CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The foregoing analysis of the problems of organization, structure, personnel, finances, and functions reveals that urban local self-government have not been able to play their role properly and efficiently as they are in a weak position. Although the system of local self government in this area is basically a British legacy, there has been continuous erosion in the status of local government ever since the Britishers left. The plight of local bodies in India is so dismal that their inefficiency has become proverbial, creating extreme discontent and apathy. Financially weak and other problems like incompetent personnel, excessive political interference in day to day working, widespread corruption, nepotism and favouritism etc. are rampant- a fact which has almost paralysed administration. The constant process of reforming, reconstructing, innovating to strengthen local government in England has unfortunately not been emulated in India. Conversely, encroachment by other government departments into municipal functional domain, creation of urban development authorities and special purpose authorities in major cities and towns have also taken over some legitimate municipal functions.

Thus some of the leading issues of
urban local governments are outmoded organizational structures, erosion of municipal functions, a weak executive and inadequate resource base etc. Functioning of municipal bodies have been found far from satisfactory. Various study teams appointed by the government from time to time have made suggestions for effecting improvement in organizational structure, financial resources and manpower resources of municipal bodies to enable them to adequately meet rising expectations of the fast growing urban public. This has however, so far actually resulted only in incremental improvement, largely due to delay in implementation—a factor arising from politico-administrative inertia and stringency of funds along with illiteracy, poverty and a weak civic consciousness of most urban residents.

The present research was undertaken with the view to study the problems of municipal administration in general with special reference to the problems of Delhi and Shimla Municipal Corporations. The focus was on organization, personnel, finance and performance of the two corporations. Empirical and non-empirical method were extensively employed.

The findings of the study are based on analysis of secondary data collected with the help of various documents. Primary data was collected through the Social Survey Technique.

Major and sub-major hypothesis were
formulated. All these were validly tested against data. Thus, the validity of these hypotheses has been examined and they were found correct.

Analysis of Organizational Structures of Shimla and Delhi Municipal Corporations

While studying the organizational structures of both the corporations, it was observed that the existing management structure and the staffing pattern is defective in both the corporations. Inadequacy of field staff is a common factor. Though Delhi Municipal Corporation has more than one lakh employees on its roll, still their number is far from numerous enough to cater to the needs of growing population. This naturally hampers efficiency. Even though both corporations add to the total number of their staff annually, the recruitment is far below the actual need. Shimla Municipal Corporation is overidden by the stagnation of staff for many years as it has never endeavoured to recruit in numbers adequate to cope with the city's fast increasing population. Numerous vacancies lie unfilled. However, no steps have yet been taken to fill the same, a scenario resulting in administrative inefficiency and mismanagement.

Deliberative and Executive Wings

The deliberative wing of Delhi Municipal Corporation is more adequately staffed than that of Shimla Municipal Corporation. The phenomenon of
councillors having politicised municipal government is widespread. It has bolstered and effected democratisation as councillors are more accessible than higher authorities. This makes for quick redressal of public grievances.

Commissioner

The municipal commissioner form of local government has not worked well in India, resulting in disharmony, friction and even conflict between the deliberative and executive organs. While studying the executive authority it was observed that the Shimla Municipal Commissioner does not take whole-hearted interest in the Corporation’s affairs. The commissioner was unable to throw light on the corporation’s problems and general procedures taking the plea that he had recently taken charge. This might be due to fact that he is generally an officer deputed by the state government, that too for a very short term. By the time he familiarises himself with the job he is usually transferred. This factor also makes municipal administration inefficient. Conversely, Delhi Municipal Commissioner is highly responsive, despite no clearcut demarcation of powers.

Since all the executive powers of corporation are vested in the municipal commissioner, mayors are the just nominal heads of deliberative wing. The mayors of these corporations lack executive powers. They find themselves helpless in solving municipal
problems. Thus most mayors favour a mayor-in-council form of local government in order to formulate policies independently and implement these in collaboration with the respective municipal council. The mayor has overall responsibility for the administration of the city even though the term of commissioner ends. Thus the division of powers as at present, impedes rather than accelerate the functioning. In comparison to mayor of Shimla Municipal Corporation, it was observed that mayor of Delhi has residual powers. In administrative matters his role is one of an advisor. But the mayor of Shimla Municipal Corporation is the real manager of city affairs.

Standing Committee.

The standing committee of Delhi Municipal Corporation is more powerful than that of Shimla Municipal Corporation. In Delhi Municipal Corporation, it is the appointing-cum-disciplinary authority, which deals with the corporation's day-to-day activities. Even the budget, before its final approval in the house, is presented to the standing committee by the commissioner. Whereas in Shimla Municipal Corporation, the budget is directly presented by the commissioner to the house for approval, it not being considered necessary to present it to the standing committee. Thus the standing committee of Shimla Municipal Corporation is not given as significant a
Problems of Municipal Personnel Administration

Four general problems of Personnel Administration were studied during the research. First, the Recruitment: The problem of proper recruitment is much more acute in Shimla Municipal Corporation than in Delhi Municipal Corporation. This is mainly because of lack of autonomous rules and regulations. This forces the criterion of state rules and regulations on the Shimla Municipal Corporation. Chronic shortage of staff fuelled by extremely limited recruitment forms a vicious circle. As such, stagnation is the norm that has prevailed, prevails and is likely to continue to prevail. Thus the corporation's performance is abysmal and thereby necessarily inefficient.

Municipal personnel administration needs to be restructured due to many structural deficiencies reflected in recruitment methods. Delhi Municipal Corporation fares much better in this respect as the personnel system is based upon UPSC's rules and regulations. Shimla Municipal Corporation recruits through state employment exchange, a process marked by a high degree of political interference. The municipal personnel largely opine that recruitments should be free from the practice of deputation to the top positions as deputationists generally lack of knowledge of the
relevant job. Considering all these factors, disfunctionality results. Second, the Promotion: Exam based promotions were highly favoured by personnel in both the corporations, the majority of employees being little satisfied with the prevalent promotion procedures. The fact that promotions depend upon vacancies makes present system over-ridden by stagnation. This is also part and parcel of the practice of deputation and, alongwith all the factors mentioned lowers the morale of the regular staff. Thus the system of deputation was mostly disfavoured by the employees. Third, the Training: urban problems in India are multiplying in number, variety and complexity. Municipal administrations, which manage urban affairs, are therefore, woefully lacking in their capacity to cope. The weak infrastructure is already crumbling, and the lack of training for municipal employees is a predominant feature in this house of cards. This is true in both Delhi and Shimla Municipal Corporations.

Municipalities rarely attract talented people as such bodies offer little in terms of job satisfaction and remuneration. Relatedly, trainers and training organizations have thus, by and large, neglected urban affairs. The reasons for this are lack of 'desire for improvement (1)amongst people who run municipal affairs (2)amongst municipal organizations (3)amongst public organizations, the municipal
administration gets low priority. Though there are no training facilities in both corporations, Delhi Municipal Corporation has already qualified staff even in clerical positions. Shimla Municipal Corporation's staff lack such credentials. Delhi employees still, however, have access to training, as they can join diploma courses in local self-government, a course generally lasting six months. Such credentials allow them 2 increments. All India level courses and state level courses entitle employees to 4 and 3 increments respectively. So comparatively speaking, Delhi Municipal Corporation employees have more incentives and motivation.

Municipal Finance

Both corporations have shown little aptitude for efficient financial management. The analysis of finances of Shimla and Delhi Municipal Corporations has revealed that the expenditure increases correspondingly with increased income. However, the growth of expenditure is more than that of income.

It further shows that the revenue of both corporations have been on a continuous increase, this being fairly uniform in Delhi Municipal Corporation but non-uniform in Shimla Municipal Corporation. This non-uniformity can be attributed to low state government grants, especially in 1986-87 and 1990-91,
there being a significant decrease in income. SMC's maximum income accrues from the general department and from deposits, advances/grant-in-aid given by the state government. DMC's maximum income accrues from internal revenues. Previously octroi was the main source of income of SMC till its abolition in 1982. Terminal tax, similar to octroi, was the external source of income being shared by NDMC and the Delhi Cantonment Board prior to 1993. But this ceased when the terminal tax was abolished by the central government issuing an ordinance effective from 30th Jan 1993. The SMC's meagre income is also due to fact that the state government deprived it of different sources of revenue by taking charge of many of municipal functions. In the past local bodies in Madras (Tamil Nadu), Bengal and Bihar even maintained railways, a source of income. In England, local authorities have, with in about the last twenty years, lost two of their important trading services, namely gas and electricity. It is also proposed to nationalize water services in England. The passenger transport service has also been taken away from local authorities. But in countries like U.S.A. and Germany, the trading activities of local authorities have developed to the great extent, bringing in larger revenues. In the U.S.A, there is decline in income from property taxation but the loss is compensated by the income from an increasing use of non-tax revenue of all types, special charges are
levied for collection of refuse and garbage. In Germany, municipalities own and manage all industries concerning the necessaries, comforts and luxuries of the citizens. They render efficient services and derive large income out of such enterprises. Municipalities in Japan earn a good deal of revenue from municipal enterprises like cars, buses, trolley-buses, water-works and sewage.

The expenditure of both DMC and SMC has been on a constant increase year by year. Growth has been constant in SMC except in 1990-91 when it showed a downfall. This can be attributed to deposits made by general public to the corporation for construction and repairing purposes - an area stricken by low finances. The comparison shows that the percentage of expenditure on education is highest in DMC and lowest in SMC. In the United Kingdom, the local authorities invest 38 percent of their local expenditure on education. Data has shown that the expenditure incurred on public health in MCD during last nine years has come out to be 2.40 percent of its total. Conversely, in Shimla Municipal Corporation, maximum expenditure is incurred on public health, forming 30.4 percent of the total. Thus it can be analysed that SMC gives more importance to public health than DMC.

During the period under review, MCD's income from external sources has formed 19.54 percent of the total, which comprises assigned taxes and
grants. Assigned taxes further comprise terminal tax, entertainment tax, and motor vehicle tax. Of these three, terminal tax has contributed the most during the last nine years, but now it has been abolished. The abolition of terminal tax is expected to lead to a net loss of Rs.40 crore to MCD. The analysis of internal sources of revenue of MCD comprising of municipal taxes and rates, reveals that income from such sources was to the extent of 58 percent during such years. Shimla Municipal Corporations' maximum income accrues from taxes on lands and buildings, contributing 75 percent of the total. Sanitation tax, second in number is 17 percent of total tax income. Thus it can be concluded that increase in income from taxes in MCD though constant, has been marginal throughout the years under study except in 1991-92 when it rose significantly. Similar is the case with SMC. With respect to borrowings, Shimla Municipal Corporation does not borrow from the state government or any other organization as this is usually resorted to where capital expenditure is involved and SMC lacks such liabilities. But since MCD has taken up various developmental programmes, it has resorted to borrowings from central government. As per grants, MCD gets grants in lieu of education, while MCS gets grants in lieu of abolished octroi. However, in MCS this grant is much less and provides an escalation of just 7 percent per year.
Performance

Performance of Delhi and Shimla Municipal Corporations in providing various services to their citizens has been far from satisfactory. This is clear from the following adage, "The decay of Shimla is reflected in functioning of municipal corporation after Independence". Municipal services are great in quantity (especially of MCD) than quality. DMC's expenditure on public health, conservancy and street cleaning; scavenging drains and sewers during the last nine years has come out to be 2.4, 18.46 and 2.10 percent respectively of the total. Medical relief, which includes maintenance of hospitals and dispensaries and control of communicable diseases is vested in Delhi Municipal Corporation. But in Shimla, Medical Relief is the responsibility of state health department. MCD has spent 11 percent on medical relief during the period under review. With such a low level of expenditure on public utility services, it is quite obvious that Delhi Municipal Corporation cannot be said to have provided a reasonable standard of services. Similarly, MCS inspite of incurring huge expenditure on public health, has done a very poor job.

Supply of pure and safe drinking water is an important function of municipal authorities. Without an adequate water supply, drainage and sewerage, schemes cannot be implemented. In Shimla, no improvement
has been made on sewerage system since 1833. Sewerage system has outlived its life. Leakages are often noticed causing insanitation and unhygienic conditions. Inadequate number of public lavatories are kept unclean. It is ironical that the water supply system erected by the British about a hundred years ago is still the main source of water supply in the Shimla town while the population has risen fourfold. More than 40 percent of water is lost due to leakage from worn out pipes. Shimla Municipal Corporation supplies water to its users after being provided the same by the Irrigation and Public Health Department, at the rate of Rs. 2 per thousand gallons.

Water supplied by both corporations is inadequate and irregular, mainly due to fast growing population and old and outdated water distribution networks. This results in water loss through leakages. Millions of gallons of drinking water are used daily for parks and gardens in some areas of Delhi which needs immediate curtailment. The installed capacity of municipal water supply of Delhi is 600 million gallons per day, of which 15 percent is lost during transmission, thus leaving the net quantity of water available at about 450-475 MGD. Thus per capita availability in Delhi is about 56 gallons per day as against about 55 GPD in Bombay, 30.5 GPD in Calcutta and 15.5 GPD in Madras. If the population is not controlled and migration not checked, then by 2001 year the water
requirement of Delhi will go up to 900 MGD—a daunting task to fulfil. The water requirement of MCS will go up to 39.58 million litres a day by the year 2006.

Primary Education is one of the primary responsibilities of MCD. The corporation incurs huge amount of expenditure in providing primary education to the children. During last nine years, 28 percent of its total expenditure has been incurred on education. It is quite disconcerting to note that the plight of municipal schools is dismal. Some schools do not have buildings and some others are situated in unhygienic and insanitary surroundings. Large scale expansion of schools and poor quality of teachers has also resulted in deterioration of education system.

As per Roads and Buildings in Shimla, they are well looked after and maintained by MCS. 133.71 Kms of Pucca roads and 20.58 kms of katcha roads were laid during the year 1992-93. 480 residential houses were also constructed in the same year. Forest Department of SMC has greatly contributed towards protection and growth of forests under its jurisdiction.

The efficiency and effective functioning of municipal corporation and the standard of services and amenities provided by them depend mainly on their finances. But other factors like structure, leadership and peoples participation are also important for their smooth functioning. The Shimla Municipal
Corporations' inefficiency compelled the state government to take over many of its important functions. Thus depriving it of important revenue earning departments.

Lack of civic consciousness is also responsible for inefficient working of Municipal Corporations of Shimla and Delhi. Citizens, inspite of beingaware of their responsibilities in keeping their city clean, genarally ignore such. Should they realize their duties towards the corporation, they can be of a great help in directly improving administration of the municipal corporations efficiently and effectively.

To conclude, the administrative problems are manifold and there are no easy solutions. Greater local autonomy would perhaps go a long way in properly addressing all the problems encountered. All in all, administrative and political will and measures are direly needed alongwith inculcation of civic consciousness. Living, breathing and responsive democracy can thus be created and its benefits reaped.

Suggestions

The following suggestions have been put forward as possible solutions to administrative problems in case of both Delhi and Shimla Municipal Corporations.

1. Immediate steps should be taken to fill in the vacant posts in Shimla Municipal Corporation. Though Delhi Municipal Corporation's organizational structure is quite extensive-- consisting of around 1.10 lakh employees on
its roll-- still the corporation is inadequately staffed (menial staff) to discharge its normal functions. Since the population of the metropolis is on a rapid and continuous increase, efforts should be made to increase the staff for economically and efficiently serving the growing population.

2. There should be a clear demarcation of functions between the executive and deliberative wings of the municipal corporations.

3. Mayors should be given more executive powers and immediate steps should be taken to set up mayor-in-council form of local self-government to keep check over mis-utilization of powers by the mayor.

4. The term of office of mayor should be increased in both the corporations to five years.

5. The term of office of commissioner of Shimla Municipal corporation should be lengthened.

6. Like Delhi Municipal Corporation, Shimla Municipal Corporation should also recruit its personnel through state public service commission.

7. The system of adhocism should be discontinued as it renders the service inefficient.

8. Training institutes for municipal personnel at lower and middle levels should be set up in the states. If no efforts are undertaken to provide training to municipal
employees as the state governments generally do, these local institutes could prove to be total failure in future time.

9. The municipal commissioner - the chief executive authority should be required to undergo a thorough training before joining his post because he should have thorough knowledge about the working of municipal corporation.

10. Before joining the corporation employees should be made conversant with the job. They should be imparted training in the latest techniques of working and how more efficient work can be accomplished in little time.

11. Rather than taking over various departments of municipal corporations which have incurred losses, the state governments should take necessary steps to improve their working.

12. An Independent Statutory Tax Assessing Authority should be set up in the states for proper assessment and collection of the taxes of the corporations.

13. Grants should be made available to the municipal corporations well in time. They should be conform to the minimum requirements of the municipal corporations.

14. Grant-in-aid in lieu of octroi to Shimla Municipal Corporation should be increased. Delhi Municipal Corporation should also be provided with appropriate grant in lieu of abolished terminal tax.

15. The corporations should take necessary steps to
provide better health facilities and medical relief to their citizens.

16. Century old drainage system and water distribution networks need to be replaced with a new technologically efficient and economical ones. Open drains should be covered and available water should be equally distributed among the residents of different areas proportionate to their population.

17. In order to provide better environment, sanitation, cleanliness and health services to the people, municipal corporations should endeavour to frame better policies and programmes and implement them in time to yield the desired results.

18. Last but not the least, there should be emphasis on civic education in schools and adult literacy camps for more effective civic consciousness.