

Solid waste management a treatise

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Abstract

The synergy between the people or community at large and the government urban local bodies has been the missing link in general towards the strategy of effective handling of solid waste at the urban level. The urbanisation trend since the 1990s has been at a faster pace than anticipated coinciding with the open economy in India. There was a boom towards privatisation and an open economy invited various players within and from outside the country to engage with the economic growth process. This participation and embracing of the open economy was not planned to handle the boom that was to come. The economists and the planners were caught unawares or had an estimate which went haywire when the boom happened. We are comparing this essay to the context of effective solid waste management and how the synergy can be brought about to enhance the role of both the community and the urban local body with respect to this task on hand. The economic opportunity was huge in terms of the population that we hold as a country for both the goods and services. We required a more strategic and methodical approach to the introduction of the open economy. I being a witness to the transition from closed economy to an open economy, where the government provided all the goods and services and the private sector had very less or minimum presence, to an open economy where the government, the local industry and the international goods and services had to compete with each other for their survival. This was a win situation for both the capitalist in terms of providing the best quality of products and services at reasonable cost and also for the consumer that could demand for the best product or service. There was this choice that was created, very good, but what was the preparation to handle the space for the goods and for handling the disposed waste from consuming these goods. The link between the services and goods also was very thin as all services to be provided required some good or the other to accomplish the service, wherein the computers were common factor over a period of time. This growth escalated with the Information Technology revolution which can be equated to the industrial revolution of the late 1700s to the early 1800s, wherein the face of the world changed. We were in for a similar transformation and the pace was unprecedented. The industrialisation took a few decades as the revolution called for a machine approach to the traditional manual approach of production. This learning was slow paced in comparison to the IT revolution of the 2000s. This paper attempts to understand

the background from where it all began and how we have continuously been blind to several of the developments around us and carried on with our lives as usual business, especially with the ever growing challenge of urban solid waste management. The irony is, we all need to understand that every move we make towards development in creating a life comfort good or service, we are directly or indirectly generating some waste and a problem for ourselves. So why not be more careful than sorry at a later date, which we are today. So, herein we are attempting to decipher the fact as to how it all began and where we have arrived, how we traverse the journey we have embarked upon without even understanding what the destination would be. The time has come to think and think fast or as they say nature will take care of itself, when will humankind realize this. The message is clear and loud telling us do something fast and stop or you will perish from the face of the earth. Do we need more proof to act at least with less foolishness if not wisely. A thought for a necessary synergy for the community to support and extend its long, strong hand to the government, its responsible agencies in enabling better solid waste management for our cities in India. The traditional system of a settlement which has been understood to be self-sufficient in its own has been struck down by the series of revolutions that have occurred time and again. The containment in the lives and the limited wants had us as humans more happier and less sufferings, more so as recorded or known from history or the archives that are available. But with the growth of populations over the years the numbers to feed and demand for services forced the human mind to think beyond these boundaries of the settlements across the world. This necessity grew wings and converted to greed. Man as a living creature wanted comforts around him, ease of living, somebody else do my work so I can be relaxed or laid back, that's what started by mechanising production and trigger of the industrial revolution, followed by the concentration of communities into urban centres to enable industrial growth, multiplied with the technology revolution. So we created a multi-tier growth system which flourished on the foundation of the industrial revolution. However, the world wars did not slow down mankind, it rather boosted the growth factor of the world. Each power hungry country wanted to be now superior to the other not only militarily but also in terms of its existence with better infrastructure, providing better products to its citizens, better quality of life, etc.