

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM OF WUHAN (PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA)

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***Abstract:** Wuhan's Local Government System is an integral and dependent functioning organ of Chinese provincial as well as central government's machinery. This is executed and administered in two ways (i.e., through centralized system which integrates the Local People's Congresses with the National People's Congress through dispensation of elections, and through dual subordination of local government set-up). It is also accountable to higher-level governments that are provincial and central in general. The administratively-functional bureaus and departments are accountable to higher-level provincial and central commissions, ministries, and agencies too. In addition to it, to run the system smoothly and efficiently, the personnel functions are integrated among various levels of local governing paraphernalia. The distinction of the system is that it has a unique monitoring and checks, not only by the voters but also by the higher cadres. Because of its integrative nature, Wuhan's Local Government System has been associated with a number of localized institutions to deliver the services. In this paper, an attempt has been made to evaluate the functioning of town and district governments with an objective of drawing analysis of Local Government System in Wuhan to assess the local councils' performance, people-centric participation in formulating and implementing public policies, and urban development programs.*

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## **Introduction**

Local Government System (LGS) of Wuhan can be defined as a political and administrative sub-division of People's Republic of China (PRC). It has got control over local affairs including power to impose taxes or exact labor for the prescribed purposes. The governing body of the Peoples' Governments of Wuhan is elected by the eligible voters. Thus, the concept of local government involves a territorial semi-autonomous political-cum-administrative mechanism to manage and regulate affairs of the city with participation of the local populace. District administrators and town managers and magistrates run the local administrative set-up under the guidance and supervision of the elected officials (i.e., mayor, and deputy mayors.)

In the PRC, most political powers reside in the Chinese Communist Party and National People's Congress, however, the local governments are constitutionally tasked with the responsibilities to handle administrative assignments related to local legislation and management of commerce, investments, education, science, culture, public health, urban and rural development, finance, civil affairs, public security, nationalities affairs, judicial administration, gardens, forestry, city archives, tourism, environmental protection, and family planning. In addition to it, the local governments also administer and supervise cities' infrastructure planning, development, land resource utilization, transportation system, agriculture marketing, food and drug supply regulations, recreational facilities, housing, and security affairs. In practice, each tier of governmental machinery exercises varying degrees of autonomy. Likewise, the LGS of Wuhan is mainly responsible for the efficient administration and management of effective infrastructure development, rapid provision of municipal services, and ensuring result-oriented governance in cooperation with

local institutions and street bureaucracy under the supervision of People's Governments in its thirteen administrative districts.<sup>1</sup>

In Wuhan, socialist consultative democracy is characterized by the direct participation of the voters to elect members to the people's congresses. This system refers to the right to vote which is directly exercised by farmers, workers, intellectuals, and other personnel in local organs of political power, business enterprises, public institutions, and other organizations including economic, social, cultural and political cadres' committees. Similarly, according to the municipal law, the residents exercise their right of election, decision-making, management and supervision of local public organizations and street bureaucracy. This ensures implementation of people-centric governance, responsiveness to public needs, effective delivery of municipal services, and institutional accountability.<sup>2</sup>

With application of "Scientific Outlook on Development," the Wuhan local administration has framed and executed a number of new laws and regulations such as "Employment Promotion Law," "Labor Contract Law," "Urban and Rural Development Law," "Pension Insurance System," "Compulsory Education Law," "Regulations on Preparedness for and Response to Emergent Public Health Hazards," and "Emission Controls Program," with the stated objective to adequately shield legitimate rights and interests of the people. This system has achieved the results for improving and enhancing local institutions' performance, efficiency, and timely service delivery orientations.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to it, local institutions in Wuhan are assigned maintaining the highways, administering the city, inspecting and building houses, relieving destitution, supplying gas, water, electricity, and managing financial undertakings, fire brigades, citizen and marriage homes, libraries and recreational arrangements,

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<sup>1</sup> James C.F.Wang, *Contemporary Chinese Politics: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999), 175.

<sup>2</sup> Liu Mingfu, *The China Dream: Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post-American Era* (CN Times Books Incorporated, 2015), 52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

protecting environment, controlling population and accepting responsibility. In short, local institutions in Wuhan are responsible for all the necessities and amenities of a municipal character under the considered guidance and supervision of People's Governments in all administrative districts.<sup>4</sup>

Constitution of the PRC gives certain rights to the citizens. Subsequently, legal apparatus of Wuhan's local government has been empowered to make laws and regulations to protect various rights of the people for development and subsistence, acknowledged by the Constitution (i.e., freedom of religious beliefs, freedom of assembly and association, personal and property rights, freedom of speech and publication, freedom of demonstration, right to education, and right to social security as well.) Additionally, other rights including social, economic, political, and cultural are also safeguarded.

In Wuhan, grass root government's functionaries and elected officials, with a rationale for decentralized and delegated decision making and public-oriented role of local bureaus and departments, have been providing the residents a number of municipal facilities on the generally accepted grounds of effectiveness, responsiveness, efficiency, result-oriented performance, manageability, and accountability. Because of these measures, people seem quite satisfied with smooth working of system, and uninterrupted delivery of municipal services.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, Wuhan's local government jurisdiction is quite large as its expenditures constitute sizeable amount of consolidated public spending. Additionally, some defined central functions such as unemployment insurance, social security, and social safety nets have been assigned to local government apparatus with considerable autonomy coupled with enhanced fiscal capacity to ensure citizen-centered local governance.

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<sup>4</sup> Yang Fengchun, *Chinese Government* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004), 267.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 260 – 64.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Wuhan which is economically thriving, industrially advancing, and densely populated city in central China has been facing social security, housing, energy, environment, traffic, and increasing local debt-related problems. To find the solution of these problems, an analytical study of its local government system is imperative.

## **Significance of the Study**

Less has been written on local government system of Wuhan by the local as well as foreign researchers. Wuhan's ancient historical background coupled with unique archeological and architectural blend, the location surrounded by scenic lakes and river in the Central China, worth-reading cultural settings, progressive educational institutions, innovative industrial façade, and people-centric local government system have greater research potential to attract researchers to add to its scholarship. Being a researcher on local government system of Wuhan, it is necessary to have an insightful understanding of social, political, and economic arrangements of local government. Likewise, on scholarly level, this study is important to evaluate functionality of local government institutions of Wuhan to give an input to the scholars who want to investigate and have comparison of different local government systems.

The study presents an insightful understanding of political, constitutional, institutional, economic, and local governance system of Wuhan. It would also be useful for those policy makers who intend to design or amend their local government systems to serve their people in a better way.

## **Objectives of the Study**

- ✓ To know the existing structure of local government system of Wuhan.
- ✓ To analyze the extent of functioning of the system.
- ✓ To critically evaluate the provisions of municipal services for the people.

- ✓ To suggest measures for improving the existing structure and mechanism of local government system of the city.

## **Methodology**

It is a descriptive research coupled with exploratory aspects. Apart from secondary data, primary data in shape of interviews of different experts have been used to have a insight of the topic. For sampling, convenience sampling has been used due to few experts available on the topic of research.

## **Structure of Local Government in Wuhan**

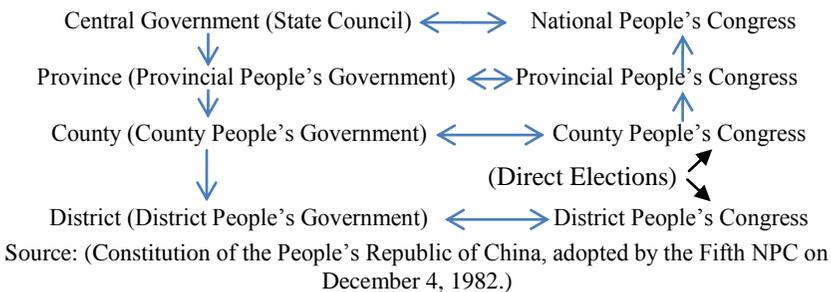
Local People's Congresses (LPC) elect and have power to recall members of the People's Councils at the corresponding levels in all administrative districts and towns of Wuhan. For an eligible voter, minimum age is eighteen years to elect members to the People's Congresses except for persons deprived of political rights according to the electoral law. Similarly, the Communist Party can place an eligible local voter for the election of People's Council. Furthermore, the People's Congresses at district level elect and have the power to recall the president of People's Courts at corresponding levels. The Local People's Council is an integral organ of government's machinery. At the municipal level, the Council consists of one mayor and some deputy mayors. At the county level, it consists of the county heads, and the deputies. The Local People's Councils carry out decisions made by the People's Congresses at corresponding levels, and decisions and orders made by the administrative organs of the state at higher cadres. The People's councils at district level direct the work of all their subordinate departments and have the powers to suspend any inappropriate decision made by the People's Congresses at the next lower level, and to revise or annul decisions and can issue orders to their subordinate departments. It is worth mentioning that the Local People's Councils are responsible to the People's Congresses at corresponding levels, and to the administrative organs of state at the next higher level, and report them on their specific administrative functions. The Local

People’s Councils are administrative organs of the city and are subordinate to and work under the coordinating direction of the provincial government and State Council. At every level, there is a People’s Court elected for a four years term and is responsible to the Local Congress and the People’s Court at the next higher level. At the primary level, the Village Committees are responsible for economic functions including agriculture and small industries. Each respective locality is under a committee divided into production brigades and production teams, and each team or brigade is responsible for directing economic efforts within its jurisdiction.<sup>6</sup>

The Local People’s Congresses at every level ensure observance and execution of laws and can issue decrees in their respective jurisdiction, draw up plans for local economic and cultural development and public works, examine and approve local budgets and financial reports, protect public property, maintain public order, safeguard the rights of citizens, and equal rights of national minorities as well.

Though in People’s Republic of China there is no division of powers among various tiers of government, but each successive tier of government down from the top reports to the preceding tier above it. The central government wields all political powers within the country. However, certain constitutional clauses do allow the local government of Wuhan to handle municipal affairs in their respective administrative demarcations with varying degrees of autonomy.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 1: Central, Provincial and Local Governments’ Structure



<sup>6</sup> Huang Huikang, *Introduction to China’s Law and Politics* (Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 1990), 49 –55.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## Wuhan's Administrative Division

Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei province, covering an area of 8,494 square kilometers with population of eleven million is divided into thirteen districts for administrative convenience.

Table 1

Serial No:	Districts	Chinese Name	Pinyin
1	Jiang'an	江岸区	Jiāng'àn Qū
2	Jianghan	江汉区	Jiānghàn Qū
3	Qiaokou	硚口区	Qiáokǒu Qū
4	Hanyang	汉阳区	Hànyáng Qū
5	Wuchang	武昌区	Wǔchāng Qū
6	Qingshan	青山区	Qīngshān Qū
7	Hongshan	洪山区	Hóngshān Qū
8	Dongxihu	东西湖区	Dōngxīhú Qū
9	Hannan	汉南区	Hànnán Qū
10	Caidian	蔡甸区	Càidiàn Qū
11	Jiangxia	江夏区	Jiāngxià Qū
12	Huangpi	黄陂区	Huángpí Qū
13	Xinzhou	新洲区	Xīnzhōu Qū

## Public Services

Municipal government institutions remain open from Monday to Friday (excluding statutory public holidays) from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. However, citizens and business organizations can make an appointment with the relevant government offices in advance, in case, if they want government services during public holidays.

## Composition of Local Government's Apparatus

In Wuhan, city mayor and deputy mayors of districts and towns assume overall administrative responsibility for running the functions of local people's governments at their respective administrative and managerial levels. In addition to it, to handle the administrative affairs, a number of functionaries of the local government system include secretaries, head of departments, head of

bureaus, and chairmen of neighbourhood committees. Likewise, people's governments of townships are administered or led by the heads and deputy heads of various departments. Furthermore, administrative affairs of ethnic townships in Wuhan are managed or governed by the heads and deputy heads, elected or nominated from the relevant ethnic minority groups.

Constitutionally, it is mandatory for the newly-elected leaders to appear before the standing committees of the people's congresses at the corresponding levels for the appointment of executive secretaries, directors, and deputy directors of offices and subordinate and attached departments and heads of departments, bureaus, and chairmen of respective committees within two months after local councils' elections. Moreover, secretary general and deputy secretaries-general are nominated by the Communist Party in big cities like Wuhan which is divided into administrative towns and districts to closely watch and supervise administrative activities of the local bureaucracy to ensure transparency, effectiveness, responsiveness, meritocracy, and accountability in the system.<sup>8</sup>

### **Component Departments of Local Government System**

According to the Organic Law of the PRC on Local People's Congresses and Local People's Governments, component departments are those functioning departments, bureaus, and offices that constitute administrative parts of the functioning machinery at various levels. Some administrative organs work more independently with greater administrative and legal status while some mainly perform their functions as subordinate offices to the parent departments. Heads of these departments are appointed or removed by both local people's congresses and local governing mechanism as per legal requirements.

Moreover, local government set-up establishes supervision departments in the light of "Law of Supervision," to enforce system of checks and balances. By the same token, a number of component

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<sup>8</sup> Fengchun, *Chinese Government*, 269-273.

departments are working in Wuhan under the local government system to serve the citizens concerned with civic facilities.<sup>9</sup>

### **Term of Offices of Local Governments**

According to the local government laws, the term of offices of the district governments in big cities like Wuhan and municipal districts' is five years. Likewise, the term of office of the governments at townships, ethnic townships, and towns' levels is three years.

### **Local Governments' Revenues and Audit**

In Wuhan, local revenue is largely managed or collected from local taxes such as collective enterprise income, agricultural and real estate taxes, shared taxes, joint venture enterprises taxes, and income from monopolies, set quotas, bonds, and credits. In addition, district governments also receive annual grants, special grants, project funds, and portion from consolidated budgets of provincial and central governments. However, all financial processes and transactions are directly overseen by the provincial finance department, but local district governments prepare their own budgets and devise revenue collection methods and expenditure rules in compatibility with local conditions. The Local People's Congresses discuss and approve budgets and financial allocations at all levels. All budgeted revenues and expenditures are strictly audited by the local and provincial supervision departments and the State Council through its audit branches at all levels. Additional finances for development projects, out of annual budgetary allocations, are processed, channelled, and operated through a well-defined "Graded Management System" in transaction understandings with the financial institutions concerned.

### **Coordination between Central and Local Governments**

Well-orchestrated relationship between the respective local party leader and the local top civil service is a key for the people-

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

friendly governance, better management of policies, and well-coordinated implementation of laws and regulations. Therefore, the Party Standing Committee, the State Council, and the respective ministries use their authority over the local party and local government administration to implement developmental policies, national laws, and governing regulations in the best interest of the recipients. In addition, each lower-level of government reports to the higher-level authorities to ensure smooth governing arrangements. Hence, it reduces risk of corruption, self-interests, and nepotism. It also promotes and trains provincial and local leaders who are considered successful in Wuhan's governing apparatus.<sup>10</sup>

### **Local Governments' Transparency**

District governments in Wuhan have taken measures for transparency in government affairs by establishing "Departmental Spokesperson System" for various office and bureaus, and holding biweekly press conferences. Hence, the district governments are toeing the lines of "Municipal Provisions on Open Government Information," the first legislative mechanism regarding information disclosure in China with the stated objective of enhancing transparency in local government bodies.<sup>11</sup>

Following are the main departments, offices, and bureaus under the Local Government System of Wuhan with their various public-centric functions.

### **City Health and Family Planning Commission**

Wuhan's administrative districts have a medical and healthcare mechanism with general and specialized hospitals administering modern and traditional Chinese medicines. In Wuhan, foreigners can avail medical facility at hospitals by presenting their personal identity documents and residential permits. In case of any emergency, people can dial emergency assistance number (120) or

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<sup>10</sup> Tapan Biswal, *Comparative Politics: Institutions and Processes* (India: Laxmi Publications, 2013), 283–84.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

the contact number of their designated hospitals for ambulance service on payment of 100 to 700 RMBs depending on distance travelled and medicines taken. The first-class hospitals have numerous medical facilities for the in-door and out-door patients. Furthermore, hospitals are equipped with sophisticated laboratory tools to investigate and diagnose diseases. For convenience of the patients, they are offered online and telephonic appointment services. In addition, formulation and implementation of "Regulations on Preparedness for and Response to Emergent Public Health Hazards" has established a unified, efficient, and authoritative mechanism for emergency response to the public health hazards to further safeguard people's health and social safety.<sup>12</sup>

### **Statistical Bureau**

According to the national laws, city financial regulations, city planning based on statistical calculations, city statistical policy, basic statistical arrangements, and statistical standards, in Wuhan are within the purview of the local government mechanism. Wuhan Statistical Bureau is accountable to the Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal People's Government, and other relevant departments for the provision of statistical information and advice to improve project planning and infrastructure development in the city.<sup>13</sup>

### **Wuhan Citizens' Homes**

Citizens' homes are composed of spacious halls, luxurious exhibition halls, and well-furnished living rooms. It is based on five functioning platforms (i.e., administrative approval platform, public resources trading platform, integrated government platform, administrative monitoring platform, and educational display platform). It functions on the 'window-based fee, one-stop service' operating mechanism. There are 66 station units, 318 windows, and

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with Yun Jio Xia (Ex-Representative of Local Government, Associate Professor at School of Public Administration, CUG, Wuhan), December 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

426 public service-oriented halls to serve and entertain the citizens culturally and educationally. Likewise, Wuhan Planning Exhibition Hall, continually arranges cultural exhibitions with comprehensive display of Wuhan's past, present, and future civilizational outlook. In addition, Citizen's Lecture Hall and *Jiangcheng* Love Hall regularly organize public welfare, cultural, and educational activities.<sup>14</sup>

### **Municipal Office of State Administration of Taxation**

Wuhan Municipal Office of State Administration of Taxation is the administrative body that carries out the state's taxation activities within the administrative jurisdiction of Wuhan City. It implements state taxation laws, regulations and codes, and formulates specific measures to levy taxes, keeping in view actual local conditions.<sup>15</sup>

### **City Agriculture Committee**

According to the Municipal Party Committee of the Communist Party of China, the City Agriculture Committee (Municipal Committee of the Rural Work Leading Group Office) works for agrarian growth, research, and development. It shoulders responsibilities of overall rural reforms programs, development and research in city agricultural sector, and new rural agrarian farms' construction. It also supervises production and business operations, quality and safety regulatory mechanisms of the agrarian products. The City Forest Bureau does research in fruit growth, tea plantation, and Chinese herbal medicines' manufacturing. Its Agriculture Research Wing studies and puts forward development and research policies concerning construction of rural grassroots work, new rural construction plans, planting industry, animal husbandry, fisheries, mechanization of agriculture and rural energy, farming, and agricultural products processing industry.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

## **Municipal Development and Reforms Commission**

This Commission is government's official monitoring unit on investment activities, industrial planning, financial reforms, and construction projects etc.<sup>17</sup>

## **City Board of Education**

Wuhan's education system in accordance with the overall policy guidelines given by the Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government earnestly implements the long-term programs for education. It promotes quality education as the main objective, improves the quality of education as the basic requirement, focuses on the promotion of fair education, deepens the reforms, insists on innovation, and urges to meet people's demands for high-quality education. Due to its performance, City Board of Education has won national, provincial, and city awards and honors.

The Chinese students are taught six years of primary education followed by six years of secondary education.<sup>18</sup>

## **Bureau of Commerce**

According to the Municipal Party Committee of the Communist Party of China, Wuhan Municipal People's Government set up Municipal Bureau of Commerce to deal with business related matters including city's business opening to the outside world, internal and external trade, investment promotion, and development strategy for domestic and international economic cooperation. Additionally, it formulates sea and dry port's rules, regulations and trade policies, and plays role of government's monitoring on medicines' management, and circulation in the city.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

## **Bureau of Justice**

Wuhan Bureau of Justice is mainly responsible for the settlement of labor grievances, legal disputes, peoples' complaints, promotion of legal education, and other judicial administrative matters in the city.<sup>20</sup>

## **City Archives Bureau**

City Archives Bureau's assignment is to receive, sort out and keep official records, proceedings, and files of City Municipal Government's offices, departments, institutions, and relevant enterprises. It also organizes workshops for party members to study Marxism-Leninism, MAO Zedong thoughts, Deng Xiaoping theory, and Communist party's principles, policies, resolutions, ideology, culture, and politics.<sup>21</sup>

## **Urban Management Committee**

It helps out Municipal People's Government to administer and enforce city's environmental protection laws, health management, urban planning management, urban landscape management, regulations of social life, regulations of administrative punishment for unlicensed peddlers, public security traffic management laws, industrial and commercial administration management laws, and other administrative punishments as determined by the Municipal People's Courts.<sup>22</sup>

## **City Water Bureau**

City Water Bureau was founded in September 2001 which is a unified body for the management and distribution of water resources. It is also responsible for city's water supply, flood control, and drought relief activities. Water Conservancy Office, one of important branches of City Water Bureau, is responsible for drainage and

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

sewerage treatment and management. City Water Bureau is also head of city's waterways, embankments, lakes and reservoirs, rural water conservancy works, coordination of farmland water conservancy, and management of all kinds of water engineering. Likewise, City Water Bureau acts upon "Deng Xiaoping's water theory of '3Ws' (i.e., Water safety, Water environment and Water resources)."<sup>23</sup>

### **Civil Affairs Bureau**

It executes social assistance plans, policies and standards to improve urban socio-economic standards. It also implements 'supporting system' for the poor, covering medical and economic relief, and gives advice regarding marriage ceremonies, funeral processions, and child adoption cases.<sup>24</sup>

### **Civil Defense**

Wuhan city is located in central China, economically developed and densely populated, and is known as "thorough fares of nine provinces" surrounded by strong earthquake geological structure. Because of its important strategic position, Wuhan People's Air Defense Committee, City Earthquake Working Organs, Earthquake Disaster Reduction Committee, and Street Level Part-Time Assistant Offices are working under the supervision of Civil Defense Office to mitigate and cope with earthquake disasters and natural calamities. This "Civil Defense Establishment" has made progress in monitoring, prediction, seismic damage mitigation, and emergency rescue service. Likewise, the city administration has built twenty five precursors and earthquake seismic stations. Due to these efforts, the "Municipal Administrative Area" is within 98% earthquake monitoring capacity.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

### **City Construction Committee**

City Construction Committee is responsible for comprehensive and systematic formulation, execution, and completion analysis of overall long-term development strategy and construction of major projects in the city. It also frames and implements technical rules, regulations, guidelines, policies, and engineering standards under the local government's directions for making affordable engineering maps and surveys, architectural designs, housing construction, infrastructure development, and construction of seismic-proof buildings as well.<sup>26</sup>

### **Environmental Protection Bureau**

Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau is handling environmental protection planning, annual resource mobilization plans, management of land and its resources, sustainable development of regional economic planning, comprehensive utilization of resources' strategy and reviewing overall urban planning. In addition, it inspects, oversees, and checks each polluted area to control carbon emission. It carries out carbon emission assessment to design effective pollution preventive modus operandi in future. It also guides and supervises ecological protection, assessment of ecological environment quality, natural resources development and their effective utilization activities, preservation of scenic spots, forests, parks, biodiversity conservation, wildlife protection, and wetland environmental protection. With the application of "Three Simultaneity" program, it ensures construction of environmental-friendly projects, constructs pollution treatment facilities, and issues radiation safety licenses too.<sup>27</sup>

### **Ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission**

It takes measures to enforce national religious policy and organizes seminars and study circles to address important religious issues and queries. With relevant departments, this commission

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

promotes socio-economic programs to create social harmony, ethnic cohesion, and national integration<sup>28</sup>

### **Bureau of Finance**

It formulates fiscal, taxation, annual budgetary and economic development policies. In addition, it implements macroeconomic regulations, controls of fiscal and taxation policies, balanced allocation of public funds, municipal and district financial distribution arrangements, and earmarking of money for the promotion of public welfare undertakings in the city. Furthermore, it administers non-tax government revenues, government-managed funds management, management of treasury bills and treasury related payment system, management of lottery money, municipal treasury business, treasury cash management, state-owned capital management budget system and measures, city's social security regulations, government investment funding, municipal construction investment policies, and overall expenditure management.<sup>29</sup>

### **Food and Drug Administration**

It carries out inspection of food, Chinese medicines, cosmetics, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and production industries. It also frames and implements local rules and regulations for better management of food and drug industry, circulation of drugs and medicines, and manufacturing of infection-free surgical tools.<sup>30</sup>

### **Housing Security and the Housing Authority**

It frames and carries out policies for city's real estate development, affordable housing construction, housing system reforms, housing special planning, real estate market regulations, and housing management laws. It also supervises city's housing management, property management, building safety management,

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

various aspects of application of architectural designs, dissemination of scientific and technological achievements in housing sector group housing information exchanges, implementation of housing industry technical standards, introduction of modernization in housing industry, and development of energy saving residential industry.<sup>31</sup>

### **Human Resources and Social Security Bureau**

Social Security Bureau formulates and executes city's short-term, long-term, and annual social security development plans. In addition, it chalks out city's urban and rural social insurance policy and standards, annuity disbursement schemes, unified measures for transferring social insurance money, supplementary insurance funds management, social security funds' investment policies, social security transfer payments, policy for allocation of municipal adjustment funds for special persons, preparation of city's social insurance budget, and arrangement of endowment funds to help the poor and needy.<sup>32</sup>

### **Land Resources and Planning Bureau**

It makes and implements rules and regulations about urban and rural land planning and resources, house demolition arrangements, land surveying, and land mapping. It is also responsible for organization of urban development strategy, sustainable use of resources, land assessment, assets management, land research planning, revision and co-ordination of urban system planning, urban master planning, land use planning, geological and environment protection planning, mineral resources protection, and utilization planning.<sup>33</sup>

### **City Garden and Forestry**

It frames and implements strategic plan for the development of gardens and forest industry. The Animal Husbandry Wing

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

forecasts and handles occurrence of emergencies such as major wild animal epidemics and forest pests to ensure ecological safety. It also keeps people abreast with imminent happening of disasters and winds through micro-blogs, *Wechat* communication system, newspapers, radios, and televisions.<sup>34</sup>

### **City Traffic Administration**

It supervises management of city's bridges, underpasses and tunnels, such as the *Yangtze River Bridge*, the *Baishazhou Bridge*, the *Han River Bridge* and others. It makes plans for road traffic management system, road traffic facilities, traffic research, accident prevention, illegal traffic handling, vehicle's registration, and driver's training system as well.<sup>35</sup>

### **Science and Technology Bureau**

It takes measures to timely maintain, protect, update, and open online government information, in accordance with the "public information directory" related to the network of community involved in science and technology planning system, science and technology project reporting, technical operating procedures, scientific and technological achievements, and scientific awards review results. It is also authorized to inform about international science and technology news, Chinese science and technology achievements, Wuhan science, technology and economic news, and Intellectual Property Right Office's announcements. This Bureau has also launched , the Public Information, Open Guide, Open Directory, Open Application, and "I want to ask," and Director's Mailbox like information blogs through which media organizations, and people can have easy access to city's innovative technical projects.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

## **Legislative Affairs' Office of the Municipal Government**

It enacts and implements Local Government's policies, laws, rules, and regulations, annual legislative plan and disciplinary documents of the Municipal People's Government, and reports to the leading comrades of the Municipal People's Congress for examination and approval and guides the departments concerned to get them implemented.<sup>37</sup>

## **Municipal Service Centre Management Office**

It is an interactive platform responsible for government information disclosure, strengthening the organization and administrative leadership of Peoples' Government's departments, improving Local Government System to proceed, and broadening the channels and forms of government information proliferation for public good, official documents' reception and transmission, website maintenance management, and supervision, to develop service-oriented government's administrative structure.<sup>38</sup>

## **Bureau of Tourism**

It devises, executes, and manages tourism-related programs such as cultural activities, trade exhibitions, sports, educational fares, regional fashions' festivals, historical monuments and ancient religious sites' visits, and investment opportunities for local and foreign tourists, researchers, students, anthropologists, and businessmen.<sup>39</sup>

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In the People's Republic of China, the People's Congress System is the basic political set-up in which the power resides in people. Therefore, in Wuhan, the people's congresses at the district or

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

town level implement the direct electoral system, and the average voting participation rate can reach up to ninety five percent.

Wuhan's local government largely protects people's right to vote and takes various steps to facilitate the voters during the direct electoral process to elect the members to the people's congresses. According to the electoral law, deputies to the People's Congresses are elected by the eligible voters. In Wuhan, many small businessmen and first-line workers through their efforts and struggle have been recognized by the people and elected as deputies. They discharge their duties and take part in various town committees' proceedings to protect the rights and interests of the communities concerned. Therefore, it can be said that the National People's Congress's powers belong to the people. Almost all towns and districts in Wuhan have hospitals, schools, other social security facilities, and essential cultural facilities such as youth palaces and reading rooms. In addition, Wuhan's health system based on "Regulations on Preparedness for and Response to Emergent Public Health Hazards" has solved many problems of people by providing them sophisticated medical services. It has contributed in protecting health of the residents, resulting in increased average life expectancy.

Likewise, the "Pension Insurance System" is increasing the proportion of the insured persons and providing pension services to all the retired officials and cadres. Similarly, under the "Compulsory Education Law" all school-aged children and adolescents are receiving free nine years education. It adequately protects citizens' inalienable right to education by reflecting the concept that education is the foundation for long-term socio-economic development, promotion of scientific and technological progress, and realization of socialist modernization.

In Wuhan, the local government authorities and legislative bureau organize hearing system to listen to the opinions and suggestions from all quarters of life before undertaking major decisions. This arrangement helps the administrative and legislative bodies to solicit opinions while taking further measures in decision making process. This acts as a catalyst to mobilize government cadres and trigger public-service enthusiasm and passion among the people as well. By these community-based orientations, people actively and

directly participate in socio-economic matter and development of their city. This people consultation-oriented system fully manifests residents' status as 'the masters' in decision making process regarding local administrations' functionalities. In addition, the local government offices and departments build interactive platforms for the public through television, mobile phones, radio, internet, official websites, and electronic signposts to enable them to easily watch and supervise government affairs and performance. This system has achieved encouraging results by enhancing government efficiency.

In Wuhan, grassroots' government functionaries and street bureaucracy with closest contact with the people are directly responsible for implementing policies, standards, rules, and regulations. This reflects their dedication and hard work to serve the people, and the people seem to be satisfied with the system and delivery of municipal services.

Since the reforms and opening up policy in the late 1970s, Wuhan has been making progress in socio-economic landscape. To ensure that the residents may share the fruits of reforms-driven economic development, Wuhan Municipal Government has been trying to protect the basic rights and interests of the people by improving health care system, education sector, minimum living standard system, energy security arrangements, and building affordable and low-rent houses. With growth of income, people's living standards are gradually improving and now people are enjoying digitally-managed provision of improved municipal services.

In light of the above discussed analysis and research findings, following recommendations are put forwarded:

- ✓ More funds should be allocated to develop the less-developed areas of Wuhan such as Central Town.
- ✓ Modern managerial skills to be enhanced through training courses to further the administrative capacity, quality of work, and professionalism of local government institutions.
- ✓ Well-orchestrated planning should be devised to ensure energy sufficiency for sustainable socio-economic development in the city.

- ✓ Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau should take scientifically-devised and approved measures to control increasing air and aqua pollution.
- ✓ More financial allocations should be sanctioned to construct affordable apartments backed with modern facilities and gadgets for the residents.
- ✓ The municipal government should undertake initiatives for traffic management for improving the traffic flows in congested roads, and for that matter comprehensive network of underground metro systems across the city should be developed.
- ✓ Private taxi, rickshaw, and motorcycle system should be equipped with modern gadget and IT system and should be made available to facilitate the commuters.
- ✓ Outdated taxis should be replaced with modern and environment friendly vehicles.
- ✓ Local taxation system should be made more transparent and easy to understand to increase the local revenue collections.
- ✓ Steps should be taken to improve financial management and functions of administrative districts to decrease leakages in resources.

If the abovementioned suggestions are taken into account in letter and spirit, Wuhan's Local government system will have more result-oriented and more people-friendly governance. Moreover, it will have enhanced administrative capacity, improved provision of municipal services, better management of resources, greater efficiency, and extended transparency in administrative transactions and an increased institutional capacity. Indeed, it would also provide the people of Wuhan with quality life full of facilities. Only then can Wuhan model be presented as a model local government system for other cities to follow.