



Cooperatives Department

At a Glance

Functions

The Cooperatives Department is entrusted with the responsibility of registering and supervising cooperative societies in Delhi. Other main functions include audit/ inspection and cancellation of cooperative societies, approval of their bye-laws, and arbitration of disputes that arise among members of such societies.

Findings

Cooperative societies are regulated by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCS), who is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi under the Delhi Cooperative Societies (DCS) Act, 1972.

- Of the 5,351 cooperative societies, over 60% are in the urban credit, housing, and banking sector.
- During the entire Ninth Five Year Plan period (1997–2002), the number of cooperative societies in Delhi remained almost *stagnant*—there were about 5,351 cooperative societies on 2001-02 as against 5,248 in 1996-97.
- The total approved plan outlay for the Department in the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997–2002) was Rs 417 lac, and the Department spent only about 50% of these funds.
- In the year 2001–02, a committee was constituted to draft a new Cooperative Bill to replace the existing Delhi Cooperative Societies Act, 1972. The new Cooperative Bill tries to ensure the healthy growth of cooperatives in a more democratic and transparent manner, with least interference of the Department.

Reforms

- The Registrar of Cooperative Societies has many statutory powers that impinge on the internal working of the societies, for example the power to approve bye-laws and cancel registration. This

influence needs to be minimised. The Registrar is also a quasi-judicial authority with regard to settlement of disputes. It would serve a better purpose if these responsibilities are assigned to independent tribunals/ courts.

- *** The Cooperative Finance Department (CFD) could become the nodal agency, in fact, for coordinating *all* subsidised enterprise-credit schemes currently run by the government under different agencies. Thus, the CFD would become a one-stop shop for all such schemes.