

Minutes of the Meeting

The 10th & the 11th Progress Report & Coordination Meeting (PRCM) were convened on the 8^h of April 2009 at the Ministerial Conference Hall at 1430 Hours. The Hon'ble Lyonpo chaired the meeting with Dasho Secretary as the vice chair. Unlike the regular PRCM, this PRCM was different due to the following:

- 1. The two months PRCM was conducted at once and*
- 2. As per the instruction from the Chairman of the PRCM, all the Heads of various units along with the HoDs of the various departments of JDWNRH were invited to participate in this PRCM.*

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS:

Before the commencement of the business session, the Chairman thanked each and everyone for participating in the PRCM. He emphasized that the importance of PRCM should not be compromised as it is undertaken with the objective to enhance accountability, transparency and above all information sharing which is one of the facet of a good organization.

The Chair informed the forum that the 9th of April 2009 marks the first year of the democratically elected government. He briefed the forum regarding the achievements and challenges; the Ministry has faced during the last one year and acknowledged that the major achievements were made possible due to the unstinted support and team-work of all the employees of the MoH. The Chair also made the forum aware of the objectives initiated during his visit to Gulf Medical College, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Vice-Chair informed the house that on the directives of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), all the 10 Government Secretaries called on Hon'ble Lyonchen at his chamber, on 6th of April at 09.30.Hours. The focus of the meeting was to devise appropriate interventions to reduce issues related to Administrative Burdens (AB). The Vice – Chair indicated that as the delivery of services by the Government to the general population was hindered by many hurdles like long bureaucratic procedures, unnecessary obstructions etc, the main focus of the meeting was how best to reduce the AB and enhance the service delivery, a core component of good governance.

The Vice-Chair indicated that as per the governments' directives, the MoH has nominated 3 Officials to carry out the AB Exercise in the Ministry and stated that all the units/divisions/departments are expected to extend their full cooperation. He informed that the 3 Officials nominated are Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, DG, DMS, Mr. Nado Dukpa, CAO, AFD and Dr. Lungten Zangmo, Head, Research Unit, PPD. The Chair supplemented by pointing out that all the heads of the various units along with the HoDs of JDWNRH were invited in this PRCM with the sole intention of keeping them abreast regarding the implementation status of AB. The Chair remarked that the

Minutes of the Meeting

inception of weekly meetings (units) followed by departmental meetings preceded by divisional meetings and subsequently the monthly PRCMs were started in the MoH to achieve and reduce the AB.

Finally, the Chair once again reiterated that team work and sharing of information is very important for the success of the organization to achieve its strategic business management – in case of MoH, the strategic business management is to make a healthier Bhutan.

SPECIFIC DISCUSSIONS:

The CPO (PPD) made a brief presentation related to the proposal submitted by a private firm to open Medical Consultancy Services specifically targeting the tourism sector.

The forum deliberated at length related to this issue and some of the pertinent issues that cropped up are as follows:

- Some of the members felt that since the firm has no back up facilities (in the proposal), it may be difficult for the firm to provide medical services and may ultimately have to utilize the services of JDWNRH.
- Some felt that it would be better if the MoH could improve the service standards of the hospitals and charge the tourist who wants to avail medical care.
- Some of the members pointed out that since there is no clear cut policies, the MoH has to frame and develop policies related to such issues and put up to the cabinet for further discussion and approval.
- However, all the members felt that with rapid strengthening of private sector, certain areas in the health care delivery has to be outsourced as the private sector can deliver the required services faster than the public sector. The Chair pointed out that some of the services like evacuation/search and rescue etc could be looked after by the private sector (chopper services).

Ultimately, the house endorsed that since somewhere something has to begin, the PPD/DMS was directed to ask for Detail Project Report (DPR) of the firm and begin looking into the issue – DMS/PPD.

Further, the forum also directed that the DMS should look into the aspect of introducing Off-Hour Clinic Services along with PPD – DMS/PPD.

The CPO (PPD) also made the house aware regarding the up-coming Annual Health Conference (AHC) to be held from 16th to 18th of April 2009. He pointed out that

Minutes of the Meeting

since the government is facing severe financial constraint, the PPD and the AHC Organizing Committee has introduced various measures to control and minimize wasteful expenditures – For example, unlike the past AHCs, the AHC from 2009 will not be providing bags and note-pads etc.

The CPO appraised the floor that the theme of AHC 2009 is – “*New Era in Health and the Challenges Ahead, 2008 – 2018*”.

In line with the Chair, the floor directed that the HRD should look into the issue of introducing accelerated nursing programme (ex-country) to address the shortage of nurses. The Chair informed that this issue will be discussed in the Cabinet and at the same time directed the HRD to explore the possibility of sending doctors to do PG Courses in Bangladesh – HRD/M

The issue of International Membership was also discussed. It was pointed out that most of the Specialist are members of their respective area of specialization and has to pay international membership fee per annum. Thus, it was indicated whether the MoH could pay the membership fee every year. To this effect, the vice chair pointed out that membership to particular agencies are important as the specialist will gain and have access to more knowledge and technologies. However, the vice chair stated that the advantages and disadvantages (Pros/Cons) of this type of membership has to be gauged.

Thus, the house concluded that the fee for being international members will be provided case by case basis. To this effect, the HRD/M was directed to liaise with the Specialists and study the case judiciously – HRD/M

Some of the HoDs voiced concern regarding the composition of Human Resource Committee (HRC) in the Ministry. They justified that a specialist should be included in the HRC as the concern specialist will have better knowledge/relevancy while sending/nominating specialists for conferences/seminars. However, the Chairman of the HRC pointed out that the Medical Director is a member of the HRC (represents the specialists also).

However, it was indicated that if the HRC requires technical views, concerned specialist will be called to consult respectively. – HRD/M

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