

Minutes of the Meeting of Environment Help Line held on 8th September 2015

The First meeting of Environment Help line jointly established by National Centre for Human Settlements and Environment (NCHSE) and Friends of Environment Group was held on 8th September 2015 at NCHSE. The objective of the help line is to provide knowledge based assistance to common citizen especially youth on urban developmental and related issues and to enable them to raise the issues of public interest with the concerned authorities.

The meeting was chaired by Mrs Nirmala Buch, Chairperson of NCHSE. Senior officials of concerned government agencies, former bureaucrats, environmentalists, sector specialists and Senior Journalists participated in the meeting. The list of participants is at Annex I.

All members present in the meeting supported the proposal to create an Environment Help Line on urban development issues to carry forward the legacy of Dr M. N. Buch.

The concept and the strategy of the initiative were discussed at length. It emerged that most of the urban development issues falls under the preview of urban local bodies, which are not being addressed due to lack of a systematic approach. It was felt necessary to initiate following actions to help the citizens resolve their problems:

- i. Initiate proper publicity of the initiative and invite inputs from various sections of the society;
- ii. Create a web portal to enable citizens to register their queries and to provide feedback with substantive information/practical solution/ corrective measures;
- iii. Classify environmental issues pertaining to Madhya Pradesh and collect issue based information/documents and success stories of environmental protection;
- iv. Strengthen existing library of NCHSE as a Resource Centre on environment and developmental issues in Madhya Pradesh;
- v. Create a knowledge pool comprising of subject matter specialists, who wish to provide voluntary and advisory support on citizens queries, and place them in different groups, such as Heritage protection, Natural resource management, Forestry, Urban development, Architecture, Planning, Industries, Environmental Law, etc.. The members present in the meeting volunteered to extend their support for the topics of their interest, which is mentioned against their names in Annex I.
- vi. Publish a digital news letter for dissemination of information on environment of Madhya Pradesh as well as encourage subject matter specialists to join the group of their choice;
- vii. All members may also suggest names of persons with their academic qualification/ subject of interest to join the forum;
- viii. Identify partners and champions who have made significant contribution towards protection of heritage and environment;

- ix. Encourage youths to enroll themselves as volunteers to support the cause through research and documentation on the topics of their interest. Incentives like a certificate of proficiency for the contribution of volunteers may be considered;
- x. Consider conducting a lecture series on a specific issue by a sector specialist from any of the groups or by an invited speaker during the meeting of the forum;
- xi. Convene a monthly meeting of the Help line for discussion on a topical issue, starting with “Traffic issues” for the month of October. The topics of discussion for the subsequent months will be on any one of the following:
 - i. Forest
 - ii. Lake Conservation
 - iii. Heritage Protection
 - iv. Man Animal Conflict
 - v. Solid waste Management
 - vi. Noise Pollution
 - vii. Air and Water Pollution
- xii. During the meeting it was decided to convene the monthly meeting on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 11.30 AM. But later it was felt that to encourage greater participation it would be better to schedule the monthly meeting at 11.30 AM on 3rd Saturday of the month.
- xiii. The issue of legal action against violators was also discussed, and it was decided to take suitable action on the issue later.

The meeting was ended with a vote of thanks to all.

Annex -I

List of participants of the meeting on Environment Help Line held on 8th September 2015

So.no.	Name	Topic of interest
1.	Mrs. Nirmala Buch, Chairperson, NCHSE, Bhopal	
2.	Mr. R.C. Saxena, Vice Chairmam (E), NCHSE	
3.	Mrs. Anshu Vaish, IAS(Retired), Bhopal	Heritage Protection
4.	Mr. Narendra Prasad, IPS(Retired), Bhopal	Traffic
5.	Mr. Arun Gurtoo, IPS(Retired), Bhopal	Legal matters
6.	Mr. V.R. Khare, IFS (PCCF Retired), Bhopal	Forestry and Environment
7.	Dr. Ram Prasad, IFS (PCCF Retired), Bhopal	Forestry
8.	Mr. N. K. Singh, Sr Journalist, Bhopal	Protection of green spaces in city
9.	Mr. L.S. Hardenia, Senior journalist; Bhopal	Journalism
10.	Dr Alok Saxena, Chief Chemist, MPPCB, Bhopal	Environmental pollution
11.	Mr. Rajendra Kothari, Bhopal	Industry related issues
12.	Mr. C. K. Naidu, Sr Journalist, Bhopal	Information dissemination
13.	Mr. Bhalu Mondhe, Indore	Lake Conservation
14.	Ms. Rachana Potdar, Indore	Environmental conservation
15.	Mr. Jitendra Singh, Information Officer, DMI, Bhopal	Information dissemination
16.	Mr. Sunil Deshpande, Environmentalist, Bhopal	Lake Conservation
17.	Ms Vishakha Wadhvani, Intern, MCM, Bhopal	Environmental conservation
18.	Ms. Rashmi Saraswat, General Secretary, MCM, Bhopal	Gender mainsteaming
19.	Mr. Raghuraj Singh, Incharge- Administration & Communication , MCM, Bhopal	Communication
20.	Dr Pradip Nandi, Sr. Fellow, NCHSE, Bhopal	Water Conservation