The Hindu□□□□□□ 28.12.2017□□

GIS mapping to help increase revenue in ULBs

Urban Local Bodies in the State eligible for grants under AMRUT

By bringing in under-assessed and unassessed properties into its purview with utilisation of satellite property mapping technology, the Department of Municipal Administration is expecting at least a 25% rise in property tax revenue this financial year in the 72 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across Telangana.

Highlights and honours

Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration (CDMA) T.K. Sreedevi said on Wednesday that the increase in revenue would happen without increasing the tax rates. “This is being done without increasing the tax rates, but concentrating on the under-assessed and unassessed properties in municipal areas. We will utilise Geographic Information System (GIS) and satellite mapping technology to ensure all properties are assessed. Already, there was a 14% increase in tax collection amounting to Rs. 42 crore over the base rate so far,” she explained.

Highlighting the Department's achievements over this year, she said that the Skoch medal was awarded for taking 23 municipal services online. "Land registry can now be done through satellite mapping, while complaint redressal and ease of doing business have been simplified," she told a media briefing.

Ms. Sreedevi claimed that the emphasis on online services at citizen service centres across ULBs had eliminated the need for middlemen. This was aided by mobile applications like Citizen Buddy, she said.

She took pride in the fact that most ULBs are ready to be declared Open Defecation Free, according to the wishes of the Municipal Administration Minister K.T. Rama Rao and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao. Construction of 'She' toilets and public toilets through the involvement of self-help groups paid dividends, the director added. "We had a brainstorming session with ULBs about our short-term and long-term priorities as an exercise before going ahead with implementation of plans," said Ms. Sreedevi.

Resource efficiency

Besides, ULBs were also provided the necessary expertise and guidance for reducing wasteful expenditure as well as energy saving. “Almost 3.35 lakh LED lights have been installed, converting it from conventional lightning in 36 ULBs. With another 20,000 street-lights to be retrofit, all ULBs would be equipped with energy efficient streetlights,” she quipped.

The CDMA said ULBs in the State had become eligible for grants under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme and the 14th Finance Commission due to adherence to audits and efficient financial performance coupled with service-level benchmarks, issuance of certificates and sanitation.

Skill development

The Department was equally focused on providing skill development training to the unemployed urban youth, she said. While emphasis would be on providing soft skills for the IT/ITES industries, it would also train youth to get jobs in the manufacturing sector.

In this light, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the National Small Scale Industries Corporation, said Ms. Sreedevi.

Also, making use of the Centre's Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme, the CDMA has been trying to dovetail the banks and other financial institutions to provide loans and promote self housing for the low and middle income families with annual income up to Rs. 18 lakh, she concluded.

Emphasis on online services at citizen service centres across ULBs eliminated the need for middlemen. This was aided by mobile applications like Citizen Buddy.

T.K. Sreedevi

Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration