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KARNATAKA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, RESEARCH AND REFERENCE BRANCH

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Turn Bangalore Turf Club into a Lalbagh-like lung space: PAC

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has recommended cancelling the licence of the Bangalore Turf Club (BTC) and developing the premises into a lung space on the lines of Cubbon Park and Lalbagh.

The committee, whose fourth report on the matter was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Friday, also directed the authorities to recover Rs 36.63 crore in rental dues from the BTC.

The turf club declined to comment.

The committee, headed by senior Congress leader H K Patil, urged the government to seek an early hearing of a case pending in the Supreme Court, which has restrained the government from initiating action against the BTC. The club is accused of defaulting on rent payment and conducting races without a valid licence.

The committee pulled up the Finance Department for not doing anything to sus-

pend the club's licence, even though it violated the Mysore Race Course Licensing Act, according to the report. "The violations should be brought to the notice of the chief minister to revoke the license issued to the club," the committee said.

The PAC expressed dismay at the lack of progress on shifting the club to the city's outskirts although discussions have been going on since 1968. "Moreover, the city's population and traffic density are increasing at a rapid pace. Therefore, the BTC land should be developed along the lines of Lalbagh and Cubbon Park to ensure environmental equilibrium, curb pollution and improve green cover," the report said.

The Finance Department told the top court the club owed Rs 36.63 crore in rental dues until 2018-19, the committee said, asking authorities to calculate the rent for the previous fiscal year and recover them with interest.