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FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EDITOR

Prof. Nishith Rai

According to estimates, urban India today contributes to 58% of India's GDP and by 2030, urbanization is expected to touch around 40% and urban India is expected to contribute to around 70% of the country's GDP. India must, thus, improve urban sector productivity to achieve objectives of national economic development. This translates into a need for better service provision and governance, and bringing the urban informal sector into the mainstream of development process.

The recent McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) Report on 'India's Urban Awakening-Building Inclusive Cities, Sustaining Economic Growth' also highlights similar concerns noting the substantive infrastructure investment required to take India to the next level of economic growth. This study has suggested four sources of funding urban infrastructure, namely, monetizing land assets, collecting higher property taxes and user charges, PPP and formula-based government spending. It is needless to add that these reforms will need political will, vocal citizens and active participation of the private sector.

It may be added that adequate finance is necessary to ensure satisfactory standards of infrastructure and services; governance systems determine not only the allocative and technical efficiency of spending, but also the responsiveness and accountability with which services are actually delivered. Thus good policies, efficient and responsive local governance systems and sound arrangements to finance public services are critical elements in sustainable urban development. They shape the nature and quality of public services provided, as well as the structure of incentives and accountability.

This bi-annual issue of the journal *Urban Panorama* is a modest attempt of our Regional Centre to place some ideas, views and experiences on some of the significant aspects of urban management and urban transformation before its esteemed readers.

December, 2010

Nishith Rai Director

FROM THE DESK OF EDITOR

Over the last few years, the Government of India as well as State Governments have undertaken a number of innovative initiatives to strengthen service delivery and governance in urban local bodies (ULBs). The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), National Urban Sanitation Policy, setting up of a High Powered Expert Committee on Urban Infrastructure, Centres of Excellence in Urban Development, Public Private-Partnership (PPP), the importance accrued by the 13th Central Finance Commission (CFC) to ULBs, the recently launched McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) Report, just to name a few, prove that there is a strong realization to improve urban India so that it may achieve fast and sustainable economic development. Hence this issue of the journal Urban Panorama is an attempt to cover some of these important themes.

Prof. Kumkum Kishore, in her article *Urbanization and Some Social Problems* traces the evolution of urbanism along with the features of social life on the urban mode of living associated with it from the Roman Civilization to the Second World War and onwards. The urban way of life and the social problems arising due to urbanization in capitalist and socialist countries have also been discussed at great length. It has also been pointed out that urbanization is a worldwide phenomenon and it is irreversible, and thus it exercises a growing influence on all aspects of the life of a society and its values.

Urban local bodies are vested with functions delegated under the municipal legislation to them and these include regulatory as well as development functions. The most important functions relate to water supply, sewerage, sanitation, solid waste management, maintenance of roads and streets, parks, playgrounds, etc. as well as street lighting. All these functions and the principles of public-private-partnership (PPP) in the provision of municipal services with special reference to such projects in India have been dealt by Dr. Anjuli Mishra in the article *Management of Urban Services*.

A study based on primary sources on Acquisition of Agricultural Land, Compensation and Livelihood Issues in Urban Fringe of Lucknow Metropolis has been elaborately dealt with by Prof. S.S.A. Jafri et.al. The article deals with various aspects relating to economic activity, land acquisition and compensation, besides the utilization of compensation money by households in the selected areas. It also suggests the need for protection of prime agricultural land and minimizing of urban regional disparity by controlling landless and marginal farmers of rural-urban-fringe.

The Government of India is promoting the concept of inclusive growth, which has been given great importance in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. It may be added that while adopting the Mission Approach in 2005, the Government of India also targeted slum-free and poverty-free cities with inclusive growth. The Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) for the slum dwellers and urban poor also envisages a slum free India through encouraging states and forward to achieving the above objective have been discussed in detail in the write-up Inclusive Urban Development in India by Dr. A.K. Singh.

The article on *Civil Society and Good Governance: Prospects and Perspectives* by Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhartiya examines the core ingredients as well as the dimensions of good governance. He also explains the developmental effects of governance on individuals, along with the institutional effects on the functions of civil society. In the end, attributes of good governance.

Elaborating on the issues relating to financial management in municipal government, Mr. Gaurav Sinha in his article on *Financial Management in Urban Local Bodies in India: A Critical Assessment* has stressed on the need for a mandate for financial management and the enabling legislative framework for the same. He has also referred to budget planning, budget execution and accounting, besides management information systems, since these are important in delivering urban services effectively.

Prof. A. Malla Reddy, in his article *Federating Self Help Groups in Urban Poverty Alleviation Program – Chittoor Municipality Experience*, has explained the role of community structures and the need for federating them in the amelioration of urban poverty. He has explained the relationship of self help groups (SHGs) and slum level federations (SLFs) and the formation of town level federation (TLF) in Chittoor Municipality of Andhra Pradesh, and their respective role in alleviating urban poverty.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations relating to the eradication of urban poverty in the state of Uttar Pradesh, with particular reference to the city of Lucknow, have been discussed at length by Dr. Akankssha Nigam in her article *Urban Poverty & Health Parameters in the Wake of Millennium Development Goals*. The situation analysis relating to maternal and child health and mortality, and the various means of achieving MDGs due to various inequalities, besides other important issues and their effective solutions, have been discussed in the article.

A Comparative Study of Urban Administration During the Maurya and Gupta Periods has been discussed by Dr. S.K. Jaiswal. He has described the organization and functions of various committees which were associated with the administration of the urban areas during that time, along with the reforms which were undertaken to lead the governance of cities towards a positive direction for the general welfare of its citizens.

A Case Study on Role of CDS in Special Child Labour Rehabilitation Centres in Gwalior Nagar Nigam has been discussed by Dr. Kamal Kumar Singh and Ms. Divya Lyall. They have also discussed the concept of convergence and the participation of DUDA, ULB and CDS in the working of these centres.

We hope that the various articles discussing some of the important and thoughtprovoking issues relating to the urban sector would benefit our readers.

December, 2010

Richa Varmani Jt. Director

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I, Nishith Rai, declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Nishith Rai

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