



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
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Member of Standing Committee on Finance
Member of Consultative Committee on Finance
Member of Parliamentary Forum on Youth
Co-Chairman, Vigilance & Monitoring Committee, Bangalore Urban District
Vice Chairman, National Military Memorial Management Trust, Bangalore

26 November, 2013

Dear Shri Kamal Nath Ji,

As you may be aware, the Department of Urban Development of the Government of Karnataka has released a notification on draft rules for the constitution of a Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) for the Bangalore Metropolitan Area, and invited comments from the general public on these rules. The said Notification dated 07.11.2013 is enclosed for your reference.

The Constitutional Amendment Act requiring devolution of powers and responsibilities to municipal bodies was passed in 1992. In all these years, none of the states have met its requirements in full. And while the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) laid out many conditions (provisions of the Amendment Act) that were to be met by the states, the funds under the Mission were released to the states despite their continuing non-compliance with those conditions.

Even today, this charade continues. The draft MPC notification deviates from the mandate of the 74th Amendment Act, both in letter in spirit. Integrated statutory planning, citizen participation, greater executive powers to Mayors and Presidents - all of these have been given the go-by. Even the minimum expectation that the MPC should have jurisdiction over a "metropolitan region" has been diluted.

I urge you to have a proper law enacted - one that adheres to the letter and spirit of the Amendment Act. The Union Government cannot be seen as urging real reforms on the one hand, and cooperating in its dilution, on the other. It is absolutely imperative that the Union Government insist upon the states' passing MPC laws that achieve all three goals - a formal role for citizens in governance (including budgeting and oversight), a regional scope for the MPC, and enhanced executive powers for elected leaders in municipal bodies.



Only this will have a realistic chance of transforming urban governance. This is especially critical today, as the country is going through rapid urbanization. The framework that is put in place today will have lasting implications for the way our cities are governed in the future, and consequently for their livability, inclusiveness and economic vitality.

I look forward to your intervention in upholding Parliament's clear intent in passing the 74th Amendment Act.

Yours Sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Shri Kamal Nath
Hon'ble Minister of Urban Development
Government of India
New Delhi