

केंद्रीय दत्तक-ग्रहण संसाधन प्राधिकरण
Central Adoption Resource Authority
(महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)
(Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India)

Minutes of the 35th Meeting of Steering Committee of Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).

The 35th Meeting of the Steering Committee of Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) chaired by Shri Indevvar Pandey, Secretary, MWCD (Chairperson of the Steering Committee of CARA) was held on 11th July, 2023 at 03:00 AM at Conference Hall, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

2. The list of participants is attached. The meeting was held virtually, while the Chairperson, Member Secretary and other official members of the Ministry were physically present.
3. At the outset, CEO & Member Secretary, CARA welcomed Chairperson of the Steering Committee and all the other Members of the Committee. Chairperson of the Steering Committee requested Member Secretary & CEO, CARA to start the proceedings of the 35th Meeting of the Committee.
4. The Action Taken report on the Decision on the Agenda items of the 34rd Meeting placed at **Appendix-A** was discussed and approved.

AGENDA ITEMS AND DECISIONS

PROGRAMME & POLICY MATTERS :

Agenda No. 35.01 : Annual Action Plan of CARA for the FY 2023-2024.

1. The Adoption Regulations 2022 through its regulation 41(5) and 41(11) binds CARA to conduct training & capacity building programmes with all its stakeholders and carry out advocacy & awareness activities for promoting adoption. In pursuance of the same, the Annual Action plan of CARA for the FY 2023-2024 comprising of Annual Training Calendar and Media Plan has been prepared.
2. It may be noted that CARA has already started conducting virtual training for its stakeholders. Orientation programmes for Chief Medical Officers with the help of AIIMS expert has already been completed. The detailed action plan is placed at **Appendix-B**.

Decision : Approved.

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Agenda 35.02 : Referral to PAPs who have crossed maximum age limit.

3. The eligibility criteria of Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) in terms of age is stipulated in Regulation 5(4) and 5(9) of Adoption Regulations 2022 which is given below for reference :

Regulation 5(4) : The age of Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs), as on the date of registration, shall be counted for deciding the eligibility of Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) for children of different age groups. Maximum Composite Age for Married Couple is 110 years and for Single Parent is 55 years.

Regulation 5(9) : The seniority of the prospective adoptive parents who have not received a single referral within three years shall be counted from their date of registration except those who have crossed composite years of one hundred ten years.

4. The children as per the age criteria are referred to PAPs on the basis of "age" as on the date of registration. The provisions have been made in the designated CARINGS Portal as per the above laid down norms. It has been observed that in a number of cases, the children are referred to PAPs where maximum age limit i.e. 110 years in Married Couple and 55 years in Single Parent has been exceeded. Similarly, the PAPs beyond the maximum years of age are also able to reserve the child from direct reservation options under '7 days for RI/NR/OCI', 'Special Needs Children' and older children available from 'Immediate Placement'. The adoption of child by PAPs beyond the maximum age of 110/ 55 years contradicts with Adoption Regulations 2022.

5. It is proposed that the provision may be made in the CARINGS Portal to debar such PAPs for referral of normal child as well as direct reservation of child who have crossed the maximum age limit of 110/ 55 years.

6. Around 100 parents would be affected on implementation of the above.

Decision : The Committee is of the opinion that child/ children are referred to Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) on the basis of their age as on the date of registration which is categorically specified in Regulation 5(4) of Adoption Regulations 2022. Hence, the eligibility of PAPs cannot be denied. However, it may be ensured that the PAPs should get the referral of child/ children in the appropriate category specified in Regulation 5(4). Accordingly, Regulation 5(9) of Adoption Regulations 2022 is required to be amended.

Agenda 35.03 : Regarding designated online CARINGS Portal.

7. Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System (CARINGS) was developed in dotnet framework and has been maintained by NIC for both In-country and Inter-country adoptions in accordance with the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and Adoption Regulations notified

by the Government from time to time. It integrates the two database pertaining to the legally free children available with that of the prospective adoptive parents who register themselves online through the same system. The automated system matches the children available for adoption automatically with that of the choice given by parents.

8. The impact of CARINGS, maintained and managed by NIC, has been widely acknowledged at all levels as an instrument of innovation in child protection.

9. Meanwhile, it was decided to revamp the CARINGS Portal with latest technology stack in collaboration with AICTE that may remain operational for the next 15 years. Accordingly, the Steering Committee of the Authority in its 29th meeting held on 05-01-2022 (agenda 29.01) had approved the proposal of hiring of technical interns for revamping and redesigning of the portal with latest technology. Thereafter, the competent authority approved the engagement of four Developers for continuation of the project after 30-06-2022.

10. As on date, the NIC has sanctioned strength of following 5 (five) technical professionals for regular updation and modifications in the existing CARINGS portal (MSSQL, .NET) which is being engaged by CARA through GeM:

- (i) Solution Architect
- (ii) DBA (yet to be engaged)
- (iii) Senior Developer
- (iv) Developer
- (v) Junior Developer (yet to be engaged)

11. Simultaneously, the Technical Support Team (TSG) consists of 04 (four) technical professionals for revamping and redesigning of CARINGS portal with latest technology stack.

12. In view of above, NIC will take the full responsibility for ongoing and the revamped CARINGS. NIC will expeditiously accomplish the pending tasks and in this regard, a Meeting was held with NIC chaired by CEO (CARA) in the presence of Ms. Anubha Goyal (HoD) and Mr. Chandkiran Chokar (Sr. System Analyst) NIC. A copy of the Minutes is placed at Appendix-C for information.

Decision : Noted. It has also been informed to the Committee that server of CARINGS Portal is being migrated to AWS Cloud under Mission Vatsalya by NIC.

Agenda 35.04 : Updated information about CARINGS maintained by NIC.

13. The following tasks have been accomplished :

- (i) PAPs registration include State specific priority;
- (ii) Module for District Magistrate for issuing online adoption orders;

- (iii) Module for CMO for certifying the health status of child having special needs;
- (iv) Procedure for children adopted under the HAMA, 1956 by parents who desire to relocate the child abroad (Post 17.09.2021);
- (v) New provision for RI/NRI/OCI PAPs' for 7 days;
- (vi) Enabling DCPUs for conducting HSR and forwarding the online adoption application after verification on DM portal.
- (vii) Ineligibility of registered PAPs to adopt a normal child in case they have already two children;
- (viii) Debarring of PAPs for a period of one year not reserving a child out of requisite number of referrals (three referrals for RI/NRI/OCI PAPs and two referrals for Foreigner PAPs) ;
- (ix) Automatic execution of CARINGS referral cycle (twice a week from March 2, 2023 i.e. Tuesday at 11.00 am & Thursday at 12.00 pm.);
- (x) Disruption and dissolution module.

Upcoming applications :

- (i) CWC module
- (ii) Foster Adoption module
- (iii) New CARA website and Dashboard

Decision : Noted.

Agenda 35.05 : Decision regarding considering Transgender person as Adoptive parents.

14. The Eligibility criteria for prospective adoptive parents to adopt a child have been clearly defined in the Regulation 5 of Adoption Regulations, 2022.

15. It is mentioned that the Authority has been receiving requests from stakeholders for providing guidance over considering transgender person as adoptive parent. Recently, SARA, West Bengal has sought guidance in the matter of an In-country relative adoption, wherein PAP, Abdul Hannan Sekh (Transgender) has put application to adopt the daughter of Abdul's Sister, Surjahan Bibi from Murshidabad, WB.

16. Section 57 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children), Amendment Act, 2021 and Regulation 5 of the Adoption Regulation, 2022, clearly mentions the eligibility criteria for PAPs to adopt a child. However, Adoption Regulation, 2022 is silent on this issue.

17. Hence, the decision regarding the eligibility of the transgender person as an Adoptive parent may be taken.

Decision : Case may be forwarded to Ministry of Law & Justice for Legal Opinion.



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Agenda 35.06 : Fee for District Child Protection Unit for rendering services as required under the Regulations

18. As per Regulation 38 of Adoption Regulations 2022, the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) has also been entrusted to accomplish the task of Home Study Report or revalidation of Home Study Report.

Regulation 38(14) : DCPU to ensure that its professional staff namely, counselor, social worker or protection officer while conducting home study and verifies the prospective adoptive parent's required paperwork and the information they provided at the time of registration;

Regulation 38(15) : DCPU to complete the prospective adoptive parent's Study Report within two months of their registration and ensure that Home Study Report is revalidated before the expiry of three-year period, and if the prospective adoptive parents are not found eligible or suitable to adopt, all such Home Study Reports shall be referred to the State Adoption Resource Agency concerned for decision, and thereafter the reports shall be uploaded on the Designated Portal accordingly.

19. There is a provision of fee for Home Study Report, Adoption Fee, Post-adoption Follow-up Reports, revalidation of Home Study Reports for Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs) in Schedule-XV, with the direction to SAAs to adhere the standard utilization pattern. As far as fee for District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) is concerned, the Adoption Regulations 2022 is silent. In this regard, many queries have been raised by DCPUs. Both SAA and DCPU are performing the same duties and tasks, hence it is proposed that fee in accordance with Schedule-XV may be made applicable for SAA and DCPU both as most of the staff are contractual.

Decision : The case may be examined on the basis of additional work assigned to the DCPU and the same may be forwarded to MWCD for decision.

ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCE MATTERS :

Agenda No. 35.07 : Information to Steering Committee of CARA regarding delegation of financial powers up to Rs.15,000/- by MS&CEO, CARA to Dr. Jagannath Pati, Director (Prg.) (on contract basis), for sanction of an expenditure of miscellaneous or contingent nature.

20. Dr. Jagannath Pati has superannuated on 31/03/2023 from the post of Director (Prg.), CARA. At present, the post of Joint Director in CARA is also vacant. Dr. J. Pati has been appointed as Director (Prg.) on contract basis in CARA, by the Competent Authority vide Office Order No. CARA-EA041/1/2023-O/oJS(TG) (e-006233)/508 dated 05/04/2023. As per Para 9.3 of the Rules and Regulations of CARA, the Member Secretary & CEO of CARA may further delegate his power with the approval of the Steering

Committee to any Director/ Joint Director to sanction an expenditure of miscellaneous or contingent nature (**Appendix-D**). MS&CEO, CARA has approved and delegated the financial power up to Rs.15000/- to Director (Prg.) (on contract basis) till the regular Joint Director / Director (Prg.) is appointed. Steering Committee is now being informed of the same.

Decision : The case may be submitted to IFD through MWCD.

Agenda No. 35.08 : Approval for grant of Non-Productivity Linked Bonus (ad-hoc bonus) to the CARA employees.

21. As per the decision of the Steering Committee in its 34th meeting held on 15/02/2023 (Agenda No 34.14 refers), the file was sent to the Ministry for necessary consideration and the Ministry has returned the file with IFD's Remarks that "the matter should be left to the organisation to decide. There appears to be no reason for the Ministry's intervention in the matter".

22. In light of the above, Steering Committee may please approve disbursement of Non-Productivity Linked Bonus (ad-hoc bonus) to the CARA employees approx. 8-10 staff for the year 2021-22 including non-disbursed bonus of previous years (2019-20 & 2020-21).

Decision : Approved.

Agenda No. 35.09 : Information for extension of contract of CARA Help-Desk with enhancement of monthly salary/remuneration of help-desk tele executives by 5-10%.

23. As per the directions of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in the matter of Rajvinder Kaur Vs UOI to establish a 24 hours help-line, a help-desk was set up for functioning 12 hours (08:00 AM TO 08:00 PM) by hiring manpower through GeM, initially for one year, with the strength as Counsellors - 02 Nos. @ Rs.50,000/- PM each, Operational Manager - 01 No. @ Rs.45,000/- PM each, Tele Executives - 08 Nos. @ Rs.30,000/- PM each, MTS - 01 No. @ on Minimum Wages. Tenure of the help-desk is expiring on 30/06/2023. The same may be extended for further two years. An annual 5-10% increase in the salaries of all help desk staff may also be considered in the pattern of professionals recruited at CARA.

Decision : Proposal is to be submitted to IFD through MWCD.

Agenda No. 35.10 : Information for rationalisation and closure of Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and transfer of its building (B-12, Qutab Institutional Area, Near Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi - 110016) to CARA post closure of CSWB.

24. MWCD has issued OM No.- 85/02/2023-closure cell dated 04/05/2023, wherein it has been mentioned that the union cabinet in its meeting held on 06/04/2023, has approved the rationalisation and closure of Central Social

Welfare Board (CSWB) and the building of CSWB shall be transferred to CARA post closure of CSWB. A communication regarding transfer of building has been received from CSWB. CARA has nominated two officers to take over the papers of ownership of the said property from CSWB and, accordingly photocopies of registration papers & drawing of Samaj Kalyan Bhawan, B-12, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi have been received from CSWB.

25. A letter from MWCD to Secretary, MOHUA for necessary directions to DDA for transfer of ownership of CSWB building to CARA was sent vide OM issued from File No. 85/2/2023-Closure Cell dated 04/05/2023.

Steps to be follow:-

- a) Transfer of ownership to CARA by CSWB from DDA.
- b) Process for renovation of building by CARA.
- c) Assessment/Estimate of expenditure by agency (CPWD/NBCC) for renovation/setting up work stations.
- d) Proposal for budget allocation by MWCD for renovation of building. Finalising the tender process for award of work contract to agency by CARA.

Decision : Director, MWCD informed that the transfer of ownership to CARA by CSWB is in the process at the level of DDA.

Agenda No. 35.11 : Approval of Annual Accounts for the Financial Year 2022-23.

26. As per Section 69(3)(b) of the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the Steering Committee of CARA shall approve the Annual Accounts which has to be produced before the C&AG for audit every year. The Internal Audit of the books of Accounts has already been completed for the year 2022-2023 by the C&AG empanelled auditor.

27. The Annual Accounts/Financial Statement for the year 2022-23, which was prepared and certified by the Chartered Accountant (C&AG empanelled auditor), is placed at Appendix-E for the approval of the Steering Committee of CARA and for onward submission to C&AG for SAR Audit.

Decision : Approved. The issue of unspent balance in various offices was also discussed and the Committee has directed to pursue the matter rigorously with concerned offices/authorities for speedy recovery of the same.

Agenda No. 35.12 : Major activities performed since last Meeting of the Steering Committee which was held on 15.02.2023.

28. Details of major activities performed during the period from February, 2023 to June, 2023 are placed at Appendix-F.

Decision : The Committee expressed satisfaction about the activities undertaken by CARA.

Agenda No. 35.13 (Additional Agenda) : Appointment of Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2023-24.

29. Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) was registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and was made an Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in 18th March, 1999. The subject matter relating to Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) stands transferred to newly created Ministry of Women & Child Development from Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment vide MWCD's Communication No. 17-26/2005-CW dated 28/02/2006. Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) has now been attained the status of a Statutory Body of the Ministry of Women & Child Development under Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2015 with effect from 15th January, 2016.

30. CARA maintained its books of accounts from the financial year 2000-2001 onwards. M/s. Garg Juneja & Company was appointed as internal auditor for the financial year 2000-2001 from the panel obtained from Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) with the approval of JS&FA of the Ministry. The term of M/s. Garg Juneja & Co. (internal auditor) was further extended for the financial years 2002-2003 to 2007-2008 with the approval of the Management Committee. Thereafter, M/s. Atul K. Garg & Co. was appointed for the financial years 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 from the panel of C&AG with the approval of AS & FA of the Ministry. The term was further extended for the years 2011-2012 to 2013-2014 with the approval of the Management Committee. After that, M/s. Virmani Roy & Kutty C.A was appointed as internal auditor of CARA for the financial years 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 from the panel obtained from C&AG. Thereafter, M/s. Gopal Chopra & Associates, was appointed as internal auditor of CARA for the financial years 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 from the panel obtained from C&AG. Previously, M/s. Sanjay Gulab & Co., was appointed as internal auditor of CARA for the Financial years 2020-2021 to 2022-2023 from the panel obtained from C&AG.

31. IFD of the Ministry observed that CARA is an autonomous organization; the appointment of internal auditor may be decided with the approval of their Management Committee. There is no need of IFD concurrence in the matter.

32. As per the C&AG CA empanelment list, CARA sent a quotation invitation letter to the following C&AG empaneled CA firms:-

- (i) **Sanjay Gulab & Co.**, 2944/3, Shyam Chembar, Top Floor, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-110055.
- (ii) **DSA & Co.**, SF-1, Second Floor, Rishabh Ipex Mall, IP Extension (Opp. Max Hospital) Patpar Ganj, Delhi-110092.
- (iii) **Manoj Vatsal & Co.**, 303, 3rd Floor, 209, South Ex Plaza-2, Masjid Moth, Near NDSE-II, New Delhi-110049.

- (iv) **Atul V K Jain & Associates**, B-45/A, Somdutt Chambers-I, Bhikaji Camma Place, New Delhi.
- (v) **R P Narang & Co.**, 709, 7th Floor, Aggarwal Cyber Plaza 1, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura, New Delhi.

33. All the above five firms were asked to submit the profile of the firm with Internal Audit fee. Out of the five firms, three sealed envelope quotations were received with necessary required documents. A Committee consisting of Mr. Ram Saran, IFO, Ms. Poonam Sharma, DD and Mr. Vinit Kumar Upadhyay, AD scrutinise the applications and recommended to appoint M/s. Manoj Vatsal & Co., 303, 3rd Floor, 209, South Ex Plaza-2, Masjid Moth, Near NDSE-II, New Delhi-110049, as Internal Auditor on a fees of Rs. 49,000/- per year excluding taxes as applicable, being the lowest quoted (Appendix-G).

34. Steering Committee may please approve to appoint M/s, Manoj Vatsal & Co., 303, 3rd Floor, 209, South Ex Plaza-2, Masjid Moth, Near NDSE-II, New Delhi-110049, for the financial year 2023-24 on an annual audit fee of Rs. 49,000/- (Forty Nine Thousand Only) plus taxes as applicable from time to time. The contract may be further extended for another three years basis on the performance of the firm and approval of the competent authority.

Decision : Approved. It was also decided that the tenure may be initially for one year and further extended up to three years. In future, the issue should be decided by HoD of CARA.

35. **Other issues discussed :**

Related to Referral

- (i) Referral cycle for normal children below the age of 5 years may remain for 60 days & normal children above the age of 5 years & siblings may remain in referral cycle for 30 days on net time basis (by striking off number of days the child was reserved and later released by PAPs) [Regulation 8 (a) & (b)].
- (ii) Simultaneously, children should also be available and visible in '7-Days for RI/NRI/OCI PAPs' Tab on net time basis (by striking off number of days the child was reserved and later released by PAPs) [Regulation 8 (c)].
- (iii) Provision shall be made for NRI/OCI PAPs to view the child referred to them with her/his profile along with children available through 30/60 days referral cycle or through direct reservation under '7 days for RI/NRI/OCI PAPs', 'Special Needs' and 'Immediate Placement'. However, the adoption process shall be completed through the AFAA/CA/IDM concerned.

It has also been advised that NIC may be consulted for technical viability for the above provisions.

Related to Service Matters

- (i) The issue of Provident Fund in respect of employees of CARA was also discussed. The Committee was apprised that Employees Provident Fund (EPF) was extended to the employees of CARA. Secretary, MWCD emphasized that willingness of employees w.r.t. National Pension System (NPS) may be obtained and applicability of NPS as well as its modus operandi may be explored with the concerned authorities.



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List of Participants in the Thirty-Fifth (35th) Meeting of the Steering Committee of Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) held on 11th July, 2023 (Tuesday) at 03:00 p.m. in the Conference Room/Hall of MWCD, Room No. 602, 6th Floor, A-Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

1. Sh. Indevar Pandey, Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi – Chairperson (Ex-officio).
2. Sh. Nitishwar Kumar, Additional Secretary & Financial Adviser, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi – Member (Ex-officio).
3. Sh. Lingraj Panda, Director (SW), Department of Women & Child Development, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar – 751030, Odisha [Representing State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA), Odisha] – Member (**through VC mode**).
4. Sh. Vimal Kumar Tyagi, Sewa Bharti Madhya Bharat, Matruchhaya (Shishu Kalyan Kendra), Swami Ramtirth Nagar, Opp. Maida Mill, Hoshangabad Road, Bhopal – 462011, Madhya Pradesh [Representing NGO run Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA)] – Member (**through VC mode**).
5. Ms. Sangeeta Bangiwar, H.No. 103, Mont Vert Tropez, Wakad, Pune-411057, Maharashtra [Adoptive Parent] – Member (**through VC mode**).
6. Ms. Shirali Radhakrishan Tyabji, Room No. 49, India International Centre, 40, Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi - 110003 [Adoptee] – Member (**through VC mode**).
7. Prof. Poonam Saxena, Vice Chancellor, National Law University, Jodhpur – 342304, Rajasthan [Professor] – Member (**through VC mode**).
8. Ms. Tripti Gurha, Joint Secretary & CEO, CARA, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi – Member Secretary (Ex-officio).

Special Invitee(s) :

1. Dr. Jagannath Pati, Director (Programme), CARA, R.K. Puram, New Delhi.
2. Sh. Navendra Singh, Director, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
3. Smt. Anubha Goyal, Sr. Tech. Director, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi (**through VC mode**).
4. Sh. Manoj Kumar Prabhat, Under Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

Other Officer(s) of MWCD :

1. Sh. Alex P. Thomas, Deputy Secretary (Finance), Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
2. Sh. Rajanish Kumar Jha, Under Secretary (IFD and Budget), Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
