

Date: 10-07-2017

To,
Shri. K. Siddaramaiah
Honourable Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka
Vidhana Soudha
Bengaluru – 560001

Subject: Constitution of Ward Committees (WC) in all 198 wards in BBMP through a democratic selection process and preparing a guidelines for the same

Ref: Constitutional 74th Amendment (Nagarpalika) Act, 1992

Dear Sir,

Greetings from B.PAC !

Karnataka state pioneered the decentralization of power to local bodies during the 1980's which sparked the 73rd & 74th amendment to the constitution under the leadership of late Shri. Rajeev Gandhi, Former Prime Minister of India.

The 74th Constitutional Amendment devolved the powers to the municipalities including finance and power across India. Municipalities in Karnataka state continues to be at the forefront in adapting to e-governance, technology-led growth coupled with local government reforms.

We are drawing your attention to citizen centric reform, constituting Ward Committees(WC) in all 198 wards in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike(BBMP) through a democratic selection process. BBMP is the only municipality in the state which had constituted Ward committees earlier. During April 2017, High Court of Karnataka directed Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike(BBMP) to set up Ward Committees as mandated by the constitution.

Several Bengaluru based Civil Society representatives including B.PAC had met with the Worshipful Mayor and Commissioner, BBMP and put forward the contention that nomination and selection of members to the Ward committees should consider Commissioner recommendation and monitored at commissioner's office for an equitable representation.

Over 500 nominations from concerned citizen groups including 34 B.CLIP Civic leaders (Trained in the nuances of city administration, ward governance and who continuously & meaningfully engage with corporators in finding solutions) were submitted to the office of Commissioner. Only 3 representatives have been selected as members to Ward committee from the 129 wards where the ward committees have been constituted.

Further, there is a huge public outcry to the fact that qualified civil society nominations have not featured in the Ward committee whereas kith and kin of the Corporators and his supporters are included as members.

Since there are no set guidelines for constituting Ward committees, higher offices in BBMP are passing the responsibilities to the officials at wards creating such a sorry state of affairs.

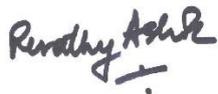
Sir, we are deeply disappointed and wish to inform you that Ward Committee formation in BBMP has turned out to be a futile exercise and looks like Ward committee membership is being given to people aligned to the Corporator only thereby not allowing citizen participation in BBMP affairs in local wards.

We urge you to direct the Urban Development Departmental officials and BBMP Commissioner to prepare a guideline and define a selection process for constituting ward committee in a transparent manner. These set of guidelines will pave ways to all the ULB's in the state to adopt.

The time has come again, Karnataka state under your able leadership to set a precedence to other states in the country for a transparent and democratic way of involving citizens in governance.

Anticipating a positive response from your good office.

Thanking You



Revathy Ashok

Managing Trustee & CEO

CC:

Shri. K.J.George, Hon'bl Minister for Bengalure city & Town planning, GoK

Shri. Subash Chandar kuntia, Chief Secretary, GoK

Shri. Mahendra Jain, Addnl Chief Secretary to Urban Development Dept, GoK

Shri. N. Manjunatha Prasad, Commissioner, BBMP