ABSTRACT

Urbanization, which is inevitable, is directly linked with the process of Economic Development. With the aggressive economic policies and renewed emphasis on Urbanization in India which is a challenge as well as an opportunity, the stage is set to experience a rapid pace of Urban Growth. Urban Infrastructure consists of Physical Infrastructure as Water, Sewerage, Drainage, Solid Waste Management, Road, Urban Transport, Urban Transport Infrastructure and Street Light as well as Social Infrastructure like Schools and Hospitals. The present thesis deals with the Physical Infrastructure.

The preliminary results from most recent Census 2011 shows a positive trend towards a rapid pace of Urbanization indicating a highest ever increase in the census towns and reversal of decline in the net increase in the percentage point in the level of Urbanization over previous decades occurring since 1981. The States with higher levels of Urbanization also have higher levels of State GDP and Per Capita Income. The 12 states and Union Territories in India have already crossed 40% mark and are closely moving towards urban majority society.

Present research seeks to address this experience in an academic research backed by statistical data to prove my hypothesis that there is a Resource-Responsibility Gap and to provide a Constitutional and Legal solution to urban problems by creating a Municipal List. The prime concern of this study is to show that the Urban Sector has long been neglected and that it should get its due share of focus and priority for overall Economic Growth. Role of Urban Infrastructure in planned Urbanization and Synergy between Urbanization, Rural Development, Economic Development and Human Development has been shown. The issues concerns and special requirements of Women, Children, Elders, Physical Handicapped and Urban Poor are closest to my heart and hence have a special mention.

Present study demonstrates that the Urban Sector in India faces a severe shortage of Urban Infrastructure due to long neglect in the field. This fact has been brought up in Reports, Recommendations, HPEC Recommendation, McKinsey Report and several other Studies. All these Reports are in the form of Recommendations reflecting the Government point of views, concerns and limitations. This thesis is an Academic Study of all the sectors of Urban
Infrastructure and the problems being faced by the Urban Governance i.e. The Municipal Corporations and Urban Local Bodies in Urban Infrastructure provision for its city dwellers residence.

Rural Development has been the focus of development in India and all the other sectors have been dealt in isolation and hence the positive affect of one sector has not been fully transferred to the other sectors and at times one sector has been antagonistic to the other. In contrast an integrated model with synergy between Rural Development, Urban Development, Economic Development and Human Development has been focused.

The main reason of urban neglect was that the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act was not implemented in spirit. Though the responsibility of providing Urban Infrastructure Services have been transferred, however, the transfer of financial resource has been left to the State Government who has not performed jobs as was desired. Those States which have delegated powers and made their ULB's financially strong, have shown fast Economic Growth. This point has been highlighted for other States to follow.

Present research indicates that the small towns and peri-urban areas are the fastest emerging sectors in the Indian urban scenario. There is a severe Urban Infrastructure shortage in all the cities; the Problem is most serious in the small towns and peri-urban areas. Since these centers have strong rural connections hence focus on these emerging giants is essential for both the Rural and Urban Sectors. Findings of present research suggest that there is an urgent need to focus on the Urban Sector in general and peri-urban and small towns in particular.

In summary, present research confirms a number of key findings in relation to the problem of Urban Development. The chief of which are lack of Urban Infrastructure due to long neglect of the Urban Sector leading to backlog and future demands due to urban population increase and likely to further increase in the coming years. The Center, States and ULB's have to gear up to meet this challenge. 74th CAA was the first step and creation of a Municipal List should be the second step which shall bridge the Resource-Responsibility Gap and enable the ULB's to perform the responsibilities enshrined to them regarding Urban Infrastructure Services which is the key to Urbanization, Economic Development, and Human Development.