

Role Of Urban Development Administration In Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: Present paper analyses the problems faced in urbanization in Himachal Pradesh. Being a tiny hilly state where majority of its populations dwell in the rural areas and majority of its towns locate in hilly terrains, poses multifarious problems in management and administration of the towns. Paper analyse the viewpoint of resident people in the town and the officials regarding Urban Development Agency about the financial autonomy, political interference, administrative lacuna, availability of basic amenities and effectiveness of urban development agencies. Lack of autonomy, bureaucratic and political interference in the working of Urban Development Agency appears one of the major causes of its ineffectiveness. Inefficiency in the working of the officials in the Agency also appears major cause of its ineffectiveness. Improvement in the working of the Agency may help in better management of the towns and cities in hilly area, whereas it can also bring satisfaction to the residents in amenities.

Keywords: Urban Development Agency, Bureaucratic interference, political interference, financial autonomy.

I. URBANIZATION

Urbanization is defined as process of the movement of the population towards urban areas-towns and cities. The process may proceed either through an increase in the number of cities or through a rise in the size of the population in each city. Urbanization thus refers to the growth of cities, to the total population living in urban settlements. In other words, it implies an increase in urban population. Urbanization may be distinguished from urban growth. The latter term refers to an increase in the percentage of urban population to the total population.

Professor Houser and Duncan characterize urbanization as a change in pattern of population distribution. It involves an increase in the relative size of urban population, a growth in number and size of urban settlements or places and an increasing concentration of population in such places.

The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 provisions, thus, provide a basis for the State Legislatures to guide the State Governments in the assignment of various responsibilities to municipalities and to strengthen municipal governance. Accordingly, several State Governments have amended their Municipal Acts/Laws/Legislations so as to

bring these in conformity with the Constitutional Provisions. It is also learnt that the municipalities are confronted with a number of problems, despite the amendments in the State Municipal Acts and the implementation of the 74th Constitution Amendment Act provisions. For instance, in several States, there exists a problem of ineffective participation in the decision-making process despite adoption of the policy of reservation.

II. URBANISATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh is geographically a Himalayan state within the Indian union, predominantly rural. First of all this state came into existence as a small union territory in 1948 by bringing together thirty small princely states after Independence. Before Independence, very little attention was paid to the development of this hilly state which for most of the time remained under the princely rulers.

On 5 March 1970, act no. 53 called the state of Himachal Pradesh act was adopted. Part ii (3) of the act provides that on and from the appointed day, there shall be established a new state, to be known as the state of Himachal Pradesh

comprising the territories which immediately before that day were comprised in the existing union territory of Himachal Pradesh. Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi inaugurated this 18th and the youngest state of the country on 25th January 1971. Reorganization of the districts took place on 1 September 1972. The Kangra district which was quite big in area and population was divided and in consequence, two more districts, namely Una and Hamirpur were created for effective administration. Now, at present the total number of district in Himachal Pradesh is twelve.

The Directorate of Urban Development was established during the year 1985-86 to direct, control and monitor the activities of the Urban Local Bodies in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

V.P.Dobey (1991) in his book on "Urban Development Administration" has focused on various basic problems affecting the city administration. The management of our cities requires speed and dynamism. He further stresses on the basic social and religious issues which play no less significant role in the economic forces in giving shape to the urban needs for better management of the city and its day to day functioning, a lot depends on the municipal administration for implementing proper policies to solve the problems relating to municipal administration.

PremLataBansal (2001) in his book "Administration Development of India" has portrayed the evolution of the various structural legacies of the civil service system in India as well as their accompanying behavioral and functional orientation. Most of these structural patterns continue in the civil services system of free India. Modifications which have taken place in the composition and training patterns of I.A.S. in response to the demands of development are also covered in the first part. Results of Dr. Bansal's study will be both theoretical and practical utility for at least those nations which have emerged from the British colonial tradition.

K.K. Bhattagar and K.K. Gadeock (2007) in his book provides a useful material on "urban development and Administration" and this section also deals with the merging concept of user charges and right prices of urban services so as to cover the O&M cost. There is a shift now in the policy on urban services delivery from a social welfare approach to the one based on sustainable financial viability. In this section, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission has been discussed in sufficient details. This programme is meant for the amelioration of the long-neglected cities, to improve their poor infrastructure and quality of life.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design has been defined by different social scientists in different terms. All these definitions emphasize systematic methodology in collecting accurate information for interpretation with economy in procedure. Stated in a simple language, a research design is a plan of action, a plan for collecting and analyzing data in an economic, efficient and relevant manner. A research design could be constructed either to test a hypothesis or to give a cause-effect relationship to a situation. Thus, a research design is a plan of action to be carried out in connection with a research project. It is the

conceptual structure within which research is conducted and it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

IV. SELECTION OF THE PROBLEM

Urbanization is inevitable and is directly linked with the process of economic development. In hilly state like Himachal Pradesh urbanization is a problem. Implementation of policies is difficult, assessment of programme is also a problem so to cope up with these difficulties proper study on urban development is needed. Himachal Pradesh government has established various agencies for regulating the growth of urban areas in the state. The agencies like, town and country planning, urban development department, housing board, municipal corporation board are supposed to play an important role in the urban development in Himachal Pradesh, but it has been observed that these agencies have not contributed optimally in regulating the urban development in the state. Unplanned growth of housing and commercial sectors has posed a major challenge to the state government, the answer to which lies in the effective performance of various agencies engaged in the administration of urban organizations and the social, political and economical environment in which these operate. The problem is that, while in spite of having so many institutional arrangements, still the haphazard urban development is taking place which is deficient in civic amenities and is unsuitable to the ecology of the state

V. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Urban areas in Himachal Pradesh are growing day-by-day. Hence it is important that the administration of these areas should be effective and efficient. Government has launched many programmes and policies for the development of these urban areas. The government is spending huge sums of money on the execution of these programmes and policies. It will contribute, theoretically and empirically, to a better understanding of the issues involved in designing urban policy and programme either for redistribution or for growth. This study would be a great help to planner, policy makers and administrators in making efforts to streamline the process of implementation different urban development programmes. The study would also have an added significance from the academic point of view, as not much has been done earlier in this direction in Himachal Pradesh.

VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study was limited to the urban development administration in Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh being a hilly state faces a lot of problem. There are many far-flung areas which mostly gets cut-off from the state during in the winters. Urban development is really a challenge in hilly areas like Himachal Pradesh. So the scope is limited to the problems, challenges and public perception regarding urban development in Himachal Pradesh. Shimla being the

capital of the state comprises of all the administrative wings of Himachal Pradesh. Major problems regarding policies and programmes, implementation and employees grievances etc. would get reflected here.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The present study was conducted to achieve some pre-determined objectives. These objectives were as under:

- ✓ To analysis the urbanization in Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ To study the various policies and programmes of Urban Development in Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ To study the challenges Urban Development in Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ To identify major problem encountered by Urban Development in the implementation of various development programmes.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

With a view to achieving the objectives and testing the hypothesis, the present study was based on the primary as well as secondary data. The methodology of data collection has been discussed as under.

COLLECTION OF SECONDARY DATA

The secondary information has been collected to have in depth understanding of the concept of urbanization and urban development administration both at the state and National level. In the present study secondary data was obtained from the office records of the Department of Urban Development, Town and Country Planning, Planning Department of Government of Himachal Pradesh, concerned offices of selected Urban Local Bodies. It includes annual progress reports, economic surveys, annual administrative reports, etc. The secondary data have also been collected from the various books, research papers, journals and internet sites.

COLLECTION OF PRIMARY DATA

In the present study, primary data was collected through a sample survey by administering the interview schedules. For this, well-designed schedules have been administered to the respondents selected through sampling method. Data have also been collected with the help of personal observation made during the field visit to the Municipalities offices. Following techniques and methods were employed for the collection of first hand data.

- ✓ *Interview Schedules* For the collection of first hand data interview schedules has been prepared with the purpose to get the viewpoints of various respondents on the problem in hand. Three interview schedules have been developed and used for the collection of first hand data in the present study. These were:
 - Schedule for Government Officials
 - Schedule for General Public

- ✓ *Discussion method:* Discussion method was also used to elicit the first-hand information from the respondents. During the survey various aspects of Urban development and administration has been discussed with the respondents to find out the real position about the urban administration.
- ✓ *Personal observation:* Observation method was also used to have the exact knowledge of actual status of urbanization and the urban administration in the selected municipal bodies.

VIII. URBAN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Urban local government is the responsibility of the department of local self- government in the state. At the state level a number of department deals with subjects which are the direct concern of the urban government. In addition to the department of local self-government the functional departments in the secretariat administer the various components of urban development. Thus water supply, drainage and sewerage, road construction, land acquisition and development, housing and slum clearance, etc. are being dealt with by respective functional departments. As is to be expected under such a fragmentary arrangement, the urban affairs do not get viewed as one integrated function.

Most of the Directorates of Municipal Administration in the state are still in their infancy and as such in experienced as their working has not yet been streamlined. Besides, there are difference among the states not only as regards the formal constitution of these Directorates but also about their actual working and their relationship with urban local bodies and the local self-government department at the state level. The intention behind the creation of Directorate of municipal administration was to strengthen to them; the general trend has been towards the Directorates becoming another agency for intervention. To give guidance and advice to urban local bodies, a directorate of municipal administration has been set up in the states both the central council of local self-government and the conference of state ministers of town and country planning had emphasized the desirability of setting up such an organization in the state.

IX. ROLE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

- ✓ It is responsible for direction, supervision and control of all the municipalities in the state.
- ✓ It carries out inspections of municipalities. The inspection note which is written at the end of an inspection includes the necessary instructions, by way of guidance, to tone up civic administration. The Directorate, thus, provides an opportunity to a municipality to mend specified affairs.
- ✓ It is empowered to suspend a resolution, order, licenses, permission or act if its execution is likely to cause financial loss to the municipality, danger to human life or is likely to lead to a riot or breach of peace.

- ✓ The Director of municipal administration carries out annual inspection of the Himachal Pradesh Municipal Corporation.
- ✓ Periodical inspection of urban local bodies.
- ✓ Implementation of “low cost sanitation” (conversion of dry latrines into hand flush system and thereby liberating the scavengers
- ✓ Recommendation of amendments in Acts/ Rules/ Regulations and Bye-Law of the urban local bodies.

X. CHALLENGES URBAN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

A. POPULATION EXPLOSION IN URBAN AREAS

Recent trends of population explosion have been mentioned earlier. India's urban population is second largest population in the world. The increase in urban population results in asymmetric patterns in resource utilization, land use and transportation. This generates a series of negative environmental and social effects. Thus, population explosion has increased environmental challenges being faced by our cities today.

B. INEFFECTIVE PLANNING

In many states district planning committees and metropolitan planning committees do not exist. There are no expert and professional planners in some urban local bodies. Master plans in the past did not consider special requirements for living and working of the poor. Thus, there is ineffective planning system in urban local bodies at various levels.

C. LACK OF WATER SUPPLY

Due to the larger water resources available in the state, there is mismanagement in urban agencies for the procurement, distribution of potable water in the urban areas of the state.

D. LACK OF SYSTEMATIC SANITATION FACILITY

The challenges of sanitation in Indian cities is acute. In fact the problem of lack of systematic sanitation facility is much worse in urban areas than in rural areas.

E. LACK OF SCIENTIFIC TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The management and disposal of solid waste generated in Indian cities is major problem. Staff deployed to manage solid waste management is also fairly low as per requirements. In most of the cities, waste is transported and dumped to land fill sited. Scientific treatment and disposal of solid waste is practically non-existent.

F. LACK OF SOUND FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Most of states of India have set up State Finance Commissions according to the 74th CAA, but they suffer from inadequate technical and financial support. In several cases, their recommendations have mostly not been complied with. Fiscal situation relating to many urban local bodies is extremely weak.

G. LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

There is no system of having Ombudsman or LokAyukta type institutions in urban local bodies of India. There is also no system of social audit of various important schemes and development works undertaken by the urban local bodies, on the lines of MGNREGS. There is no provision for regularity in annual audit of the accounts of the urban local bodies by the Director of Local Fund Account Audit under the technical guidance and supervision of the Accountant General in many states.

XI. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT

Recent initiatives are useful for better urban governance in Himachal Pradesh. But there need to adopt some major steps for good urban government.

A. POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Even though the 74th CAA has granted constitutional status to the urban local bodies, the municipal bodies in state derive their powers and responsibilities from the municipal, as well as specific laws framed by the respective state. For effective, efficient, responsive, transparent and accountable urban governance, the legal and institutional framework must provide for adequate and effective devolution of functions, functionaries and funds to the urban local bodies.

B. CHECKS AND BALANCES

A system of effective checks and balances needs to be put in place to facilitate the elected wing and administrative machinery in urban local bodies to play their respective role effectively and synergistically.

C. INDUCTION TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Induction training programmes for the councilors needs to be conducted by state government for all urban local bodies immediately after elections, so as to educate sensitize the elected members regarding the relevant provisions for the law and their roles and responsibilities in respect of the various government policies and programmes relevant to the urban areas.

D. PREPARATION OF ANNUAL PLANS AND BUDGETS

Preparation of annuals plans and budgets should follow a more rational, objective and consultative process, by calling for suggestions from citizens, reviewing committed liabilities and assessing compliance with city development plans. Urban local bodies would need to make allocations to wards and functional sectors on a transparent and rational basis.

E. URBAN LOCAL BODIES TO BE EMPOWERED TO DELIVER CORE FUNCTIONS

The 74th CAA expects the transfer of 18 functions or groups of functions to urban local bodies. Many of these functions have not been given to the urban local bodies. So, it is necessary that the urban local bodies should be empowered by different mechanisms to deliver effectively the core services and functions such as water supply, sanitation, sewage planning and development functions.

F. CREATION OF PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPAL CADRE

Poor quality of urban managers is one of the major reasons for sub optimal urban administration. There is an urgent need for increased investment, financial management and audits in the urban local bodies. Thus, creation of municipal cadre is essential for better future of urban governance.

FUNCTIONAL AUTONOMY

For the smooth functioning of any administrative unit, functional autonomy is important. Without it administrative units, specially, local level administration, cannot function properly and they face various problems. For the efficient and effective implementation of development programmes and policies urban development agencies and urban administration needs functional autonomy. Lack of which result into non-fulfilment of development goals. The opinion of the officials and elected members have been collected on the question that lack of functional autonomy hampered the working of urban development agencies. The collected data have been presented in Table 1

Responses	Government Officials	Elected Members	Total
To large extent	10 (33.33)	8 (26.67)	18 (30.00)
To some extent	18 (60.00)	9 (30.00)	27 (45.00)
Not at all	2 (6.67)	13 (43.33)	15 (25.00)
Total	30 (100.00)	30 (100.00)	60 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 1: Opinion about the Lack of Autonomy Hamper the Functioning

Data in Table1 reveals that out of total respondents, 45.00 per cent of respondents were of the opinion that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning of urban agencies to some extent, while 30.00 per cent of respondents opined that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning to large extent. Respondent-wise data shows that government officials have different viewpoint on this. As 60.00 per cent of government officials think that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning of urban agencies to some extent, 33.33 per cent of government officials opined that it hamper to large extent. On the other hand, out of total elected members, 30.00 per cent of elected members held that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning to some extent, 26.67 per cent of respondents reported that it hamper to large extent. 6.67 per cent of government officials and 43.33 per cent of elected members felt that lack of autonomy does not hamper the functioning of urban development agencies. Hence, it can be concluded that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning of urban development agencies either to some extent or large extent.

BUREAUCRATIC INTERFERENCE

Urban local bodies (under 74th Amendment Act, 1992) are established for the development of urban areas. Any kind of bureaucratic interference in the functioning of these bodies may cause serious harm to their autonomy. It not only snatching the authority of taking decisions but also demotivating the members of these agencies from giving their best to the development. Data about the bureaucratic interference have been collected from the sample elected members and presented in Table 2.

Responses	Elected Members	Percentage
To large extent	4	12.50
To some extent	13	40.63
Not at all	15	46.87
Total	32	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 2: Bureaucratic Interference in Day-to-Day Working of Urban Local Bodies

Figures in Table 2 depicts that 40.63 per cent of elected members reported that bureaucracy interfere in the functioning of urban local bodies to some extent and 12.50 per cent of respondents reported that bureaucracy interfere in the functioning of urban local bodies to large extent. While 46.87 per cent of respondents did not feel any kind of bureaucratic interference.

It is clear from the data that in about 53 per cent of cases bureaucracy interfere in the functioning of urban local bodies either to some extent or large extent. This is one of the serious problems that urban local bodies are facing. Do to this these bodies feel some sort of bindings while performing their duties and also implementing the development programmes and policies.

POLITICAL INTERFERENCE IN URBAN ADMINISTRATION

Political interference is one of the greatest hurdles in the smooth functioning of administration. With regard to the

urban development agency it can be said that if political interference is there then these agencies cannot achieve their desired result with ease. Hence, to know weather there is any kind of political interference in the urban administration or not, data have been collected and presented in Table 3

Table 3 shows that, 63.34 per cent of government officials were of the opinion that the politicians interfere in the administration to large extent and 33.33 per cent of respondents were of the opinion that political interfere to some extent. Hence, it is clear from the above analyses that political interference in the administration of urban development agencies was there in the study area. About 97 per cent of respondents accepted this fact.

Responses	Government Officials	Total
To large extent	19	63.34
To some extent	10	33.33
Not at all	1	3.33
Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage

Table 3: Political Interference in Administration of Urban Development Agency

To what extent urban development agencies are discharging their duties at the cutting-edge level of administration can be assessed by asking questions from general public. Hence, in this section, an attempt has been made to analyze the data and information furnished by the general public on different aspect of urban development administration and urban development programmes.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WORKING OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

For getting their work done, people should have the Knowledge of urban development agencies and their working. In this regard data have been collected and analyzed in table 6.13.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	287	95.67
No	13	4.33
Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 4: Knowledge about the Working of Urban Development Agencies

Table 4 reveals that out of total respondents, 95.67 per cent of respondents had the knowledge of urban development agencies and urban development programmes, while mere 4.33 per cent of respondents did not have the knowledge. Therefore, it can be concluded that urban people are aware of the working of urban development agencies in the state.

PROVISION OF BASIC AMENITIES

Urban development administration is responsible for the provision of basic amenities, such as infrastructure, water management, street lights, sanitation, housing etc., in urban areas. To know the status of these amenities, data have been collected from the general public on the statement that urban development agencies provide these amenities to extent

possible. The collected information has been enumerated in Table 5

Figures in Table depicts that out of total respondents, 37.33 per cent of respondents were disagree with the statement that urban development agencies provide basic amenities to the extent possible, 33.00 per cent of respondents were strongly agree and 29.67 per cent of respondents were partially agree that these agencies were providing the basic amenities to their extent possible.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	99	33.00
Partially Agree	89	29.67
Disagree	112	37.33
Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 5: Urban Development Agencies Provide of Basic Amenities

Hence, it can be inferred that urban development agencies are not making provision of basic amenities to their extent possible.

SATISFACTION WITH THE BASIC AMENITIES

Satisfaction of people with the basic amenities provided by the urban development agencies, is of utmost importance. Therefore, data have been collected from the respondents and presented in Table 6

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
To large extent	87	29.19
To some extent	82	27.52
Not at all	129	43.29
Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 6: Satisfaction with the Basic Amenities

Table show that out of total respondents, 43.29 per cent of respondents were not satisfied with the provision basic amenities made by the urban development agencies. While 29.19 per cent of respondents were satisfied to large extent and 27.52 per cent respondents were satisfied to some extent. Hence, it can be inferred that the provision of basic amenities made by urban development agencies are not up to the mark, as majority of people were not satisfied and if satisfied then to some extent.

OPINION ABOUT FUNCTIONAL AUTONOMY

It is important to know the opinion of the general public about the functional autonomy of urban development agencies. Therefore, the opinion of general public about the functional autonomy has been analyzed and shown in Table 7

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	126	42.00
No	174	58.00
Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses represents percentage.

Table 7: *Opinion about Functional Autonomy of Urban Development Agencies*

Data reveals that out of total sample respondents, 58.00 per cent opined that urban development agencies did not have functional autonomy, while 42.00 of respondents thought that urban development agencies had sufficient functional autonomy to perform their functions with ease. Table clearly indicates that in majority of cases people think that urban development agencies did not have functional autonomy. It affects the very functioning of these agencies and failed to deliver their best.

OPINION ABOUT POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

Too much political interference in the functioning of urban development agencies affects the ability of these agencies. Hence, during the field survey, opinion of the general about political interference in the functioning of urban development agencies have been collected and presented in Table 8.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Too Much	119	39.67
Little	131	43.67
Not at all	50	16.67
Total	300	100.00

Source: *Field Survey.*

Note: *Figures in parentheses represents percentage.*

Table 8: *Opinion about Political Interference*

With regard to political interference, 43.67 per cent of sample general public realized that there was too much political interference in the functioning of urban development agencies, 39.67 per cent reported there was little political interference and 16.67 per cent of respondents reported that there was no political interference. Hence, analyses clearly indicates that in majority of cases politicians interfere in the functioning of urban development agencies either too much or little. Respondents confidentially said that due to this interference benefits of development programmes are diverted unfairly. This also leads to corruption in these agencies.

XII. SUGGESTION

The above analyses reveal that lack of autonomy hamper the functioning of urban development agencies either to some extent or large extent. Bureaucratic as well as political interfere in the functioning of urban local bodies is one of the serious problems that urban local bodies are facing. Due to this these bodies feel some sort of bindings while performing their duties and also in implementing the development programmes and policies. Financial resources allotted to urban development agencies (including urban local bodies) were

found sufficient. With this urban development agencies have the capacity to implement the development programmes and policies. The study reveals that government have made provision for the training of officials and people involved in urban development in the state. In majority of cases people feels that urban development administration is incapable of implementing the development programmes and policy. It was found that needy person did not have the accessibility to basic facilities and the benefits provided under different urban development programmes in the study area

- ✓ Distribution of work among the personnel of an organization should be according to the capability of the personnel, there should be provision of adequate salary according to the work, no political interference should be there. The personnel should feel satisfied with the job he is doing.
- ✓ Professional capabilities of the personnel should be taken into consideration for the proper functioning of the organization.
- ✓ There should be no administrative interference in day-to-day decision making.

CONCLUSION

Role of different body of urban development administration cannot be summarized in brief. Scope of their role is very wide and the points are discussed earlier in this chapter. Increasing population, poverty, unemployment rate are some of the biggest challenges of urban development administration. Changing needs are also making the planning in effective so the role is ever changing and have to adapt to the changing needs and expectations of the public.

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