

New medical college for Shillong

OUR CORRESPONDENT



Commissioner and secretary, health department, Donald P. Wahlang (left), signs the agreement with KPC Group promoter Kali Pradip Chaudhuri in Shillong on Friday, as chief minister Mukul Sangma looks on. Telegraph picture

Shillong, Nov. 2: The Meghalaya health department today signed a concessionaire agreement with a private firm to develop the Shillong Medical College and Hospital — the state's first medical college-cum-hospital — which is likely to be completed four years from now.

KPC Group, Calcutta, will develop the Rs 250-crore college-cum-hospital under the public-private partnership (PPP) mode at the existing Reid Chest TB Hospital in the Upper Mawprem area within the city.

The group was chosen from among five companies that bid for the mega project.

Over 100 firms had expressed interest in the project, but KPC Medical College, Jadavpur (Calcutta), a subsidiary of the KPC Group, emerged the partner through a competitive bidding process.

The state health department had engaged the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Washington as consultants to prepare the groundwork for the project.

According to the proposal, the college will have 100 seats for MBBS studies (where 40 seats will be reserved for Meghalaya students), 500 hospital beds, and another 100 beds for a super-speciality centre.

While it is expected that the first batch of students will be enrolled from May 2017 onwards, at least 250 of the hospital beds will be completed by 2016.

The entire structure will be ready by 2020.

Under the agreement, the state government will have to shell out at least Rs 100 crore towards the project.

The amount will be disbursed within a period of 12 years.

KPC Group promoter Kali Pradip Chaudhuri, who was born at the H. Gordon Roberts Hospital here, turned nostalgic when he spoke at the signing ceremony held at Hotel Pinewood here in the presence of Meghalaya chief minister Mukul Sangma.

“Having been born here, it is a dream for me to do something in Shillong,” Chaudhuri, who had spent almost 35 years in the US, said.

He also showered praises on the manner in which the bidding process was held.

“The International Finance Corporation held the bidding process in a very transparent way. We do not see this every time in India. It was one of the best bidding processes,” he added.

At the same time, Chaudhuri admitted that the task would not be an easy one, especially when it comes to recruiting faculty for the college.

“I will require significant help from the government and the public,” he said.

Although the timeline for enrolling students has been set for 2017, Sangma, during the course of his speech, appealed to the private partner to ensure that the first batch of medical students is enrolled by 2016.

Stating that the health landscape of the Northeast needs improvement, the chief minister said super-speciality centres are required in the region to address the problem of patients who are required to move outside for treatment.

He said the Megha Health Insurance Scheme will be launched soon, under which all families in Meghalaya will be provided insurance to the tune of Rs 90,000.

“Unlike in the US, in India, hospitals, except the government-run hospitals, first ask the family members of patients to deposit money before treatment can be administered. Those who cannot meet the monetary requirements simply surrender to the disease. That is how we lose many lives,” Sangma said, adding that the insurance scheme will help patients in not surrendering to the disease they are afflicted with.

Another medical college will also be coming up near Tura in West Garo Hills, but this project will be fully funded by the state government.

Source:

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