



RESPONSE TO THE NEWS ARTICLE ABOUT ERS-108 SERVICE

The recent news article in the Shillong Times **28th of October and 29th of October 2023 on 108 bidding process** has presented a one-sided perspective on the bidding process for the 108 emergency services in Meghalaya, and we believe it is essential to provide a counterpoint to the claims made in the article.

Firstly, the claim that a midnight notice was released for the presentation is misleading. It's important to clarify that the bidders were well aware of the requirement for presentations based on the parameters defined in the Request for Proposal (RFP) Document. The RFP document explicitly stated the need for presentations, and bidders were required to submit them along with their technical bids. This implies that the necessity for presentations was not a last-minute surprise but a pre-established part of the bidding process.

The Committee for Technical Screening at National Health Mission, Meghalaya, had already conducted a preliminary assessment of the hard copy presentations submitted by each bidder in the technical bid. The decision to conduct further presentations was likely made to evaluate the actual ability of the bidders to showcase their proposals and convince the committee members about their competency. Also, the time limit was already mentioned in the notice given with an option of being online or in person. The time limit was fair to everyone. The allocated 10 minutes for presentations and 5 minutes for Q&A may seem limited, but it is a standard practice in the evaluation process, and it is reasonable to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the bidders within this time frame.

The article suggests that experienced companies are being favored in the quality assessment process, while less experienced companies are neglected. However, it's crucial to recognize that the Tender Document and the entire bidding process were developed over time and with necessary approvals in the Government. There were pre-bid meetings held, clarifications given and sufficient time given for potential bidders to respond to the same.

The departure of GVK EMRI from the bidding process for the 108 emergency services in Meghalaya, despite being one of the biggest companies in the Indian Emergency Service Domain, should be viewed as a significant development rather than a setback. It is crucial to remember that their services were terminated in the state due to their inability to provide efficient and uninterrupted services, leading to multiple agitations, protests, and even calls for their removal by their own field staff. This termination of services highlights the pressing need for a more efficient and accountable emergency service provider. It is strange on how Shillong Times poses a sympathetic view to GVK EMRI and an emphatic perception of their capabilities while the same had different views when they were unable to handle the issues during 2022.

By allowing new companies with expertise in similar work to participate, the Committee responsible for the selection process aims to open the doors to efficient, professional, and ethical bidders. This approach is essential in weeding out inefficiencies and ensuring that only the best and most reliable service providers are chosen. Monopolies or undue influence from any single firm can compromise the quality and effectiveness of public services, and it's vital to maintain a competitive landscape to drive innovation and improve service delivery.

Shillong Times has not made a minimal effort to contact the concerned persons in the Government to seek clarifications before publishing the first news item dated 28th of October, 2023 which is a basic expectation.

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