In India, municipalities are usually spending much of their income on various establishments like water supply, conservancy services, public health—needs of the community—and also on regulatory services like issuing of building licenses and controlling of public nuisances. The efficiency of municipalities depends to a great extent upon the performance of its personnel. The performance of its employees in turn depends to a considerable extent on the municipal management, structure and practices in addition to environmental factors. Because of urbanization and exodus of population from rural to the urban areas, the basic functions of the municipalities in respect of the city dwellers have been increasing. The society, the government and all other people expect the personnel of municipalities to be more efficient and they are expected to serve the public in a better way. Contrary to the expectations of the society, the present day municipalities are suffering from administrative diseases such as red-tapism, corruption, indecision, etc. One of the serious weaknesses of municipal administration comes from its internal administrative set up.
Since the entire administration has to be under the control of elected representatives, it has resulted in a system of democratic administration. Municipal bodies rely on the system of committees and sub-committees adopted to suit the mass of business now requiring co-ordinated and long-term actions. Permanent officials are not given sufficient importance and generally are not given power to take decisions. Moreover, the work of municipalities is fragmented and too many separate departments are working without any cooperation among themselves. The various committees are also found to be lacking in proper coordination. Problems regarding urban water supply and underground drainage, fire services, immunisation programmes to infants and such other necessary functions, are being attended to by specialised organisations directly managed and controlled by the state government. These will cut seriously into the powers of the municipal institutions, and reduce their capacity for effectiveness and also undermine the people's expectations in such institutions. The governments are showing little interest in their functioning, except lip sympathy. In such circumstances, it goes very difficult to make municipal administration a grand success.

It is probable that such a situation in course of time may lead to an increase in the number of problems of the city
duellers with increase in the population. The increase in
the number of slums and the increase in the number of unemployed
and inadequacy of urban housing gives rise to a number of social
crimes and dangers of pollution proving hazardous to the life of
urban population. It is not easy to solve such problems. Another
characteristic defect associated with municipal administration
is that talented and highly educated people do not prefer to
join the municipal service because municipal services may be
regarded as a common place, a sort of a third estate in the field
of administration. Requiring no particular expertise, formerly,
civil servants in municipal services were getting very low
salaries. But after the year 1972, the year in which new pay
in Karnataka scales were introduced, the municipal employees were brought on
par with government servants. In the light of such a situation,
the statement that employees under municipalities do not get
high salaries and other benefits as the rest of the civil servants
appears to be incorrect. Moreover, the chief officers are
generally drawn from the cadre of government administrative
service. Therefore, treating the municipal services as a third
estate is not quite correct. The municipal body may pass any
resolution and lay down any policy. But ultimately it is the
question of implementation of the resolution or of the policy

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A.P. Padhi (ed.), Personnel Systems of Urban Bodies in India,
that is very important. As Read Ordway says, "Administration is a moral act and administrator is a real agent."

There are certain points on the basis of which the evaluation of the municipal administration can be made. The following are some of them.

The municipal staff have to collect the rates and taxes from the city dwellers. The efficiency of the municipal staff can be evaluated on the basis of the amount collected, the arrears outstanding at the end of the year and the amount written off every year. These throw light on the efficiency of municipal administration.

The cities in India at present have become the heartland of educational, cultural, economic and political institutions of the nation and therefore cities are to be looked upon as a miniature of national problems, viz. poverty, disease, unemployment, communal tension, violence and crimes. The urban government provides for a large proportion of the needs of the people. Services such as water supply, drainage, lighting, open spaces, public parks, health facilities, etc. are required

to be provided by the municipalities. In the same way, markets, hospitals, dispensaries, etc. are provided by private sectors with the government help. In the recent past, as a result of the expansion of irrigation facilities, the agricultural produce and its trade have considerably increased. People from the surrounding rural areas have been migrating to Jamkhandi. There is a small industrial area or belt developed around the outskirts of Jamkhandi wherein the small scale and cottage industries have been established; but their number is small. Some handlooms are functioning in this city. By and large, the surroundings of Jamkhandi are industrially backward and are consequently free from industrial pollution. In the rural areas, with the help and financial assistance of nationalised banks, she-buffaloes and Jersey cows have been purchased by rural folk who are running the dairy industry as an alternative profession. The migration of a large number of villagers and other people to Jamkhandi has caused congestion in population and has aggravated problems concerned with housing, sanitation and hospital facilities, water supply and other basic civic amenities. It has, therefore, become almost a Herculean task for the municipal authorities to attend to the needs of the growing population because of the paucity of funds, which are already dried up. The structure as well as the jurisdiction of local government falls short of what is needed
to provide essential services effectively. A large number of poor people have formed a slum area on the outskirts on both sides of the Mudhol road, on the by-pass road to Bijapur and also on Ramtirth road. These people are unauthorisedly occupying private house sites and are living in extremely poor conditions even without water and basic sanitary facilities. It goes difficult to assess how many of such people have exercised their franchise in municipal elections. The participation of such people has little or no impact on decision making. Hardly their problems are being attended to by the municipal council and rarely they are being discussed. It is not enough that people's participation in elections is not only important but it is equally important that the down-trodden people, workers and poor should necessarily participate in the day to day affairs of the city. Such people should feel that they are part and parcel of the local body.

The question of decentralisation of state functions is really tied up with the question of improvement of municipal finance. In the composition of Jamkhandi municipality during the period 1970-87 only two castes, Brahmins and Lingayats, have played a dominant role in the development of the city. Rich farmers and rich merchants have dominated the composition of the council. Women have played their role in a negligible way.
The same candidates have been elected and re-elected quite often and new women candidates have not come to the fore. Jamkhandi though being a small area, the municipality has tried its level best to attend to the problems of health, maintenance of sanitation, public parks, drainage, etc. adequately. Infant mortality rate was very little during the period of study under review because of the introduction of progressive medical aid and development in the field of medicine.

Epidemics such as plague, small pox, cholera, influenza and malaria never threatened the health of the city seriously. Thanks to the Jamkhandi municipal authorities for having taken timely and necessary precautions in providing vaccinations and inoculations against epidemics. The system of collection and disposal of refuse and removal of night soil never caused a great problem and threatened the city health because of the introduction of the proper infrastructure created by the Jamkhandi municipality.

Formerly water supply to the people of Jamkhandi was the duty of the municipality; but now it is controlled by the state government through Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Sewage Board. Adequate arrangements were made by the Jamkhandi municipality for the burial and cremation grounds for the disposal of the
dead of all communities. In case of destitutes, burial/cremation was arranged by the municipality free of cost. All this reflects the progressive welfare measures adopted by the municipality. Construction of underground drainage is an important step taken by the municipality to maintain proper sanitation and keep the city away from all sorts of diseases.

Slums

The most urgent need of the city is to prevent slums which are coming up in the vicinity of the present Arts and Science College, Rastirth road, Gubbaraya's mosque, and also on Nijapur-Madhhol road. Though it may be necessary to provide shelter to the teeming millions, there are no clear-cut plans for undertaking such objectives. As regards the slums of Jamkhandi city no plans either preventing or eradicating them or providing alternative residential requirements have been drawn up.

Finances

An analysis of the various sources of expenditure and income of the Jamkhandi municipality for the period 1970-87 reveals that till the year 1979, the year in which the octroi was abolished, for all these years octroi served as the main source of income. Income from grants and contributions from the state government has also been the other important source of
Income. Income from house tax has also been increased. In spite of such rise in income, municipalities are lacking funds for developmental activities. New forms of taxation will not help very much as there is very little scope for it. At the same time, the state government is also not in a position to sanction grants in a generous way.

The state government which is sanctioning grants in lieu of octroi, should sanction grants liberally or it should undertake the developmental projects itself. By doing so, the municipalities will be able to have a permanent source of income to depend upon more often than not on their own resources.

Unfortunately at the state government level, there has never been a rational policy underlying the ever increasing state grant-in-aid to local governments. Therefore, the only alternative left to municipalities is to develop their own property like the construction of municipal markets and stalls, buildings, cinema houses and theatres etc., and should derive more income from them by way of rent. Or else the state government should release 10% of the sales tax collected from the sale of goods within the municipal limits. The state government should also release at least 5% of the revenue derived from excise duties collected within the municipal limits.
The central government should also give some share, at least 5% of the income-tax collected within the municipal limits which will serve as a permanent source of income to the municipalities.

It is also suggested that a Local Finance Commission on the model of the Central Finance Commission should be set up every five years to go into the needs and resources of local governments. Moreover, municipalities are to spend very heavily on payment of salaries and allowances of their employees. This is unavoidable as municipal administration is charged primarily with the functions of maintenance of services and enforcement of provisions of various municipal acts. The growth of population, the increase in the number of houses and the expansion of the business - for all these, the municipality of Jamkhandi has to shoulder the responsibility of providing the basic needs in an effective manner. Jamkhandi municipality should, therefore, think of creating bodies like housing boards and urban improvement boards to construct more houses by raising money from the public. To avoid more and more congestion and to prevent housing problems, municipalities should plan for a period of 20 years to solve these problems effectively.
But unfortunately, at present, the municipal bodies are not thinking on these lines and they are entirely dominated by local politicians. The inefficiency of municipal administration is reflected in low collection of rates and taxes and the amounts being written off.

Fortunately, with regard to Jamkhandi municipality, the amount written off is nil and at least a minimum of 70% to 80% of the amount due from rates and taxes has always been collected.

The work of the section entrusted with issuing building permission in disposing of the cases within a stipulated time reflects the integrity and efficiency of the municipal staff. Jamkhandi municipal staff in this respect are carrying out their duties in a most efficient way and it is with great pleasure that during the period under study not even a single case was found to be pending regarding issuing or granting permission either for construction of a new building or altering the existing ones.

Before the Municipal Act of 1972 was made applicable to all the municipalities, the members of the municipalities were found to be giving undue importance in respect of recruitment, promotions, increments in pay, and transfers of municipal
employees ignoring the fact that such action would affect adversely the efficiency and morale of the municipal employees. Limited resources and increasing activities are the main difficulties. Therefore, it is suggested that there should be a drastic revision in the organisational structure of the Jamkhandi municipal administration with a personnel department at the centre of the organisation which should have a well-planned and complete programme for a total development. Decentralisation of municipal functions is necessary to provide for speedier disposal of cases with greater efficiency and economy. It is very essential for the Jamkhandi municipality to introduce performance appraisal system for its employees for evaluating their work efficiency. Comprehensive training programmes to improve skills and potential work efficiency of the employees should be organised. Work should be converted into a challenge with a fair and objective performance evaluation system coupled with systematic rewards in cases of efficiency and punishments in case of insufficiency. It is also felt necessary to introduce training or orientation courses for municipal councillors extending from about a week to a month to acquaint them with the basic concepts of municipal administration and their role with particular reference to their duties and responsibilities as the elected representatives and their relation to the municipal staff.
The Jamkhandi municipality has not yet prepared any plan for the beautification of the city, which should include widening of the narrow lanes for the smooth transport, slum clearance on Bijapur bypass road to avoid congestion in traffic, developing gardens and public parks, etc. Jamkhandi municipality has failed in providing this facility to the public. Necessary steps should be taken in this matter. At present, there are only three public parks at Jamkhandi. Such plans are of course a felt need, but with the new objectives of democratic socialism, decentralisation, development planning and welfare state, there is an urgent need for municipalities to have a sense of purpose and priorities. The Jamkhandi municipality should give more priority to supply adequate quantity of pure drinking water, to provide for slum clearance, good roads and transport facilities. It may also be suggested that the municipality lacks social welfare programmes. In the near future the municipality will have to shift its emphasis from its obligatory duties to discretionary ones. Functions like free supply of milk to poor pupils in primary schools, free periodicals, medical examination, raising housing colonies at cheap rates for the poor, maintenance of art galleries, zoos, play grounds and stadiums should engage the attention of municipal government. Some municipalities run beggar houses and Jamkhandi municipality should also think on these lines.
Jamkhambi municipal elections are not contested on political party affiliations. It can be said that elections have failed to offer distinct alternative programmes for local development and the solution of civic problems. It only reflects the power politics. It is also because of this that municipal administration of today has not been able to meet the growing demands of the urban centre. The local government is also restricted in scope and horizon. The end result of this is that at city government level, there is no perspective planning and the entire emphasis is on ad-hoc work programme to deal with immediate problems. The urban local bodies in India are largely based on the British system. In view of the Indian conditions it would be better to follow council manager plan where the council frames the policies and the trained manager implements them. But all this is true only when local self-government institutions can have an assured source of income at their disposal. In a country like ours too many radical reforms on British or other model in local government institutions are not possible.

The poverty of the country and the competing demands on resources stand in the way of liberal income transfers from the high level government to the local bodies.

The local bodies in India on the one hand have to depend on the states for their finances. Because of this local autonomy
is jeopardised. This aspect is aptly explained by S. Bhatnagar, when he states, "The pace of urbanisation in India has resulted in considerable deterioration of civic services. The government has resorted to the creation of a multitude of specialised functional authorities in each urban centre. These authorities, besides creating administrative confusion, have eroded the authority and prestige of the local bodies. *" The state government has resorted to establish certain specialised functional authorities and ad-hoc bodies which have affected the functioning of municipalities. Any measure taken by the governments - state or central - to mitigate the urbanisation problems should take care to see that the local bodies are unaffected. In such matters, large metropolises should be treated differently. In view of their peculiar problems, in a democratic set up, local government has to fulfill two objectives:

1. Development and management of local socio-economic services, and public-utilities,

2. Providing a vital base for the democratic structure.

But many times state governments give the first objective, an overriding dominance without a corresponding concern for the second objective. This many a time has affected the local autonomy. Any effort of the government in the direction of attending to the urban problem should never hamper the local initiative and decision making. Decentralisation should be safeguarded at any cost, because centralisation of local problems would add to the problems of the government itself one day. Moreover, the urban authorities are regulated by a host of enactments passed by the state legislatures, which do limit the municipal activities from time to time with these limitations. The municipal authorities are expected to fulfill the aspirations of the citizens in every sphere.

The municipal administration fails naturally to deliver the goods to their expectations, because of the approach of the governments towards urban bodies. For all this, only a bold approach to structural organisation with assignment of proper role to the state government and the deliberative and executive organs can restore local government to its rightful place in national policy. Jamkhandi being an agriculturally oriented city, it has come to the notice of the study under review that no efforts are being made to treat the local people as junior partners in the process of planning and development. If the urban governments are to be true agents of modernisation
and social change, they will have to treat local people as junior partners. The administration and financial constraints in the working of the municipality will largely be removed if this is accepted in principle. (Elections need not be the only criterion for civic participation.) This can be done by forming a citizens' council. The citizens' council should consist of some educated citizens drawn from all walks of life and outside experts, policy framers and/or the professional staff. The legislative staff may consult and have a dialogue with the citizens' council by which there can be increased participation of the public in the city government. Therefore, with regard to the affairs of the Jamkhandi municipality it can be stated that the administrative set up can be revitalised and it can be taken that the administrative change is needed. The staff seems to be too meagre. With proper skill and qualifications, it has to do a great deal to encourage citizens' participation in developing a civic culture which is at a very low ebb. The morale of the administrative staff has to be built up by introducing new service conditions with proper promotion ladder. Besides all this, Jamkhandi municipal office at the heart of the city should be shifted to a more spacious area and it should have an attractive building.
It is suggested here that the present municipal administrative set-up may be replaced by introducing a cabinet form of municipal executive to meet the challenges of the time.

"The proposal for the introduction of cabinet system in municipal government was discussed at the seminar conducted by the Indian Institute of Public Administration in September 1969."

The problems of management of towns and cities are not only vast in size but are truly complicated in character with urbanisation taking place at an accelerated pace. The tasks and responsibilities of the local authorities have been growing rapidly. Therefore the present system of municipal committees is an outdated one to accept the challenge of urbanisation and it needs to be replaced by a system which will meet the needs of the time. In the first place beyond the leaves and fishes there is the pursuit of power and service to the people that attracts some of the best available talented persons. The municipal council which is generally a talking shop without being effective in decision making can have purposeful discussion with qualitative improvement in political leadership.

Secondly, if the local bodies are to be training ground for politicians aspiring for positions of higher level, there

should be identical form of government at all levels, national, state and local.

Municipal bodies have tried almost all conceivable forms of executive except the cabinet form which is the pattern of executive at state and also at national level.

Thirdly, cabinet form of government is based on regular debate, exchange of ideas and constructive criticism, among the political parties, regarding various policy decisions that are to be implemented for governance of the state. At present, in Jamkhandi the functioning of municipal body is neglected due to the absence of any articulated civic programmes sponsored by parties at state and national levels. Therefore introduction of cabinet form of executive at local level will compel the particular political party which may get majority in local body elections, to maintain coherence among the members of the various committees in the municipality in respect of their activities.

To start with, the cabinet system of municipal executive may be tried in some of the selected big cities on an experimental basis.
State governments have the tendency of enacting legislation that would strengthen the powers of government and their officers in respect of general control and supervision over municipalities. Some municipalities have prepared town development schemes and plans. Of course, these plans try to provide for the earmarking of streets, parks, gardens, hospitals, etc. They lack vital inputs like housing, drainage, schools, etc. It is unfortunate that barring some funds for water supply and drainage schemes there is no provision in our five year plans for comprehensive and integrated development of our towns. If the gap between resources and requirements of municipalities is supported by the state governments it would go a long way towards urban development.

If the financial statements of Jamkhandi municipality are examined it would be seen that a considerable amount of income is spent (i) on returning or clearing of loans raised and (ii) on office establishment. After meeting these commitments, very little amount of money will be left to undertake developmental activities. For every new plan the municipality has to rely on loans. It is high time that the state government should establish an urban development corporation to tap other sources of funds from institutions like cooperative and commercial banks. In Karnataka, the cooperative
movement has not been much popular. The state government should ask the commercial banks as also the cooperative societies to earmark funds for urban development programme at a subsidised rate of interest. Without this approach, the municipalities in future cannot draw heavily upon these sources for new developmental activities or functions. Of course, various suggestions can be made likewise to increase taxes, rates, etc. The Karnataka Municipal Act 1972 allows the municipalities to govern their affairs without much state interference. The administrative control is exercised by the Director of Municipal Administration, with a view to have a healthy growth of municipal bodies and to serve as a suitable state machinery for municipal supervision and guidance. The Director of Municipal Administration and the Deputy Commissioners of the respective districts are given concurrent powers to control the affairs of municipalities.

The powers of the Director of Municipal Administration and the Deputy Commissioners are more for checking abuses than for giving a helping hand. It is felt necessary that they should pay more attention to guiding and helping the municipalities in their developmental activities. In Jamkhandi municipality it is also found that the state controls the municipal finance in two ways, i.e. (1) Through proper sanction of municipal indebted
budgets or expenditure beyond a certain limit; (2) Through the appointment of auditors to examine the municipal accounts.

As regards the nature of audit control, it seems that its reports reveal a negative and a formal approach. More attention is given mainly to the observing of municipal acts and resolutions, rules and orders and to forbid lapses from them rather than giving constructive suggestions for better utilisation of funds and also ways of getting over certain rules if they come in the way of legitimate expenses. Emphasis should have been laid more on administrative propriety. It is required that auditors or auditing should be based on the element of progressivity in audit evaluation. The auditor should try to assume the role of a watch dog of municipal expenditure. In case of auditors in municipal administration, they have assumed the role of prosecutors. The auditor in this context should try to introduce an element of administrative realism and broadening the framework of audit.

It is also observed that Jamkhani municipality lacks the services of trained assessors and many a time they are appointed on a temporary basis. The approach of wrong assessment is challenged. Because many times the aggrieved parties are allowed to go to courts to redress their grievances. Such erratic
assessment should be avoided as far as possible, by appointing efficient and well-trained personnel in the concerned departments. This will result in saving the amount which otherwise would be spent on court fees. These matters speak about the state control over municipalities in regard to administration, audit and judicial control. In order to enable the municipalities to implement government policies, the government should try to help them to increase their capabilities to provide services and generate developmental processes and to share political power and promote local initiative and decision-making. It should try to restore local functional responsibilities and create a framework of state municipal relations which will contribute to decentralisation and at the same time project the state government's legitimate interests in the performance of local administration. In exercising control over the municipal bodies, the state government should be guided by the wholesome consideration that it is after all a junior partner of the former in the joint venture towards establishing democratic government and clean administration.

These are some of the conclusions which can be drawn from the study of Jamkhanchi municipality. Every city has its own problems peculiar to its environment and jurisdiction. Local self-government in the present administrative set up is bound
to play a major role. It is only this unit of administration, as a base of decentralisation, which is bound to serve the basic needs of the urban population. The problems of municipal government need urgent consideration in the national planning process. Introduction of ad-hoc centralised bodies should be continued but due care should be taken to preserve the local autonomy, local needs and interests, because these units of local self-government are the main source through which both the state and the union government can feel the pulse of the public. What is presently lacking is a full throated physical acceptance of municipal government as a full fledged member in the family of governments.

Conclusions

In order to make the municipal administration to the best satisfaction of the public, the following recommendations are found very essential:

1. According to Section 72(5) of Karnataka Municipal Act 1964 the municipal council is only competent to keep the work on its own without calling tenders for the work, the estimate of which, does not exceed up to ₹5,000/-. This is a very meagre amount, with which even emergent works cannot be taken up. This financial
restriction is actually one of the obstacles for running the administration, as the municipality cannot construct a drain, a culvert, a cross-drain and a road, pavement to small lanes etc. within the amount of Rs. 5,000/- This restriction is making the municipality to execute the work into a number of piecemeal items. In order to overcome this practical difficulty it is essential that the power of execution of any work involving an expenditure not exceeding Rs. 25,000/- can be undertaken without calling for tenders as per the estimated rate. The effect of this relaxation will definitely be helpful and economical for the municipality for the following reasons:

1. Saving of advertisement charges. Example: The municipality has to publish the tender notice in newspapers for the work costing more than Rs. 5,000/- and has to bear the advertisement charges of the newspaper which will be not less than Rs. 1,000/- minimum. If the tender amount is very small, this will be an additional cost which can be saved if this suggestion is accepted.

2. On the publication of the tender notice inviting competitive rates, unlike PWD and other government departments the municipality is not supplying steel, cement, etc. to the contractors from the departmental stores. Therefore the
contractors naturally, as per our experience, will quote higher rates, which will be an additional burden on the municipality. If the authority to entrust the work upto a value of Rs.25,000/- as per the D.S.R.C. (Departmental Scheduled Rate) is given to the municipality there will be saving of advertisement charges and tender rates. Besides, execution of work would be taken up immediately on war footing to meet the public demands. This will result in avoiding unnecessary delay in carrying out the work. This kind of practice is prevailing in the P.W.D., However, it is necessary, and it should be made compulsory to obtain the technical sanction from the competent authority before actually starting the work. Such a procedure is also necessary in view of the increase in the cost of building materials.

3. As per the Karnataka Municipalities Act 1964, Section 96, the power of granting sanction for levying any tax is now vested with the government. This is also a cumbersome procedure resulting in inordinate delay in getting sanction from the government, and affecting the revenue of the municipality. To avoid this, the Deputy Commissioner of the District may be empowered to approve the revision, modification or levying of new taxes within the limitations of the Act. This will simplify the procedure and will prove to be a boon in its real meaning to municipal administration to serve the public better.
4. Remission of Taxes. According to the provisions of the Karnataka Municipalities Act 1964, and Remission of Taxes Rules 1966, the power vested with the municipal council to accord remission of taxes is limited to Rs.50/- only. This limit was fixed in the year 1966. But no amendments have been made till today. At present, due to inflationary trend and certain local conditions, such unrecoverable taxes are unnecessarily being carried in the demand register without recovery. Practically they are not recoverable at all and as such they cannot be written off from the demand register without following the requisite procedure. In some cases during the study under review, it is seen that in spite of following the procedure there still is a delay in getting the approval from the government since the proposal has to be routed through the Deputy Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration and the government. Due to technical hurdles they are not yet finalised. This is a common defect with all the municipalities. The reason is that the power in respect of remission of taxes was given in 1966 is limited to Rs.50/- only. Hence this problem has remained unsolved till today. There is a strong need to amend the rules to secure speedy recovery and disposal of such cases. It is essential to amend the existing limit and to enhance it upto Rs.250/- or Rs.300/- in each case.