

## Chapter I

### Introduction

The Land and Development Office (L&DO) traces its genesis to the office of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, responsible for acquiring the land for new capital of Delhi in 1911. The land and development work was then done by an Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD), known as Land and Development Officer, in the Chief Engineer's office, under the control of the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner in PWD. The Land and Development Officer was formally charged with the land record work and administration on behalf of the Government of Raisina Estate. On transfer of the work under the direct administrative control of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi with effect from 1 March 1928, the office of the Land and Development Officer came into being as a separate organization. In 1958, the Chief Commissioner resumed Nazul<sup>1</sup> lands under the management of the Notified Area Committee, Civil Section, Delhi and put them under the administrative control of the L&DO. L&DO was brought under the control of the then Ministry of Urban Development, presently Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (Ministry) with effect from 1 October 1959 and since then, it had been functioning as a subordinate office of this Ministry until it was upgraded as an attached office of the Ministry vide Gazette notification dated 04 April 2000.

The main functions of the L&DO are:

- i) administration of the leasehold properties of Central Government land,
- ii) allotment of land to various Government/ semi-Government departments and various political, social, charitable, educational and religious institutions,
- iii) conversion, substitution, mutation etc., of leasehold residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use properties into freehold and execution of conveyance deeds, and
- iv) realization of Government revenue in accordance with the terms of lease deeds and orders/ instructions issued by the Government from time to time.

The properties administered by L&DO fall into two broad categories:

- Nazul lands, which were acquired in the year 1911 for the formation of the capital of India at Delhi; and
- Rehabilitation lands<sup>2</sup>, which were acquired by the Government of India for the speedy rehabilitation of displaced persons from Pakistan.

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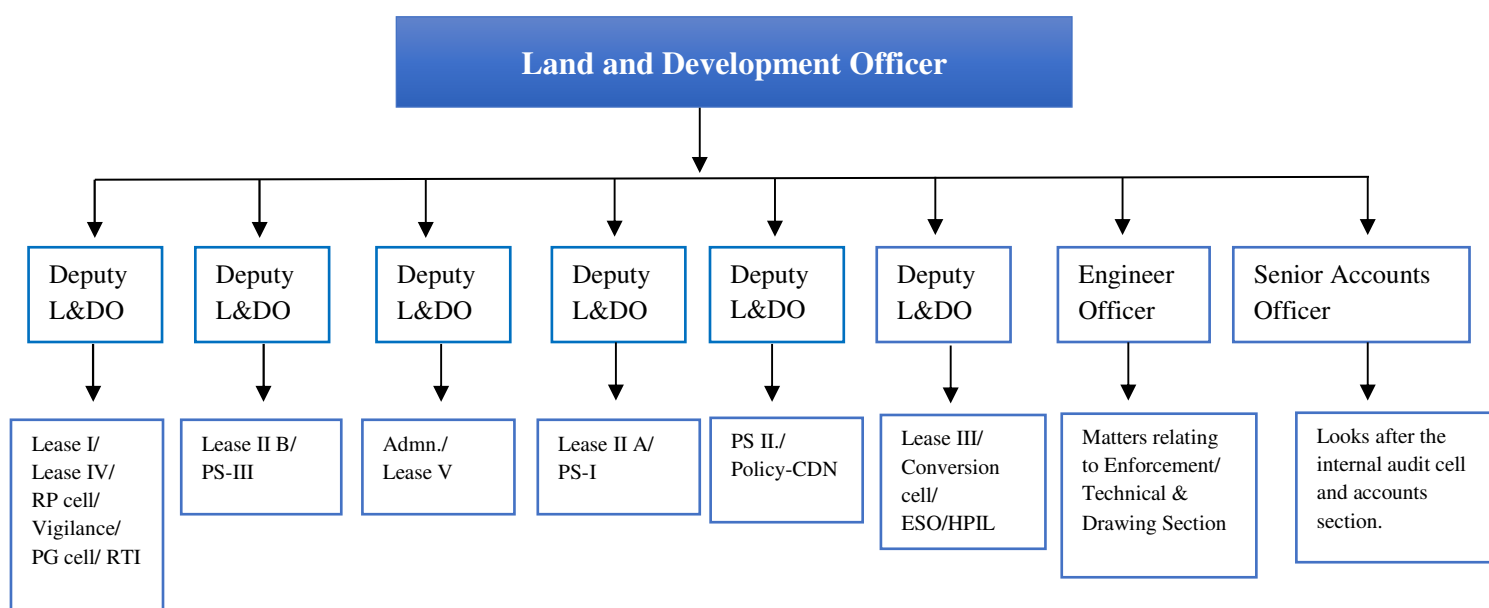
<sup>1</sup> *The term 'Nazul land' inter alia means land or buildings in or near towns or villages which have escheated to the Government; property escheated or lapsed to the State. The term 'Nazul land' is commonly applied to any land or house property belonging to Government either as an escheat or as having belonged to a former Government.*

<sup>2</sup> *Rehabilitation leases, which were earlier administered by the Rehabilitation Department, were transferred to the L&DO in 1983*

These properties were given on lease for residential, commercial and institutional purposes. As per the Annual Report of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for the year 2020-21, L&DO is responsible for the administration of about 60,526 leases of the Central Government land in Delhi. These include 57,389 residential, 1,597 commercial, 1,430 institutional and 110 industrial properties, out of which 34,905 properties have been converted into freehold.

### 1.1 Organizational setup

The L&DO is headed by the Land and Development Officer, who is assisted by six Deputy Land and Development Officers, one Engineer Officer who heads the Technical Branch and one Senior Accounts Officer who also acts as Internal Audit Officer of L&DO. The administration of leased properties is done through six Lease sections, three Property sections (PS), and one Residual Property cell (RP cell).



(PG: Public Grievances; CDN: Coordination; ESO: Estate Officer; HPIL: Hemisphere Properties India Ltd)

As against a sanctioned strength of 197 persons, the L&DO had 99 persons in position (as of January 2021). In addition, 41 persons were also working on contract basis.

### 1.2 Online Systems

L&DO has an online system known as “e-Dharti”, which is meant for speedy disposal of public services (such as conversion, substitution and mutation of properties) including a payment system. Capability to digitize sale-permission, mortgage permission and gift permission was under development. Another application, the e-Dharti Geoportal, is a Geographic Information System (GIS) based application for mapping its properties. Through this application, the lessee will be able to see the basic details of the property along with a map showing its location. The NIC is managing these applications and the IT resources.

### 1.3 Budget and expenditure

The budget estimates, revised estimates and actual expenditure of L&DO during the years 2016-17 to 2020-21 is as under:

**Table 1.1: Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure of L&DO**

(₹ in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
2016-17	9.94	10.50	10.42
2017-18	10.76	11.16	11.03
2018-19	12.04	13.11	12.13
2019-20	11.93	13.86	12.66
2020-21	12.97	12.97	Not Available

(Source: Detailed Demand for Grants of MoHUA)