New Regimes of Private Governance: The Case of Electronics City in Peri-urban Bangalore

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Abstract
New modes of urban organization are being unleashed across India by the designation of certain spaces as Special Economic Zones, Industrial Townships, Industrial Corridors and Smart Cities. Many of these spaces have been granted exception to multiple laws and regulations and operate as enclaves with private modes of governance. This paper aims to bring a grounded understanding of the emergence of such spaces by examining the transformation of the governance systems in Electronics City in peri-urban Bangalore with the creation of the Electronics City Industrial Township Authority (ELCITA). Electronics City has been a site of contestation between various groups - the industries association, the local village panchayats and the city corporation - especially over material claims like land revenue. Even though ELCITA is not a democratically elected body, it is vested with the powers of a municipality including the power to levy property tax and also perform functions like urban planning, regulation of buildings, water supply and solid waste management. The sharp contrast in the levels of infrastructure and basic services of ELCITA with that of the surrounding region reveals the operation of "splintering urbanism" in the region. This paper argues that new regimes of private governance like ELCITA are created to bypass the social and political realities of Indian cities by spatially and legally locating itself outside their jurisdiction.