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Model of Governance for Effective Implementation of Regional Plans and Development Plans in Maharashtra

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Abstract: ***For planning and development of a particular area, considering its infrastructure needs, Regional plans or Development plans are traditional instruments used. Over a period of time, it is realized that percentage of implementation has received less attention than formulation. Increase in ratio of effective execution is missing in Regional plans & Development plans in Maharashtra. Review of Regional plans & Development plans and analysis of its execution in state of Maharashtra is discussed in this paper. Thus, status of the execution of Regional plans & Development plan with identification of barriers in its implementation is focused. Also, solutions to avoid these barriers to some extents are proposed.***
Keywords: Regional plans, Development plans, Implementation, Governance, Legal provisions, Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Maharashtra is a leading state in India in terms of preparation of plans. Regional Plans of all 35 districts are prepared. Development Plans out of 536 towns 257 statutory town has DPs. In spite of having such a good record of plan preparation, the record of implementation has been poor. In process of development of any area, plan preparation takes about 10 % time and efforts, while 90% contribution of time and efforts lies with its implementation.

On average, only 30% of Development plans in Maharashtra are implemented till date. In spite having same kind of administration and resources, some ULBs have progressed far ahead than other ULBs in the state. This is mainly due to poor implementation of plans. ULBs where plans are not implemented properly, issues must lie within the effectiveness of administrative structures or the poor strategies they use for implementation.

The state of Maharashtra has history of regional disparity over the years. Districts in regions such as Konkan, Pune are developed far ahead of the other districts of regions such as Vidarbha, Marathwada due to poor implementation of Regional plans. In MRTP act, there are no provisions for implementation of regional plans, neither the authority held responsible for implementation of RP is specified. Even in District planning committee act 1998, implementation of RPs is not mentioned at all. There are no legal provisions or regulations, which will ensure the implementation are enforced, in case of both DPs and RPs.

This sums up to create an impression that, flexible administrative structure, strong legal provisions and smart strategies are necessary for effective implementation of Development plans and Regional plans, and such modifications should be done in current mechanism of implementation.

II. FAULTS IN EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

A. Finance

While preparing Regional plans, proposals are given without considering available financial resources. Thus, later resulting in shortage of finances at implementation stage. In case of Development plans, Funds allotted for development purpose to ULBs for implementation of DPs are very less. Due to high land values, it is difficult for authorities to acquire lands proposed under DPs. In big cities, where vertical development exists land acquisition is possible due to use of tools such as TDR. But same is not the case with less developed cities, where horizontal development exists.

B. Political Interference

Most of the underdeveloped regions/ ULBs are reported to face political interference in decision making and implementation stage. This happens because the elected representatives are not educated enough to understand their social responsibility or to be sensitive to the problems which common people face. Some proposals which do not benefit political agenda of specific leader, such proposals are given less importance during implementation. Political interference also exists in form of corruption, funds allocated for implementation purpose are not completely utilised for its sole purpose, ultimately resulting in poor delivery of services.

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C. Lack of Trained Personals

Lack of trained personals is another issue responsible for poor implementation of RPs and DPs. Those working on RP implementation are unaware of their roles, responsibilities and powers as well as the effective use of modern techniques. In smaller towns, there are lack of trained personals who understand DP tools like TDR, AR and their effective use for DP implementation. Most of political leaders such as Mayor, Nagar sevak are less aware of the whole process, need and effects of DP implementation. Also, many are not familiar with use of software such as GIS which could be used effectively for monitoring implementation. Many are incapable of visualising the aims and objectives of RPs & DPs. Lack of technical experts and modern techniques causes delay in implementation process.

D. Lack of Interdepartmental Co-ordination

There is lack of Interdepartmental Co-ordination between implementing agencies. RP once published implementation is done directly by govt agencies or indirectly by private agencies. Ex: Govt only request PWD for implementation but there is no compulsion on PWD to implement those proposals.

E. Lack of Public Participation

Public participation is most crucial factor which could lead to successful implementation of DPs. Currently, to involve common people in development process, concept of Area Sabhas is enforced as a fourth tier of government below ward level. Where corporators are expected to held meetings in their respective areas for discussion of issues and suggestions from common people for development of that areas. But in reality, these meeting are hardly conducted apart from few areas in big cities.

F. Lack of Planners convincing Skills

In most cases, proposals are ignored as planner could not convince his ideas to politicians / decision makers.

G. Regressive mentality of people

People in underdeveloped region have regressive mentality towards earning more. Also, they are less willing to adopt modern techniques to increase their income sources.

III. FAULTS IN EXISTING LEGAL PROVISIONS

A. Shortcomings in MRTP act, 1966.

Clear directions for implementation of Regional plans are lacking in MRTP act. No authority is held responsible for RP implementation in MRTP act. It initially mentions constitution of Area development authority or special development authority for implementation of all plans including regional plans, but further, fails to mention about allotment of functions to area development authority regarding implementation of Regional plans. No criteria for formulation of ADA by states is given. As a result, creates scope of biasness in creation of ADA in different regions by states.

Also, Monitoring and evaluation aspect of RP is not discussed at all. Time frame for RP implementation is not provided. Directions for Phasing and programming of RP implementation are not discussed at all. Under section 160, if the state government is satisfied with the purpose of planning, it may dissolve regional board but no such criteria confirming this satisfaction is stated.

Regional boards are obligated to involve and inform state government and so the state government to retort back in all stages of preparation and revision of regional plans but no such provision for monitoring the implementation process of regional plans is framed.

It is unclear that, to whom Purchase notice should be served in case of acquisition of land under the reservations of Regional plans, as no authority is held responsible for implementation of Regional plans. In case of development plans, Planning Authority is held responsible for implementation in section 42 of MRTP act, but there are no compulsions placed on these authorities for the same. The terms regarding DP implementation i.e., time frame, phasing, monitoring and evaluation lacks elaborated and clear directions in MRTP act, 1966.

B. Shortcomings in District Planning Committee act

District planning committee being the authority responsible for district level developments, it is not held responsible for implementation of regional plan in DPC act. Provision in DPC act, to mandate implementation of RP is essential.

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C. Violations in DCR

Violations in DCR is another aspect affecting the development process. In many instances it is observed that the ULBs deliberately accord development permissions to the private developers violating the DCR. Unauthorised construction by general public is another way of violations in DCR.

D. Use of Old Norms

Norms which are provided for Development plans years before are still the same. For Ex., Reservations of lands are not allotted considering the need of the city, but according to the norms. New norms should be designed according to current needs.

IV. STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANS

To improve percentage implementation of Development Plans, Smart strategies for improving finances at ULB level, which can be later utilised for its development are required. Involving reputed private institutions to achieve public purpose in DP implementation will decrease the financial burden. Changes in plan preparation stage will result in effective and qualitative implementation. Such as allotting reservations according to the need of the city rather than following the standards stated in DCR. Currently, plans are prepared with short term visions, by considering ESR long term solutions can be achieved. Importance should be given to wholistic city level development rather than development in pockets. Strategies to improve public participation and to bring transparency in the process should be incorporated. Smart strategies to improve quality of service delivery are required.

For development of the regions, Economic development- Economic growth of every region should be considered. Co- operative establishments should be promoted for boosting economy. Agencies who are implementing certain proposals, should be made responsible for their qualitative outcomes. Ex: agency which construct road should look after its maintenance for certain period.

V. FINDINGS

Based on the expert interviews conducted, following statistics are formed to identify the intensity of issues.

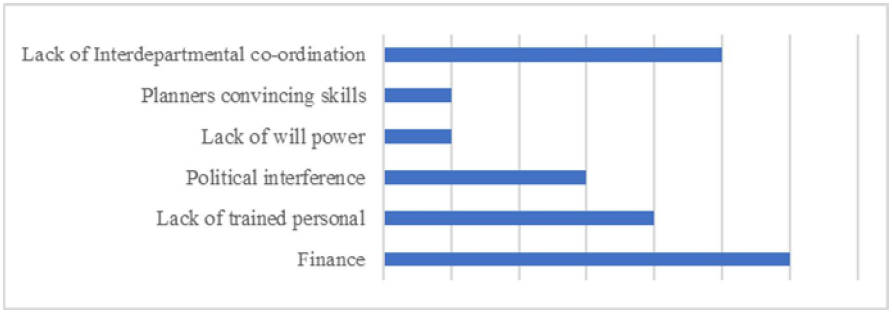


Fig. 1 Administrative issues in Implementation of RP

1) Majority of Expert rated finance as the major issue responsible for poor implementation of RPs, after that lack of interdepartmental co-ordination, lack of trained personal are held responsible.

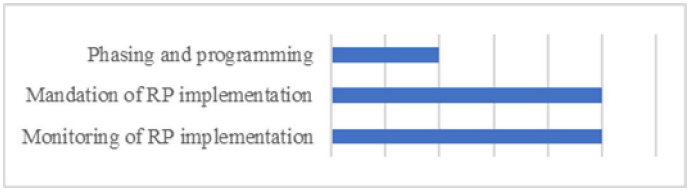


Fig. 2 Legal issues in Implementation of RP

2) Among all the legal problems, lack of mandating on RP implementation and monitoring the same are the issues majorly responsible by experts.

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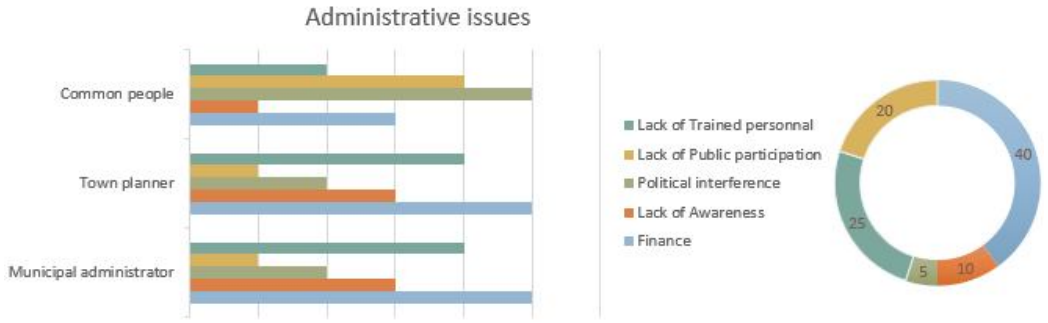


Fig. 3 Administrative issues in Implementation of DP

3) Finance is the main issue contributing to poor implementation of DPs, according to majority of experts. After that lack of trained personnel and lack of public participation are held responsible.

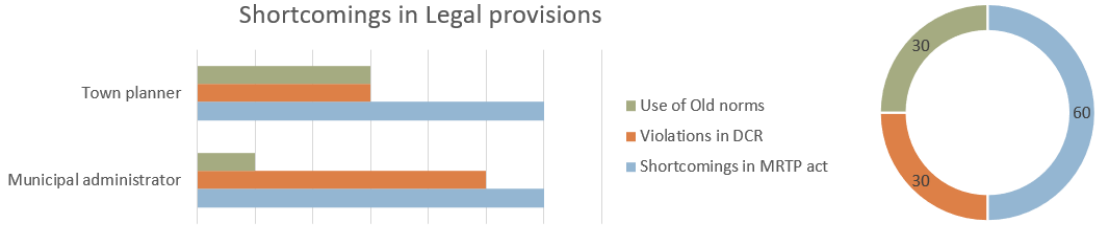


Fig. 4 Legal issues in Implementation of DP

4) Shortcomings in MRTP act are majorly held responsible by experts, for poor implementation of DPs.

VI. MODEL OF GOVERNANCE FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL PLANS

1) *Implementation of RP:* Addition of section on implementation of RP in MRTP act, 1966, where ADA and DPC should be held responsible for RP implementation. These authorities will also, carry out functions assigned to them regarding RP implementation. This will ensure mandatory implementation of RPs. Also, by specifying authority responsible for RP implementation, purchase notice can be sent to these authorities, and will resolve the unclarity of whom purchase notice should be sent in case of delayed land acquisition.

2) *Interdepartmental Co- ordination:* To improve interdepartmental co-ordination responsibilities of each department with respect to implementation of contents of Regional plan should be mentioned in MRTP act. This allotting of functions to each department will resolve the unclarity among departments about their roles & responsibilities. Also, there should be a provision in MRTP act to mandate Regional planning boards to consider plans prepared by these implementing agencies at plan preparation and implementation stage.

3) *Timeframe for RP implementation:* RP should be mandatorily executed within 20 years from the date it is sanctioned. Extension should be granted to authorities where implementation is not possible in given time period by state government after submission of application with proper reasoning.

4) *Phasing and programming:* Addition of section in MRTP act which suggests, Execution shall be carried out in 4 phases (5 years each), first 2 phases should be focused towards developing Revenue generating proposals. Phasing and programming can vary according to financial conditions and resource availability within regions.

5) *Monitoring and Evaluation of RP:* ADA/DPC shall constitute Monitoring cell in their respective region to keep the track of regional plan implementation. It is duty of Monitoring cell, so constituted to monitor Regional plan annually during its operation and shall evaluate it after 5 years from the date on which it is declared to be executed completely. Monitoring cell should be constituted with executive members, locally elected representatives and experts in the field of Regional planning as well. It should be mandatory to all implementation agencies to submit a progress report of implementation every year to the monitoring cell. This progress report should be evaluated based on quantitative as well as qualitative aspects. It should be evaluated if objectives of regional plans in terms of economic development, Environmental improvement & social advancement are achieved or not.

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6) District planning committee should be made cognizant with RP implementation by adding the function to execute RP in DPC act. Also, DPC should reserve separate fund head for RP implementation every year.
7) *Use of Cost-Benefit analysis*: Use of Cost-Benefit analysis at planning stage can minimise the hurdles associated with finance later at implementation stage. Helps to design realistic proposals which are possible to be implemented in near future within given time period. The cost-benefit analysis removes any emotional element by rational decision making and helps to overcome biases, provides plan for delivery, predicts the costs involved in each stage of implementation.

VII. MODEL OF GOVERNANCE FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS

1) *Encouraging Good performance of authorities:* Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) should evaluate general working of municipal authorities annually across the state. This evaluation can be based on percentage implementation of Development plans, quality of service delivery and satisfaction of citizens towards provided services. Authorities with best performance should be awarded with extra incentives for its development.
2) *Timeframe for DP implementation:* DP should be mandatorily executed within 10 years from the date it is sanctioned. Extension should be granted to authorities where implementation is not possible in given time period by state government after submission of application with proper reasoning.
3) *Phasing and programming:* Addition of section in MRTP act which suggests, Execution shall be carried out in 2 phases (5 years each), initial phase should be focused towards developing Revenue generating proposals. Phasing and programming can vary according to financial conditions and resource availability within regions.
4) *Monitoring and Evaluation of RP:* Planning Authority shall monitor Development plan annually during its operation and shall evaluate it after 5 years from the date on which it is declared to be executed completely by Planning authority. All the agencies involved in service delivery should submit progress report on services they provide every year to authority. Planning authority should take necessary decisions on policies, resource allocations, incentives/ penalties for improving service outcomes. Evaluation should be done based on quantitative as well as qualitative aspects.
5) *Encouraging Public Private partnership:* Government should incorporate policies which promote use of public private partnership. Suggested models of PPP in each sector are given in table below.

TABLE I
suggested models of ppp in each sector

Facility	PPP model
Education	B-O-T
Health care	B-O-T, PFI
Transport	D-B-F-O, B-O-T
Water Supply & Sanitation	D-B-O, B-O-T, B-O-O-T
Shopping Malls & Gardens	B-O-T, B-O-O
Industries	B-O-O

These models are proposed on the basis of their convenience in particular sector and their usage in that sector across the globe.

6) *Training Working staff, Stakeholders involved in RP and DP:* these programmes should be conducted by state level institutes such as YASHADA on regular basis to upgrade technical support and encourage service delivery. The program should cover topic on Rules & regulations involved in implementation of RP/DP, Use of GIS, Land Acquisition (Tools and Procedures), Functions, role & responsibilities of their respective departments, Information on existing Govt. schemes, Information on working & government business of their respective departments, Ethics and values in Administration.
7) *Orientation programme for politicians:* Bold attempt should be made by arranging Specially designed orientation program for elected politicians of ULBs. This program should be designed to impart the sense of their responsibility towards development of their area and society. This seminar can be conducted by state level institute such as YASHADA.

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8) *Online tool to increase Public Participation:* Public participation in Development process can be improved by providing online platform which could be accessed by all. An Internet based tool will open up an opportunity to get connected with all on one platform without any limitation of area, background, qualification, etc. This tool can have information of proposals in DP in a format which is easily understandable by common public. This way people will get connected with the issues, initiatives and administration by the Government. This platform can also be used for assessment of the satisfaction levels of citizens with regard to public services. This tool will help to get community involvement in identification of issues and initiatives. Active participation of all (NGOs, communities, experts, administration) in defining the Action Plan for the City. "Watch" on implementation with pro-activeness by all.

9) *Linking with Area Sabhas:* This tool can also be linked for improving the functioning of Area Sabhas. Notification of meetings can be displayed on this platform. This will enable corporators to conduct meetings at regular basis, as public is aware of such meetings. Also, issues reported at this platform by public can be further discussed in Area Sabha meetings and suggestions by public will be considered. Satisfaction levels of people about the services delivered in their area can be accessed.

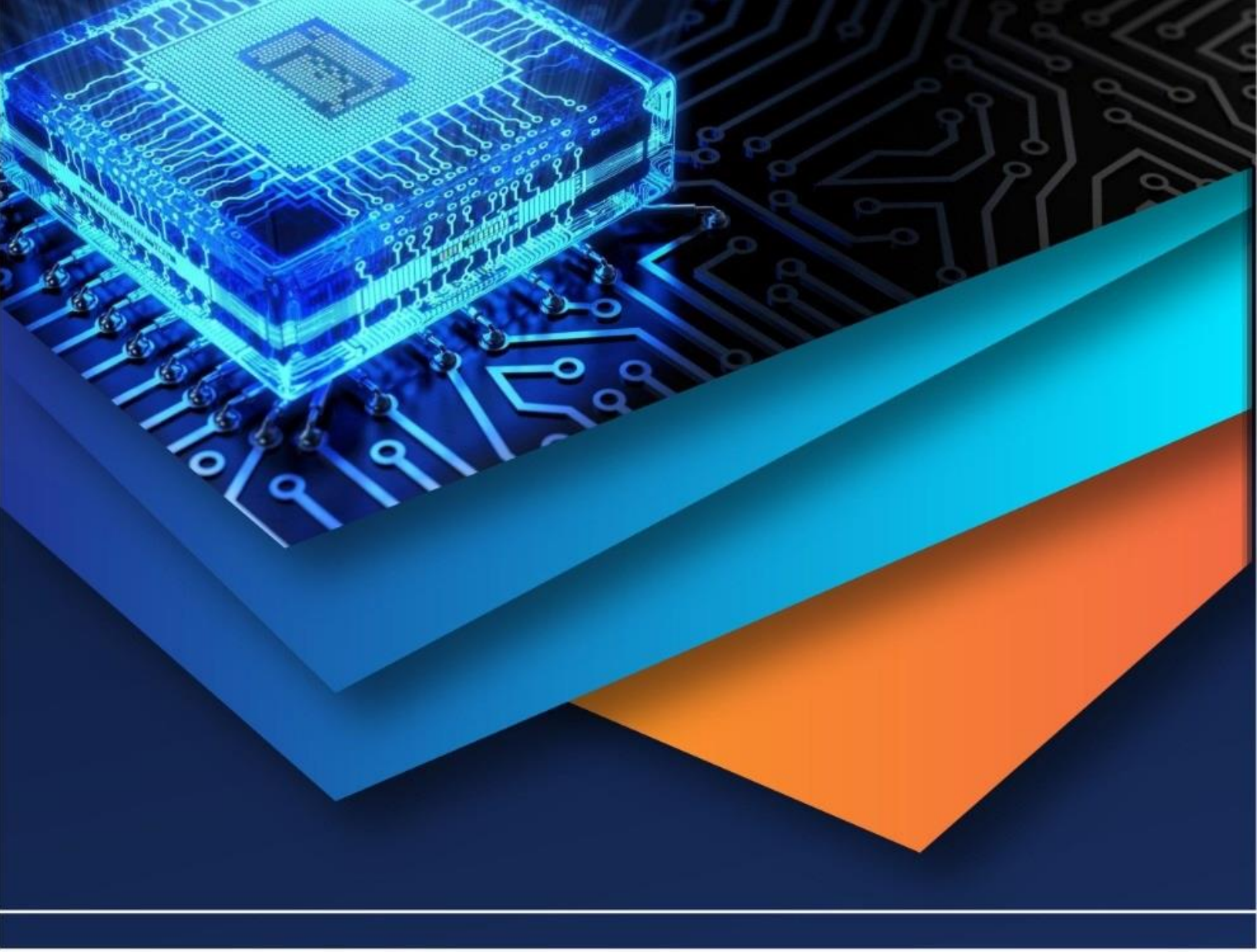
VIII. CONCLUSIONS

A comprehensive implementation framework based on judicious allocation of financial and institutional resources in a coordinated manner is a must for the successful implementation of a plan. For successful implementation of RPs & DPs, strict legal actions against violations in given implementation framework are necessary. The implementation framework needs to be updated from time to time according to the changing situations of society, in case of both RP and DP.

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