



MCD to ban Tongas soon

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NEW DELHI: Tongas will soon become a thing of the past. MCD on Thursday passed a resolution to ban the horse-drawn carriage in the capital, and if everything goes as planned tongas will no longer be seen on Delhi roads from mid-January.

However, the civic body has also come up with a rehabilitation plan for the licensed holders of these animal driven-vehicles.

According to MCD, there are 232 licensed horse tongas renewed up to 2009-10. There are 170 people who hold single tonga licenses while 62 people have more than one tonga license. MCD officials said about Rs 30 lakh would be spent on rehabilitation of the tonga operators.

As per the proposed Policy, MCD would provide tehbazaris to licensed tonga holders having one licence in their names and those who have more than one tonga licences would be considered for one tehbazari site. Those having up to a maximum of three licence will be eligible for financial assistance (1/3rd of the cost of the vehicle) for purchasing CNG goods carrier autorickshaws.

Individuals who are plying their tongas without valid licenses shall be given financial assistance (1/4th of the cost of the vehicle) for purchase of CNG goods carriage autorickshaws.

The allotment of the tehbazari sites for the eligible licensed tonga holders would either be at the locations of the existing/operating tonga stands or at a nearby place within reasonable limits subject to the availability of land/site. The department shall tie-up in this regard with the deputy commissioners of the respective municipal zones.

MCD reasoned that since lakhs of transport vehicles (cycle rickshaws, autorickshaws, cars, buses) are running on the roads, there is no place and demand for these slow-moving animal driven vehicles. Besides, instances of cruelty to these draught animals, especially horses, mules, ponies, etc, are regular feature in some parts of Delhi roads. "Tongas in Delhi are generally driven in very congested areas like Sadar Bazaar, Chandni Chowk, Delhi Gate and some trans-Yamuna areas. There have been several instances of accidents involving these horse-drawn carriages," said a senior MCD official.