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Disabilities Commissioner castigates BBMP for poor track record

Staff Reporter

Implementation of welfare programmes poor: K.V. Rajanna

LAME EXCUSE: Three per cent of the revenue from local bodies is allocated for disability welfare programmes, but the BBMP has not put it to proper use.

BANGALORE: The Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike has not been able to implement any rehabilitation or inclusivity programmes for the disabled, for which it allocates budgets every year. Out of Rs 4.4 crore allocated in 2009-2010, only Rs. 92 lakh was used. The 2010-2011 budgetary allocation, worth Rs. 10 crore, is as yet untouched.

In the absence of any programme or structured plans to work towards inclusivity and to help those with disabilities, these funds are being “diverted” every year, alleged K.V. Rajanna, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, at a press conference here on Friday.

Neglect alleged

However, after holding talks with the BBMP Welfare Department, Mr. Rajanna said the palike has agreed to start a survey to count the number of disabled persons in the city within the next three months. Further, the Commissioner and BBMP officials will meet in the coming days to sit down and chalk out “concrete plans” to see how the funds can be effectively utilised. “The track

record of the BBMP in this matter has been bad. They have neglected the disability community all these years and deprived them of programmes for which money has come in," he said.

Three per cent of the revenue from local bodies is allocated for disability welfare programmes, he pointed out.

Official hard-pressed

In Bangalore, where an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 persons live with disabilities, there is only one District Disability Welfare Officer. Even this official has no support staff. "In fact, the officer does not even have a car to travel around, and is burdened with several other responsibilities," he said.

Mr. Rajanna proposed that the BBMP appoint one disability welfare officer for every one of its eight zones. At least two support staff must be allotted to each zone, and other infrastructure must be provided, he added.