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URBANIZATION, SUSTAINABILITY & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

Urbanization in India has shown a phenomenal growth after independence, because of pressure of growing population, rapid industrialization, rural to urban migration, and the growing trend of modernization. About one-third of India is said to be urbanized, though the degree of urbanization varies widely among the states of the country. The prediction is that in a few decades, half of India's population will come to live in urban areas. Rapid urbanization in India during the last four decades has resulted in unprecedented growth of cities, forcing the inhabitants to live in congested and polluted neighbourhoods. As per the Census of India estimates, approximately 20% of urban households do not have access to safe drinking water, and more than 50% are deprived of proper sewerage facilities. Less than 25% of the city dwellers have access to electricity, and the drainage system for rain water disposal covers only 66% of the population. Besides the above, there is housing shortage as well as inadequate transportation and other basic infrastructure. No democracy is sustainable, if large sections of its people remain poor, underfed, uneducated, unhealthy, with poor resources and assets, human and material, to obtain a decent living standard. This is so, because if development leads to urbanization, it also brings in its wake, the evils of urban poverty and environmental degradation. The biggest challenge of modern age therefore, is to make development sustainable, by creating a governmental system that promotes, facilitates and formulates policies, aimed at judicious utilization of development resources. Thus development, which was earlier measured only in economic terms, has now come to include social, financial and ecological dimensions, along with effective governance. The growing scale and complexity of administrative problems and the expanding role of the state in promoting and guiding development, led to the conceptualization of the administrative process involved in development activities as "Development Administration". According to Donald Stone, "development administration is the bundling of all the elements and resources into a concerted effort to achieve agreed upon goals. It is the continuous cycle of formulating, evaluating and implementing interrelated plans, policies, programmes, projects, activities and other measures, to reach established development objectives in a scheduled time sequence." Thus development administration is the best possible vehicle which can be suitably geared up to effectively deal with problems of sustainability caused by large-scale urbanization.

Urbanization, largely a twentieth-century phenomenon, means transformation from traditional rural economies to a modern industrial one. Although some cities in the world did exist in antiquity, there is little evidence of widespread urbanization in the early years of civilization. Urbanization is a phenomenon which is a part and parcel of economic development. With