

NEW DELHI, OCT 23: A study conducted by the Centre for Civil Society (CCS) on the Delhi government and municipal corporation has found severe flaws in delivery of basic and essential services and lack of efficient infrastructure.

The study brought to light some startling facts. The prevention of food adulteration (PFA) department in the Delhi government has only 28 food inspectors to oversee 1.50 lakh food establishments. The study said that with such low manpower in place, it would be able to inspect a single food outlet only once in 17 years. The number of food inspectors in the PFA department has not changed since 1960.

The drugs control department of the state government has 29 drug inspectors for inspecting 5,000 drug retailers. The fake drug market in the city is estimated at Rs 4,000 crore per year.

The study entitled 'State of Governance' also found that over 80 per cent of the children who pass out from class V in corporation schools do not know how to read or write their names. The Delhi Transport Corporation employs 12 people per bus and incurs a monthly loss of Rs 25 crore, whereas private operators employ 6 persons per bus and earn profit.

The farmers pay 7-15 per cent of their sale proceeds as commission to commission agents at the regulated wholesale markets controlled by the Delhi Agriculture Marketing Board.

Delhi has 36 'safai karamcharis' (scavengers) per 10,000 persons while all other metros have about 18 'safai karamcharis' per 10,000 and, yet Delhi is not as clean compared to other cities.

Over Rs 4 crore taxpayers' money has been wasted under the Old Age Pension Scheme as 37.5 per cent of the beneficiaries were found ineligible. In 168 cases, the beneficiaries by name were dead persons, however, the department of social welfare continued to send them pensions despite being informed by local post offices, the study said.

The study further said the labour department rendered a subsidy of Rs 1,545 per person for stay at Holiday Home at Mussoorie and Rs 2,612 per person for stay at Holiday Home at Haridwar in 2000-01. The CCS in its report concluded that the Delhi Financial Corporation has overstated its profits by at least Rs 171.25 lakh and its reserves and surplus by Rs 78.99 lakh in 2002-03. Only 3.6 per cent of the MLA Local Area Development Scheme fund were spent in 1999-2000. However, it is encouraging to note that this fund utility rose to 52.2 per cent in 2002-03.

The study notes that though the Licence-Permit Raj has been abolished in the industry, it exists in other areas. To open a school in a slum or a barber shop or a dhaba or to sell ice cream, water, fruits, vegetables on the roadside licences are necessary. Since licences are limited, people do business as usual without them and this results in regular harassment and extortions by policemen. In this context, the study said that on one hand the

government is pouring money through employment generation schemes and on the other hand it is preventing the people from earning a honest living.

Alternately, the study suggests a new public management (NPM). It suggests rendering of clean subsidies to identified beneficiaries like food coupons to families living below the poverty line (BPL) and education vouchers to poor children for purchase of books, levying water tax on actual users instead of a flat rate on all and hospitals should contract services in which it has less competence.

