

MINUTES OF THE 8th STATE LEVEL MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
03-05-2019 AT 11:30 AM IN THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION GUEST HOUSE,
VIJAYAWADA

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THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

1. Sri J.C.Sharma, IAS (Retd), Chairman.
2. Dr. Irfan Basha, Member.
3. Sri K.Venkateswara Rao, Assistant Director, MEPMA
4. Dr. Vijay Bhaskar, NGO, Roots Health Foundation, Vijayawada
5. Sri M. Dharma Teja, NGO, Divya Charitable Trust, Machilipatnam
6. Sri J.Ravikanth, TE, MEPMA
7. Smt. A.Padmaja, DMC, MEPMA

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At the outset, the Assistant Director, MEPMA welcomed the Committee and explained the action taken on the previous meeting minutes.

2. In this meeting most of the time was spent in interaction with the two NGOs who had been specially invited to attend the meeting. The idea was that the feed back and experience of NGOs should be taken and used for understanding the programme in a better way. The main points informed during the discussions with Sri Dharma Teja, Chairman, Divya Charitable Trust (NGO), Machilipatnam and Dr. Vijay Bhaskar, Chairman, Roots Health Foundation, (NGO), Vijayawada are summarised as follows:

(i) Non release of funds in time

The release of funds to the NGOs has not been streamlined as yet. They have received payments upto December 2018. It was becoming difficult to take work from the staff due to lack of payment of salaries in time. The AD, MEPMA informed that though MEPMA was releasing the funds in time to the Municipalities yet in some places due to budgetary restraints on PD accounts, there were delays in further release to the NGOs.

The Committee felt that this issue has been raised and discussed many times earlier and it was desired that the system of payments to the NGOs should be streamlined. Though some action has been taken yet there are gaps for which urgent action has to be taken. The MD, MEPMA may examine whether the funds can be released directly to the NGOs in advance and based on the performance and utilization certificates further review can be made.

(ii) Funds for replacement of beds, mattresses etc

It was informed that the funds are supplied for the first time purchase of beds and mattresses etc but there is no further funding when there is a requirement of replacement of these items. The AD, MEPMA informed that already Government had issued permission to the Municipalities to use general funds for this purpose but in some places it was not being done.

The Committee felt that it was the duty of MEPMA to monitor whether the Municipalities were complying with the permission and taking action for replacement of the necessary items. The overall picture may be placed before the Committee.

(iii) Lack of publicity

There was a lack of publicity of the programme as a result the capacity was not being fully utilized in most of the Shelters.

The Committee felt that in addition to the funds being provided under the Scheme, the Municipalities and NGOs may be advised to mobilise funds from the donors. The help of District Collectors may also be taken in the matter.

(iv) Non payment of rent in time

It was informed that in some cases there was delay payment of rent where buildings have been taken on rent for running the Shelters. It was found that out of total 74 Shelters, 66 were in old Government buildings or newly constructed buildings and 8 Shelters were running in rented buildings.

The MD, MEPMA may find out the status of all the rented buildings and place before the Committee.

(v) Grant of recognition to NGOs

It was informed that the NGOs had organized themselves in Associations at State and District level but there was a need to grant recognition by the Government or the Departments, so that the fake NGOs can be avoided while sanctioning the Schemes.

The Committee opined that MD, MEPMA may obtain permission of the Government to grant formal recognition to the reputed NGOs who have good track record so that only good NGOs are involved in the programme.

(vi) Linkage of Shelters to Anna Canteens

It was suggested that in order to provide food regularly to the residents of the Shelters, there should be a proper linkage between the Shelters and Anna Canteens. The idea was that the NGO running the Shelter would deposit the required money (at the rate of Rs.5 per person) to the Anna Canteen, obtain the food and supply to the residents at the Shelters.

The Committee felt that the existing procedure of Anna Canteens will require relaxation as there is a system of providing food at the Canteen itself and not for transporting it somewhere else. For that reason, as the suggestion is worth considering, the Government and MD, MEPMA may examine the matter and take it further as it will meet the goal of Anna Canteens as well as fill up the requirement of Shelters.

3. The other points discussed in the meeting were as follows:-

(i) Conducting of drives on regular basis

It was felt that in order to cover all the shelterless persons, there should be regular drives at the places where normally these people are found. The present system was not adequate and require improvement.

(ii) Construction of temporary Shelters

As discussed in earlier meetings, there was a need to examine whether some temporary Shelters with coverage of roof could be provided at the places where normally shelterless people sleep during the night as has been done in some places like Hyderabad.

After discussion it was proposed the Committee would visit the Benz Circle area in the night at about 9.30 p.m. along with Dr. Vijay Bhaskar who had planned to conduct survey in that area. It was also decided to inform the Commissioner, VMC and Police in the matter.

(iii) Conduct of regular State, District and Municipality level meetings

The Committee wanted to know whether the meetings of various Committees constituted at State, District and Municipality level were meeting regularly. As the information was not readily available, it was suggested that the information may be obtained and put up for review in the coming meetings. For the State level meetings the MD, MEPMA should take the initiative. At District level, the PDs should make it a point that they meet the District Collectors and see that the meetings are conducted.

(iv) Participation of line departments in the SLMC meetings

The Committee has perused the summary of minutes of SLMC meetings of other States prepared by the AD, MEPMA on the suggestion of the Committee. It was felt that in most of the States the concerned line Departments like the Commissioners of important Municipal Corporations, Senior Officers of Police, Women and Child Welfare, Social Welfare, Labour and Medical and Health Departments were being invited by the Principal Secretary of the Municipal Administration Department to attend the SLMC meetings.

The Committee felt that it was a good practice and this should be done in A.P also, so that there is improvement in convergence of the Schemes of various Departments for the benefit of the residents of the Shelters for Urban Homeless. In this connection, Special Chief Secretary, MA&UD Department may be requested to issue the necessary orders.

(v) Adoption of certain practices from other States

The Committee felt that the MD, MEPMA may examine the minutes of the meetings of the SLMCs of other States and propose for adoption of certain desirable practices of other States in Andhra Pradesh.

(vi) Change of NGOs for certain of Shelters as recommended by Inspecting Officers

The Committee discussed the issue of changing of NGOs of some Shelters which were not found to be running properly and the Inspecting Officers had recommended for the change of NGO. It was informed that action was pending at the Municipalities level. The Committee has felt that it was a serious matter and no leniency should be tolerated in the matter. The status may be put up before the Committee in the next meeting.

(vii) Completion of survey for vulnerable shelterless people

As per the suggestions given earlier, the survey for vulnerable shelterless people should be completed at the earliest and a few Shelters should be separately opened for various categories of vulnerable people.

4. In the night at about 9.30 p.m. the Committee visited the Benz Circle area of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation. The Commissioner, VMC, Sri Rama Rao, IAS, the PD Sri Prakash Rao, Dr. Vijay Bhaskar from Roots Health Foundation, Vijayawada and local Police were present. The Committee interacted with a few homeless persons who were taking rest on the footpaths. The following points were noted:

(i) Some of the persons were very old and in very bad condition of health and sanitation and some of them were not able to talk. A few persons of younger age who were working in day time as construction workers were also there. They agreed that coverage by roof at the very place will be of good use to them as at present they have to run here and there if there is rain fall.

(ii) It was generally felt that it may be examined to construct a temporary Shelter outside Trendset Mall on the wide footpath along the MG Road corner. Appropriate design may be thought of by the VMC after studying models at other places.

(iii) The VMC may also consult the NHAI (National Highways Authority of India) to examine the possibility of providing a Shelter below the flyover which is under construction. The Railways and APSRTC may also be consulted to provide space for Shelters near Railway Station and Bust Station.

It was proposed that next meeting may be held on 12th June 2019 at 11.30 a.m.

(Dr. Irfan Basha)
MEMBER


(Sri J.C. Sharma)
CHAIRMAN