Mutated Governance, Political Participation and Development Dynamics: Case Study of Delhi
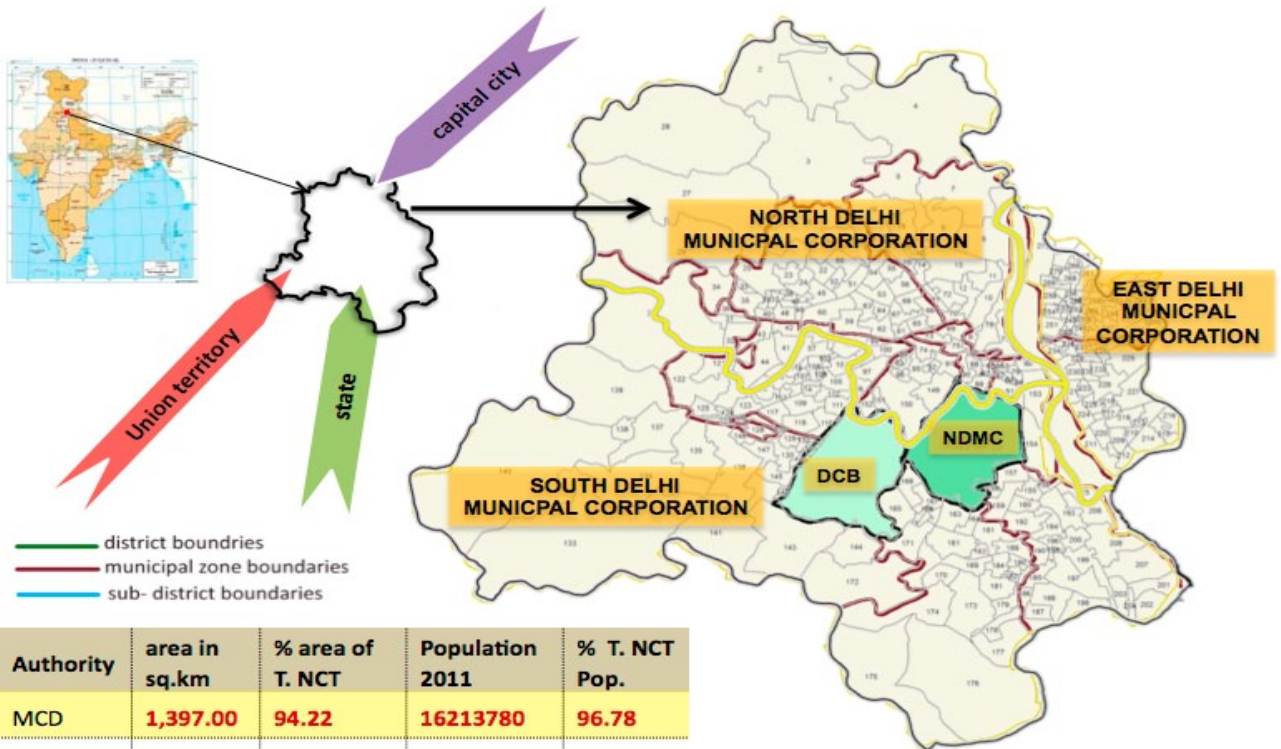
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with Contributions from Aparna Soni

Delhi as of today, has gone through several changes both in terms of its status, from that of a 'State' to that of 'Union Territory' since independence, and in terms of urban growth. Delhi Municipal Corporation Act of 1957 created Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) covering the entire Union Territory but excluding New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC) and Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB). In this new creation, MCD took over the functions previously enjoyed by ten local bodies (municipalities, notified area committees, Delhi District Board and three para statal agencies: Delhi State Electricity Board, Delhi Road Transport Authority and Delhi Joint Water and Sewerage Board) (Delhi Development Report: 2008). The mutation of the Governance system in Delhi started since Independence of India, and the reasons often placed before the public was 'Delhi is a National Capital' and needs special treatment. National Capital

district boundries
municipal zone boundaries
sub- district boundaries

| Authority	area in sq.km	% area of T. NCT	Population 2011	% T. NCT Pop.
MCD	1,397.00	94.22	16213780	96.78
NDMC	42.74	2.88	368571	2.20
DCB	42.97	2.90	170884	1.02
NCT	1,482.71	100.0	16753235	100

NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY DELHI - INDIA

Territory of Delhi (NCTD) has many features of the State but with curtailed powers. The Parliament of India has over riding powers to enact any laws for Delhi on subjects transferred to Delhi, apart from the powers it has given to the Central Government such as land, public order, police and offences. In fact, the annual budget is to be laid down to the Assembly only after getting sanction from the President of India. No bill of Amendment relating to financial matters will be allowed in the Assembly without the recommendations of the Lt. Governor of Delhi who is appointed by the President. Hence, the decision taken by the Assembly or the Council of Ministers is not binding on Lt. Governor as in the case of other states. The Government of India through its various departments, the Government of NCTD, MDC, NDMC, DCB, apart from autonomous bodies of the Central and State Government such as Delhi Development Authority, Delhi Waster Supply and Sewerage Board, Delhi Transport Corporation, and Delhi Electricity Supply Undertaking all function within this geographic space conflicting and contesting with each other. 'The Citizen is confused about the agency that should be approached for a particular service or grievance' (DDR:2008).

However, within this limited manoeuvrability, experimentation to centralise and decentralise and to make the people participate through incentives in the development process has been going on over the past few decades. Sometimes these were forced by the Supreme Court decisions, and many times due to achieve political consolidation. These related to decentralisation through Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) instead of elected representatives at the Ward level, Local Area Plan preparations by the Delhi Development Authority through Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and the recent division of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) into three separate Municipal Corporations: North Delhi, South Delhi and East Delhi (see the figure given above) for the purpose of governance.

Delhi had a population of 1.67 Million in 2011 with a growth rate of 20.96% between 2001-2011. It had a density of 11,297 persons per sq.km. less than Chennai. Number of Ministers in the council is restricted by the Delhi Administration Act to be 10% of the Members of the Assembly (70) (DDR:2008, p.63). As a result, Delhi has 352 elected members consisting of 10 members of Parliament (Center), 70 members representing State Legislature Assembly and 272 Ward Councillors representing 272 wards. Due to partial acceptance of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, Delhi is not allowed to have Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC). However, it has formed Wards Committee with limited powers. This is again restricted to
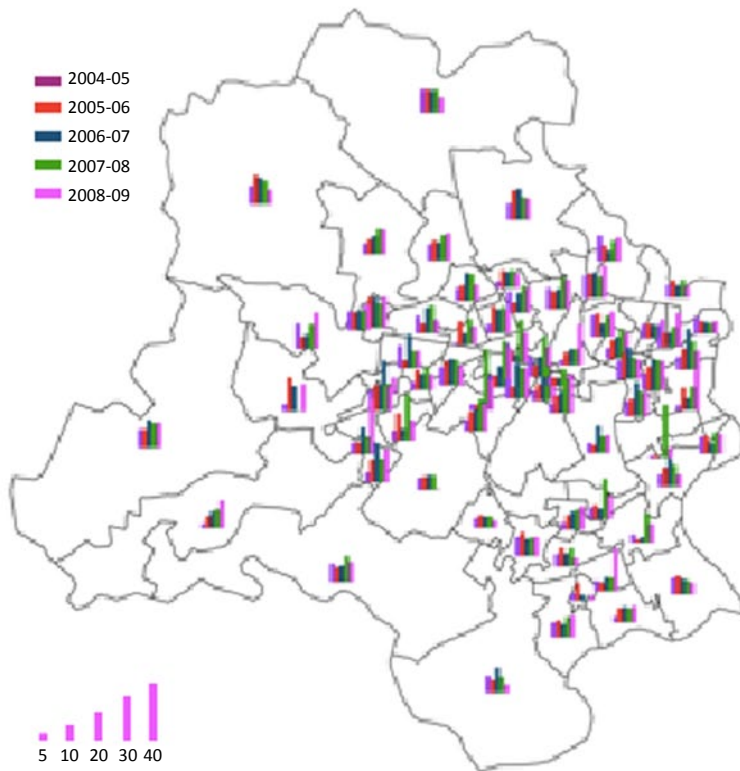
21.4 Rs = 1 Peruvian nuevo sol
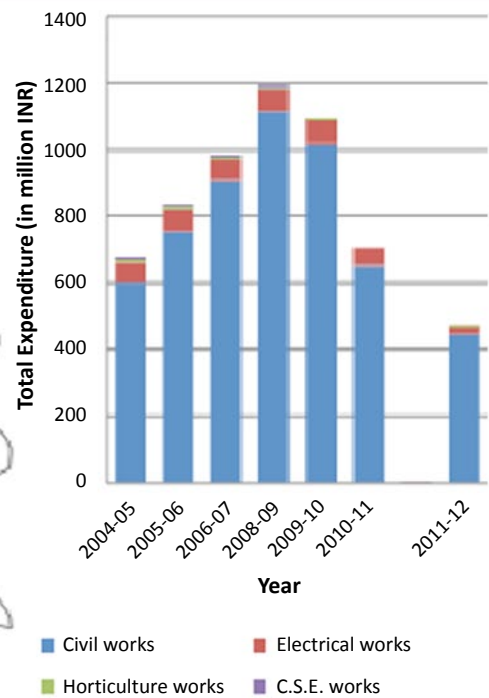
Note: These figures are for verified amounts only. The figures for 2009-2012 have data gaps due to pending verification of bills. Updated figures for 2010-11 are not available.

Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which is now divided in to three Municipal Corporations. New Delhi Municipal Committee area and Delhi Cantonment Area do not have Wards Committee. Delhi as a whole has 61,593 persons per ward as compared to Mumbai's 45,049 persons, and Kolkata's 31,881 persons per ward (Sridhar & Kashyap:2012). The average per capita capital as well as revenue expenditure (Rs. 2032 and Rs. 4571 respectively) is also low compared to Mumbai (Rs. 3433 and Rs.9888) (Ibid:p.15). The figure above shows that the funds allotted to Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to spend for development work in their area reduced in terms of spending after 2008-09. If one observes most of the expenditure is on Civil Works (road construction) as compared to other development expenditure. In the case of Councillors (Municipal Councillor) Funding, the amount spent increased two times over previous years in 2008-2009 and to subsequently decreased 3 times in 2009-10. The total amount per Councillor increased to Rs.25.50 Million (US$ 0.464 Million) and the Assembly Members get Rs. 40 Million (US$ 0.727 Million) each. This has also resulted in an average per capita budget deficit of Rs. 177

(US$ 3.22). The local councillors are were not aware of any mega projects coming to their area or involved in any major decision making projects being implemented in their area by the State Government. In fact there were conflicts exist between the State sponsored Bhagidari scheme involving Resident Welfare Associations and the Councillors.

Thus the mutation of governance system with the creation of three Municipal Corporations and the presence of several Central and State level agencies have made the peoples' participation less perceptible in the governance process in Delhi.

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