



ICAI/012/CP&GFM/TP

Shri Mebanshailang R. Synrem, I.A.S.
Principal Secretary
Department of Urban Affairs
Government of Meghalaya

Dear Sir,

Sub: *Proposal to catalyse accounting reforms in Local Bodies of Meghalaya.*

Greetings from the Committee on Public and Government Financial Management (CP&GFM) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (the ICAI). We are an Institute created under an Act of the Parliament. The ICAI is created as an authority in the field of accountancy.

ICAI is involved in the accounting reforms and improvement of financial reporting and management of Local Bodies. The ICAI through its CP&GFM is issuing Accounting Standards for Local Bodies (ASLBs available at https://www.icaig.org/post.html?post_id=1527). The Committee is also involved in creating awareness amongst Local Bodies and various end-users about accounting reforms and its implementation in Local Bodies by organising workshops/ training programmes (https://icaiv.com/category.php?cat_id=22) and developing e-learning modules (https://icaiv.com/category.php?cat_id=21).

Government of India has taken several initiatives to improve financial reporting in Local Bodies such as issuance of National Municipal Accounts Manual, key development schemes such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation and Recommendations of 15th Finance Commission which linked grants with accounting reforms and also focussed on implementation of accrual basis of Accounting in Local Bodies.

Under the on-going accounting reforms, accrual accounting implementation by ULBs has been linked with availing grants released by Central Government. However, it has been observed that Municipal Acts of various States does not support implementation of accrual basis of accounting. Consequently, most of Local Bodies may not be able to get the benefit of grants. Also, apart from availing grants, the new accounting should be implemented in view of the benefits and value addition it is expected to bring to the existing financial reporting practices of ULBs. Therefore, it is advisable that for smooth adoption of accrual accounting in Local Bodies, the relevant existing municipal and other Statutes may be considered for amendment as mentioned hereunder.

(i) The Model Municipal Law, 2003 recommends for engagement of Chartered Accountants for Audit of ULBs. Meghalaya Municipal (Amendment) Act, 2012 has prescribed that the audit of municipalities to be done by the Examiner of Local



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Accounts or his equivalent or an Auditor appointed by the State Government. A few states such as Karnataka, Bihar, Sikkim and Jharkhand have amended their Municipality Acts to incorporate the provision of appointment of Chartered Accountants as Auditors in addition to the existing officials responsible for the same in the respective States. To cover the accounts and audit in arrears, it is suggested to consider engaging professionals like Chartered Accountants which is already being done at Rajasthan, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh, etc.

(ii) Paragraph 32.15 of the Accounting Manual for ULBs in Meghalaya states that the ULBs may get internal audit done. Internal Audit is a mandatory requirement under AMRUT as well. However, none of the ULBs has any system of Internal Audit. It is suggested that the said Manual may be executed to achieve the desired outcomes.

The aforesaid amendment would help in successful implementation and enforcement of accounting reforms. This communication is to seek an opportunity to catalyse accounting reforms in Local Bodies of Meghalaya. This initiative will go a long way in setting up a quality structure for robust and transparent accounting framework at the Local Bodies.

We look forward to receive the way forward in this regard and to support you in the above endeavour.

Please revert to us for any further clarification/query.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

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