

# Urban development and informed

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hefty financial overlay and consultancy input. The plan documents have been prepared and the respective terms of reference of the concerned consultants exhausted. However, no guideline of these plan is ever referred to or consciously followed. Master plans of Quetta, Lahore and the secondary cities of the Punjab and the NWFP face the same fate. 4. The sewerage disposal system of Pakistani cities has virtually no treatment facility of any grade. With very few exceptions, the entire urban waste water is directly fed into the nearest water body, natural creek, ravines, hillocks, trenches, etc. The status of urban environmental sanitation in majority of medium and small urban settlements is below habitable level. Waste water is channelled

er cities.

7. Important urban development and management decisions are delayed at times for no reasons. Resource crunch is cited as the universal excuse for not acting as per the developmental priorities, even in case of those which do not have any expenditure outlay. At certain ends, the decisions about the re-allocation and appropriation of resources are taken without any logical connection to the city development agenda.

On the other hand, decisions are withheld in situations where direct allocation or utilisation of finances have no consequence. The decision related to Karachi Division Physical Planning Agency (KDPPA) is an example. It is important to note that the city of Karachi has had no legally approved master plan for development and management

for the last two decades. On the initiative of the city planners and professionals, an exercise was undertaken to create a planning agency for the city. The group of professionals, after a thorough analysis, recommended to the Sindh government that the existing Master Plan and Environmental Control Department of KDA (MPECD) should be assigned the task of planning for Karachi. It was found to be the most appropriate and cost-effective option since no new investment or bureaucratic shuffle was needed. However, after two years of this exercise, a decision in this regard is still awaited. Similarly, the exercise to revise the Karachi building and town planning regulations was begun in 1997. Despite an exhaustive professional input on a voluntary basis by professional architects,

engineers and planners, the matter still awaits a decision. It simply proves the fact that the government decision-makers do not even take decisions where no direct cost or expenditure is involved.

8. A large number of urban development projects involve resettlement which has little or no precedence in the past. As the people against resettlement normally carry a strong voice, the projects become grossly affected leading to an absolute stagnation. The case of Sabzi Mandi relocation in Karachi is an example. The old mandi was to be relocated to the new premises which was constructed at a site in the suburbs of the city. However, despite its completion, the shifting has not taken place due to various reasons. There are disputes related to allotment and occupation

# decision-making

which compounded during each regime and could not be resolved. Grievances and fears of various interest groups such as labourers and small-scale transporters could not be mitigated. As provisions for labour colony or settlement are not done, the operators are skeptical of the immediate functioning and sustenance of the enterprise. Besides, there has been no workable strategy of relocation developed to the satisfaction of the stakeholders which has caused concern among them.

9. In some large- and medium-sized cities, building and zoning regulations are applicable. These regulations are largely based on the pre-independence examples of the British Indian format of building and town planning considerations. Needless to say that these are largely outdated and against the

norms of the life styles now prevalent in the society. The market forces that govern development, sale and purchase of real estate reduce building and zoning bylaws/regulations to an unimplementable status. In Karachi where there is a separate agency in the shape of Karachi Building Control Authority (KBCA) to control the building activity, the violation of bylaws is rampant. Several reasons exist to this effect. One, the bylaws are not compatible to the life style and social norms of the people. Two, they do not accommodate the building practices of a vast majority of individual builders mostly from low-income brackets. Three, they are not in correspondence with the implementation and enforcement capacity of the agencies. And

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Waste water is channelled through open drains which in turn connect to nullahs/creeks and is finally disposed of into the natural outlet without any kind of treatment. In secondary cities of Sindh it was found that the respective municipal bodies had no means and capacity to maintain the water/sewerage related distribution/drainage channels. Nawabshah, Sakrand, Moro, Mirpurkhas, Jacobabad, Thatta, Sujawal and Badin are a few example. Situation in other provinces is a little different.

5) As the size and complexity of cities/city affairs is increasing, there is a decline in the routine performance of municipal administration. The capacity to

Manage urban areas

manage urban areas, maintain public infrastructure and organize common good activities has virtually collapsed. The municipalities or development authorities have no capacity to develop and upgrade city maps, prepare and maintain records and undertake basic survey work. This is evident from the fact that almost all the urban master plans have been prepared through the technical and financial support of external donor agencies and consulting organizations.

6. Resource base of the municipalities has become too thin. After abolishing octori, the municipalities have to wait for the federal government to release resources. Property tax, betterment tax, fire and conservancy tax all generate a feeble revenue base, at least for small-