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GHMC to the rescue of ailing sportspersons

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation is contemplating a 'pension scheme' for outstanding sportspersons from the Telangana State who represented India in Olympics, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games but now ailing and in bad shape financially.

Thanks to the initiative of GHMC Commissioner Somesh Kumar, a meeting of the select sports fraternity was convened on Tuesday in this regard which was attended by members from the APOA, S. R. Prem Raj, Director of Sports, GHMC, and Olympian N. Mukesh Kumar and former India football captain Victor Amalraj. It was proposed to give Rs 10,000 each to the deserving athletes.

"I got this idea of giving pension when I met an old sports personality at a function few weeks ago who represented India and is struggling for livelihood. Therefore, I sincerely believe the GHMC can come forward to provide some lifeline to these great sportspersons who played for the country when big money was not there," Mr. Somesh Kumar informed the

gathering.

The entire amount for the year will be handed over in one go to the probable beneficiaries. In response to Mukesh's intervention, the GHMC top official intervened to clarify that the pension scheme is not only for Olympians but can be applicable to the internationals who are in dire straits also.

"There can be graded system of payment of monthly pension in the case of internationals like Rs. 5,000, Rs.7,000 also depending on the eligibility norms," Mr. Somesh Kumar told the gathering. And, the GHMC is not confining itself to giving these monetary benefits but also likely to rope in ex-internationals to ensure optimum use of the existing playgrounds.

"I am looking at year-long training at most of these venues in select disciplines depending on the chances of producing outstanding players," the top official pointed out.

"We are optimistic of roping in some of the corporates to adopt some of the big GHMC playgrounds to lure local talent in

different disciplines,” it was informed.

Mukesh suggested that the pension scheme being mooted should be a permanent feature and not disbanded with a change of order in the GHMC or the State Government. “Let this be a model initiative to everyone,” he said.

The next meeting on October 17 should see a clear-cut policy and framing of guidelines for this scheme.

Mulls pension scheme for players who represented the country at Olympics, Asian and Commonwealth Games