The Journal of Governance

IC Centre for Governance
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IC Centre for Governance
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The IC Centre for Governance has been set up 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 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.

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Compassion and competency is an irresistible combination. In government, it is everything.

— *Unknown*

We are happy to place the twenty-fifth issue of *The Journal of Governance* in your hands. The Journal has been brought out by the IC Centre for Governance since its inception in July 2010 without a break and for the last few years has followed a pattern of alternating between general and special issues. For more than a decade, its journey has remained linked with the journey of the IC Centre. Both of them have touched upon many topical subjects of public governance and have delved deeply in some. On the one hand, the special issues of the Journal have covered themes like urban governance, education, health, environment, energy, disaster management and civil services, and on the other, the Centre has relentlessly pursued its resolve of embedding ethics in governance. The visionary guest editors of the special issues have taken pains to engage domain experts making each issue a collectible item. One of them has even been subsequently published in the form of a book. The dedicated editorial team overseen by Mahesh Kapoor and ably assisted by Nandita Sinha is constantly guided by the Core Group of the Centre.

In the seventy fifth year of our independence, it is not too early to think of formulating a vision of the shape of governance in times to come. Without belittling the importance of other ecosystems in the growth of the country, it can be safely said that the ease of living of millions of citizens is largely dependent on the way public services are delivered to them. We are, therefore, happy to learn that the Prime Minister has tasked the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) to chart Vision 2047 for Governance and an Advisory Committee has been constituted to assist in the process.

The preliminary draft Vision document prepared by the DARPG follows a comprehensive systemic approach to the long-term vision. One cannot but agree with most of its components, particularly the draft's focus on young administrators and the creation of a good governance index. But in our view, it should move towards creating a futuristic image of the shape of public governance in the year 2047. We should seriously think of transforming the relationship of the government with citizens and private actors and enterprises. We need a radical measure to create a new ecosystem of trust between the government and the people. The rest is embellishment.

A lot has been said about introduction of E-governance in the delivery mechanism, which is all very valid. However, there is a world beyond functional competence. Building a brand is quite different from building a product. While re-engineering the delivery of services (which is the main job of the civil servants), we are looking from the product point of view. How can the delivery of services help in creating increased welfare, requires something more. How to prepare the recipient citizens to make the best use of public services requires something more.

In the meetings of the Advisory Committee, it was emphasized on behalf of the IC Centre for Governance that institutionally we have failed to make the civil servants aware of their potential, of what they are capable of doing. Merely telling them to follow the law honestly and abide by the rules and regulations may not be enough. They need to be made aware of putting their best in the service of the people. They must be nudged to put the two essential attributes into the day-to-day job: justice and compassion. To improve the ethical culture of the civil services, there are presently not many instruments available. Mission Karmayogi is expected to help in institutionalizing some ways of instilling ethics culture and building capacity of the civil services as a whole.

Our hypothesis is that ethics of public service should be the cornerstone of all trainings in the Union Government and state governments. The civil servants need to be told that they should endeavour to go beyond their normal duty to serve the public better; that Ethics makes their duty bigger; it makes their duty

more meaningful; it makes their duty more uplifting. And it can be illustrated by exemplars.

It was also suggested that there should be an Ethics Centre under the Department of Administrative Reforms to formulate instruments and outcomes and monitor them. It should act as the clearing house of all issues including preparation of a code of ethics for public servants. To acquire a wide perspective, the Centre should not comprise of domain experts only, but behaviour science and design experts too.

The need for the enactment of a new law reversing the presumption of denial that applies in most dealings between the administration and the people was also impressed upon. The present dispensation is that if a government agency does not respond to a request or an application for a service made by a citizen, it is deemed to have been not accepted. The request is granted only if it is specifically approved by the competent authority and is so communicated to the applicant. This needs to be reversed for listed services. For the listed services, the administration should be deemed to have granted a request if it has not responded or asked for more information within a predefined period of time, ranging from a few days to 12 months, depending on the service in question. For example, if an application for construction of a building is not responded to within two months, it should be considered approved.

The main purpose of this law is to increase efficiency and to simplify interactions of people with the administration. It will go a long way in enhancing the trust of the people in government. And today we have a confident and determined government to carry out such a radical reform.

Perhaps we cannot have such a law in the present state of preparedness of our administrative system. But this can be envisaged in 5 to 10 years' time. But if the components incorporated in the draft Vision document prepared by the DARPG are realised, our administrative system would become robust enough to ensure the implementation of the proposed law.

It is heartening to learn that these suggestions are going to be deliberated upon by the Working Group of Vision 2047. Perhaps the acceptance of public service ethics as a guiding principle of civil service is not too far away. If the essence of these suggestions is accepted, the efforts of the IC Centre would be well rewarded.

Prabhat Kumar

K. Kasturirangan*

A Scientist's Tryst with Governance**

Iam delighted and privileged to deliver the Second Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance. I am deeply conscious of the tremendous responsibility I have to shoulder in accepting this honour of speaking on a subject relevant to governance, and in memory of one of the most illustrious sons of this country. The maiden lecture in this series was delivered by no less a person than Sri Venkaiah Naidu, our esteemed Vice President, who had a long and illustrious career in governance in various capacities. It is therefore fair to question whether someone whose career has been steeped in science has the authority to speak on matters of governance. Before accepting the invitation to follow in such hallowed footsteps, I myself pondered this question very carefully.

It is evident that in the present-day context, science and governance have both emerged as decisive influences in shaping our society. On the one hand, scientific research and innovations have become the indispensable handmaiden for good governance, and key determinants for a better quality of life of all. On the other hand, sound practices of governance in scientific research and applications have become absolutely necessary for averting the grave dangers arising from scientific endeavours that lack ethics. There can be no better demonstration of this than the deadly pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus and its variants across the globe, followed swiftly by the rapid intervention of scientific research and

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governance to confront this threat. Therefore, I have accepted the task of delivering this lecture out of a sense of duty, to illuminate how science and governance can enrich each other. I have titled my talk as "A Scientist's Tryst with Governance".

At the outset, I would like to express my deep gratitude to IC Centre for Governance for inviting me to deliver this prestigious lecture. The significance of such institutions in a democratic polity needs no emphasis. This Centre, through its multifarious activities such as research on governance practices, building policy capacity, shaping civil society role, and creating greater awareness of ethics, has made a mark in the national arena. In all these areas, the life and work of Sri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in whose commemoration this lecture is instituted, can be a beacon to chart our voyage of progress in the high seas of governance. I owe my gratitude to Mr. Prabhat Kumar, whose persuasive qualities coupled with his ready acceptance of my suggestion for finalising the topic encouraged me to undertake this lecture. His unstinting commitment to ensure dissemination of the information, about the activities of this Centre, to a wider range of intellectual community deserve our deep appreciation. In this context, you may also like to know that a recent book by Shri Prabhat Kumar "Public Service Ethics- Quest for Naithik Bharat" is a very unique discussion about ethics in public service, a subject you don't often get an opportunity to read. This book has a special value in understanding the principles and exceptional thoughts on the subject, based on a very eventful and remarkable journey in public service, of the author. I may recall that my association with Shri Prabhat Kumar dates back to the time when I was Secretary to the Department of Space and he was the Cabinet Secretary. Shri Prabhat Kumar's deep insights, into the multidimensional character of the working of Space, and the positive support that he extended to the planning and execution of its activities have had a major impact, on the smooth functioning of the Department. Thank you, Shri Prabhat Kumar Ji. Sardar Patel had been an epitome of the spirit of sacrifice and stands out as one of the tallest leaders of our nation's independence movement. His contribution to craft a pragmatic strategy and its implementation towards unification of India from more than 550 widely disparate princely states and provincial colonies,

his vision to initiate and establish the All India Civil Services and his humanistic handling of the tragic aftermath of the partition, have all left a lasting imprint in the eventful history of this Nation. In all this, we can see his political acumen, combined with a strong conviction for harmonising conflicting forces. In a broadcast to the nation on 13th November, 1949, he said, and I quote, "The Government, Industry and Labour must all play the game in a spirit of national service...we must have the fullest sense of national emergency; we must close our ranks as we do in the presence of a common danger. Who flourishes if the country sinks into economic slaving? Who sinks if the country prospers? Let that be of our ruling sentiment, let that be our ruling thought."

We can see that the strength and nobility that were reflected in the character of Patel, is also a reflection of the timeless and life-giving values that we find on the Indian soil, a part of the rich heritage that had been handed down to us. Patel demonstrated through his life, how those values can play a vital role in good governance, without indeed evoking an overt civilizational or cultural accent for his nationalistic ideology. In the stark realities of today's interconnected world and our challenging national landscape of building a secure equitable society, the relevance of Patel's pragmatic and rationalistic approach and the acumen of harmonising diversely complex issues is of a strategic value.

It is a common perception that science and governance are two distinct domains, primarily because only a small group of people are active at the interface of science and governance. However, compartmentalising science and governance can be highly limiting when dealing with new advances in science and its applications.

At the fundamental level, science seeks to explore the unknown and to create new knowledge through the novelty of work carried out by scientists, adding to the existing knowledge base and wisdom. We often call this pure research, to differentiate it from other types of research – applied and translational. While pure research often gets the greatest attention and recognition, its fruits rarely yield tangible outcomes that are scalable, with societal, strategic, or commercial impact, unless there is connected ecosystem of applied

and translational research.

It is important to note that governance structures that are most conducive for pure research are somewhat unique. The pursuit of pure research (in science or indeed any other domain) necessarily presents a level of uncertainty, randomness and arbitrariness for the uninitiated. To be a source of valuable scientific discoveries, these endeavours often require unshackling the human mind to its full exploratory, creative, and innovative potential. Often, pure research has flourished in environments that encourage unfettered thinking. Thus, the governance structures must recognise that promoting scientists' creativity and originality sometimes calls for a degree of tolerance in enforcing "the rules of the game".

When we move from pure research to applied and translational research, together with associated development programmes, we typically encounter two key differences in the nature of work. First, there is an increasing level of predictability of outcomes, and therefore an expectation of steady advancements. Second, such research often demands major interdisciplinary efforts. For both these reasons, research that is applied and translational in nature, calls for a more conventional governance system. Scientists who have grown accustomed to the relaxed form of governance, appropriate for pure research, may find the transition to a more rigid governance structure difficult. Indeed, a key challenge for India has been to develop a thriving applied and translational research community.

India's space programme is one example, where such a community has been successfully developed. There are key lessons to be learned from this developmental journey that are relevant to a broader spectrum of activities at the intersection of science and governance. The most important of these lessons is that the desired development from pure research to applications does not emerge through a natural process of organisational evolution. Instead, there is a need to design a structured form of governance to deal with issues effectively, and to carefully refine this design over time. At the scale of a handful of institutions, such endeavours can have its own set of rules, which need not be common with full-fledged governance systems as we know today. However, when it comes to national-scale

scientific endeavours like Space or Atomic Energy program, one faces complexities of linking multiple technology dimensions on one side and requirement of large investments as well as human resources on the other side. Further, there is the most important aspect of delivery of assured outcomes.

For India's space programme, the core refinements in governance were conceived and implemented over its first two decades. This critical period spanned the combined tenures of its first two Chairmen, Dr Vikram Sarabhai and Prof Satish Dhawan, and I will now delve into their legacy.

Vision is a basic driver for all human initiatives, action and progress. Vikram Sarabhai's vision for the Indian Space Programme was an extraordinary act of foresight from a scientific leader. To fully appreciate this, bear in mind the relevant historical context: India was facing severe challenges in the aftermath of Independence and the dominant global perspective on space was shaped by the Cold War. It required a truly remarkable mind to foresee that the use of space for peaceful purposes could provide developing countries, such as India, an innovative way to leapfrog the process of development. He recognized that the promotion of space research, besides contributing to societal benefits and enrichment, could also have intangible benefits derived from novel technologies for economic development and security.

Sarabhai emphasized self-reliance, not merely as a promoter of nationalistic fervour, but also as an essential guiding principle for developing technology to suit our own socio-economic and cultural contexts. We are often confronted with situations where the status of our technology lags the global level. Hence, there is a dilemma in reconciling the principle of self-reliance with dependence on foreign sources. The risk of perpetual dependence, coupled with the need for optimally using our human resources potential, was a cause of concern, both for Sarabhai, and later for Satish Dhawan. I shall cite the strategy that Sarabhai and Dhawan adopted to circumvent this, by elucidating India's space communication program.

When India decided to go for space-based communication and broadcast systems, we had to balance the urgency to initiate services

in this area, with the long lead-times that designing and developing an indigenous Indian National Satellite (INSAT) would imply. In order to usher India into the era of space communications as early as possible, it was decided to go for a bought-out option for the first-generation INSAT systems. Hand in hand, we embarked on the design and development of the second-generation systems indigenously. Four satellites of the first generation were thus procured, launched and operated for providing space-based communication and broadcasting services for meeting national needs. It is also of interest to note that the procurement process and the resultant interactions with the foreign supplier provided valuable insights into the technology of communication satellites with contemporary capabilities. This knowhow in-turn helped to configure upgraded indigenous second-generation systems, cutting short developmental times and the costs to realise the same. This, in turn, enabled the introduction of indigenous second-generation systems into services before the end of operational life of first-generation satellites. This carefully well-orchestrated parallel process, is a shining example of Sarabhai's foresight and Dhawan's organisational brilliance. This strategy has become a hallmark of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) projects through multi, inter and trans-disciplinary approaches.

Let me now return to Sarabhai. In addition to formulating his vision, he also had to conceive a viable strategy to initiate the process. He recognised that science was the seed from which India's initial forays into space could germinate into a programme that provided societal benefits as he had envisioned. He had at least three reasons for taking such an approach. First, being an exceptional scientist himself, he recognised that the Indian scientific research community was a hotbed of innovative and original thinking. Second, by creating first-class experimental science programmes, he knew that he could develop a generation of young scientists with the type of deep systemic knowledge that would be essential to manage complex space projects. By the time I joined such a programme at Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) in 1963, he had already mentored a superb cadre of senior students who had started playing key roles in the early phase of India's space programme: Prof E. V. Chitnis, Prof P. D.

Bhavsar, and Prof U. R. Rao among others. Third, Sarabhai could leverage his extensive contacts within the international scientific community, including top scientists at National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), that enabled him to pick the brains of some of the best minds to bring in innovation and creativity for India's early space endeavour. PRL provided Sarabhai an academic platform to invite such experts, and it is therefore recognised quite rightly as the cradle from which our space programme emerged.

To give you just a taste of this exciting moment in time, allow me to share some of my personal experiences. Because of my strong interests in Physics, I was naturally thrilled to have an opportunity to carry out research on Cosmic X-rays under the overall guidance of Dr Vikram Sarabhai. As I was being interviewed for the position, Sarabhai summarised his vision for India's space programme. He stressed the experimental nature of the research I would be conducting. Our goal was to design and test new instruments that flew to the edge of space, initially using high-altitude balloons, but later using rockets. From this vantage point, these instruments had an opportunity to advance science by observing phenomena that cannot be detected from the ground because of the blanketing effects of the atmosphere, or for reasons of in situ measurements.

I may mention that practicing research can contribute to the development of key abilities in an individual. Among other things, research kindles originality, creativity, an innovative approach to looking at the world, an ability for out-of-the-box thinking, and an approach to coping with increasingly complex problems. Further, research methodology often calls for looking at a particular problem with all its multiplicity of dimensions, without which one cannot comprehend the complete picture. To give you an illustration, when I wanted to understand cosmic radiation from outer space for my research, I had to grasp the nature of radiation, its transmission, techniques of detection and the models of the universe that can explain the phenomena. So, there is a whole host of disciplines and approaches like physics, astronomy, experimental techniques, developing precise communication abilities and team work – all

brought together to design a set of experiments to explore scientific phenomena of interest. This is precisely the type of systems thinking that Sarabhai was seeking to inculcate. Now, decades later, we have echoes of his vision in the National Education Policy, which stresses the importance of liberal education.

Even as Sarabhai actively mentored the scientific activities that seeded the space programme, many of which had a pure research flavour, he worked tirelessly on laying the foundations for the next phase. At the time, there were very few benchmarks for applied and translational research programmes, and Sarabhai further recognized that India lacked an industrial and academic system capable of providing supportive linkages. Therefore, he began to develop the nucleus of a new culture where a large group of individuals, trained in diverse activities but well-versed in working in teams, could drive the transition from space science to space technology and its applications. He set up the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) in 1962, which took over the responsibilities for space science and research from the Department of Atomic Energy. Under Sarabhai's leadership, INCOSPAR started establishing core capabilities within specific institutions, including Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS), Space Science and Technology Centre (now Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre) in Thiruvananthapuram for launching sounding rockets as well as developing launch vehicles and early satellites, Experimental Satellite Communication Earth Station (now Space Applications Centre) in Ahmedabad for satellite communications and remote sensing, and a satellite tracking station at PRL itself. In 1969, INCOSPAR was superseded by the ISRO, with Sarabhai as its first Chairman.

Central to Sarabhai's unique conception of the use of space, were nationally important applications such as direct satellite television broadcasts for educational purposes, improving meteorological forecasting (which is critical for agricultural operations), and conducting resource surveys to support national planning. He surveyed the landscape of such applications with a keen eye, and he initiated investigations into all potential applications that could be feasibly validated. However, as yet another example of his

tremendous vision, he recognised that it was not enough to merely demonstrate technical feasibility, in isolation from the community of users that the applications targeted. He stated, "It is possible to develop atomic energy and space research through basic, applied and developmental research in islands, largely isolated from the rest of the country, but large-scale applications of either, for the benefit of the nation cannot be undertaken in isolation." Thus, he initiated a major national-level consultation with user agencies outside the space system. It is among this crescendo of effort, taking ISRO to the cusp of its next phase, that Sarabhai's life was tragically cut short in December 1971.

In the immediate aftermath, Prof M.G.K. Menon took over as Interim Chairman. One key step (among many) that he took at this critical juncture was to organise a seminar as a fitting finale to Sarabhai's initiative to embark on a national consultation to utilize space capabilities for national development. This was held at Ahmedabad in August 1972 and attracted over two hundred participants representing 78 different Organisations, Agencies and Institutions. They jointly identified critical programmes and projects of relevance to the country. This seminar helped to reemphasize Sarabhai's legacy of creating a powerful culture of inter-departmental work among these stakeholders. This culture, that places the user community of space applications at the core, continues to remain intact at ISRO today.

After Menon's brief tenure, the mantle was passed into the capable hands of Prof Satish Dhawan. It was Dhawan who accelerated the process of consolidating the diverse sets of activities that had been initiated previously, giving them an organisational focus. Dhawan's tenure from 1972 to 1984 was marked by three phases in the evolution of India's space program. This phased strategy is akin to modern approaches of risk management for large techno-social systems by a stage gating process. I will now describe these three phases in some detail, along with the associated evolution of the governance structure that prepared the programme for its next phase.

During the first phase, Dhawan quite naturally focused on completing the proof-of-concept demonstrations for activities that

had been conceptualised and initiated under Sarabhai. However, he was not simply dotting i's and crossing t's, but energetically creating a working environment attuned to the complexities and challenges ahead. As an illustrative example, consider the development of Satellite Launch Vehicle, SLV-3. When Sarabhai had initiated this project, he was handholding his group through the process of vehicle development by adopting a configuration similar to the 4-stage American Scout rocket. In an effort to maximise learning in the least amount of time, Sarabhai had consciously split the group into four teams, one for each stage. By the time Dhawan took over, the downside of this structuring was evident: integrating the designs of four separate teams into a single system was proving to be immensely challenging. Dhawan could have narrowly focused on addressing only the immediate challenge, but that was not his style. Instead, he crafted a permanent solution to the systems integration problem at the governance level. In the case of the SLV-3 project, this involved identifying a person to whom the overall responsibility of the vehicle could be entrusted. The man he selected was none other than Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

Other key projects that Dhawan led to completion during this first phase included Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) involving the ATS-F American satellite, Satellite Telecommunication Experimental Project (STEP) supported by the Anglo-French Symphony Satellite, and applications development involving images obtained from American satellite LANDSAT. These demonstrations enabled ISRO to evaluate the potential of Space as a vantage point for addressing the country's developmental needs, as well as issues of scalability at the national level. An important outcome of this first phase was the validation of the uniqueness of space in providing new services, as well as assessing the advantages beyond the conventional approaches. Further, this phase offered a low-cost strategy for evaluating the concepts, the systemic issues including technologies, the institutional frameworks, and the user interfaces.

Turning to the organizational systems, an important mechanism that created integrated focus and multi-disciplinary leadership was through setting up a high-level body in 1972 known as the Space

Commission, which oversees and guides the space program in India. It is pertinent to quote here from the resolution relating to the constitution of the Space Commission which inter alia states, "the technological advances in the field of space, which are based on developments along advancing frontiers of many areas of science and technology produce rapid obsolescence not only of tools and equipment but also established systems of organisation. The sophistication of this technology, the newness of the field, the strategic nature of its development and the many areas in which it has applications have to be borne in mind in developing a suitable organisational framework to handle this area on behalf of Government". The resolution also noted that in order to promote a rapid development of activities connected with the Space Science, Space Technology and Space Applications, the government considered it necessary to set up an organisation, free from all non-essential restrictions and or needlessly inelastic rules, which will have a responsibility in the entire field of science and technology of outer space and their applications. The Space Commission is chaired in ex-officio capacity by the Secretary to the Government of India in Department of Space, and it reports directly to the Prime Minister. This structure ensures that the space program derives strength from the highest level, and that policy directions are duly integrated by different government agencies.

Dhawan now turned his attention to the next phase, which dealt with the realization of end-to-end systems at an experimental level. Even as he did so, his foresightful mind was already envisioning ISRO's third phase of sustained operations and growth, which would largely occur after his tenure ended in 1984. Thus, in parallel to activities in phase 2, he was further refining the governance structure, and the success of the third phase rests on the strong foundation he laid in the latter half of his Chairmanship. I will describe these parallel efforts next.

In Phase 2, there was a marked shift in strategy to develop in-house experience in the end-to-end realization of space systems whose potential utility at the national level had already been clearly demonstrated in Phase 1. Examples from Phase 2 include satellite

missions such as Bhaskara and APPLE (Ariane Passenger Payload Experiment), and the development of space launch systems: Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) and Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle Systems (ASLV).

Thus, Phase 2 sought to build heritage in space prior to operational deployment. This is a widely respected practice, which duly recognizes that space systems are inherently complex, carry high risks and are investment-intensive. There was also a need to minimize the impact of probable early failures in the public mind and the political system.

Many of the techniques that have uniquely evolved for space endeavours reflect principles of sound governance. Dhawan introduced several of these, starting early in his tenure with an effective review system with clear accountability and numerous checks and balances.

During the execution of complex space missions and projects, uncertainties that arise often call for mid-course changes, which affect several segments of the complex system. Configuration management techniques and practices have today become relevant for socio-economic development activities that are invariably multi-disciplinary in scope. For governance practices which need to address multistakeholder interests and interrelation among cost, schedule and performance for evaluation of impact of midcourse corrections, configuration management techniques are highly relevant. The early adoption of the principles of configuration management is a high point of ISRO's management practices in different projects.

Global experience with structuring of enterprises in the modern knowledge era indicates a preference for project-oriented matrix structures where the water-tight divisions of functional departments are transcended and flexible team working can be enabled focusing effectively on the outcomes desired. Many professional leaders of today adopt interdisciplinary and mission working to realise outcome targets relevant to governance. There is tremendous need for such organisational innovations in governance, which need to be studied and adapted or modelled for practical use. In big scientific endeavours, a structured way of getting things done with well laid out

rules and with a well-defined scope of financial control, management of the configuration of deliverables and schedule control need no emphasis.

In the governance relating to the introduction of high technology systems for meeting developmental and other innovative service goals, pragmatic strategies are called for. In the journey that India undertook in transforming her to a major space power, the strategic outlook was an essential navigator. In the first place, there was a detailed assessment and evaluation of alternate approaches to arrive at the most optimal solutions. Secondly, there were timely and deliberate decisions on exercising buy or build options considering the time frame for the introduction of services. In fact, the option whether to buy or to build was often/always part of the original design, at the system or even subsystem level, retaining the greatest level of flexibility. In the case of buy options, a parallel indigenous development plan was created to achieve self-reliance goals.

You may recall the tradeoffs I had spoken of earlier for space-based communication and broadcast systems. For earth observation systems, Dhawan required a different strategy. Although foreign satellites such as LANDSAT were being used for developing remote sensing applications in the country, the special requirements of earth observations peculiar to our country, as well as cost and strategic considerations, called for an indigenous design and development route for the realization of operational remote sensing satellite systems. The implementation strategy that Dhawan put into place involving many original concepts and innovation relating to overall satellite optimization, payload design particularly optics & detectors and other satellite elements, helped India gain a preeminent position in the field of remote sensing satellite systems.

Launch vehicle technologies play a seminal role in providing autonomy for access to space. In terms of the complexities and the barriers that exist internationally for the technology flows, space launch vehicles experience a higher degree of constraints in comparison to satellites. Therefore, even though we embarked on developments of both satellites and launch systems at the same time, it became necessary to make these two streams of development to

proceed independently. India consciously decided to seek launch support services for operational satellites from outside agencies as the development of suitable launch vehicles were still under progress. Such a strategy enabled the timely establishment of space services and also provided specific inputs for sizing the launch systems for these classes of satellites.

An aspect of the organisational strategy was to create an industrial base for supporting the space programme and for carrying out relatively routine operations. Sarabhai, being an industrialist as well as a scientist, had leveraged his ties to industry for creating ground systems and certain aspects of space systems. Under Dhawan, the space agency concentrated on pushing the internal output to move up in the value chain. This meant enhancing the quality and content of R&D outputs. This also enabled us to progressively increase the strength of highly qualified professionals without increasing the overall size of the organization. Also, in successive five-year plan periods, the organization could deliver increasingly larger number of complex missions, thanks to the increasing involvement of the Indian industries.

Dhawan also spearheaded several innovations that supported ISRO at an organisational level. Experience from earlier experiments involving broadcasting, communication and remote sensing, and dealing with the user communities, provided valuable inputs for the creation of innovative formal institutional frameworks. In the case of remote sensing, the institutional framework involved setting up of the Planning Committee of the National Natural Resources Management System (NNRMS) in 1983, which at the overall level is mandated to provide directions for the creation of space based remote sensing capabilities for the country. NNRMS consists of Secretaries of the line departments of the Government of India dealing with natural resources. It was initially headed by a Member of the then Planning Commission. Such a structure enables the involvement of major user communities to address issues of ensuring the use of such systems in their own areas of thematic applications, while at the same time facilitating the incorporation of this new and powerful technique into conventional approaches. Similarly,

the INSAT Coordination Committee, with the Secretaries of the user departments (Information and Broadcasting, Communication, Information Technology and Science & Technology) working along with the Secretary of the Space Department, was created as an apex body to address the development of space communication, broadcasting and meteorology and planning their utilization. In the context of Space, the Advisory Committee on Space Sciences (ADCOS) represented by some of the leading space scientists in the country provides directions for space science research. These three unique structures were masterminded by Dhawan, and they have played a crucial role in sustaining the various space endeavours. Being user driven, they further emphasise the culture of accountability, and a focus on efficiency.

In a conflict-ridden world swayed by the forces of globalisation as well as diverse geopolitical and nationalistic interests, the roles and the actors of space activities are rapidly transforming in the global arena. The strategic role of space in security, human and robotic operations in space and exploration of planetary bodies, and management of space environment for safe, secure and sustainable uses are receiving priority. We see larger roles for private sector actors, and disruptive developments are to be expected. This overall change in environment calls for a renewal of our approach to governance in space. Developing a national ecosystem for future advances in space must now be considered a priority.

In the context of enhancing space endeavours in the years to come, there are also needs and opportunities to strengthen and enhance the role of strategic, commercial and international cooperation/collaboration. In this context, there is a need to examine models that can address meeting demands on increased financial and other resource inputs. One major step in this direction is to address private sector participation, not only in the provision of downstream services, but also in owning and operating satellite systems as well as providing launch vehicle services.

This would need consortia of industries coming together to produce state-of-the-art, cost competitive satellites on one hand, and manufacturing launch vehicles and providing launch services on

the other hand. Needless to emphasize, there are issues related to technology transfer from ISRO, the use of ISRO infrastructure for testing, and other related requirements of launch vehicle and satellite manufacture, the use of launch pads and auxiliary services to provide launch services through private entrepreneurs, apart from issues relating to confidentiality and national security. It is gratifying to note that many of these developments related to national and international space endeavours and the resultant needs of transformative changes have been recognised by the government and the recent restructuring of ISRO by the present Government is a welcome step in this direction. A major initiative is needed from the private sector, with the enabling role of the government. Further, the increased role of space systems in the strategic sector is yet to display its full potential. It is necessary to evolve a comprehensive policy and programme relating to national security with space systems playing an appropriate role. Towards the end of the last decade, the world has witnessed the induction of the Space Force as one of the independent service branches of the US military. The breakthrough in reusable launch systems, the aggressive role of the private sector in the US disrupting the balances hitherto in the markets, the phenomenal investments in space capabilities from our region, all call for a strategic response from India in the new era unfolding in the space arena.

Another dimension of increasing the level of space endeavour in the country is to increase bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation, particularly for science missions. Evolution and expansion of this strategy could see India playing an increasing role in manned space missions, creation of space habitats, lunar bases and planetary exploration; all within the ambit of a global partnership framework like the model followed for International Space Station. Further, India could also play an effective role in global missions relevant to disaster management, monitoring climate change, space traffic management and such emerging concepts.

Regarding the international dimensions of space, with a unique legal regime that considers activities in outer space as a common province of all humankind, and allows all states to freely explore and use any part of outer space including the Moon and other celestial

bodies, the domain of outer space has witnessed many unique acts of cooperation at the international level. At the same time, due to its strategic and economic importance, it has also triggered intense competition for the use of resources such as orbit and radio spectrum in certain preferred ranges.

On balance, however, the inherent unifying influence of space and its ability to convey interconnectedness of all human actions on Earth had been powerful enough to inspire a new culture that has enabled human minds to transcend their exclusive earthly image and engage in expansive visions of space travel, living in outer space, and emerging as a multi-planetary species.

I would like to conclude my talk by making some comments on Science and Governance – a partnership in progress. With the growing progress in human civilisations over the past few centuries, which is equally tempered by the great wars and other upheavals, a new trend of universal and overarching humanistic values as a basis for social, political and cultural movements is manifesting. These humanistic values transcend national boundaries and connect all humanity. As a system or a discipline, the governance should draw its vital strength from these trends of reawakened humanistic values based on the recognition of the rights of all people including those who are disadvantaged or marginalised for access to livelihoods, equality and justice. Secondly, there is the priority need for renaissance in governance, for enabling it to synchronise harmoniously with the culture and methods of science which are strongly influencing the pathways traversed by societies in quest of further progress. Without such renaissance, modern challenges like climate change cannot effectively be confronted. Further, the governance systems should recognise the realities of the increasingly interdependent nature of the world, resulting from the forces of globalisation and also the imperatives of the natural world that we live in. India has been a land for time tested values that indeed address all humankind with their universal outlook and limitless magnificence of human potential. These values need not be in contradiction to the scientific outlook and techno culture that dominate the environment of our times but more importantly that can be vital forces to ensure beneficial

coexistence and growth in the order of a stupendously diverse world. In this context, the values manifested through the life and actions of tall leaders like Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel stand as a strong testimony for the relevance and vitality of such values as the life-current of good governance. They continue to serve as our beacons for our future journey of progress.

I would like to express my grateful thanks to Prof K R Sridhara Murthy for his help in developing this manuscript and Prof Viraj Kumar for critically reviewing the same.

Let me take this occasion to heartily wish you all good health and progress. Thank you

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R. Balasubramaniam

Mission Karmayogi
A Silent Revolution

Evolution of Civil services in a post independent India

In a young and continuously evolving democracy like India, Civil Services have remained at the epicenter of all government activities both as the agents of policymaking as well as the executive hand that delivers and implements those policies on-ground. When India became independent, our global share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was less than 2% and our social and economic condition was quite adverse. In such a situation, the Indian state had to rise to the occasion and provide welfare to India's citizens, so that they could achieve a basic standard of living. The agents of the state, i.e. the civil servants, had to adapt themselves to this reality. Under British rule, civil servants had mastered their role of maintaining law and order and collecting tax revenue from the population that were seen as *subjects* of the Crown. Now, they had to become effective providers of welfare to fellow *citizens*. They played this role until the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The extent to which the Indian state succeeded in enhancing welfare during this phase may be debatable, but there can be no doubt that the state was the dominant force in the Indian polity during this era. By the early 1990s, another reality emerged: India decided to embrace liberalization, privatization, and globalization, and it became necessary for the state to transform from being a *provider* of welfare to being a provisioner of services.

Today, we are at another crossroads; a new world is emerging before our eyes. Three forces are shaping this new world. First, with the rise of information and communication technology, we are becoming ever more inter-connected globally. Young Indians

living in small towns and villages are connected to the wider world, which is shaping their aspirations and desires. India's citizens today are no longer content to passively receive benefits from a *mai baap sarkar*; they are instead actively making claims on the state, and feel empowered to shape how the state affects their lives. Second, this more informed citizenry is giving shape to a more mature political system, one in which politicians from across the spectrum recognize the importance of delivering on their campaign promises of better health, education, and social benefits. These two forces have led to a sharper focus on citizen-centricity, citizen engagement, and citizen partnership, which the Prime Minister has called *Jan Bhagidari*. Finally, the development of new technologies is also opening up possibilities for governance that did not exist 10 or even 5 years ago, and it is incumbent upon the state to leverage these emerging technologies to deliver the maximum good for the maximum number of people, while minimizing the harms resulting from these technologies.

These forces herald a new phase in the evolution of the Indian state – from being a provider and a provisioner state, to becoming a 'partnership state.' Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic exemplified many aspects of this new 'partnership state.' At one level, we saw many different arms of the national government rise to the occasion, from the Prime Minister's Office, to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and many other Ministries, the NITI Aayog, ICMR, NCDC, and other central government organizations. These arms of the national government collaborated effectively with international bodies – such as the WHO, UN, and governments of other countries – and with state governments, bringing out the strength of India's global relations as well as of its federal structure. Even within states, municipal authorities and the frontline workforce of ASHAs, ANMs, and Anganwadi Workers rose to the occasion and conducted disease surveillance, provided medical care where needed, provided rations and other supplies, and finally carried out the world's largest vaccination drive. The role played by ASHAs has now been recognized through the WHO's Global Health Leaders Award [1].

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[1] https://www.who.int/news/item/22-05-2022-who-director-general-announces-global-health-leaders-awards

But it was not just the government. The private sector, civil society organizations, and citizen volunteer groups all joined the effort against the deadly virus. For example, it was Indian private sector companies that produced these vaccines, not just for India, but for the whole world. Civil society organizations and citizen volunteer groups played a major role in providing relief to those hit by the economic effects of the lockdowns, in spreading awareness about the virus, and in engaging in surveillance and related activities. All these parts of society – the government, the citizens, the private sector, the civil society organizations – they all came together as one partnership, as one "Team India", to fight the virus. This is the true spirit of the 'partnership state'. India will have to do this on an ongoing basis to collectively combat the challenges of the future, whether it is climate change or pollution or future pandemics or meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

This new model of the *partnership state* requires new skillsets and new mindsets among India's civil servants. For example, during the COVID crisis, we already saw how the best civil servants were able to shift their mindset from being *followers* of rules and orders to being *leaders* who brought citizens on board by arousing their inner purpose and getting them to commit to this common cause. More generally, as boundaries between 'government' and 'not government' blur, a new toolbox of collaborative skills will be required, as well as a willingness to admit that the government may not have all the answers. But the government does not need to have all the answers. Its job in this new model of the 'partnership state' is to co-create solutions with different stakeholders, such that everyone benefits together. This will bring to life the Prime Minister's vision of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, and Sabka Prayas*. Achieving this vision requires a new understanding of public human resources (HR) management and of capacity building, and a new articulation of the answer to the perennial question: "capacity building to do what?"

Mission Karmayogi – heralding a new era in public administration in India

This is the fertile ground from which the seeds of Mission

Karmayogi emerged from the visionary thinking of Prime Minister Modi. Mission Karmayogi – the **National Program for Civil Services Capacity Building** (NPCSCB) encapsulates three transitions: the first transition is a change in the mindset of government officials from considering themselves as *karmacharis* to considering themselves to be *karmayogis*. The second transition is a change in the workplace, from assigning individual responsibility for performance, to diagnosing the constraints to a civil servant's performance using the Means, Motives and Opportunity (MMO) framework. The third transition is moving the public HR management system and the corresponding capacity building apparatus from being *rule-based* to *role-based*. These three transitions are described in more detail below.

The first transition must occur at the level of the civil servant. Today, many civil servants consider themselves to be mere salaried employees or *karmacharis* who are cogs in the wheels of the larger government machinery. The Prime Minister wants to see the mindset shift to that of *karmayogis*, as individuals imbued with the spirit of action, service, and humility. Drawing inspiration from Swami Vivekananda and the national ideals of *Seva* (service) and *Tyaga* (sacrifice) that he propounded, each civil servant must see their work as being essential to achieving the larger goals of the government and the nation.

The second transition must occur within governmental units, be it a Ministry or Department or organization or agency. Today, officers are considered responsible for their own performance. But the government can learn from fields like consumer behaviour, social marketing and organizational management, where organizational leaders reflect upon three types of constraints to an individual's performance [2]:

- **Motives:** Does the individual want to perform the required role? How inspired is he to engage in public service?
- **Means:** Is the individual capable of performing the required role? Does he have the requisite set of competencies to play his role?

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[2] https://gh.bmj.com/content/bmjgh/4/5/e001790.full.pdf

- **Opportunity**: Does the individual get the chance and the support needed to perform the required role? Is he placed in a position and role that his competence is best suited to deliver on?

Answering these questions creates workplace solutions both for the individual and for the managerial environment within the Ministry or the Department. It also helps one understand the constraints and challenges including the different hygiene factors that facilitate or inhibit effective and efficient functioning of the Ministry.

The third transition is a system-wide transition that applies to the public HR management system and the capacity building system as a whole. This is the transition from a rule-based to a role-based HR management system, which empowers officials to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes that they require to fulfill their roles within the government at all points in their careers, rather than provide them training resources based on one-size-fits-all rules.

Institutional framework for Mission Karmayogi

The Institutional Framework includes four institutions and functional bodies, with representation from the Centre, State and civil society, and oversight from the highest level of political office. The framework keeps in mind principles of stability, sustainability, agility, scalability, and autonomy and will manage the whole-of-government transformation. These are the Prime Minister's Human Resource Council, the Cabinet Secretariat Coordination Unit, the Capacity Building Commission and the SPV Karmayogi Bharat.

Prime Minister's Human Resources Council

The Prime Minister's HR Council (PMHRC) is conceived as the apex body driving and providing strategic direction to the overall civil services reforms. Chaired by the Prime Minister, PMHRC will signal policy interventions, approve the National Capacity Building Plan, and review and provide guidance on reports submitted by other tiers. The Council will also guide the Global Public HR Summit providing inputs on themes, priorities, and international partnerships.

Cabinet Secretariat Coordination Unit

NPCSCB envisions a program coordination function to ease and manage implementation of the reform, monitor its progress, and promote cross-departmental collaboration. Implemented as a Coordination Unit and hosted within the Cabinet Secretariat, it will work to unify the program, align stakeholders, and resolve all issues, ensuring early adoption of capacity building plans within the Union Ministries and Departments. Chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, the Coordination Unit is designed to have representation from the Central and State bureaucracy (including representation from Departments and training institutes).

Capacity Building Commission

Core to the overall institutional framework, the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) is conceived as an independent body with full executive powers and is considered the heart and soul of Mission Karmayogi. Comprising of a three-member Commission and supported by an internal Secretariat, the focus is on driving standardization and harmonization across the capacity building landscape. To ensure independence, members of the Commission will represent the views of different services, State governments, public and private sector practitioners, and academia.

The central purpose of the CBC is to build credibility and shape a uniform approach to capacity building on a collaborative and sharing basis. As the custodian of the overall landscape, CBC will determine the roll-out strategy of the NPCSCB, onboarding different Ministries and Departments, conduct the HR audit of government organizations, ensure functional oversight over all central training institutions and over iGOT, conduct the Global HR Summit, provide policy inputs to DOPT and approve third party training providers.

Karmayogi Bharat – a Special Purpose Vehicle

Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT Karmayogi) is a large-scale comprehensive learning and career management platform, built indigenously in India, to suit the unique needs of the government. The platform creates an environment of continuous,

frictionless, and guided learning with tools for networking, peer-to-peer interactions, and career management. Envisaged as a digital platform where a content marketplace enables learning, iGOT Karmayogi will enable tailored competency development for all civil service officials. It will also form the backbone and starting point of linking and amplifying an intelligent government approach to HR management.

Implementing and managing a platform of the complexity and size of iGOT requires a specialized institutional mechanism, with core competency in technology and innovation. Considering the specialist skills and management autonomy needed, the government has instituted a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) termed Karmayogi Bharat, to operate the iGOT Karmayogi platform and any other digital assets pertaining to the Program.

The programmatic approach of Mission Karmayogi

Before outlining the programmatic steps required to achieve the vision of Mission Karmayogi, I want to discuss the idea of a **'competency'**, which is the building block for the new public HR management and capacity building system imagined by Mission Karmayogi. A competency basically represents a skill or an attitude or knowledge that enables an individual civil servant to perform her role. Competencies can be of three types: behavioral, domain, and functional. For example, let's say we have an officer in National Informatics Centre (NIC) whose job is to build websites that citizens would use to access government services. This officer needs to know the coding languages required to create webpages – that's her domain competency. This officer also needs to manage the relationship with the different nodal Ministries for the schemes being accessed through the website. Therefore, 'stakeholder management' and 'project management' are her functional competencies. Finally, throughout the project, the officer needs to demonstrate empathy towards the needs of the citizens who will finally use the website. That's an example of her behavioural competency.

Once we have understood the idea of a competency, we can understand the three specific steps that are being undertaken to

achieve Mission Karmayogi's ambitious goals, and how its institutional architecture will come together to deliver on this mission.

The first step in the process is to describe the government's vision for civil service performance. Defining this vision explicitly is important: this vision represents the goal towards which the capacity of the civil service is being built. Given the many stakeholders involved, this has to be a collaborative exercise, one that learns both from international experience and from India's vast history of public administration, and yet is rooted in the practical realities of governing a country as diverse and complex as India. We want this vision to be a practical, tractable and achievable vision and in alignment with the national vision set by the Prime Minister (five trillion dollar inclusive economy, ease of living, citizen-centric delivery of goods and services, Atmanirbhar Bharat, use of emerging technology etc). The Capacity Building Commission has been assigned the task of anchoring this unprecedented effort in India's history, and we are working closely with different Ministries, cadres, and state capacity experts to give shape to this vision.

The second step is to put in place a Framework for Rules, Activities, and Competencies (FRAC) across all the Union Ministries. Through this framework, the Ministry will be able to able to clearly and explicitly specify the roles and activities associated with each position in the Ministry, and the competencies required to perform those roles and activities well. Doing this is essential to transition the capacity building system from being rule-based to role-based. Currently, most officers receive one-size-fits-all training based on rules, such as their rank or years of experience. Specifying officers' roles and the competencies required to fulfill those roles will enable the Ministry to provide training that's customized for those roles. However, engaging in this activity can be quite an overwhelming task for any Ministry. Therefore, Capacity Building Units (CBUs) are being put in place within each Ministry to support the Ministries with this activity.

The third step, which is happening concurrently, is building the technological infrastructure underpinning the program. The Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT), has been created

using open-source digital building blocks developed entirely in India, designed for Indian learning systems. iGOT will own all the digital learning resources that will be used in the capacity building process and we are very proud that the government is benefitting from open source tools developed indigenously by Indian private sector and Indian philanthropic foundations, which exemplifies the true spirit of the partnership state. A version of iGOT is already hosted on NIC's servers, and the platform will be managed by the dedicated SPV company, Karmayogi Bharat that has already been set up. It will also manage onboarding of Departments, approve third party providers, and provide helpdesk assistance. Through marketing activities, the SPV will create a brand for the platform and promote it across all stakeholders. In doing the above, the SPV will own the Intellectual Property (IP) of all related assets and processes on behalf of the Government of India.

iGOT contains six hubs, with each hub representing a different aspect of the capacity building apparatus:

a. The Competency Hub: Here, the officer will learn which competencies are required for her position, and her current level of those competencies.

b. The Learning Hub: Here, the officer will be able to access a marketplace of courses. In the Mission Karmayogi parlance, we call these training courses 'Competency Building Products' (CBPs), because these courses are laser-focused on building the officers' competencies. The officer will be able to consume the CBPs required for their role, as well as CBPs to build competencies they may not need today, but which they wish to acquire in the future. In this way, we are transitioning the public HR system to being more role-based. Most of these CBPs will be produced by Indian organizations and contextualized for the unique situations faced by Indian civil servants.

c. The Career Hub: Here, the officer will be able to view all the competencies required for other positions in the civil service. The officer may aspire to be promoted to such positions in the future, and therefore, knowing which competencies

are required will enable them to plan their career trajectory effectively.

d. The Discussion Hub: Here, officers will be able to discuss various topics that may be relevant to their work, and in the process, signal their expertise to a wider world.

e. The Network Hub: here the officers will be able to connect with other officers in the government, and to receive mentoring and guidance from more senior officers.

f. The Events Hub: here, officers will be able to learn about and participate in various online and offline events where they can share ideas and interact with each other.

Therefore, iGOT will help officers identify gaps with respect to the competencies required for their roles through various forms of assessments; address these gaps using CBPs that are contextualized for India; and connect across departmental silos and seek and provide mentorship.

The iGOT platform is supported by a robust monitoring system that will assess officers' engagement with the platform, and measure whether their competencies are truly being built through the platform. In particular, officers' competencies will be assessed through a number of assessments on the platform: those that are part of the course itself; proctored assessments that are provided by independent assessment providers; and workplace competency assessments that are provided by the individuals with whom the officer works closely. All these assessments will help the officer understand where she stands vis-a-vis the role that she is expected to perform. It will also help her Ministry or Department understand her performance, and calibrate her professional trajectory accordingly.

But it is not just the officers whose platform engagement and performance will be assessed. CBPs will also be assessed for their impact on the officers' competency levels. Further, organizations providing these CBPs, such as universities or national training institutes, will be assessed for the impact of their courses on officers' competency levels and the quality of the content that they produce. There will also be an overall composite score for each Ministry that

can be used to rank the Ministry based on its overall performance on the Mission Karmayogi program.

The iGOT Karmayogi platform will benefit stakeholders in a number of ways. Officials will be enabled to identify gaps in the competencies they are expected to have by taking assessments on the platform that evaluate the relevant skills, attitudes, and knowledge. Once they are aware of how much they need to learn to meet the requirements of their roles, they can address these gaps by taking courses that are designed keeping the unique developmental needs of the Indian civil service in mind. Providing a space for civil servants to learn independently and autonomously will motivate them to make learning a regular part of their professional lives and engage in lifelong learning. Ministries and Departments, in turn, will be able to communicate the expectations of each role to civil servants, and assign roles to those that are best suited for them. CBP providers, such as Central and State Training Institutes, will be able to provide courses of a higher standard by understanding the demand for courses and the impact they have on learners, as well as the changing needs of the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India. And more importantly iGOT will help provide *anytime, anywhere, any gadget learning* to the nearly 3.1 million civil servants (belonging to Groups A, B and C) of the Government of India and another 20 million employees of all the State Governments and CPSUs.

The Capacity Building Commission of India (CBC), considered the heart and soul of Mission Karmayogi plays a key role by focusing on both the demand and the supply side of training. It is addressing the supply side by ensuring oversight and quality demands on the CBPs that will be available on iGOT, and by developing an accreditation framework for Central Training Institutes. This work will harmonize the standards for capacity building and facilitate knowledge sharing between institutes. The CBC is assessing the baseline of existing capacities of Central Training Institutes (CTIs) and providing a standard for them to elevate the quality of training they provide. The standard will further be used to harmonize civil service training delivery in the country by defining processes and

procedures of a civil services training institute. On the demand side, the CBC is helping Ministries prepare Annual Capacity Building Plans (ACBPs). These ACBPs detail the steps that the Ministry intends to take to build the capacity (both training and non-training) of their officials, identify factors that impact the motivation and engagement of officials, and provide an environment that enables them to deliver services effectively. The CBC will also undertake HR audits to understand the people, process and other system challenges and explore non-training interventions to mitigate them.

Once all these steps have been taken, India's capacity building system will look very different, and we would have effectively addressed many criticisms of the current model.

One, training and capacity building programs would be better targeted, because they would focus on the competencies that the officer needs but lacks for their current role.

Two, more cross-learning and cross-utilization of resources would be enabled across different cadres of the civil service, and across different training institutes. For example, if two different cadres require the same functional competency, only one of the corresponding civil service training institutes needs to develop the CBP for that competency. This would save substantial resources. More importantly, there will be greater consistency in training priorities and pedagogy, and these efforts would contribute to breaking down the departmental silos that sometimes can stifle government performance. It will also be a precursor step towards enabling a 'whole of government' approach towards delivery of goods and services to citizens.

Three, officers would benefit from greater flexibility in the training programs. Today, most training programs take place on particular days at particular locations, which makes it challenging for some civil servants to benefit from these programs. A technical architecture like iGOT can enable anytime, anywhere, any gadget learning, which is more consistent with the needs of several civil servant roles, such as frontline workers and police officers.

Four, the whole process would refresh the technological and pedagogical methods used by the civil service training system. Online

training would be much more efficient: direct to learner, rather than through a cascading training-of-trainer system which can lead to transmission loss. In terms of andragogy, Mission Karmayogi's emphasis on learning communities, on-the-job learning, mentoring, adult learning principles, and post-training support and mentoring will bring India's capacity building system into the 21st century. All capacity building programs will also be driven by the 70-20-10 framework where 70% will involve *experiential* on-the-job learning, 20% will be peer-driven and mentor-based *relational* learning, and 10% will be content-based *informational* learning.

Five, the program would create much stronger incentives for learning and applying knowledge than what exists today. iGOT's technological architecture will make it easy to measure, document, and reward progress in a systematic and consistent way across Ministries and Departments. Officers will now be able to more credibly signal their expertise to their employer, and therefore the civil service may find it easier to place the right civil servant in the right role driven by objectively verifiable criteria.

Finally, capacity building would become a lot more equitable and democratized. While Group A officers still manage to receive a host of training opportunities today, the training of Group B and C officers is sporadic and not provided at the right junctures in their careers. Offline methods also make it challenging to train frontline workers, who interact directly with citizens. iGOT solves for all these problems, and will be a step change in how the Indian state is able to work. The inputs from the HR audit and real-time information collected and collated from the CBUs will help the CBC frame robust and actionable HR policy inputs for the consideration of DoPT.

Together, the interventions set forth as part of Mission Karmayogi will actualize the vision of the National Training Policy (2012). With the CBC revising to make it updated, contextually relevant and culturally appropriate, any gaps will soon be addressed and a future-ready policy will also be in place. And this will further enable training programs to align comprehensively with the requirements of the roles that civil servants are assigned, empowering them to perform at their best. It will facilitate the breaking down of silos

between different training programs and institutions, supporting a pedagogy that is consistent, coherent, and accessible to all. Further, civil servants from all departments, positions, and services would have access to the same training, and will be able to take charge of their own growth as public servants. Training programs will constantly evolve to match the needs of civil servants and the ever-changing world. Public HR management systems will be able to take advantage of competency-focused training infrastructure, assigning officials to roles that they are both interested in and skilled at, allowing Ministries and Departments to perform better at achieving their goals.

Emerging as a global exemplar

A post-Covid BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear and Incomprehensible) world is redefining the very understanding of the future of WORK. The understanding of what is a public good is also constantly evolving along with the increasing demand and aspirations of citizens. India is now moving towards a *'Less Government, More Governance'* approach that is driven by citizen engagement and partnership. All this requires a paradigmatic shift in the capacities, mindset and actions of the civil servant. Technology is no longer a fashion statement and is redefining how goods and services can be rendered. From Aadhar to DBT and Digilocker, from CPGRAMS to MyGov, from faceless transactions to drone deliveries, from online learning to a Digital University, India is rapidly integrating technology in both governance and in delivering goods and services. The structure and setup of the WORKPLACE is rapidly altering and *'work from anywhere to deliver good governance'* to all citizens will soon become the new norm. All this requires a WORKER (civil servant) who is not just *committed* but also has the *competence* to deliver on this evolving mandate. While the world struggles to understand these changes, India has taken on the pioneering role of not just ushering in inclusive citizen-centric development, but also to democratize the knowledge that can drive it. And in the civilizational spirit of *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam*, India is preparing itself to share the knowledge, experience and expertise that it is now developing as an exemplar in public administration with the rest of the world.

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2022 Higher Education:
Vision, Growth, and Governance

The Background of a Rich Heritage

The traditional Indian Gurukula model from ancient India was unique, and it did not require any formalized rule-based regulatory system of governance from outside. Each Gurukula or ancient educational institute so to say, was fully autonomous and was supported in trust and faith by the society and the rulers. Much could be learnt from the ancient Indian tradition of knowledge quest, transfer, and utilization so much so that great institutions like Nalanda, Taxila, Vikramshila and others continue to be unique exemplars of our country's history of education systems.

Even today, the top-level international universities have reached the credibility they enjoy solely because of autonomy, and total absence from outside interference and control. Inevitably, there were constraints in total implementation of such practices in situations when the State provided public funds and was duty-bound to ensure its appropriate usage and accountability. The trust deficit of pre-independence days perpetuates even now, and similar patterns of overseeing accountability persist.

From Social Support to State Control

Several notable initiatives can be recalled from the pre-independence days that ignited afresh the quest for knowledge that had permeated Indian society at practically every level from the times of the Gurukula, led by the learned and wise men and women. Opening educational institutions was considered a pious task, one of the notable means to repay the "Rishi Rin", debt to the learned

knowledge creators. Support came from the society, the affluent within it, and the rulers of the day. Those were the days of a unique level of mutual trust and respect. Any interference from any quarters was unimaginable.

Before independence from the British rule, outstanding initiatives were launched in this country in higher education, purely with the support of philanthropy. The Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is a primary example of the vision of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who lived a life fully devoted to Vedic principles and practices, but a great votary of equal respect for all religions; and deep faith in "unity in diversity" that traditionally abounds in India. But he had the vision and knew how relevant it would be to acquire new knowledge, and how it could be harmonized with the great wisdom of ancient India. His university gave equal importance to the study of the Vedas, as also to establishing the first modern College of Engineering. The Aligarh Muslim University, Baroda University, and the Mysore University were also very significant developments. There emerged a large list of colleges as well.

Post-independence Growth in Education

Post-independent India had an inheritance of just about 30 universities or Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and 695 colleges during 1950-51 (Table 1). The literacy rates were around 18-20 per cent and the outreach of access to education was severely restricted at every stage. There was a very inspiring inheritance of the freedom struggle: no other struggle for freedom had focused so much on education as had been emphasized by the Indian leaders of the pre-independence period! Mahatma Gandhi saw education as the, "Ray of hope" for the deprived and the way to bring them hope after several generations. For decades he had worked dexterously on his model of basic education, *Buniyadi Talim*. He had a very clear vision of the shape of higher education (HE) in independent India. He had delivered a historic speech at the foundation day ceremony of BHU, February 4, 1916. By 1947, this university had created a distinguished place for itself among Indian universities, primarily because of the model of governance it developed under the nationalistic fervor and

universal vision of Madan Mohan Malaviya, which was subsequently strengthened by the presence of distinguished scholars and academic stalwarts of the stature of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. At the time of independence, universities of Allahabad, Patna, Madras, Calcutta, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), and Shanti Niketan had a very respectful international presence among the distinguished centers of learning and knowledge. India had a reputed scholar as its first education minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and internationally known scientists and scholars, including C.V. Raman, Homi J. Bhabha, S.S. Bhatnagar, S.N. Bose, D.S. Kothari, Ramaswami Mudaliyar, among several others.

Table 1: Growth of Higher Education Institutions (1950-51 to 2021-22)
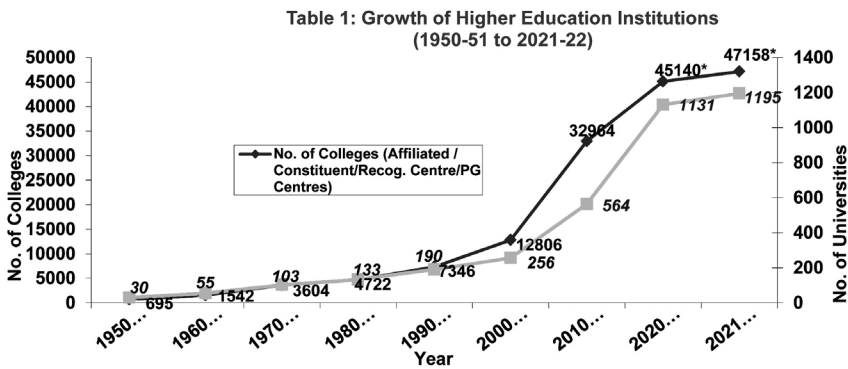
Colleges include Affiliated Colleges / University Colleges / Constituent Colleges / Post Graduate Centres / Off-campus Centres / Recognized Centres

* Provisional Figures

Source : University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE).

In spite of severe resource constraints, with the futuristic vision and foresight of the academic community and political leadership, India went ahead with innovative plans and programmes for expanding higher education, setting up new institutions in relevant areas, particularly for the advancement of science and technology. This led to establishing great centres for nuclear science and space research, now known internationally as Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Bhabha Atomic Research centre (BARC), and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). Further, the Council

of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), National Physical Laboratory (NPL), several new universities, and numerous specialized laboratories in specific areas of research, innovation, and applications of the outcomes initiated considerable advances and helped to create a rich pool of young scholars and scientists. Addressing convocation of Allahabad University, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru put his perception on higher education in these words: "A university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards even higher objectives. If the universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is all well with the nation and the people." (Kothari, 2000: 108). On another occasion, he exhorted young people to test their mettle and contribute in building a new India: "Every generation has to fight anew the battle for freedom. Otherwise, we grow soft and forget the basic values of life and freedom and tend to lose their essence. Now a chance comes to all of us and, more especially to the young to test their mettle and their patriotism. Let this challenge be considered an opportunity and be met with strength, dignity, discipline and fortitude, so that out of this trial a new and better India might be fashioned by the efforts and sacrifices of her children." (ibid. 32).

In consonance with the spirit of the Constitution of India, in spite of severe constraints thrust upon the national resources, independent India remained steadfastly committed to provide equality of opportunity to all in school education, and to the willing, inclined, and talented in HE. The national vision was best comprehended in the words of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who, ever conscious of universal access, quality and excellence, made this universally acceptable statement: "Education is a universal right, and not a class privilege." Further, he said, "Intellectual work is not for all, it is only for the intellectually competent." (Radhakrishnan, 1990: 509-513). No matter what changes may have occurred in individual aspirations and national expectations from the universities and institutions of higher learning, the following summarization by the teacher-philosopher-statesman not only comprehensively unveils the role of universities, but also lays down candidly the role of teachers:

"If our universities, which showed so much promise on the eve of Independence, now appear to be in a state of disarray, it is because they have been increasingly invaded by masses of people who have no regard for intellectual competence or aptitude for academic work. We have made short work of tests of intellectual competence in order to make peace with every kind of social and political pressure." (Ibid)

The Turbulent Trajectory of the Education System

Pankaj Chandra (2017) very prudently analyses how the governments entered into the managements of educational institutions, and the rest, as they say, is history: "The nineteenth and early 20th centuries, when many of these colleges were being established, remain the golden period for private support of higher education in India. Sometime in the 1950s, the government decided to support these institutions with significant operating grants, thus starting an era of State control in academic institutions. The control of these grant-in-aid institutions passed from nimble, engaged donors to stodgy, suspecting government bureaucrats." The HEIs saw in the government a source of easy financial aid that would otherwise have been unavailable to them. The government argued that since it was providing financial support to universities, it should have a say in the decision-making process. It wanted to influence the appointment of the Institution's leadership and, subsequently, the selection of its faculty. The government insidiously imposed its own rules and regulations on the university, displacing the governance system that was already in existence (which, it can be argued, was less transparent, but was decisive and focused). The Central Government started propagating its own educational vision by establishing largely standalone central institutions that focused on specific disciplines or provided training for a single profession. The undergraduates were, therefore, deprived of a well-grounded, holistic education. By the early 1960s, the foundation of *"sarkarikaran"* was in place. Gradually, the control of the establishment grew both in institutions established by the Union government, and State governments just followed suit. During the Emergency in 1975-77, with complete government control intellectual endeavor was undermined in all walks of society. In the 1980s, State governments competed with each other to lower

the eligibility standards not only for entry to professional colleges, but also sanctioned HEIs without caring for readiness or resources. How they impacted the quality in higher education is best illustrated by a reference to the massive growth of professional institutions, offering teacher-education qualifications (Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], National Education Policy [NEP] -2020: Para 15.2): "According to the Justice J.S. Verma Committee (2012) constituted by the Supreme Court, a majority of stand-alone teacher education institutions (TEIs), over 10,000 in number, are not even attempting serious teacher education but are essentially selling degrees for a price. Regulatory effort has, so far, neither been able to curb the malpractices in the system, nor enforce basic standards for quality, and in fact have had the negative effect of curbing the growth of excellence and innovations in the sector. The sector and its regulatory systems are therefore in urgent need of revitalization through radical action in order to raise standards and restore integrity, credibility, efficacy and high quality to the teacher education system."

The Current State of Disarray

The state of disarray, which was a matter of concern over seven decades ago, has become far more complex at this juncture. The immense expansion in HEIs and enrolments could be one contributing factor. To correct the situation, the first challenge is to keep the quality of education in the HEIs suitably advanced to meet internationally acceptable levels, apart from meeting the national needs and requirements. The systems of governance, management, and administrations have undergone considerable changes in response to new challenges. These need to be scrutinized and examined in view of the pace of change that has been unexpectedly accelerated during this century. Presently, we are seriously deficient in efforts to ensure quality and excellence in several of the HEIs. India needs sound academic leadership, and a dynamic system of governance and its structures.

The critical questions posed to the system of governance:

- How and why did India, while expanding its higher education system (HES), allow the dilution of basic expectations of

quality, excellence, creation, and utilization of new knowledge from universities and specialized HEIs?

- Did the leadership lack dynamism, commitment, and inspiration?
- Was there an inadequacy of necessary human and fiscal inputs?

The On-going Challenge

We are now in the third decade of this century. We must properly comprehend the importance of: "The industrial revolution has bequeathed us the production line theory of education." (Harari 2018: 309). The pertinent questions that we need to address are:

- Is higher education now only meant to prepare young people for jobs?
- Isn't such an approach injurious to personality development and search for truth?
- Is the universally-accepted ideal of education to promote the liberty of mind and freedom of thought too tough to sustain?
- Have we adhered to traditional pedagogies for far too long?

The traditional classroom-teacher-taught model that was globally prevalent, stood seriously challenged during the mid-twentieth century. We persisted with it for far too long. As the pace of change accelerates, it requires corresponding changes in policies, focus on student choices and interests, new pedagogies, and more prominently than the past, in systems of governance, administration and management.

The Covid Pandemic posed new challenges to practically every aspect of higher education. This encompassed the very approach to new pedagogies, course content, and respect for individual choices of the learner! It necessitated serious transformation in the structure and approach of governance and management.

In a federal setup of degrees, grades and credits, the issues of equivalence, transfers from one system to another, and the need for

institutional networking that helps maintain global standards, just cannot be ignored. Hence a coordination mechanism at the Central and State level is necessary. Over the last seven decades, large-scale expansion was inevitable, and it did take place. However, the corresponding structural changes in management and governance could not keep pace with the emerging demands.

The inadequacy of such changes has been adequately reflected in the National Education Policy, NEP-2020 (MHRD 2020). Dynamic systems of governance that aim at assisting the academia in quality, excellence, and new knowledge can gain a lot from the manner in which credible international institutions are functioning, creating new knowledge, experimenting with new management systems, and utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to augment their effort. In fact, every institution requires an innovative leadership and its own system of governance that suits the personality of the university/institution. An academic leader must learn from others but be his "own person" when it comes to implementation.

Preparing for the Emerging Scenario

Universities and HEIs in India could also be categorized on the basis of the source of funding and resource generation. Funding comes from the Central Government, State governments, and self-financing initiatives within State-funded universities. India now has several private universities, colleges, and other degree-awarding institutions. The most sought-after universities of national importance like the Indian institutes of technology (IITs), Indian institutes of management (IIMs), and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), are fully funded by the Central Government.

The Structure: The President of India is the Visitor of Central universities, and the Governor of the State concerned is the Chancellor of State-funded universities. Private universities have other arrangements for the post of Chancellor. The Executive Council, Board of Management, and Governors constitute the top body. The Vice-Chancellor (VC) is supposed to implement its decisions and instructions. The VCs are appointed for a fixed durations of five years (in some States it is three years) by a search-cum-selection

committee constituted by the Visitor and/or Chancellor. It submits a panel of three-to-five names, out of which one is picked as the VC. The VC is supposed to be a scholar of eminence, embodiment of values and ethics, distinguished in the realm of compassion, vision and empathy, and committed to create and generate new knowledge. He is the academic leader, the university set up in its entirety is expected to stand behind him in implementing his ideas, achieving his ideals, and the national goals set up by the education policy at the national level. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) is the top national body to advise the government in all matters of education, and that includes structural changes and also uplifting of the systems of governance.

The point to be noted in the context of governance is indeed terrifying. Although the former Chief Justice of India pointed out the horrible state of affairs in 2012, it had to be repeated in 2020! Obviously not much worthwhile was achieved during the intervening eight years! The story, we know, is just the same in medical, engineering, management, and other sought-after professional courses. Commercialization of education is a daunting issue in India at every level. The systems of coaching, particularly the popular brands of coaching systems have intruded deep within institutions, disturbing and destroying the accepted pedagogies that are supposed to kindle ideas and imagination among children. More often than not, paper leakage in entrance and competitive exams has become a regular phenomenon. It is not impossible to counter it. It requires leadership qualities and support from decision makers at every level. Everyone is expected to adhere to honesty and transparency, irrespective of ideological or political commitments.

National Education Policy

India's first comprehensive national education policy came 1968, second in 1986/92, and the latest; National Policy on Education—NEP-2020 is under active implementation at present. Each one of these appreciated the role and importance of upgrading the systems of educational administration and management in accordance with the goals and objectives articulated. The NEP-2020 (p. 4) mentions,

"The aim of education in ancient India was not just the acquisition of knowledge as a preparation for life in this world, or life beyond schooling, but for the complete realization and liberation of the soul. World class institutions in India such as Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vallabhi, set the highest standards of multidisciplinary teaching and research and hosted scholars and students from across backgrounds and countries."

The extent of its successful implementation depends on the strength and dynamism acquired by the system of governance, and the manner in which it decides on prioritizing the initiatives expected to be launched to fulfill the aims and goals stated in the policy document. A thorough transformation has become necessary after the two years of the pandemic, which has totally disturbed education systems around the globe. Academic leadership has been put to unprecedented testing in handling unforeseen situations.

Academic Leadership

Common people have to deal with government functionaries at various levels. The upper levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy, in various areas and departments, have visible and experiential commonalities. Seniors expect respect, are conscious of their position and power, and are always keen to punish those who commit a wrong, evoking the fear of authority while dealing with those whom they are supposed to serve. Invariably, they refer to past precedents and are generally not interested in taking risks and launching innovations. This approach just does not work when it comes to academia. Societies that do not offer adequate respect to their teachers rarely flourish. Those who become part of educational systems within institutions and also in government and its departments must clearly appreciate and internalize the difference between the bureaucratic approach and the academic approach (Rajput 2001: 238-249). It has been observed that when academics, scholars, or researchers assume charge of a leadership position as VC, Chairperson, or Director of a distinguished public university or professional organization, devoted to research and development, they are, invariably, overwhelmed by administrative and bureaucratic procedures and stipulations. Interaction time is mostly cornered

by those responsible for administrative and financial management. Expectations are entirely different. Those who really appreciate the difference between academic and bureaucratic administration delegate most of the general administration responsibilities to Registrars, Financial Advisors, and the like. The volume of files should not become an addiction, or a 'proud' habit or demonstration of efficiency! Persons in the leadership position will command respect for their contribution to knowledge creation and research, to the academic life of the nation, and outside (ibid. 247-248). They must continue these in spite of heavy new responsibilities, without dissociating from innovations, not only in their areas of specialization but also in managing people and their institutions. The leaders need not focus on individuals for a lapse or below-par performance. They must dexterously explore the factors responsible for any individual not delivering to optimum capacity and capability, and what needs to be done to avoid any recurrence of lapses. Academic heads must always participate actively in serious professional discussions and treat institution management as an art, not a craft. They must continuously interact with colleagues with due deference, and acknowledge their contribution in realizing the objectives, goals, and vision envisaged in the initial stages of the establishment of the institution, and any alterations that might be necessary in a dynamic scenario in the field concerned. They should be ready to face all challenges and manage conflict situations. In fact, in the present decade, one of most significant objectives of education and learning as identified by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and accepted globally is, "learning to live together"; along with learning to know, learning to do, and learning to be. This in fact defines the vast expanse of the horizon opening before academic leaders assuming charge of new assignment as institutional heads.

Percept to Practice

Impediments to improvements in higher education are really a cause of concern (Rajput 2022). One of these is the inadequacy of resources, both in workforce and material. If funds for research and innovations are scarce, and universities suffer from 40-60 per cent academic staff vacancies, the situations are hardly inspiring. There

is one more serious issue which is often swept under the carpet in deliberations. Having cursorily glanced over institutional expectations, and much-needed difference between academic and bureaucratic leadership, we need to ponder over the external influences that tend to make or mar the decision-making skills of the academic leaders. In ancient Indian tradition, even kings and emperors could never have thought of imposing their persons of interest as chiefs of Nalanda, Vikramshila or Vallabhi! Several politicians, who give more preference to ideological attachments than national interests or the aspirations of the young, firmly believe that all the talk about university autonomy and its being headed by an outstanding individual is, "meant only for academic discussions and nothing more". They are worried about the recommendations in the NEP-2020—which propose constituting a strong Board of Governors (BoG), that shall become the appointing authority of the VCs and other heads of the HEIs. The NEP-2020 clearly mentions: "It is envisaged that all HEIs will be incentivized, supported and mentored during this process, and shall aim to become autonomous and have such an empowered BoG by 2035." The Kerala and Tamil Nadu Governments are said to be working on independent education policies, rejecting the NEP-2020. If this really happens, it will permanently damage the interests of the young persons from these States, on both the national and international stage. The systems of governance can hardly be expected to deliver in terms of excellence and a sound work culture under such circumstances.

A Case for Case Studies

In a slightly different context, one could peruse the case of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) created by an act of parliament in 1993. There was a long-standing demand for this from senior and sincere teacher-educators for over two decades. The NCTE, became operational in 1995-96, and within the next three years, made its presence felt throughout the country, particularly among all those interested in education and teacher education. It followed the policy of being "supportive yet firm". It really worked. Once convinced that every institution had been made fully aware of the basic minimum inputs required in workforce and material in teacher education institutions (TEIs) it implemented these firmly. On

one occasion a State government sanctioned 70-odd TEIs to function with immediate effect, without caring for the NCTE stipulations. The NCTE, after making sincere yet unsuccessful efforts to convince the State authorities not to go ahead, issued notices in media indicating that the degrees so earned would not be recognized. This worked. The State had to withdraw the sanction. A State Open University invited applications for admission to B.Ed. correspondences courses, flouting the NCTE stipulations. The NCTE issued public notices about its being unrecognized. It worked again. The credibility of the organization was not only established, but also appreciated. It is also relevant to mention that NCTE, which came on to the scene in full bloom, and with positive vibes in academia, received appreciation even from the perpetual critics of every innovative initiative; but it squandered away all of its credibility and acceptability within no time. It is for serious researchers and scholars in education, management, and governance to research about this organization, and many others, on how the initial credibility was established, and what led to its sharp decline and by 2012, the Justice Verma Committee had to make these shocking remarks, "A majority of stand-alone TEIs —over 10,000 in number are not even attempting serious teacher education but are essentially selling degrees for a price." Proper study of these examples can help identify indicators that create both positivity and negativity, and the impact on the growth and development of academic institutions. The appropriate research will also reveal what is needed to be achieved in the years ahead to ensure institutional functioning at the optimum level.

The Task Ahead

India is moving ahead with educational plans and programs that are future-oriented, and indeed inspiring to the generations ahead. It is the Kulapati, the VC, who would be responsible for creating a learning environment rich enough to lead the disciple from humanity to divinity (Rajput 2016: 90-91). The Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata highlights the responsibility of the guru in pragmatic terms: *Gurur Gurutamodhamah*; The guru-teacher or mentor, can transform the learner from a person to a personality, even guiding him on the path from humanity to divinity. It requires an ambience that encourages

purity of thought, speech, and action. It may appear tough at this stage, but India has achieved it in the past. It could do it again in spite of the hurdles, deficits, and deficiencies strewn all-around at present. In spite of impediments being thrown in the well-initiated implementation of the recent transformational resolves, the nation must move ahead on the policy mandate (MHRD, NEP-2020: 19.2): "It is effective governance and leadership that enables the creation of a culture of excellence and innovation in higher education institutions. The common feature of all world-class institutions globally including India has indeed been the existence of strong self-governance and outstanding merit-based appointment of institutional leaders." In this day and age, no nation could afford to ignore what was anticipated by several luminaries at the time of decimation of the era of imperialism that "future empires shall be empires of knowledge". These are the days of knowledge power and knowledge economy. It is encouraging that the Indian academia and scholarship accepts the new outlook, and this finds reflection in the resolve made at the national level (ibid. 19.4): "All leadership positions and Heads of institutions shall be offered to persons with high academic qualifications and demonstrated administrative and leadership capabilities along with abilities to manage complex situations. Leaders of an HEI will demonstrate strong alignment to constitutional values and the overall vision of an institution, along with attributes such as a strong social commitment, belief in teamwork, pluralism, ability to work with diverse people, and a positive outlook. The selection shall be carried out by the BOG through a rigorous, impartial, merit-based, and competency-based process by an Eminent Expert Committee constituted by the BOG." It is a very encouraging and inspiring blueprint for moving towards excellence in the national knowledge quest, its creation, assimilation, and utilization in human welfare. Working under tough conditions, Indian universities must remain conscious of the adage attributed to Napoleon: Men are powerless against the future; institutions alone fix the destinies of the nations. India's history, heritage, and tradition of knowledge clearly indicate how institutions have played a sustained role in maintaining the continuity, simultaneously accepting, "Noble thoughts from all around." India is bound to regain its legitimate

position in the comity of nations as long as its higher education prepares disciplined young persons of exemplary character, courage, commitment to values and ethics in life.

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Yogendra Narain

Civil Military Relationship

Civil Military relationship in India has been the subject of intensive analysis and discussion in India specially after Independence. Usually, the topic is taken to mean the interaction between the civilian bureaucracy in the Ministry of Defence and the Military establishment. But in its broader sense it includes the civilian Ministers /State Ministers heading the Ministry of Defence also. With the creation of a separate Department of Military Affairs under the Chief of Defence Staff, the interaction between the Military and the civil bureaucracy in the Defence Ministry has substantially reduced. However why does this acrimony between the two verticals still remain? For this we will have to go back a bit in history.

The British Indian army grew out of the East India Company's involvement in the disputes between the Indian states in the eighteenth century. There were three separate armies in the Presidencies of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. However, by the Regulating Act of 1774 these three separate armies were brought under control of the Governor General in Council. The concept of civilian control over the military was an established principle in Britain and this was extended to India. The Presidency Councils, in turn, exercised control over the local military commanders in their jurisdictions.

After 1857 all the possessions of East India Company came under the control of the Crown and the three Presidency armies were gradually amalgamated in one under a Commander in Chief in 1895. In 1905 the civil military relationship led to discord between the then Commander in Chief Lord Kitchener and the Viceroy Lord Curzon. The Viceroy wanted the Defence Department to be headed by a civilian who would vet independently the proposals received from the

Commander in Chief but Kitchener was not agreeable to the same and wanted to head the Military Department of the Government. The British Government supported Kitchener and Curzon resigned on this issue. Kitchener was now not only the commander of all military forces in India, but also became the Military Member of the Viceroy's Council-a post that was hitherto kept separate. This gave the military an outsized position within the government

The Indian political leaders were quick to grasp the issues. In the budget of 1903, Gopal Krishna Gokhale argued that "Indian finance is virtually at the mercy of military considerations" as the latter was being given excessive weight in the government's consideration of the matter. In 1907 Gokhale argued against privileging the narrow standpoint of a soldier. The newly constituted legislative assembly while discussing the recommendations of the Lord Esher Committee tabled 15 resolutions as recommendations to the Viceroy, which covered the central "structural problem of civil military relations". They argued for establishment of similar civil military relations as in Britain. To realise the "principle of ultimate supremacy of the civil power" they also demanded that the Commander in Chief cease to be a Member of the Executive Council. This was not agreed to and it was argued that the ultimate control of Defence administration continued to vest in the Secretary of State in India, who was subject to parliamentary control. In this way the civilian control continued. The Army Department was put under the control of the Commander in Chief but the Department was headed by the Secretary who was a military officer of the rank of Major General. He could not independently examine the proposals received from Army Headquarters but had to issue orders under the name of the Government of India for the same.

It was in 1921 that a civilian was again appointed as secretary and in 1936 the department was renamed the Defence Department. Together with it a Department called the Department of Military Finance was also created. All proposals having a financial bearing were scrutinized by it. Budget preparation, overview of Expenditure and other aspects of financial control were vested in that Department.

In September 1946 when the Interim Government was formed,

Prime Minister Nehru made it a point that the Commander in Chief no longer had a seat at the political decision-making table, as he had until then by combining the role of Defence Member and Commander in Chief of the Viceroy's Council. In the new structure the Commander in Chief was out of the Cabinet, and all the important communications and decisions now had to go through the civilian officials and the Member heading the Department of Defence. Sardar Baldev Singh, a civilian, was appointed the Military Member of the Executive Council.

Independence and After

Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India realized the importance of keeping the military subordinate to the civilian political authority. Symbolically, shortly after Independence Nehru moved into the Flagstaff House, the Commander in Chief's mansion to use as his own official residence

Nehru then adopted a policy of separating the unified armed forces structure, in which the Army and the Commander in Chief dominated and might be a potential threat to civil power, into one in which the Army, Navy and Air Force each had their own command structure and were headed by separate Commanders in Chief. In Parliament the Prime Minister emphasized the point that "civil authority is and must remain supreme". In 1955, the Government further downgraded the position of the Commanders in Chief to that of Chiefs of Staff and all the Chiefs of Staff were made coequal.

The Study Team on Defence matters set up by the first Administrative Reforms Commission of 1966 noted that there was some misapprehension that civilian control amounted to "civil service control". As early as 1951 the first Defence Secretary of independent India, H M Patel, observed that the military leadership deeply disliked the role of civilian bureaucrats in policy and administrative matters alike.

A three-tiered structure from the colonial period continued to be used in higher defense policy making. The Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) was the foremost national security authority. The CCPA comprised of all the senior ministers of the Prime

Minister's Cabinet and was responsible for policy making on a variety of subjects including foreign affairs and defense. The next tier below the CCPA, the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) – previously the Defence Minister's Committee – consisted of the Cabinet Secretary, the Prime Minister's special Secretary, the secretaries of finance, external affairs, planning, defence, defence production, defence research and development, and the three service chiefs. The Chiefs of Staff Committee was the military component of the third tier. The other half was the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Defence Coordination and Implementation Committee (DCIC) chaired by the Defence Secretary. The DCIC coordinated defence production, defense research and development, finances and the requirements of the services.

The Defence Ministry under its Secretary H.M. Patel also changed the Warrant of Precedence, so that at public meetings and State occasions the top Generals were clearly below the senior civil servants and elected representatives of the people. Today while the three Chiefs are higher in precedence than the Secretaries but they are below the Cabinet Secretary. Similarly, today while the Vice Chiefs are of the same rank as the Defence Secretary but the Defence Secretary Chairs the meeting of the Vice Chiefs. Further according to the Note attached with the Warrant of Precedence, in all public and official functions in New Delhi, all Secretaries will have a higher precedence than the Vice Chiefs/equivalents

In his seminal work on civil military relations, the late Samuel Huntington differentiated between subjective civilian control over the military and objective control. Objective control accepted the fact that there is an inviolable military sphere of action which should not be intruded upon. Subjective control, by contrast, operated on an ideological affinity between military and political leaders

Clearly, civil military relations do not exist in a vacuum. They respond to the times. There is always bound to be some friction between senior elected officials – who are in control of the instruments of national power for some limited amount of time – and senior officials of the military with long years of experience managing one of those instruments of national power. This happened

in India at the time when Krishna Menon was the Defence Minister and General Thimayya was the Army Chief. When the friction between the two reached the boiling point, General Thimayya put in his resignation. Nehru persuaded him to withdraw his resignation but General Thimayya was clearly disillusioned when Nehru did not live up to his assurances given to him.

The 1962 war with China was a disaster for India. It showed up the unnecessary interference by the civilian political leadership in military matters. The order given by Prime Minister Nehru to set up forward posts without the requisite force backing was obviously taken without consultation with the armed forces. The appointment of General BM Kaul as the Army Chief at that critical point showed the lack of foresight of the civilian Government and primarily its then Defence Minister Krishna Menon. The Government at that time refused to heed the advice of the earlier Army Chief to prepare and arm the Indian troops for the likely attack by China. They firmly believed that China would never attack India.

Again in 1971 when Indira Gandhi planned to send Indian troops to aid the freedom movement in Bangladesh, the then Chief of Army Staff General Sam Manekshaw advised her against it and suggested that nine months be given to make adequate preparations. The Prime Minister agreed and that is why the Indian armed forces could defeat the Pakistan army in Bangladesh in a very short period of time. Prior to that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi also signed the Treaty with Russia to ensure that if any other country tried to intervene (read China and USA) then USSR would come to its aid. Civilian diplomacy was as important as the actual battles between the Indian and Pakistan armed forces.

In the 1999 Kargil war there were two interventions by the civilian Government. One was that the Indian armed forces were directed not to cross the international border. The Air Force had to use precision bombing to destroy the bunkers set up by the Pakistani forces on the Indian side. They were clearly told not to cross the border. The intervention by the Air Force was approved by Cabinet Committee on Security on May 25th 1999. The second intervention was again on the diplomatic front. Our diplomats kept the US Government

briefed daily on the actual field situation. The result was that when the Pakistan Premier Sharif went to USA for help, he was rebuffed and advised the immediate withdrawal of Pakistani forces from the Indian side.

Kargil Review Committee Reforms

After the Kargil war, and after the receipt of the Kargil Review Committee Report (authored by K. Subramaniam) the Government of India set up a Committee under the then Home Minister L.K. Advani, to review the entire course of events leading to the Kargil conflict and recommend reforms necessary in the fields of intelligence, Internal Security, Border Management and Higher Defence Management. The implementation of these recommendations led to closer civil-military working at various levels. A Defence Procurement Board was set up under the Chairmanship of the Defence Secretary and this included the three Vice Chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force as well as the Secretary Defence Finance, Secretary Defence Production and Secretary Defence Research. They were to decide jointly on Defence items to be procured. Another Defence Acquisition Council was set up under the Defense Minister to finalise the defence equipment and platforms required as well as whether they should be Made in India or should be bought outright from the manufacturers. Similar Councils were created for the Departments of Defense Production and Department of Defense Research. Thus, in all these bodies, the Armed Forces became empowered to give their advice directly to the Defense Minister and voice their concerns on all the issues that came up before these Councils.

The Reforms also established a Secretariat for the proposed Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) and till that post was created, it came under the Chiefs of Staff Committee. The CIDS (Chief of Integrated Defence Staff) who heads the Secretariat, is charged with examination of the Budget proposals received from the Army, Navy and Air Force Headquarters and with the approval of the CDS, recommend the budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Defence. Though these recommendations are scrutinized by the Department of Defence Finance as before but it is the CIDS to whom the queries are now

directed and not the Defence Secretary/Joint Secretary concerned. Thus, a large part of the civilian functions in this area are now with the Military.

It is true that the armed forces had been demanding for a long time that they should also man posts in the Defence Ministry as well as be Staff Officers to the Defence Minister. This was not conceded to by the Government but to ensure that the Government should benefit from direct military advice it was decided to create the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in the Ministry of Defence to be manned by a Military officer.

Chief of Defense Staff

On 31st December 2019, a day before his retirement, the Indian Army Chief, General Bipin Rawat was elevated to the post of CDS. He served as the first Chief of Defence Staff of India until his demise in a tragic helicopter crash on December 8th 2021.

While the Defence Secretary continues to be the Chief Defence Advisor to the Government , the CDS will be the Chief Military Advisor to the Government. A distinction has thus been made between the functions of Defence and the Military functions.

Functions of the Chief of Defence Staff

The functions and duties of the Chief of Defence Staff are as follows

- To head the Department of Military Affairs in the Ministry of Defence and function as its Secretary.
- Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.
- Principal Military Advisor to the Minister of Defence on all Tri Service matters.
- To administer the Tri Service organisations/agencies/ Commands.
- To be a member of the Defence Acquisition Council chaired by the Minister of Defence.
- To function as the Military Advisor to the Nuclear Command Authority.

- To bring about jointness in operation, logistics, transport, training, support services, communications, repairs and maintenance, etc. of the three Services.

- To ensure optimal utilization of infrastructure and rationalize it through jointness among the Services.

- To implement the Five Year Defence Capital Acquisition Plan and two-year roll on Annual Acquisition Plans, as a follow up to integrated Capability Development Plan.

- To assign inter service prioritization to capital acquisition proposals based on the anticipated budget.

- To bring about reforms in the functioning of three Services with the aim to augment combat capabilities of the Armed Forces by reducing wasteful expenditure.

Other Issues in Civil Military Relationship in India

The Defense Ministry does not work in isolation. It has to interact with various other (civilian) Ministries like the Ministry of Finance (for budgeting), the Ministry of External Affairs (which decides on foreign policy and strategy), the Ministry of Shipping/Ports (for use of Ports and building of ships and submarines), the Ministry of Railways (for movement of Troops), the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (which supplies fuel for the vehicles and the Air Force), Ministry of Home Affairs under which function the Intelligence Bureau and the para Military forces, and the Cabinet Secretariat, under which the external intelligence agency, RAW, functions. There is also the National Security Advisor and the National Security Council which advises the Government on overall Security matters. Then there is the Department of Space, which helps in putting up communication and other special purpose satellites which helps the Military.

In short when we talk of civil military relationship we think only of the civil bureaucracy in the Ministry of Defense and the Headquarters of the Army, Air Force and the Navy. But this is not so. This relationship and the different issues facing the Military have a much wider range. It also includes the interaction with the civilian

authorities in the field not only at the time of riots, but also when troop movements are taking place. When the military acquires land for stationing the troops both in the forward areas as well as inland, the civil authorities are the ones who legally acquire the land for the armed forces or who remove encroachments on military lands.

Too much of our time is taken up in finalising equivalence levels between the civilians and the officers of the armed forces, both in the field as well at the Armed Forces Headquarters. Who will salute whom becomes more important an issue than all other matters. There are more than 4 lakh civilians working in the military.

There is an old Bible saying which states that give unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God. Therefore, in operational matters, the Military should be given complete autonomy and there should be no interference from the civilian side once the objective is laid down by the political masters. However, once the objective is achieved it will be for the political masters to decide when and how to end it.

Even today when the three Chiefs want to discuss operational strategy with the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister in the War Room of the Defence Ministry, the Defence Secretary and other Secretaries are kept out of the discussions.

Pay Commissions and their Recommendations Pertaining to Civil and Military Officers

Another contentious issue bedevilling civil military relationship is the parity in pay and allowances of the civilian officers/ employees with their military counterparts. After every Pay Commission report this issue comes up. The Military establishment wants a representative of theirs on the Pay Commission but the Government states that if they give this representation to the Military, other services would also demand that their representatives should be on the Commission also. This would defeat the concept of an independent Pay Commission for all the officers/employees of the Central Government.

The issue of one rank one pension also became a raging issue in the period 2015-16. Orders in this regard were issued 7th November 2015. The military officers raised 38 anomalies in the present

recommendations of the 7th pay Commission and also pointed out that the earlier anomalies were also not fully resolved till now. They blame the civil bureaucrats for this delay and procrastination.

Post Retirement Absorption of Armed Forces Personnel

The transfer and absorption of Armed forces personnel after the end of their military service into government organisations including police and other departments where their unique skills, training, discipline and strengths can be optimally used, despite recommendations of the Parliament and Pay Commission, have not been implemented. The IPS officers heading para military organisations under the Ministry of Home Affairs have consistently opposed the induction of the jawans retiring from the Army, in their forces. The Army jawan normally retires around the age of 35 and is still youthful and energetic. He then has no option but to go back to his village and live on his pension.

In every District of India we have a Soldiers Board to look after the welfare of the ex-servicemen as well as to sort out the problems pertaining to land disputes and criminal intimidation of the families of the soldiers still serving. The cases are referred to by the Commanding officers to the concerned District Magistrate. But it takes years to resolve these disputes and the military officers are very critical of the civilian administration in this regard. The empathy for the soldier is found missing.

Conclusion

There are various facets of civil military relationships in India. All these facets need to be analysed to ensure harmonious working between the two.

The servicemen in India are deeply respected by the ordinary citizens of India. Their acts of valour have become a part of folk lore and now find mention in text books also.

The military in the British days used to be kept away from the cities and located in cantonments. The British felt that the army should be kept aloof and not catch the virus of national freedom. This was the beginning of the civil-military divide. The Army was used to suppress

the freedom movement in various parts of the country. That is why in the early years after independence the Congress leadership took steps to keep the military firmly under Civil control.

In the first decade after Independence there were also fears of military coup and that is why the civilian government decided to stop army recruitment only from the areas known to be populated by the martial races and have the recruitment from different parts of the country. They also took steps to diffuse the leadership in the regiments with mixed class officers.

The military in India has kept away from politics and that is why we have a more stable democracy unlike some countries in our neighbourhood.

It is hoped that this environment will be maintained.

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Iqbal Singh Chahal

Fighting Covid in Mumbai

In the last week of April 2020, there was rapid spread of Covid virus in the slums of Mumbai, especially Dharavi, Govandi and Deonar. A large number of people started dying on account of Covid due to limited testing facilities available and even more limited number of Covid beds available in the city of Mumbai. Mumbai, the financial capital of India was on fire with Covid. There were several cases of people dying and their dead bodies were found on the streets and road dividers. One of the biggest slums of Asia, viz. Dharavi with a population of 8,00,000 was visibly out of control. There were hardly 3743 Covid beds available in city of Mumbai and approximately 1500 people were getting positive every day. Social media was full of videos depicting, dead bodies on the road; more than one patient lying on many hospital beds, dead bodies kept on the hospital beds next to alive patient on the bed etc. Citizens from massive slums of Mumbai were rushing to hospitals gasping for breath and were dying within few hours of reaching the hospital. The death rate had gone beyond 8%. Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) had only 480 ICU beds, 80 Ambulances and 4 Hearse vehicles (for dead Covid patients). When the Central Government Covid Monitoring Team came to Mumbai on 5th May, 2020, it pointed out glaring deficiencies in Mumbai and how things were getting out of control.

It added that Mumbai would explode leading to thousands of deaths in the near future. There was utter mismanagement and deficiency of resources to fight against Covid in Mumbai. Even the media started raising the demand of putting Mumbai under military supervision to fight Covid. Mumbai had become the hotspot in the

country. There was a panic situation and a sizeable number of citizens of Mumbai fled to safer places. The entire situation had become very helpless and National Media was full of adverse criticism of Mumbai's handling of Covid situation. It resulted in tremendous pressure on State Government. Under these circumstances, Government of Maharashtra took a very hard decision of replacing the Municipal Commissioner of MCGM, who had not completed even 1 year in office. In this background, I was instructed by the State Government to take over the charge of Municipal Commissioner, MCGM at 7 p.m. of 8th May 2020. While working as Principal Secretary, Urban Development to the Government of Maharashtra, the State Government had made me Nodal Officer for monitoring of Covid situation in 36 districts and 27 Municipal Corporations of Maharashtra State since March 21, 2020, and I had a fair knowledge in prevailing situation in the city of Mumbai. The very next day, i.e. 9th of May early morning, I straight away walked into Covid ICU of the hospitals to gather first hand view of the ground realities. It was followed by 4 km. long march in the containment zones of Dharavi slums to understand actual situation prevailing in these slums of Mumbai. It was clear in my mind that there were only 4 pillars on which the foundation of Covid fight stands, viz. disciplined and focused testing; large fleet of ambulances; abundant increase in the number of Covid hospital beds and huge increase in the availability of trained para-medical and doctors in Mumbai. The weapons in defence happened to be Testing, Tracing, Tracking, Quarantine and Treatment. Between 8th May 2020 and 1st August 2020, I ensured a massive increase in health infrastructure under MCGM. A snap short of the same is as below.

Sr. No.	Criteria	As on 8th May 2020	As on 1st August 2020
1.	Total Covid Beds	29282	88953
	(a) DCH / DCHC	3743	16398
	(b) CCC2	4030	24646
	(c) CCC1	21509	47909

2.	Total ICU Beds	480	1755
3.	Total Ventilator Beds	248	1069
4.	Beds with Oxygen	2739	10811
5.	Dialysis machine for Covid	48	120
6.	CCC1 beds (For quarantine)	21509	47909
7.	Ambulances (For Covid)	80	750
8.	Hearse vehicles (For Dead Covid patients)	4	36

Besides this, Mumbai became the only city in the country where all tests reports would come within 24 hours without exception. Mumbai has conducted more than 7.50 lakhs of RTPCR tests which is the gold standard and one of the highest in the country. The number of ambulances available in MCGM increased from 80 to 825. Mumbai created a huge pool of trained paramedicals and doctors by hiring retired doctors from Defence Services as well as the State and Central Government. It also got more than 100 doctors and nurses from Kerala on loan. It also deployed more than 800 MBBS intern students to manage the Ward war rooms. It deployed IAS Officers to oversee daily administration of major hospitals in Mumbai. MCGM rose to the occasion in the fight against Covid and implemented 'Game Changing', original, unique, path-breaking and effective initiatives successfully to turn around the Covid situation in Mumbai and thereby attaining strong grip on Covid virus.

Mumbai's first Covid wave which started in March 2020, started to wane in September 2020 and by the end of December it was as good as over.

However, Team Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) was certain about the second wave hitting Mumbai after a couple of months. This was based on the experience of Europe and USA. It was decided in the first week of September 2020 itself to launch 'MY FAMILY MY RESPONSIBILITY' campaign in Mumbai from 15th September to 15th December 2020. The campaign began on 15th September 2020. Under this campaign, thousands of MCGM health workers paid visit twice to 99.1% of 35.1 lakh families residing

in Mumbai. These health teams carried printed pamphlets to every home sharing with them the Dos and Don'ts of Covid while moving in public domain and also shared with them the telephone numbers of Ward War Rooms of all 24 Wards of Mumbai. Temperature and oxygen level of family members were taken during home visits and co-morbid citizens were moved to hospitals in thousands. The citizens were also warned that they shall be fined if found not wearing masks in public domain. This action was started in right earnest in parallel and before the commencement of second wave with effect from 10th of February 2021. More than 40 lakh people in Mumbai were fined Rs.200/- each for not wearing masks in public domain and were also given a free mask with a request not to repeat it again. 800 large hoardings were put-up all over Mumbai creating awareness of fight against Covid. 'NO MASK NO ENTRY' also became a slogan of this campaign wherein 45 lakh stickers were printed by Team MCGM and pasted on the doors of shops, shopping centres, offices, public transport, private taxies, private cars, bus shelters and so on. Print and Electronic media were also roped in to create awareness about this campaign. This was a huge success and played a major deterrent role in limiting maximum number of cases in a single day to roughly 11,000 only despite highly infectious nature of the new mutant virus which resulted in the second wave in Mumbai. 'MY FAMILY MY RESPONSIBILITY' is undoubtedly one of the unique campaigns in the entire world. The moment this campaign ended on 15th November 2020, it was supplemented with 'I AM RESPONSIBLE' campaign which continues till date. Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai is conducting social audit of the massive impact of the scheme, the results of which will be out soon. Team MCGM wisely decided not to close even a single bed in all 7 jumbo field hospitals in Mumbai even though around 15th of January 2021, 5 jumbo field hospital at NESCO, Goregaon had only 3 patients on a particular day with a capacity of 3000 beds with 224 ICU beds. Team MCGM was indeed gearing up for the next wave. The first wave resulted in 3,13,000 cumulative Covid cases out of which 11,400 unfortunately passed away resulting in a mortality of 3.6%. However, the second wave which started with effect from 10th of February 2021 resulted in 3.93 lakh new cases till 31st May

2021 with only 3484 deaths with a mortality rate of 0.8%, one of the lowest anywhere.

This could be achieved due to successful implementation of a number of initiatives. conceived and designed by Team MCGM. These initiatives included 'CHASE THE VIRUS' policy, 'CHASE THE PATIENT' policy, Decentralized Ward War Rooms, Uber Platform based Ambulances, tremendous expansion in health infrastructure, more than 140 private hospitals on MCGM's dashboard charging patients at Government rates and all bed allotment through Ward War Rooms, online portal for patient's dialysis, online dashboard for crematoriums, abundant medicines at all times available in MCGM hospitals, etc. Although the Government of Maharashtra finalized a tender for procurement of 56,000 vials of Remdesivir at a cost of Rs. 550/- each on April 1st 2020, MCGM took a decision, fraught with risk, of procuring 2 lakh Remdesivir vials at the cost of Rs. 1558/- each on 5th of April 2021 inviting lot of criticism from some quarters. However, with zero supplies made to Government of Maharashtra tender till date, MCGM's tender finally became the lowest in the market. 12 States of India used this rate to place similar orders of Remdesivir. MCGM chose to save lives over the high cost of medicines.

On 17th April 2021 around midnight as soon as SOS call came that 6 hospitals were running out of oxygen and it was conveyed that in the next two hours 168 patients, including 34 in ICUs, would lose their lives, a massive operation was launched between 1.00 am and 5.00 am to shift all 168 patients to jumbo field hospitals. This ensured zero mortality. The oxygen management system of Mumbai was appreciated by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on the 5th of May 2021. The High State Court also appreciated the initiatives taken in Mumbai and even directed that such steps should be taken elsewhere also. Mumbai Covid management model has won accolades all over the world.

The third wave of Covid started in Mumbai on the 20th December 2021 and had declined to negligible levels by 20th February 2022. In this period, a total number of 2,88,063 cumulative Covid positive patients were detected in Mumbai out of which, unfortunately 322

lost their lives. This mortality rate of 0.11% again proved to be the lowest anywhere in the world thereby pointing to spectacular performance of Team MCGM. During the third wave of Covid, Team MCGM implemented a unique home quarantine system, only one of its kind in the entire world. Under this, the data of all passengers arriving from risk countries in the previous 24 hours was tapped online from Air Suvidha app of Ministry of Civil Aviation and automatically transferred to the respective ward war rooms through zip code information. The 240 online dashboards available in 24 ward war rooms would then monitor the home quarantined air passengers for next 7 days by calling them at least 5 times in a day on video call to ensure that they remain strictly quarantined in their homes. Further, ward war room ambulances were sent to the residents/society offices of these home quarantined passengers to randomly check if they were available at home, failing which they were warned of prosecutions. Even the housing society office bearers were requested in writing to keep a watch on home quarantined passengers and also ensure that they don't entertain any visitors. In case of any breach, the society office bearers were to take photographs of any breaches committed and transmit it to ward war rooms on WhatsApp to initiate prosecution actions against these home quarantined passengers. On day 7 of home quarantine, the passengers were instructed to undertake home collection of swabs and upload their Covid negative reports to the ward war rooms after which they stood discharged. This unique home quarantine mechanism ensured that thousands of international passengers arriving in Mumbai remained imprisoned in their homes so as to not spread the virus in public domain.

In nutshell, the internationally acclaimed and praised Mumbai Model of fight against Covid virus pandemic resulted in saving of thousands of precious human lives in the financial capital of India during the 3 waves of corona virus pandemic. The performance of Team MCGM has been nothing short of spectacular and inspirational. Kudos to Team MCGM.

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Prabhat Kumar

Entrepreneurship With an Ethical Twist[*]

The theory of entrepreneurship has developed enormously over the last century. The venerated Dr V.G Patel carried it with aplomb when he showed empirically how entrepreneurship can be nurtured with passion and perseverance. That he was a formidable pioneer in his time is obvious.

In his book *Managing India's Small Industrial Economy*, he elaborated the role of industrial counsellors in the growth and sustainability of small-scale industries. Like him, I have also worked relentlessly for the development of small enterprises for more than three decades through policymaking first at the state government level and then at the national level. In a way, I was instrumental in bringing the Year Package for SSI which till now is regarded as one of the most progressive policy packages in the area.

I am no entrepreneur in the strict sense of the word though I have observed with interest a large number of young men and women write their stories and create their singular enterprises in various fields. Besides, I had a five-year opportunity of showing my entrepreneurial prowess in a public sector corporation as CMD, which I handled rather well. So much so that the Corporation blew up the competition with big players in the private sector and emerged as the best company in its league.

It may sound rather incongruous to talk about entrepreneurship in the time of slowdown of global economy when everybody is talking about low GDP growth, declining demand, closing factories

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and retrenching workers. But I think this is the right time to plan innovative enterprises. An enterprise that is conceived and is born during these stressed times is bound to go a long way.

Who are these entrepreneurs?

I believe that the world is populated by two types of people; those who are reasonable people trying to adapt to the world around us and those rare unreasonable people who persist in trying to adapt the world to the rules made by them. According to George Bernard Shaw, it is the power of the unreasonable people which keeps the world going round and progressing. These unreasonable people are the world's entrepreneurs.

In a fantasy film, a great magician goes to a town for giving a performance. There are four youngsters who want to become magicians like him. He gives them a simple test by stretching his right arm and spreading the fingers. He asks the boys, 'The power to control the world is in which finger?' Three boys pick different fingers, but the fourth one stands thinking. The magician asks him what he is thinking. The boy says, 'well, it is a stupid thought; to pick my own finger'. The magician says, 'that's wonderful, you will prove to be a true magician'.

Obviously, the fourth boy is in a different league from the others.

Most of us hope to find meaning by fitting ourselves in a readymade story, but for the entrepreneur the truth is just the opposite. He thinks, 'the universe does not give me meaning. I give meaning to the universe'. That, in my view, is the essence of entrepreneurship. It is true that some of them are insanely ambitious. They are can-do people surrounded by don't-do, can't-do and won't-do people.

I would like to tell you a story of a small enterprise started by two young Chinese Americans in their twenties.

Tony Hsieh and Alfred Lin decided to start an online shoe selling company in 1999. The immediate provocation was that one of them wanted to buy a pair of shoes for himself. He visited three stores but could not find what he was looking for. If he found the right size,

the colour was wrong; and if he found the right colour the shape was wrong. He came back without buying anything.

Since they did not have much money, they took the help of a venture capital Fund. In a couple of years, it became the largest shoe selling company in the world blowing up all the competition. The giant e-retailer Amazon wanted to acquire the business.

In 2009, they sold it to Amazon for 1.2 billion dollars. Today, it is a wholly owned subsidiary of Amazon and its roughly 1,500 employees; headquartered in Las Vegas, produce in excess of $2 billion in revenues annually.

But how does this company, with less than 2,000 employees, continue to dominate the mainstream and social media headlines? After all, there are many other companies selling shoes online. Why does it seem as though it has a stranglehold on press hits and mentions? What's the secret?

The name of the company is Zappos. The banner headlines on their website: There isn't anything we won't do for our customers. 'We want our customers to love us'. In a word, it's all about "culture. They want to give 'wow' service to their customers. They call their training centre 'The School of Wow'.

Zappos will take an order as late as midnight and deliver it to the customer's doorstep before breakfast. It has the world's largest selection of shoes, and its service includes free returns. If it doesn't have the shoe you want in stock or in your size, a Zappos call centre employee will go to three competitors' sites to try to help you locate what you want to buy. Seventy-five percent of its business comes from repeat customers, despite the fact that its prices are far from the lowest.

The core company values include: deliver wow through service, build a positive team and family spirit, be passionate and determined and be humble.

The case of start-ups like Zappos is particularly relevant in the current scenario when profits are the only determinant of success.

The dictionary meaning of the word Entrepreneurship is 'the activity of setting up a business or businesses, taking on financial

risks in the hope of profit'. The watchword is 'profit' measured in terms of money or wealth.

There is a need to refine the definition in view of emerging trends in the enterprise culture. In fact, I believe that there is a need to do sustained work on the requisite policy environment of ethical enterprises in our country, which benefit the wider society as well as the entrepreneur.

Today, there seems to be a concerted assault on ethics and morality in every profession. In education, for instance, we have converted educational institutions into shops; we do not teach our children in schools, we steal theses in research; we sell degrees and appointments in universities. In medicine, we pinch kidneys and advertise impossible cures; we perform unnecessary surgeries; we play with lives of millions of infants and pregnant women by embezzling budgeted funds in National Rural Health Mission. In business, we have perfected the art of duping financial institutions; we under invoice and over price; we fudge balance sheets and evade taxes; we adulterate everything from milk to turmeric. And similarly, all other professions have their fault lines in the area of ethics.

In short, ethics is at a discount everywhere. No organization, public or private, wants its employees to practice ethics. They consider ethics as utterly useless and even counterproductive. At best, the code of ethics makes a good decoration on the walls of the reception office.

Unethical practices like bribing to get orders, undercutting competitors through dubious means and inside information, providing false information about emission norms etc are being quoted. A large number of prominent companies like Siemens, Volkswagen, Enron, and Satyam have been found to be guilty of questionable conduct and legal violations in the recent past. Even highly respected accountancy firms like Arthur Andersen (Enron, Waste Management) and Price Waterhouse Cooper (Satyam, Global Trust Bank, United Breweries) have been involved in controversial cases of balance sheet fudging and endorsing inflated profits.

But I am not focusing here on the criminality of businesses. The business ethics being taught at management schools confines itself to

compliance with laws and regulations. If you are fully law compliant, then you are ethical, they say.

The Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman says that the only social responsibility of business is to use its resources for increasing profits, so long as it remains within law and does not indulge in deceit or fraud.

I am of the view that Milton Friedman's definition is severely limited.

I go beyond the observance of rules and regulations and being on the right side of law. I go beyond the fulfilment of CSR expenditure as required by the Companies Act. I even go beyond the Triple Bottom Line Approach. I am concerned with the core of business being ethical, providing social good through the core business. That marks the ethical twist of business, the ethical twist of entrepreneurship.

Similar sentiment is somewhat reflected in the recent resolution of America's top corporations.

Recently, the CEOs of nearly 200 of top companies in the US have attempted to redefine the purpose of a corporation, saying a stockholder's interests are no longer the top priority and the new focus is to better society. The updated definition was released on 19 august 2019 by the Business Roundtable which includes America's most influential corporate leaders.

The statement redefined the purpose of a corporation with social consciousness in mind, saying corporations are now committed to valuing customers, investing in employees, dealing ethically with suppliers, protecting the environment and supporting communities.

The statement was signed by 181 CEOs including Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Apple's Tim Cook, BOA's Brian Moynihan, Boeing's Dennis Muilenburg and Blackrock's Larry Fink.

The new idea takes from the concept of 'conscious capitalism' which promotes a company having the responsibility to serve society, an ethos that has been growing in popularity with CEOs over the past decade.

It is called social business, a for-profit venture to fulfil ethical objectives. Unlike traditional corporate businesses, social

entrepreneurship ventures focus on maximizing gains in social satisfaction, rather than maximizing profit gains.

For-profit entrepreneurs typically measure performance using business metrics like profit, revenues and increases in stock prices, but social entrepreneurs blend for-profit goals with generating a positive "return to society" and therefore must use different metrics.

For a clearer definition of what social entrepreneurship entails, it is necessary to set the function of social entrepreneurship apart from other voluntary sector and charity-oriented activities. The self-sustainability is what distinguishes social businesses from charities, which rely almost entirely on donations and outside funding.

Muhammad Yunus says about this characteristic, "He (or she) competes in the marketplace with all other competitors but is inspired by a set of social objectives. This is the basic reason for being in business".

The good news is that there are areas of light in this gathering gloom. I can cite exemplars of exceptional organizational ethics in the private sector like Berry Wehmiller, Zappos, and Next Step etc. I am happy to report that there is a company Profits Through Ethics Limited, whose promoter Michael Solomon runs a movement called 'Responsible 100' by testing companies on verifiable credentials.

As founder and director, Michael describes Responsible 100's ambition as becoming a kite mark for businesses determined to have the maximum positive impact on society and the environment.

Almost 14 years in development, R100 sets a high but demonstrably achievable bar. To join, businesses are required to answer challenging questions on a range of social, environmental and ethical issues; have their answers reviewed, assessed and scored; guarantee their information as complete, accurate and verifiable, and maintain it as such at all times; and make it available for public scrutiny, comment and rating on www.responsible100.com.

First, they are entirely open and honest, and are prepared to explain and justify all the things they do. Second, they are on a path to becoming net positive by increasing their positive impacts on people and planet, and decreasing their negative impacts, as far and fast across their operations as possible. Third is an acceptance of their role as businesses: to deliver goods and services, make profits,

AND make the world a better place. Lastly, they don't just say "yes, yes, we do these things", they actually provide proof by making a clear, public, unequivocal commitment.

Responsible 100's soon-to-be-unveiled new brand will manifest these qualities and, as such, differentiate businesses determined to help create and be part of a better world. Responsible 100 is not a PR exercise; it is setting benchmarks for ethical business, of total transparency and responsibility. The members of Responsible 100 are committed to answer all questions truthfully.

Social entrepreneurs often say that they have multiple bottom lines but the main bottom line is service to the society. As a result, their calculus is very different from that followed in the mainstream business.

Ethical fibre is important because leaders who are about to change the world must be trustworthy.

One distinguishing attribute of entrepreneurs is that they rarely take credit for making change. They insist that the change they have brought about is due to everyone around them. They also tend to be driven by emotion; they are not trying primarily to make a profit but to address suffering.

Therefore, the need of the community in our country is a band of entrepreneurial leaders who can show by example that ethical entrepreneurship and ethical business are as profitable, if not more profitable, than self-serving business.

Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank fame coined the phrase 'Social Business' in the context of the rural poor in Bangladesh. He cites the cases of Grameen collaborating with Adidas of Germany and Danone of France to produce shoes and fortified yogurt for the poor children at affordable prices. Grameen's collaboration with Danone called Grameen Danone Foods has a bottom line 'will be to deliver benefits to people and the planet rather than to earn money for the investors'.

I am of the view that an entrepreneur without creativity is flawed.

An entrepreneur without ethics is flawed.

An entrepreneur without a vision is flawed.

Thus far, there has been no firm consensus on the definition of social entrepreneurship, as so many different fields, disciplines and organization types are associated with social entrepreneurship, ranging from for-profit businesses to hybrid models combining charitable work with business activities, to non-profit charities, voluntary sector organizations and non-governmental organizations.

My hypothesis is that the ethical movement in our country has to start from the entrepreneurs. We cannot expect it from the multinational companies. We have seen Enron, Volkswagen, Johnson and Johnson and many others failing the test of ethics and social accountability. We can't expect it from big companies as we have recently seen disgusting cases of swindle, cheating and fraud.

Therefore, it is imperative for celebrated institutions like Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) to come forward and be in the vanguard of the ethical movement.

In their book 'The Power of Unreasonable People', John Elkington and Pamela Hartigan mention the characteristics of social entrepreneurs as:

They want to change the system.

They are insanely ambitious.

They are propelled by emotion.

They think they know the future.

They seek profit in unprofitable pursuits.

They ignore the evidence.

The try to measure the immeasurable.

They refuse to act as superheroes.

Muhammad Yunus defines a 'social business' as 'a non-dividend company dedicated to solving human problems'. It was a concept that arose from not theorizing or speculation but from his practical experience working with villagers to solve tough social problems in one of the poorest countries on Earth.

Christobol colon, a Spaniard set up a dairy business in 1982 that

employs mostly mentally ill workers. Today, La Fageda, his dairy farm is a thriving business and has third largest market share after Danone and Nestle. Its annual revenue is about $10 million. It works with public sector which refers psychiatric patients for training and employment. It has a fully staffed mental health facility on site. Here mentally ill are not viewed as 'patients'. They earn their living and are proud of it.

Mind you, La Fageda is not an NGO. It is a fully self-sustaining enterprise. It is a for-profit enterprise but not a profit maximizing business. Its business is social transformation. Working with mentally ill is its core business, not a public relations exercise or a CSR activity. It does not work on charity or philanthropy.

In our country, Dr Devi Shetty has worked to make sophisticated health care available to all. He founded Narayana Hrudayalaya in Bangalore. It is a network of hospitals that provide 60% of its treatments below cost or free, thanks to reduced cost from high volumes and innovative management.

It was fifteen years ago that I remember having challenged a number of big companies to set up an enterprise to produce sanitary napkins which could be sold for Re.1 a piece to the millions of rural women in our country. I was disappointed as none accepted my challenge. If Tatas or Birlas or a public sector corporation had accepted my request, it would have been a pioneering social business.

Recently, I read in the newspapers that the Central government has decided to make available Re. 1 napkin at 5500 Jan Aushadi Kendras across the country.

Then we also have people like Sri Kanth Bolla.

Bolla was born visually impaired at childbirth in Machilipatnam, a city in Andhra Pradesh in 1992. Bolla was denied admission to coaching institutes for Indian Institute of Technology, where he wanted to study engineering, because he is blind. He attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was the first international blind student.

In 2012, Bolla started Bollant Industries, which manufactures Areca based products and provides employment to several hundred people with disabilities, with funding from Ratan Tata. Addressing a

combination of issues – employment, economic and environment – Bollant produces eco-friendly recycled Kraft paper from municipal waste or soiled paper, packaging products from recycled paper, disposable products from natural leaf and recycled paper and recycles waste plastic in to usable products. Bollant has shown exceptional growth averaging 20% a month since inception and a turnover of ₹ 150 Cr in 2018.

Bollant Industries' major objective is to employ differently-abled people and also help in environment restoration by producing products which would help everyone to say no to plastic products.

Srikanth says, "To be a successful entrepreneur, you don't need eyes, you need vision".

There are several other examples of businesses motivated mainly by an objective of serving the society.

I will end with good news that was announced in a budget speech by Nirmala Seetharaman. *In the Budget 2019-20, the Finance Minister spoke about setting up a social stock exchange for listing social enterprises besides voluntary organizations, so that they may be able to raise capital as equity or debt. The move seems to give recognize the value of those enterprises which have a substantial social impact.*

The idea of creating a Social Stock Exchange (SSE) as put forward in the Budget makes a departure from multiplication of money being the classical intent of investment. It tries to establish that increasing the welfare of the people could also be a legitimate objective of capital. Therefore, a parallel track for 'impact investment' is proposed to deliver social and environmental good along with profits.

For such an exchange to be a global path breaker it must be based on stores of value that are independent of or superior to monetary value and, therefore, defy the power concentrating tendency of capitalism. The 'how to' appears daunting. But the real danger lies in the outdated mindset which equates value with money. The future belongs to those who can manage the shift that makes social, cultural and ecological capital more powerful than promise-to-pay on currency notes.

My hypothesis is that all social enterprises which wish to register themselves with the SSE should be tested on 'social impact' benchmarks. Those who qualify to be registered with the Exchange

would be considered eligible to receive financial support in the shape of equity, loan or grant from various agencies including government, financial institutions, development agencies, foundations, private investors or crowd funding platforms.

Therefore, I would challenge EDII to prepare a framework of criteria to define social businesses for the consideration of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog).

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Raghu Dayal

What Ails the Bureaucracy in India

Leadership in bureaucracy needs to draw a charter of transformative change in country's administrative structure appropriate for 'future-ready' India, and solicit Prime Minister's intervention for the daunting task to be accomplished... *Modi hai to mumkin hai.*

Ten Sectoral Groups of Secretaries have been mandated to identify the achievable targets, timelines and milestones for commemorating the 2047 centenary year of independence. The key areas already identified include agriculture, commerce, infrastructure, industry, urban landscape, security and defence, technology and governance.

Yes, governance is indeed the single most important element in any scheme that aims at achieving what "We, the people" set about defining our goals and aspirations 75 years ago, and all that, we now determine, needs be done for India to accomplish by the 2047 centennial. It is governance, for it to be able to deliver, that itself calls for a targeted thrust, for its contours as well as culture to be transformed. The task is not easy; it's daunting and onerous. It has eluded almost all the Prime Ministers. Of late, some aspects in government have seen significant initiatives towards breaking the mould. A huge lot needs to be done for administration to change its very direction, its culture, its structure. It requires a relentless onslaught on systems and traditions, habits and interests that are firmly entrenched.

Momentous as the occasion is, I feel somewhat wary, whether all the crescendo created for the centennial will end up as a mere

brouhaha, as it has been happening on similar salient milestones like the golden jubilee of independence and, for a change, indeed turn out to be a sincere and credible programme achieved and accomplished.

Effective governance – India's Achilles' heel

Agile and adept at conceptualising bold and ambitious plans and policies, the executive has had but a lacklustre record in their implementation. Effective implementation is predicated on effective governance, which remains the single most important requirement for India; and that's where the country has floundered for long. Notwithstanding firm avowals from the highest in government for delivery of a myriad of services and programmes for the very security and well-being of citizens, or ease of doing business, countrymen as well as foreigners have generally found the government machinery and institutions inept and obstructive, intimidating and exasperating.

Again, in respect of re-organising and re-orienting the administrative apparatus, there has been no dearth of deliberations, analyses, ideas, suggestions from within as well as hundreds of expert bodies, committees and commissions. The history of 'reinventing government' shows it needs clarity, courage, persistence and perseverance. India's administrative reform has remained a staple of perennial debate, yielding little tangible change on the ground.

In attempting as I have done to gather some loose sallies on a subject as complex as this, and submitting this rambling piece, I'm aware of my serious limitations, having been less than a cog in the administrative structure. Spontaneously driven by my own limited experiential learnings, I've largely leaned on some in the pantheon of acknowledged and accomplished veterans who have shared wealth of their experiences and wisdom in published literature. In my quest to garner and absorb some of their erudition, I may well have missed out the essence and nuances of value, and thus unwittingly let some fault-lines creep in, in my assessment and understanding. I believe the readers, understandably few, who may find time to glance through the piece, will be generously considerate, not to doubt my intent and purpose.

Let me acknowledge here that country's bureaucracy, which so often gets pilloried, and undeniably has big chinks and drawbacks, may well be proud of many of its constituents who performed with distinction, rising above the circumstance. Although government employees as a rule collectively evoke derision and distrust, many of them rising above the normal call of duty have won accolades of the community. With utmost humility and open mind, we need to scan the horizon around us, look ahead in the future with hope and confidence, and accept the realities of the present, ready to heed and listen, and do the course-correction as needed.

Government structure remains bloated, alienated

Even after 75 years of independence, India retains an effete governance structure – feudalistic, alienated, status quoist, self-serving. Over years, Indian bureaucracy has proliferated, added flab, become ineffective. Addressing the National Developmental Council in February 1999, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee highlighted four areas of governance that needed specific attention: (i) *people often perceive the bureaucracy as an agent of exploitation rather than a provider of service',* (ii) *'corruption has become a low risk and high reward activity'; (iii) 'frequent and arbitrary transfers combined with limited tenures are harming the work ethics and lowering the morale of honest officers',* and (iv) *'while expecting discipline and diligence from the administration, the political executive should self critically review its own performance'.* Government is oversized and incoherent; suffers from politicization and leadership-deficit from within; it continues to retain its excessive generalist culture.

Retaining much of its imperialist image of a collector, kotwal, or police chief, the recognized symbols of state, the general popular perception of bureaucracy that endures is of civil servants being arrogant, unhelpful, self-centred, inaccessible. One message that has emanated loud and clear from the foreign observers and investors is that of the great roadblock which the bureaucracy is in the country, at the Centre, so also in the states. Officers, far removed from the life and concerns of *aam aadmi*, flaunt their superiority in the shape of car beacon/siren, or gun-toting Personal Security Officers (PSOs), in the pomposity of their strutting and posturing. They remain procedure-focused rather than performance-oriented. Lower functionaries like

the patwari, police constable, clerk in a government office, or an excise and sales tax inspector have smothered the common man. Shrilal Shukla's *Raag Darbari* serves as a sardonic reflection of the murky machinations of the felonious triumvirate of *netas*, babus and goons in a fictional eastern Uttar Pradesh (UP) village.

Meaningful administrative reforms eluded all Prime Ministers

Recounting what he considered to be his greatest failure as Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru admitted, *'I could not change the administration, it is still a colonial administration'*.

In the mid-1980s, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was to speak on the contemporary administrative culture, and delivered a scathing indictment: *'We have government servants who do not serve but oppress the poor and the helpless. We do not uphold the law but connive with those who cheat the state and the whole legions whose only concern is their private welfare at the cost of the society. They have no work ethic, no feeling for the public cause, no involvement in the future of the nation, no comprehension of national goals, no commitment to the values of modern India. They have only a grasping mercenary outlook, devoid of competence, integrity and commitment'*.

Much the same way, albeit for different reasons, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would candidly reflect on his striking failure at streamlining and reforming country's governance structure and culture. Soon after assuming the reins of the country in 2004, Prime Minister announced 'his first and primary aim was to substantially improve the service delivery system'. Reinforcing the pervasive public perception, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA)- I set up Administrative Reforms Commission acknowledged that governance is 'admittedly the weak link in our quest for prosperity and equity'. A whole decade passed by; there was no improvement. If anything, things worsened much – people turned cynical and despaired.

Let us particularly focus on some critical aspects which appears to constitute the core of the problem:

1. **Already an obese and flabby structure, in dire need to be drastically pruned and streamlined, is being further expanded.**

Civil service today is a leviathan, circumscribing the whole panoply of the state, engendering popular portrait of a Gulliver tied hand and foot by his Lilliputian captors. India's bureaucracy is obese and flabby, vastly so. An over-manned establishment with droves of bureaucrats at all levels of government, each wing with a large vertical hierarchy, implies not just a huge drain on country's resources; bloated bureaucracy clogs the channels of communication, leads to delays and diffusion of responsibility. Three-fourths of all government civil employees are unproductive support staff - peons, daftaries, drivers, clerks, et al., while key public services such as education, healthcare are starved of people. Former Cabinet Secretary B.G. Deshmukh was prompted to suggest that at least 40% of the staff in the ministries of finance, commerce and industry be shifted to other areas like education, health, social welfare.

Both at the Centre and the states, departments have proliferated; within the departments, divisions have grown in numbers. There is large scale overlapping of functions among different departments and organisations; cost of administration has risen phenomenally, casting a big burden on the citizens. An unbridled expansion of the civil service began with the socialistic pattern of government and the urge to occupy "commanding heights". The Nehru era (1946-64) saw the proliferation of economic and social legislation that expanded discretionary powers in administration. The Indira Gandhi period (1966-77 and 1981-84) witnessed great expansion of discretionary powers. By 1988, India's bureaucracy is estimated to have a whopping around 19 million officials – four million engaged in the central government, seven million under the state governments, six million under quasi-government activities, and two million under local self-government bodies.

The all-India services which existed on the eve of the Government of India Act, 1919 included the Indian Civil Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Forest Service, among others. Take the states. In a large state like Bihar, in 1938, there were all of 18 ICS men: two in Government House – the Governor and his Principal Secretary; nine ran the secretariat – Chief Secretary, four Secretaries, two Deputy Secretaries, and the two Under Secretaries (David C. Potter). The

1931 census counted just about one million of all employees on rolls of the colonial state, in a population of 353 million. At the Central Government, there were 11 Secretaries, 10 of whom were from the Indian Civil Service (ICS). Outside the secretariat, there were 30 main departments, of which five were headed by ICS men: President of the Board of Examiners, Comptroller and Auditor General, Director General of Posts and Telegraphs, Director General of Commercial Intelligence, Director of Criminal Intelligence.

According to the combined Government of India (GoI) Civil List of 1946, the total strength of the ICS at the Centre and in the British Provinces was 1,094. As a result of partition, the total came down to 642 in 1948, which included ICS officers seconded to the judicial and political services. The number of secretariat departments at the Centre was 18 in 1947. In 1951, there were 25 Secretaries to Government of India, one Special Secretary, one Additional Secretary, 35 Joint Secretaries and 74 Deputy Secretaries.

The sanctioned strength of civil employees under Central government increased from about 1.5 million in 1948 to 1.7 million in 1959; it increased to 2.9 million in 1971, 3.7 million in 1984, rising to 4 million by 1991. No less striking has been the rise in state level bureaucracy. The number of secretariat departments at the Centre was 18 in 1947; today it is difficult to count the Secretary level incumbents, as also Additional Secretaries and equivalent, not to talk of a battalion of Joint Secretaries. The Indian Administrative Service (IAS) expanded from 1,232 at the time of initial constitution of the service to 6,154 by 2012. The police service kept pace with the expansion of the central para-military forces. What has happened in the same way in the states is a legion.

The British had ruled the country for a hundred years with three grades of clerks and an equal number of levels of superior officers in the central secretariat. By the time of the Emergency, not only a huge expansion had taken place in numbers, but also inflation in grades – at least five for clerks and eight levels of officers.

I find Parkinson's argument here apt and germane to the context. Stressing the need to trim the civil service, he emphasises that the whole Indian sub-continent during the British Raj used to be ruled by

about a thousand of the Indian Civil Service. *What made for a certain efficiency then and what would make for efficiency now is to have a sufficient number of decision-making officers and the least possible number of clerks. With a smaller number of people there are fewer steps between the foot and the summit of the administrative pyramid and that means reaching a quicker and possibly wiser decision at a lower cost. The shape of the pyramid is, therefore, an important thing. Essential it is to flatten it out'.*

Take the civil service itself. The pressure from the services to mitigate stagnation gathered strength in the 1980s, particularly from the enormously large batches recruited in the 1960s. A number of insignificant posts were arbitrarily upgraded to provide high level berths to the clamouring mob. This period also coincided with the coming into vogue of large-sized Cabinets both at the centre and in the states. The interests of the top bureaucracy and the political hierarchy converged in wasteful expenditure and structural imbalance. Unrestrained bureaucracies defend their turf and seek to expand it. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao assured substantial reduction in senior level bureaucracy, including of six Secretaries; in effect, the crafty coterie around him succeeded, instead, in creating anew six departments with Secretary level posts.

Gradually the services have become top heavy due to time bound promotions. Over the years, there has been merry tinkering with the structure owing to 'rationalisation' of cadres, a facile euphemism invented by clever babus to swell their ranks. Without the criteria of merit or efficiency, posts have proliferated. Many posts have been marginalised; many heads of departments ('principal' and not so others) tread on toes of each other; senior officers are accepting a diminished role for themselves.

For example, in UP that has the country's largest IAS cadre, levels of administrative hierarchy increased from six to eight; the number of principal secretaries/secretaries/special secretaries rose from 21 in 1965 to 157 in 1994; the number of divisional commissioners from 11 to 15, and of district collectors from 48 to 70. Against two sanctioned posts of chief secretary, eight adorned the Sachivalaya in that scale; against 17 posts of principal secretaries, 52 were promoted; and against 75 super-time scale posts, 189 had been appointed. At

the end of 1990, there were 29 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in UP, who had been appointed Additional Directors-General of Police, though the posts they held had neither work nor the level of responsibility befitting their status and seniority.

In the second largest cadre in the country, the erstwhile Madhya Pradesh, the enlargement of the senior posts proceeded in geometric progression: the growth in ten years from 1957, the date of formation of the new state, was 52%. Many new posts of departmental heads were created; some of the positions of heads of technical and semi-technical departments were encadred, depriving departmental officers of the opportunity to rise to the top (Sanjoy Bagchi, IAS).

At one time in Bihar, there were 8-10 IAS officers drawing pay of a Chief Secretary only because their juniors were appointed Chief Secretaries at one time or the other. What began as the fallacious concept that cadre expansion should move in tandem with the growth in Plan expenditure generated its own momentum, which was difficult to resist.

The supersized state is, no doubt, a subject that merits an honest appraisal of tasks and activities that must necessarily be government's agenda of action, simultaneously to identify and shed those which would better be in the domain of private sector. Here it is indeed relevant to candidly and objectively study the implications of the Prime Ministerial directive to complete recruitment of 1million young persons within 18 months against around 8,50,000 so-called vacant posts in central ministries/departments.

Prima facie the proposition looks perilous. A clear paradox. When several expert bodies and seasoned veterans have pleaded for bureaucracy to substantially slim in the interest of efficiency and productivity, a case has been made out for fresh recruitment of incredible numbers in a mission mode. Where is the fallacy? Government itself informed the parliament of around 8,70,000 "vacant" posts in central government departments as of 1 March 2020, when, instead, the departmental officers ought to have first done their homework, to understand the genesis and nature of these "vacancies". How do senior echelons in different departments let lakhs of posts originally sanctioned decades ago to remain on rolls

in spite of activities justifying the sanction having ceased and assets mothballed, rendering the posts redundant. Further, a whole gamut of activities having been outsourced and costly technologies inducted would oblige departments to rationalise their workforce. Didn't CPC-V perceptively flag this pervasive malady, while recommending the backlog of some 3,50,000 posts to be straightaway abolished, further employment of junior staff to be frozen, and Secretary level posts to be drastically reduced?

Aware that my request for taking a leaf out of ongoing armed forces' initiative to reform and restructure may not be well received by the core bureaucracy, for me it means an attempt to be lauded and replicated across the civil side, particularly, for instance, railways. Indian Railways and Indian Army bear unique resemblances in their size and structure, pan-India presence, traditional ethos and sense of discipline.

It is much to its credit that the army of its own volition launched an extensive exercise to explore how it can augment its core strategic strength by re-organising its formations for optimal effect, cutting its revenue expenditure on pay and pensions. Admitting that it has also been plagued with decades of 'empire building' virus, similar to what has been happening on the civil side, it has not felt shy of opting for a leaner, high-tech fighting force, shedding around 1,50,000 personnel over 6-7 years.

In spite of ruffling many feathers, and in teeth of resistance, it has moved ahead with officer cadre restructuring as well. Army too has been flagging the shortfall of about 8,000 officers. It has reviewed threadbare to determine whether the 'vacancies' must be made up or, instead, the overall authorisation can be reduced by about 5,000. As a corollary, the army is examining whether a larger number of meritorious soldiers and junior commissioned officers (JCOs) can be promoted from the ranks to fill up officer vacancies.

To grasp the ramifications, take railways, which already reels under serious financial crunch and ballooning debt burden. After Railway Minister's recent announcement in Rajya Sabha about 2,65,547 so-called vacant posts on railways (2,177 gazetted and 2,63,370 non-gazetted), government planned to go on a hiring spree. How do

railway hierarchy explain their indifference to streamline the network in terms of the study they sponsored Rail India Technical and Economic Service Limited (RITES) in 1990 to do? RITES' report, *Manpower Planning for Indian Railways* identified the effective potential for reduction of as many as 5,68,000 from the total strength of 15,77,000 regular employees. Like most studies report, this too only gathered dust, conveniently forgotten.

Obligatory it looks that top bureaucracy duly apprises Prime Minister of the far reaching, long term implications of the contemplated hiring spree. Not only antithetical of PM's own avowed precept of "minimum government, maximum governance", massive hiring will not just render the elephantine bureaucracy slower and infirm; it will burden the exchequer with huge avoidable revenue expenditure by way of pay and pension alone.

Doesn't the scheme fly in face of the rationale touted to launch *Agnipath*, which is prompted to save such revenue outgo in as critical a sector as defence, while Government avidly roots for such huge work-force, veritable parasites, that will cast financial burden many times of what regular military recruits would cost? With a lopsided staff structure, 95% of government employees are at lower tiers. In most states, almost three-fourths of government civil employees are unproductive support staff, countering the rhetoric of turning India into a global knowledge hub, to ably cope with challenges of the new age. Governments, instead of enlarging the pie, resort to populist measures, including undue increases in staff strengths. Instead of the state creating employment opportunities, it becomes a provider of employment.

Again, let it be borne in mind that it will further whet appetite for the clamouring mob aspiring for more *sarkari naukari* that provides the lowest ranked employee monthly emoluments in excess of Rs 25,000, more than twice those in a private sector counterpart, in addition to life-long pension and perks, not to talk of inflation-indexed dearness allowance, stability and social recognition. Crores of young people, including hundreds of Engineers, MBAs and PhDs apply for miniscule number of even entry level government jobs in railways, police, etc., many of whom have no interest in doing low

level jobs, causing disciplinary problems, in addition.

Occasionally, there ensues a constant chatter that flabby bureaucracy needs trimming, the ever-proliferating number of ministries and departments needing the pruning secateurs. Proposals to start pruning process from the vast base of the pyramid immediately get scuttled by politicians and the unions who see their empires threatened. If the start is made with, say, 25% load-shedding (for, we are top heavy, make no mistake) at the level of joint secretaries, one can offer some hope of success to shave off 30% of the workforce at the bottom of the pyramid (for, we are even more bottom-heavy than we are top-heavy).

2.   Time for a serious re-think – the imperative of a nimble and sprightly administration

Government has taken on far too much in areas in which it ought not to have ventured, and accomplished far too little in areas where it ought to have involved itself. It employs too many persons to pursue each task. Let us not forget that the Constitution entrusts most responsibilities to the states, the centre to be mostly "all staff and no line", in Paul H. Appleby's words.

Nirmal K. Mukherji, the last of the Indian Civil Service to retire as Cabinet Secretary pleaded in his 5-point charter for a slim bureaucracy: (i) the federal component in the administrative arrangement should be multi-layered to correspond with the levels of representative structure and accountability and should be squarely vested at each level; (ii) the heavily over-centralised powers and functions be revised through massive devolution to state and local government levels and it should show up in slimmer central and state bureaucracies; (iii) deregulation and privatization under the new economic regime are 'inescapable slimming diets' for bloated bureaucracies of the Centre and the States; (iv) bureaucracy of the future should be understanding and humane in the face of social churning underway in the country, more so the rise of 'a new species of middle and upper middle classes characterized by yearning for lifestyles like those of affluent countries'; and (v) the present 'rigid and change-resistant' bureaucracy is inconsistent with the emerging

information and communication revolution. It is clear that the case really is against a big and centralized bureaucracy.

Government itself needs to be restructured by closing down departments, and amalgamating many of them, transferring subjects and institutions to the state government and Panchayati Raj bodies. Coordination of government functions has to occur not only at levels of district, state and centre, but also within each bureau across these levels. With the May 1993 notification of the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution, power needs to be transferred to the local institutions, including village panchayats, zila parishads, and municipal bodies, simultaneously ensuring that, in the specific fields transferred to local government, there is no parallel state-level organisation in the district.

B.G. Deshmukh in his essay, *Rethinking the Civil Service System*, asserts that leaner government needs be embraced in order to make governance efficient. Advocating a pragmatic solution for replacement of the notorious inspector raj, Deshmukh suggests non-government certifying agencies be utilised, analogous to the tasks assigned to qualified CAs, for example. He advises that as the identified functions are hived off to, say, non-government or private agencies, a downsizing of the civil service must follow. Perceptively he warns that the staff so rendered surplus must not remain in the same area, else they will invent some work to be busy.

The government office needs to be reinvented. Now when Information Technology (IT) infrastructure has itself been promoted in almost all offices and activities, citizens in a community could deal with just one office locally regarding all tax matters and payments to utilities like electricity and water. Technology unleashes the forces of creative destruction; it encourages that we accelerate the trend towards automation. Digital technologies raise the stakes and accelerate the pace. One option might loosely be called pave the swamp, that is, find ways to improve the structure of bureaucracies such that, while they might remain large, it would at least be easier to move things through them.

Several countries have addressed it, to cut the monster to size. Jefferson articulated a vision of a smaller, less centralised

government, a government that worked better and cost less, one that taxed lightly. A Presidential Review Commission appointed by President Mandela found inherited bureaucracy 'fundamentally flawed' and recommended far-reaching reconfiguration and abolition of a number of ministries in South Africa.

The US President Bill Clinton talked of a government that works better, and on less money. In March 1993, while appointing a special team – The National Performance Review Team – under the chairmanship of Vice President Al Gore, President Clinton said: 'Americans want better schools and health care and better roads and more jobs, but they want us to do it all with a government that works better on less money, and that is more responsive'.

The world today deliberates the Henry David Thoreau dictum, 'That government is best that governs least'. Together with that of Tom Paine, a major voice of the American Revolution, that 'Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its mixed state, an intolerable one'. Emerson, some years later said, 'The less government we have, the better'. We do not need more or less governance. We need better government. We need better governance. Good governance is limited governance – slimming down the state is essential so that it concentrates on its essential functions and divests itself of all non-essential functions.

Rules and administrative structures pile up like so much sediment at the mouth of a river, slowing the current. The job of government is to steer, not row the boat. Government is not good at the rowing. Peter Drucker argued that we needed more governance, not less. In The Age of Discontinuity, he maintained, 'we do not face a withering away of the State – but we do face a choice between big but impotent government and a government that is strong because it confines itself to decision and direction and leaves the doing to others'.

3. **All-pervasive and dominant that IAS has been in India's governance structure, it has a lot to reflect on.**

A clear iteration I must make that, although much of the discussion here revolves around the IAS, all civil services share the ambit, of course, IAS bearing the brunt in view of its primacy and

dominance. IAS would for all intents and purposes be accepted as *primus inter pares,* but its aggressive stance, its exclusive and hegemonic propensity would not let that happen.

Following Prime Minister Modi's recent outburst in parliament that elicited much public attention, purportedly hinting at IAS pervading India's administrative structure, it has been asked why IAS alone gets the stick. The answer seems to clearly lie in IAS, a virtual clone of the ICS, that looms large in country's governance structure, which, though *'it had some outstanding individuals',* as Jawaharlal Nehru believed, was *'a symbol of inequality, casteism and amateurish dilettantism in our administration'.*

An Op-Ed piece in a national daily recently raised a seminal question, Has IAS Failed The Nation? It was emphatically answered by former RBI governor Duvvuri Subbarao, IAS. With utmost candour, he confessed how 'my generation of civil servants and subsequent cohorts have bequeathed a flawed legacy'. IAS has indeed failed the nation, he added. Over last fifty years, it has brought ignominy for itself, of ineptitude, indifference and corruption and, worse, loss of moral compass.

Not that there haven't been many others with IAS lineage to have diagnosed and detected its infirmities and fault-lines. Among the latest, former Cabinet Secretary Prabhat Kumar argues in his book, *Public Service Ethics* that country's rusted steel frame is today viewed as 'a well operated gang of corrupt and incompetent members'. Another former Secretary, N.C. Saxena, IAS-UP 1963 rued, 'There was a time when people looked up to the IAS officers as their saviour. Slowly they have become part of the problem, not the solution'.

The IAS had been hailed as the steel-frame of administration. British Prime Minister Lloyd George held, 'I can see no period when they (the Indians) can dispense with the guidance and the assistance of this small nucleus of the British Civil Service, of British officials in India…they are the steel-frame of the whole structure …if you take the steel-frame out, the fabric will collapse'. Recall how, at a conference of provincial premiers in the Interim Government called on 21 October 1946 to consider the question of replacing the ICS and the Indian Police, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel forged a consensus

in favour of creating two successor all-India services – the IAS and IPS, in spite of strong opposition from several provincial leaders of the stature of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Premier of Uttar Pradesh and Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, Premier of Punjab.

The *steel frame*, a sobriquet that ICS/IAS acquired, has steadily degenerated into a creaking bamboo frame, belying Sardar Patel's expectations. There appeared palpable cynicism across the citizenry at lack of not just the cardinal tenets of 'incorruptibility' and 'integrity', but what indeed is a telling failure of senior bureaucracy – to offer free, frank, impartial advice. Consider Sardar's address in the Constituent Assembly, *'Today my Secretary can write a note opposite to my views. I have told them that if you do not give your honest opinion for the fear that it will displease your Minister, please then you had better go'*. If this metric were to apply today, there will be a ceaseless procession of senior civil servants marching out of Secretariat!

Acute leadership-deficit plagues the civil services. Taking a stand for a junior colleague, who may be unduly pilloried by political leadership, is rare to be seen. What makes for leadership is somewhat like the celebrated credo at the Indian Military Academy, where Field Marshall Chatwood's inspirational code is engraved: *'The Safety, Honour and Welfare of your country comes first, always and every time. The Honour, Welfare and Comfort of the men you command come next. Your own Ease, Comfort and Safety come last, always and every time'*. An esprit d' corps such as this motto inspires is conspicuous by its absence except in some rare cases in civil services.

The bureaucrat not only indulges the politicians' whims and practices, he often does so also in order to have his own peccadilloes condoned. The higher the seniority level, the more the vulnerability and timidity observed among the bureaucracy, having gradually become imbecile, spineless, susceptible to pulls and pressures. Constituted to examine the Emergency excesses, the Shah Commission concluded that *'some members of the Service, who were asked to bend, actually crawled'*. Long ago, on 20 November 1996, the Cabinet Secretary lamented at the Chief Secretaries' conference that some senior IAS officers had not only become partisan, but were working in close tandem with the ministers to plunder the state and the people. The echelons

provide no example, nor leadership. As Chaucer said centuries ago, *'if gold shall rust, what will iron do?'*

On top of it, greed has taken its toll. A vice-like grip maintained by IAS has ensured its total monopoly at top layers of bureaucracy. IAS has now close to total dominance over even Constitutional institutions: Election Commission, Information Commission, so also Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), besides regulatory bodies. Mulcting many an ex-cadre position, the clan got identified with *'bureaucratic imperialism'* (Jagmohan), encroaching upon areas belonging to technocrats, educationists and other groups.

Post-retirement sinecures are an overwhelming lure. Persons holding constitutional posts, including judges, are keen on jobs after retirement. Ministers hope to head corporations, or after losing office, get into jobs with ministerial perks. The adage goes, *IAS never retires.* There are a number of commissions, regulatory bodies and tribunals at the Centre and in the states as also other slots as ambassadors and governors, where they continue with the perks and trappings that trap them. Today, too many babus spend their career's sun-set years kowtowing for post-retirement sinecures. The higher the seniority level, the more the vulnerability and timidity observed among them.

IAS perceives all reforms through the prism of its own hegemonic interests. Ironical it is that Government lets it adjudicate the administrative reforms. All reports are 'processed' by the IAS echelons. The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms has continued to be dominated by the clique. Post-1969 split in Congress party and its strength depleted at the centre, it began to view the IAS as an instrument of its own overlordship which suited the hegemonic IAS. It perceived the recommendations of the Morarji Desai-led Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) (1966-69) as a threat to its status and authority, and succeeded in stiffly opposing them.

Political leadership has seldom evinced interest, not to talk of commitment, in implementation of the reports of reform commissions, pay commissions. The fate of the outcome of various

reform bodies is well known. Take the Gorewala Report, 1951, the Appleby Report,1953, the Administration Reforms Commission Reports, 1966-70, the Sarkaria Commission Report,1983.

Is there any tenable answer, for example, to why the most pertinent recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission were ignored? CPC-V desired its report to be *'implemented as an integral whole, in its entirety, as a complete package'*. Why deceitful cherry picking, then? Can bureaucracy absolve itself of quiet burial of its eminently sensible recommendations, e.g., abolition of the central government backlog of 350,000 vacant posts; a freeze on further employment of junior staff; a downsizing of numbers by 30% in a 10-year period by normal attrition, assisted by a greater number of retirements under the voluntary retirement scheme with golden handshake and compulsory retirement of those who are found to be incompetent or corrupt; reducing the number of Secretary level posts from the then 90 to 30; making the structure horizontal; de-layering, level-jumping, functional multi-skilling; pruning the current 5-6 layers to not more than 2; pruning the number of gazetted holidays from 17 to 3 with provision of restricted holidays, etc.?

Grown to be experts in "battles of attrition", adroit in playing games and managing the system, like Permanent Secretary Humphrey in *Yes Minister* tied Minister Jim Hacker in knots, astute members of what now constitutes an omnipotent trade union, the IAS force decisions the way magicians force cards on their audience in the three-card trick: 'Choose any card, choose my card'.

4. An ass becomes a horse – by mere efflux of time

While discussing the degeneration in the IAS ranks, former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Subbarao says, the biggest problem with the IAS has been 'a deeply flawed system of incentives and penalties', everyone getting 'promoted by efflux of time'. Not just for IAS, but all across the entire civil service, the main criterion is the date of birth and rank attained after passing just one examination years ago. Once having entered the hallowed portal, civil servants remain ensconced in lifelong security, clinging unsteadily to the lifeboats. In his book, *Courts and Their Judgements*, Arun Shourie puts

it so aptly, *'This (civil service) is the only place in which, by the sheer efflux of time, an ass becomes a horse'.*

Peter's Principle works in every organization. Any good management tenet would imply that a proper system of performance appraisal be used not only to reward performance but also to weed out the inefficient and the undesirables. The corrupt, lazy and incompetent don't get weeded out, breeding a system that promotes mediocrity and risk-aversion.

For ages it has been practiced in the armed forces, where around the age of 50, the fitness and capacity of the officers to rise above the level of formation commanders is tested and assessed. As a corollary, departmental enquiry rules and regulations need to be simplified and the procedure shortened and compressed. Although Modi government has, of late, initiated measures to weed out some of 'the deadwood' and 'corrupt' within the extant rules, the unintended immunity that a government employee has in effect acquired through Article 311 of the Constitution needs to be redefined. It makes the process cumbersome and arduous to weed out civil servants who are found to be inefficient, obstructive, even corrupt.

Finding that the service provided almost automatic promotion, each of the direct recruits, irrespective of his/her level of competence, managing to climb to the top of the ladder, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had directed that *'the tyranny of seniority'* be done away with in filling senior posts. Rajiv Gandhi suggested that, in a batch, joint secretaries empanelled should not be more than 75%; the additional secretary and secretary level panels should not be more than 25%. The top civil servants pursuing the group interest made sure to scuttle it (Sanjoy Bagchi, IAS).

5. Politicisation poison in administrative body

Politics in the country since independence has developed as a full-time job. One sees the new-breed *netas* enticing an army of unemployed youths to be local fund-raisers, booth-managers, cheerleaders, clinging as parasites. Sanjay Gandhi's Youth Congress brigade, ubiquitous and brusque, made its presence acknowledged. Politicization of the higher civil services has resulted in officers with a

proven track record of honesty and political neutrality being harassed, shunted to innocuous positions. Petty politics has had a debilitating impact on civil services. Members of Parliament (MPs) or Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) or anyone else in authority deem it a natural right to lobby and demand favours for anyone.

As Panikkar reveals, ICS men in the early 1950s were not clear in their minds 'where their authority ended and that of the ministers began'. They expected that 'ministers would be satisfied with the functions that Members of the Executive Council used to exercise in the past'. A Chief Minister (in Madhya Pradesh) put it more bluntly, when he informed an ICS Secretary where the ultimate authority now lay, 'You may think you are doing your duty, but if I think you are going beyond it, remember I am the judge'. Banerjee (ICS, UP) perceived in the early 1950s itself 'the conversion of the administration into a playground for political parties', and the apparent ease with which so many of his service colleagues fitted 'snugly into the altered administrative ethic'.

The interference in day-to-day administration filters down to posting of even police constables, patwaris and other junior employees, breeding corruption and insubordination. While it is acknowledged that an officer must have an uninterrupted defined tenure of at least two years on a post, as of 1 January 1992, 56% of the IAS as a whole had held their post for less than one year, with variations for that year all the way from 35% for the Bihar cadre to 69% for UP. The average tenure of an IAS officer in UP in last few years was just four months! Mobility rates in India are indeed too rapid for effective administrative performance, and that this single phenomenon contributes significantly to noteworthy pathologies in administration.

The pervasive malaise has particular ingredients that corrode the core administrative structure such as the lure and lust of post-retirement employ of senior echelons, creation of parallel cadres as of chief secretaries and director generals (DGs)/Police, kowtowing to ruling party satraps, and instability and uncertainty in case of tenure of officers in the states turning into a "transfer industry", jeopardising country's basic governance.

The concept of loyalty and branding of officials entered the central level from the decade of the 1970s. Politicisation made a strong entry during the Emergency. The period 1971-1977 inflicted great damage on the system. Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980 saw blatant interference in the internal working of bureaucracy, followed by the emergence of the institution of Prime Minister's House (PMH), later turned into Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The levers of political power moved full steam to maul and demoralize the higher civil service. Special assistants and private secretaries to ministers and those in the Prime Minister's secretariat threw their weight around, to the detriment of smooth and orderly functioning of administrative machinery.

By the time Rajiv Gandhi assumed charge as Prime Minister, he could not but acknowledge its consequences. In his first address to the nation on 12 November 1984, he announced that he would give no quarter to the 'corrupt, the lazy, and the inefficient' and ensure full protection from outside pressures and interference to those who worked with integrity and dedication. In the end, however, nothing changed.

The ministers and the senior officers in the controlling ministries misused their authority in demanding creature comforts for themselves at the expense of the state enterprises. They obtained vehicles and other equipment for personal use from the corporations, withdrew manpower for their domestic needs and often used the funds of the enterprises for their private and public hospitality. Many ministers had no hesitation in inflating the labour force of the enterprises by appointing people of their own constituencies, irrespective of their qualifications or suitability, or the very justification for these posts.

To survive the rough and tumble required political skill. 'From the first day of independence, the administration was indeed in politics', observed Mangat Rai (ICS, Punjab). Services at all levels were exposed to a new style politics of official position that was disruptive of hierarchical discipline and fair use of delegated authority. A new breed of public servants mushroomed which did not have attachment to service ethics, but to political personality who played the patron.

Will we blame only politicians for all acts of omission and

commission? Whom do we hold responsible for failing to stand up against evident attempts at fraud and graft, for an unbridled proliferation of administrative apparatus, for frenzy of ex-cadre sinecures, for basic administrative reforms remaining in limbo, for a growing number of timid, effete and scheming officers ever jockeying for favours? No doubt, political class in public perception is venal and corrupt. Who props them? Some bureaucrats outdo felonious politicians and may well impart a lesson or two in political skulduggery to our netas.

All blame cannot be heaped on politicians. Civil servants strive and succeed in feathering their nest, duly securing their interests even under grave circumstances. IAS officers forged alliances with politicians to brighten their own careers. 'This is now a mutually reinforcing system with each aiding and abetting in getting the maximum out of the spoils system' (Madhav Godbole, IAS). As Subbarao argues, 'Politicians will of course dangle carrots but why should officers go for them?' Inexorably becoming quintessential courtiers, many in the hallowed group indulge the politicians' whims and fancies, not unoften in order to have their own peccadilloes condoned or eke favours.

L.K. Jha (ICS) in a 1983 paper, *The Role of Bureaucracy in a Developing Democracy* analysed the factors contributing to the 'declining standards of administrative performance', 'There then begin to emerge within the civil service persons who "curry favour" with ministers, anticipate their views, and make recommendations to please them. Newly elected ministers usually want to do certain things – possibly in fulfilment of electoral promises given generously rather than wisely'.

As Potter describes, attractiveness of certain jobs and postings has always been there: every province had its plum jobs, a principal object of striving and craving. Mason (ICS, UP) recounts lobbying in the mid-1930s for the plum job in Garwhal. The Commissionership of Rawalpindi in Punjab was considered 'the best ICS job in North India', while, for the more junior men, Kulu Subdivision in Kangra District was a 'prize posting' (Muhammad Azim Husain, ICS, Punjab). Being Collector of Bombay was a plum job in that province; it was in

the city and had excellent amenities, including the sprawling official residence on Malabar Hill, facetiously referred to as 'Buckingham Palace'.

There came a classification of 'wet' and 'dry' posts in government, and the political class has interfered to ensure that its protégés are larger beneficiaries of the 'wet' posts (Kamala Prasad, IAS). 'Wet' posts in the civil service multiplied consequent upon the assumption of new functions by public administration under the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61). Many civil servants found such posts alluring. As a consequence, three categories are now visible: (i) truly Weberian who appear motivated by public interest, observing a high standard of ethics in their behaviour, those who would neither wilt not tilt – and perceptibly a diminishing species; (ii) weather-report readers who observe the current trends and swim with the current, conduct themselves pragmatically, capable of easily swaying either way; and (iii) incorrigibles (S.R. Maheshwari).

6. Amateurish dilettantism

Inequality, casteism, and amateurish dilettantism were three of many charges levelled increasingly from the 1960s against the ICS tradition of generalist administrators. A characterization of the spirit of Indian bureaucracy that has endured is that of top-heavy, over-codified, and monopolized by generalists at the top. The Economist (19 March 1994) wrote about the British Civil Service, *'The system was staffed by clever generalists convinced that they, and often only they, knew where the national interest lay. The public service was notoriously ponderous and customer-unfriendly'*. Indian civil service in essence and content has been no different.

With the increasing complexity of functions and the technical nature of many of the problems the country faces, the continuance of this tradition inevitably impedes the conduct of our attempts at planned development. The new economic policy required civil servants to be experts in their concerned fields. A system was, therefore, needed to be evolved under which, after a preliminary period of, say, 12-15 years, a properly structured assessment of performance and potential of an officer is made. He/she is then

allotted a certain area of activity where he/she is continued on a more or less permanent basis.

In 1957, the Central Administrative Pool was announced with the ostensible aim of building up a reserve of officers with special training and experience for the purpose of economic administration and for maintaining continuity of knowledge and experience in the field of general administration, with little disturbance inherent in the tenure system of staffing.

The central government set up an Administrative Reforms Commission in November 1965. By 1970, ARC had submitted 19 reports with 581 recommendations. Considerably influenced by the Fulton Committee in Britain, the Commission's recommendations included that the pre-eminent position of IAS generalists in the central secretariat be reconsidered; all competent Class I officers from all services should have access to middle and senior management posts in the Secretariat. Another important recommendation made with the great foresight by ARC was for lateral entry into the various layers of administration. Induction of people from outside at senior levels on contract basis would invigorate the civil service. An essential concomitant of the system would be to depute civil servants to work in non-government organizations and in private industry.

Some other prominent recommendations included: promoting specialisation into eight broad areas for which selection to the middle level positions in the Secretariat would be based on the result of a mid-career competitive test open to all officers, which implied modification of the character of the IAS. B.G. Deshmukh, while supporting the concept of lateral entry for jobs requiring specialised domain knowledge, emphasised the need for developing expertise in the civil service through a system under which, after a preliminary period of about ten years, a structured assessment of performance and potential of an officer is done, for a designated area of activity to be allotted to him, to continue there. He also advocated the performance appraisal system to be revamped, also for filling in the top-level posts early in the career.

7. Ethics and values

In the context of 'a politician-bureaucrat-underworld nexus' impacting country's administration, it is essential that Government maintains a relentless emphasis on ethics and values in its training courses and curricula devised for all categories of its employees. Corruption doesn't merely corrode nation's moral fibre; it deprives the masses of an equitable and inclusive deal, disenfranchising and disempowering the poor. Every now and then, claims are made that corruption in the country has declined. On a global bribery risk index India leaped from 185th in 2014 to 77th in 2020; yet the Transparency International annual corruption index still puts India 86th, against 94th in 2013. Where digitization and technology use in administrative services and processes have reduced public interface, so also scope for discretionary powers, there has been an improvement.

The perverse system of incentives in public life, which makes corruption a high return, low risk activity, need to be addressed earnestly and firmly. Various countries have put in place codes of conduct, ethics campaigns, citizens' charters, *et al.* Adopting new laws including code of conduct by itself does not go far without implementing the spirit and the word as well as political will. Codes of conduct and business principles are necessary, but not sufficient.

There's been much talk of the need to reverse the slide by prescribing stringent standards of probity in public life, important being a system required for funding of elections. Former CVC, N. Vittal clearly held that bureaucracy, invested with an enormous security blanket – the very guarantee of tenure under Article 311 of the Constitution, is more corrupt than politicians. To overcome complicated procedures arising from the Constitutional safeguards, a comprehensive examination of the entire corpus of administrative jurisprudence is called for. Prevalent institutional arrangements need be reviewed and changes made, where those vested with power are made accountable, their functioning subjected to social audit with a view to minimizing discretionary decisions.

It appears essential that Government critically evaluates the effectiveness and utility of its anti-corruption instruments. Futility

of country smothering itself with proliferating Vigilance network needs close scrutiny. By dint of his enormous experience in the state as well as at the centre, B.G. Deshmukh found the extant audit system 'unimaginative, governed by the rule book, inhibiting initiative, and not adequately result-oriented'. He made a similar plea for the financial control system, which, according to him, needed to relax its rigid approach in the department of expenditure and revenue. In fact, there is an urgent call required to clearly define the role of Finance and Accounts in government.

8. Justice delayed, justice denied

India seeks for its citizens social, economic and political justice. One glaring chink in country's march over last 75 years has been that of justice delivery awfully delayed. There has been much noise heard that justice must be made quick, inexpensive, easily accessible, and antiquated laws be weeded out, language made easy, procedures be overhauled. There has been no dent; justice system in India continues to cry for quick reforms.

Huge pendency of cases logjams the efficiency of India's judicial system. More than 30 million cases remain pending, 58% criminal, 42% civil, 27 million in district and subordinate courts, 4.3 million in high courts, and 65,000 in Supreme Court. As myriad archaic laws remain an issue; in fact, a real culprit is botched up investigation, besides endemic delays in investigation. India has a conviction rate of just about 21% of the registered cognizable offences.

The paramount concern is whether country has resigned itself to perpetually remain bogged down with the accumulating burden of horrendous judicial delays. Shouldn't there be a concerted move to grapple with the problem in a real 'mission mode' by some ingenious out-of-the-box initiatives in the immediate term, and by building up the requisite infrastructure and devising expeditious mechanisms, in the medium term?

Can we try some sectoral *lok adalats*; also consider feasibility of judicial *agniveer*s, drafting judicial officers from amongst superannuated judges and from practising lawyers, along with support staff? Can't we have courts functioning for longer hours, even in multiple shifts

for some time; and, of course, think of curtailment of 'vacations'? Can't some commercial disputes be settled through mediation and arbitration? Will not a proper mediation law help make mediated settlements enforceable? Will not a special tribunal help handle arbitration-related cases?

Above all, essential is it that, simultaneously with devising measures for mitigating the pendency, causes of such high order of litigation are duly examined and analysed. It has often been stated that government itself is a major culprit, one department suing another, passing the buck to the judiciary. Government remains the largest litigant, responsible for estimated 45% of all court cases (a June 2017 Department of Justice report, Action Plan to Reduce Government Litigation). Here a PMO intervention is called for, in order to ruthlessly curb the trend, holding the officials personally responsible for facile recourse to litigation.

Former CVC, N. Vittal, IAS, explained how the Central Administrative Tribunal and its Benches failed to deliver. Not bound by the Code of Civil Procedure, they were meant to be a substitute for the courts. They were specifically given the authority to decline requests for, that plague of India's courts – adjournments. The CAT cases were to be settled within six months.

Pertinent it is here that the Department of Justice as well as the top judiciary ensure a systemic mechanism to be in place for timely selection and appointment of judges. A time-bound action plan is also required for the thousands of positions for judges for subordinate courts are not allowed to remain vacant. It is believed that it is not just inadequacy of courts and judges; the problem of how judges' time is used also needs to be addressed. It is reported that judges in subordinate courts spend most of their time (45-55%) on administrative matters.

The 2018-19 Economic Survey dealt extensively with the issue, and recommended the use of technology to raise productivity of courts, including digitization, electronic deposition of witness testimonies to save time, etc. The biggest change in judicial domain in the coming decade may well be effected by the use of technology in courts. That will not only help organize cases, but will also bring

references into the judgement at an unprecedented speed.

No indictment of individuals – only fault of the system

It will be incorrect to leave an impression that the country's civil service is wholly decrepit. The most coveted career in India is the civil service, for entry into it means life term employment, security of job, time-bound promotion, and an assured comfortable existence and, of course, plenty of challenges and opportunities to serve the nation. Some of the ablest young men and women constitute the echelons.

This critique is no indictment of people, but of the system. Some of the finest brains of the country in civil services have rendered yeoman's service to the nation under difficult circumstances, and kept it ticking. Individually intelligent, industrious and idealistic, many of them atrophy and vegetate; swell the stymied system, become avaricious, clannish, and hegemonic. Government owes it to the few strong and upright among them to be provided a viable safeguard against the excesses of pliant seniors as much as revengeful political masters. Britain provided for a mechanism for such relief, as also for induction of renowned public figures from outside Government for selection of senior civil service personnel like permanent secretaries.

Simultaneously, it's time for a sincere soul-search. There's a lot the fraternity itself needed to ponder. A Service association as the conscience keeper can and should play an effective positive role in preserving the collective image of the Service. It is difficult to accept that political interference is the sole cause for the present mess. The responsibility is on the senior bureaucrats to follow this code of conduct. If they observe it, it will be easier to enforce it down the line. Even the worst politician respects a straightforward officer.

Imperative of reforms in governance throws a gauntlet which perforce can only be handled by the Prime Minister.

No other Prime Minister in India ever invested as much time and attention to its administrative machinery as PM Narendra Modi has done. Leading from the front, periodically interacting not only with

Secretaries in central Ministries and departments but administrative heads of states and selected districts, and regularly monitoring important projects, Prime Minister has demonstrated his will and intent to infuse a new life and vigour in the civil service.

Earlier in the year, at a marathon 4-hour meeting with Secretaries of central ministries, PM Modi asked them to flag the shortcomings they notice in any government policy or programme to him. "The PM sent a clear message to the executive that they must give their feedback on government policies if they find anything wrong….so that things can be corrected or improved". Prime Minister reiterated that senior-most bureaucrats must work like a team, go on tours and for more field visits to "see for themselves" the progress of government projects and programmes.

In the words of President Obasanjo of Nigeria, 'Civil Service Rules by themselves will not lead to good governance if they are not backed by political will …'. In this context, difficult it is to resolve the enigma of Prime Minister Modi upbraiding the elite cadre as he keeps extending tenure of super babus and appointing many in key positions after retirement in face of government's own policy that forbids extension of service/re-employment except "in very rare and exceptional circumstances". He extended the prescribed tenure of all Cabinet Secretaries ever since his first installation as PM in 2014. Government has routinely appointed retired IAS officers in Election Commission, Information Commission, as Chief Vigilance Commissioner, CAG, and others from the same fraternity, besides joining all powerful PMO as advisers.

Cognizant of deficient delivery having been an Achilles' heel, Modi sarkar initiated several reforms, including systemic review of civil servants post-30 years of service or 50/55 years of age, opening a small window of lateral entry of professionals in central ministries, and for Central services officers in senior positions. It has launched the Shibulal-led three-member task force to help government effect major bureaucratic reforms through Mission Karmayogi.

Some aspects highlighted by National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) in regard to administrative reforms need to be seriously followed up:

(i)   there is little logic and rationale of having as many as 60+ Group 'A' services. The central services were 30 in 1971, which increased to 49 in 1984; in 2003, their number rose to 66. The number of civil services need to be drastically reduced. As former Cabinet Secretary Nirmal Mukherji advised, the IAS shop be shut. There may well be just one stream for civil services, and another for technical, scientific and engineering services.

(ii) The upper age limit for UPSC candidates needs be brought down from current 30-32 years to 27. An important ingredient for inculcating values is the imperative of doing it at the earliest in life. The progressive increase in the age for recruitment, enabling older persons to join the service often tends to bring their baggage of experience and attitudes into their new world of work. Finding that today civil service candidates are much older than earlier, spending too much time preparing for the entrance exam, up to 10-12 years in some cases, some aspirants availing more than half a dozen chances, former Secretary in central government, Satya Mohanty (Mint, 20 April 2022) believes that India's civil services recruitment market has suffered degradation, that 'not-so-good quality has driven out much better quality'. Recalling what George Akerlof in his 1970 paper on a market for lemons, for which he got a Nobel Prize in Economics, Mohanty adds, 'What are the country's best prepared students doing? Most appear to have opted out of the system. Thus, as in Akerlof's market for lemons'.

(iii) there may be a broad-based administrative pool of promising middle level officers selected by an egalitarian, autonomous panel, also fill senior positions by short-term contracts, enabling lateral entry of technocrats, professionals and entrepreneurs, to supplement and strengthen the system dominated by the general elite.

It will be useful to study the way armed forces recruit, train, and select commanding officers. Army's "colonel threshold" may well be a template for a structured mid-service evaluation of civil servants for their career progression. A second post mid-career selection by UPSC may well be considered for a common panel for senior

positions from all services.

Indeed, important is it that Prime Minister personally reviews the burgeoning numbers in bureaucracy at the Centre and in states, in the context of an egalitarian, efficient and responsive government India needs to have for a 'future ready' powerhouse it must become, by dint of its technology-endowed and knowledge-based demographic resources. The country needs to emerge out of the Vigilance mesh it is now caught in, and also redefine the role and organisation of finance and audit.

Likewise, is the challenge for Prime Minister to effect a quick and real change in judicial delivery system.

Shedding the feudal baggage: Government has no business to be in business; government has no business to be world's biggest property builder or transport owner and operator. Why should Government saddle itself, except in really few rare cases, with the job of building and allotting residential accommodation, buying/leasing and arranging transport and telephone facilities, etc.? Privileges and perks to legislators and government employees so arranged by it in many cases amount to far in excess of salary.

Isn't there a case for doing away with vestiges of feudalism like huge residential bungalows, servant quarters, retinue of personal staff, bungalow peons? Why shouldn't Government at the Centre and in states pay composite remuneration to public servants, legislators, and others on their rolls as it is done in most of the countries as well as in global business and industry, in the United Nations and other similar world bodies?

Insulating the system from political interference: In order to build the spinal cord of the bureaucracy, the Fifth Pay Commission advocated the constitution of a high-powered civil services board both at the Centre and the states, to address the vexed questions of postings and transfers, and minimum tenures. No heed is paid to this advice. Invoking Article 32 of the Constitution, a writ petition by a large number of retired civil servants in the Supreme Court succeeded in securing significant support. The apex court directed for an Act to be passed by Parliament laying down the duties and responsibilities of bureaucracy; a minimum period of posting in each post; a civil

services board to be appointed; and orders issued to bureaucrats to be duly recorded. It has been forgotten. No action has been taken.

While it is important to punish and deter the corrupt, it is equally important to protect the honest and innocent public servant. An imperative need is for an effective mechanism to be ensured to safeguard civil servants from political whims and bureaucratic vengeance, and politicians to volitionally eschew advocacy of postings and transfers of government employees, like it was in days of Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru. Prime Minister Nehru clearly directed that public representatives must not take up issues such as government servants' cases in HR domain. As Sardar Patel wrote to the Chief Minister of Bihar in 1947, 'ministers should not give orders to any subordinate officers and they must deal with them through their superior'.

Officers to be on the ground, in the field: It was said that the ICS administered the districts more from the saddle than an office chair. It was widely regarded as mandatory for good Collectors "to get out of the office". As E.H.H. Edye (ICS, UP) remarked, "a Collector's value is in inverse ratio to the wear on the seat of his trousers". Prime Minister Modi has all along emphasised that officers must involve themselves in the progress of projects and programmes relevant to their sphere of work, and visit the work sites. Many services valued and practised the culture of 24X7X365 inspections along with effective follow up, which seems to be gradually fading away like some other benign and useful management tenets.

Spare time and facilitate redressal of public grievances/ problems: There was a time, within living memory, when an hour or so was kept available for people to meet all echelons of power. Where is that open time for airing of grievances and seeking redressal? Officers have built around themselves ivory towers of a retinue of personal staff to insulate themselves from *aam aadmi*. The white sahibs introduced and rigorously followed these simple and effective interaction mechanisms, while, regretful it is, their brown successors have chosen to build around themselves Chinese walls to insulate themselves from the people in India's vibrant democracy.

Today, essential it has become to relook some of the features

and aspects in country's administrative structure. What the last ICS Cabinet Secretary Nirmal Mukherji advised deserves due consideration: 'the postulate that the Constitution is meant to be worked by a ring of service that will keep the country under control, is entirely untenable, if only because it places the bureaucracy ahead of democracy. Equally indefensible is the view that the IAS is needed to keep India united. Things have changed since the Sardar's days and any discussion about All India Services should reflect the change'.

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Society needs the 'Good' more than the 'Educated'

Introduction

A. The Problem: Who are the Mentors in government, the role-models, statesmen, men of wisdom, the *Shrestha* who we can trust to govern us well and, for long-term good of the nation; irrespective of 'party' or 'ideological' differences?

As a society, we have no clarity on the idea of 'good and bad', other than marks, degrees, status, vocation, money, legal-illegal, etc. All these factors relate to our external-nature whereas it is the quality of our thoughts-desires, our inner-nature, which govern our outer behaviour! We think everyone is equal and everyone should have the freedom to do what he wishes. We have no idea of who are the *Shrestha*, the best men of society, the enlightened elders and leaders, who can really Mentor and inspire each and every one of us to strive to be good.

What does it mean to be 'educated'? According to the dictionary, it is to be cultured, knowledgeable, well-informed, skilled, accomplished, refined, learned, erudite, sophisticated, etc. Surprisingly, nowhere does being educated guarantee good character, commitment to our respective duties, swadharma, care and concern for each other, etc.!

Who are the teachers as Mentors who can guide and inspire us to be good after explaining what goodness means and convince us that it is good to be good and show us how to strive to be good and better towards the highest and best? Shouldn't at least some part of our academia and schooling focus on identifying the few and nurturing and educating them to be Mentors, in whatever vocation they may be; besides teachers, who merely teach?

We have no processes to Educate and Evaluate us to be Mentors, i.e., those who are inspired to strive towards good, better, best, in a vocation where we can excel, and be of service to society, not for exploitation and making money!

This western idea of education that we're blindly aping is focused only on IQ and the 3R's (reading, writing and arithmetic), and our evaluation of how good or bad, is based only on our marks and degrees; and being educated is unconcerned with inspiring us to refine the quality of our inner-nature! No wonder, more education is leading to more crimes and intelligent ways to exploit natural resources and people, for personal gain!

- Considering that 3R's schooling was thrust upon us by breaking our own gurukuls, merely to produce clerks and accountants to serve the then masters; and was not intended at all to inspire us to be good, it is of course not surprising that we the educated have a herd mentality and cannot think beyond the 3R's!

Obviously therefore, we the educated including our leaders and academia, have no ideas and plans and processes in place for making the good people, the enlightened citizens, who have been educated and inspired to sincerely strive to be committed to their *swadharma*, respective duties, and work selflessly for good of society.

- We've criticized, and because of our ignorance, are even today ready to criticize, our own indigenous time-tested social and educational systems; but have ourselves failed to create alternatives to prepare and nurture the young to be good. And evaluating, identifying and nurturing only those to be Leaders and Mentors of society, who have the potential and the disposition to be ethical, moral, virtuous, selfless, of good character, etc. in whatever vocation they may be.

- Modern societies are totally ignorant of even how to define goodness because we've no idea of what is the 'highest and best' against which only can we really evaluate how good or bad we're and how to become better towards the best.

- As a collective we've no holistic, healthy-worldview of

Creation and our purpose for being here! We have yet to decide who are the good because we haven't yet discussed and explored the '*plan and purpose of Creation'* and what is '*the role of our daily work and vocation'* in '*attaining and fulfilling our purpose'?*

- Unless we've clarity on the purpose of our work and life, how can we prepare ourselves to remain on the optimum path to it? As a society and as academia and teachers, we've no idea from where and why we suddenly come into the world; why in a particular family; why are we all different, with our unique inherent tendencies and characteristics, etc. and why we suddenly go out of existence!

- Schooling makes no attempt to allow us to study, reflect, discuss, explore, how our sages have understood these issues.

B. Suggested Vision and Solutions: We have to build a society where the educated, the teachers, professionals, leaders are not just men of IQ and the 3R's, but are men of wisdom, who have the potential to be Mentors. Those fit to be Mentors can be identified during schooling and nurtured and inspired to be our guides. Mentors can then focus on striving for the highest and best and inspiring the young too, in and through their respective vocations. And for this, all-educational institutes and workplaces should provide time and opportunity to improve quality of our thoughts through introspection, discussions, etc., to determine our short and long-term goals, keeping in view the purpose of life.

- Schooling must plan and focus on giving us an intellectual conviction on the profound ideal that our vocation and daily work and life itself is our opportunity to attain and fulfil our role in this Creation, when we learn to strive selflessly for good of society. Every educated person must graduate with this inspiration, to offer his best for good of society. If we do not, the result is obvious – growing selfishness, materialism, intolerance and a divisive world-society which remains in a state of perpetual purposelessness.

Fulfilment of our respective duties, *Swdharma, Kartavya-palan* and spirit of focusing on the highest and the best in and through our daily work and life are the twin ideals of Bharat, which literally means those stiving for the highest illumination!

- This clarity on the direction of growth and development towards the higher should have come through Governance, Human Resource Development/Department of Personnel and Training/education, philosophy, religions, and political leaders, but they have miserably failed to come together on a common platform to inspire us to strive to become good and better towards the highest and best, in and through our daily work and life—because of the schooling we've got.

- We must appreciate that unless we are made aware of the 'highest and best goal of life', 'higher and better' don't have any real significance; they would make sense only when bench marked against the highest. And, only those who sincerely strive for the highest are really suitable to be our Mentors, teachers and elders! This was our societal and educational ideal.

C. Healthy worldview of 'Oneness': The 'highest and best' ideal placed before us is that: *man-and-man; man-nature; Creation-God are not 'separate' but are 'one', interconnected, interdependent, interrelated, 'integrated whole'.*

It is this grand ideal that is the foundational wisdom of all religions and faiths; and it is this vision that gives rise to all goodness, ethics, virtues; of 'love the neighbour as thyself'; of 'as you sow, so shall you reap', etc.

Thus good, better, best can be judged from our ability to grow in feelings and experience of our oneness, and love, care, concern for more and more till we actually realize our oneness with the whole Creation – from less and less selfishness to more and more unselfishness is a universal idea that academia has to practice and preach.

This in a nutshell is the plan of Creation and the role of our daily work and life is to continuously strive to expand our consciousness from just me, my family, my community to actually realize the whole

Creation as our very own family; we're actually one with Creation; it is our I-ego sense that keeps us separate!

Through daily prayers, worship, meditations, and fulfilling our respective swadharma we gradually purify our minds, grow in humility and reduce ego-sense and expand our consciousness till we find fulfilment, bliss, Ananda, in oneness with everything!

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) had once created a series of National Resource Centre for Value Education, NRCVE, where sincere NGOs of different religions and faith groups and the Academia, could sit together and evolve a series of self-development plans including Life skills, etc. that could be offered to the young. This idea needs to be pursued.

D. Thought Management: Childhood is the best opportunity to imbibe the habit of self-development Practices to improve Quality of Thoughts and Direct them towards feelings of oneness with more and more.

Unselfish Work is Meditation with eyes open! It is fulfilment of our respective duties, swadharma, and selfless work done in a spirit of worship, which purifies our thoughts and has the potential to lead us towards the highest and the best – perpetual joy and perfection. The Government of India has introduced the idea of public servants as Karma-yogis and so commitment to duties must be learnt through training with armed forces and the NGO's of NRCVE.

Learning & Practicing Thought-Management prepares us to be Mentors

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO says: Wars begin in the minds of men and peace must be installed in the minds of men by cleansing the mind. How? By 'Training 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'.

We should appreciate that we're a 'body-mind-life/consciousness' complex; our inner-nature, the mind, is subtlest matter, enlivened and made conscious due to its proximity to 'life, Consciousness, divinity',

within us. Aping the west, modern societies, scientists and teachers are busy learning and teaching about the 'objective', the external world of 'matter' and totally ignore the study of 'ourselves', our inner-nature, even though we're an integral part of the world of matter!

When we learn to focus on the 'subjective', our mind and thoughts, we will understand more clearly that our every thought-word-action leave impressions on our mind and these impressions, good/unselfish or bad/selfish, enslave and entrap us and either refine or deform our character, accordingly. Therefore, it is good to learn and practice being less and less self-centred.

❖ **Self-development is a planned process of Thought Management** and can be considered as the process of training, disciplining, and controlling our mind and managing our thoughts, values, beliefs, goals, desires and emotions towards growing feelings of care and concern for more and more; it is this process of expansion towards unselfishness that differentiates us and ultimately leads to manifesting more and more of the perfection, peace, joy, divinity already within us.

We have to provide time, space, environment and inspiration in our education for daily self-study and reflection on our beliefs, values and goals to Know and harmonize them towards higher and better; highest and best? There are many Life skills, etc. that can help and there are four time-tested ways to improve quality of thoughts and direct them from selfishness towards more and more unselfishness:

i)   Work and vocation as worship and service of mankind (Karma-yoga)

ii) Devotion, respective worship, prayers, etc. (Bhakti-yoga)

iii) Knowledge of Self, of our mind, of our creation, of our goal and purpose in life (Gyan-yoga)

iv) Meditation, Self-development practices, yoga (Raja-yoga)

❖ **Methods of training & changing the mind-set:** There are two fundamental methods for changing the mindset & to reform/refine it:

- Repetitive thoughts, words and actions, constant Practice to inculcate the higher, & getting established in the better habit
- Learning to focus on the essential, the higher, and learning to with draw from the non-essential/lower & getting convinced & established to choose the higher/better

There are three fundamental processes to impress new thoughts and ideals in the mind, awaken *Viveka* and Directing the Mind towards higher:

- Hearing (Reading): conviction in higher
- Reflecting upon the new ideas
- Deep thinking – Meditating upon the new ideas, practicing them and ultimately making them your own & rejecting lower
- ❖ **Nature of Mind:** Through daily self-development processes we can awaken our *Viveka* and develop powers of will to walk the critical path.

Doing what 'we' want to do implies doing what the mind wants to do. Freedom is in NOT having to do what the MIND wants to do. The motive power for all actions is our desires. As an educated person we must learn to check the desires to do wrong actions. Those actions, which take us towards manifesting our potential are good or right actions and those that take us away are wrong actions.

Not allowing the Mind to take us towards lower desires is to be constantly practiced. Good actions calm the mind and only a calm mind can really be effective and peaceful and allow us to experience our full potential perfection and bliss.

- Because of the numerous impressions we create every moment, which propel us into fresh actions, the very nature of mind is to be restless like a monkey.
- Drunk with 'Desires'; stung by scorpion of 'Jealousy'; and also possessed by devil of 'Pride'; the mind is therefore very difficult to control!!
- The more self-control we have, the greater as a person we

become.

- Mind is a continuous Flow of thoughts – wanted / unwanted.
- The mind is built to look outside through the five sense organs.
- By its very nature mind has a tendency to 'flow down' - be tempted, enjoying the experience of the senses, weak people don't have self-control and do wrong.
- Mind is difficult to lift up and control – like reversing the flow of river.
- Mind is One-track in nature; gets attached easily, but detaches with difficulty.
- Mind is material in nature, just matter! I am Conscious; the master of the mind, not its slave!
- Functions: Inputting & Doubting; Storehouse of all impressions; Choosing; and 'I-sense'.
- Carries the impression of every SINGLE Thought, Word, Action; Choice/Motive.
- Constant Focus on Higher & Practice of with drawl from lower (likes/dislikes) alone can increase self-control; Resolutions to be disciplined, fixing goals, following time table, help.
- Awareness that "I am not the mind" helps in control.
- Continuous, regular, repetitive practice is needed to purify & develop mind.
- MANAGING THOUGHTS: Quantity (Reduce them by keeping busy in planned actions); Quality (improve them); Direction (control it towards the higher).
  - ❖ **Positive Attitudes help improve Quality of our Thoughts:** To bring about any change, external or internal, we have individually, to strive, to exert, to struggle and should develop the conviction: -
  - I alone am responsible to change quality of my thoughts – none else! Mentors can only guide.
  - To put in the effort to change, I need the support of three

forces or motivation:

- First, I need to be dissatisfied with the present state of affairs. I will put in the effort to change only if I wish to grow, to become better and best. So, am I dissatisfied with the present state?

- Second, I need to have a lofty vision, a long-term good goal, a direction towards which I need to change. This should be my personal vision, something about which I have a passion. However, my vision must also be in harmony with our worldview of 'oneness' and our universal inner-need for peace, and bliss, not just happiness, success, which come and go!

- Thirdly, I have to evolve and act on my action plan for my self-development.

So, schooling must create a platform, with help of academia of different religions, where students can openly explore, investigate, determine their personal vision and understand that their personal vision must be in harmony with the commonly shared universal vision of every being, which is of love, ahimsa, peace, righteous conduct, truthfulness, bliss, prosperity.

- ❖ **Holistic Worldview of Oneness that can inspire us to grow towards selflessness:**

- *A quote in a church: "If we see God in others, we discover the best in our self".*

- *The Kingdom of God is within you. Seek you first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and everything else will be added unto you.*

- *Human ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is: To preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life by learning to manage & improve the Quality of our Thoughts.*

- *We're habituated to identifying ourselves with our body-mind complex and so become self-centered!*

- *Each soul is potentially divine and through selfless work, devotion, meditations, and reflecting on worldview of oneness, we purify our mind and can Identify with our divinity to feel oneness with more & more!*

Vivekananda, who has been nominated as the icon of our youth,

gives us a common, powerful vision towards which all of us can strive:

- *All power is within you; you can do anything and everything. Believe in that; do not believe that you are weak. Stand up and express the divinity within you.*

- *All glory, power and purity are within us already…potential or manifest, it is there – and the sooner you believe that, the better for you.*

❖ **Action Plan for Thought Management:**

a) VISION: Make the teachers/students aware of higher dimensions of education, work and life. Help them to understand the Self-development processes to acquire the Vision and the Inner-strength to walk towards the higher.

- Higher dimension of Education: (IQ+Left Brain) + (EQ+SQ+Right Brain); Intelligence + *Viveka*, ability to choose and self-control and will power to act on the higher

- Higher dimension of Work: From 'bread + butter' to 'Fulfilment of obligatory Duties' to 'Quality in work' to 'work as service to God in man and nature'

- Higher dimension of Life: 'Earning and Fulfilment of desires' to 'Striving to experience our oneness with more and more' and 'Striving to manifest our infinite divine potential and perfection by offering our very best for the good of people'

Man is matter plus life: Matter is limited, finite. Matter alone cannot be the source of values, power, potential and consciousness. Life is Consciousness, Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent. It must be the source of all potential, knowledge, power, energy, bliss or 'Ananda'.

What are the methods and skills to be acquired to manifest our full potential? If education can help understand these issues, we will be better placed to manifest our potential. 'Work', which includes our every thought, choice, word and action and the motive behind it, is our opportunity to manifest or cover up our potential. What do I choose? *Viveka* is the ability to choose rightly.

b) HARMONY IN GOALS: The Teacher/students should then understand and appreciate the great importance of self-development - Daily and constant Self-introspection to review, plan and harmonize all their 'work' towards the highest.

'Work' includes all our Values, Desires and Goals (Long-term, Short-term, Weekly, Daily Actions)'.

Education must establish us in the habit of daily introspection to think, plan and review our daily 'Work' and harmonize them towards the higher. Education must help to develop *viveka* (the ability to choose the higher), self-control and will power to walk towards the higher. Mere teaching the 3 R's is not enough.

Problem: The Teacher-students must first understand, why are we not able to experience and express our full potential? The villain is our mind. Mind is our instrument of perception but it also acts as a veil, which does not allow us to experience the full potential that life offers. We keep on forming, deforming, and reforming our mind every moment, by the permanent impressions that are left on it, by our 'work', which include our every thought, word, deed.

These impressions make us what we are and make people different. The good impressions we gather make us calm, and can take us towards the higher. The active impressions give us the power and energy to fulfil our goals. Wrong actions make us dull and inactive and cover up our potential.

- Whatever may be our present circumstances, high or low status; rich or poor; etc., it is possible to bring about an inner transformation in our attitude.
- We need a teacher who can guide us and show us how to grow towards highest and best.
- Teachers trained as Mentors can gives us right guidance.
- We have to sincerely practice his teachings.
- We can appreciate that the primary purpose and duty of a 'teacher' must be to be a Mentor.
- Teacher as Mentors can guide us, who are selfishly attached to 'I, me and mine', so that we are inspired to practice some

self-development processes to bring about an inner change in our attitude.

- Teacher as Mentors can empower and enable us to walk towards the higher dimensions of life.

- As teachers our primary task must be to build character.

- Teaching of a 'subject'; the teaching of the 3 R's – 'reading, writing and arithmetic', and giving of information, should be only the secondary objectives!

- Important learning is that 'I and I alone am responsible for creating my future'.

- The teacher can just give the direction, but it is for us to walk the path.

Vivekananda: *We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so, we have to know how to act…. We reap what we sow. We are the makers of our own fate. None else has the blame; none has the praise… Go on doing good, thinking holy thoughts continuously, that is the only way to suppress base impressions. Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character. We can overcome the difficulty by constant practice.*

Subjective Focus: *"From our childhood upwards, we have been taught only to pay attention to things external, but never to things internal; hence most of us have nearly lost the faculty of observing the internal mechanism. To turn the mind, as it were inside, stop it from going outside, and then to concentrate all its powers, and throw them upon the mind itself, in order that it may know its own nature, analyse itself, is very hard work. Yet that is the only way to anything which will be a scientific approach" to 'tapas' or self-development.*

"It is good and very grand to conquer external nature, but grander still to conquer our internal nature. It is grand and good to know the laws that govern the stars and planets; it is infinitely grander and better to know the laws that govern the passions, the feelings, the will of mankind."

Conclusion

It is the foremost responsibility of teachers, parents, to give the students a lofty vision and a purpose in life and the inspiration to strive for it.

- Unless, we the elders have a lofty vision, are inspired by it and are working to realize it, we cannot inspire the students.

- Students have a tremendous curiosity for knowledge and if we can provide them with the inspiration for a high ideal, they will develop the enthusiasm to follow it.

- The young learn not by "preaching" but by "following the conduct" of the elders.

- Therefore, both parents and teachers have to be *Acharyas* – role models of good values, ideals and righteous conduct; and for them to become Acharyas, they must themselves be engaged in self-development processes for inculcation of values for realizing the highest and the best, and then the students will catch their enthusiasm.

An ideal society is based on ethics, morals, Dharma, i.e., our duties and righteous conduct; where the more power that we have and the higher we are in status, the greater is the self-control, self-restraint, humility, spirit of service and character that we must acquire.

This spirit of working for good of society has to be acquired when we are young. It must therefore be a part of Governance, Education and of Evaluation, to differentiate between being 'educated' and being fit to be nurtured to be 'leaders and mentors' of society, whatever be our vocation; as otherwise the same intelligence, power and status, untampered with wisdom, will do both us and society, great harm in the long run.

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Akshay Bajad

Empowering Voters with Visual Disability

Section 11 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, states that the Election Commission of India and the State Election Commissions shall ensure that all polling stations are accessible to persons with disabilities and all materials related to the electoral process are easily understandable by and accessible to them. The aforesaid act was made to give effect to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to ensure full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.

According to the Strategic Framework on Accessible Elections adopted on 4th July 2018 in the National Consultation on Accessible Elections, the Election Commission of India is committed to building an equal access framework for persons with disabilities supported by the fundamentals of responsiveness, respect and dignity to enhance elector confidence among them; and support initiatives for improved service offerings to enhance their electoral participation. The Election Commission recognises the use of accessible technological tools for facilitating persons with disabilities of different categories to cast their votes.

Article 15 of the Indian constitution also prohibits discrimination by the State against any citizen (including disabled) on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Yet, persons with disabilities have been fighting for long for their right to vote on par with other citizens.

As per Census 2011, there are about 2.68 crore disabled persons in India, out of whom about 50 lakh persons have disability in seeing. Voters with disability in seeing are still able to cast a vote at an election with the assistance of a companion. An assisted vote, while not a secret and independent vote, still allows such voters to participate in the electoral process. However, in the present system of voting through EVMs, there is no way of knowing if the assisting person has indeed cast his/her vote for the candidate picked by the voter with disability in seeing.

For the convenience of voters with disability in seeing, there is Braille signage on the balloting unit of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM). On the right side of the balloting unit along the candidates' vote button, digits 1 to 16 are embossed in Braille signage for the guidance of such voters. However, a voter with disability in seeing can press a button but cannot ascertain the actual voting. The voter is not sure whether his/her vote is recorded or not, and if recorded, whether it is recorded in favour of the candidate to whom it was intended or not. Moreover, not every person with disability in seeing understands Braille.

Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) is an independent system attached with the EVMs that allows the voters to verify that their votes are cast as intended. However, there is no such facility by which the voters with disability in seeing can verify their voting. There is a need to provide a system by which the voters with disability in seeing can get immediate audio verification of their cast votes.

Image text to speech conversion (ITTS) device:

The basic idea of the proposed stand-alone real-time system is to capture the image of the paper slip generated by the printer in VVPAT, extract text from it and convert the text into speech that can be listened to through the headphones.

The ITTS device consists of four main components: camera, programmable system (optical character recognition software and text-to-speech engine), headphones and battery. As the optical character recognition software cannot recognise and convert the

image of the symbol of the candidate printed on the paper slip in VVPAT into text, the name of the symbol needs to be loaded in the VVPAT machine along with the serial number, the name of the candidate and the image of the symbol.

The ITTS device is to be fixed inside the VVPAT machine in such a way that the voters' clear view through the transparent window of the VVPAT remains unobstructed and the printed paper slips displayed for seven seconds in VVPAT come within the field of view of its camera lens. Externally, it requires a set of headphones with volume controls in them.

Upon entering the booth, the voter puts on the headphones. When a vote is cast, a paper slip is printed in the VVPAT containing the serial number, the name of the candidate and the image and name of the symbol of the candidate and remains exposed through a transparent window for seven seconds. The ITTS device captures the image of the paper slip using its camera. The extraction of the text from the image is done by optical character recognition software and the process of converting text to speech is done by the text-to-speech engine. The audio output is then listened to through the headphones. It states the serial number, the name of the candidate and the name of the symbol of the candidate. The voter listening at the headphones can instantly verify that his/her vote is cast as intended. Thereafter, the temporary files created in the ITTS device during this process get eliminated automatically creating space for new files.

The proposed stand-alone system is not vulnerable to manipulation. The manufacturers of EVMs (Bharat Electronics Ltd. and Electronics Corporation of India Ltd.) are capable of making inexpensive and efficient image text to speech conversion (ITTS) devices using current technologies.

Voting is an act of expression which has immense importance in a democratic system. With an intent to have fullest transparency in the electoral system and to restore the confidence of voters with disability in seeing in the EVMs, it is necessary to provide them the facility to verify their voting. It is the voters themselves who must consider their voting experience to be a success. To have confidence

in the outcome of an election, they must believe that they successfully used the voting system. Without this belief, the outcome of the election may be questioned.

Therefore, in order to empower the voters with disability in seeing to verify their cast votes, the Election Commission of India should incorporate a system of "image text to speech conversion" in the Electronic Voting Machines.

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Vivek K. Agnihotri

Legislative Express Delivery

The Context

On 15 August 2021, speaking on the occasion of the 75th Independence Day celebrations held at the Supreme Court lawns, Chief Justice of India, N V Ramana, lamented the "sorry state of affairs" of lawmaking and parliamentary debate in the country. He observed: "We see a lot of gaps in legislation, there is a lot of ambiguity in making laws. There is no clarity in the laws. We do not know what purpose the laws are being made for". In the absence of quality debate, courts are unable to fathom the intent and object of the new laws triggering litigation and causing inconvenience to the stakeholders, he added.

This was indeed a scathing indictment of the process, procedures and personalities. The comment was made against the backdrop of the dubious distinction of legislative achievements of the mauled Monsoon session, 2021 of the Parliament. The session, which began on 19 July and was expected to conclude on 13 August with 20 sittings, ended prematurely amidst din and chaos. However, in spite of continuing disruptions, the Lok Sabha passed 22 Bills while the Rajya Sabha approved 21 Bills, including two money Bills. Of these, 21 Bills were passed during this session itself by both the houses. One extra Bill passed by the Lok Sabha was passed in the Rajya Sabha during the previous session. One of the Bills passed related to a constitutional amendment, since numbered 105th Constitutional Amendment after the President's assent thereto. Six of the Bills passed by the two houses pertained to ordinances promulgated by the President in the preceding intersession period. Only one of the

Bills passed had been through the portals of a Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee (DRPSC).

At the end of every Parliament Session, media regularly publish statistics of business transacted in the two Houses during the period. Mostly we read about not so encouraging figures regarding the time lost due to disruptions and how the ruling party/coalition was unable to get the nod for certain key legislations, which it was desperately trying to push through. The reports also highlight the Bills pending in the two Houses, which is always a large number, particularly in the Rajya Sabha. Going by those standards, the legislative achievement of the recently concluded Monsoon Session – 22 Bills in 18 Days – was indeed very laudable.

According to the Bulletin issued by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat of the proceedings of the House on 11 August, the concluding day, when the House was witness to forgettable scenes of ungainly tussle between the honourable members and the security personnel in the context of the passage of the controversial The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021, the Rajya Sabha, in addition to passing the Constitutional Amendment Bill, gave its nod to 3 other Bills and transacted other official business, the cumulative record of which ran into 22 pages.

The Precedents

However, this express delivery of legislative business is not a singularity. In August 2019, before the euphoria over the reading down of article 370 relating to the status of Jammu and Kashmir had subsided, came the claim, universally, but grudgingly acknowledged by some, that the first session of the 17th Lok Sabha and the corresponding 249th session of the Rajya Sabha, during June-August 2019, had been the most "productive".

M Venkaiah Naidu, Chairman, Rajya Sabha, in his Valedictory address on 7 August 2019 highlighted that in terms of legislative output, with the passage of 32 Bills during 35 sittings, the 249th session was the best in the last 17 years accounting for 52 sessions. 35 Bills were passed during the 197th session in 2002. The best performance in this regard in the last 41 years since 1978, for which

Session-wise data is available, was 37 Bills passed during the 131st session in 1984. The turnaround during this session also comes out clearly when viewed against the passage of a total of only 33 Bills during the last five sessions (244th to 248th) put together. Similarly, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, in his valedictory remarks stated that 36 Bills were passed during the First Session of the 17th Lok Sabha.

However, not all saw it that way. Some leaders of the opposition in the Rajya Sabha presented a letter to the Chairman of the House on July 25 2019 objecting to the "hurried" passage of Bills without adequate scrutiny in the ongoing Parliament session. Derek O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress had observed: "Three days, three Bills. It's like delivering pizza."

Again in 2016, a news item took all by surprise, at least for the moment. "In rarest of rare case, both LS and RS pass a Bill in one day", said a newspaper headline on 13 May 2016. Both the Houses of Parliament, on the same day, passed the Rajendra Prasad Central University Bill. Even the President of India, late Pranab Mukherjee, hold your breath, reportedly gave his assent to it the same day. It was indeed a rarity, if not a singularity again.

Rules, Procedures and the Process

Why did this occurrence invite so much attention and was termed as "rarest of rare case", a phrase normally used in the context of a court awarding the death sentence? What is so 'rare' about it? A close look at the rules and procedures prescribed for consideration and passage of a Bill in the Parliament would bring home the uniqueness of the phenomenon, perhaps fit for entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

To begin with, there are certain formalities to be completed before a Bill reaches the portals of the Parliament. The Ministry in-charge of the legislation has to get the proposal formulated in consultation with other concerned Ministries, including, of course, the Ministry of Law. A Note for the Cabinet has to be prepared, enclosing the draft of the Bill, in several cases.   After the approval of the Cabinet, the Minister in-charge has to send a notice to the

Presiding Officer (Speaker, Lok Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, as the case may be) of the House of Parliament, in which he wants the Bill to be introduced, after a session of the Parliament has been summoned.

Without getting into the nitty gritty of special procedures prescribed for money Bills and Constitutional Amendment Bills, broadly speaking, when a session of the Parliament begins, the Minister sends a request for listing of the Bill for introduction on a particular day, and it is accordingly put on the List of Business of that House. Copies of the proposed Bill have to be printed and circulated to the Members of the House at least two days in advance of its introduction. In certain cases (Money Bills), prior recommendation of the President is required to be obtained by the Minister for introduction of the Bill in the House. According to the normal practice, after introduction, the Bill is referred to the DRPSC for examination and report. If a Minister, for some very cogent reasons, wants the Bill to be taken up for consideration in the House immediately, he/she has to make a specific request to the Presiding Officer, who, in consultation with the leaders of other important political parties, grants the permission. If for some reason, the permission is not forthcoming, the Bill is sent to the Standing Committee, which is normally given three months to present its report. After the report is laid on the table of the two Houses, a copy of it is sent to the Minister in-charge for consideration. In case some changes in the provisions of the Bill have been recommended by the Standing Committee, after the approval of the Cabinet the Minister in-charge gives a notice to the Presiding Officer for listing the Bill for consideration and passing. The Business Advisory Committee of that House allots specific time (in hours/minutes) for the purpose. The Bill is accordingly put on the List of Business for consideration and passing on a particular day, taking into consideration the priority of business in the House. Amendments to the Bill, moved either by the Government or private Members of the House, too, have to be circulated in advance. In certain cases (Money Bills and Bills with financial implications), prior recommendation of the President is required to be obtained by the Minister for consideration of the

Bill in the House. Technically speaking, this procedure constitutes three reading of the Bill in the House, namely introduction, general discussion, and clause by clause consideration followed by formal passage of the Bill.

After a Bill has been passed by one House, a message regarding this fact is required to be transmitted by the Secretary-General of the House to his counterpart in the other House and it has to be read out during the sitting of that other House. Thereafter the procedure for consideration and passing of the Bill in the other House is more or less the same. In case the second House approves any fresh amendments to the Bill, it has to be sent back to the first House for further approval.

The Bill, as passed by the two Houses, is then sent by the Presiding Officer of the second House for obtaining the assent of the President through the Ministry of Law. After the President's approval, the Bill is notified in the Gazette.

Completing all these formalities in one day is indeed an impossibility; but it can be done with the explicit or implicit 'cooperation' of all stakeholders, including granting of exemptions from meeting certain requirements. A Bill a day or 22 Bills in 18 days is, however, not what the framers of the Constitution and the Committees on Rules of the two Houses had envisioned while prescribing the meticulous legislative procedure.

Improving Quality of Legislation

Although there is definitely merit in the opening observations of the Chief Justice of India about the quality of legislations and its organic link to the parliamentary debate, let us take a look at some of the counterfactual arguments. First and foremost, each Bill is necessarily accompanied by a Statement of Objects and Reasons, which explains, at some length, the intent and object as well as the purpose of the Bill under consideration. In the absence of clarity in the legislation, the courts often refer to this Statement. Moreover, much depends on careful drafting of the law. Thus, often it is not the hasty passage of a Bill that is at fault but the haste to introduce it in the Parliament that makes its careful drafting a casualty.

Further, the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India, added by the Constitution (Fifty-Second Amendment) Act, 1985, (popularly known as anti-defection law) lists two grounds on which a legislator can be disqualified for defection. One, if he voluntarily gives up membership of his political party; and two, if he votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction issued by his party. The second provision has the effect of preventing the members of house from speaking out their minds on various matters, including legislations, if it is not in accordance with their party line. What was intended to prevent body shopping of legislators has ended in silencing them. Hence the debates in Parliament do not bring out the diversity expected of them, based on the expertise and competence of the members. Of course, with the permission of the party, a member may defy the party whip, but it rarely happens. The voice of the individual members of the Parliament has been curbed by the clutch of loyalty to their respective political parties and, occasionally, lost in the cacophony of adversarial politics. During the dawn of Indian independence, in the Constituent Assembly, however, whips used to be issued to Congress party members, but they did not silence everyone. Shibban Lal Saksena frequently spoke in defiance of it and was, apparently, never punished for the delinquency.

The Indian Parliament today is also very different from parliaments in other parts of the world. For instance, in UK and USA, individual legislators frequently dissent over Bills and even policies of their party leadership, and sometimes force changes. It is unlikely to happen in India unless the party breaks up and the dissenters are in a two-thirds majority.

However, all is not lost. The proceedings of the Committees of the Indian Parliament are neither telecast nor their discussions subject to whip. The members speak freely therein unfettered by political compulsion. The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRPSC), in their reports, sometimes provide an alternative to the government Bill. The Committees also have the benefit of wide-ranging consultations with professionals and experts and hence produce reports which are well considered and a healthy alternative to informed parliamentary debates. However, as we

have seen, reference to the DRPSC is not mandatory and lies with the ambit of the discretionary powers of the Presiding Officer of the House in which the Bill is introduced. It is another matter that after a Bill is passed by one House without reference to a DRPSC, the other House may still refer it to a Select Committee of its own. But that does not happen most of the time. It did not happen even in a single case in the recently concluded Parliament Session. The move of the opposition in the Rajya to do so in the case of General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021, was lost in commotion and scrimmage even before it was rejected by 79 votes to 44.

In order, therefore, to ensure proper scrutiny of the Bills, the Rules of Procedure of the two Houses need some modification. At present, after a Bill is introduced in the House, the Presiding Officer takes a call on referring it to the concerned DRPSC. Often, on a request made by the concerned Minister, for reasons of urgency or otherwise, the Bill is taken up for consideration and passing in the House without reference to the DRPSC. By making suitable amendments to the Rules, all new Bills should automatically stand referred to the DRPSC. As far as urgent Bills or Bills amending existing statutes are concerned, the decision not to refer them to the DRPSC should be taken by the full House.

In the ultimate analysis, of course, for measuring the productivity of Parliament, the number of sittings, the hours lost or gained, number of Bills passed, number of questions answered, number of calling attention motions taken up and number of discussions held are only a primary level of criteria. At another level, the competence of the legislative pillar of democracy should be judged by its representativeness; oversight of the Executive; transparency; accessibility; accountability; institutional capacity; infrastructure; integrity; involvement in international policy and the impact of its output on the quality of life of the people.

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The review of the book **'Public Service Ethics – A Quest for Naitik Bharat'** *by Prabhat Kumar (Published 2021 by IC Centre for Governance, ISBN: 978-81-950891-3-0) was published in January 2022 issue of The Journal of Governance. Here, V.Srinivas and Raghu Dayal further comment on the book.*

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Shri Prabhat Kumar, a distinguished civil servant, former Cabinet Secretary and former Governor of Jharkhand, a legendary figure in the Civil Service with over 50 years of experience in Government, has written a monograph to highlight the crucial element of human character – the practice of ethical principles as a way of life. He believes that India needs a movement of 'Ethical India' to tide over the crisis of ethics in every profession. The important elements of this crisis are inefficient delivery of public service, rampant corruption at all levels, and lack of civil society participation at all levels. These have significant ramifications on the quality and trustworthiness of public governance system.

Ethics in public service is an essential component of Parliamentary democracy, encompassing serving the people and helping the weak, the poor, the downtrodden, and public servants should be imbued with the ethical spirit of compassion, empathy, and understanding of issues which face the community in which the public servant works. India's citizens expect a Government that looks after their needs, a Government that is responsive and acts fairly and impartially. This, in essence, is the DNA of ethics in public service. A corruption free Nation, with dedicated public servants imbibed with an ethical spirit is what our country needs. The motto "I am Ethical, I am Accountable, I am the IAS" imbibed in the words "Sheelam Paramam Bhushanam" holds very much true for modern day Public Servants.

Through the twelve-chapter book, the author has discussed the related aspects covering the perceptions of civil service, role of democratic institutions, and elements of understanding modern principles to drive home his point. Shri Prabhat Kumar eloquently

argues that the virtues of honesty, abiding by rules, or obeying orders of seniors are not enough for public servants. They need to be innovative, imaginative and sympathetic to the needs of the people. Adoption of the practices enunciated in the book will give a quantum leap to India's prestige in the comity of Nations and also make the Nation more competitive in a multiplicity of global endeavors. It is important to recognize Shri Prabhat Kumar ji's signal contribution and salute him for his services to the Nation.

Shri Prabhat Kumar's hypothesis is that Ethics of Public Service should be the cornerstone of all trainings of Union Government and State Governments. Civil Servants should be told that they should endeavor to go beyond their normal duty to serve the public better, that ethics makes their duty bigger, it makes their duty more meaningful, it makes their duty more uplifting. Ethics of Public Service urges us to do more than what is expected of us. Popular discontent with the conduct of civil services has a universal dimension when the citizen is asked to wait for legitimate rights from the Government, and there is dilution of integrity of institutions. This happens when civil servants begin to consider themselves bigger than the institution to which they belong, showing a contempt for the service in which they spend their life.

It is recognized that India has an incorruptible system of recruiting higher civil services based entirely on merit. They undergo rigorous training in their disciplines and are given enormous responsibilities from the first day of their postings. While the Civil Servants have done reasonably well in maintaining the stability of the Nation and the system of governance, they have suffered from a bias to status quo, inability to learn from future, working in compartments rather than trying cross-cutting initiatives and failing to be seen as people-friendly. One of the major mistakes of senior bureaucrats is to act alone. Most of the officers who could have set the standards of service were loners. The individual alone, however competent and charismatic, does not possess the endowments to overcome the inertia of the system. Team building is essentially based on shared perspectives and shared goals. A forceful boss can start an initiative but cannot bring behavioral change in his subordinates. After her

departure, the initiative is forgotten or replaced by the initiative of her successor.

Shri Prabhat Kumar says that civil servants need to build an identity of their own, fix benchmarks for conduct and processes and create safeguards against failing to deliver services to the people. Too long we have toyed with the conservative approaches to reform the civil service and have had limited success in infusing vigor in its functioning. The reforms suggested and implemented have often lacked depth and generally been one-dimensional. Benjamin Franklin's statement "he that is secure is not safe", applies to the Indian bureaucrat. Shri Prabhat Kumar says that the Indian bureaucracy today needs a new narrative. It has to come out of its latent conservatism to discover a fresh idiom. Mission Karmayogi is a welcome initiative, expected to provide precious capacity building in the behavioral attributes of civil servants. Ethics of Public Service can help lay the strong foundation of governance in the third decade of the 21st century.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) identifies 8 key components of an ethical infrastructure in governance – political commitment, effective legal framework, efficient accountability mechanisms, workable codes of conduct, professional socialization mechanisms (through training), supportive public service conditions, existence of central ethics coordinating body and an active civil society able to act as a watchdog over the actions of officials. Shri Prabhat Kumar has identified several sterling examples of unflinching adherence to standards of public service, and I have had the opportunity to serve with a number of officials whom he has citied – Gajendra Haldea, Balvinder Kumar, Anil Swarup, Amarjit Singh, Jayesh Ranjan, Prabhakar Deshmukh, Rajendra Barud, Umakant Umrao, Jitendra Kumar Soni, Durga Shakti Nagpal, Shrikar Pardeshi – each one of them has stood out as a high performing civil servant critical to good governance and to the effective delivery of public services while finding an identity in public perception. There are several young officers whom I wish to cite – Keerthi Jalli, Varnali Deka, Krishna Bhaskar, Ghanshyam Thori, Dr. Ashish Srivastav, Bhagwati Prasad, D.Sajith Babu, Adra Vamsi,

Shubham Saxena, Adeela Abdulla, Harichandana Dasari – officers who have stood in the frontlines of duty, putting service above self, representing the foundational and non-negotiable values of ethics of public service. The Civil Servant of the 21st century will have to be more accountable for his services to the common man, develop an understanding that whatever decision he makes needs to balance the different parts of the whole system.

Functioning of Countries is measured in terms of quality of governance. Some of the common fallacies identified include class arrogance, personal ego, stressed attitude, conflict of interest and 'in-betweenity'. Ethics is very fragile. It is built with a lot of effort over time, but can be demolished by a single act of selfishness or greed. There is tremendous gratification that can be drawn from doing good for society, in becoming role models for others, particularly the younger generation, the satisfaction that one's life has touched other people's lives. The fragility of ethics is particularly visible in some organizations which over time become unproductive and toxic, where employees are fragmented, the purpose of serving the people is lost to the goal of serving themselves. Corruption in our system has 2 fronts – transactional corruption and collusive corruption – as the author says, "most get on the bus, others run alongside it, yet very few stand in front of it". It is important to change the mindset of officials who run government institutions, by introducing institutional corrections and strengthening the ethical movement in government. Civil Servants need to consciously examine the ethical content in decision making and most of the time get it right. The IC Centre of Governance needs to be commended for commencing the "Alliance of Change Makers" webinars.

To conclude, a rough definition of EPS is "Ethics of Public Service in its widest connotation, includes the legitimate selfless exercise of the position, and the authority, power and influence that go with it, in the service of the people and beyond the boundaries of one's job. It is doing more than what the law requires and less than what the law permits". The three-layered test of ethics of public service in day-to-day decisions and actions of conscious civil servants is doing what is right, doing what is not only legal but just,

not only defensible but compassionate, not only part of an ethical/ moral code, doing more than what is expected of you. The last aspect is one's unique personal contribution to ethical public service. Always respect the art of listening, as communication is an essential ingredient of ethics of public service.

V. Srinivas

A complex theme, yet a commonplace term, ethics is often touted in varying contexts. Delving deep into the meaning and content of the term, the author traces inter-relationship of morality, ethics and spirituality. Delineating the subtle difference between ethics of public service and ethics in public service, he explains how corruption is a broader issue than bribery, how ethics in public service goes beyond the normal meaning of integrity.

Prabhat Kumar has enriched the text with cogent examples and anecdotes, keeping it simple and empirical. Narratives of how India's governance structure germane to ethics in public service has evolved, and glaring deficiencies staring in the face, are deftly interspersed with observations and inferences based on extensive knowledge and intensive involvement in affairs of the government he was privileged to steer, including as country's topmost civil servant.

Known not just for his analytical diligence and scholarly grasp of any subject, he demonstrated during his illustrious career an essential attribute of a leader, a strong spine, capacity to say No to high and mighty and doing what's right. Chief Minister of the state couldn't bend him to let sale of the Cement Corporation go through with questionable processes. As Cabinet Secretary, he declined to issue a wrongful notification that the head of the Republic desired, preferring to accept President K.R. Narayanan's wrath. Hurt by allegations of some wrongdoing made by certain disgruntled elements, he chose to quit governorship of Jharkhand, even though none in Government even called for any clarification. Prabhat earned his credentials to write on ethics in public governance. Appropriately the book was released by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, who hailed the author as one "known for his integrity…also who followed ethics in public life".

While recognising general perception of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) as the premier government service (Note 10), the writer bemoans fast weakening of institutional structure and increasing tremors in the structure of civil services (Chapter 2). The "steel frame", the sobriquet that Indian Civil Service (ICS)/IAS acquired, has belied Sardar Patel's expectations. He introspects like in a soliloquy (Chapter 3) that the tribe to which he belonged – superior bureaucracy – can't escape responsibility for the culture of corruption in governance. Albeit he candidly acknowledges the public viewing the rusted steel frame as a well-operated gang of corrupt and incompetent members, he seems to resent senior bureaucracy being given the 'despicable moniker' of 'Babu'.

Often it has been asked why IAS alone gets the stick. Well, if lion's share of power and perks is mulcted by the cadre, how it can escape rampant fault-lines in the structure. Undoubtedly many in the tribe with exemplary dedication and diligence kept the nation ticking amidst awesome challenges; collectively, they gather opprobrium of becoming avaricious, clannish, and hegemonic. Inexorably becoming quintessential courtiers, many in the hallowed group indulge the politicians' whims and fancies, not unoften in order to have their own peccadilloes condoned or eke favours.

Besides close to total dominance over Constitutional institutions – Election Commission and Information Commission, so also Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), besides umpteen commissions and committees, most of the chiefs of regulatory authorities owe their roots to the privileged coterie. IAS arrogates, as Chairman, Pay Commission-VII said, "all power of governance", relegating "all other services to secondary position". Today the adage goes, IAS never retires. No surprise that too many babus spend their career's sun-set years kowtowing for post-retirement sinecures.

Discussing ethics of public service, Chapter 5 extols some of the young and idealistic among the officers – a Durga Shakti Nagpal, a Balvinder Kumar, et al. They raise the bar and do the fraternity proud. But, then comes the rub: author adds, after ten years or so in service they just want pay cheques! How does that spirit, energy

and idealism evaporate so abruptly? Answer appears to lie in acute leadership-deficit plaguing the civil services. The higher the seniority level, the more the vulnerability and timidity. Believing how leaders need to be not men of success, but of values (Chapter 11), author rues that many unworthy people in bureaucracy often occupy top leadership positions.

Whereas the author queries, can ethics be taught (Chapter 9), a strong case is made by him for public servants at all levels to be repeatedly exposed to training in ethics of public service. Necessity and utility of appropriate training can't be denied, but claims made for several schemes appear highly exaggerated, including from those acclaimed as transformative initiatives such as Mission Karmayogi, Satyanishtha, emotional intelligence, etc.

Since 2005 IC Centre of Governance (ICCfG) is claimed to have evolved and sustained a training module towards changing the mind-set of government functionaries. "We try to marry ethics with the realities of public service". It will really be helpful to determine the efficacy of the programme if a real-life assessment and appraisal is carried out by an analytical agency how, to what extent, the training by ICCfG helped the beneficiaries in facing real-life situations.

Finally, the crux of the issue author raises: what we can do to embark on an ethical renaissance. A very complex issue, it admits of no silver bullet. Epilogue warns us of society's deepening ethical degeneration and increasing loss of fundamental moral values. Body social is cramped with crisis of character. Money and muscle, *dadagiri* and *saudagiri* rule the roost. Don't we discern symptoms of the country losing direction, being adrift? Don't *netaas* of all hues, with inexhaustible appetite for illegitimate funds in politics, live with magnificent obsession of grabbing and retaining power, clamouring, "what's in it for me"! Nations aren't built on quicksand of opportunism and realpolitik. Books like this help grasp the gravity of the ailment, to stir nation's conscience. India today needs creative destruction. When rot runs deep, as French President Macron believes, "Makeshift repairs would not do; if you keep the same structures, habits are just too strong".

Raghu Dayal

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Sailing on My Own Compass – A Policeman's Diary

A long innings

Mukund Kaushal

Early in the year, I read quite a few memoirs and biographies written by civil servants and others but Mukund Behari Kaushal's *Sailing on My Own Compass* is indeed quite different. It does not talk about his home, his school, his friends, his exploits in Mussoorie, or in Mt. Abu, for which perhaps we will have to wait for his next book! The title of his book says "A Policeman's Diary", but the author never wrote one and kept it all in his mind. With the memory of an elephant, it is awesome how he remembers the events in such details with names of people and places. Not able to go out due to the COVID lockdown, Mukund sat at home and wrote about these incidents in his life, putting it all on paper, writing in longhand, to produce a very readable book.

As Prabhat Kumar says in the preface of the book, Mukund is a very good storyteller. He narrates the stories in simple language and establishes a personal contact with the reader and holds her attention as if he was talking to her. Nearly four decades in the police gave him opportunities to witness life from very close quarters. He could understand the working of the minds of people whether involved in riots or in petty and major crime; it offered a large canvas of life to observe human behaviour. *Duniya ko bahut kareeb se dekha hai!*

While most people live their real life under the cover of secrecy, Mukund writes freely about the incidents in his life and says "this book is not only a narration of what happened with me, but also what life has taught me". A life well lived, hands always used to help, eyes to sympathise, and emotions to uplift someone in need. He led his people from the front and took responsibility as a leader, doing

the right thing at the right time, so that he could sleep well!

The humane person that he is, comes so well in the very first chapter of the book, with his concern for the women and the children standing on the Grand Trunk (G.T) Road (even though they were protesting), for their life and safety and the possible loss of livelihood of the "rehriwalas" who were to be removed. The sensitivity with which he handled and found a solution to rehabilitate them is an inspiring tale.

Some of the incidents that he narrates in the book were the headlines of the day and his handling of the situation, whether a rally or a riot, shows the inner strength and conviction of this man who understood what was the right thing to do, almost like a reflex, and the courage to do it. His quality of leadership is seen in sharp focus when the Parliament Secretariat served all of 34 notices of breach of privilege for one incident and was asked to face the Privilege Committee of the Parliament. He faced the Committee to tell them that as the leader, he alone was responsible for all that happened and gave that in writing, much to the surprise of the Committee!

Undoubtedly, a policeman has a lot of clout, and when used for a good purpose, has endless rewards. One feels uplifted with the story of the young (otherwise bright) teenager involved in a robbery who would have certainly been in a lockup had it not been for Mukund's help. He responded to the pleas of the boy's mother's and requests to let him write the examination and Mukund's help changed the life of that boy, who later joined the civil service and rose to the rank of an Additional Secretary. This is just another case where compassion gave its reward.

There are other interesting events involving the son of Prime Minister Morarji Desai and the Station House Officer (SHO) of Jama Masjid, whose transfer brought a call from Prime Minister Narsimha Rao. These incidents show the strength of conviction in doing the right thing. His investigative skills come out well in the story of Harshad Mehta, who had claimed that he had paid rupees one crore to Prime Minister Narsimha Rao at his official residence when through records it was established that the Prime Minister was not at home at that hour.

Chapter 25 is the longest and has a series of incidents that bring out the real Mukund Kaushal, humane, caring, considerate yet firm, sure and courageous to execute what is right. Never arrogant or for displaying authority or power, his best skills in persuasion and negotiation.

At the formal book launch, many said that this book should be compulsory reading in all Police Academies and Institutions. I could not agree more. The incidents and events where he handled difficult situations with ease would inspire many a young policeman.

Mahesh Kapoor

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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 few 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.

IQBAL SINGH CHAHAL did his BTech (Electronics and Communications Engineering) from the Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology (TIET), Patiala, before joining the Indian Administrative Service in 1989 as an officer of the Maharashtra cadre. He has served the Government of Maharashtra and India in various capacities. He is currently the Municipal Commissioner & Administrator of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

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MAHESH KAPOOR joined the Indian Railway Traffic Service in 1957 and worked on the Central Railways and Railway Board. He was responsible for preparing the first Corporate Plan for the Indian Railways and has worked in Nigeria, China, Ghana, Tanzania and other countries on World Bank Projects. He was Advisor, Transport, Planning Commission and author of the chapter on 'Transport' in the

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PRABHAT KUMAR is a former Cabinet Secretary and the first Governor of Jharkhand. He has a Master's Degree in Physics and Mathematics from the University of Allahabad and a Master's Degree in Economics from the London School of Economics. Currently, he is the President of the IC Centre for Governance and is on the Board of several Committees related to ethics in governance. He is the author of the book 'Public Service Ethics-A Quest for Naitik Bharat'.

R. BALASUBRAMANIAM is a well-known development activist and is known for his pioneering work of over 3 decades living and working amidst the indigenous communities in Karnataka State. He is a visiting professor at Cornell University, USA and has written seven books till date. He is currently the Member-HR, in the Capacity Building Commission of the Government of India.

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RAJIV SACHDEVA is the former Managing Director of Siemens Power Engineering Ltd. An engineer from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, he worked for over 38 years with Siemens, which included about 8 years in Germany. He is a former Chairman of the Instrumentation Division of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and has also been on the Board of Directors of several companies. His major achievements include the transfer of latest automation technologies from Germany to India and spearheading the innovation of competitive products and systems in India.

SUNIL KUMAR is Member, Managing Committee, Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi; Trustee, IQF (Value education NGO) and a Member of the Board of Directors of the IC Centre for Governance, New Delhi. Formerly, he was Professor and Founder Trustee SriSiM, PGDBM Institute based on Indian wisdom, Vasant Vihar, Delhi and GM, The PEC of India. He has written books including 'Managerial Effectiveness – Indian Insights'; 'Vedanta for the Modern Man' and 'Hinduism and 'The Five Basic Human Values'.

V. SRINIVAS has a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering from College of Technology, Osmania University, and joined the IAS in 1989, as an officer of the Rajasthan cadre. He presently serves as Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare with additional charge of Director General, National Centre for Good Governance. He represents India on the Council of Administration of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels. He has authored the books –*India's Relations with the International Monetary Fund 1991-2016: 25 Years in Perspective* and *Towards a New India: Governance Transformed 2014-2019.*

VIVEK K. AGNIHOTRI is former Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha, and an IAS officer of 1968 batch, of the Andhra Pradesh Cadre. He has a Ph.D. in Public Policy Analysis and Design from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi and is a Visiting Fellow at the Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. He has several publications to his credit including Environment and Development, Skills for Effective Administrators, Public Policy Analysis and more.

YOGENDRA NARAIN an IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh (UP) cadre, 1965 batch, was Secretary, Ministry of Surface Transport, Government of India. Subsequently, he was the Chief Secretary of UP and then the Defence Secretary in the Government of India. On his retirement, he was appointed as the Secretary General of Rajya Sabha. He has a Ph.D in Public Administration and has written many books, and also published a book of his poems titled "Clouds and other Poems".

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