

PRESS NOTE

Make budgets public now!

“KNOW YOUR CITY BUDGET” campaign joins with the Global Movement for Budget Transparency, Accountability and Participation (BTAP) to demand open and inclusive budget on the occasion of ‘International Right to Know Day’ on **September, 28**.

Local civil society organizations, activists, youth, women, students join the campaign to voice **make budgets public now!** A workshop on budget transparency and participation has been organized to create citizen awareness on Berhampur Municipal Corporation budget through the ‘know your city budget’ initiative by Youth for Social Development.

Being the citizen of the country, a voter, tax payer we have the absolute right to know the budgets (both the income and expenditure) of the city, state and central government. Know your city budget campaign will raise awareness among the mass to know their city’s budget income and allocation in different areas of development and create a voice among the citizens, civil society and youth to make open the budget documents, to create space for citizen engagement and demand more budget allocation for the urban poor and in basic services like in water, sanitation, housing, transportation in the city.

An analysis of Berhampur Municipal Corporation budget has been presented in the workshop and the following are the major issues discussed

- Own income of BMC has significantly reducing. The income growth rate was 17.4% in 2001-02 but it is -3% in 2013-14.
- BMC is totally dependent on grant-in-aid, 73% (Rs. 9800 lakhs) of income comes from state and central government.
- Per capita income of BMC has been increasing, Rs. 325 in 2000-01(2001 census) and increased to ten times Rs. 3025 (2011census) in 2013-14.
- Sanitation remains very low priority with expenditure of only 14.74% (Rs. 1252 Lakhs) while in roads and bridges it is Rs. 1700 lakhs.
- Expenditure in water supply remains only at Rs. 420 lakhs (4.95%) which is fairly less as compared to the severity of water problems in the city.
- Commitment for slum free city remains gloomy with only expenditure of 23.78% in housing (IHSDP and RAY) for 137 slums and informal settlements.

- Livelihood expenditure for the urban poor is only 8.24% (Rs. 700 lakhs) is significantly low as compared to its slum population 1,17,541 (30.5%)
- Expenditure in street lighting remain much less than others i.e. only 3% (Rs.260 lakhs) where as in parks for public amusement remain very low i.e. Rs. 10 lakhs (0.12%)

These are the following measures the local (BMC), district and state government should adopt to make budget transparency and participation.

- Mandatory public disclosure of budget documents and allocation before its approval by the corporation
- Ensure citizen participation through 'ward committees' and public consultation in budget making process and allocation
- Increase budget allocation for the urban poor and specific basic service like water, sanitation (garbage, drainage and public toilet), housing and transportation.
- Implement 'development outcome budget' to measure the money spent and the results which follow to ensure effective government management and accountability.
- In adherence with the Right to Information Act, local government offices should provide information through voluntary disclosure. The Act also recommends that every public authority computerize their records and publish requisite information for wide dissemination.

For further details please contact

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