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Issue of delay in work orders dominates HDMC meeting

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Mayor to hold a special meeting of the council today

Projects should have been implemented under

Rs. 15-lakh grant to each ward

HDMC officials accused of having no respect for councillors

HUBLI: The issue of delay in issuing work orders for development projects to be taken up under Rs. 15-lakh grant to each ward in the twin cities dominated the meeting of the Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation council here on Wednesday.

Leader of the Opposition in the HDMC council Deepak Chinchore raised the issue through a call

attention motion. The meeting witnessed a heated debate on the issue by the ruling party and Opposition members. Congress members wanted to stage a walkout, but decided against it.

Mr. Chinchore said though Mayor Viranna Savadi had issued orders with a good intention allocating Rs. 15 lakh to each of the 67 wards to implement development projects after he assumed office, not a single work had been implemented as no work order had been issued.

He said negligence on the part of corporation officials had resulted in slow progress in several works and revenue collection had come down drastically.

Following his request, the Mayor allowed a discussion on the issue. Speaking on the issue, Congress councillors Yasin Haveripet, Ganesh Tagargunti said that the officials delayed implementation of works citing some reasons. Janata Dal (S) councillor Altaf Kittur said the officials had no respect for councillors and the Mayor and were not following the issues raised in the council meeting seriously.

Councillor Tagargunti said that the Congress councillors would stage a walkout and participate in the meeting only if work orders were issued. His statement led to strong reactions from the ruling party councillors, including floor leader Bharati Patil and senior councillors Ashok Jadhav and Pandurang Patil. This led to chaos.

The Mayor sought to know if the Congress councillors wanted a discussion on the issue. Mr. Chinchore pacified the councillors and the discussion resumed.

Even the ruling party councillors took the officials to task for delay in issuing work orders.

Mr. Ashok Jadhav said the officials could not delay works for want of proper policies.

He said that there was a communication gap among the officials and councillors, which gave scope for suspicion.

Mr. Chinchore urged the Mayor to take steps to begin work on various projects.

Confusion prevailed again when the officials gave contradictory statements on the number of work orders issued under the Rs. 15-lakh allocation to each ward. The officials were taken to task for giving contradictory statements.

The chaos ended when the Mayor announced that he would hold a special meeting of councillors and officials on the issue on Thursday.

The meeting began on a chaotic note with ruling party members seeking an apology from Janata Dal (S) councillor Altaf Kittur for his allegation about involvement of a former mayor in a land scam. The ruling party councillors insisted that either Mr. Kittur produce documents to substantiate his allegation or tender apology.

The meeting witnessed pandemonium and the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a few minutes to hear the grievances of residents of Nava Ayodhya Nagar who were protesting on the HDMC premises.

The meeting resumed after Mr. Kittur expressed regret over his statement.