**Report of the Protest held on 26-11-2014 against the recent Amendments of KMC Act and Framing of Rules For the Functioning of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas by the State Government**

More than two hundred representatives of various Ward committees, Residents Associations, Non-Governmental Organisations and other Citizens groups participated in the Protest held on 26-11-2014, in-front of Puttana Chetty Town Hall, Bengaluru. The protest was organised against the recent **Amendments of KMC Act** **and Framing of Rules For the Functioning of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas** by the State Government. The Protest was jointly organised by **CIVIC, Namma-Bengaluru Foundation, BRACE, Environment Support Group(ESG), Citizen Action Forum (CAF),Consumer Care Society, Coalition Against Secularism,** **Eeshanya Maha Vedike (Federation of NERWA), FORWARD Hebbal, Koogu Mahila Okkuta, Namma Bengaluru Foundation (NBF), Society for People's Action for Development (SPAD), Abhyudaya Foundation, Association For Physically Disabled(APD),** **Abhyudaya Foundation, Association For Physically Disabled(APD), VV Nagar Abhyudaya, and several other Citizen Groups.**

**Shri. Doreswamy , Freedom Fighter and Activist,** led the protest and demanded that the State Government should frame rules for a functional and independent **Ward Committees** and **Area Sabhas** so that people can fully participate in the governance of Bengaluru and other cities in the state. He said that a vibrant democracy has no space for many of the undemocratic aspects of the Act. The biggest undemocratic act is the veto power of the Corporators to overturn the ward committee decisions. We need rules that enable decentralisation of power down to the ward committee and the area sabhas. He also appealed to conduct non party based elections for the Ward Committees and Area Sabhas in the state.

**Smt Kathyayini Chamaraj, Executive Trustee, CIVIC,** appealed to the government to implement the suggestions submitted by **CIVIC, Namma Bengaluru Foundation, Citizen Action Forum(CAF), Environment Support Group and other citizens groups** during the consultation organised by the **Urban Development Department, Govt. of Karnataka**. She questioned the government on retaining the rule related to exercise of Vetoe power to the Corporator to reverse the decision of the ward committees and appointments of members of Area sabha. She said the rules formed by the government are against the citizen’s interest and undermine the spirit of the 74th Amendment of the Constitution. She said a fully functional ward committees and Area Sabhas will promote people’s participation in burning issues faced by the citizens living in cities and major towns of the State.

**Smt. Kathyayini** asked the participants to sign the online petition launched by the organisers on the CHANGE website on the Internet. In two days, about 200 people have signed in support of formation of **Ward Committees and Area Sabhas** as laid out in the **74th Amendment of the Constitution.**

**Smt. Mahalakshmi Parthasarthy, Shri. Rajshekar, Shri. Mukunda, Smt. Meenakshi Bharath represented CAF, Shri Phanisai,Namma Bengaluru Foundation, Shri. Raghunandan, Secretary(Retd.,), Dept of Panchayati Raj, Govt of Karnataka, Shri. Karibasappa, Activist, Davanagere district, Smt. Sudha, SPAD, Shri. Chetan Keshava Kumar, National Confederation of Residents Welfare Associations(NCRWA), Shri. P.L Rao, Ward Committee Member, Kaveripura Ward, Shri A.T.Krishnamurthy, Ward Committee Member, Shri. Vidyadhar, Shri. Madhu Sudhan, Shri. Venkatesh, Shri. Ramanji, CIVIC, are the prominent personalities participated in the protest.**

The participants unanimously agreed to launch an state wide struggle covering all cities with population of 3 lakhs and above. The petition will be submitted to the **Shri. Vinay Kumar Sorake, Hon’ble Minister for Urban Development by Shri. Doreswamy. Shri. Anil Kumar, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Karnataka, has agreed to collect the petition at the residence of Shri. Doreswamy.**