Smart Nagarpalika Computerization Of Urban Local Bodies (Municipalities)

Introduction

The urban local bodies in the towns and cities of the country are autonomous and are managed by elected representatives. These bodies, also known as Municipalities, are responsible for the management and upkeep of the civic amenities in the town or the city. For this purpose they collect taxes such as property tax, water tax, etc. which form the revenue for the local body/municipality. In addition, the local body is also responsible for registration of births and deaths, and issue of building permissions and trade license. Following is the comprehensive list of functions executed by municipality/local body:

- Birth and deaths registrations
- Property tax
- Water tap connections and charges
- Advertisement tax
- Financial accounting
- Building permissions
- Grievance redressal
- Project and works monitoring system (PROMS)
- Dangerous and offensive trade license
- Assets and inventory
- Court cases monitoring

The NIC, Under the Department of Information Technology of the Ministry of Communications and Information's Technology, Government of India, has taken the lead in constituting a national level project called "SMART Nagarpalika" wherein all the above subjects have been studied in-depth with Andhra Pradesh as the pilot State. A detailed systems requirements specifications (SRS) report has been prepared and the same has been utilized as basis for

developing the software on the above subjects. The following sections deal in details with the functionalities of each of these software modules:

Births and Deaths Registrations

Registration of Births and Deaths is one of the major activity of Municipality and is done in compliance with the AP registrations of Births and Deaths rules 1999, which are drawn from the Registration of Birth and Deaths Centre Act 1969. Registrar-General appointed by Central or state government maintains the registers of births and deaths recorded.

Birth and death occurring within the geographical zone of a municipality has to be reported to that municipality within 14 days in case of births and 7 days in case of deaths. Hospitals are responsible for reporting the event of a birth or death occurred at their premises; if the event occurs at home then head of the family or any neighbor is responsible for reporting.

For the birth or death which is not reported within the specified period, but reported within one month of its occurrence, late fee is applicable. In case birth and death reported after one month and within one year of its occurrence, late fee and affidavit have to be submitted. If the reporting is still delayed, then magisterial order and no non availability certificate have to be submitted along with the late fee.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of the births and deaths registration module

- Registering of births and deaths
- Issuing of birth, death and non-availability certificates
- Generation of field verification report
- Generation of birth and death registers
- Generation of monthly and yearly statistical report
- Closure of the registrars at the end of year
- Provision for inclusion of name.

Salient Features

The Following are the salient features of births and deaths registration module:

- Maintaining the fee collections
- Standardization of master details
- Maintenance of statistical information
- printing of acknowledgement/receipt
- Online status enquiry

Property Tax

Property tax is a tax paid on property owned by an individual or other legal entity, such as a corporation. Most commonly, property tax is a real estate ad-valorem tax, which can be considered a regressive tax. It is calculated by a local government where the property is located and paid by the owner of the property. Property tax is one of the prime revenue sources of the municipalities. Property tax is levied by all municipalities by a resolution of the Municipal Council. The tax companies components such as tax for general purpose, water and drainage, lighting and scavenging. Property tax aspect is handled by revenue section in the municipality. The various functions concerning to property tax are assessment of buildings/lands, current/arrear-demand collection, title transfers, revision petitions, appeal petitions etc.

Objectives

- Standardization of procedures and norms for assessment and collection leading to uniformity.
- Standardization of revenue zones, wards, blocks, locality, complex apartments, building age and depreciation.
- Ease in tracking demand and collection of assessments category-wise.
- Fixation of monthly rental values, tax standards, penalty rate and tax components.

Water Tap Connections and Charges

The Municipalities on request issue water tap connections to the owners of the buildings. Connections are sanctioned based on the category and availability of resources by the municipal commissioner. Connection charge and deposits are to be paid by the citizen. Water tap connections are of four types: domestic non-metered tap, domestic metered tap, commercial metered tap, industrial metered tap. The water tap connection may be disconnected by the Municipality in case of long standing dues from the user. The re-connection is possible by clearing the dues and paying the necessary re-connection charges. Illegal tap connections can be regularized by paying regulations charges.

The various functions concerning water tap connections and charge are issuing water tap connections, regulations of illegal tap connections, work order, demand/arrear raising and collection of tariff, etc., all achieve the following objective:

Financial Accounting

The accounting system being followed in municipality flows from a system adopted in 1930s where the local bodies have control over all the activities being undertaken in their domain. The tax structure is also designed to meet the expenditure incurred in the fields of lighting, public, health, preventive medicine, scavenging, education-elementary and secondary, water supply and drainage, town planning, maintenance of remunerative enterprise like markets, slaughter houses, etc. and endowments. The accounting system is so designed that income and expenditure in each of the areas can be ascertained at the end of the financial year and tax structure can be suitable modified. The general fund is meant for creation of new assets and

improvements of facilities in the area under the municipality, Based on the activities in municipality, the functions are assigned to various section for better monitoring and control. The major sections in the municipality are revenue, engineering, town planning, public health, accounting etc. The financial accounting module being developed will address the requirements of these sections by integrating the activities.

Assets and Inventory

The web enabled Assets and Inventory module establishes assets and inventory management for the municipal administration. The asset will keep track of complete information of assets owned by the municipality right from age old till today. The inventory part will keep record of the items procedure for the maintenance of the assets and serviceable goods.

The functional requirements are, recording right from the nature of the asset as and when it arises, its maintenance procedures and event of asset sale. The inventory of the materials used for the maintenance of the asset and serviceable goods such as medicines, engineering items, stationary, which are classified as consumable, are recorded. The stock position of the materials dealt in the municipality is taken care of.

Conclusion

This case study surveys the software for computerization of Urban Local Bodies (Municipalities) under the title "SMART nagarpalika-Computerization of Urban Local Bodies (Municipalities)". Various subject such as Births and Deaths, Property Tax, Water Tap connections and Charges, Advertisement Tax, Financial Accounting, etc. are covered in details in terms of their software functionality and capabilities. This software is being implemented in many Municipalities in the country. It is also being supported by the Ministry of Urban Development.