CHAPTER - VI
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PROBLEMS AND PROPECTS

One of the most striking trends of modern economics, during the last century has been the increasing concentration of people and their economic activities in a chosen area, usually referred to as the process of urbanization. The problems of urban areas are myriad, chief among them being housing, water supply, drainage, sewerage, air, water and land pollution, congestion, transport, et al. Urbanization has led to innumerable economic problems also. It encourages the production and consumption of non-essential goods, this results in a diversion of scarce economic resources away from the production of essential goods necessary for the economic development. The consumption of semi-luxuries and luxuries is promoted at the cost of necessary goods and services, leading to many social problems in urban areas particularly a breakdown of traditional values and behavior. It precipitates problems such as cut throat competition, juvenile delinquency, crime, robbery, prostitution, alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide, mental diseases, social unrest and political instability.

The problems vary from country to country and from city to city. No city has to cope with all the problems in an intense form at any one moment. But in general there are sufficient similarities
between the problems which have arisen in different countries. Unprecedented industrial activity in urban areas with attendant employment opportunities and services have tremendous 'magnetic' attraction and lures the rural population resulting in large scale exodus. Besides, the general poverty in rural areas and resulting indebtedness is another compulsive reason for migration. The limited capacity of urban areas however is not able to create enough employment opportunities and absorb the rapid rate of growth of the urban labor force. As a counter step governments today are taking initiatives towards decentralization of industries and locating them in small towns and rural areas to provide employment. The National Rural Employment Program (N.R.E.P.) launched in 1980, and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (R.L.E.G.P.) launched in (1983-84) were model programs aimed at containing migration of rural people. Though a step in the right direction, the schemes have not been able to generate employment for the rural poor, hence migration continues unchecked. The conditions of many new industrial towns that have emerged due to setting up of industries in backward regions are worse. The township outside the immediate environs of the main factories and their colonies are in the form of large degenerated slums. Ex: Bhilai, Korba and Hausur.
The share of agricultural employment in the total employment of working force has been reduced, from 72 per cent in 1961 to 68 per cent in 1981 (Census of India). This has been further reduced to 64 per cent by 1991. In the year 2001, 180 to 200 million people were added to the rural hundred million people who have already migrated to urban areas in search of jobs. At present the share of the secondary sector in employment is being gradually reduced. Even the tertiary sector is unable to absorb all the migrants. This has created serious economic and social problems.

In a developing nation like India, huge investments are required for the development of proper and adequate facilities of urban infrastructure including public utilities and housing. The problems of urban infrastructure are increasing at an alarming rate. It becomes difficult for a country like India to provide adequate housing facilities, electric supply, water supply, sanitation, transport and communication facilities to an ever increasing urban population. This coupled with poor and dishonest administration and total lack of civic sense has resulted in urban degradation.

Like all urban centres in Karnataka or any state of India, Hubli-Dharwad cities are bearing the brunt of unplanned growth and lack of basic amenities and infrastructural facilities like proper road and air services.
In the last 40 years Hubli-Dharwad has had a population boom, a jump from 2.5 lakhs to 7.8 lakhs. It increased from 5.27 lakhs in 1981 to 6.7 lakhs in 1991 and in 2001 it already reached 7.86 lakh mark, a 68.41 per cent increase in four decades. The projected figures for Hubli-Dharwad in 2011 is 9.27 lakhs, if birth and migrations continue at the present accelerated rate.

This phenomenal growth of population is the main hurdle in the smooth and orderly development of Hubli-Dharwad. The increase in facilities is not commensurate with increase in population leading to over crowding and unauthorized constructions, with surroundings that are filthy and unhygienic and a general breakdown of urban system.

The citizens of Hubli-Dharwad like everywhere else face problems of bad roads, irregular and insufficient water supply, shortage of public taps, frequent power cuts, absence of sufficient street lighting, obsolete U.G.D. in many wards which are 40 years old, lack of foot paths and others.

PROBLEMS:

Water supply:

People in Hubli-Dharwad twin cities face an added problem viz., the supply of potable tap water. Municipal water is available only once in 8 or 9 days forcing the people to depend on bore wells. Due to irregular power supply the bore wells remain nonfunctional.
most of the time and many of them do not function and are need of urgent repair. It would not be an exaggeration to say, that the Municipal administration with in-fights and inefficiency has not been able to meet these changes.

**Housing problem:**

Most of the old residential areas in Hubli-Dharwad cities are uninhabitable. They are built with poor quality building materials and have very poor sanitary conditions and drainage system. There is lack of drainage facilities in the new extension areas also.

Hubli-Dharwad cities have the second largest number of slums in Karnataka. Many of them have come up on the tank beds or near gutters. There are no proper public toilet facilities in these slums. Karnataka Government has recently taken up the work of building toilets even for individual houses by providing subsidy and other help. The main problem however is lack of space.

Frequent drought conditions in the surrounding villages have forced small farmers to migrate to the twin cities, some of the development activities associated with the growth centre project at Belur and industrial zones at Tarihal and Gokul, and others have displaced many people from those areas adding to the already over crowded slum population.
**Lack of sanitation facilities:**

Rapid expansion into the villages/suburban characteristics of outlying rural units and lack of underground drainage contribute to the problem of maintaining cleanliness.

More than 30 per cent inhabited areas do not have underground drainage. In Dharwad particularly the drainage system has been posing insurmountable problems due to the topography consisting of high ridges and deep valleys creating problems for connection at a single point for disposal.

The development of housing layout in the twin cities is haphazard. The sewage is let into a natural valley which is partly lined and partly unlined at many places creating cess pools.

There is lack of sufficient public toilets in the twin cities; where they exist in the earlier developed areas they choke due to lack of proper maintenance.

**Land pollution:**

There are not enough dustbins to collect waste and many of the citizens do not have civic sense and throw the waste along the roads. The labor is insufficient to clear the garbage and there are not enough vehicles to clear and transport the garbage to the disposal sites. Pigs roam around freely and the mosquito menace is rampant. The above are also a result of administrative deficiencies.
**Air pollution:**

In the twin cities of Hubli-Dharwad small scale manufacturing units are scattered. Vehicles—two wheelers or four wheelers have more than quadrupled in the past two decades and have increased pollution.

**Marketing problems:**

In Hubli-Dharwad cities subsidiary commercial centres are not available. There is no proper distribution of commercial functions in the central area. The whole sale shops are located in narrow congested streets, without loading and unloading facilities. There is lack of space for parking of vehicles. The problems are compounded in the rainy season with markets in knee deep slush making it difficult to display or purchase items.

**Roads and Transport:**

National Highway No.4 passing through the city is not well defined and orderly in the southern part of the city. As such, goods traffic through the city is creating traffic hazards. The highway is well laid but roads are in very bad condition inside city areas. Most of the internal roads in built up areas are very narrow, and unfit for vehicular traffic. Lack of co-ordination among the various departments of Government leads to frequent digging of even well laid roads—once for cables, once for water pipes, again for teak repairs and the like.
The number of buses and their frequency do not meet the requirement of large number of commuters. There is good bus service from K.S.R.T.C. and private concerns between Hubli and Dharwad, but the services are inadequate on the city roads within Hubli and Dharwad. Most of the extension areas and level crossing have traffic bottle necks. There are no separate paths for pedestrians, the free moment of animals on all the busy roads hamper the movement and create traffic hazards. Where there are foot paths they are chocked by unauthorized shops adding to the congestion on the already congested roads.

**Tele communication:**

Compared to other cities in Karnataka Hubli- Dharwad have probably the worst telecommunication system. Faulty or excess billing and poor services are other problems.

**Electricity Supply and Lighting problems:**

Electricity cuts are frequent and there seems to be no fixed time or duration for these power cuts. There are no proper electricity connections to the newly built-up areas. There is a lack of proper street lighting. High mast lamps at street corners are also not adequate.
Manufacturing units and congestion:

Small scale Industries are scattered in the city, without proper zoning (except in industrial estates). They have created a lot of congestion in the city area.

Parks and play grounds:

In Hubli-Dharwad cities people are facing the problems of adequate parks and play grounds for relaxation.

Poverty and social unrest:

When many industrial units have closed down for some reason or the other in the twin cities like Bhorakha Textiles, Mahadev textiles, Mysore Kirloskar Electric Industries, it results in large scale unemployment. A negative result is increase in crime rate and unrest.

These major and other problems have to be tackled on a war footing.

Suggestions and solutions:

1) Proper management of water supply which includes the repair and maintenance of pipes.

2) Provision of more houses for slum dwellers.

3) Immediate proper disposal and treatment of solid waste.

4) Provision of better drainage system
5) Provision of 'sulabh' toilets in the city area and maintaining the cleanliness.

6) Awareness camps to educate the citizen on the need for better environment and importance of clean surroundings.

7) Widening of roads and designing them scientifically.

8) Provision of foot paths for pedestrians along the busy roads.

9) Truck terminals should be located on the outskirts of the city area.

10) There should be separate routes to goodshed from the city area.

11) Provision of specific parking space for the vehicles.

12) Stringent rules for carrying out pollution test have been promulgated but they need to be strengthened particularly with regard to government vehicles.

13) The market areas in the city should be maintained properly.

14) More public health care units to be started in different parts of the city.

15) Air services should be provided with Bangalore and other near by cities.

16) Provision of more play grounds and parks.
17) Preservation of existing tanks and developing them into recreation centres.

18) Social forestry programs to be taken up along the roads and in the compounds of public buildings.

Prospects:

Hubli-Dharwad cities have bright future prospects for further economic development and urbanization. But the cities may have to pay a very heavy price with increased pollution, congestion and shortages.

1) Karnataka government has identified Hubli-Dharwad as growth centre and land for this has been acquired at Belur and it is being developed, besides the Tarihal and Gokul industrial estates. These measures will help in generating employment opportunities and economic development.

2) The Information Technological Park which was recently inaugurated at Hubli is the only full fledged state-of-the art facility in North Karnataka with all the necessary infrastructure facilities. The Software Technology Park of India has also established an earth station, this helps in providing data communication facilities for the software units, when these are fully developed they will make Hubli the second important IT centre in Karnataka.
3) Besides two universities the Karnataka University and the University of Agricultural sciences, there are various other training institutes of technology, engineering and medical sciences. There are also facilities for training in entrepreneurship, management and small scale industries. There are also plans to develop a Science City at Dharwad. These would go a long way in giving Hubli-Dharwad a standing and recognition of their own.

4) There are good doctors, specialists and private clinics and nursing homes. Recently a multispeciality hospital has been opened to cater to the population of the twin cities and surrounding areas.

5) Establishment of the Headquarters of South-West Central Railway and the development of air port and regular air service will further help in developing the cities to make them economically viable. These would also give a boost to commerce and business.