

BELUR DECLARATION

We, the members of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), the members of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and the Government of Karnataka, hereby make this Joint Declaration on the 23rd day of January, 2004 at the Panchayat Raj and Urban Local Bodies Convention being held in Belur Gram Panchayat, Dharwad.

To carry forward the decentralization movement and further empower the PRIs and ULBs to serve the people, Government of Karnataka commits to undertake the following initiatives:

1. The principle that what should be undertaken at a particular level should be undertaken at that level alone would be adhered to, as per the activity mapping. Funds, functions & functionaries would be accordingly devolved to the PRIs;
2. Formulate a scheme to correct regional imbalances by involving the PRIs & ULBs;
3. Integrate various schemes aimed at increasing agricultural production and assisting other land-based activities at the Gram Panchayat level;
4. Transfer 'Akshara Dasoha' scheme to Gram Panchayats and ULBs;
5. Bring primary schools, rural libraries, adult education centres, anganwadis, ANM Sub-centres & fair price shops within the administrative ambit of GPs;
6. Strengthen Gram Panchayat administration and integrate the village level revenue functions and functionaries with Grama Panchayat administration;
7. Create an Ombudsman for every district under the Lokayukta, to ensure accountability of PRIs and ULBs;
8. Strengthen technical and financial management capabilities of Gram Panchayats, including capacity building of PR members through continuous training, education and communication;
9. Equip Grama Panchayats with computers and give an impetus to e-governance;
10. Strengthen co-operative credit structure by nominating one Grama Panchayat member to each Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society;

11. Further enhance the financial powers of ULBs pertaining to contracts, procurement and tackling of water supply related works;
12. Devolve urban planning functions on ULBs;
13. Enable ULBs to provide water supply as per normative standards;
14. Help install underground sewage system in all Class I cities in the state and establish integrated solid waste management system;
15. Provide professional staff to urban local bodies.

In turn, PRIs and ULBs, welcoming these government initiatives, commit themselves to the following:

Panchayat Raj Institutions:

1. To maintain the highest level of integrity and transparency in all public expenditure and implementation of development programs;
2. Conduct minimum of 2 Ward Sabhas and 2 Grama Sabhas each year;
3. Select only deserving beneficiaries for various schemes through Ward and Gram Sabhas;
4. Enhance PRI resources through tax reforms and higher collection efficiency, including enlargement of gramatanas to cover all new habitations;
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5. Create and maintain income generating assets assiduously;
6. Fulfill aspirations of the people with dedication and sincerity.

Urban Local Bodies:

1. Mobilize resources in a comprehensive and transparent manner;
2. Commit to good governance in ULBs, especially through e-governance initiatives;
3. Set up an effective public grievance redressal system;
4. Ensure commitment and transparency in ULB functioning.

All parties to this declaration shall endeavour to work in accordance with these commitments.