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The IC Centre for Governance has been set up in with the objective of collective thinking and acting on important issues of governance. It believes that public governance is too serious a matter to be left entirely to the state and that the involvement of the Civil Society is not only desirable but also essential. The Centre seeks to strengthen the capacity of Civil Society and government for ensuring good governance.

C O N T E N T S

COMMENT

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

"Things are different. So we can't keep operating like everything is the same, and that's what many of us have done. And I think it's up to us to change the conversation."

Michelle Obama

Much that I did not intend to devote this editorial to the ubiquitous topic of Covid-19, it is difficult to close one's eyes to the overpowering presence of the pandemic in our economic, political, and social life and to the personal problems being faced by almost everyone in the country.

While the initial cooperation of the people and the dedication of our health care and sanitation personnel in the current battle against corona virus are widely acknowledged, the role of the administrative machinery across the country in executing PM's vision in this hour of crisis deserves deeper examination. From the cabinet secretary, the head of the civil services to the chief secretaries and directors general of police, healthcare officials, doctors and the frontline workers on the ground have visibly been as involved in managing the spread of the Virus.

The corona virus crisis has impacted a whole gamut of human and economic activities concerning a wide range of civil services overseeing and managing them like healthcare, education, policing, communication, travel, transport, construction, farming, banking, commerce and industry and even diplomacy.

Initially, it appeared that the civil services showed the nimbleness they are known for. The lock down announced in the last week of March 2020 was enforced swiftly and adequately. India's quick and effective response to the corona virus was widely acknowledged. It seemed to be reflected in the comparatively slow spread in the country for almost a month.

As the lock downs came in regular succession, the tautness of civil

administration started signs of slackening. There were reports of police brutality, administrative insensitivity and human suffering. Anecdotal evidence of heartrending poverty and hunger started going round the social media. At the same time, the ongoing fight against corona virus had also thrown up rare instances of local initiatives and empathy exhibited by some civil servants.

The Bhilwara, Agra and Pathanamthitta (Kerala) models of containing virus are only some instances. Some healthcare officials and doctors falling prey to corona virus while leading the fight against it are inspiring evidence of their selflessness and empathy.

By the end of the second lock down period, the stray cases of suffering became a stream and photographs of women carrying their children on their backs and little children walking along their parents became viral. At the time of writing, we have secured the fourth place in the world in the number of infected persons; and the numbers are rising despite denials of community spread.

The course and duration of the fight against corona virus is still uncertain.

The corona virus crisis impacted a whole gamut of human and economic activities concerning a wide range of civil services overseeing and managing them like healthcare, education, policing, communication, travel, transport, construction, farming, banking, commerce and industry and even diplomacy.

Challenge of a black swan event, something that happens only once in a century; earthquakes, floods, draughts, tsunamis test the efficacy of the administration in a defined region, this catastrophe has jolted the civil services all over the world. I wonder how the story of the pandemic will be written in the annals of public governance, how the response of the civil services in our context has been.

Some civil servants have acquitted themselves with rare courage and compassion – stories of a police constable carrying a pregnant woman to the hospital and donating blood to her- but there are many who have failed to come up to the required standard of service. Because of them, an opportunity of raising the bar of performance was lost.

Fighting a pandemic of this dimension requires management at both the macro and micro levels. Merely pandering to the whimsical pronouncements of the political bosses without applying their minds to the situation is seen to be the hallmark of many of our bureaucrats – raising barriers on roads, asking hospitals not to admit patients from outside the state, running relief trains at the fancy of ministers, beating the hapless migrant worker for daring to demand attention or for breaking the lockdown rules.

Issuing long unintelligible notifications and un-implementable rules by the central, state and local governments has become the hallmark of our administration. Even I, a former Cabinet Secretary, cannot decipher the long winding circulars issued by the district magistrate of the district I live in.

In the event of a vaccine against Covid being found, the vaccination of 1.3 billion people would present a new challenge for civil administration. We will have to address issues of management of medical supply chains, prioritisation of vulnerable persons and coordination among different agencies.

In sum, the civil services have treated the unprecedented never-to-be-repeated challenge in a routine manner. The seriousness of the situation has been acknowledged not more than in the case of the recurring natural disasters like floods, draughts and hurricanes. Perhaps they could not appreciate the severity of the pandemic as there has not been any destruction of the physical infrastructure.

The roads, bridges and the power and water supply remains unaffected, people have not been killed on beaches and fields and there was no need for evacuation of the population. That's perhaps why the local administration took it in their normal stride. Even a not too difficult task of carrying the migrant workers back to their villages was not executed satisfactorily.

The civil services have not risen to their potential. They have not shown the urgency of raising the level of public service to warlike proportions; worse, even in these trying times some of them have continued with extortion and rent seeking, the mud sticking on the face of entire civil service. I shudder to think of the fate of millions of poor in case a severe earthquake strikes the NCR.

Another mistake being committed by them is blind obedience to their political masters. They seem to have abdicated the decision making to the politicians despite having the collective expertise and historical memory of handling disasters.

It is high time our civil services recognize the uniqueness of the challenge and gear themselves with courage, determination and innovation to overcome the deadly scourge.

Prabhat Kumar

Prabhat Kumar

Taking Jobs to the People – A Proposition

That the Indian economy is vitally dependent on the small and micro enterprises is not contested by anyone. It is an accepted fact they have been the most vibrant and dynamic drivers of our economic growth over the decades. The total number of small and micro units (both manufacturing and service) is estimated to be more than sixty million employing a workforce of over 110 million and accounting for almost 40 percent of the total working population of the country. The total fixed assets in these units are estimated to be at least Rs. 15 lakh crores.

It is also a truism that the small entrepreneur has not received the attention he deserved in a responsible welfare state. The MSME sector, especially the micro manufacturing and service subsectors, has unfortunately not been accorded the importance it deserves in the scheme of things. Besides improving the economic condition of a vast number of low-income families, it has a great potential of lifting masses out of poverty and also bringing rural urban migration to manageable levels. The dream of the Prime Minister to provide work to every hand can be realized only through the micro sector of the economy.

It is ironic that the importance of the small sector of the economy is suddenly being realized by the commentators on the politics and economy of the country in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. They seem to have awakened to the fact that the pandemic has dealt the small entrepreneur a death blow. The government has also reacted with alacrity for restoring the health of micro, small and medium enterprises by hastily announcing a package of stimuli. To say that it is woefully inadequate to deal with the present distress of the sector would be an understatement. Incidentally, was amused by FM's branding the change of definitions, which might benefit a handful of medium industrial units, as a 'revolutionary' step.

I am surprised at the seemingly uninformed understanding of the MSME ecosystem by those who should be dealing with the issues of MSM hands-on on a regular basis. Having seen the administrative systems responsible for managing, regulating and promoting the millions of tiny and small enterprises at the state and union levels, I was expecting a more comprehensive approach for helping out the small entrepreneur during the unprecedented crisis. The Finance Minister famously came out with a Rs. 20 lakh crores parcel of incentives including Rs. 3 lakh crores credit based line for MSMEs. This package, if offered in normal times, would have been hailed as a noble gift to the MSME ecosystem. But when all the enterprises had come to a grinding halt for an extended period of three months or more, it would prove to be too inadequate a cure for the dying sector. She could have done better.

Fortunately not everything has been lost. Given an honest new look by all the stakeholders, millions of micro and small units can still be revived and millions more can come into existence in the next few years in the process of realizing the dream of 'Self Reliant India'.

Four years ago, a One-Man Committee was appointed by the Union Government to study the MSME sector and to suggest policy measures for developing it. They were normal times. I, as the Chairman of the Committee submitted its report personally to the Minister of MSME on January 1, 2017 when I was assured that the recommendations would be examined by the government expeditiously.

The true impact of MSMEs must be judged from the percentage of population touched by them rather than the size of their turnover. Therefore, MSMEs should be considered as the indicators of the nation's future economic growth potential. For example, a new knowledge intensive growth model has already emerged in the small sector, which has the potential to grow to greater strengths in the next decade.

MSMEs are also important for fostering and strengthening our innovation potential. They are not only a catalyst for new ideas to breed, but also for pushing new ideas into the market. MSMEs have unique flexibility to adapt to new market conditions and are open to emerging ideas supported by information technologies.

In view of the above, the government should take a new look on policies to reap the advantages of a growing young entrepreneurial

class. This new born class should be encouraged to become the drivers of economic growth that will have the potential to pull the marginalized people of India out of poverty.

It is this group of entrepreneurs that will make the next wave of massive employment and value addition a reality in India. The intricate linking of micro, small and medium enterprises, its interconnectedness to large industries as one unbroken value chain is, therefore, crucial for India.

I believe changing the mindset of the institutional stakeholders, honouring the entrepreneurship spirit and restoring the dignity of entrepreneurship should be the guiding mantra of our MSME policy. I feel that as a nation, we have not been able to give the respect to our entrepreneurs, which they rightfully deserve. The state establishment needs to develop an 'I care' syndrome in supporting and servicing the enterprises. It should be appreciated that there is a range of 'possible futures' for the youth, but the entrepreneurial route is the most exciting and challenging of all possible futures. The young woman or young man who chooses the enterprise path needs all the support and encouragement from state, financial and other agencies.

What is, therefore, essential is to bring about a change in the mindset of the functionaries of different public institutions at various levels; and this includes the staff of the banks and financial institutions too. The mindset of the functionaries of various institutions including the MSME-DIs, DICs, autonomous institutions, banks and financial institutions can be modified largely by training and reorientation.

In addition, the dignity of the entrepreneur can be enhanced by making the systems more right based and entitlement based eliminating the subjective human element. For instance, the banking system can introduce common application for all scheduled banks, have model project reports duly endorsed by a multi-disciplinary body to put a stop to the entrepreneur running around. Similarly the schemes of the Central and State governments should be accessible online so that the entrepreneur does not have to go to offices personally.

It would be considered presumptuous of me to assert that if the recommendations had actually been logically examined (not necessarily accepted), we would have been in a better position to deal with the present situation.

In this short paper, I would be dealing with only a few broad areas of the recommendations of the Committee. In the present perspective of hundreds of thousands of migrant workers having gone back to their villages, the need for facilitating them to earn their livelihood at their places of residence would be increasingly felt, as many of them may not like to go back to their old jobs in the cities. Additionally, most of them would have been exposed to skills and management making them better qualified to set up micro enterprises. In my view, providing them institutional support to set up micro enterprises and generate self-employment acquires top policy priority in the present context. Therefore, I intend to talk about my recommendation on this aspect.

I may, therefore, be excused for not covering all the aspects of SME operations e.g. financing, marketing, exports, delayed payments, infrastructure, labour laws, ease of doing business, bureaucratic corruption etc. in this paper. Those interested in all the recommendations of the Committee are requested to go to the full report.

Packages of programmes and schemes have been introduced from time to time by successive governments. The recommendations of various committees on the subject have been implemented piecemeal but not in a holistic manner. We think it is the time to pause and consider the policy environment in totality and then to initiate the process of developing a synergistic ecosystem. The synergistic eco system should combine the activities of the Central ministries and agencies dealing with any aspect of MSMEs, the state governments, specialized institutions promoting the sector as well as private organizations.

The policy formulation in the Central Government for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises suffer from fragmentation and silo-thinking. Each subject matter ministry concerned with a section of MSMEs looks after the interest of their MSMEs to the exclusion of others. Often the Ministry of MSME is not even consulted. Additionally, there are separate ministries for deciding on vital issues like finance, entrepreneurship, skilling, labour issues etc. Therefore, the Committee is of the view that considering the growing importance of the sector, the level of policy making structures in the government should be raised to the highest level.

It has been a general perception in the present set up that the most radical ideas of development and welfare come personally from

the Prime Minister. It was because of the exhortation of the PM that programmes like Swachh Bharat, PM Mudra Yojana, Jan Dhan Yojana and Ayushman Bharat got the needed momentum. Therefore, a National MSME Authority under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister needs to be created for broad policy formulation at the Centre with adequate institutional arrangements for coordination with state governments.

The Committee felt that the states are equal partners in the development of MSMEs, especially the micro sector and there should be more of centrally funded schemes with matching contribution from the states. SLBCs and IIC Meetings should be held regularly with adequate representation from the Centre.

The Committee also felt that it is absolutely essential to have a transparent database that can be gainfully used by the key stakeholders at the national, state and local levels. Such a database should be maintained and managed by an autonomous agency; should be made available to key stakeholders e.g. central government institutions, state institutions, accredited associations, local bodies, entrepreneurs etc. on a 'need to know' basis; should be dynamic; with relevant information to be shared by all including banks and financial institutions , based on the principle of universal registration; all the schemes etc. of central and state governments to be properly displayed.

According to the Committee, there should also be a mobile app for the entrepreneurs to access the database. Incidentally, the Committee felt that the name 'Udyog Aadhar' should be replaced by 'Udyam Aadhar'. The registration data of enterprises should be reviewed after every five years.

It was recommended that a task Force should be constituted to give a comprehensive template for the interactive database within a short time.

In the changed policy scenario, the District Industries Centres should be redeveloped as Udyam/Udyog Bandhus (उद्यम / उद्योग बंधु) with the necessary infrastructure for providing counselling, mentoring and handholding services. A specialized cadre of trained officials employed by the Udyam/Udyog Bandhus need to work with local partners to counsel, mentor and to train small entrepreneurs. These Udyam/Udyog Bandhus can comprise of "Facilitator Business Development Cell as one stop services" to give counselling,

mentoring and handholding towards complying rules required for setting up services or manufacturing enterprises.

The Central Government should consider setting up a dedicated TV Channel named as Udyami Bharat (उद्यमी / भारत) on the lines of Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV. This could be an effective instrument for disseminating information and could enable the best practices and progressive entrepreneurial cases to be showcased

The MSME Associations have extensive knowledge of the industry or have access to such knowledge which can be conveniently passed on to the policy-makers.

It is, therefore, possible for Governmental agencies and MSME associations to form effective partnerships and bridge mutual gaps in understanding. MSME associations can also help identify emerging issues and develop solutions to problems.

There is a need for system of accreditation of representative associations by the Central government and to encourage creation of a platform of accredited associations industry wise/zone wise. By suitably empowering the accredited associations and federations, they can be used for delivering the services, which are currently being delivered by state institutions. For instance, they can be incentivised to set up common facility centres, testing laboratories, training centres and mini industrial estates in rural areas etc. This may lead to better service delivery in addition to cutting down on 'government'.

The kinds of enterprises, such as bakery and confectionary, beauty parlour, snacks, manufacturing, garment, water purification, cement bricks manufacturing, photo and video studio, florists and flower decoration, sweets making, nursery for plants, paper plate, spice processing, academic coaching and   tuition centre, fast food, livestock processed product, toilet installation, solar energy solutions, manufacture of furniture, spinning – weaving of textiles, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles etc.; among various others, offer necessary resilience in an inclusive development process.

Staggering 67.25% of the total micro enterprises have an investment below Rs.25, 000. Further, 16.20 percent and 5.55 percent are in between Rs.25, 001 – Rs.50, 000 and Rs.50,001 to Rs.75,000 respectively. The enterprises of the poor often seem more a way to buy a job (Necessity Entrepreneurship) when a conventional employment opportunity is not available. Very few individuals from the Poorest of the Poor segment manage to start

their own enterprise. Also, deterring factors such as social neglect and discriminatory environment impede the urge. The challenge is in moving from "Necessity Entrepreneurship" to "Opportunity Entrepreneurship".

The significance of micro enterprises is that they contribute to the stability of local economies and the development of the economy and society, thereby creating employment, reducing poverty, curbing migration and ensuring social security.

To achieve the above objectives, the following cardinal principles are proposed:

• Upgrade and revitalize Micro enterprises subsector especially in rural areas to function as change agents of country's economy;

• Introduce exhaustive development programmes which create business expertise, generate additional employment, opportunities and profitability to sustain rural livelihood with dignity;

• Avoid disparities in financing for easy access to finance.

Ensure setting up of physical and institutional infrastructure for the balanced growth and development of the micro enterprises

It is recognized that the micro sub sector accounts for more than 90% of the total number of enterprises in the country as also more than 90% of non-agriculture employment. While micro units are eligible for all the schemes including services for small units, they do not normally figure in the scheme of things because of historical significance of small scale industries. There are, of course, the traditional industries like Khadi, Coir and other traditional industries which consist mainly of micro units. The schemes for these groups of enterprises surely impact the micro sub sector, but do not do full justice to the entire micro subsector. The present focus of policy making in the Ministry of MSME for micro enterprise sector would need to be further augmented and up-scaled.

MUDRA may take over new enterprises as also the ones which are already being assisted by SIDBI under a programme known as Micro Enterprise Promotion Programme (MEPP) and various other Inter-Ministerial programmes leading to employment generation in rural India. This programme of SIDBI is suggested to be brought under an up-scaled MUDRA for better coordination.

The Committee strongly recommended the need to significantly upscale the MUDRA Scheme to bring it under the ambit of an

exclusive MUDRA Bank, which could be established on a stand-alone basis exclusive of SIDBI. The entire gamut of micro units, especially those coming out of the exclusive nurturing centres (discussed below) should be linked to MUDRA loan on a priority basis

To promote the culture of rural entrepreneurship in the country, and encourage low cost manufacturing by utilizing rural infrastructure, rural manpower and rural inputs, import substitution and to generate rural self-employment, low cost Rural Livelihood Nurturing Centres (सूक्ष्म उद्यम पोषण केंद्र) should be established in and around rural areas in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. Theses Rural Livelihood Nurturing Centres:-

i.   would provide training in self-employment to rural youth and other unemployed persons,

ii.   would add value to rural agricultural produce thereby enhancing the incomes of farmers,

iii. would make rural population self-reliant in most of consumer products,

iv.   would lead to Import substitution of cheap imports of low tech quality from other countries, and

v.   would reduce transportation losses of agro products like fruits & vegetables due to decays / loss of time.

The Rural Livelihood Nurturing Centres would be providing complete entrepreneurship training with handholding support in setting up and operating units to rural youth and nurture them to set up their own micro & small enterprises. These Centres would also provide an opportunity to rural youth to acquire skills in business operations such as product development, identification of appropriate technology, product quality, preparing project report, accounting, marketing and commercial aspects of business.

These Nurturing Centres can be established within the premises of District Industries Centres or Panchayat buildings under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode, wherein, low cost projects with appropriate technologies should be demonstrated in working condition and practical hands-on training is imparted to produce different products on actual machines and equipment. The land & building or other built up premises for these centres should preferably be made available by DIC or the Panchayats.

In addition, private corporate sector companies, organizations like educational institutions, NGOs or other private sector firms can also be initiated to establish such Nurturing Centres on self-sustaining basis. These centres will help nurturing of potential entrepreneurs to establish new micro and small manufacturing or services enterprises for creating self-employment opportunities for them. A suitable initial funding scheme for setting up these centres should be offered by the Ministry of MSME with state governments' partnership. It is suggested that at least one such Nurturing Centre should be set up in each block of the country.

The corporate sector companies should be encouraged to support the nurturing of micro enterprises by including this activity under the list of eligible activities for CSR.

Linkage with MUDRA Yojana: All such trained persons at the Rural Livelihood Business Nurturing Centres should be given overriding preference in 'MUDRA' financing scheme of the Prime Minister in order to help these trainees to access loans for their micro businesses. It will in turn also strengthen MUDRA scheme since trained entrepreneurs adequately prepared by the Nurturing Centres would prove to be more robust and sustainable in running their businesses and meeting repayment commitments.

To promote Micro units in the Rural Areas, it is recommended that small Rural Business Zones (RBZ) be created after conducting baseline survey of the resources and skills available in the rural areas so that these resources and skills can be utilized by the entrepreneurs who set up their micro enterprises in these Zones.

There is a requirement to identify various rural technologies, which can be applied and installed with small investment and minimum infrastructure that is available in rural areas. After this, an innovative model of an integrated support system should be established for generation of Rural Industries. The model which should hold the promise of achieving multi-faceted goals of sustainable economic development and generation of additional employment opportunities by way of promoting entrepreneurship and setting up of micro rural enterprises.

Rural industrialization seems to be a promising solution to gainfully employ the underutilized rural population. Rural industrialization does not really mean commissioning of big industries. Need of the hour is to employ machines and technologies which can be operated

by one or two persons, technologies which do not require high level of skills to operate upon, which do not need high power and which can be manually operated. This would gainfully employ unemployed unskilled and semiskilled persons

There is a perception that the entrepreneurs do not want to get registered in order to avoid being burdened with government regulations or visits of inspectors from coercive departments. Besides, they do not see any advantage or service attached with registration. Therefore, with a view to provide some incentive to the micro entrepreneur, it is suggested that every micro entrepreneur who volunteers to get registered, should be offered free, cashless family medical insurance on the lines of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana. The insurance premium should be shared by the Central and state governments as in the case of RSBY.

In order to provide focus on Micro Enterprises Development and bring in coherence of action with respect to the proposed policy, it is recommended to set-up a new Office of Development Commissioner – Micro Enterprises in the Ministry of MSME and designated as: Development Commissioner (Micro enterprises & Village industries).

The model suggested above could, if sincerely implemented, prove to be a credible exercise in taking the jobs to the people as a substitute to the present paradigm of taking people to the jobs.

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Jyotsna Sitling

Social Enterprises and the Role of the Government*

Abstract

Despite much material progress, India's social and environmental problems are getting aggravated and intense on account of mass poverty, inequality, climate change and recently, COVID-19. Traditional organisations of Government, Civil Society and the Market have fallen greatly short to solve our ever-increasing societal problems. This calls for the Government, Civil Society and Market to work together rationally through a structure which has **the heart of a social organization and head of a business entity** to hold hands with the Government to address our massive societal problems. **Social Enterprises (SE)** are the answer to this. Sensing the pulse accurately, the government rightly announced a Social Stock Exchange (SSE) in the budget speech in July 2019 at the most opportune time. This comes with a huge responsibility to build the right ecosystem for SEs and Impact Investors to enable them to address refractive social problems with immediate support signal from the Government. The purpose of this article is to make the stakeholders aware of the market functions on Social Enterprise, and the roles critical to the Government in bringing distinct value in different market sub-segments of social impact investment.

Background

The world faces several grave societal challenges today. Businesses in the pursuit of maximizing profit and shareholders value have already done a lot of damage to the environment and society. On the top of it is the 'rising inequality'. If we talk about India, in 2018, top 10% of India's population received 55% of all income and the bottom 50 per cent shared only 15 per cent *(World Inequality Report 2018)[1]*.

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*A shorter version of this article was printed in the magazine 'gfiles', June 2020 edition.

[1] https://wir2018.wid.world/files/download/wir2018-full-report-english.pdf

Source: https://*wir2018.wid.world/files/download/wir-presentation.pdf*

The figure above suggests that inequality is rising in India at a much faster rate as compared to the USA, China, Europe and even Russia. More importantly, although it is true that India has made massive gains in reducing multidimensional poverty from 2006 to 2016, 364 million Indians continue to experience acute deprivations in health, nutrition, schooling and sanitation according to MPI 2018 Study of UN[2] . The major concern is that our ranking in Human Development Index is still 129 (out of 189 countries, 2019)[3] . Similarly, our performance on the status of the environment is quite appalling. We are ranked 177th out of 180 countries (2018) in Environment Performance Index[4] . The rising inequality especially will sharpen further in the post-COVID world. This clearly shows that businesses have to find ways which are more inclusive and try to balance people, planet and profit. This alternate business model gaining momentum across the globe are Social Enterprises.

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[2] https://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/sustainable-development/successstories/MultiDimesnionalPovertyIndex.html

[3] http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/2019-human-development-index-ranking

[4] https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/epi-topline?country

Understanding Social Enterprise, Social Stock Exchange and Social Impact Bond

Social Enterprise

In simple terms, Social Enterprises (SE) are businesses which have a revenue generating model, and, therefore, they are not charity or philanthropy. They reinvest most of their profit into the cause for which the enterprise is existing and do not focus on multiplying shareholder's money value and are, thus, different from traditional profit oriented businesses. Most importantly, their primary focus is social and environmental good. However, there is no universally accepted definition of SE. SE is not new In India, but the scale is not there. A number of non-profits and mutual profits registered as Trust, Society, Cooperative and Sec 8 Company in India are into social business addressing the challenges of access, affordability and assurance of societal products and services to the needy public.

Social Stock Exchange

It is worthwhile mentioning that Social Stock Exchange (SSE) are different from traditional Stock Exchanges in multiple ways. Most prominently they do not facilitate the trading of shares. The most important function of a SSE is to act as a platform for SEs and Impact Investors. Impact Investors are the investors who are not only interested in financial return but also focus on social and environmental return. They invest mostly in SE having direct societal impact or in socially and/or environmentally responsible businesses and projects that prevent negative impact on people and planet. The impact measurement globally has been characterized by prominence of metrics, certifications and ratings built on robust assessment systems and measurement systems. This has largely benefited the market by allowing investors to compare and accordingly invest in social businesses by assessing their potential impact. Brookings India July 2019 Report titled 'The Promise of Impact Investing in India'[5] (hereinafter referred to as the Brookings India Report, 2019) cautions that although it will be prudent to look into methods and instruments

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[5] https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-promise-of-impact-investing-in-India.pdf

from global best practices for channelizing the resources, it will be equally critical to examine several externalities of the Indian market on impact-focused take up from a policy standpoint.

Globally, SSEs have been set up in more than ten countries. The prominent SSEs are in UK, Canada, USA, South Africa, Singapore and Mauritius. The ambit of functions of SSE differ widely with respect to (i) types of organizations listed – 'for profit' vs not-for-profit, (ii) services offered – directory only, matching funders and organizations and providing for direct online fund raising, (iii) abilities to trade securities, (iv) methodology for accreditation of organizations and investors and (v) ability of retail investors to participate (Roopa Kudva and Raahil Rai, 2019)[6].

Social Impact Bond

A Social Impact Bond (SIB) is an innovative financing mechanism in which governments or commissioners enter into agreements with social service providers, such as social enterprises or non–profit organisations and investors to pay for the delivery of pre-defined social outcomes (Social Finance 2011, OECD 2016)[7] . More precisely, a bond- issuing organisation raises funds from private - sector investors, charities or foundations. These funds are distributed to service providers to cover their operating costs. If the measurable outcomes agreed upfront are achieved, the government or the commissioner proceeds with payments to the bond-issuing organisation or the investors. In reality, the term "bond" here is a misnomer. In financial terms SIBs are not real bonds but rather future contracts on social outcomes. Impact bonds in India is at a nascent stage, with two contracted in education and one in healthcare according to Brookings India Report, 2019. The same report also highlights that while philanthropy and government will continue to be vital sources of funding for the social sector, SIBs can complement this funding by serving a niche purpose: providing predictable, long-term capital for evidence-based organisations aiming to significantly expand their social programs.

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[6] https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/designing-a-social-stock-exchange-119082500004_1.html

[7] http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/UnderstandingSIBsLux-WorkingPaper.pdf

Evolution of Social Enterprise in India

Societal problems that are difficult to solve have existed in all periods of human history. At each stage of its evolution, society has adopted different institutional arrangements to address emergent societal problems. Initially, this was in the form of new laws of incorporation such as Societies Registration Act that came up in 1860 and later the Indian Trusts Act, 1882. Another institutional form based on self-help and mutual help was recognized in 1904 under the Indian Cooperatives Act. Thereafter came the legal recognition of Charitable Company under Sec 8 of Companies Act, 2013 (earlier Sec 25 of Companies Act, 1956). Social enterprises are a new form of collaboration, where an organisation tries to address difficult social problems using the means and methods of market institutions. SEs also try to collaborate with government agencies to enhance their legitimacy, resources and reach. SEs have adopted any one of these legal forms or have affiliates in other legal forms. Lessons from successful Social Enterprises around the world indicate that though they may start as a single SE, over a period of time they tend to spawn a large number of affiliates which cut across different legal forms of incorporation to address the societal problems in their full scope of complexity. The Civil Society Organizations like SEWA, BASIX, BAIF, SELCO, Industree, ALC India and Arvind Eye Care are few Indian examples on this count.

Social Impact investment has picked momentum in India over last one decade. According to the available report (McKinsey and Company 2017)[8] , India's cumulative investment from 2010-2016 has remained to the tune of 5.2 billion USD with 60-80 million beneficiaries. 90% of this investment is foreign funded. The deal size remained between 7m to 17m USD from 2010 to 2016 with 60-80 deals per year in select sectors like clean energy, financial inclusion and education. Of late, agriculture has started receiving good investment response from the impact investors.

As far as the regulatory backing of the Government to Social Investment goes, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

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[8] 'Impact investing: Purpose-driven finance finds its place in India' Private Equity and Principal Investors Practice, September 2017, McKinsey and Company

defined Social Venture Capital Fund (SVCF) as a separate fund type under the Alternative Investment Fund Category-I in 2014. This definition recognizes SVFs as those entities that invest in Non-profits, Trusts, Societies, and have a clear intention of measuring the development outcomes. This type of fund can only be invested in non-profits and should be open to accepting muted returns.

It is pertinent to mention that foreign funded Social Venture Funds (SVFs) in India are mostly bound by global impact auditing system - IRIS (Impact Reporting Investment Standards) practised by GINN (Global Impact Investment Network) which operates with solution based approach to attending Indian societal problems. India needs to develop domestic impact certification and rating system for Social Enterprises and Impact Investors with robust governance and disclosure practices as credible and demanding as those existing in the mainstream financing. The robustness in systems building needs to be backed by strong infrastructure support and a well-conceived promotional drive to attract both domestic and foreign investments in the long run.

Challenges inherent to the growth of Social Enterprise and Impact Investment in India

Social sector in our country is large but fragmented. Social enterprise covers a multitude of activities virtually in all sectors encompassing education, health, nutrition, livelihood, skilling, sanitation, water, energy, and other fields. Social enterprises draw its principles and concepts from diverse yet intertwined fields of economics, social welfare, business management, rural development, finance, and law. [9]

There is no forum within the Government to enable interdisciplinary, interdepartmental and collaborative economic decision making involving State, Market and Civil Society stakeholders for social enterprise. Although a number of Ministries are stakeholders of social enterprise, building widespread understanding, interest and engagement among government stakeholders in promoting market

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[9] http://www.vikasanvesh.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Essay-on-social-enterprises-and-social-entrepreneurs-Review-of-global-Indian-and-Bharat-lanscape.pdf

for social impact investment is a big challenge (Brookings India Report, 2019).

Currently, awareness and understanding of the components of the ecosystem of this emerging field and the ability to deal with the ecosystem components in the public domain is low in the Government stakeholders. Being an emerging field, Government is yet to arrive at the definition of SE. The same is now being attempted by SEBI in the norms for Social Stock Exchange. The draft report of SEBI Working Group on this is currently open for public comments. It is expected that once the regulatory framework for SSE is built, Government stakeholders will be able to deal better with the ecosystem components on SE. Hence, the pragmatic approach for the Government would be to first bring out the norms of SSE.

A holistic research and documentation of this emerging sector involving diverse disciplines has been the biggest missing link in this emerging sector of prime importance for the future. The literature on SEs in the India are rich on recounts of the practitioners on best practices, management challenges, institutional ecosystem, governance and compliance aspects. A well-researched report connecting the possible dots on the Social Impact Investment ecosystem and the policy framework conditions with adequate depth of the Indian context was published for the first time in Brookings India Report, 2019.

Over last one year, many well-conceived articles on the proposed roles and functions of SSE in India have been published by the social investment experts drawing learnings from the global practices. All these literatures have, although, highlighted the need for a promotional role of the government and attention to detailing out of these roles have not been attempted so far. From the side of the Government as well, no serious research and study have so far been attempted to understand and promote this sector of increasing prominence.

Given the above knowledge gap scenario in an emerging market, Social Stock Exchange has mostly been understood from the market perspective in terms of impact value chain – from capital to enterprise and from assessment to exit, even though Public

(clients/beneficiaries), State and Civil Society Organizations are the major stakeholders in building faith to create this market. It also has been observed world-over that nascent SSE platforms face several challenge of scouting and evaluating enterprises, building trust and sustaining dealings over the long run, and find ways to grow and become ready to list (Dureen Shahnaz 2019)[10]. Being an emerging market with huge information asymmetry at present, there is mismatch of expectations and mistrust between SE and Customer, Investor and SE, Employee and SE , Investor and Donor and finally between Government and Donor/ Investor/ SE/ clients. Government's role becomes vital here in addressing the information gap. At present, Government participation in building the ecosystem is yet to evolve.

To sum it up, social enterprises are not new to India. Best practices are there, but the much needed ecosystem to capture the diversity of our country's social problems and attain scalability of proven social programs through impact investment is not there. This emerging sector having potential to solve societal problem from the market end is riddled with challenges such as funding support for investment, regulations on the ease of doing social business, managerial skills and an understanding of this sector amongst market and government stakeholders specially the mainstream financial institutions. The systemic support of the government would be important here for vertical scaling. This refers to political, legal, regulatory, budgetary and systems changes needed to institutionalize supportive ecosystem to social enterprise at national level through advocacy, strategic alliances, collaborations with a deeper understanding of policy in the concerned field (Madhukar Shukla, 2020)[11] . Government's role becomes important here in creating right opportunities in the market through supportive policies and aligning investors' needs with the national priorities for a larger impact.

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[10] https://nextbillion.net/news/the-highs-and-lows-of-creating-the-worlds-first-social-stock-exchange/

[11] 'Social Entrepreneurship in India: Quarter idealism and a pound of pragmatism' by Madhukar Shukla 2020. Sage Publication.

Developing ecosystem for Impact and sustainability of Social Enterprises – role of the Government

With Social Stock Exchange (SSE) now on unveil in our country, India today needs a well-crafted Central Government support to create a robust market for social investment; there is a need now for the Government to be involved in multiple layers of intervention that can address supply development, directing capital and demand development. The government can participate directly in the market or influence impact investing through policies, regulations and through direct participation in the market (Brookings India Report, 2019) as under:

Areas of Govt. intervention → Govt. participation through ↓	SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT	DIRECTING CAPITAL	DEMAND DEVELOPMENT
POLICIES	Regulatory and promotional support	Taxes, incentives, subsidies, reporting requirements and intermediaries	Enabling 'Corporate' Structure for maximum participation
DIRECT PARTICIPATION (including SEBI, RBI, SIDBI and NABARD)	Co-investment by Government agencies	Procurement	Capacity building

Ref: *Brookings India Report, 2019, modified by the author as per the Indian context*

The segments of Indian Social Enterprise ecosystem at demand, supply and intermediary level with whom the government needs to work on the above interventions are as under:

Demand	Intermediary	Supply
1. Societies	1. Fund Managers	1. Institutional Investors
2. Charities	2. Social Banks	2. Individual Investors
3. Cooperatives	3. Socially oriented Financial Institutions	3. Government Investment
4. Section 8 Companies		

5. Social Enterprises 6. Mainstream Businesses 7. Government Commissioning	4. Physical and Social Infrastructure 5. Financial and Social Instruments	4. Charitable Foundations 5. Philanthropies 6. Corporates: CSRs and others

Ref: *UK impact investment Report 2014 modified by the author as per the Indian context*

The Ministries involved directly in facilitating promotional policies on Social Investment (Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Corporate Affairs) will have a major role in mobilizing interest and in bringing convergence of the other Government stakeholders to participate meaningfully in promoting a strong market for Social Impact Investment across different sub-segments at demand, supply and intermediary level. The role of other stakeholder Ministries and State Governments are equally important to create the appropriate policy and market framework conditions to take forward this initiative in the right direction. The stakeholder mapping of different Central Ministries for Social Enterprises is given in **Annex- 1**.

At present, there is a big coordination challenge within the Government Stakeholders to build the ecosystem for Social Enterprises. To handle this challenge effectively, a nodal networked body is needed for the country which could act as a **Growth Centre to develop the National Strategy on Social Enterprises** for promotion of Social Impact Investment Market. This Centre, apart from knowledge sharing, would promote ease of social businesses by mobilising various market elements for social impact investment; provide strategic guidance to leverage state, market and civil society organizations' resources and expertise for impact; and recommend supportive policies, institutions and instruments in promoting the social businesses. While fulfilling the above role, the monitoring of results and addressing capacity needs will be a cross cutting role of this organization.

Of the initiatives taken by different Governments globally, the experience of United Kingdom (UK) has remained candid in documenting their journey of Social Impact Investment from 2000-2013 and creation of SSE in 2013 in their UK Advisory Board Report

(2014)[12] to Social Impact Investment taskforce (2014). In this regard, the example of 'Centre for Social Impact Bonds' created by United Kingdom (UK) in the Cabinet Office could be relevant for India on this count (See **Box-1**).

Box-1

Case study of 'Centre for Social Impact Bonds' of UK

1. The push for Social Investment Market in United Kingdom started with the creation of Social Investment Task Force under HM Treasury by UK Government in 2000 and subsequently creation of 'Centre for Social Impact Bond' at the Cabinet Office. This has helped UK to promote the development of impact bonds by providing expert guidance, reducing transaction and set-up costs by developing standard tools such as template contracts and so on.

2. In addition to technical support, the Cabinet Office allocates funds to top-up outcomes payment. Because a social intervention often involves multiple government agencies, it is often challenging to pool funding. The Cabinet Office fund overcomes this issue by allocating targeted funding for social finance initiatives, encouraging government agencies to work together.

3. The major outcome of UK Initiative (2000-2013) that started with SITF in 2000 are as under:

   a. Creation of wholesale bank - Big Society Capital to directly support the development of intermediaries and to champion market building.

   b. Suppliers attracted to market through the activities of intermediaries such as Bridges Ventures, Charity Bonds. Explicit effort made to unleash capital from new investors.

   c. Direct attention to regulatory reforms for increased capital supply: Targeting tax relief, Reform of charitable fiduciary duties, Investment intermediary fiduciary duties.

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[12] 'Building a social impact investment market –the UK Experience 2014', Report of UK Advisory Board to Social Impact Investment taskforce.

d. Exclusive focus on Public Sector commissioning: Future Builders Fund 2004 – build capacity of social organisations to win and deliver public sector contracts and build capacity of government officers to engage and work with social organisations.

e. Diversification reflected in more instruments, support programs, information and exchange platform by 2013 to further help building market momentum, an increased understanding across growing landscape of stakeholders and the positive spillover effects of some initiatives on others.

4. This above carefully crafted initiative of UK Government has come a long way in developing traction and building the transaction governance capacity of market players at demand, intermediary and supply level, in different market sub-segments of social investment.

5. The development of the UK market has been led by a strong focus on building robust diverse intermediaries as illustrated in 'Key developments in the UK social investment market' in **Annex-2**.

6. It has targeted access to deep pools of capital from specific sources. It has also focused on building a case for social investment through supporting social organizations in public services delivery. This has all been driven by the committed support of central government in UK.

The UK initiative comes with insightful learnings on both the successes and failures on how this country worked to bring the ecosystem in place from 2000 to 2013 and instituting SSE in 2013 which practices limited trading. It is also evident that a well-designed Central Government support goes a long way to create robust market for social investments. The role of the Government would be important to facilitate the market, participate in the market, and act as a market regulator when it comes to creating an impact through social business. These roles include the initiative such as valid benchmarking system for social impact with SEBI in the Indian context, codifying information generation and information sharing for decision making

and bottom-up learning, building right intermediary institutions to operate the market, creating social impact investment wholesalers, bringing more innovations and collaborations across social enterprise ecosystem, strengthen demand for social investment particularly from increased Government procurement of social services and catalyzing a deeper and broader demand for social impact investment by creating robust pool of social organizations that want, need and can service social impact investment (UK Advisory Board Report, 2014). The background work for this in India can start immediately in the current financial year, 2020–21.

Having outlined the above roles, the key foundational tasks of the Government in building the ecosystem for impact and sustainability of SE as identified by the author is as under: (See **Box-2**)

Box-2

A. Educate market participant

The purpose is to broaden the ecosystem and deepen the knowledge of the sector through education, training and awareness in all market players including the Government stakeholders. The key activities identified are

    a. Communication and campaign to promote the cause of social businesses and SIBs

    b. Knowledge sharing and networking for multi-stakeholder partnership

    c. Disseminate learnings from best practices and failures on impact businesses

There is a need for cross-sector pooling of resources and tapping of fiscal friendly finance, such as, Depositor Education & Awareness Fund, Investor Education & Protection Fund, CSR Fund etc. for this.

B. Foster social business

The purpose is to design and implement Government policies and programs to improve the social impact investment ecosystem

i. Promoting cross-sector (state, market and civil society) partnerships

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a. Introduce innovative financing (both debt and equity) instruments/ products to trigger partnerships and convergence for new social products and services and upscaling proven social programs through impact investment.

b. Promote primary and secondary research on scale and characteristics of existing social enterprise (SE) for policy support on deepening and broadening the impact, The available spectrum of Social Enterprise in India is given in **Annex - 3**.

c. Facilitate promoting robust diverse intermediaries for developing optimum traction for social investment.

d. Promote applied research and pilots across market entities (Civil society, Industry, Academia and Government) for diversification of social business for larger impact. Few applied researches needing attention are:

o   Piloting a few programs with select Welfare Ministries that focus on how social enterprises can work with these Ministries - identifying synergies and build upon it.

o   Experiment with CSR led partnerships to support knowledge, build capacity including joint branding and business development services to SEs – identify synergies on how CSR can facilitate in building the impact market.

o   Piloting few existing alternative financing schemes (E.g., Credit Guarantee Schemes and others) for SE promotion and continuously monitor their support to social enterprises. Institutional investors such as SIDBI, NABARD, Banks, NBFCs and mutual funds need to participate in such piloting with the Government.

ii. **Strengthen demand side through public commissioning**

Public commissioning of services to social enterprise would require:

a. Sensitisation and awareness of Government/public sector on SE policies and ecosystem players.

b. Putting administrative practices in place that allows SE to better work with Government/public sector – e.g. simplified and transparent procurement and payment policies and process.

c. Revisit procurement guidelines for SE by laying social conditions for public procurement, e.g. Public Procurement Policy for MSEs Order, 2018 under section 11 of MSMED Act, 2006.

d. Monitor how supply chain contracts are designed and implemented for inclusive financing.

iii. Co-build impact audit system for convergence, efficiency and cost effective growth

The initiative recommended are as under:

a. Knowledge on impact indicators to be pooled, disseminated widely through interactive information portal focusing on targeted reach to the stakeholders.

b. Apart from becoming a repository of Social Enterprises and Impact Investors, SSE platform need to be more investment friendly by integrating information management system (MIS) on recent developments and best practices using AI and machine learning. This needs close collaboration of SEBI with relevant Social/Business/people/Academic institutions/Research organizations.

c. Reducing the complexity and cost of handling impact audit through convergence - Social data, Business data and CSR data to be made usable for seamless confirmation of impact. Few examples are MoSPI, MCA data and NITI Aayog (NGO Darpan, Aspirational District Program data) data.

d. Work with the regulation body on

o   Valid benchmarking of social impact on continuous basis in response to the emerging social needs.

o   Codifying information generation and sharing for decision making to promote bottom-up learning and address the value capture issues in the process.

> o   Legislation for monitoring and reporting like annual impact reporting.
>
> o   Involving stakeholder Welfare Ministries for working on relevant impact
>
> e.   Creating repository of social enterprises promoted by government, CSR, bilateral and multilateral project at district, state and national level for transparency and needful convergence for a larger impact.
>
> **iv.   Attend specific current barriers or opportunities in the social impact investment market**
>
> Following are a few examples of specific cases to be identified for targeting specific current barriers or opportunities in the social impact investment market:
>
> a.   Small social organisations in transition need more types of blended capital
>
> b.   Retail investors are seeking social value but more mainstream social pension opportunities (e.g. National Pension Fund) need to adapt and capture this interest

Conclusion

In India, social investments are most likely to gain traction when developed to address issues in the areas of key interest to multiple stakeholders including, most importantly, the government. Supportive government policies and institutions play an immense role in both promoting and sustaining an ecosystem conducive to outcomes-based financing. Building local capacity will allow for the implementation of SIB models that are less complex and more cost-efficient. The Indian political, social, and investment contexts will determine the potential of SIB growth and expansion (Brookings India Report, 2019). In this context, the critical need of a Growth Centre to develop the National Strategy on Social Enterprises as mentioned earlier in this article deserves reemphasis.

Given the challenge of encompassing convergence function to build the market for social business, it will be vital to bring relevant

Social, Business, People, Academic Institutions and Research Organizations as partners for developing a national strategy for Social Investments and Social Enterprises.

Equally important would be to identify the collaborative role of these above partner organizations and the expected outcome of such collaborations in terms of catalyzing the social impact market on the ground. The needful collaboration with the State and Local Governments would also be required for necessary policy and program convergence to catch scale with quality.

Who in the Government should champion this cause? Given the massive coordination challenge of the above nature, the high level office in the Central Government with the largest convening power, i.e. either the Cabinet Secretariat or NITI Aayog would be the most appropriate Government Body to anchor the exercise on the formation of this Growth Centre.

As far as the institutional role of the Government is concerned, the Government can be a vital partner to the Growth Centre in facilitating policy tools to aid development of respective ecosystems of social impact business. The procedural and functional limitations of the Government Offices to lead the Growth Centre also need to be analyzed critically while designing the proposed Growth Centre.

Since the proposed Growth Centre will be a heterogeneous network of actors linked by associations through their aligned interest in social impact business, a well-conceived management information system (MIS) on the objective and functionalities of partnership backed by a robust technological integration would facilitate the needful collaborative process and leverage partnerships to build a sound ecosystem.

Given the potential of the proposed Growth Centre in catalysing cross sector partnerships to foster inclusive growth, a Task Force (Think Tank) could be formed by one of the two abovementioned high level offices in the Government of India to come up with recommendations on the functional and institutional architecture of Growth Centre for Social Enterprise.

Disclaimer: *The views of the author are personal and not those of the Government of India.*

Mapping key Ministries with their stakes on Social Enterprises

(Updated 2019 version of British Council Study 2015 by the author)

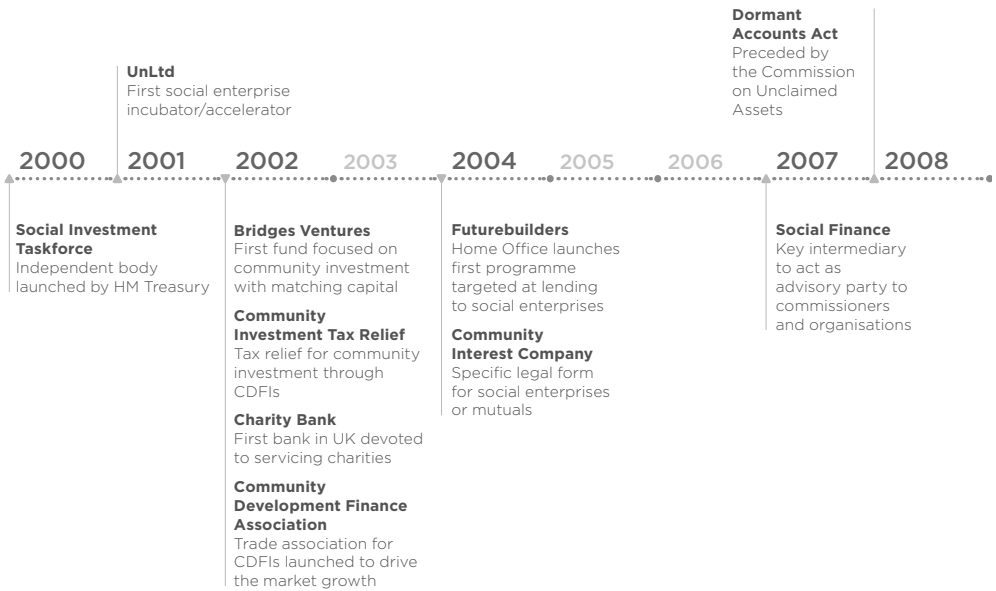| Sl. No.	Name	Existing Legislation, Programmes and Activities influencing Social Enterprise	Potential role in supporting Social Enterprise development
1.	Ministry of Finance	Decides budgets, regulates taxes and subsidies. Decides investment rules.	Provide specific budgetary support for promotion of SE. Tax relaxation, subsidies and incentives for SE to mobilise demand of social bonds.
2	Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Responsible for enterprise regulation and administration through 2013 Companies Act. Take investment and co-investment decisions.	Enabling 'Corporate' Structure in policy regulation to facilitate social enterprise (SE) under Companies Act.
3	National Institution of Transforming India - Aayog	Policy think-tank that aims to involve States in economic policy using the bottom up approach. Custodian of Sustainable Development Goals for the Country.	Incorporate best practices across Ministries and States. Provide programmes and cross sectoral collaboration.
4	Ministry of Home Affairs	Decides the policy on flow of foreign funds to different Indian organisations under FCRA, maintains law and order and deals with the correction of delinquent citizens.	Provide regulation to make foreign donations eligible for Social Enterprise. Source programme delivery by Social Enterprises.

5	Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises	Oversees MSMEs legislation and programmes covering Social Enterprise as MSMEs.	Include specific reference to Social Enterprise in subsequent iterations of the MSMEs. Provide programmes at national or state level and capture data on enterprises as MSME sub-set.
6	Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion	Promotion and development of start-ups. Focus on technology and innovation driven entrepreneurship.	Support Social Enterprises that focus on technology and innovation led start-ups. Promoting ease of doing Social Business.
7	Ministry of Science and Technology	Support to innovation and commercialisation of pro-poor technologies.	Programmes to provide bespoke and research support and /or raise awareness on SE. Source programme delivery by Social Enterprises.
8	Ministry of Human Resource Development	Oversees public education and private education facilities, setting public education curricula.	Social entrepreneurship to be taught at secondary level and beyond, and encourage social enterprise programme at senior secondary level and beyond. Source programme delivery by SEs.
9	Ministry of Rural Development	Leads socio-economic development of rural India, focusing rural infrastructure and rural livelihoods.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.

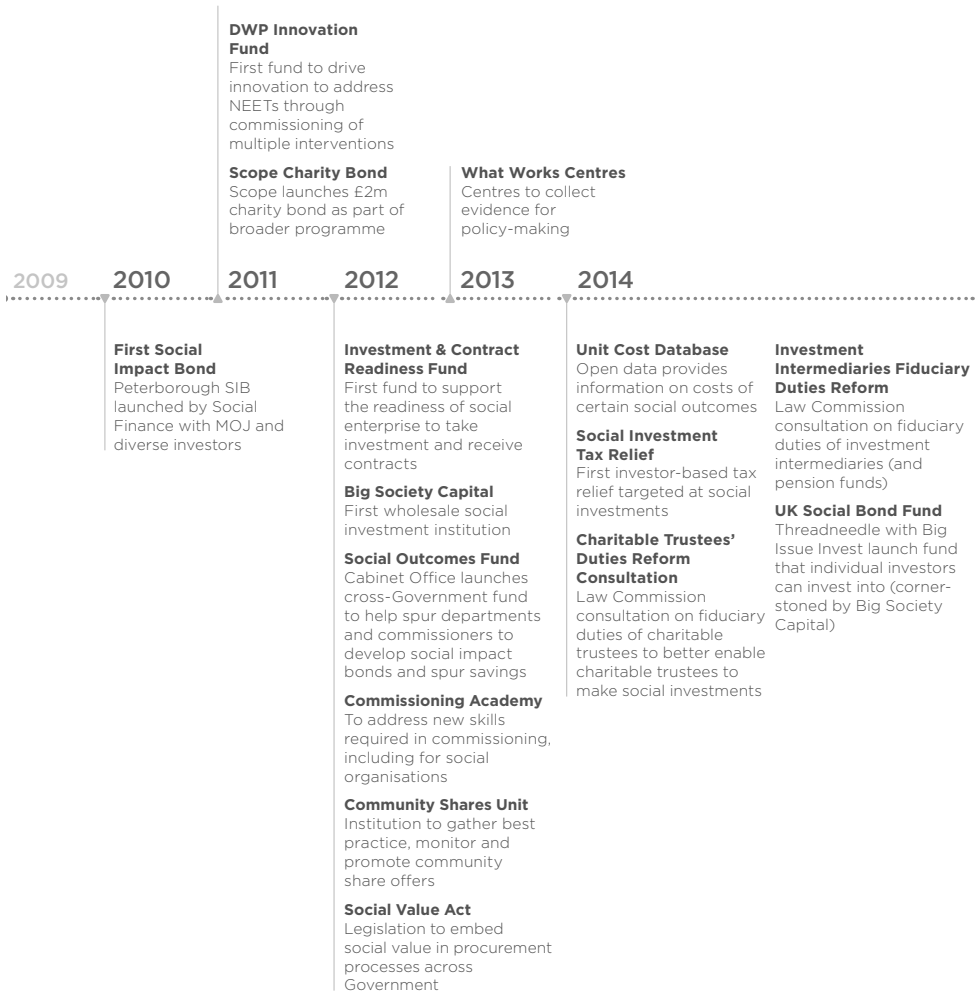| 10	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Address employability through skilling across sectors, geographies and socioeconomic categories. This includes self-employment.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs
11	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare	Oversee policies and programs on agriculture, horticulture, fishery and other allied activities dedicated to farmers' welfare.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.
12	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment	Supports disadvantaged groups, provision of finance, technical support and skill development for livelihood and microenterprise.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.
13	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	Apex body for formulation and regulation of laws on forest, environment and climate change.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.
14	Ministry of Renewable Energy	The nodal Ministry responsible for policies and programmes on new and renewable energy.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.

15	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Oversee policies and programmes on welfare of Tribal population in India.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.
16	Ministry of Women and Child Development	Apex body for formulation and regulation of laws and programmes relating to women and children.	Potential to provide specific collaboration and support to SE on key/specific challenges/issues. Help prioritise the work of SE and commission its delivery by SEs.

Timeline of key developments in the UK social impact investment market

Dormant Accounts Act
Preceded by the Commission on Unclaimed Assets

UnLtd
First social enterprise incubator/accelerator

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008

Social Investment Taskforce
Independent body launched by HM Treasury

Bridges Ventures
First fund focused on community investment with matching capital

Community Investment Tax Relief
Tax relief for community investment through CDFIs

Charity Bank
First bank in UK devoted to servicing charities

Community Development Finance Association
Trade association for CDFIs launched to drive the market growth

Futurebuilders
Home Office launches first programme targeted at lending to social enterprises

Community Interest Company
Specific legal form for social enterprises or mutuals

Social Finance
Key intermediary to act as advisory party to commissioners and organisations

DWP Innovation Fund
First fund to drive innovation to address NEETs through commissioning of multiple interventions

Scope Charity Bond
Scope launches £2m charity bond as part of broader programme

What Works Centres
Centres to collect evidence for policy-making

2009   **2010**   **2011**   **2012**   **2013**   **2014**

First Social Impact Bond
Peterborough SIB launched by Social Finance with MOJ and diverse investors

Investment & Contract Readiness Fund
First fund to support the readiness of social enterprise to take investment and receive contracts

Big Society Capital
First wholesale social investment institution

Social Outcomes Fund
Cabinet Office launches cross-Government fund to help spur departments and commissioners to develop social impact bonds and spur savings

Commissioning Academy
To address new skills required in commissioning, including for social organisations

Community Shares Unit
Institution to gather best practice, monitor and promote community share offers

Social Value Act
Legislation to embed social value in procurement processes across Government

Unit Cost Database
Open data provides information on costs of certain social outcomes

Social Investment Tax Relief
First investor-based tax relief targeted at social investments

Charitable Trustees' Duties Reform Consultation
Law Commission consultation on fiduciary duties of charitable trustees to better enable charitable trustees to make social investments

Investment Intermediaries Fiduciary Duties Reform
Law Commission consultation on fiduciary duties of investment intermediaries (and pension funds)

UK Social Bond Fund
Threadneedle with Big Issue Invest launch fund that individual investors can invest into (corner-stoned by Big Society Capital)

Ref: Building a Social Impact Investment Market (2014) published by UK National Advisory Board to the Social Imapct Investment Taskforce established under the UK's Presidency of the G8

https://gsgii.org/reports/uk-advisory-board-to-the-social-investment-taskforce-report/

Available spectrum of Social Enterprises in India

Following are the available spectrum of Social Enterprises in India.

More primary and secondary research is needed on scale and characteristics of Social Enterprises positioned as under especially in column No. 3, 4, 5 and CSR component in column No.6 to diversity and expand the scope of Social Business.

	Non-Profit without Business Activity	Non-Profit with Business Activity	Supported Business with Social Purpose	Pvt. Ltd. with Social Purpose	Large Pvt. / Pub. Ltd. (with significant CSR activity)
1	2	3	4	5	6
Purpose	Social	Social	Social	Social	Financial
Commercial Activity	None	Somewhat significant	Significant	Critical	Critical
Resource Base	Subsidies / Grants / Donation / Volunteers (SGDV)	• SGDV • Commercial Activity Income	• SGDV • Commercial Activity Income	Income from commercial activities	Income from commercial activities
Profits	None	Reinvesting in Social Purpose	Reinvesting in Social Purpose	Reinvestment, Dividend distribution	Reinvestment, Dividend distribution, Donation (CSR)
Category / E.g.	Charity organisations	Arvind Eye Care	Section 8 company (Eklavya Foundation)	BASIX Ltd., Narayana Hirdayaya, Microfinance Co.	Tatas, Mahindras.

Charity--→Commercial entity

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Neeraj Saxena

Disruptive Technologies in Education and its Governance

Close your eyes, think of these random words and relate them to the environment closest you can imagine: batch, attendance, time-table, delivery, instructions, test, pass, inspection, examination, result, grade, fail, reject, quality, promotion, detention. A factory is built in your imagination, as these words rattle your head. Right? A stark irony that our education institutions also use similar terms, if not the same. Yes, our academic institutions are factories that grade humans and pass or fail them. Alas! We humans, the most intelligent organisms on the planet have created a system of education which sees, admits and processes humans as products or commodity. The content canned in books is pumped into the head of each student as instructions, to be learnt at a pace of the rest of the class. The student is prompted to regurgitate the same, for being tested against what is there in the books and stamped fit or otherwise for upward mobility on the academic/ professional ladder. Human beings put in rat-race!

With the system in place, testing a learner in what he knows (in a handful of subjects that a school and its teachers know) and not recognizing his strengths what s/he knows, no wonder the quality of education is sliding down across the board. The students and their parents agree with it, as do the teachers, administrators and the policymakers. The faculty in the top-notch institutions agree with the deterioration and the same gets echoed by teachers in remote primary schools. If the quality is sinking all across, then something is wrong the way we look at the quality and also why we focus on it. The paradigms have changed in the knowledge era that we are in, yet we use the same lens to check the quality. The technology is disrupting and in fact, has disrupted education and rendered the

factory model completely out of sync with the times. But, when did it all begin in India?

Anachronistic Model of Education

On 2 February 1835, Thomas Babington Macaulay enunciated his Minute on Education aimed to reform secondary education on utilitarian lines. The objective was to create "a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect". What came about was imposing English as the medium of instruction in secondary education, from the sixth year of schooling onwards, in place of Sanskrit or Persian till then used in the educational institutions supported by the British East India Company. This British policy had a determining impact on two aspects: (i) the content and methodology of what has been and is being taught in Indian educational institutions, and (ii) the medium of instruction through which these have been and continue to be taught. What started almost two centuries ago has perpetuated- to produce armies of drones – starting with clerks, then managers and now coders; all spawned from the instructivist or conformist mould of learning, that split schooling and education into two!

The things remained unchanged largely because there was no technological breakthrough since the printing press in the 15th century that enabled the mass production of books and the rapid dissemination of knowledge. The books came handy in the industrial age, in the form of manuals- basically a prescription to be followed religiously- by workers. The books also came handy to the teachers as a repository of knowledge, content for delivery to students, to prepare questions for examinations, and to evaluate the performance of students against the book. Sage-on-the-stage with books, addressing the needs of an industrial society, has been the defining characteristic of the factory model of education.

Schools in the 20th century were largely supply-driven institutions, primarily to cater to prepare the workforce for the factories and governments. For reasons of a large number of education seekers and cost control, schooling remained impersonal, seldom tailored to

the needs and skills of each child; in short, there were leashes in the education system. But in recent years, technological breakthroughs have allowed monitoring of each child's progress individually and to use his/her data of past performance to modify and customize what follows. Yes, the polar-shift has started happening towards a learner-centric system, with an opportunity and means to unleash the full potential of every child, for the first time in human history.

A Roadmap for Education

"Realizing the full potential of every Indian" goes the vision in the roadmap of Education, that Technology Information, Forecasting & Assessment Council (TIFAC) has laid down. First-ever foresight for Education, ever attempted in India! This emerged out of the long-term technology perspective plan for the country drawn by TIFAC, Technology Vision 2035 (TV 2035) as a response to the challenges thrown by surging Information Technology across all sectors of socio-economic importance. The time horizon for the Technology Vision 2035 exercise was chosen because it was coinciding with 200 years of Macaulay's Minutes on Education! Naturally, then the exercise would not have been complete without a document on education. More so because "quality education, livelihood and creative opportunities" was identified as one of the prerogatives that the government must assure its citizens. Also throwing weight behind the roadmap, were 11 sectors covered under TV2035- hugely technology centred and verticals by themselves. The growth of technologies in these sectors, their deployment and adoption, would not be effective unless backed by strong, modernized and responsive educational system and hence, a roadmap for education was imperative.

Education is possibly the only sector which leads to new technology and at the same time, gets impacted by new technology. Also, it is the one which faces maximum resistance when it comes to the implementation of technologies and ironically from the teachers who are responsible for producing the change-makers! Therefore, the roadmap from TIFAC looks at education in a much more comprehensive manner not only by focusing on future technologies but also looking at the changes which are getting induced in human

behaviours attitudes and inclinations and reasons for learning. Let's see the technologies shaping and disrupting the education space.

Technologies impacting education in future

All technologies are basically assistive in nature; they augment the capabilities of humans and tremendously expand the resources. When harnessed properly, technologies can significantly improve human lives and make them better citizens of the world. The internet and mobile telephony have disrupted education and rendered it-globalized, democratized, inclusive and affordable. The books allowed a learner to proceed linearly- forward or backward and thus imposed a restriction. In contrast, each web-page with hyperlinks embedded in it, allows a learner to dive into a new world just like a free roving human mind. The technology thus allows access to what a learner wants instead of books which have been dictating the learners. Let's catch a glimpse of technologies in the offing, in not such a distant future.

The ingress of hand-held devices like tablets, mobile phones into the education system is already visible but has to spread to actually unleash the potential of flipped-classrooms and blended-learning in a big way in India. The versatility of tablets will increase further with mobile apps become popular for providing access to educational content, facilitating testing and assessment, supporting management functions, financial transactions- over the internet. The wearable technology will further add to the capabilities of the tablets through wired/ wireless interfaces. Several MOOC providers have already developed their own apps for tablets to allow access to their material on-the-go. This personalization gets further advanced as these hand-held devices allow tracking one's own performance and improve on learning objectives through learning analytics. Also, gaming and gamification are being supported by these tablets, taking care of the needs of learners in a wholesome manner.

A lot more changes are expected if we push our time-frame by a decade or so. Developments in Artificial Intelligence will allow Natural Language Interpretation and Machine Translation to advance further and reduce the linguistic barriers at least in the written

text. The advances in Internet technologies like Cloud computing, 4G& 5G communications and Mesh Networking, will transform the classrooms on the one hand and make the virtual learning environments less virtual on the other. Modular computers, with flexible screens and context-awareness, will make every other panel learner's desk- smart and almost weightless; access to educational material and performance of educational transactions will be without the use of papers, through haptic interfaces and gestures. The sensation of depth in virtual and tactile experiences for experiential learning will be addressed by volumetric screens and Internet of things. All these technologies will liquidate 'distance' in distance education on the one hand, and take conventional education to distant places on the other. Thus, the shift from real classrooms to virtual classrooms, availability of language-neutral books, more engaging game-based experiential learning and highly personalized self-directed education would become common. With these progressions, MOOCs and remote-labs would get integrated and also mainstreamed as will be game-based learning. Adaptive learning and testing will emerge as a defining characteristic of personalized or learner-directed education that appears to be the future.

In a slightly distant future but not beyond our horizons, new experiences in education can be foreseen. Real-time translation would liquidate all linguistic barriers and learning would start becoming language neutral. It will be possible to join courses and classes, with the medium of instruction losing meaning. Synchronous teaching-learning in any language would be possible. With advances in photonics, computational photography, holography etc. and the emergence of quantum computing, the virtual spaces would start becoming immersive and offer near-real experiences, in a personalized manner. This would take experiential learning to new heights. In short, all spatio-temporal-lingual concerns in education will be taken care of. As such, it will be possible to enrich the experience by creating virtual artefacts, tools, learning points/ spaces and integrating them in learning processes. MOOCs will no longer be taken by learners but will emerge as built around a learner's need and capacity, packed with an immersive experience. Educational walk-throughs allowing

learners to have immersive experiences of historical events, remote locations, hostile settings, physical/ chemical/ biological changes etc. will become common. Reputation metrics as a substitute for institutional certifications or degrees may emerge, as education would become A4- "anyone, anytime, anywhere & any language".

The emergence of technologies like Immersive Virtual Reality (IVR), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Brain-Computer Interface (BCI), Real-time Translation (RT), 3-D Printing and Block-chain (BC) and their combinations are posed to several unthinkable possibilities. Literacy will have to be completely redefined and understood as how noted futurist Alvin Toffler puts it "the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn". With complete control over what is to be learnt by a learner to AI, language barriers liquidated by RT, the learning material and content presented in the form of IVR, assessments powered by BCI, hands-on experience enhanced by 3-D printers experiential and a cover of trust provided by BC, all of them just around a learner- the changes are unimaginable. The end of teachers, as we know them today is a distinct possibility, at least in higher education, repositioning them as pathfinders, navigators, counsellors and confidants in the service to learners and not to forget that their holographic/ robotic versions will have taken avatar.

The books are set to become vestigial for the education system, accelerated by the climate change concerns and this trend also signals the end of reading; writing already threatened by texting! BCI may also hit hard on reading and of course, bypass listening/ speaking. Instant translation of text and speech will end linguistic barriers. Further, "adaptive" systems which will become less and less expensive and more and more widely available, are a pointer to end of grades/ classes, each learner has to struggle through, competing with peers. With all these technologies and of course, an enabling eco-system and policies, education is all set for a complete changeover, with the focus shifting from improving quality (of a product) to unleashing the full potential (of a human). With some technologies on the exponential trajectory rather than linear, current education system is set to be under tremendous pressure and in a state of flux; this, in

turn, opens up challenges for governance whose solutions will come from technology only.

Challenges in Governance

Education is not just about the intellectual transactions that happen in academic institutions but it has a range of other processes, systems and institutions in its ambit. For this reason, administration, management and governance of systems and institutions in the education sector become extremely important. Administration is essentially about procedures and is therefore important in all public institutions. Unfortunately, the system now in place for administration were designed for an industrial age with layers of bureaucracy to ensure compliances. Owing to the emphasis on normality and routine that tend to maintain the status quo, the systems are bereft of novelty and innovation. Technologies like mobile telephony, cloud, RFID, apps, block-chain etc. can immensely accelerate the pace of administrative actions and make them transparent.

Management of education is the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling the activities of academic institutions. This is achieved by utilizing human and material resources in a manner so as to effectively and efficiently accomplish the functions of teaching, research, training and extension work. A great deal of management functions is being done using technology, aided and accelerated by the internet. Communicating, sharing, archiving and retrieval of information has become so fast and dependable that most management functions are prone to automation promising speed, fairness and transparency.

Block-chain technology that is taking the financial sector by storm is already tipped to take away the offices of Registrar and their equivalents in schools and colleges. If the internet transformed the way we shared information and connected, the block-chain will redefine exchange value and whom we trust. This is all the more important when much of the education will happen online, also life-long and life-wide (learning and personal development in real contexts and authentic settings), naturally learners yearning for learning in a trustful environment. With this technology not only

the educational transactions will become trustworthy, but also setting up digital lockers holding students' credentials will become faster, with student reports automatically getting uploaded with validation processes in place.

Governance reflects in the quality of administration and management. It translates into putting in place- standards, information on performance, incentives for good performance, and also accountability. Technologies that can lead to quality governance in the education sector include cloud computing, mobile apps, digital identity, RFID, real-time translation, data analytics and block-chain. Advancements in these technologies can ensure us- safe, secure and authentic database vaults, digitization and storage of personal and public records, advanced forensics, advanced biometrics for digital identity and human independent decision support systems- promising to make governance in education more transparent, speedy and effective.

Technology for revamping education

For education, as we have just seen, technology has the potential to touch almost every aspect of it- slaying the traditional bottlenecks of access, infrastructure, economics and geography. The education systems hitherto were designed to provide the information already available, to equip the students to grapple with similar situations in future. However, with democratization and easy access to education, and the rapid changes across sectors, induced by technologies, some galloping at the exponential rate, the system has to empower learners to shape the unpredictable future. Thus, education of the future will all be about how to learn and not what to learn and, scales tilted more in favour of innovation than invention. This paradigm shift would mean a radical change in the role of teachers who are considered the cornerstone, dwindling of the rigidity in academic institutions, and revisiting the structures and policies in governance- catalysed by the technology.

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Vivek K. Agnihotri

Decriminalising the Electoral System
Reforms by the Judiciary

On 13 February 2020, the Supreme Court in exercise of its constitutional powers under articles 129 and 142, while delivering a judgment in a Contempt Petition filed against the Election Commission, directed that political parties should upload on their websites detailed information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates, along with reasons for such selection. The parties were also ordered to explain as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be found for nomination. The reasons for selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate concerned, and not mere "winnability" at the polls.

The Court has further enjoined that information regarding the selected candidate's criminal antecedents should be published in one local vernacular newspaper and one national newspaper, as well as official social media platforms of the political party, including Facebook and Twitter. These details shall be published within 48 hours of the selection of the candidate or not less than two weeks before the first date of filing of nominations, whichever is earlier. The political party concerned shall then submit a report of compliance to the Election Commission within 72 hours of the selection of the said candidate. If a political party fails to submit such compliance report, the Election Commission shall bring such non-compliance by the political party concerned to the notice of the Supreme Court as being contempt of the Court's order / direction.

The Court also noted that over the last four general elections there has been an alarming increase in the incidence of criminals in politics. In 2004, 24% of the Members of Parliament had criminal

cases pending against them; in 2009, that went up to 30%; in 2014 to 34%; and in 2019 as many as 43% of MPs had criminal cases pending against them.

For the Apex Judicial Court of the country to issue such detailed executive instructions is by itself an expression of its angst and frustration at the failure of the Parliament and the Executive to take adequate steps to prevent persons with established criminal background away from the sacred portals of the country's legislative bodies, in spite of the Court having nudged the system, from time to time, in this regard in the past.

The Contempt Petition in relation to which the Supreme Court delivered the aforementioned order, relates to its judgment delivered on 25 September 2018 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors Vs Union Of India & Anr) in which the Court had issued the following directions:

- Each contesting candidate shall fill up the form as provided by the Election Commission and the form must contain all the particulars as required therein.
- It shall state, in bold letters, with regard to the criminal cases pending against the candidate.
- If a candidate is contesting an election on the ticket of a particular party, he/she is required to inform the party about the criminal cases pending against him/her.
- The concerned political party shall be obligated to put up on its website the aforesaid information pertaining to candidates having criminal antecedents.
- The candidate as well as the concerned political party shall issue a declaration in the widely circulated newspapers in the locality about the antecedents of the candidate and also give wide publicity in the electronic media. When we say wide publicity, we mean that the 98 same shall be done at least thrice after filing of the nomination papers.

The five-judge Constitution Bench held that candidates could not be disqualified merely because charges have been framed against them in a criminal case. The bench also gave directions to the legislature

to consider framing law to ensure decriminalisation of politics. The Bench, however, observed that time had come that the Parliament must make law to ensure that persons facing serious criminal cases do not enter into the political stream.

Accordingly, the Election Commission on 10 October 2018 issued a circular stating that the candidates at all elections are required to file an affidavit in Form-26, along with the nomination paper, declaring information about criminal cases, assets, liabilities and educational qualifications. The Form included Tables for the candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV, and for the political party to publish in website, newspapers, TV, to record full details of the candidate's criminal antecedents. The candidates are thus required to publish the details in newspapers of wide circulation and make at least three insertions on three different dates after the last date of withdrawal. The declarations have also to be aired on television channels on three different dates. The matter must be published in font size of not less than 12. The copies of these insertions have to be supplied to the Election Commission along with the account of poll expenses. But apparently this initiative did not yield the desired results.

The Supreme Court's crusade against criminalisation of politics is a long drawn out saga. In recent times, it all began in 2002 (Association for Democratic Reforms vs. Union of India), when the Supreme Court mandated the disclosure of information relating to criminal antecedents, educational qualifications and personnel assets of candidates contesting elections. According to the Court, seeking this information was part of the fundamental right of the voter to be informed all relevant details about a contestant; it was extension of the freedom of expression [article 19 (1) (a)].

In 2013, on a petition filed by Lily Thomas and Lok Prahari NGO, the Supreme Court stated that if a sitting MP/MLA is convicted in a case, punishment for which was more than 2 year of imprisonment, then he / she would be disqualified immediately and the seat would be declared as vacant, setting aside clause 8(4) of the Representation of People Act, 1951. Clause 8(4) had provided special privilege to MPs/ MLAs to hold the office even after conviction if an appeal had been

filed in a higher court within a period of 3 months of conviction. In 2013 again, in the case of People's Union for Civil Liberties vs Union of India and Anr, the Supreme Court recognised negative voting as a constitutional right of a voter and directed the government to provide NOTA (None of The Above) option in the EVM (Electronic Voting Machine). Further, on a petition filed by Subramanian Swamy, the Supreme Court directed the Election Commission to introduce Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

In 2014, in Public Interest Foundation vs. Union of India, based on the recommendations of the Law Commission, the Supreme Court ordered that criminal trial pending against any Member of Parliament or Member of Legislative Assembly must be disposed of within a period of one year from the date of framing of the charge. Taking it from there, in 2017, the Supreme Court directed that the government should set up special courts to exclusively conduct time-bound trials of law-makers accused of corruption and criminality. The government accordingly set up 12 special courts. In 2018, the Supreme Court emphasized the need for 70 special courts to hear and decided criminal cases against legislators, as 12 courts were grossly inadequate in view of a large number of cases (over 3900) pending in courts. Subsequently, the Court decided to consider a request to designate a court in each district to take up pending cases against law-makers on a priority basis.

As an extension of its order of 2002 relating declaration of assets by the contesting candidates, in 2018 the Supreme Court ruled that apart from declaration of assets, the candidates, at the time of filing of nomination, should also disclose the sources of their income. Non-disclosure would amount to corrupt practice within the mischief of section 123 of the Representation of People Act, 1951. The Court further directed the government to set up a permanent mechanism to monitor the accumulation of wealth of sitting MPs and MLAs, their spouses and associates, in order to maintain the purity of electoral process and integrity of the democratic system.

There are several other matters relating to electoral reforms, which are pending before the Supreme Court. In 2018, the Supreme Court decided to consider a life ban from contesting election for

persons convicted in criminal cases by declaring section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951 ultra vires the constitution of India. Section 8 imposes only a six year ban on contesting election on politicians serving out sentence of two years or more in jail in criminal cases.

In 2018, the Supreme Court found ambiguity in the appointment of the Election Commissioners and referred the question to a constitution bench to consider the request of the petitioner that the appointment of Election Commissioners should be made under a 'collegium system'. Another Public Interest Litigation has been filed for clarity on the procedure for removal of the two Election Commissioners. It has been pleaded that they should be provided the same protection (removal through impeachment as in the case of a Supreme Court judge) as the Chief Election Commissioner [first proviso to article 324 (5)]. In its affidavit filed in this case the Election Commission has requested the Supreme Court that it should be vested with the power to make rules under the election laws, instead of the government.

Several decisions of the Supreme Court have come against the backdrop of some very significant reports of Committees and Commissions. In 1990, the Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms had highlighted the crippling effect of money and muscle power in elections.

In 1993, the N. N. Vohra Committee (in the context of the 1993 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai) concluded that agencies, including the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), had unanimously expressed their opinion that the criminal network was virtually running a parallel government. The money power was being used to develop a network of muscle power, which was also used by politicians during elections.

In 2007, the 18th Report presented by a parliamentary committee to the Rajya Sabha had expressed a strong feeling that politics should be cleansed of persons with established criminal background. "Criminalisation of politics is the bane of society and negation of democracy", the Report said.

The Law Commission, in its 244th Report, put it succinctly: "instead of politicians having suspected links to criminal networks, as was the case earlier, it was persons with extensive criminal background began entering politics".

The foregoing account of the judgments of the Supreme Court as well as the reports of committees makes it amply clear that their no dearth of wisdom coupled with guidelines and instructions for improving the electoral ecosystem. The exhortations of the Supreme Court and the parliamentary committee notwithstanding, the will to cleanse the system of criminal elements is missing among those who have to act. The million dollar question, as usual, is: 'Who will bell the cat?"

The expectation from the present order of the Supreme Court seems to be that the embarrassment over having to justify the criminal records of candidates may deter the political parties from nominating them and the parties may become more discriminating in their choices of candidates. But naming and shaming, will it work? It is a billion dollar question, now.

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Raghu Dayal

A New Normal post-Covid-19:
The Gandhian Way

As the Covid-19-smitten world, with extreme vulnerability of millions, confronts enormity of myriad challenges, including of crumbling economies and escalating inequities, the core Gandhian values and ideals constitute an abiding ethical quotient. Among some 100 students participating in a contest "Dear Gandhi" hosted by the Maharaja Sayajirao University in Vadodara on the occasion of Gandhi ji's 150th birth anniversary, one wrote, "Like no other time, we need Gandhi now". That student echoed the growing urge that world harbours for a new normal of sustainability, inclusiveness and harmony.

Gandhi – not of an age, but for all times

The infinite energy and wisdom that Gandhi exudes are increasingly sought to heal our troubled universe, be it ethical values and participative governance conducive to a sustainable development model, power of non-violence and harmony in widest commonality spread, or saving the planet from environmental degradation and health hazards. Universality of Gandhi's genius is well described in words of Ben Jonson's tribute to William Shakespeare, "He was not of an age, but for all time". World finds valuable lessons from Gandhi's life even for grappling with deadly epidemics like the novel coronavirus that has turned life topsy-turvy world over.

Amidst overwhelming concerns and fears that the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has unleashed I was struck by what a devoted Gandhian scholar, Dipali Rajyaguru wrote, "Gandhi is a total syllabus, you have to choose what subject you want to explore". I instantly recollected how an old colleague passionately argued for Covid-stricken world to grasp the infinite value of Gandhi's cardinal tenets of sarvodaya, swachhata, and swadeshi.

Gandhi ji's brush with epidemics and health hazards

Gandhi lived through the 1918 devastating Spanish Flu; he remained enamoured of a medical career; his testament of, and commitment to, healthcare and personal hygiene as well as basic tenets of life in harmony with nature all coalesce into simple, practical ways towards preventive cure as also easily accessible and cost-efficient remedies.

There are grisly tales of little-chronicled 'Spanish Flu' that took a very heavy toll. In her 2017 treatise, the Paris-based Laura Spinney estimates it took toll of 50-100 million people worldwide, including of some 18 million in India, around 6% of its population then (31 crore). The havoc wrought by the contagious onslaught is well gauged in Hindi poet Suryakant Tripathi Nirala's lament how several of his own family, including his wife, "disappeared in the blink of an eye", when the Ganga itself was swollen with dead bodies.

Did the 'deadly flu' afflict Gandhi ji too, then 48 years old, while in a Gujarat aashram? There appeared deep public concern as reported in a local daily, "Gandhi's life does not belong to him – it belongs to India". Mahatma's erudite and scholarly grandson Gopalakrishna Gandhi maintains that, though Gandhi's eldest son Harilal's wife Chanchal and their son Shanti succumbed to the raging epidemic, Gandhi ji didn't himself fall to the rampaging virus. He collapsed, having been grievously exhausted by the hectic pace during the 1918 Kheda satyagraha and recruitment drive for World War I.

Like no one knows how the venomous Covid-19 speck sneaked in to wreck the world with its danse macabre, the ravaging 1918 viral, slunk in through a ship of returning soldiers that docked in Bombay in June 1918, came "like a thief in the night" as Health Inspector J.S. Turner put it. The Times of India wrote, "Nearly every house in Bombay has some of its inmates down with fever". The paper warned that the disease spread "mainly through human contact by means of infected secretions from nose and mouth", and that "To avoid an attack one should keep away from all places where there is overcrowding…".

Some uncanny similarities between the 1918 'Spanish 'Flu' and

the ongoing novel coronavirus are indeed striking: Mumbai (then Bombay) bore the brunt of the 1918 virus much like it is doing now in the throes of current Covid outbreak. Much like Spinney chronicled that administration was "absolutely unequipped to deal with the disaster", healthcare infrastructure even in metros has been pathetic, "horrific" in Delhi, as termed by Supreme Court. Again, as in 1918 NGOs and volunteers set up dispensaries, removed corpses, arranged cremations, treated patients, raised money and arranged centres to distribute food, clothes and medicines, civil society organizations and individual samaritans came forward to help large number of stranded migrants and other indigent labour.

A medical practitioner that he didn't become

Not many know that Gandhi desired to become a medical practitioner. When just 18 years old, he pleaded with family to let him study medicine in England; his elder brother dissuaded him, arguing that their late father, who passed away when Gandhi was 16, would not have approved of him , a Vaishnava, handling/dissecting dead bodies or killing frogs. He advised young Mohandas to study law and become a barrister.

Albeit, in deference to his family's wishes, Gandhi opted to study law in England, his interest in healthcare didn't diminish. A close associate, Dr Sushila Nayyar once wrote in her article, "Medicine for the Masses", that, when she once told him, "Bapu, you should have been a doctor", he instantly responded, "I always wanted to be one". While in South Africa he visited a doctor's clinic regularly, dispensing medicines, dressing wounds, even organizing an ambulance corps comprising 1,100 volunteers, 300 Indians among them. He personally nursed patients at Johannesburg during the pneumonic plague in South Africa. At his Sevagram, a small dispensary took on the shape of a hospital. He asked for preventive inoculation to be done in most villages in the vicinity of Sevagram during the 1938 cholera outbreak.

Gandhi's own life was a struggle with health issues – high BP, pleurisy, dysentery, malaria, gastric 'flu, influenza. He was operated upon for piles, and appendicitis. Every time he was back on his feet,

primarily by dint of his self-control, disciplined lifestyle, including regular long walks, and fasting. He retained an abiding interest in health, hygiene and nutrition, and the power of preventive care. His insistence on household remedies - nature cure, hydropathy, earth treatment, herbal medicines, meditation - stemmed from his commitment to make healthcare for the poorest of the poor to have access to it.

A living apostle of 'plain living and high thinking', advocating moderation and discipline, he knew Indians had a problem with hygiene. Gandhi told people to always avoid blowing their nose or spitting in public places. How, once on finding countryside at Shantiniketan filthy, he enlisted support of the Servants of India Society, organized volunteers for sanitation and medical relief, like a similar model he followed in Champaran villages. Gandhi made sure proper hygiene was followed, whether it was at his ashram in Phoenix Settlement near Durban, or his community centre in Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg, or in Sevagram at Wardha.

On a friend's desire to set up a nature cure clinic, Gandhi advised him for its halls of treatment and other uses should be surrounded by huts, where patients could live while being treated, also the sanatorium to have road connectivity and cattle sheds, grow grains, vegetables and fruits, be in harmony with nature. Punctuated with his Spartan aesthetics, his guidelines were clear – premises be kept clean, simple, practical, in tune with surroundings, using locally available material for construction, appropriate to country's climate.

His life an open book

Gandhi's puckish humour, disarming honesty is well reflected also in The Story of My Experiments with Truth, as he candidly admits his faults and flaws along the way. The frail "naked fakir" who, in his bony fingers, held the fate of the mighty empire on which the sun never set, has had millions pay instant obeisance. He never said or did anything, which he didn't himself practice. Punctual to the minute, firm believer in order and discipline, he always clearly drew the line between rights and duties. There was no ambiguity in his message, "Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led

by them, if we want to avoid mob rule and desire ordered progress for the country". His sharp reaction against the Chauri Chaura incident signified his rejection of mobocracy. A realist inspired by Henry David Thoreau, Gandhi ji maintained, "…In the ideal state, there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that the government is best which governs the least".

None else knew better than Bapu Gandhi with rare clairvoyance the latent, in fact, innate, infirmities that, he apprehended, would overtake the grand old party when in power and authority, post-independence. He believed Congressmen, enticed by power and pelf, were prone to go astray, lose direction. He would like the Congress to turn into Lok Sevak Sangh. That didn't happen. The country has endured an unremitting spectacle of netas crafting vicious nexus with babus and businesses in a scramble for loaves and fishes. Gandhi cap and khadi kurta defiled and degenerated, came to be derided in popular psyche. Paying obeisance to Gandhi became a ritual. Behind their sparkling, starched and scented apparel lurked dark deeds of deceit and fraud.

Well ahead of times to think of respecting Mother Earth

The Covid-19 outbreak is perceived as Mother Nature's response to its relentless exploitation by man. The latest coronavirus, called SARS-CoV-2, causing the disease Covid-19 has turned out to be ever more vicious than many others which preceded it. Today, the planet carries load of almost 8 billion people, in comparison with 1.8 billion when the 1918 flu epidemic struck. Echoing the Gandhian sentiments, Thomas L. Friedman wrote in a recent column in the New York Times, the Covid-19-afflicted "world is not just flat. It's fragile". Lamenting how we keep stripping away nature's biodiversity and buffers that has been randomly resulting in, what he describes as, "global weirding".

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration revealed in its 2019 Global Climate Summary that, whereas the combined land and ocean temperature increased at an average rate of 0.07 degree C per decade since 1880, the average rate of increase

since 1981 is 0.18 degree C, that is, more than two and a half times higher. As a result summers get hotter, glaciers melt, arctic ice-sheet too – leading to cataclysmic happenings across the globe - cyclones, typhoons, earthquakes. Then, rivers have been turned into toxic drains; ground water gets steadily depleted, land tracts degraded, cities shrouded in smog, planet getting cooked. Air pollution today is the fifth leading risk factor for mortality, estimated to have taken a toll of 5 million deaths worldwide. Then follow diseases, viruses - ever more deadly and devastating.

Long way back, Gandhi ji in effect preceded the UN mandated SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) by way of his subtle message of the virtues of sustainable consumption. Much as Marya Mannes emphasized, "The earth we abuse and the living things we kill will, in the end, take their revenge; for in exploiting their presence we are diminishing our future", in Hind Swaraj, Gandhi outlined the threat to humanity's common future from its relentless quest for material goods and services. He believed, "The world has enough for everyone's need, but not everyone's greed". He took keen interest in "No Breakfast Association" in Manchester that aimed to improve health of "Englishmen who ate too much". Gandhi ji's advice to shun all excessive greed, his stress on thrift will ideally be an ingredient of post-Covid economic testament.

What Friedman says seems to paraphrase what Gandhi maintained, the values that each of us bring to the interdependent world matters more than ever, and so does the "Golden Rule": Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you. As world, disenchanted by both capitalism and communism, gropes for a middle path, Gandhian precepts of Sarvodaya and Antyodaya spell the cherished golden mean, a way out for redistributive justice sought for the poor and the marginalized.

Liberal and cosmopolitan, a staunch votary, progenitor of liberal world order, Gandhi ji would not like India to be confined by "narrow domestic walls": "I do not want my house to be walled in all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible"….(Young India, 1 June 1921).

World recognizing Gandhian way to save the planet

For Gandhiji, India lived in its villages. Most of it still does. We may recall the heart-wrenching spectacle of droves of the coronavirus-stricken migrants, uncertain of their tomorrow, keenly trudging back from cities and towns to their villages. Here a cardinal thought process comes into focus. The defining feature of Republic's mission statement, the phrase, "We the people" in the Preamble of the hallowed Constitution often strikes a cynical chord about its meaning and content in the context of, what Tocqueville said, too many people were living a "sort of fancied equality" notwithstanding the "actual inequality of their lives". It's much like Albert Camus perceived ressentiment as a characteristic feature of modern world, where the majority sees social power monopolized by people with money, property, status and connections, where the promise of equality collides with massive disparities of power, education, status, et al.

If WFH (work from home) is today instantly accepted as a viable way out, WFV, or work from village, cannot be a far-fetched concept for delivery of goods and services. As the winds of change gather pace, promising hyper-local commerce, offline stores scaling up delivery and online shopping, a new paradigm is sought to be embraced after the salutary lesson that industry and commerce has just learnt from country's incredible reverse migration. Some cogent plans are said to be already on the drawing board, for industrial activity and production to be steadily relocated nearer the areas convenient for labour to live, and adopt technologies to enhance productivity and cut costs.

Gandhi visualized communities in villages living in harmony with each other, and nature around them. His gram swaraj would be self-reliant (atma nirbhar). "A society must be built in which every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its own affairs", he believed. The late former President APJ Abdul Kalam would later envision the concept in terms of PURA (providing urban amenities in rural areas) - roads, skills, scientific solutions and technological support. Entrepreneurs, agriculturists, self-help groups will all strive

to ensure that every village in the district manufactures at least one quality product. Let us not forget how essentially old rural India commanded a lion's share in world trade by dint of exquisite exclusive products coveted across Europe and elsewhere.

Gandhi visualized every village to be "self-sustained" in food security, clothing and shelter, using materials locally available. The charkha symbolized for him this spirit of self-reliance he advocated. Whereas his preference always was for producing things by hand, and in revival and propagation of khadi and other related village industries, he never shunned mechanization to ease and assist human labour. Singer's stitching machine, when introduced, was acclaimed by him as "the most useful machine man has invented". He didn't shun or decry technology, he only cautioned against its over-use and misuse.

With the poorest - Daridranarain - at the centre of his universe, Gandhian precept of Sarvodaya implied integration of economics, politics and technology with ethics. For Gandhi poverty was "a product of an unjust social order". "There is no wealth but life. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings". Many around the world scoffed at Gandhi ji's worldview of self-transformation, his idea of village republic as fanciful, if not utopian. Today, more and more thinkers acknowledge his ethics of social and political reconstruction eminently apt and relevant.

A man idolized, yet so modest, self-effacing, so natural as one of us, a man, not a myth, whom Gurudev Tagore named the "Mahatma", "the miracle of a man", as recognized by Albert Einstein ("Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a man as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth"), about whom George Orwell noted in 1949, "compared with the other leading political figures of our times, how clean a smell he has managed to leave behind".

Amidst all the gathering gloom, there has been a glimmer of hope. Covid-19 has helped us realize all is not yet lost. With due care and restraint we can redeem our future. Didn't we see within a few weeks of the lockdowns air clean, skies blue and azure, Yamuna no

longer filthy, but pristine; people could steal the joy of a glimpse of Shivalik, Dhauladhar or Himalayan ranges from far off cities. With some discipline and curbs on our frenzied life, we let Mother Nature smile. Not that world can be kept locked down this way indefinitely, but with prudent moderation in lifestyle, aided with technology, communities in villages, towns and cities need to recalibrate contours of their engagements and routines.

Today, there are a miniscule few who are really well endowed with Gandhi's testament, principles, precepts, and philosophy, and far fewer who follow him. Depicting the deep despair among those incensed at the nation having swerved sharply from Gandhian path, Bhopal-based Hindi poet Rajesh Joshi, in his poem Mahatma Gandhi's Clock metaphorically conveys how Gandhi's clock has stopped.

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Paramjit S. Bawa

Case for Fraternity

Of all the significant expressions in the preamble to the Constitution, fraternity appears to be the only neglected one by commentators. Justice, liberty, equality, freedom, dignity, and unity and integrity have been commented upon, a few very copiously, by sociologists, defense experts and the courts, but there is hardly any reference to the idea of fraternity which must be the progenitor of all ideas. In fact, fraternity is both a consequence and a beginning of all these expressions. It is the backbone of nationhood. In its absence there shall be neither equality nor freedoms thus jeopardizing the notion of justice and adversely impacting on dignity. In a society where there is deficit of fraternity, there shall always be fissiparous tendencies, destructive forces, tensions, conflicts, and suspicions. An emphasis upon fraternity is thus not only desirable for a harmonious society, but also necessary for the unity and integrity of the country thus preventing the nation from being on the tenterhooks of uncertainty.

The idea of fraternity is a metaphor for a happy family where all members live in harmony through thick and thin. They acknowledge their debt to each other, stay away from friction, and contribute to the good of the family. Whereas the parents provide protection, the siblings have a fraternal existence, the elder supporting the younger, and all receiving equal treatment and protection from parents. It is a reciprocal relationship between parents and children. They have no jealousies, animosities, or hatred for any member of the family. On the other hand, the family protects the sick, the diseased, the disabled, and showers affection by doing all that is within its competence. They uplift the dejected, tend the sick, share the shortages, and have values that promote peaceful life. None is discarded. It means people living

in harmonious social relationships, acceptance of differences, sharing the shortages, feeling other's pain and tribulations. Hidden in the concept is the idea of mutual support, wholesome unity, sacrifice, and accommodation.

The extension of the idea of fraternity into the nation would mean people respecting each other and not causing friction among themselves over avoidable issues. It means accommodation of the weak by the strong, a protective hand for the backward, the disabled, the disadvantaged, and the deserving who are given facilities for advancement. Involved herein is the intention not to discriminate on basis of birth, class, caste, region, religion, or gender. Hence the idea of affirmative action is designed to create opportunities for equality. All schemes under the directive principles of state policy are fraternal in nature, the idea being to bring at par, so far as possible, the different segments of the society.

A logical pattern can be discerned within the preamble.

(1) Fraternity as solidarity is essential for unity and integrity of the country.

(2) Fraternity can be secured through justice, liberty, equality, and dignity.

Further spelled out, it means that a nation that is a battlefield of its own population will not only weaken itself but also cannot protect against external threat. Importance of fraternity can be realized in the context of its absence reflected in (a) terrorist incidents, (b) communal riots that emanated from hatred between communities, and misunderstanding of the faith of the other like the gory incidents at Nellie (1983), Bhiwadi and Delhi (1984), Hashimpura, Meerut, and Bhagalpur (1989), demolition of Babri Masjid (1992), Mumbai riots as a consequence thereof (1993), Gujarat (2002), etc. In all these black landmarks, the citizens were pitted against citizens, the aggressors being the majority community.

Secondly, the society has been fragmented because of 'the deep social hierarchies in Indian society, the structural inequalities, and fragmentation that inhibited solidarities among the people and a resulting absence of fraternity', says Devesh Kapur. There is an

embargo over the freedom of marriage, a person from a backward community sitting on horse, and evacuation of illegal immigrants, foreigners, infiltrators, etc. This has led to a reaction by the affected community that feels its dignity hurt thus creating cleavage in the limb of fraternity.

Thirdly, some of the non-issues have assumed importance. The rewriting of history by eclipsing the role of those who are not savored by the establishment, the undue psychological protection given to the vigilante groups, the irresponsible utterances of leaders that defy logic, and the protest against imaginary assaults upon honor of some groups have not only vitiated the atmosphere but also created and intensified hatred among people.

Enemies of fraternity (1) Ground situation

Lack of fraternity is reflected in

- denigration of the practices of the 'other' in the context of food, customs, dress
- questioning the social and religious norms
- creation of social silos by denying interaction between communities, especially on issue of marriage
- suspecting intentions and imagining collaborations with anti-national elements thus labeling the whole community responsible
- hierarchizing religions on the basis of number of followers, superiority based upon numerical strength
- intolerance on trivial issues like a so-called lower caste person supporting moustaches and wearing shorts
- creation of hatred to score political points thus creating bad blood as in their anxiety to win elections they do not mind calling names, being abrasive, abusive, derogatory, and even insulting thus making this a new normal of electioneering
- assertion of identity of the majority community, and
- misguided nationalism.

Enemies of fraternity (2): Institutions and practices that militate against it

Besides closed circles of religion, race, caste, etc. that make people adhere within their boundaries, some of the institutions are inimical to the promotion of fraternity. These are

- **Khaps:** These impose their dictate upon people of their clan in matters of social 'discipline', especially in case of marriage, even in case of consenting couples and families. Since the members of the khap feel aggrieved at the breach of so-called 'tradition', they do not hesitate to interfere even to the extent of violence, ex-communication, or harassment of the family through social boycott. The practice of endogamy is stressed upon, intermarriage is a taboo, and inter-faith marriage a sacrilege. 'Honor crimes' are crimes of tradition. Caste-ridden society creates distance, discordant notes, and is highly anti-feminine. Since there are castes within castes and even within religions, chances of fraternity flourishing are very dim. Khaps create humiliation and are an assault on dignity and individual rights of freedom and religion.

- **Vigilante groups:** These have the tacit support of politicians and militate against the communities that they feel are against their interest. They are self-styled gangs who have a strong feeling of the state approving their activities when neither the authorities nor the so-called bosses sound knell of caution or even decry their nefarious activities. This encourages them to undertake their assignments with more vigor.

- **Ideological State Apparatus (ISA):** The term used by Louis Althuser captures the ideology of the majority political party that puts stamp of its thinking on affairs of the nation. The ideology tries to bring about uniformity of tastes, dress, language, thought, etc., upon all with the result that the dictates of government and party are sometimes irritating, being irrational and appearing to favor a community. The efforts include a stress on religious nationalism, excavating legends in history that are felt to be ignored by 'interested and left' historians, inventing an enemy, Romeo-squads, love and land jihad, not permitting prayers by a

certain community on public land, changing color of buildings as per the political color favored by the rulers, creation of spectacles like mahaotsavas, special prayers at iconic spots, seeing the liberals as anti-national, etc. The re-writing of history or the claim of historians having done injustice is in vogue. The syllabus is being changed suggesting that all that is considered good now existed in the 'glorious past'.

Though the state may not be directly involved in most of the issues yet some of the initiatives that are irrational and irksome have not elicited state intervention to stop these, failing which the state appears complicit. What confirms this doubt is that some of the leaders have been making objectionable statements on public forums.

According to Zygmunt Bauman; (1989; p. 21) moral inhibitions against violence tend to be eroded once three conditions are met. (a) Violence is authorized by official orders from legally entitled quarters; (b) actions are routinized by rule governed practices and exact specification of roles; and (c) victims of violence are dehumanized by ideological definitions and indoctrination. He further says, "Responsibility is silenced once proximity is eroded; it may eventually be replaced with resentment once the fellow human being is transformed into an Other. The process of transformation is one of social separation" (p. 184) He reiterates that the 'entrenchment of modern national states, the modern 'gardening' state – the society as an object of designing, cultivating and weed-poisoning, the technological advancement that 'increases the psychological and/or psychic distance between the act and its consequences' render the victims psychologically invisible (Stanley Milgram's experiments where the perpetrator is spared the agony of witnessing the outcome of his deeds). All these militate against the fraternity by obliteration of responsibility.

- **Priority to logic of winning elections:** The parties have been playing on the emotions of the electorates in the hope of expressing sympathy and extracting votes. There are no-holds barred in vilification of the 'other' party considered as enemy, an

attempt to diminish its contribution by negating all that has been done so far and promising a 'new turn' in events and outcomes that the previous party had deliberately missed or ignored to perform. In other words, a no-love-lost situation of hatred against parties is created on the basis of real or imaginary assessment (more often the latter). The main object is to win elections. The lust and quest of power are dominant discourses that create hatred among communities and supporters. More enemies are created who become rabid in matters of tolerance of a dissident view. The opposition candidate and the party are considered enemies. Such divisive politics creates enmity among people and results in considerable harm to the idea of brotherhood.

- **Appropriation of national heroes:** It is tragic that national leaders have been labeled with states and communities like Shivaji by Maharashtra, Sardar Patel by Gujarat, Nehru as sponsoring a 'family', Ambedkar by backward classes, etc. The national icons have been packed in closed wrappers and are appropriated by political parties. Secondly, there is an attempt to create friction among icons of the freedom movement by distorting historical truth and attributing to them the ignoring of each other's contribution. Friction is attributed between Nehru and Ambedkar, and Nehru and Patel, and Gandhi is roped in. All had, in fact, made lasting contribution to the nation – Nehru for democracy, Patel for unification of the country, and Ambedkar for the Constitution. They all worked in unison with a sense of cooperation. Ramchandara Guha says, "Nehru and Patel were colleagues and not rivals, co-workers not adversaries. Working individually and together, they united India and gave it a democratic template". He is critical of "polarizing the electorate on communal lines" and refers to distracting moves as "alternative facts".

- **Mistrust of scriptures and history:** There is a mistrust of scriptures without knowing the content. The interpretation is based upon narrow understanding of the text. Selective words are picked up that mislead the people and create a wedge between communities. Myth, legend, folklore, and history are mixed up

thus causing confusion of sorts and creating differences. Let myth be myth; legend be legend; and history be history.

Fraternity not taken seriously so far

There appear to be two reasons why fraternity as a theme has not been dealt with in Supreme Court decisions. One, fraternity is not a fundamental right and does not qualify for being adjudicated by the apex court. Two, there has hardly been any occasion for the courts to rub in the idea of fraternity while dealing with other issues of religion, culture, or social mores which were decided on merits. The courts may have avoided any reference to it for reason of abandon caution as patriotism and nationalism are getting varied definitions. Similarly, intellectuals too have kept distance from this notion.

Idea of fraternity

There are a few ideas expressed by intellectuals on the idea of fraternity. It is necessary to examine these to understand the real issue and what can be done to achieve its resurrection.

Firstly, the idea of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** (world is one family) expressed a universal thought that is the outcome of a very liberal and paternalistic inclination, almost on the periphery of the divine and acceptable to an open mind that does not consider differences of any validity. It is a cosmic view of things full of benevolence and consideration for all living beings.

Second view pertains to the doctrine of **'love'** or the Brotherhood of Man. It is amorphous and devoid of reality. E.M. Foster argues that men or nations cannot love each other. One cannot relax on this assumption as it is not practicable. He says, "Love is a great force in private life: but love in public affairs does not work. It has been tried again and again… And it has always failed. The idea that nations should love one another … is absurd, unreal, dangerous. It leads us into perilous and vague sentimentalism. … The fact is that we can only love what we know personally. And we cannot know much." (p. 54)

So he offers a third strategy of **tolerance** which is neither dramatic nor emotional but "is a very dull virtue… It merely means

putting up with people, being able to stand things". He suggests that in the context of growing population full of unknowable people, it is prudent to avoid the Nazi solution of extermination of the disliked ones. "The other way is much less thrilling, but it is on the whole way of democracies, and I prefer it. If you don't like people, put up with them as well as you can. Don't try to love them: you can't, you will only strain yourself. But try to tolerate them. On the basis of that tolerance a civilized future may be built. Certainly I can see no other foundation for the post-war world". (p.55) Tolerance is a 'common sense' strategy as we have to live with others and have no options. So putting up with them is the next best thing. Foster further suggests that Ashoka, Erasmus, Montaigne, John Locke, Sydney Smith, Lowes Dickinson, and Goethe "testify to the creed which I have been trying to express: a negative creed, but necessary for the salvation of this crowded jostling modern world." (p.57)

Forty years later, Zygmunt Bauman (1991) propounded the fourth view that "Tolerance as 'mere tolerance' is moribund… Survival in the world of contingency and diversity recognizes another's difference as the necessary condition for the preservation of its own … Tolerance is ego-centered … there is a lot of cruelty that tolerance, through its lofty unconcern it feeds, makes easier to commit". Danah Zohar & Ian Marshall say, "Both conflict and tolerance keep the other at arm's length. Both stress that he or she – the black, the Asian, the Muslim, the Jew etc. – is other than the myself. The other is no part of my experience except in so far as he or she impinges upon me. The other is no part of my identity, of my 'I-ness'. The other does not get inside my skin". (p.151) Tolerance conveys a grudging acceptance of behavior. It would make a difference if the word is replaced by 'acceptance' or, better, 'respect', the former as an indicator of the given, and latter of conscious reverence.

In a recent study, Simon Rabinovitch too disregards tolerance as a virtue. He agrees with Goethe who said, "To tolerate is to insult". Rabinovitch says, "It is time to dispense once and for all with tolerance as a model for relations between groups." He is against religious tolerance as it does not accord equality between different religions and seeks to "maintain the power and purity of

the dominant religion in a given state… It has been a means for the majority to regulate the minority". Tolerance is considered as a 'compromise' and not a positive idea. He suggests, "It is a one-way relationship between the tolerating and the tolerated", and the latter being in minority are never treated as equals. This attitude denies the need for 'reciprocity' which is "a philosophy, a social ethic, a way of seeing the world and a psychology".

The other is a stranger and does not matter to me. So I grow insensitive to his problems, fears, and apprehensions. Indifference can be dangerous. Absence of empathy and understanding make the other an instrument. Atrocities can be committed as he does not belong to my ilk and remains an enemy or a stranger at best, and not to be bothered about. Sartre had said 'hell is the other'. The other threatens the idea of own-ness.

It is in this context that Zohar & Marshall delve on the fifth idea of tolerance in a quantum society. They argue that "identity, the very core of the self, has both a particle and a wave aspect. The particle aspect of my life is my 'I-ness', that part of me that is unique and identifiable pattern of my own peculiar characteristics, my own 'voice', my own style… The wave aspect of my self is my 'we-ness', the part of me that is evoked through my relationship to others and that is literally interwoven with the being of others. My wave aspect is my public aspect, the dance to which my solo movements contribute and through which they both take on a larger meaning and through which they evolve". (p.151) In this context, they present two strategies: (a) a celebration of diversity; and (b) preference of dialogue 'where everybody wins' to debate that is adversarial, prevents compromise as both sides try to protect their turf by taking adversarial positions and without relenting. "In debate we are like boxers throwing our best punches and hoping the other hits the canvas. In dialogue we are like dancers exploring and (creatively discovering) our common score". (p.238)

The above concepts 'world is one family', brotherhood of man, tolerance, empathy, 'we-ness', etc. are brittle as these depend upon developed consciousness and high order thinking. Dipankar Gupta (2017) has proposed a concept of 'citizenship' that is more robust

and built on the solid ground. This implies "that there is a 'single uniform status' at the starting point which then promotes differences and, indeed, inequality too … That is why citizenship must embrace respect for all forms of beliefs, practices, ideologies and sentiments. The right to be different is inviolable, and nobody can take that away, as long as the rights of others are equally respected" (p.3). Besides, the people are transformed into citizens by the Constitution that provides a legal construct as well as protections by treating all alike without any privilege. It is a matter of stern reckoning that all are entitled to justice, equality, freedom and dignity. This is what fraternity is all about.

All ideas have relevance depending on the state of mind. It is a series of options. One need not exclude any of these, and use them suitably as the situation demands.

WHAT TO DO?

The tragedy is that fraternity so far has been taken for granted and no special effort made to promote it consciously. There has to be conscious effort to ignite the wick of fraternity which at present lacks necessary oil and the matchstick of desire for change. The fraternity in family is a metaphor for national fraternal expectations. Whereas the family is a closed unit and even then there are conflicts, the nation is scattered. Hence fraternity in the national context requires an extra effort on the part of leadership that plays a parental role by appearing to be, and in actuality, just for all.

Devesh Kapur in his brilliant and pioneering essay (as nothing has been thought and written so far) has indicated 'building blocks of making an Indian state' like constitutional institutions, federalism, role of public sector, large firms in the private sector, institutions of higher learning, growth in connectivity, and rapid economic growth that to a great extent obliterated 'the sharp congruence between occupation and caste', and rapid urbanization that created opportunities for social interaction. However, these initiatives refer to nation building rather than fraternity. It is felt that much more is required to be done.

Fraternity is not an issue of outward provision of infrastructure and national institutions. It is not only an issue of the heart that feels and the mind that accepts, but equally a matter of rights. Gupta (2017) aptly remarks that "urban spaces, education institutions, factories and even elections (are) unable to wipe out traits of the past" (173). Therefore, a conscious effort has to be made to bring about deepening and entrenching of fraternity within communities. Gupta rightly asserts "Fraternity, in the truest sense, is like a very delicate plant; it has to be nurtured carefully and requires constant attention. If you take your eyes off it, some pestilence will almost certainly strike it". (p.13)

Having realized the importance of fraternity, the effort would be futile if it is left to fend for itself. This study may prove sterile if it does not suggest the way forward. Where do we go from here? We are obligated to think over the matter and consider some doable projects. A conscious effort has to be made seriously. It may fall into three segments. One, it must be appreciated that there are a few items which are immutable and cannot be changed easily. Two, there are useful ideas, which if kept in mind, shall be for nation's good. Three, these ideas have to be undertaken systematically. Hence the role of some agencies is indicated.

I. ACCEPTING POTENCY OF THE 'GIVEN'

There is need to accept the 'givens' with grace by all without an iota of regret or finding fault or crying over split milk or attributing any blame to past actors as this would not lead us anywhere except creation of remorse, rancor and bad taste. There are, therefore, some imperatives that have to be taken into consideration while considering the need for fraternity.

• There is a semantic confusion caused by the Hindutva judgment by the Supreme Court: "The words 'Hinduism' and 'Hidutva' are not necessarily to be understood and construed narrowly, confined only to the strict Hindu religious practices unrelated to the culture and ethos of the people of India, depicting the way of life of the Indian people." It also held, "It is a fallacy and an error of law to proceed on the assumption that any reference to Hindutva or Hinduism in a speech makes it automatically a speech

based on the Hindu religion as opposed to other religions or that the use of the word 'Hindutva' or 'Hinduism' per se depicts an attitude hostile to all persons practicing any religion other than the Hindu religion". However, it is often interpreted by people as based on religion (as it sounds like that) and not as a way of life that was intended by the court. Hindutva as such has nothing to do with religion. The judgment is based on acceptance of a common civilization rather than the religion. Since phonetically Hindutva and Hinduism are close correlates, there is a problem of identifying one with the other to the exclusion of other religions. It is a reality that people cannot differentiate between the two.

- Christians and Muslims who appear to be bête noir are facts of reality and cannot be wished away. Both cannot be denied their contribution to advancement of education and health in remote places and depths in the country, and undertaking some of the trades that are unpleasant to the majority community, respectively.

- Citizenship is given. None can question it, reduce it, deny it, or take it away. This is inviolable. It must be appreciated that Muslims cannot be pushed to Pakistan or Bangladesh whatever be the wishes and exhortations of some politicians. Such pronouncements only vitiate the atmosphere and create a fault line in the context of fraternity by making the 'others' feel as diminished and unwanted in the country of their birth. It is an impossibility to expect that the other nations shall accept them for no reason. The remark is only emotional and hence irresponsible that embarrasses the government and the nation as such.

- The Constitution is given and so is its principle of 'basic structure' (Keshwananda Bharti) that includes the idea of secularism. The talk to hate the word like 'secular' and 'socialist' and negate their presence from the text is not only empty rhetoric bereft of any meaning but also creates a hiatus between the people. There can be no amendment of these, even if desired or wished. Secularism merely articulates right to freedom of religion and nothing more; whereas socialism packs in one word what is already contained in the Directive Principles of State Policy. There has yet been

no cogent argument against these two expressions except the strategy of rhetoric that castigates the two expressions without mentioning the damage it has done or could do. Besides, talk of amendment of the Constitution for withdrawal of Article 370 creates fears and apprehensions of those likely to be affected. While the amendment of the Constitution is not an easy task, even a threat to do so creates a distance between people and goes against the notion of fraternity.

Due to modernity and historical background of people, there have been diverse thoughts and values that are not palatable to those holding fixed views, styles of living, and backgrounds. Bauman (2001) says, "But there is little chance of things getting transparent and simple for us, the residents of modern cities. Since the beginning of modern times, cities have been gatherings of anonymous crowds, meeting places of strangers – genuine 'universal otherhoods', as Benjamin Nelson called them". (p. 88) Since the idea of fraternity under the pressure of 'otherhood' is under attack, it has to be guarded against.

- Multiple religions: Four major religions Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism had their origin in India. There is presence too of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, besides various subsets of these. Dr. Ramendra has asserted that "these religions make conflicting truth-claims, which are incompatible with one another. For instance, they have different views regarding the nature of this world or about the nature of "life" after death, or about the ultimate destiny of human beings. They also advocate different moral codes, different methods of worship and different rituals. Since they are not similar, it is not possible for all of them to be true at the same time. It is also not possible to regard them as different paths leading to the same goal, because they do not believe in a common goal". (p.17)

However, he forgets that if they were similar, there would have been no occasion for religions to originate. It may be appreciated that all religions are based upon faith and logic. None can be denied their unique status as religion is central to the individual psychological needs, devotion, habit, and is part of one's lineage.

It is also a marker of identity and hence critical to the personality of the person. Any interference with it by outside forces is bound to be resented.

- Crimes shall continue in any society. Criminals too, by and large, belong to a religion. It is risky to give a religious label to a crime. However, all incidents of crime must be treated as such without any reference to a religion. No study in criminology has asserted any correlation between religion and crime. Any attitude to relate crime with religion is thus imaginary, prejudicial, uncalled for and must be deplored.

- The past is given. It can neither be erased nor manufactured afresh. It is, therefore, inappropriate to blame anyone for today's problems as nothing can be done. The "if-games" are of no avail. "If" is in the realm of the imaginary and need not be used for self-approbation. It is infructuous to find scapegoats in the dead and transfer their image in the living present. The observation of Gupta (2017) is very relevant: "We must learn to forget many aspects of the past if we have to fashion an actually functioning democratic future". (p.7) The reason is that one cannot do anything about it. Reference of past 'injuries' vitiates the present atmosphere. One does not have to scratch the injury to bring about blood and leave it a non-healing spot.

Any effort to take care of the neglected concept of fraternity must reckon with the above realities, proceed to do the course correction, and do justice to the forgotten idea. It is, therefore, the task of the present to negotiate through the 'givens'.

II. IDEAS THAT ARE USEFUL

• 'I am my brother's keeper': responsibility for responsibility

Emmanuel Levinas commented that all immorality began with Cain's angry reply to God when He asked where Able was and he replied 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Elaborates Zygmunt Bauman (2001), "Of course I am my brother's keeper; and I am and remain a moral person as long as I do not ask special reason to be one. Whether I admit it or not, I am my brother's keeper because my

brother's well-being depends on what I do or refrain from doing. And I am a moral person because I recognize that dependence and accept the responsibility that follows. The moment I question that dependence, and demand as Cain did to give the reason why I should care, I renounce my responsibility and am no longer a moral self. My brother's dependence is what makes me an ethical being. Dependence and ethics stand together and together they fall". (p. 72) Zohar & Marshall go a step further, "In moral terms, I am not my brother's keeper. I am my brother". (p.276)

- **Dialogue and not debate**

A lot of damage to fraternity is done by getting into debate on communal and caste issues. One must have seen on visual media intelligent people, scholars, politicians, journalists, and religious leaders fighting with each other. They look like enemies fighting for turf of their viewpoint. It is an abominable sight. It not only diminishes the other but also does not eke out any solution. Debate debases; people stick to their version. Any change of stand appears as a defeat, ignominy, and not to be accepted. The speakers stick to their point whatever the extent of shallowness. Debate does not lead to any resolution. It creates two incompatible enemy camps. There is no attempt to extend a helping hand for solution. Blaming is predominant, none accepts fault. Bizarre arguments are presented. The stand becomes hardened; positions do not change. None relents in a debate even when one knows the fault of argument. Everyone wants to win. Participants are angry, uncompromising holding their version of truth not realizing that there are different truths, yet every one holds on to his slice. Nothing changes, hatred deepens, and fraternity is hit hard as there is no consensus and only adversarial stance.

On the other hand, dialogue uplifts and has the potential of trying for a solution. Zohar & Marshall rightly point out, "In dialogue, the other is my partner or fellow explorer in a mutually creative enterprise of discovery. 'In dialogue', as David Bohm says, 'everybody wins' Together we 'win through' to a new, mutually welcomed position. (p. 238) Dialogue promotes "mutual respect and mutual co-operation, a philosophy of mutual belonging, that is not possible in adversarial politics" (p. 241)

- **Imagining the absence of those who make our life capable and worth living**

There are many strangers who are engaged in basic tasks and deserve our adulation and respect for their contribution as they are instrumental in making our life better by helping and assisting in tasks which are beyond our capabilities. The cobbler, butcher, carpenter, potter, scavenger, rag-picker, fabric dyer, washer man, weaver, barber, skin-remover, leather tanner, the midwife, undertaker etc., all deserve to be adulated as they contribute to various aspects of our well-being, survival, and are doing tasks that are beyond the capacity of an ordinary person. They perform basic acts and deserve respect for their contribution. Such an exercise would bring us closer to them irrespective of their religion, caste, class, and language. The essence lies in their contribution and not in their background or artificial differences. Some of the saints of the bhakti movement belonged to the subaltern professions. They are revered in the sacred texts.

- **Cultivating inter-subjectivity**

Dipankar Gupta (2017A) proposes a 'thought experiment': "Put oneself, even hypothetically, in the shoes of others". Imagine being a victim of lynch mob of vigilantes who may have mistaken taking the cow as meant for beef and not for milk, victim of a genuine marriage called 'love jihad', beaten for wearing a skull cap, sporting a beard that becomes a marker of identity, etc. This would lead to 'inter-subjectivity', an interaction between the 'self' and the 'other'. "Once the other is seen in the context of the self, we have already accepted that the condition of the 'other' matters to us". (p.2) He further elaborates that the others affect our lives. "Existentialism is built around the dictum 'Hell is other people. For a sick person 'Heaven is other people". (p.61) This exercise of seeing-the-other-in-me and I-in-the-other is empathy.

- **Celebrating diversity**

India is a unique country in the world that is conscious and proud of its diversity where 122 languages and 1,600 dialects are spoken and is a host to the major religions of the world that had been

coexisting with each other without any friction. India lets hundred flowers bloom.

Ram Nath Kovind, President of India, testifies, "Fraternity and compassion are written into nature's DNA. Whatever else we do as a society, that sense of compassion and fraternity, of civility and mutual dignity, cannot be removed from our hopes and dreams for India. Nature does not compartmentalize. Its instinct is integrative and holistic…Nature promotes mutualism. The flower nourishes the bee. The river waters quench the thirst of all human beings. And trees provide a welcoming home to so many birds and animals. There is a rhythm to this togetherness. And there is an almost cosmic bond that allows every living being, small and big, silent and loud, to live in harmony, to flourish and to thrive. Human beings can learn from this… India is nature's favorite child. Let us … make that rhythm and that togetherness – and that quest for every individual to be able to fulfill his or her dream and destiny – a national movement. We owe it to our today; and much more, we owe it to our tomorrow".

Bauman (1989) reiterates that "pluralism is the best preventive medicine against normal people engaging in morally abnormal actions". (165) Zohar & Marshall insist upon need for recognition that we are both self and other': "Quantum reality has the potential to be both particle-like and wave-like. Particles are individuals, located and measurable in space and time. They are either here or there, now or then. Waves are 'non-local', they are spread out across all space and time and their instantaneous effects are everywhere. Waves extend themselves in every direction at once, they overlap and combine with other waves to form new realities (new emergent wholes). This 'wave-particle dualism' offers us a new powerful model for seeing ourselves as both individuals, distinct and precious and effective in our own right, and at the same time as members of a wider group through which we acquire further identity and a wider capacity for creative relationship". (p.275-6)

Diversity is embedded in the idea of India. It is permeated in every realm of religion, cosmological thought, deities, language, culture, custom, cuisine, costume, and folklore. There is no need for insistence on uniformity because diversity is beautiful, a mosaic

rather than a blank tile. Difference of ideas too is to be accepted as it leads to a new idea. There is logic to pluralism, co-existence, openness, and dialogue.

- **Aiming at a 'Decent Society'**

Avishai Margalit has distinguished between decent society and civilized society. "A decent society is one whose institutions do not humiliate people… A civilized society is one whose members do not humiliate one another". (p.1) Humiliation is caused when the authorities debunk past history and demonize those who had ruled by twisting history and creating new icons who are supposed to have countered the invaders; when the state insists the construction of a temple on the site of other religion's ground; when one religion insists superiority over the other. All this goes against the spirit of fraternity thus creating not only a cleavage between communities but also at the cost of the other. Margalit contends, "human beings are creatures capable of feeling pain and suffering not only as a result of physically painful acts but also as a result of acts with symbolic meaning…Humiliation is the extension of cruelty from physical to the psychological realm of suffering. Humiliation is mental cruelty." (p.84-5)

State must, therefore, strive to create conditions for a decent society where human beings are not rejected as human beings "merely things, tools, animals, subhumans, or inferior humans". (121) The proposed concept of 'symbolic citizenship' means "sharing in the society's symbolic wealth" (p.160) which suggests that "decent society must not develop or support, on an institutional level, any symbols that are directed explicitly or implicitly against some of the citizens of the state" (161). It is thus pertinent that the state must not appear to be favoring one religion over the other and keep away from making statements or giving symbolic expression by various means that are at the cost of respect of the community.

III. ASSIGNING ROLES

- **Responsibility of politicians and political parties**

It is regrettable that politicians have not played the role in

promoting fraternity. The call for bonding over caste and religion, and even region is prominent during elections. The moves are open; the communities are propped up or castigated as per requirement. The political parties as such have not been able to rein in their members, candidates, and leaders. They are thus privy to what happens on the ground as there are no apparent, transparent, genuine, intentional controls or chastisement to the errant members leading to the assumption of their leader's consent. They do not hesitate to use nasty expressions that are easy to understand, being symbolic. They, with the exception of few, support wrong causes and are not shy of making abrasive remarks against individuals and communities that further create a wedge and a crack in the edifice of fraternity.

It is in this context that leaders have a role. As the rulers, so are the people, says the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita: "For, whatever a great man does, that very thing other men also do; whatever standards he sets up, the generality of the men follow the same". (III.21). Therefore, the behavior and expressions of the politicians must be in tune with the constitutional morality contained in the preamble, the fundamental rights, directive principles of state policy, and the fundamental duties. It is a pity that most of them are constitution-illiterates and, if they know, they are not true to the oath that mandates 'true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established'. (Third Schedule) Ignorance, willful forgetfulness of, and scorn for the Constitution result in harm to fraternity.

The role of the parties and politicians is conceived as under

(a) not to create tension, disruption, entertain extreme thought that gives preference to one community over the other

(b) to engage in dealing with conflicts by taking proactive action

(c) not to consider opposition parties as enemies but contenders having a different stream of thought

(d) mellow down the political discourse during elections campaigns so as not to hurt sensibilities by getting personal

(e) not to keep on harping on 'past' failures in contrast to the 'intentions' for the future that may or may not materialize

(f) to keep the campaign low key so as not to disrupt communities thus creating a wedge; avoiding the word 'appeasement' both as an attack and a measure of partiality

(g) to present to people their plans, potentialities, and effort not by denigrating the past thus erasing all that has been achieved so far (There is nothing like a clean slate. All parties work on the shoulders of their predecessors and must not take credit for the existing schemes by wrapping these in new covers or giving new shape to the package)

(h) not to create "anti-Muslim sentiments (renaming the Taj Mahal) and hatred for Dalits (washing Ambedkar's statue in milk to make him pure (Meghnad Desai; 'Avoid Ideology'; The Indian Express; June 17, 2018)

(i) must eschew temptation for electoral dividend by exploiting sentiments of voters.

- **Role of media**

Media is all-pervasive. It is not only press, radio, and television, but also social media. It gives direction to public predilections and proclivities. People are affected by its pronouncements. Sometimes it has a hidden message, but often one can make out which cause it is sponsoring as is evident from the major role played by the anchors in directing the debate. Being a powerful instrument in shaping public opinion, it is imperative that it has to play a neutral role so that the message is reasonable and not biased. Media can foster or damage the project of fraternity by taking sides. It is, therefore, expected of it to play a responsible role. Here are some of the suggestions that may help in strengthening the edifice of fraternity.

One, visual media must avoid repetitive display of footage while news is being relayed. Repetition, especially of those incidents that create hatred, solidifies impressions that get embedded in public psyche. It is better to avoid extreme visuals of what is irritating to the senses. Secondly, the debates on television must be avoided as the participants stick to their views to the point of indecent posturing that does immense damage to the cause of fraternity. None gets convinced with the arguments of the other and the animosity continues till the

end. Debates vitiate the atmosphere with participants taking hard and extreme sides, absolutely unaccommodating to each other.

Third, the media must avoid labeling incidents with religion. There is no need to pitch Islam terrorism against Hindu terrorism as these terms demonize the communities as a whole whereas the actors are personally responsible for their behavior irrespective of religion. There are hazards of stereotyping communities on the basis of criminals who perform the act. These are exceptions as large number of people are sane, decent, indifferent to goings-on, and hence do not deserve to be labeled as it creates friction in fraternal relations. Under the circumstances it would be prudent to hate the crime, find the criminals, and spare the rest of the community of the blame. Nomenclatures upon communities do immense harm to the idea of fraternity. The media must avoid interviewing persons who incite rather than put a balm. It is prudent to seek moderate voices that can extinguish fire of hatred. Nothing must be projected that is a threat to communal harmony. And, lastly, trial by media must be avoided.

- **Cultivating fraternity**

Fraternity is the root idea that subsumes all important discourses as it acknowledges the existence of the 'other' and extends respect, consideration, and safety. Though all discourses like human rights, environment, and transparency seek attention of education authorities for inclusion in various courses, it would be fair to start with fraternity and branch out to other areas that affect individual and social life. Emphasis on fraternity will also strengthen the roots of democracy as it contains the seeds of equality, liberty, and dignity. Gupta rightly mentions, "The most enduring and endearing aspect of Ambedkar's leadership was his advocacy that fraternity is, and should always be, the central principle of democracy" (Gupta; 2017; p. 13).

Article 51A of the Constitution is not ornamental to be included in the text books only or curriculum for political science, sociology, or social studies. It has a practical meaning that expects citizens to internalize, follow, and put into practice in daily life the desirable behavior. It categorically states that it is the duty of every citizen of

India "(e) to promote harmony and spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities…" and "(f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture".

Since fraternity is part of the preamble, the fundamental duty in 51 A is a valid expectation. "The ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom" were inclusive in which all communities had participated. It has to be realized that it would be difficult to protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the nation as is evident from the turbulent conditions of uncivil and armed unrest that has created hatred among communities. There is a categorical direction regarding 'harmony' and 'common brotherhood' and 'the rich heritage of composite culture' that cannot be preserved if the iconic structures including religious sites, languages, artifacts and culture of various communities are not valued and protected.

- **Role of "Elites"**

Although it is fair to rely on the politicians, yet it is not certain to produce results, they being surrounded by compulsions of winning election which follow the rule of 'all is fair in war'. They would love, in electoral war, only those who are supposedly with them, the rest being their enemies and detractors. In fact, it is the political elite that have created a problem. They have not yet internalized the logic of citizenship. Some of them have made sad statements of suggesting and threatening citizens to "get out and move to another country" without realizing that these disturb the feeling and idea of fraternity. Hence it is logical to depend upon intellectuals and others of same predilections. Gupta (2013) has demonstrated that the elites have been vanguards of democracy. "When we recall the personages who contributed most to the enlargement of fraternity and formed its vanguard, what is of note is that nearly all of them hailed from affluent and privileged background and initiated policies that were not in their immediate interests" (p.21). He further suggests that "The 'citizen elite' believe in challenging the given and are constantly raising the bar as far as democracy is concerned" and so "they have been responsible for advancing fraternity". (p.188)

'Elites of calling' transform the irreverent and injurious political discourse into a meaningful one by means of their thought and action. The elite consisting of academics, thinkers, artists, legal experts, writers, journalists, visionaries, and social scientists, individually and collectively, get involved in creating a discourse in a manner that brings communities together by engaging with problems of rights, health, education, and jobs thus debunking the narrow hatreds between communities on flimsy grounds. They have the gumption to speak truth loud and clear to authority, articulate the desirables, and castigate irrelevant deviations from the proper discourse. Theirs is not to keep mum and remain silent but to create noise so as to pierce through ears of authority compelling it to take suitable and adequate action. The elite have a voice of rationality that cannot be ignored. At least they are heard. They must protect the realm of fraternity. Gupta says that they are the real democrats who answer "to a higher call, for they are fired by the ideal of citizenship whose core attribute is that of fraternity". (p.10) This also includes the role of civil society organizations that contest social and political ills and pursue issues openly on behalf of public and for their good.

- **Role of criminal justice system**

Though fraternity cannot be advanced by legal action alone as it is a political issue for leadership, yet it would be disastrous for the system to ignore disruption caused by those obsessed with fundamentalism of a sort. Nothing is more harmful to fraternity than the feeling of the victim community that it has been denied justice either by complicity or sympathy for the majority, or by neglecting the basic tasks of governance. Therefore, the criminal justice system has an onerous role to play. Any criminality that threatens the fraternity must be taken with utmost seriousness to prevent the social atmosphere from vitiating as it has many repercussions that often lead to misunderstanding and riots.

There is thus a need for constant vigilance and prompt proactive action by police. Police must not tolerate intolerance. It would be unjust if police follows dictates of political executive in clear cases of hate speech and other overtures that create dissonance in society.

Officers have to realize that they derive their powers from law directly without any intervention of political intermediaries. It is the prime duty of police to deal with rogues, lumpen elements, and mobs by using law that is sufficiently strong, like sedition in accordance with Kedarnath judgment only (and not using it to harass those who have a different opinion), for promoting enmity, especially the hate speech (Sec. 153A), and malicious act (Sec. 295A). Police must interpret incident with regard to its repercussions and not only by the plain act. Police does not have to be scared of transfers and must resort to independent functioning under the protection of law. The system must send a legal and constitutional message to the political executive that it is neutral and shall not tolerate any violation in law.

Secondly, there are often pleas by ruling parties for withdrawal of cases irrespective of their seriousness and gravity for political ends to assuage their followers on the ground that the cases were 'politically motivated'. However, the government may propose and judiciary can dispose by an in-depth scrutiny of the grounds for withdrawal with clean and penetrating judicial optics before deciding on merits of withdrawal. The courts must not permit withdrawal of cases unless these fall within the realm of law. It may be prerogative of government to seek withdrawal of cases, but for courts to decide. They must apply reason and judicial discretion in dealing with such cases.

Thirdly, there is a need for fast-track courts in real sense. Surely the superior courts are competent to direct day-to-day trial in such cases so as to convey message that judiciary is not bogged down by adjournments and interim orders that are sought to delay the process. It may be taken as a duty rather than a laid off procedure.

- **Role of religious leaders**

By not giving too much weight to Dr. Ramendra's thesis on incompatibility of religions we have to prescribe a role for religious leaders, thinkers, and preachers. They must create a new narrative of harmony and support fraternity rather than indentifying differences and creating a sense of animosity among communities and religions. Loving one's religion does not prevent one from respecting others. Love of one need not be at the cost of the other. Respect is not a zero

sum game. It multiplies with reciprocity. There has to be campaign against religious prejudice, stereotyping, and bigotry.

Secondly, even though there may be differences at the doctrinal level regarding truth claims, worldview, and methods of worship, life after death, holy books in different languages, yet on the ethical plane there is no difference in the moral codes of all religions. All believe in truth, beauty, and goodness, are compassionate and care for others. All have a feeling of brotherhood, doing good deeds, charity in various forms, and building personal character. The preachers, during inter-faith dialogues, may stress ethical principles leaving out doctrinal aspects for their own congregations. There is no monopoly over truth. Hence there is no room for bigotry, arrogance, or superiority. In this way, suspicion and distrust shall be demolished. There is no place for hatred, hurt, humiliation, or harm. Mutual respect is required. The religious leaders and preachers must talk on positives of religions.

TINA to Fraternity

There is no alternative to fraternity in the context of the Constitution that embodies within its structure importance given to it in the preamble.

There is no room for bigotry, discrimination, intolerance, and polarization for the sake of unity and integrity of the country. No country can live peacefully in case of division between 'us' and 'them', mistrust between communities, and disrespect for a segment of population.

There is no alternative to pluralism in the midst of multiplicities and various diversities.

Let (a) 'unity in diversity' or 'united in difference' and (b) vasudhaiva kutumbakam (idea of universal brotherhood) be the mission, objective, and goal of the country for peace, harmony, and development. An all out effort must be made in this regard.

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Vinay Shankar

Information Communication Technology for Development

This paper is about the adoption of Information Communication Technology (ICT), which term includes digitisation, digital technologies, digital transformation etc., in the government at all levels, and using it in their working to the maximum extent. It is also about encouraging entrepreneurs in business, industry, services; farmers; other citizens and organisations to themselves adopt ICT and use it to its potential not only in interaction with government offices but also for enhancement of their business, organisation, processes and other purposes as has been discussed subsequently in this paper. Thus, this paper argues for national digital transformation.

Scientific Terms Used

It will be useful to become familiar with the scientific terms used.

Signal:

It is a function that conveys information about a phenomenon. In electronics and telecommunications, it refers to time varying voltage, current or electromagnetic wave that carries information. A signal may also be defined as an observable change in a quality such as quantity. A signal can be audio, video, speech, image, sonar and radar-related. Any quality, such as physical quantity that exhibits variation in space or time can be used as a signal to share messages between observers.

In nature, signals can be actions done by an organism to alert other organisms. In human engineering, signals are typically provided by a sensor, and often the original form of a signal is converted to another form of energy using a transducer. For example, a

microphone converts an acoustic signal to a voltage waveform, and a speaker does the reverse. Information Theory serves as the formal study of signals and their content.

Engineering disciplines such as electrical engineering have led the way in the design, study, and implementation of systems involving transmission, storage, and manipulation of information. In the latter half of the 20th century, electrical engineering itself separated into several disciplines, specialising in the design and analysis of systems that manipulate physical signals; electronic engineering and computer engineering as examples; while design engineering developed to deal with functional design of user–machine interfaces.

Digitization:

Digitization is the conversion of paper-based information and processes in analogue form, including written text, to digital form with the goal to digitize and automate processes or workflows. It gives the ability to convert a document in digital format and use it and the data therein in a number of ways for different uses such as connecting people, processes, data etc to provide information which have the potential to change business outcomes.

Digitalisation:

Digitalization is the use of digital technologies and digitized data to impact how work gets done, transform how target beneficiaries and provider organisations engage and interact, and benefit both the beneficiaries and the provider organisations.

Digital technologies enable the use of digitised data for various applications and include the following:

(i) Big data:

(ii) Digital Analytics.

(iii) Cloud Computing

(iv) Internet of things

(v) Digital Twins

(vi) Digital transformation

The above terms are briefly explained below

Big data: Digitisation results in accumulation of very large quantities of data in unorganised form. The data needs to be organised in appropriate data bases and forms so that it can be retrieved and processed for applications.

Digital Analytics is the process of collecting, measuring and analyzing digital data - both quantitative and qualitative - from various sources. It provides an idea how users are behaving. Through digital analytics, companies and organisations are able to identify the areas where they need improvement. Digital analytics helps organisations to provide a more client-friendly online facility to its clients, which gradually results in the achievement of the desired goals of improving business operations.

Cloud computing is the on-demand availability of computer system resources, especially data storage (cloud storage) and computing power, without direct active management by the user. The term is generally used to describe data centres available to many users over the Internet.

The Internet of things (IoT) is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines provided with unique identifiers (UIDs) and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.

Digital Twins are virtual replicas of physical devices that data scientists and IT professionals can use to run simulations before actual devices are built and deployed. They are also changing how technologies such as Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics are optimized.

Digital Transformation

Digitalisation in an enterprise evolves towards Digital Transformation by the use of information technologies and their capabilities when it becomes an enterprise-wide phenomenon rather than being used for some specific purposes. The process needs to be gradual.

The objectives of Digitisation and Digitalisataion of Public Administration

Public institutions perform four kinds of functions:

1. Provide service
2. Enforce laws and regulations.
3. Record keeping
4. Securing people's participation in governance

The objectives of digitalisation of public administration are the following:

- Transparency in the functioning of the public institution
- Automaticity of the decision
- Online provision of services where feasible.
- Elimination of the need for human interface of the beneficiary with the public servant to the extent feasible .
- Greatly speeding up the process
- Review of the system, process and procedure prevailing
- Easy monitoring of the work by the superior officers of their subordinates
- Increased efficiency and productivity of the officials in the public office
- Saving of costs and quick decision for the beneficiary
- Safety and security of the record.
- Eliminating or reducing physical inspection
- Reducing adverse impact on environment / environment friendly
- Higher security
- Capability to handle large volumes of data
- Flexibility and ease of handling
- Reduced corruption
- Saving of storage space

- Cleaner and neater office layout
- Improved economy
- Lower maintenance costs
- Reduced fire hazards
- Improvement in Ease of doing Business and reducing the cost of compliance of the affected entrepreneurs or other target groups
- Participation of the affected parties in decision making by the public official.
- Providing consistent and coherent rules for changing environments.
- Enables Long-term planning in regulatory reform and
- Many more

Challenges to Development of Indian Economy

In the past India has not grown as fast as its potential and even though the scourge of the pandemic COVID 19 has hit us hard, we should still make determined effort to reach our goal of fast development and make India a 5 Trillion US$ economy.

COVID 19 led to the imposition of the unprecedented Lockdown of the country in March 2020. The reports of employment and tax collection for April 2020, the first month of the lockdown suggest that it may have caused considerable damage to the economy of the country. Even before the lockdown was effected, the GDP growth had been declining since 2016-17 when it was 8.17% and the estimated growth in 2019-20 is 4.2%. It also needs to be borne in mind that the progress towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, which reflects, in a sense, integrated development, needs to be improved. Our present international ranking is 57 but we have not achieved even a single goal fully. It is reflective of low resource use efficiency and productivity.

According to UNESCAP publication, "Analysing Resource Transition," since 1990, domestic material consumption (DMC) in India in 2016 in kg per US dollar was 2.83, while in the South and

South-west Asia it was 2.04. But India had shown great improvement in the year 2016 when DMC was 42.16 % lower as compared to what it was in the year 2000.

The above statement is for material consumption. Similar situation obtains whether it is land, water, electricity, fertilizer etc. Our use-efficiencies of almost all natural and human resources are much lower than those of the world average, let alone those of the developed countries.

The RBI has estimated that the GDP growth could be negative for the year 2020-21. The situation is compounded by the fact that even before COVID came hounding the world, there was global economic slowdown. Then came the pandemic which has damaged the Indian economy hard. There are varying estimates of the damage but according to the World Bank it may take two years for the Indian economy to restore to the pre-Corona level i.e., by 2021-22.

The Indian economy has thus been subjected to severe shock and the country will have to take innovative steps to restore the economy back on the path of development and achieve the goal to become a five trillion dollar economy in not too distant a future.

It should be obvious to anyone that If the economy is to grow at a high rate the efficiency of use of our resources needs to be among the highest in the world.

Development and ICT

The Industrial Revolution showed that socio-economic development was highly correlated with the growth of Science and Technology. European nations took the lead and technology helped them to use the resources of the entire world and they became rich and developed.

After the World War II, the developed countries added Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to their arsenal of technologies. ICT enables very large amount of information to be digitised which can be stored, grouped, organised and analysed for use in numerous applications. It enables the human being to send signals and get compliance from another object without any interface

with it. Thus ICT opened the opportunity of remote working of a machine. Robots could be developed and machines could be directed to perform functions on distant locations such as moon and planets of the solar system. Incredible amount of data could be stored in devices of miniature size. It is difficult to imagine any technology which does not have a major input of ICT. In practice production of any good or service without the application of ICT is not feasible. ICT has major uses in management of businesses. It has applications in aspects such as knowing the customer, his preferences of products, price etc., in the field of operations, and organisation and use of virtual skills. It enables the businesses to do things which they had not imagined and results in producing new products and services, reduction in cost, improved efficiency and overall growth.

The technology is very economical and all it needs infrastructure for internet connectivity and appropriately educated and trained manpower. Luckily India has been developing both – the necessary infrastructure and manpower with the needed skills. These aspects are discussed below.

Progress of ICT in India

Core and Support Infrastructure:

(Source: Saransh, Jan 2011, a publication of the Department of Information Technology)

In order to promote e-Governance in a holistic manner, various policy initiatives and projects have been undertaken to develop core and support infrastructure. The major core infrastructure components are State Data Centres (SDCs), State Wide Area Networks (S.W.A.N), Common Services Centres (CSCs) and middleware gateways i.e National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG), State e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG), and Mobile e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG). The important support components include Core policies and guidelines on Security, HR, Citizen Engagement, Social Media as well as Standards related to Metadata, Interoperability.

Bharat Net:

It is a telecom infrastructure provision set up by the government of India to establish, manage and operate the National Optical Fibre Network that aims to provide a minimum of 100 megabits per second of broadband connectivity to all gram panchayats in the country.

The National Programme of e-Governance:

It was launched by the Government of India in the year 2006. Many services are being provided to the citizen in the rural areas by the Panchayats, State Governments, Urban Local bodies that are computer based and online. Internally the government offices are using information technology. A substantial proportion of population both in the rural and urban areas have internet connectivity.

4G Networks:

A large majority of urban as well as rural Indians used 4G networks to access internet as of 2019. 3G network connections ranked second in terms of popularity with 13 percent of users accessing internet via these mobile networks. At the same time, WiFi connections were the choice for around nine percent of the urban users, but only three percent of rural users.

As of 2019, over 118 thousand Gram Panchayats, were equipped with internet access across India. Out of this, Uttar Pradesh had the maximum connectivity in its rural areas with over 28 thousand internet equipped gram panchayats.

e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project:

There is an e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project whose objectives are:

(i) Automation of internal workflow processes of Panchayats

(ii) Improving delivery of services to citizens

(iii) Capacity building of Panchayat Representatives and Officials

(iv) Social Audit

(v) Transparency, Accountability, Efficiency and RTI compliance of Panchayats

Improving Governance of local self-government:

Ten applications have been developed for the Panchayats. It will be reasonable to hope that in due course of time the Panchayats would make full use of inter-connectivity.

Aadhaar services:

The national biometric digital identity program, has vastly expanded and helped in digitisation in a significant manner. Aadhaar was first introduced in 2009, and since then, almost 1.2 billion individuals have enrolled in the program, making it the single largest digital ID program across the globe, accelerating the spread of other digital services. Similarly, the establishment of the Goods and Services Tax Network in 2013, has resulted in the bringing together of about 10.3 million indirect tax-paying businesses onto one digital platform.

Low Cost Internet-Enabled Services:

Additionally, the private sector has introduced low cost internet-enabled services to millions of consumers in the country. Ultra-fast download speeds have quadrupled somewhere between 2014 and 2017. Therefore, mobile internet access per consumer grew by 152 percent yearly.

The rapid pace of development is helping rural areas to reduce the digital divide with urban areas. Between 2014 and 2018, Uttar Pradesh has seen nearly 36 million individuals enrolled in internet services.

Digital Payment Mode:

Roughly 40 percent of the population is enrolled in internet services and numerous individuals have digital bank accounts. Digital modes of payment like UPI, Aadhaar, and BHIM are growing at an unprecedented rate, and it is heartening to see the growing awareness regarding the power of biometrics. Income tax and bank authorities have adopted this technology in quite a major way. But the adoption of digital technologies is only partial in other departments.

The result is that in most public offices computers are being used and some functions are being performed and the work is still mostly done in the conventional way.

Human Resource for ICT

Apart from the infrastructure provided which has enabled the use of ICT to grow as described earlier, India has been producing in its Engineering Colleges and Institutes of Technology graduates in ICT, electronics and Computer sciences. A large number of these students have done their post-graduate (M.Sc) from reputed universities in the USA and Europe and they have been absorbed for R&D in those universities. A large number of them work in companies located in the foreign countries and have thus acquired experience of working at the cutting edge of technology. In the year 2019, 2.9 million students were enrolled in engineering in India out of which 0.88 million were enrolled in Computer science and 0.63 million were enrolled in Electronics engineering. Many foreign companies have their offices located in India from where they get the work done.

Thus there will be adequate manpower if the country were to make a major shift to digital mode of working.

Factors Favouring India's Development

It is easy to identify features that can help the Indian economy recover rather quickly and grow at brisk enough rate to achieve the goal of a 5 trillion US $ economy. First, except for petroleum products, our imports are not high and we have the resources to meet our demand of goods and services that we need. Our economic fundamentals are strong. Our foreign exchange reserves have achieved a peak. The people of the country led by the Prime Minister have expressed a resolve to quickly get over the crisis and move rapidly on the path of development.

We have a very effective motivator in the persona of the Prime Minister and people follow him implicitly. It was demonstrated during the lock-down when just on an appeal of the Prime Minister on the media, the entire nation in the villages and towns joined together to beat drums, conches and their utensils, burn lamps , candles etc.

In addition, we have the frame work of a strong and functioning democracy built assiduously since independence. We have adopted a constitution that is rigorously followed, we have independent judiciary, regular clean elections that enable the people of the

country to choose their own government and thus ensure self-rule, a decentralised governance from the parliament to the urban local bodies and gram panchayat. There is a provision for universal elementary education and the enrolment is close to 100 % . Long ago we became self-sufficient in food and milk. From a situation at independence we did not produce a bicycle we are producing automobiles and sending space missions. This shows that we have the manpower and other resources to fulfil the dream of Atmanirbharta and taking advantage of other developmental schemes to become a developed nation in not too distant a future.

In the wake of the Pandemic, a number of programmes were announced by the Finance Minister, which if they can be implemented would certainly lead to rapid growth.

Adoption of ICT a Necessary Condition for Growth

Now that we have expressed a firm resolve to be Atma Nirbhar and that too as rapidly as possible, we should examine how we can move fast on the path of development. It is well known that the industrialised countries have forged ahead because of their lead in the development and use of technologies which enabled them to use the natural resources of other countries. It is also known that even after massive destruction of their countries during the WWII, all the countries which actively fought very quickly recovered and secured for their people a standard of living better than ever before. Once again the same path was adopted and successfully too. During the period when Europe progressed so rapidly and the USA continued to be the leader in development and application of technology, the tool of ICT was also developed, which gives high capability to its user.

The advantages of ICT have already been enumerated in paragraph 3 above. For a country of India's population and size, it is impossible to deal with the issues pf concern to the citizen without using ICT. It gives capabilities which cannot be thought of if the conventional methods were to be used.

Once the State goes digital, the citizens too will feel the pressure to be digital in their work and businesses as it will greatly facilitate them in complying with various requirements of the State and increasing

convenience and economy in doing their own work. They will also be able to detect any error or inconsistency in the information that is being submitted to the public authorities.

In business these days, decisions are required to be taken in real time and ICT is a tool which enables it.

The adoption of technology in public administration should be accompanied with all sections of society also doing so. A unique feature of ICT is that it is as relevant and affordable to the poor as it is to a highly trained professional. Even a road side vendor will be able to benefit from adoption of ICT in his business.

Modern business requires commitment to date of delivery and adherence to promised quality specifications. If we take the entrepreneurs interaction within themselves, it is found that they are unable to fulfil their commitment to deliver things with in the promised time or in many cases the quality is sub-standard. Once the operations are digitised, the computer programmes will bring these deficiencies to light.

Therefore, for us as a nation, the objective should be to switchover to use ICT in all areas of work and functions performed by the government and its agencies and the citizen and organisations in the civil society.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that If India wants rapid development it must use ICT as the basic foundational tool for all institutions of governance and sections of the society.

Proposal for Digitisation/ICT

It is proposed that:

(i) The State should adopt a policy of adopting ICT in all its functions, should ensure that proper infrastructure, both physical and human, is developed for this purpose. The State should encourage the society, its organisations, entrepreneurs, farmers and others to use ICT to the extent feasible. Capacity building should be given special attention. A time bound programme for adoption of ICT should be prepared.

(ii) Digitisation cannot be done for all the organisations and activities in any organisation all at once. It, therefore, should be done in a phased manner.

(iii) Since it is recognised that MSMEs are capable of contributing to economic growth and generation of employment with the least investment and in a short period of time, we should give priority to digitalisation of public offices with whom they interact. An illustrative list of such industries is at Annexure 1. In consultation with the industry associations, the list of such offices may be prepared by the Government of India and State Governments. They may also prepare a time bound programme for digitalisation whose first step would be digitising the data related to the industry. The objectives of digitalisation have been given in paragraph 3 above. The offices which adopt ICT should do all their work using the tools that they have. Needed applications may be developed for this purpose.

(iv) The concerned industry associations may be asked to get their members to digitise their respective units so that they can interact with the public offices digitally and also derive benefit as has been explained above.

(v) Every entrepreneur has to approach banks for finance. For a variety of reasons the banks feel difficulties to sanction and release funds to the enterprises. The work in the banks has been increasing and the bank staff feels over worked. The procedures are such that there is a great emphasis on asking for more and more documents.

(vi) Using Artificial intelligence and other tools of ICT, the same amount of work could perhaps be done more quickly and with less staff if proper use of ICT was made.

(vii) Time limit should be fixed for different types of cases and there should be close monitoring. The cases rejected should be examined closely by a superior officer to see if the request of the entrepreneur has rightly been rejected.

(viii) Annexure II contains a list of some items suggested for the application of ICT.

(ix) The Central government and its subordinate offices and agencies, All State Governments and Local Government (Municipal bodies) and Panchayats may prepare a plan to introduce / adopt ICT in their working.

(x) The programme in the urban and rural local bodies be adopted in phases. The first phase may consist of providing services online.

(xi) Entrepreneurs are required to interact with a large number of agencies under the Central Government and the State Government and to some extent with local governments. All these agencies should, have digital transactions to the extent possible.

Conclusion

India has ambition to be a developed nation and reach a US $ 5 trillion economy in the next 5 years. This achievement has to be made in the background that during the last five years the GDP growth rate has been declining and for the financial year ending March 2020, it is estimated to be 4.2%, and that the pandemic COVID 19 has severely damaged the global economy as well as that of India.

A host of measures have been announced by the Union Government and the resolve has been made by the Prime Minister to be "Atmanirbhar" i.e., self-reliant. It is possible to achieve the goal if the country adopts Information Communication Technology including those technologies that have been developed under it and those that result in high efficiencies. India is on way to have the necessary infrastructure and penetration of internet use is considerable. The state and all its components will have to make concerted effort to bring about a national digital transformation in which ICT along with other technologies will enable us to improve efficiencies of resources use and their productivity and thus help us to achieve our ambition.

<div align="right">**Annexure I**</div>

Product Group Mix for MSME

1. Food Products
2. Chemical & Chemical Products
3. Basic Metal Industries
4. Metal Products
5. Electrical Machinery & Parts
6. Rubber & Plastic Products
7. Machinery & Parts Except Electrical goods
8. Hosiery & Garments - Wood Products
9. Non-metallic Mineral Products
10. Paper Products & Printing
11. Transport Equipment & Parts
12. Leather & Leather Products
13. Miscellaneous Manufacturing Industries
14. Other Services & Products
15. Beverages, Tobacco & Tobacco Products
16. Repair Services
17. Cotton Textiles
18. Wool, Silk, Synthetic Fibre Textiles
19. Jute, Hemp and Mesta Textiles

Among the sophisticated items mention may also be made of

1. Television sets
2. calculators
3. microwave components
4. plastic film capacitors
5. carbon film registers
6. electro-medical equipment

7. electronic teaching aids

8. digital measuring equipment

9. air-conditioning equipment

10. optical lenses

11. drugs and pharmaceuticals

12. electric motors

13. pesticide formulators

14. photographic sensitised paper

15. razor blades

16. collapsible tubes, etc.

Annexure II

Some Useful Information & Communication Technologies

- **Remote Sensing / Monitoring**
  a) Through CCTV cameras.
  b) Through cameras fitted on Drones.
  c) Through Satellites equipped with high resolution cameras. This will be useful for the police in preventing crime and investigating it. It will also be useful for the municipal, town planning and revenue authorities responsible for ensuring proper land use and checking encroachment of government property and assessment of property tax. It will also be useful for Regional and Town Planning.

- **Use of Sensors and Transmitters**

  -Use of sensors and transmitters, which can, for example, eliminate the need for Weights & Measures and Fire Prevention inspections.

  -Use of smart meters with remote diagnostics for all energy and water metering. Electricity distribution networks must be equipped with remote tracking and switching facilities to ensure that there is

no theft of electricity.

- **Paperless Offices through Digitisation**

- **Virtual Online Attendance**

Meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars etc. should as far as possible, be conducted online.

- **Complete Digital Transformation in Banks**

Banks have already digitised their data and are ready for doing all their work on the digital platform. A time bound programme may be prepared.

<div align="right">

Annexure III

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Policy Group Recommendations of a Road Map for Expansion of Digital Technologies in EU (Abbreviated)

➢ **Pursue Technological Leadership in Emerging Digital Technologies**

Europe should pursue technological leadership in emerging digital technologies where global leadership is not yet established, such as AI, IoT, and robotics—not past or current technologies such as cloud computing, Internet search, and social networks.

➢ **Create a Regulatory Framework Fit for the Digital Economy**

➢ **Invest in Research**

Emerging digital technologies such as AI, robotics, and IoT enable firms to be more efficient and competitive. To be a leader in these fields, EU firms need to be at the forefront of their R&D and commercialization. The EU should increase technology R&D in partnership with the private sector.

➢ **Encourage Public Support and Nurture A Digital-Ready Population**

➢ **Spearhead Technology Policies**

➢ **Shared platforms for public sector Open Data**

The EU should set up shared platforms for public sector open data. The public sector has vast amounts of data in a number of sectors promising for AI research and tools, such as health care, energy, and transport, that other stakeholders should be able to access.

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Shanti Narain

Reinventing Indian Railways

Current Status

Indian Railways is at the cross-roads. Sustained under investment in the basic infrastructure over several decades has created capacity bottlenecks and have led to serious capacity bottlenecks resulting in a sharp decline in the rail share both in respect of total freight as well as passenger businesses in the national economy. Certain welcome increased investments have been made in the rail sector by the present government but these would have to be sustained and also substantially enhanced in future years.

IR has also to cope with mounting competition from other modes of transport, particularly from the roads and highway sector which has received relatively higher levels of investments along with assurance of sustained funding in future also from the diesel cess. This has gained urgency since two Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) are being commissioned on IR shortly and would be generating a quantum jump in transport capacity on these two routes Unless traffic is diverted to the rail mode from other modes the utilisation of the enhanced capacity would be sub-optimal leading to inadequate return on the massive investments being made.

Historically, economic and social objectives of the organisation have been inseparably intermingled, leading to lack of clarity on the financial goals of IR due to under-pricing of suburban and unreserved second class passenger travel and consequential unsustainable levels of cross subsidisation by freight business segment. There is an urgent need to review transport pricing issues by IR management.

IR's marketing and sales culture has been 'production' oriented due to demand having been ahead of rail capacity with the result that

customer focus has been conspicuous by its absence in its marketing strategy. This needs to be now replaced by a customer-focussed approach so that the genuine needs and aspirations of the rail users are addressed adequately.

In its current state the efficiency and productivity the IR monolith, is hurtling towards a financial crisis with its operating ratio reaching close to 100% and its market share continuing its downward slide in both freight and passenger segments thereby contributing to increased costs of transport and logistics for the national economy. These costs could come down significantly if the rail share is maximised in view of its relative superiority in terms of of energy intensities, land use efficiencies, environmental friendly and safety characteristics vis à vis other modes of transport.

Suggested Action Plan to Address These Challenges

Building blocks for the revival of IR should include inter alia the following critical areas, namely, (i) strengthening of its basic infrastructure, (ii) securing financial sustainability, (iii) adoption of a multimodal operational strategy and (iv) addressing urgent governance issues. These issues are examined in the following paragraphs.

Strengthening of basic infrastructure

At macro-level the transport needs of the national economy will have to be met adequately by the total transport infrastructure provided by all modes of transport at the least resource cost to the community in an integrated manner. An integrated National transport and Logistic policy has to be put in place which would enable determination of the relative investments needed in the different modes to ensure an optimal intermodal mix at the least resources cost to the community.

A template is urgently required to be developed to strengthen the basic rail infrastructure along with that of other modes of transport in an integrated manner so that the transport and logistics need of the national economy are met adequately at least cost to the community. Infrastructure ideally should precede demand. The railway which is the most efficient amongst the land modes of transport in terms

of energy and land use efficiencies as well as in environmental friendly and safety characteristics, should, therefore, get priority in the allocation of resources.

The concept of new Freight Railway with a view to segregate infrastructure for the freight and passenger segments through the development of Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFCs) along the sides and diagonals of the Golden Quadrilateral needs to be pursued. After the two sanctioned DFCs are commissioned Railway corporate plan should provide for the construction of the remaining four DFCs along with the feeder routes over the next 10 years so that the current downward trend of the Railway share in the overall transport demand is reversed and gradually raised to 50%. This would also release transport capacity on the existing high density network for upgrading quality of existing passenger services in term of both speed and reliability.

Simultaneously the terminal capacities for both business segments for the expected exponential growth would require the highest priority for the development of state-of- the art multi modal logistics parks (MMLP) at strategic locations. Ports which are existing MMLPs would need efficient connectivity with the IR network.

To operationalize this vision of a cost effective transport network an Integrated National Transport and Logistics Policy Framework has to be put in place urgently. This should be pursued vigorously by the newly created Logistic division in the Ministry of Commerce and Industries. As a step in the right direction it should pilot the formulation of this integrated National Transport Policy urgently. A conceptual framework is discussed in the following paragraphs

Integrated National Transport Policy

In the not too distant past, governments were generally content to promulgate and implement policies for different modes of transport in a stand-alone mode. However, when concerns set in about escalating road congestion, with its damaging effects on the environment as well as economic growth, the concept of sustainable transport policies was born. And now the economic wisdom claims that the goal of sustainability is achievable only if the characteristic

of integration of transport policies is ensured. Various committees appointed by the Government including the National Transport Policy Committee (1980) and the latest National Transport Development Policy Committee (NTDPC) of 2013 made recommendations which have remarkable convergence in as much as an Integrated National Transport Policy framework involving all modes of transport was considered essential to develop a national transport network that can meet adequately the overall transport needs of the country at the least resources cost to the economy.

In this context, conceptually, there are three distinct levels of integration required,

- Within and between different modes of transport,

- Between regulatory and fiscal policies aimed at transport providers, and

- Between transport and other public policies which influence transport behaviour.

The first level of integration can be attempted through both linking of operations of different modes as well as through commercial promotion of coordinated transport packages by complementary modes. Necessary infrastructural modifications to facilitate physical integration of services by rationalising of appropriate warehousing facilities as well as identification of strategic modal transfer points along arterial routes would be required.

The second level of integration has to be attempted through transport regulation by concerned public authorities in the area of transport and fiscal policies directed to internalize all costs due to externalities like environmental pollution, congestion on different modes, safety considerations, et al. It is crucial that such policies reflect, as accurately as possible, the true costs to society (including all externalities) imposed by any particular transport operation.

In 2009 an excellent study by RITES undertaken on behalf of the Planning Commission had computed the social cost of transportation on account of environment degradation and accidents on a per-tonne-km basis on the data relating to 2007-08.

Based on the above considerations, the RITES Study also

attempted internalization of the above costs by undertaking an exercise to determine the optimal inter modal mix for rail, road and coastal modes. It also determined break-even distances for different freight commodities, based on the ratio of difference of fixed costs of the rail and road modes to difference of variable costs of these modes.

What emerged from the above was that internalization of the above externalities is one of the very important tools for addressing the imbalances in the transport market and optimizing both costs and transport throughput at the least resource cost to the community. Efforts should, therefore, be directed towards setting workable machinery for regulating investment, at least in the public sector, and ensuring adoption of fair and economically justifiable pricing by the different modes.

The third level of integration can be pursued through public policies relating to other sectors of the national economy which have potential for changing the demand for transport such as land-use planning as well as energy intensity of different modes of transport, besides other policies relating to the social and cultural sectors which impact on demand for transport as also environmental and safety concerns

Operationalisation of the policy

For evolution of an integrated transport policy, the following factors have to be considered while sub-serving the needs and aspirations of society in general:

Multimodal transportation of goods will have a great relevance since it secures seamless rail-cum-road, door-to-door service. The present competitive approach between rail and road modes should be sublimated into a complementary approach by trucking companies voluntarily converting themselves into multi-modal operators by utilizing the cost advantage of rail mode to provide the 'rail bridge' between two long distance nodal rail terminals and they perform the aggregation and dispersal functions at the two ends by road vehicles.

Similarly, if Railways provides warehouses at rail-heads to serve as distributor godowns for companies dealing in processed foods, detergents, FMCG and other consumer goods, movements of such goods from the manufacturing facilities to the rail-side warehouses near the consumption nodes could be rail-based and in containers. Future dispersal to the retail outlets in the cities could remain road based with overall savings in distribution costs. Multi-modal logistics hubs would then be a logical extension of the existing modal-specific terminals.

Adoption of Multimodal Strategy

In order to meet the genuine needs and aspiration of the transport users a reliable seamless and door to door service is the norm today. Multimodalism along with containerisation is a proven operational strategy globally and is operational in respect of EXIM traffic in India also where it has also contributed to significant minimisation of overall logistics costs. However, the domestic movement of cargo particularly in respect of high value, high volume white goods, FMCG products as well as parcels has moved away from the railways because the specific needs of such traffic has not been adequately addressed to by the railways so far.

IR would need to revamp its marketing and sales strategy in order to ensure that the genuine needs and aspirations of rail customers are addressed urgently. An appropriate strategy to secure enlargement of the bouquet of freight commodities moving by rail is imperative. This would require development of a standardised domestic container which meets the specific needs of commodities which are today moving entirely by road mode of transport. Recently design of the DWARF container has received a promising response from stakeholders Design of the automobile container has become operational. The high-cube ISO container needs to be offered. Stakeholder consultation has to be given high priority so that an appropriate general purpose standardised domestic container is developed to meet the market need.

Adoption of multimodal strategy through containerisation and using the hub-and-spoke concept for attracting the above

commodities by IR is an urgent imperative. To facilitate this, IR has to take advantage of the quantum jump in transport capacity being created on the two DFCs that will be commissioned shortly.

Another essential component would be the development of Multi Modal Logistics Parks at strategic locations to service the DFC network for which PPP mechanism should be experimented so that private capital is leveraged. This strategy should be subsumed into the overriding marketing strategy to raise the market share of railways in order to leverage the strengths of rail mode vis à vis other land based modes of transport.

Critical to the success of this strategy would be a focussed effort to raise the market share of rail as a means to reduce the overall costs for the economy.

Raising Market Share of Rail Transportation

With the commissioning of the Eastern and the Western dedicated freight corridor over the next two years a quantum jump in the transport capacity for movement of freight would be generated to the extent of nearly 120 trains each way on each of these two corridors. Simultaneously additional capacity would be released on the adjoining Main line corridors for upgrading passenger services. The recently launched "Mission Raftaar" envisages raising the speeds of express trains to 160 KMPH along both these corridors.

These developments would bring about a paradigm shift in the mindset of railway executives because their whole world view had historically revolved in an environment of rail capacity continuously trailing behind demand leading to the production culture being adopted towards the rail customer. This mindset will now change and a customer focused marketing strategy will be needed to fill up the rail transport capacity being generated on the two DFCs. This will be possible because with the above development IR will be in a position to meet the intense competition in the transport marketplace. Economies in the unit cost of operations on the DFCs would be an effective tool to meet the challenge. Unit cost of operations will reduce significantly for the following reasons:-

1) With the maximum speed potential being 100 kmph the average speeds of freight trains would more than double to 70 kmph.

2) The throughout would increase due to tracks being fit for 25 tonne axle loads.

3) The transit time would be halved and thereby increase productivity of rolling stock significantly.

4) Longer and heavier trains will operate on the DFCs because loop capacity is being doubled thereby contributing to reduction in the unit costs.

Besides IR would be able to meet some of the long standing demands of rail users such as:-

1) Running of timetabled freight trains would be possible due to no interference of passenger services which normally take precedence over freight trains and slow down operations.

2) Provision of wagons on demand would be possible within a reasonable time frame due to improved availability due to higher productivity.

3) Assurance of guaranteed transit times within a tight band would also provide predictability in the supply chain to the rail customers.

4) With the availability of line capacity it would be possible to run trains with loads adjusted to the requirement of the customers based on the market demand which would add strength to Railways' marketing efforts.

The reduction in the unit cost of operations would provide cushion to Railway managers to tweak tariffs to cope with the competition from other modes of transport while ensuring a more reliable and faster service with predictability of transit times

Marketing and Sales Strategy

The objective of raising the market share of the Railways will be critically dependent on an in-depth understanding of the genuine needs and aspirations of rail users who have moved away from the

Railways because Railway managers have never seriously attempted to study the dramatic changes in the external environment in which Railway operates today. Today's customer is looking for an end-to-end transport solution to his logistics requirements. He has no time to deal with different modes and wants to deal on a single window .concept at minimum cost, a predictable time schedule without any damage or loss to the consignment. Additionally, he needs trackability of the consignment during transit. Fortunately technology is today available to meet all these requirements of the customer. But what would be critical for the Railways to achieve its objective of raising its market share is attitudinal changes in the railway managers who are accustomed to a 'production' oriented approach due to historical reasons.

Railways has to give focused attention for revamping the marketing and sales policy of IR in the area of freight services. Railways have to no longer consider themselves to be in the business of rail transport. They have to become the Logistics Advisors to their customers. They have to evolve imaginative transport/logistics solutions to meet specific needs of each individual customer. Specialised rolling stock and possibly a standardised domestic container has to be developed in consultation with the customers and other stakeholders,

It would be, therefore, appropriate to incorporate a Railway Logistics Corporation so that the needs of the stakeholders are addressed and appropriate logistics solutions provided. Facilitators like freight forwarders, and consolidators of specialized commodities need to be taken on board for designing appropriate seamless transport solutions for the rail users. The success in giving a fillip to containerised EXIM traffic by rail through the incorporation of CONCOR is a pointer

Securing financial sustainability

Based on the trends over the past two decades the financial health of Indian Railway monolith is deteriorating significantly as reflected in the operating ratio for the year 2019-20 which has touched a low of 98.4%. If this is not corrected IR would find even maintenance of existing assets a challenge.

To cope with this financial crisis a zero base review of the revenue and expenditure streams would be imperative in order to evolve development strategies to enhance revenue and cut expenditure.

Enhancing Revenues

Revenue enhancement strategies would need to address both the fare-box collections through raising market share of railway in the overall freight business as well as through generation of resources through non fare-box route by monetizing of surplus rail asset including land. Revenue generation potential exists primarily through enhancing the bouquet of freight commodities by adopting appropriate marketing and sales strategies to attract goods which are not moving by rail over long distances even through huge economics are possible because unit cost of operations by rail are significantly lower in comparison with the road mode of transport which is the principal mode today.

As far as raising of non-fare box collections are concerned monetisation of assets need to be undertaken, particularly, land assets which are in excess of operational requirements.

Development of Budget hotels on surplus land at major stations serving Tourist Centres is an area fit for commercial exploitation by railways. 100 locations had been identified for this purpose against which the railway developed Yatri Niwases at only two locations - New Delhi and Kolkata. Indian Railways need not invest in construction of the Budget hotels but instead follow the Sabarmati Development model by offering Railway land as equity to private developers for creation of an SPV to operationalise the scheme.

Similarly, Railways could generate solar energy on land alongside railway tracks through private parties who could generate solar energy for the national grid /railway use in which railway land could be offered as equity. Similarly, at all major stations the air space above parking lots could be offered on lease to put up solar panels.

Railway Hospitals which have surplus land in prime areas can offer this land as equity to set up diagnostic centres to major private medical chains. Revenue sharing mechanism could be evolved between IR and the concerned private party.

Cost Cutting exercises

A parallel exercise should be undertaken to reduce the costs in the operating, commercial, maintenance and personnel management areas of the systems. Productivity of both human and material resources of the networks has to be brought down in alignment with the global benchmarks through process re-engineering as well as induction of appropriate technology. Special focus has to be on review of the major heads of expenditure, most critical being in the area of staff costs (63%) and maintenance costs of railway assets (15%).

Multi-skilling as well as up-gradation of skills of the workforce would be an imperative. Wherever outsourcing is an option it should be leveraged for containing staff costs. Use of informatics including data analytics, Internet of things, block chain et al would have to be selectively used in the customer interface areas as well as in the operational, commercial and maintenance areas of railway working.

Governance Issues

In the light of the foregoing it is extremely crucial to review the governance structure of IR and to address the weaknesses that may have crept in over time and, at the same time, identify what new governance skills are needed to cope with the dramatic changes that have come up in the external environment in the past 2/3 decades when the Indian economy has moved into a high growth trajectory.

Some of the challenges in the area of governance include the following: -

o   Decision making structure has lost focus and an extremely dilatory approach has set in where the urgent takes precedence over the important. Corporate strategic thinking to address the humongous challenges that have emerged is needed urgently.

o   Intensity of inter-modal competition between different modes of transport has increased dramatically which requires

innovation and creativity and out of the box thinking. Railway managements historically have had a "production" orientation because demand had always been ahead of supply and therefore marketing of rail services was never an issue. Marketing skills and customer friendly approach are critical today for the top railway management to find ways to meet the genuine needs and aspirations of the rail users.

o   Within government circles, railway is perceived to be a Kamdhenu cow which can be milked by sister government departments to secure travel concessions for the different special interests that they wish to reward at no cost to themselves. Thus, gallantry awardees of different government services get complimentary IAC passes for their private travel as a matter of course. Accredited journalists as also defence personnel again get complementary /subsidized travel warrants. Suburban travel is another holy cow where railway fares cannot be raised on non-economic considerations. Railway managements have been amiss in this regard and such polices need review.

o   Importance of leveraging technology to secure enhancement of productivity and reliability of assets and reduction of costs is another area which needs to be specifically addressed at the apex decision making level.

In order to address these multiple challenges in a meaningful and focused way the railway has to transform itself into an accountable and administratively agile institution. Certain changes in the organizational structure are suggested in Annexure I.

Annexure I

ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING OF RAILWAYS

Today Railway board is manned by nine members each member representing one of the organized services/department besides the chairman who performs the coordination role. The Board performs multiple roles of being a ministry, a service provider

and also a regulator. These functions have to be disaggregated and corporate focus to the main function of delivery of transport services is absolutely essential. Railways has to transform itself into an accountable and administratively agile institution. A three-tier structure is proposed to achieve this objective.

Tier-1

The policy making function should be segregated from the executive function by bifurcating the existing Railway Board into a policy making Board which can be designated as the Ministry of Railways and an Executive Railway Board to manage the executive function. Existing posts in the Railway Board may be redistributed between these two proposed structures.

Ministry of Railways should look after the ministerial functions vis à vis the Parliament and should be responsible for long-term planning, safety, business development, finance and economic regulation to ensure the overall health and growth of the railway industry. It should be headed by a Principal Secretary to Govt. of India. The Principal Secretary shall be assisted by Secretary Traffic Planning, Secretary Fixed Infrastructure, Secretary Mobile Infrastructure, Chairman Executive Railway Board and Additional Secretary (Finance & Accounts). Finance Secretary, Govt. of India may be co-opted. Key personnel of the Ministry shall be selected from the Railway organized services through a merit-based selection. It should be enlarged by lateral induction of Advisors to bring inputs relating to technology selection and industry perspective respectively. Niti Aayog Could provide the latter input.

Interface with the Executive Railway Board would be ensured by including the Chairman of the Executive Board in the Ministry

Tier-2

The existing Railway Board should be re-constituted into the Executive Railway Board (ERB) and should be entrusted with operational responsibilities. It should be restructured on business lines and a Chairman should be given overall responsibility He should be assisted by separate Members for Passenger Services, Freight

Services, Mobile Infrastructure, Fixed Infrastructure, Finance and Personnel. It should undertake only commercially and financially viable operations. The commercially unviable operations shall be initially negotiated with the Government for the level of services and the quantum of subsidy offered. Eventually with separation of infrastructure and operations, competing operators can be selected on the basis of lowest subsidy demanded. Private operations of trains services on shared infrastructure with an adequately comprehensive regulatory structure can be the long term objective based on experience gained.

In the interest of securing a viable span of control four Regional Executive Railway Boards at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata could be positioned in place of the 17 Zonal Railways.

Tier-3

With the advances in information technology today it should be possible to replace the existing 17 Zonal and 68 Divisional structures by around 30-35 Regional Work Centre's as the basic administrative units at the field level. Each unit should be organized as a profit centre and accountable to the Executive Railway Board. These could be headed by a General Manager. This would also lead to decentralization of authority and empower the field management to respond proactively to the signals received from its stakeholders. It would also contribute to a major reduction in cost both in terms of staffing as well as in maintenance costs which would require alignment with international benchmarks. Re-engineering of commercial as well as tendering processes would also be a priority area.

Corporatization of peripheral activities

Management of Railway Construction Projects needs to be professionalized through the corporatization route. A holding Construction Company could be the umbrella administrative structure to regulate the existing railway PSUs like RVNL, IRCON, RITES, MRVC and RAILTEL. Simultaneously, the departmental construction organizations on the Railways should be wound up and the work outsourced to one of the existing PSUs. The Chinese

model could be looked as a possible model. These commercial entities should be accountable for ensuring that the projects allotted are completed without time and cost overruns besides making them accountable to align themselves to international benchmarks as far as unit costs are concerned.

Similarly all Railway Production Units should also be corporatized and become autonomous corporate structures to service Railway requirements of locomotives and rolling stock besides marketing their products globally. This would also equip them to align their costs with international benchmarks.

RDSO should be restructured into a world class R&D institution. Its processes for adopting new technologies would need to be streamlined and best practices in this vital area adopted. Research area would require strengthening.

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W. Selvamurthy & Sneha Nair

Emerging Trends & Future Trajectory in Healthcare
Technology & Governance

Introduction

India has made a remarkable progress since Independence to eradicate a number of diseases and develop itself into a hub of Medical tourism. In the next 15-20 years we need to meet the requirements of the International market as well as cater to our own population so as to ensure that as a Nation we meet the needs of both ageing as well as younger population. The need of the hour is to ensure affordable and accessible healthcare to each and every citizens as India still continues to struggle with certain gaps and issues such as to cater to the needs of rural and urban population. With the advancement of technology, we are able to prevent and cure a number of health issues however, we need to create an enabling ecosystem which will lead to indigenous development of technologies to meet our present and future requirements. It has been observed that with the advent of Information technology various improved diagnostic tools, treatment methodologies, healthcare portals have been developed to train medical professions, analyses medical records, assess the effectiveness of treatment methodology as well as to create awareness amongst the citizens. In order to improve the healthcare sector and meet the challenges of our present and future generation, it is necessary that appropriate Healthcare Governance is required. The role of Government as well as Private sector is therefore important to meet the goal of "Health for All" through development of appropriate infrastructure, promotion of research and development to create a healthy, productive workforce which will eventually help us to emerge as a global superpower. TIFAC in its Technology Vision: 2035document for Medical Science & Healthcare Sector was formulated with the vision of "Ensuring affordable

and accessible health care to every Indian through prophylactic, promotive, curative and rehabilitative aspects of technologies." The same was attributed to be achieved through blue sky research and policy implementation. This article has been prepared by taking these aspects into consideration.

Emerging Trends and Future Trajectory

Good health is often correlated with the economic growth of a Nation as improved health of its citizen directly results in the economic growth of a country. As a Nation we have made remarkable progress in the last 70 Years on several fronts which has led to almost 100% enhancement of life span, reduction in maternal and infant mortality and successful eradication of many diseases including smallpox, polio etc. India has been able to establish itself as a hub in the field of manufacturing of generic drugs.

It has been attributed that in the next 15-20 years, India will emerge as the largest source of workforce provider across the globe with the maximum percentage of youth population which can meet global manpower requirements. In order to maintaining and meeting the healthcare requirements of the various cross section of the population, it is required that adequate investments, policies and enabling environment along with application of suitable technology intervention is developed which will contribute towards the country's economy.

India's needs to redefine its healthcare system so that it can help in Nations development and further growth and the present scenario places us at the right pedestal to transform India's health system. We need to create sustainable medical infrastructure to meet qualitative and quantitative challenges of healthcare sector to ensure a healthy and efficient population which is necessary for making India a global superpower. In order for a person to focus on acquiring of knowledge through education and be a productive citizen in terms of having employment he/ she needs to stay fit and in good health. The effectiveness of workforce of a country depends primarily on healthy citizens and for building a strong nation for tomorrow, we need to nurture healthy children.

The Knowledge Superpower:

Healthcare has over a period of time emerged as one of India's topmost sectors in terms of generation of revenue and creation of employment. India's has a large and talented pool of skilled medical professionals which gives it a competitive advantage. The trained professionals include including doctors, clinics as well as technologies which has been proved through the various indigenous healthcare systems developed by the research and development laboratories in various public and private organization. India has developed into one of the leading destinations for high-end diagnostic services thus paving way to Medical tourism. India's medical tourism has flourished because it has developed itself in terms of cost competitiveness in comparison to its peers in Asia and Western countries. The surgery cost in India is found to be one-tenth of that in the US or Western Europe thus catering to a greater proportion of population in not only catering to the needs of its own population but also contributing to the healthcare requirements of the global population.

Healthcare Challenges:

Taking care of the health of 1.3 billion people is a challenge for India. In addition to providing healthcare in both rural and urban areas, Government and healthcare sector also face a challenge for instituting techniques and technologies which promotes wellness in healthcare and disease prevention. As per the World Bank report, 50% of the economic growth differentials between developing and developed nations are attributed to poor health and low life expectancy.

The various healthcare challenges faced today includes meeting the healthcare needs of the ageing populations as well as the younger generation. In developing nations such as ours, inadequate infrastructure and lack of resources is causing yet another challenge in addition to combat infectious and non-communicable diseases. Meeting the requirement of affordable and accessible healthcare for each and every Indian through prophylactic, promotive, curative and rehabilitative aspects of technologies has also been highlighted in the National Vision of the country.

One of the major challenges which India faces today is attributed to the lack of provision of the basic amenities to a large cross section of society leading to diseases caused due to lack of availability of proper hygienic water for drinking, inadequate methods for disposal of human waste, lack of proper environmental sanitation, personal and food hygiene. The healthcare sector has to manage these aspects as well as treating the diseases such as infections, zoonotic diseases and various communicable as well as non-communicable diseases. Over the past few decades it has been found that the disorders related to the lifestyle such as Diabetes, CVD, Respiratory disorders, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis etc. are cause of more than half of all the deaths across the globe. Lack of Balanced diet is yet another reason which is not only responsible for the malnutrition and over nutrition leading to obesity but is also attributed to maternal and child health problems to a great extent.

The challenges that the healthcare delivery industry faces today includes the divide between rural & urban population. The role of technology therefore becomes more important to create a structure to ensure accessibility of adequate health care and affordable to people in villages and remote areas including mountains, tribal areas, deserts as well as coastal belts.

Despite progress in various dimensions of health care management, India still continues to struggle with certain gaps and issues such as the lack of Health insurance to more than half of the population and spending from own pocket due to unavailability of proper health coverage. It has been observed that instead of focusing on preventive aspects there is a practice of placing importance thereby ignoring disease prevention and wellness. The investments made in the area of primary healthcare as well as public healthcare does not meet the demands.

Technological Advancements in Healthcare sector:

With the advancement of technology, it has become easier to prevent, detect and treat various illness and severe health conditions. More recently, e health records for treatment in remote areas and the ability of the healthcare profession to discuss, monitor and to

share data online has paved way for a wide range of healthcare solutions especially for lower income groups. The use of mobile phone technologies for collection and distribution of information has helped in effective and timely prevention as well as treatment of diseases.

Numerous techniques which will pave way for revolutionizing our health care sector include genomics, molecular diagnostics, pharmacogenomics, optogenetics, targeted therapies, regenerative medicine and information-based medicine. There has been an exponential rise in technologies which assist in providing health care to all. These Technologies such as e-health, mobile health, smart cards for registration and maintain patients database, non-invasive imaging, diagnostics and laboratory technology to meet the patient care requirement at home and information and communication technology (ICT) all promise improvements in the standards, quality, accuracy and efficiency of the healthcare delivery system. Biomedical implants, drug eluting stents, cochlear implants and bionic eye are some of the technologies which being used to improve the quality of life of persons with health issues.

Emerging trends in Healthcare Technology:

Disruptive innovation in healthcare has brought about transformative concepts that has brought about affordability and convenience to the population at large. The ability of these disruptive innovations to meet the growing demands of a country's healthcare system is still a milestone to be achieved. Meeting the growing healthcare requirements of 1.3 million population remains expensive and inaccessible to many. There is a growing need to synchronize these disruptive technologies with innovative models so that as a Nation we meet the demands of both rural and urban population.

Interdisciplinary research has led to the convergence of branches of science and technology which can be applied for early detection and treatment of diseases. Digital technologies including virtual reality, simulations etc has increased the scope of timely treatments. Some of the major technologies which has assisted the healthcare sector and will play a major role in supporting the healthcare sector

has been highlighted in the below mentioned section:-

Over the past several decades, efforts to improve diagnostic and therapeutic methods have resulted in path breaking research and innovation leading to increase in the life expectancy and quality of life. These research has led to the development of new diagnostic methods, therapies, medicines as well as medical devices. These advancements has been seen in all aspects related to healthcare such as development of new pharmaceutical drugs and medical / surgical techniques procedures (such as implants, stents) for precise diagnostic scanners and surgical robots. The various emerging trends which has been observed in the healthcare sector are:

1) Medical Diagnosis & Imaging: Advancement in the field of diagnosis with development of screening techniques specially for genetic, metabolic disorders have paved way for early detection of diseases which has helped the healthcare providers in early interventions. With the development of techniques in genome sequencing the early diagnosis of disease is now possible, resulting in improved treatment and positive results in cure. Medical Imaging technology continued its vigorous expansion in the 1990s. Radiology was highly developed application of engineering technology for medical imaging. However, there has been development of various other imaging methods which include X-rays, ultrasound, MRI, CAT scan, PET scan etc.

2) Bio-nanotechnology: This technology is nowadays used widely in the field of Drug delivery, diagnostics and treatment. Multiplexing can be applied in diagnosis wherein an array of sensors can be employed for the detection of a number pathogens at a time so that multiple blood analysis for each disease is avoided for diagnosis.

3) Robotics: Nowadays robotics has been applied to medical field for various purposed which includes surgery, training of healthcare professional, rehabilitation therapy, prosthetic devices as well as to meet the needs of people with disability. The robotic industry is providing "Robodocs" and "Robonurses", which are being applied for assisting elderly persons as well as to cater to the requirements of persons in remote areas. The major advantage

of application of robotics in medical field is its application in surgery and other patient care treatments and diagnosis with precision, ease of use, repeatability and reliability in addition to their ability to perform inside human body with minimal space requirements.

4) Multivalent & Edible vaccine: Instead of being vaccinated for various infections/ diseases one can be vaccinated for prevention of many diseases a single time. It is envisaged that instead of prick, edible vaccines can be developed in the future for preventing diseases.

5) Content-based Access to Electronic Health Records: Improved analytical capabilities has led to quality sharing of the healthcare data with clinicians has become more convenient as well as important as this data can facilitate availability of the medical history of a patient to the healthcare provider just by logging into the patient's unique ID which reflects the medical history of the patient which will not only ensure timely treatment but will also help in developing an effective communication tool between the doctor and patient. These Health scans/ pharmacogenomics-profiling which is nowadays being recorded in digitalized form as health cards has enabled caregivers to effectively maintain the data with respect to individual health profile for time to time monitoring and diagnosis.

6) Telemedicine: The success of healthcare is reflected by its ability to meet the needs as well as serve the rural population by making quality healthcare available. Telemedicine has enabled consultation, diagnosis and treatment to remotest areas through established network of satellites, hospitals and rural centres. Mobile telemedicine system mounted in a bus/van can support in community health assessment through health camps.

7) Health Kiosks: Healthcare kiosks have the potential to reach people and provide individuals with the means to measure, track and manage their vital health parameters and take greater ownership of their health. Kiosks are simple to use and enhance the patients' experiences while freeing up valuable staff time; providing cost-savings and improvement in the flow of patients.

Health kiosks have been proven to help raise awareness of an individual's risk of obesity and we have a several cases where people have changed their lifestyles as a direct result of using a health kiosk.

8) Mobile health is a rapidly developing healthcare technology for meeting the medical and public health requirements of both rural and urban population. The technology makes use of smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices interfaced with health parameters monitoring devices to deliver health care and preventive health services. The technology is also proving to be an important tool for dissemination of knowledge in terms of recent developments in the field of healthcare especially in creation of awareness about maternal nutrition, child health, immunization, disease monitoring infection control; tracking the health records. The technology has been used by healthcare professional on accessing clinical information, collaborating amongst each other for creating synergy of brains, patient interaction and for telemedicine as well.

9) Bio-monitoring wearable devices interfaced with smart phones having various applications for monitoring of different health parameters such as diet monitoring, physical activity, Blood pressure etc. has made it convenient to maintain personal health records. The system also assists in diagnosis of medical conditions, access to tests related to the medical records, appropriate medications and support etc.

10) Biosensors: Biosensors have found large scale applications in diagnosis and treatment which can be attributed to its ability in sensing wide range of biomolecules, ease of use, specificity, sensitivity, multiplex analysis. A wide range of sensors are available nowadays glucose sensors, haemoglobin sensors, Lab on chip (LOC), DNA / protein microarrays, point of care systems (POCT) etc. The need of the hour is sensors for analysing a number of parameters with single drop of blood.

11) 3D-printing technology in medical field has a wide range of applications such as development and manufacturing of surgical devices, drill guides, orthopedic implants, prosthetics, patient-

specific replicas of bones, organs, and blood vessels. The technology offers speed and precision. This technology has great potential in the field of organ transplantation and supporting disabled persons.

12) Personalized medicine makes use of the genetic profile of an individual for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases. The data helps the healthcare providers to analyses the health profile of an individual for providing appropriate medication, treatment, therapy etc. The technology has ability to revolutionize the healthcare sector by predicting an individual's susceptibility to diseases thereby providing an opportunity to prevent disease. This would not only help in prevention of diseases but also in minimizing side effects, reducing cost associated with treatment at a later stage, saving time.

13) Detection of chemical warfare agents: The use of pathogens for bio warfare against a Nation is on a rise across the globe. We should also focus on developing chemical warfare agents, detection kits/ alarms for the public domain, identification of chemical weapons and quantification of the exposure to toxic gases /chemical weapons.

Initiatives by Government:

India has shown a rapid growth in healthcare sector in the past decade especially in medical tourism. Even though we have the high end technologies and skilled healthcare professionals but still we are not able to cater to the requirements in terms of availability of doctors per 1000 population, hospitals, diagnostic centres etc. to meet the needs of both rural and urban population. Even though we have the medical professionals with sound knowledge, experience and hands-on training and are able to produce

highly skilled manpower we still are not able to meet the day to day patient care requirements. In terms of research and development of indigenous technologies and tools we still have to develop a mechanism forsettingup centres of excellence to meet the growing needs of healthcare sector. These centres should be set up in partnership with Academia, Industry and Government so as to take

the research in academia to a stage where industry can convert it into a useful and cost effective technology and government can formulate policy for effective implementation as well as standardization of the developed end product. Better research opportunities within the country will facilitate the creation of jobs opportunities for healthcare professionals which will help in reversing of the brain drain which is currently at a rise in India.

Government has established The National Knowledge Network (NKN), which can serve as an effective networking tool for sharing of ideas and experiences amongst various cross section of healthcare professionals including Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Researchers as well as patients.

In addition to the allopathic way of treatment, traditional/ alternative systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy can also be applied for treatment which is an age old art of Indian tradition of medicine and practiced in large scale even today. The same is now attracting medical tourists for attracting medical tourists from across the world Hospitals are also being built in remote areas which both public or privately owned. The training of traditional healers such as Vaidya's, Dais etc. is also an important to meet the healthcare requirements of rural sectors.

There has been an increase in the number of mobile applications and world wide web portal which is being developed indigenously to create awareness about importance of health lifestyle, information and forums to discuss the options of healthcare solutions for various cross sections based on age, disease etc. Some of the examples of mobile app are National Health Portal IndiaHealthyYou, HealthKartPlus etc. whereas the web portal are mHealth Basics, Frontline SMS, Mobile - Family Planning Tool, Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action (MAMA) etc.

Workshops and seminars to create awareness about personal hygiene and sanitation practices is being undertaken at School, college, office level to prevent and control infectious diseases and prevent lifestyle related disorders. The various initiatives such as 'Swastha Bharat Abhiyan' and 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' by the Government has proved to be appropriate in respect of striking at

the base of many diseases but a lot more needs to be initiate to ensure health and well-being of each and every person

In order to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure on healthcare, measures such as medical insurance, co-payment schemes have been implemented. The Government is working on conceptualization and implementation of effective public-private partnership business models wherein to improve the quality of healthcare facility, private players have been brought on board.

There has been support from both Public as well as Private sector in establishing diagnostic and imaging laboratories to meet the requirements of diagnostic and research. With creation of awareness amongst the youth and the aged population, there has been a trend which has shown that the focus has shifted from cure to prevention, from epidemics to chronic illness, from prescriptive healthcare to systems that encourage more independence and choice.

With an increase in the investment from the government, there has been an upward trend in improvement of health owing to the establishment of primary health centres, district and referral hospitals especially in rural sector. Regulatory policies and procedure has also resulted in ensuring delivery of quality healthcare even in remote areas and villages will help in betterment of healthcare.

India has shown a drastic improvement in its capability in the field of medical diagnostics and information technology for improving the health sector. It has shown great strength specially in meeting the needs of both rural and urban population at the same time catering to patients across the globe. With the advancement of Information technology leading to development of health portals such as m-health or mobile health and e-health the sector has shown its ability for meeting the requirement of providing care for a billion in a more efficient and effective manner. Even to patients in remote areas across geographies.

Initiatives required for quality growth in Healthcare:

In order to meet the goal of "Health for All" India must choose its evolutionary trajectory wisely where all the stakeholders need to work together in order to reshape the paradigm of providing health

care in and creation of a culture of health and wellness covering the most important aspects of healthcare delivery that is; access, cost and quality. Our vision should be of creating a sustainable healthcare ecosystem focusing on the prevention and early diagnosis.

Technology has to be implemented in a sustainable manner mainly to help the healthcare providers to solve patient problems. Research has led to the introduction of many sophisticated medical technologies every year but many of these technologies have fail to reach the common man because of the inability to lower the costs, meet thequalityrequirements and accessibilityacrossall cross section of the society. We need to develop and implement strategies to make health care more affordable by developing cost-effective technologies with innovative methods to deliver affordable and accessible techniques.

Public-private partnership under appropriate checks and balances may turn out to be a way to address the issue of lack of public investments in healthcare. The Private sector has also invested in healthcare which has led to improvement in technology as well as meeting the infrastructural requirements thereby contributing to the National mission. But, there have to be appropriate regulatory mechanisms. In fact, regulations are also needed for ensuring quality healthcare in all centres across all places. The Public-Private partnership should be taken beyond drug manufacturing so that we can emerge as a hub of healthcare products and services which can only be possible through collaboration for research and development of innovative products and services. This would not only ensure in reduction of costs but will also help in indigenization so that we can meet the needs of health requirement of each and every citizen of the country to ensure security of our people and at the same time catering to the needs of Medical tourists as well.

Training and awareness amongst care givers will ensure translation of large pool of young and skilled manpower. This would ensure more income to the citizens and better access to healthcare. Growing human resources in the form of medical and paramedical professionals will also help in balancing the patient-doctor ratio.

As a Nation we need to create a patient-centered approach and set enabling ecosystem for innovations/ technology development with appropriate funds and policies the Government for achieving the vision of transforming healthcare. Some of the key initiatives which need to be implemented as a short term goal are:-

- Increasing coverage under Insurance to reduce expenses from individual's pocket through implementation of universal health coverage system

- Appropriate funds and investments in research and development of technologies

- Promotion of alternative method of healthcare by AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) and encouraging private investments in the field of education as well as research in this area.

- Encouraging indigenous research, development, manufacturing to transform ourselves into an export hub for medical products and equipment.

Some of the initiatives which need to be undertaken and were also highlighted as a part of Healthcare Vision 2035 by TIFAC includes:-

- Ensuring availability of medical professionals in rural areas to eliminate inequity in health services.

- Involving practitioners of Indian Systems of Medicine (AYUSH) in preventing lifestyle diseases and promoting healthy lifestyles.

- Launching of one-year-duration certificate courses for MBBS graduates in disciplines like public health, anaesthesia, psychiatry, geriatric care and oncology, mainly to focus on preventive medicine.

- Setting up of new medical, nursing, and dental colleges in underserved areas.

- Public Distribution System (PDS) in India has the potential to address nutritional problems in India. Therefore the same should be strengthened and developed for fair distribution

of medicines, processed fortified ready-to-eat food to the poor.

- Innovations are required to generate computerized systems which allow viewing of data whenever required at any place. This data can be stored and periodically updated in chip-embedded Aadhar-like Health Cards.

- Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), nursing staff, doctors and teachers in school should be trained for growth monitoring and early detection and referral of growth deficiencies.

- E-communication system between patients, field workers, nursing staff, health centre, doctors and district hospital has been introduced in other countries, the same could be replicated in India by digitizing the healthcare.

- Nutritional intervention strategies should be part of all medical education programmes including Ayurveda and Unani.

- **Department of Biomedical Technology (DBMT):** Various Government agencies such as DRDO, DST, ISRO, DBT and DOT has been undertaking research and development of Bio-Medical devices and technologies. However we need to establish an independent research body which could promote and undertake biomedical device research in a product-oriented manner which can reach to society. It has been suggested in Vision Document 2035 that an to apex body can be created with the nomenclature **Department of Biomedical Technology (DBMT)**, preferably under the Ministry of Science And Technology which will play promotive and catalytic role in the field of biomedical device research. Centres of Excellence in Bio-medical Technology in Cardiology, Neurology, Orthopaedics and Physical Rehabilitation, Ophthalmology, Nephrology, Gastroenterology, Otorhinolaryngology (ENT), Pulmonology and Critical Care, Non-invasive Imaging and Diagnostics, Brain Computer interface, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Public Health are envisioned to be established.

- **Establishment of Indian Medical Device Regulatory Authority (IMDRA):** It has been suggested that a regulatory mechanism should be developed to ensure overall evaluation and adherence to safety standards before a device is allowed to enter into the market so as to ensure that it does not become obsolete when it becomes available for use. The authority should aim at meet zero tolerance to device failures, safety in terms of materials, mechanical function, electronics, software reliability and biocompatibility.

India's National Health Mission should primarily invest in expanding the supply of affordable health care. Establishment and nurturing of appropriate ecosystem for promotion of innovation with new healthcare delivery models, cost-effective drugs and device manufacturing to transform India into Global hub for high-value products. Another aspect which should be focused upon is to harness technology to expand the reach of existing services like telemedicine, electronic health records etc. Education of healthcare providers including Dais in addition to doctors, nurses and allied personnel through training focusing on education and awareness of healthy living and prevention.

Acknowledgement

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Sunil Kumar

Commitment to Swadharma
Pre-condition for Ethics of Governance

Commitment to Swadharma: The composite culture of India that is Bharat was based on the clear-cut ideal that the primary purpose of schooling is to get us established in our swadharma. Only then can we remain committed to our dharma, ethics, in and thru' our daily 'earning' and 'enjoying' and attain the highest human ideal. And, our culture, our epics, our various religious faiths, our elders are continuously inspiring us to remain on the path of ethics, dharma, because that alone guarantees peace, happiness, prosperity that we are seeking.

This was our idea of schooling, religions, governance. Our teachers, religious preachers and administrators were educated to be role models of society. They were held responsible and accountable for bringing ethics in society and in governance. We've failed to build a civic culture where citizens are committed to their civic duties. We are responsible for this 'chalta-hai, inefficient, and a corrupt civic culture. It is time to reflect; what exactly needs to be done during education, schooling, recruitment, to make governance ethical, led by the ethical? Our suggestion is to introduce a compulsory subject on Enlightened Citizenship for creating the Shrestha committed to their swadharma.

Unfortunately, education that we've inherited and continue to follow is focused on the 3R's, IQ, knowledge of various subjects and skills. Education and religions have no responsibility and accountability, towards building an ethical society; whereas commitment to dharma, kartavya-palan, swadharma were and have always been the hallmark of our culture. How do we ensure that all our systems of schooling, training, selection, recruitment, focus on

producing the Shrestha, Enlightened citizens committed to duties?

Schooling is the time to get established in daily self-development practices to awaken Viveka and build strength of mind to be good and do good. The Academia has to be given the responsibility to draw upon the spiritual wisdom of all faiths and religions from our composite culture and create a compulsory subject on Enlightened Citizenship for creating the Shrestha committed to their swadharma.

The Supreme court has also pointed out that: Attainment of constitutional ideals is possible only if side by side with intellect, moral character of children is also developed to make them good citizens. How best religious pluralism can be made to accord with "secular thought" can be achieved by properly selecting material for inclusion in text books of children appropriate for different ages and stages. Scrutiny of text books to see whether they conform to Secularism is to be undertaken. Prohibiting study of religions would amount to denying children right to understand their own religion and religions of others with whom they are living and interact. Study of religions is not prohibited. Otherwise chances of spiritual growth of humans to be the highest goal of human existence would be totally frustrated. A dogma is quite different from study.

The Academia has to create an universal action plan of 'Inner Governance', of daily 'sadhna and swadhyaya'; 'self-development and self-introspection practices', to supplement and complement our schooling, so that every citizen, of any vocation – teacher, religious preacher, administrator, professional, businessmen, farmer, or workforce, all imbibe the spirit of:

- Commitment to their swadharma, respective duties to society, family, community, vocation, self, katatvyapalan, and to the Fundamental Duties (Art.51A).
- Commitment to striving for quality and excellence in their respective 'Vocation'
- Commitment to care and concern for each other and to working for the good of society.
- Commitment to universal values of peace, ahimsa, love, righteous conduct, truth, etc.

- Commitment to Standards in Public Life:
  - o Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of public interest.
  - o Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
  - o Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
  - o Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
  - o Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
  - o Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
  - o Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

As India, we're in a state of perpetual purposelessness; blind leading the blind, towards what, we know not. No one is responsible for producing the Shrestha, enlightened citizens; and guiding, inspiring, coaxing us to be good, better, best! Governance and religions have failed to create an advisory forum of men of wisdom, of sincere Spiritual leaders, the Acharyas, with moral and spiritual authority who can be given the responsibility to work together and plan how to produce the Shrestha. Our Fundamental Duties enjoin on us to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; strive for excellence; for harmony and brotherhood, and

to imbibe the ideals of our freedom fighters, etc. Only daily Inner governance practices can help us imbibe these high ideals.

Fortunately, in this era of lockdown, it is very simple to know what really is our indigenous culture thru' the popular TV serials of Ramayana, Mahabharat, Upanishad Ganga, Chanakya et all, to which the entire nation is once again glued. This clearly establishes once for all that at heart we're of Bharat, whereas modern schooling and the educated elite represent the idea of India! Perhaps, clips of these epics can be a very good case-study material to inspire the young to explore, discuss, debate the ideas and ideals of being 'good and bad'; let them thereafter draw their own conclusions! Case studies from our epics have been inspiring us for thousands of years; and they still do so!

Our epics give clarity on our ways of schooling, working, living, governance; they give clarity on the goal of life and the idea of both 'universal-dharma' and our respective 'swadharma' or duties, in different roles and stages of life. They emphasise that the purpose of schooling is to get established in our respective swadharma and the needed Self-development processes so that in and thru' our vocation and swadharma we remain on the critical path towards building an ethical society.

Our epics show that it is the obligatory duty of an Acharya, teacher as mentor, to guide society towards being the Shrestha, enlightened citizens and role models of society. Merely teaching ABC, 123, various subjects, etc. is only a secondary purpose. Similarly, those in governance are akin to a Raja, whose duty is to guide the Praja towards highest Perfection, in and through their 'vocation' and 'pleasures'. Praja literally means children who're to be nurtured, protected from adharma.

Thus, during schooling Acharyas are required to establish us in our swadharma. Only if schooling is focused on making us the Shrestha, and inspiring us and showing us how to struggle towards peace, prosperity, Perfection, will we be role models in whatever be our vocation.

Isn't this what our forefathers expect from us? We've criticised and destroyed all the social systems they gave us and which defined

our swadharma, our roles, our goals, and sraddha in our spiritual work culture where work was worship, mother, father, teachers, atithi, were worshipful.

ICCfG's Role: With our vast experience in governance we're a bridge between the past, the present, and the envisioned future. It is up to us to seek and provide answers to the governance of the day, on the most fundamental of all issues, what is 'that' towards which we are all working? Governing? How can we evolve an educational culture, work culture, civic culture, and ethics of governance that can help us harmonize our respective goals with 'that'?

Whereas culture is an umbrella term, civic culture relates to affairs of governments when dealing with cities, citizens, citizenship, civic duties, leadership. Ethics of Governance will relate to the due processes, rules and guidelines followed by those holding public office, when discharging their duties and, the trust they inspire in people. It does not relate to our individual faith, belief, values, good or bad, whatever they be. Ethics of Governance is grounded in the notion of responsibility and accountability. And, in democracy, every holder of public office is accountable ultimately to the people.

Can we create a system where Academia is given the responsibility and made accountable for introducing the systems of Inner Governance for creating the Shrestha, with the help of spiritual leaders of all faiths?

ICCfG's Workshops on Code of Ethics: ICCfG has been involved in organizing various activities and conducting talks and workshops on ethics in governance. We've now evolved Workshops for institutions and schools on "Code of Ethics"; "Teachers as Mentors"; "Inner Governance/Self-development Practices; "Enriching Teaching", etc. In our Workshops we are not just proposing, but helping institution and schools evolve for themselves a Code of Ethics. We share with them the idea that if the code, systems, procedures, etc. are evolved by ourselves and clearly defined, then like it or not, we are led into following them. We had done a case study of DMRC, who are a shining example of a world-class government department, thanks to its ethical leadership and code of ethics, where everyone is inspired to follow their respective swadharma, for good of society.

ICCfG's Workshops on HRD/Teachers as Mentors: Through these workshops we want HRD and Teachers to learn to mentor the young and inspire them to be committed to their swadharma and strive for excellence. We share with them time tested self-development practices to improve quality of thoughts, reduce quantity of thoughts, and direct the thoughts towards the higher, better, best. We can plan to conduct workshops and On-line courses.

Create a nexus of Mentors: As an outcome of our workshops and discussions, we hope to get more mentors and ideas to create a program of Inner Governance and Self-development processes to manage our minds towards good, better, best and become committed to our swadharma. The first step is to provide time for daily discussions and introspection, for getting conviction and inspiration to walk the talk, during schooling.

Can we take the lead to fulfil the ideal of Vivekananda, "My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody"? It is our duty to place before the young the ideals of Bharat; then let them decide.

Online courses on becoming enlightened citizens committed to Swadharma: Harvard University is running a course on knowing religions thru' their scriptures. Can we create similar courses for all our religions so that we can let students learn, appreciate, understand, the universal ideals in an open academic environment, free of devotional and faith biases, as the Harvard course clearly states. Students can adopt self-development practices and strive for excellence, etc.

Outcome of our workshops: Schooling must take responsibility to establish the students in the habit of daily Self-development practices! It should be noted that people are not equal; we're born with our respective mindset. We've different characteristics, Sattvic-rajasic-tamasic, i.e. calm-active-listless. To refine our mind-set, we have to work on our Mind and therefore, Schooling must provide one-hour every day for classes on "Citizenship". During this one hour, there will be regular study, discussions on understanding of our Fundamental Duties which enjoin on us to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; strive for excellence; for harmony and brotherhood, and to imbibe the ideals of our freedom

fighters, etc. DD, TV, U-tubes, Ted talks, Khan Academy, etc. can be used for communication to masses, at a fixed hour for students of different classes.

Students must be given the opportunity to get established in the habit of daily self-development practices of reviewing our goals, life-balance-sheet, life-skills etc. along with Prayers, Meditation, Reflection, Self-introspection, Yoga, Pranayama, learning-games, study and contemplation of inspiring life and teachings, etc. Many Inner governance exercises, Life skills are available.

Many acceptable sources, workbooks, NGO's are available. MHRD had created National Resource Centres for Value Education under NCERT, including IIT, IIM, RKM, Bahai, Aurobindo, and Muslim and Christian NGOs, etc. Late P.M., Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, have nominated Vivekananda, as our National Youth icon and Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and our freedom fighters have acknowledged how Vivekananda's words and knowledge of our composite culture, of harmony of religions, on our problems and their solutions, etc. have inspired them to love and sacrifice for the good of the nation. These can be offered during this Period of One-Hour daily for reading, debating, discussing, to appreciate the essence of our wisdom, and learn how to strive towards good, better, best by getting established in ethics, dharma.

Creating a Shared Vision for Citizenship: The Supreme Court asked a question – whether during last 50 years we have safeguarded public property and abjured violence? Whether bandhs, strikes have not increased damage to property loss to nation? Are we trying to promote harmony and spirit of brotherhood among people from different religions? They note: It appears that in spite of Fundamental Duties Art 51A, we have not taken necessary steps for such a purpose. Similarly, instead of protecting/improving environment, water sources, we have damaged it.

Supreme Court judgment, is very relevant; it observes:

- The past 5-decades after independence have witnessed constant erosion of essential social, moral and spiritual values and an increase in cynicism at all levels.

- Schools can and must strive to restore and sustain the universal and eternal values oriented towards unity and integration of people and their moral and spiritual growth enabling them to realize the 'treasure within'.

- Value based education is likely to help the nation fight against all kinds of prevailing fanaticism, ill-will, violence, dishonesty, corruption, exploitation and drug abuse.

- Curriculum in schools have to develop key qualities like regularity, punctuality, cleanliness, self-control, industriousness, sense of duty, desire to serve, responsibility, enterprise, creativity, etc.

- Although not the only source, religion is a major source of value generation. What is required is education about religion, their basics, values inherent in them, and comparative study of philosophy of all religions.

- Students be given awareness that the essence of every 'religion' is common, only practices differ and to ensure that no prejudices or narrow-minded perceptions are allowed, and dogmas should not be propagated in name of education about 'religion'.

- What is sought to be imparted is from Fundamental Duties, Art. 51 A. e. i.e. "to promote harmony and spirit of common brotherhood transcending religious and other diversities"

- And to see that universal values, truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, non-violence be the foundation of education.

Similarly, UNESCO asks: 'Are we giving adequate attention to teach peace? Are our schools really interested in producing a peaceful young generation? They observe that those who want 'war' (consumerism, sex, violence, drugs, lower pleasures and entertainment) prepare the young for war; but those who want peace have neglected training the young for peace! They clearly state that Peace can be cultivated only through training of the mind to control desire, balancing between deserving and desiring, developing

tolerance and respect for differences, concern and love for others, and moving from competition to cooperation'.

NCERT in their book "Education for Values in Schools – A Framework" say, Value Education has to be a Planned effort to nurture core universal values held uppermost by our Constitution. National Commission of Secondary Education says that the supreme end of educative process should be training of character and personality in a way that they will be able to realize their full potentialities and contribute to well-being of community. If we exclude spiritual training, we would be untrue to our whole historical development. Schools can and must strive to resolve and sustain the universal and eternal values oriented towards unity and integration of people enabling them to realize the treasure within.

Gandhi ji in his Hind Swaraj says: Under the impact of the British rule India is turning into an 'irreligious' country, away from God. He likens modem civilization to a 'mouse' 'gnawing' our people while apparently 'soothing them'! He critiques Lawyers, Doctors, 'false education' of Macaulay. He asserts that people of different religions would continue to constitute one nation on the principle of non-interference in one another's religion.

Vivekananda, asserts that the national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in these channels and the rest will take care of itself. 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man'. Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work (Karma Yoga), or worship (Bhakti Yoga), or meditation (Raja Yoga), or philosophy (Gyana Yoga) – by one, or more, or all of these and be free. And this is the essence of religions; of our Composite Culture. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.

Conclusion: It is extremely hard to change the mind-set. Our past thoughts-actions have developed our present characteristics. It is only by 'continuous practice' and 'focus on the newer, higher and better thought-actions', over a long period of time, that we can culture and refine the mind-set. Besides all other attempts for

ethics of governance, we have suggested a compulsory subject on Enlightened Citizenship for creating the Shrestha committed to their swadharma, and time of One-hour-daily for self-reflection. We hope to create a nexus of the good so that together we may help schools to focus on evolving strategies to inculcate spontaneous feelings of love, care and concern for all, following time-tested strategies, which are common to all religions and traditions.

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Kewal Krishan Sethi

My take on Governance

What is governance and how does it differ from government? Wikipedia defines it as "Governance refers to "all processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market or network, whether over a family, tribe, formal or informal organization or territory and whether through laws, norms, power or language". It relates to "the processes of interaction and decision-making among the actors involved in a collective problem that lead to the creation, reinforcement, or reproduction of social norms and institutions".

By this definition governance is not limited to government and the laws and rules made by it. It follows that it evolves over time in accordance with the mores of the society. But here we will be dealing with only the issues which relate to government or the actions of the government.

The government works through the formal route by enacting laws, rules and regulations. There are norms set for performance and any deviation there from is punishable. Courts and tribunals have been set up for the purpose. The governance is at more informal level, though it does not purport to go against the laws of the land.

The laws formulated by government are all prevailing at higher level but Governance is really what happens at the cutting level. At the higher level we make rules which govern every aspect of the plan or the programme but these do not really work out in that manner at the grass root level. There the informal contacts and relations are more relevant. In the formal setting institution is important but at the lower level the rules of the game are what matter.

We must define what we mean by the rules of the game. Diagonal turning is the norm at cross roads now but there was a time, when

it was an offence. Introduced in late fifties, someone was asked to define what diagonal turning meant. The answer was what we were doing when the policeman was not watching. It was done because it was smoother and it did not harm anyone. But sometimes it is also done under duress. These informal rules are set by the prevailing norms of need and of the immediacy with which a particular action is required, It may involve payment of extra rent (by rent here we mean consideration which may be monetary or non-monetary). The rent to be paid is determined by the urgency of the situation. Consider the registration of documents relating to the transfer of property. The urgency determines the payment to be paid to the lawyers or the agents. It can be done in normal course but it may take time. The traffic police do it as a routine. An amount, predetermined, is charged for offending against traffic rules. The person concerned has a right to appear before a court and pursue his case but one rarely does it. It is more convenient to forget about it rather than take the trouble of leaving one's profession and attending the courts. It is taken as a done thing though it is not strictly as per law. This is governance. It suits both the governing body and the citizen. It makes life easier to live.

How can this be rationalized and made the mode of the government procedures? The simplest way it can be done is by simplifying the processes but there is a limit to that. The alternate option is to make everything automated. If there is no interference by individuals, the things can go smoothly. But there is a limit to this also. Human hand is involved in one way or the other at every transaction.

It must be pointed out that this is not meant to break the rules. It is to make the compliance of rules more meaningful without harassment, without delay and without undue tension. It is not the prescription for speed money as it is understood at present. It is to eliminate the incidence of the speed money. This is where the group action comes in. If we are vigilant as a group we can prevent unwanted aspects of the transaction. The voluntary groups can be formed which would keep a watch on these transactions.

This is all the more necessary in education. Teachers do not

teach, sometimes they do not attend the schools. To remedy the situation, it was thought that the panchayat raj functionaries should be involved. Instructions were sent to the teachers to get a certificate from the sarpanch about the attendance in the schools before the salary is paid. In due course, this led to a malpractice of nexus between the sarpanch and the teacher. In such a situation, a group would be more effective, provided it is taken seriously by the higher authorities and is not a mere formality. This has been happening with the management committees formed under the Right to Education Act 2009. The presence of the teachers can be assured through the group action. It can even provide safeguards as also what they teach. For this purpose, there have to be viable schools and viable management committees. The idea of having a school in every hamlet has not made the impact it was supposed to do. There is no use of having cent percent enrolment and sending fortnightly report about it. What is the purpose of mid-day meals for the students unless it is accompanied by the quality education. The same can be said about the police functioning.

Of late the discussion about governance is attracting a lot of attention. Modi, in the run up to the elections, had repeatedly spoken about minimum government, maximum governance. Others have also been saying the same, though with varying emphasis.

But what is governance and how does it differ from government? Governments are concerned with delivery of services. The attributes of good government are said to be transparency, equity, the objectivity of the government agents. This can be viewed both at the macro and the micro level. At the macro level, the laws, the rules and the regulations are made which are implemented through the institutions. How smoothly these institutions perform their function is considered to be test of good government.

The governance is in a different category. The perfect institutions, well-oiled machinery and well drafted laws may not mean much unless the common citizens draw satisfaction from their functioning. In other words, governance is concerned with the micro, the public agent citizen interaction. If there is failure at the micro level, it might mean failure at the macro level also. Micro level governance does not

demand or hope for omnibus policy designs and solutions, even in the basic sector of health or education. The problem of absenteeism, of quality of education or lack of medicines may mean failure of the government so far as the citizen is concerned. How to remedy this aspect of administration is the subject matter of governance. The problem is how to ensure delivery of services at cutting edge. There have to be incentives to perform different services are subject to different incentives and a single strategy may not be applicable to ensure the presence of the teachers, the students and the doctors. on the medical side, beds in hospitals may not be a cure for malaria or the dots for treatment of tuberculosis unless there is follow up action and the procedure does not attend with the prescribing the medicines. The client may not use them or be regular in taking the pills.

This is where the rules of the game come in as opposed to institutions. Hitherto the emphasis has been on institutions which have even led to evolution of a new branch of economics called Institutional Economics. It undertakes the study of institutions-political, social, and legal - on economic development. Here we are more concerned with the rules of the game which govern interaction amongst the players (the providers of the services and the recipient of services). This involves the study of pay offs and sanctions of services and affect incentives. The actors, rather than the rules, can change the initial conditions and boundaries of behavior (can we see here a parallel to quantum physics where the position of the observer is an important ingredient of study of sub atomic particles). Socially wasted outcomes of perverse incentives are sometimes generated by well-intentioned motivational measures. Take an instance. Coal companies are provided incentives for delivery of coal to electricity generating companies. Even when the electricity company closes down for repairs or renovation, or when there is lesser demand during rainy days, the incentive means delivery of coal when it is not needed leading to waste of effort in transportation and storage. Mid-day meals is meant for incentive to parents to send their wards to schools but these are not the incentives for the teachers to be present there. Instead it means more work for them and that too at the cost of education which is their primary duty. The outcome may

be better attendance but lesser education which was not the intention when the scheme was devised.

Affective and emotional biases do matter in social interaction but may not be relevant in many situations of public governance. The design of the micro rules needs to take note not only of material incentives but also self-interest of the beneficiaries. There is a need of resorting to mild incentives accompanied by nudges to address the irrationality and biases of the human actors. This is especially true of the social causes. Take the case of the bureaucrats. The rules are strict regarding punishment for them. Threats of punishment leave them unconvinced due to various loopholes. In many cases, their contribution, or lack of it, is not even measurable. On the other hand, social exposure of misdeeds is more likely to be effective to keep them on the straight path.

The changeover from command and control philosophy to inclusive governance which involves the recipients of services is a difficult process. Perhaps this is the reason why this aspect has remained generally neglected in our society. The major problem is how to cultivate the new element in the conduct and the temper is deep rooted and patient and persistent effort is necessary to deal with it.

The question is how to tame the public agents and reduce the malady of ignoring the client. One of the imperatives is to catch them young. What we are advocating is that the idea about inclusive governance should be included in the training programme at an early stage. The rule making processes and the governance codes are much more susceptible to intervention before they are fully formed. Micro governance is actually in the shape of the capillaries and should be taken care of at the beginning. It is generally seen that it is left to the street level where the individuals who come into contact with the public have to fend for themselves and lay down their own norms. At that level they cannot see the implications of their action over the mechanism as such. It will be recalled that Mahatma Gandhi advised that the face of the poorest person should be kept in mind while deciding on a new policy or initiative. He was led by the same consideration. The street links are lost as the bureaucrat enters the

elite area of directive, constitutional and macro governance. He develops amnesia about the man on the street and changes over to numbers. Frequent changeover from office to field is necessary to maintain the balance. It is through nudges and minor initiatives that the policy can be modified to become serviceable.

Political and economic thinkers have influenced the state-citizen relationship through the ages. Hobbes advocated authoritarian sovereign to command and control the inherently selfish nature of human beings. This dominated the design and organization of the state for over 300 years. For Locke and Mill, liberty of individuals took primacy over the government and the state. Semi democratic systems (voting was restricted to certain classes) replaced the authoritarian sovereign in due course. Despite this, the relation between state and citizens experienced little change in this transformation. Laws replaced the whims and fancies of sovereign but the coercion process remained the same. Adam smith advocated state to confine itself to tolerable administration of justice, peace, and supply of public goods. He wanted the economic markets to be left to their own devices. What followed was the policy of laissez faire. Even so, the iron hand of state was visible in the limited areas of state citizen interaction.

The World War I and the great depression of thirties brought about a change. Keynesian ideas took hold of the economy and the government expenditure increased to boost economy. Proactive governments brought in compulsory education, new labour laws, laws for safety at work, tax funded libraries and other infrastructure.

The seventies brought its own problems of rising unemployment. Economists like Friedman advocated abolition of role of government not only in economic markets but also in the function of providing public goods. Whatever remained of the government was to be on PPP model even including outsourcing of basic government functions such as social security. However, this was not accepted by governments and some compromise was worked out as a remedy.

In the nineties, the new paradigm is individualization of services. It is recognized that markets have their limitations while the command and control model is no longer relevant. This new development is the basis of the call of minimum government, maximum governance.

We come back to beginning. What is governance? in its broadest sense it means "Governance refers to ""the processes of interaction and decision-making among the actors involved in a collective problem that lead to the creation, reinforcement, or reproduction of social norms and institutions". The parable of six blind men and the elephant describes the situation more accurately where 'where each was partially in the right, and all were in the wrong'. Governance means different things to different persons. Corruption, transparency, efficiency, equity, consistency, courtesy are some of the attributes with which people judge the actions of the government and its agents. Another point of view recognizes governance as transparency and accountability; efficiency and effectiveness; decentralization and deregulation; and justice and fairness. Inclusiveness is another aspect which is emphasized by some.

The modern society depends upon interactions which can be efficiently performed only if the legal rights are clear and can be enforced in a swift and orderly manner. The basic point is that there is a shift from inputs to outcomes. The man in the street is not concerned with how good the laws are; in how flowery language the documents declaring the policy are written. When he is seeking a certificate for caste, a ration card, a birth or death certificate etc. he wants a time bound delivery without hassles and without having to pay speed money.

How can this be achieved and made the normal mode of the government functioning? The quickest way it can be done is by simplifying the processes but there is a limit to that. The alternate option is to make everything automated. If there is no interference by individuals, the things can go smoothly. But there is a limit to this also. Human hand is involved in one way or the other at every transaction. So, in the ultimate analysis, it comes down to the behaviour of the agent who deals with the people – which is called the cutting edge. Once again we recall Gandhi ji who advocated thinking of poorest man while formulating policy but more important is how the agent deals with the poorest man (or for that matter with the richest man – whether he is over awed to make concessions not warranted by the concept of good governance).

We have spoken of automation and stated that it is not the final word but, at the same time, it helps enormously to promote prompt and equitable action. It enables the citizens to be assured that the response will be certain. This is especially true of the grievances and complaints. Many of the state governments have launched websites where the complaints can be traced. Along with the time limits laid down, this has been become a veritable tool for the right action. The Right to Information Act was the precursor of this approach. One of the provisions in the Right to Information Act is that the basic information about the department or office should be on the website which must be updated regularly, and if possible, automatically.

It will be pertinent to point out some of the initiatives taken by the state governments. The best example is supplying copies of the documents regarding land records. The computerisation of land records started as far back as 1990 but the supply of records in a painless manner is of much recent period. Presently registration of sale of property is one important aspect where many states have tried to launch automated or partially automated schemes some of them are from Karnataka (bhoomi), Maharashtra (sarita), Punjab (prism) Tamil Nadu (star) which are performing well. Treasury information system in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are spoken well of. Many of the municipal corporations have switched over to e-payment of property tax and other dues. The railways which were the first to launch electronic system has an enviable record of reservation done through web site. In fact, now there is competition amongst various states to invent and re-invent best practices. One of the important things is to see that the best practices of a state are adopted (adopted not copied as the circumstances may be different) by other states.

One of the most important ingredients of governance is redressal of grievances and settlement of disputes. Of the grievances, we have spoken above but the question about disputes merits closer attention. In fact any lapse in that negates all the advantages of good governance. The numbers of civil and criminal cases pending in the courts are legendary. And no solution is in sight. A common excuse is the shortage of the judges but that is not the major problem. The major problem is the will to settle down to disposing off the

pending cases. 'Tareekh par tareekh' is the normal thing which comes to mind when one thinks about the judicial work. The litigant, the recipient of judicial services, is never at the centre of the rules and regulation which are highly biased in favour of lawyers and advocates. The interest of the lawyers is to prolong the cases since they are getting paid for each date rather than for each case. Assume that a rule is made that a particular case will mean so much remuneration regardless of how long it takes, will it not expedite the disposal of the cases. Further the rule can be that all payments to the lawyers will be through the courts who will deposit the amount directly into the bank accounts of the lawyers. (it will be recalled that where the adjournment was granted on payment of compensation, this went to the pocket of the lawyer rather than the litigant who was supposed to be compensated for his time and expenses). Where the government decides to subsidise the legal expenses, this will be paid straight to the court and, through them to the pleaders. Long winded arguments must be cut short by giving a fixed time to the pleaders to list their arguments. After all the judges are supposed to be as learned as the lawyers and whole judgments need not be read over to them. We believe that this will cut down the time taken for the cases immensely. This will also reduce, if not eliminate, the oft repeated complaint that justice can be purchased.

It is also seen that the government is the biggest litigant, both in cases by it and the cases against it. There should be mechanism within the government to test the necessity, or otherwise, of the cases. Once again the interest of the litigant should be paramount rather than the prestige of the government.

Another irritant is the multiplicity of the agencies for regulations. We have Commissions for Human Rights, for Scheduled Tribes, for Scheduled Castes, for Minorities, in the centre and often duplicated in the states. Recently, we have added National Green Tribunal, why can there be not one single commission for human rights which can look after all the sectors of society. This Commission can also take care of the so called public interest litigations, which are more guided by desire of publicity rather than the grievance to be redressed. This multiplication of commissions to find jobs for the retired judges

and others are totally against the spirit of good governance. It may be better to legislate that a judge of the superior court will continue for his whole life, unless he chooses to retire (and retire means retire completely, not for seeking another job (political, constitutional or other).

One of the favourite past times of the well intentioned persons dealing with governance is to multiply information. It is noteworthy that World Bank had developed governance indicators based on 310 variables from 33 different agencies totaling some 1000 plus data points. The Government of India department of Administrative Reforms, Pension and Grievances has 123 indicators across five dimensions. We have Human Development Index for which information is to be collected from a host of agencies. Now we have Sustainable Development Goals designed by United Nations which has 17 goals, 169 targets and the indicators are still being worked out which may reach the figure of 500. There is no logical relationship between the indicators and the governance. Take for example, the indicator about legislators charged for criminal offences. An occasional study is alright but to have it compiled on a regular basis is just meaningless. When we talk about simplification about laws and procedures, we also would like to have simpler data collection which can convey meaningful information to the public.

The last point to be made is that good governance depends upon the mindset of the players. The regulations, the citizen charters, the programmes written for the computers may all be of top quality but the ultimate dispenser of good governance will still be the people at the cutting edge. Their initial training, their periodical reorientation, their quick assessment and consequent action will be needed. It is not an easy task but it is a task which has to be performed to ensure good governance.

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Akshay Bajad

Election Manifestos and Voters Right To Know

The political parties and candidates bag the votes by making promises in the elections, however, the voters are kept in dark, when it comes to giving them an opportunity to know the correct status of all such promises made.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court recognising the importance of the election manifestos directed the Election Commission of India to frame guidelines directly governing the contents of the election manifestos in the case of S. Subramaniam Balaji v. State of Tamil Nadu & Ors. reported in (2013) 9 SCC 659. Although, the Election Commission of India issued certain guidelines on election manifestos, framed in consultation with the political parties, it failed to consider that the voters ought to have a right to know as to what happened to those promises made in the election manifestos. A failure on part of the political party or for that matter a candidate in disclosing the status of the promises made in their election manifestos before the next elections deprives a voter his right to know and thereby denudes him from making an informed choice.

Election manifestos are generally drafted by the political parties and candidates keeping an eye on forthcoming elections and are generally published and well publicized. The political parties and candidates bag the votes by making promises in the elections, however, the voters are kept in dark, when it comes to giving them an opportunity to know the correct status of all such promises made. It shall be difficult to hold the political parties and candidates responsible for non-fulfilment of each and every promise made in

the election manifestos, however, what would be the harm caused to such political parties and candidates if a disclosure with regard to the status of the promises is required to be made by them while filing nominations.

Till recently, the candidates use to propagate the manifestos published or released by the political parties to which such candidates are affiliated to. However, since last few elections, several candidates belonging to different political parties, taking into consideration the local issues, have been coming up with their own manifestos giving an account of what would they do for their constituency if they are elected. The safeguards, although few, laid down by the Election Commission of India governs only the election manifestos issued by the political parties and not the individuals.

There is a statutory vacuum regarding regulation of election manifestos to the extent of tracking the performance of the political parties and the candidates and accountability to the public thereof. The Representation of People Act, 1951 as well as the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 although have recognised the right to know of a voter, however, the same is insufficient. The information sought under Section 33A and Form No. 26 pertains more to the conduct of the candidates in their personal capacity. However, it is more so important to call for information with respect to their conduct as a representative of the nation. Voter's (little man/citizen's) right to know about the agenda of the political parties, their accountability and sincerity towards the promises made by it is much more fundamental and basic for the survival of democracy. The little man may think over before making his choice of electing law-breakers as law-makers. The vacuum regarding the information relating to the promises made in the election manifestos and their status has resulted into deprivation of right to know of voter as guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India. Such a disclosure would ensure that the voters make an informed choice while casting their votes which is very much essential for a participatory democracy. If a Status Report is there at the disposal of every citizen, then it can strengthen the democratic process and also restore the confidence of the people in the democratic process

of choosing elected representatives. Furthermore, such a disclosure would also keep a check upon the political parties inasmuch as all such parties and candidates shall publish their manifestos after thorough research thereby restraining them from making false promises with a view to filling their vote banks.

Why the provision of information as to the past performance of a candidate and political parties with respect to the election manifestos is essential?

Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution includes right to know of the voters about their candidates and their performance in their tenure before any citizen exercise their franchise. The Hon'ble Supreme Court recognized the voter's right to know for the first time in the case of State of Uttar Pradesh v. Raj Narain & Ors., [(1975) 4 SCC 428] at Para 74. and has widened the horizons of the right to know of a voter while reiterating that the said right is a fundamental right under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India in the case of Lok Prahari v. Union of India reported in (2018) 4 SCC 699. Further, in the case of Union of India v. The Association for Democratic Reforms, [(2002) 5 SCC 294] held in Para 22 that a voter has a right to elect or re-elect on the basis of the antecedents and the past performance of the candidate. Article 19 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) also guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression with regards to voting and this right shall include the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kind.

Any political party is not liable to disclose information under RTI. As such, the citizens of the country are left with no option to know as to what is the status of the fulfilment or otherwise of the election manifestos. For a participative form of democracy, it is important that the voters' are educated in a right manner. It is all the more important that people cast their votes after knowing their candidate and not for any other extraneous considerations.

Therefore, in order to make our democracy and our election process, transparent and to give the voters all the information they require about the political parties and the candidates so that the voters

could exercise their right to vote wisely, parliament should amend the Rule 4A and Form 26 appended to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 thereby seeking information regarding the status report of the promises of quantitative nature made in the election manifestos of the candidates along with that of his/her political party from the candidates; as well as the Election Commission of India should also issue guidelines regarding submission of an affidavit containing statement with respect to the status of the promises of quantitative nature made in the election manifestos of the candidates along with that of his/her political party from the candidates by suitably modifying the Model Code of Conduct.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

AKSHAY BAJAD is an academic writer. He has taken up several research activities aiming at Good Governance and policy framing for the last 4 years. On the basis of the extensive academic research carried out by him, he has sent many recommendations and suggestions to the Central Government and various State Governments in order to make our society better, more transparent and egalitarian, some of which have been accepted.

JYOTSNA SITLING is an Indian Forest Service officer of 1987 batch, and has worked at the helm of both state and central governments of India. As an institutional entrepreneur, she has created participatory institutions, policies, instruments and programs in many areas. Presently, she is working on ecosystem for social enterprises in India. An IIM Bangalore alumnus, she is a recipient of Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar 2004-05 and Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2006-07 for her outstanding contribution to the public service of the country. She has recently joined as Principal Chief Conservator of Forests - Van Panchayat in Uttarakhand after completing her tenure as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

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