CONSTITUTIONAL 74th AMENDMENT

The 74th Amendment to the Indian constitution is the most critical structural change in Urban management. The twelfth Schedule, which lists the functions that may be assigned to municipalities contains item such as Urban planning including town planning, planning for economic and social development, public health, sanitation, conservancy and solid waste management, slum upgradation and improvement, protection of the environment and promotion of ecological aspects. It also deals with democratic decentralisation in Urban areas and devolution of power to Urban local governments to make them truly representative.

However the functional domain of municipal bodies has been systematically encroached upon over the years and a number of their responsibilities assigned to other agencies such as development authorities, water supply and sewage boards, slum clearance and improvement boards - agencies which are not responsible to the people but to the state.

The most effective way of increasing public participation in Urban planning and management would be strengthen the hands of the agency representing the people, namely the Municipal authority. Other means include fostering of constructive partnerships with non-governmental entities and community based groups and also public-private participation in provision and maintenance of Urban services and infrastructure.

In other words, the entire aspects of Urban planning and management must be truly vested with the local elected bodies and the community.