PREFACE
The welfare state has emerged as a consequence of the evolution of the theory of the state during last three centuries or so. To begin with, the state was believed to be a creation of God (the Divine Origin Theory of the State) and it was only at the end of the medieval age, during the 15th and 16th centuries, that a rational view of the role and functions of the state came to be accepted. The 17th and 18th centuries saw, following the Social Contract Theory of State, the individualistic–liberal theory as represented in the writings of John Locke (1632-1704). Adam Smith (1723-1790) advocated laissez-faire and the laissez-aller philosophies, which in turn propagated a type of negative state interfering least in the life and actions of individuals. Subsequently the theory of the positive state beginning with John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and T.H. Green (1836-1882) emerged which posited that the state was not a necessary evil, but was, or could become, a necessary institution for promoting the welfare of the individual. The 19th and 20th centuries with H.J. Laski (1893-1950) and a host of others saw the emergence of the welfare state and the state which emerged as a major instrument of modernization, especially in the developing countries.

Following her independence in 1947, India opted for a secular, democratic, socialistic and welfare state. The political integration of the Indian state, which has some 3000 religious and socio-ethnic classes and groups and also the most diverse socio-cultural order in the world, may be said to have begun under the Mughals, when a common system of administration and revenue collection was introduced. Under the British, a uniform system of law and administration penetrated down to the villages, thus creating a single administrative and political entity. However, it was the struggle for independence that created the bonds that tied the Indian people into a nation. Thereafter, on the one hand, the Constitution of free India guaranteed all citizens equality before law irrespective of their religion, caste or place of birth and, on the other hand, developmental inputs were designed to create an all India unified economy that would provide the material basis for the transformation of the country into a modern nation.

The state, as a welfare state, was supposed to undertake a gigantic role in providing numerous services to the people. Thus charged with the major responsibility in nation-building, the prime concern of the Government in India has been, and continues to achieve a developed nation. However, in spite of tremendous achievements in science and technology, higher education, industrial development, and numerous other fields, the process of national development, even after nearly 57 years of independence, has yet to be truly and faithfully reflected in the vast majority of the population that comprises of the urban and rural poor who continue to live in poverty, illiteracy, ill-health, malnutrition and homelessness.
The low levels of development in India can be attributed to numerous factors, especially to continuing increase in its population with which the increase in productivity has not been able to keep up. Second, and compounding this problem, is the fact that the state apparatuses, as a rule rather than an exception, are characterized by both inefficiency and corruption, which keeps productivity increases low. Third, and underlying both these factors, is the pervasive lack, among people at large, of social awareness and willingness towards hard work which precludes, on the one hand, any substantial popular and spontaneous contribution towards either population control or greater economic productivity and, on the other hand, a bottom-up check on the functioning of the state apparatuses. Fourth, and compounding the pervasive deficiency of popular and spontaneous contribution to national development, is the exploitation of the ignorance and, more particularly, the religious and cultural sentiments of the masses, by vested interest groups for their personal gains. The last mentioned has assumed significant dimensions as a negative force constraining national development in comparatively recent times with the decline of social values and, more importantly, of political ethics.

Throughout the length and breadth of the country, there are organizations, often flourishing under political patronage, fostering narrow religious, linguistic, regional, communalist and casteist loyalties in total violation of the sanctity of the freedom accorded to them by the Constitution for their existence and activities, and at the cost of wider national interests.

Violence, disruption of public life and destruction of national assets have, as a consequence, become everyday occurrences and have diverted popular and state attention from national development efforts. Thus the orchestrated destruction of the nation’s integrity has detracted from its development.

Today the goals of national peace and prosperity in India have become extremely elusive. There is a need to mobilize all forces that can foster national integration and national development.

This study posits that the cooperative movement can play a significant role in this regard. Cooperatives can contribute to national development directly by supplementing state mechanisms for delivery of goods and services and employment generation, and to national integration (and thereby to national development) through the participatory involvement of people that entail and that can foster, on one hand, individual character building and, on the other hand, community cohesion.

The history of the cooperative housing movement, in particular, which has emerged as a strong and well-spread movement based on the principles of self help and community participation, has amply demonstrated the tremendous role of housing cooperatives in this respect.
To talk of national development when nearly one-fourth of the population is having no access to basic amenities like food, clothing and shelter is to talk of empty words. The vast majority of people in rural and urban areas are facing problem of basic services. The condition of the urban poor or slum dwellers is of much concern. Slums have been an outcome of unplanned urbanization and they have now over the years grown across the length and breadth of the country. Government and non-Government initiatives have not provided the desired results in their upgradation.

This study also highlights that forming multi-purpose cooperative societies for the slum dwellers can provide, an answer. These cooperative societies can for example, have ‘housing’ as the prime mechanism for their upgradation.

Housing cooperatives throughout the country have shown a capacity to provide a qualitatively superior housing product through a cost-effective and efficient process of housing supply. By providing housing related community facilities, housing cooperatives foster better social environment and, thereby, improving quality of life. Furthermore, they provide a forum for promoting leadership qualities and collective action in various spheres of community life, bringing together people from all communities and walks of life. It is encouraging that there have been no incidences of communal violence in housing cooperatives. In this context, and with adequate support in the removal of constraints to their smooth functioning, housing cooperatives can be expected to play a substantial role in national development and national integration.

The first chapter deals with the of evolution of the welfare state, stating how over centuries the welfare state came into being. The second chapter deals with the evolution of cities and also talks of urban planning. It also discusses the lacunae in urban planning, leading to the growth of slums. Three case studies of slums in Kolkata, Hyderabad and Delhi have been given at the end of the chapter. Definitions and characteristics of slums are discussed in the third chapter in detail, supported by case studies and statistical data. The fourth chapter highlights the government initiatives and refers to various schemes which were put forth at the Centre and State levels. The details of the cooperative movement in general and housing cooperatives in particular, comes in the fifth chapter. While the sixth chapter stimulates the need for forming the multi-purpose cooperatives among slum dwellers, and thus contributing in national development. The concluding seventh chapter summarizes the study by proposing how a multi-purpose cooperative society can be formed and also suggestions and strategies are given at the end which can be followed. The study has been supported by tabular and statistical details throughout and is appended by an appendix and rich bibliography list.