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# CONTENTS

Preface <b>Sudhir Singh</b>	i-viii
Declining Character of Political Parties: Crucial Challenges to Governance in Contemporary India <b>Alok Kumar Gupta &amp; Vandana Mishra</b>	1-16
Good Governance Initiatives: A Study of Odisha <b>Amulya K Tripathi &amp; Santosh Kumar Sahu</b>	17-37
Inclusive Governance: Demand for Regional Autonomy in India <b>Deepak Yadav</b>	38-50
Good Governance and Indian Democracy <b>Nirmal Jindal</b>	51-62
Good Governance and Grass Root Democracy: Some Musings on the Panchayathiraj system in the state of Kerala <b>Sabu Thomas</b>	63-75
Good Governance & India: Issues, Challenges and Prospects <b>S. Prabhakar</b>	76-88
Good Governance & Parliament of India <b>S. Prabhakar</b>	89-100
Good Governance in India: The Imperatives of Human Rights Based Development Approach <b>Suresh R</b>	101-113
Panchayati Raj Institutions and Good Governance in India <b>Sudhir Singh</b>	114-123



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## Preface

Good governance has been major point of discussion among stakeholders since the end of the cold war due to gamut of reasons. What this good governance is all about? For most it meant government without corruption. For many others, governance is what the government is seized with. These are parochial perspectives. In a democracy, governance is sum total of what the government and civil society do over time and how other stakeholders take it or respond and with what impact and implications. Good governance is more than a popular government. As good government in parliamentary democracy is not possible without good politics, good politics is not feasible without good political leaders. All these ideal situations are not possible without a vigilant citizenry and a value neutral civil society. Our constitution begins with 'We the people' and speaks a lot and that means that people is the ultimate custodian of the processes of democracy and good governance has remained the moral motivator of the entire process.

Governance has been a global issue. Including World Bank all leading international economic institutions often pushed for strong will power for governance. In the contemporary world, majority of the countries have adopted democracy as a way of governance. Governance is the key of success of democracy. People are the custodian of democracy and it is stated that they are renewing the licence of the ruler after a fixed tenure adopted by the respective constitutions of different countries. The ideal level of governance has been one of most ticklish tasks for countries to achieve in its composite way. In developing countries, it is very difficult and despite all tall promises political parties made during election period they are not acting on their promises. In developing countries, development remains in the backdrop and all other parochial issues dominate the public domain. In a country like India which has made a Himalayan jump towards development since independence, many prevailing issues still prevents genuine development. Right from 1989 till 2014, not a single party majority was achieved at the centre. It strengthens the coalition era which is slow in terms of decision making. From South to North India, caste and clan has become hallmark of Indian politics. DMK and AIDMK in Tamil Nadu, TDP, YSR Congress in Andhra, TRS in Telengana, JDS in Karnataka, SP, BSP& RLD in U.P, RJD and JDU in Bihar, TMC in West

Bengal, BJD in Odisha, AAP in Delhi, Lok Dal in Haryana, NPP in Meghalaya, SAD in Punjab, PDP & NC in Jammu & Kashmir have become important stakeholders in the corridor of power both at the centre and in their respective states. These caste and clan based parties came into being in early decades in the backdrop of our independence, but they became parochial by all counts in due process of time. At the time of their incarnation they vowed to change the landscape of development and promise to make it genuine inclusive and accommodate regional aspirations. With the passage of time these parties became caste and region based and exploited the emotions of the people. Due to fragile nature of government at the centre they gave less importance to development between 1989 to 2014. It was an era of coalition at the federal level and not intended to development. Instead the development which should be core of their political ideology, non-issues became their core demands. Since independence till 2014 development had never been an electoral issue. Other issues remain the hallmark of our polity both at the central as well state level during this period.

The arrival of Modi led BJP in 2014 has changed the narrative of Indian polity. Now governance has become hallmark of the government based on the political philosophy of 'Integral Humanism' propounded by Dr. Deen Daya IUpadhyay and 'inclusion' of Dr. Ambedkar. After 72 years of our independence our common man needs basic facilities of his survival. We have had not been able to fulfil their 'basic needs' during this period. Modi government has on the one hand made development of all as the philosophical moorings of government. At the delivery front it has acted swiftly and through the adequate use of technology prevent the leakage of the system. In result basic needs have been delivered to poorest of the poor at the large level. It has propelled gamut of schemes which has witnessed huge success in terms of delivery to the needy people. In 2000 the number of BPL families in our country was 350 million which has reduced to 190 million in 2015.

However, governance has had integral element of Indian tradition since its inception. In ancient India, governance was the philosophy of the ruler. In Europe even after modernism had arrived the fight between the king and the church was on to dominate the ruling landscape. King was claiming that he is the representative of the god on the planet therefore he is not accountable for the people and only accountable for almighty. In contrast, Indian tradition stresses that king is not ruler he is on the throne to provide adequate service to the people. It was the moral duty of the king. The rulers were bound by dharma, known as Raj Dharma, which precisely meant for ensuring good governance to

people. Arthashastra while highlighting the principle of good governance declares, “In the happiness of his people lies king’s happiness, in their welfare his welfare, whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his people he shall consider as good.”<sup>1</sup>

Shanti Parva of Mahabharat has devoted considerable space to Raj Dharma which aims to establish good governance in the society. It stressed that, it is the duty of the king to seek and promote the welfare of its subjects. The king must be compassionate to the people of all sections of the society and concentrate on the welfare of the people.<sup>2</sup>The Mahabharata further warns the king, ‘Beware, the weak are, in actual fact, much stronger than the strong, for nothing is left of the strong that have been burnt by the weak’. And further, “When the king wipes the tears of the poor, the dispossessed, and the old. And creates happiness among the people thereby, such conduct on his part is called the king’s dharma (Rajdharma).”

According to Mahabharata, law and governance are the instruments for protection. The importance and meaning of protection require a set of laws and governance which create social and economic conditions where one lives in a society without fear.

Thus, there is a wider meaning of protection and the Mahabharata enjoins upon the king to create social and economic conditions not only of freedom from fear but, more positively, of human flourishing, where the individual is enabled to come into the fullness of his, or her, being. Ahimsa can be realized only in a society where trust, friendship, and caring - the elements of human bonding, individual and social - exist.

Protection has, in the Mahabharata, the wider meaning of creating conditions of personal and social bonding.

That is the function of the king, or of the state.

In Mahabharata principles of governance require the state to be committed to social concerns which need to be attended for creating an ahimsak society. The institutions of the state have to be continuously vigilant for keeping order and curbing violence.

Bhishma, in a particularly intense yet short chapter in the Anusasanaparvan, warns Yudhisthira that the hunger of even one person in a kingdom renders the life of the king meaningless and if there is a

king in whose kingdom young children eagerly watch the delicious meals of others and are not offered the same food with all ceremony and care, what indeed would be the fate of such a king?

What indeed can be a sin greater than that. The wealth that is taken away from the poor takes away the prosperity of the king and destroys the country. Therefore, instead of depriving the poor, offer them great comfort and gratification, and relieve the people of all fear of hunger. And further, the king should not extinguish the opportunities of livelihood.

The protection of the life and dignity of women is the primary aim of governance and the Mahabharata in unequivocal terms states, 'A king in whose kingdom crying and wailing women are forcibly carried away in front of their sons and husbands who cry and wail in vain, one feels that there is no governance. And Bhisma adds, having given his promise to protect the people and the state fails to protect then such a state is as good as non-existent.'

The very reason that (Arthshastra) book appeals to our generation, even after over 2400 years, shows that Kautilya has fine-tuned each concept in great details, proving his farsightedness. Kautilya says that treasury (Vittam) is the foundation of the state but vittam or finances have to be collected in accordance with dharma. A king, says Kautilya, should devote his best attention to the treasury.

Thus he, like the Mahabharata, advocates that dharma is the basic in the affairs of the state, the Arthshastra exhorts the king to behave in a righteous manner and further says, "In the happiness of the people lies his happiness, in their welfare, his welfare."

Kautilya defines the purpose of the state as one - ensuring the welfare and security of the people and two - maintaining and expanding the power of state. The Rig Veda states, the dual purposes of our life are emancipation of the soul and welfare of the world. Thus, the public good should be the welfare of the society, or in other words, the private good or self-promotion<sup>3</sup> should be subservient to the greatest good of all.'

The Apastamba Dharmasutra proclaims with such finality, it is the primary duty of the king to ensure that none within his domain suffers from hunger, want or deprivation. Sage Apastamba lays down the discipline of the kings in this context, thus, let no one suffers from hunger and disease, or from extremes of heat and cold. No one in the

kingdom ought to suffer thus, either because of general scarcity or because of specific design against him. Under such circumstances, people may become angry and the state might be lost to the enemies of the country.

Western hemispheres have their own version about governance. Debate started here with the evolution of the Industrial Revolution. Since the Enlightenment, philosophical speculation has contemplated the role of individual rights in the preservation of international peace. Immanuel Kant in his seminal work, *Perpetual Peace* (1795), recognized that the violation of rights in one part of the world would be felt everywhere. He argued (1939, p. 58) that “all politics must bend the knee before rights. Only when the norms of morality are applied to the facts of international politics can a just peace be achieved. Kant’s prescription necessarily requires an acceptance of limitations on state sovereignty and on the power of governments to treat their populations as they will without right external interference. Kant (1939, 54) notes that a state has the duty to organize itself on the basis of liberty and equality for its citizens. While foreign to the politics of the West phalian system of nation-states in place since the 17th century, in the contemporary era a morally acceptable international human right regime requires at least some transfer of authority to the larger global civil society, its participants and its institutions”.<sup>4</sup>

But what exactly is governance, and how is it different from government? Plato first used the Greek ‘kubernân’ (to pilot a ship) as a metaphor for the rule of men over men. This passed into Latin as ‘gubernare’ (to steer, hence to direct, rule, govern); and in the 13th century, in Old French as ‘gouvernance’ (the art or manner of governing). A century later it became in English, governance, the manner as opposed to the act of governing. The term government can refer, ambiguously, either to the act of ruling with authority or to those who rule.

After long obsolescence, in the 1990s English-speaking social scientists at UN agencies resurrected the French-inspired term, ‘governance’, both to distinguish it from government as an institution and especially, to promote a new neoliberal conception of how public affairs should be managed.

This conception was based on the participation of ‘civil society’ (including markets and networks) at all levels (national, local, regional and global). In this contemporary use, governance properly speaking

has gone from being a synonym for government (a traditional hierarchical way of governing) to becoming an antonym (a decentralised participative approach to political management).

India is one of the most diverse countries by all counts in contemporary global system. Governing India is indeed a stupendous challenge with its unique democratic system. Western democracies are older than us and they have limited population and in comparison with us it is easy to govern. We adopted democracy as mode of governance once we emerged as an independent country. The seventy two years down the line, we have achieved some milestones in the path of development but still 190 million people are languishing under severe poverty and deprived of basic necessities of life.

Removal of poverty has had been an integral part of political and electoral discourse since our independence. In 1972 elections, Indira Gandhi led Congress gave the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' and won the elections with comfortable majority. Right from 1972 till 2019 general elections, elimination of poverty has remained cornerstone of electoral promises but unfortunately poverty remained very much in the society. In post LPG process, another negative thing has surfaced and that is widening gap between poor and the rich. During the LPG process (1991 till date) poor has become poorer and rich has become richer and needless to say that it has accelerated many situations which are detrimental for any stable democracy.

Naxal movement is prevailing in more than 100 districts out of total 625 districts of the country. Naxal movement is determined with their open assertion that they are working to eliminate the writ of the Indian state. During last 53 years of naxal violence, we have lost over 75,000 people and majority among them were innocents. State has to allocate adequate resources to contain the menace. But the fact remains that Naxal groups recruited their foot soldiers from the poorest of the poor and that is also exclusively from central India.

We have to retrospect why governance has not reached in far flung areas and who is eating the resources allocated for the poorest people even after seven decades of our democratic exposure has ended. Corruption is another great blockade in the path of governance. Gamut of commissions have been constituted since Santhnam commission to curb it but it still remains an integral part of our administrative system. Although India has improved a lot in ease of doing business since 2014 but still many laws are hindrance.

Police and Judicial reforms are radically required for good governance. India is still ruled by the laws of the colonial era as far as police and criminal justice administration is concerned. Police has not reconciled with the fact that police state has ended and welfare state has begun. The dealing of the police with the people is a matter of serious concern even after 72 years of our independence. Corruption in the police system is rampant but worse from it is slow process of investigation and erratic system of evidence etc. Police force doesn't have adequate equipments and weapons which many mafia gangs have. This scenario has reduced the morale of the police. Human rights education is absent from the police system and only lip services have been initiated in this direction. Many committees were constituted since independence to ensure police reforms but still it remains a distant dream.

Judicial reform is also a serious challenge. Judicial system in India has remained a laughing stock for variety of reasons. Right from supreme court to the district level courts roughly 30 million cases are pending. In many cases jail period of the convicts has surpassed the stipulated maximum years of sentence in those cases and therefore it has become meaningless in the eyes of the public. Judicial system has also been very costly which common people can't bear. Instead of disposing pending cases, judiciary remained busy to resolve high voltage cases. In media it seems that judiciary is working very sharply but in real sense justice is delayed in majority of the cases. Appointment of good number of judges on time bound basis and other infrastructure of judiciary must be push factor for speedy justice. We have to decentralize the overload of cases from judiciary and PRI and urban based local bodies must be given smaller judicial rights to resolve small cases.

Since the adoption of LPG process, India has done well and slated to sustain the process. India is projected to grow at 7.5% in 2019 and 7.7% in 2020, an impressive lead (over one percentage point) ahead of China's estimated growth of 6.2% in these two years, according to latest data provided by the International Monetary Fund.<sup>5</sup> Many global studies have come out with the conclusion that better governance is set to facilitates this process. Globally also it is opportune time for India due to many prevailing security architectures.

The narrative of Indian politics has been turning towards the debate of governance. In western countries it has already become only and only electoral issue. Gradually it is becoming core issue of electoral politics in India as well. The papers included in this issue therefore deals with the diverse facets of governance and tried its level best to reformulate

the contours of development so governance could be established in its true format.

**Sudhir Singh**

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# Declining Character of Political Parties: Crucial Challenges to Governance in Contemporary India

Alok Kumar Gupta & Vandana Mishra

Indian democracy is one of the greatest paradoxes on earth. On the one hand it has the credit of being the largest democracy on earth with second highest population, one of the fastest growing economies of the world, an ever-growing international personality are to name but a few; whereas on the other it is being marked by high level of political violence, electoral politics mired with massive role of money and muscle, criminalization of politics, politicization of crime, ever-growing casteism that has become social infrastructure of politics. There are innumerable polemics that the Indian polity is ridden with, and an exhaustive list of such polemics may not be that easy. India as a whole may have been progressing but the quality of the political process is certainly on the wane. Citizens are weary as nothing is appreciable about the way political leaders are managing the political affairs of the country. It is in this backdrop that the authors intent to explore the causes and remedies of the degeneration of governance in the country. Among many institutions that are responsible for the rot that the Indian political system has developed, degeneration of political parties which are an important vehicle of democracy and governance is one of them. This paper is an analysis of the changing nature of political parties in India and its causes, impacts, and ramifications for the polity as a whole. Authors have also attempted to articulate the possible remedies to strengthen the institutions of political parties and redefine their role in the wake of contemporary global changes as also a necessity towards strengthening governance in contemporary India.

Most aspects of Indian social life standspoliticized. The health of the political system affects every Indian irrespective of their profession, circumstances, identities and other denominations though differently. Whether one praises political system, or criticizes it, or be indifferent to it, one cannot deny the fact that it affects the citizens indiscriminately. Thus, it is ironical that something which is so entrenched in the life of every Indian is degrading gradually and yet Indian citizens are expecting 'good days ahead', a phrase which has generated more storm in the tea

cup than peace with consequent prosperity and liberty. It is like a cancerous patient expecting to lead a happy life. The political power struggles are being contested in the spirit of deadly battles where opposing political leaders are standing like gladiators against each other. Development has acquired a place of primacy in political discourse with a cosmetic role and has largely proved superfluous. Power has become the real aims and objectives of political process which could be achieved by unprecedented means at the cost of human lives and mortgaging the polity. Hypocrites and opportunists are ruling the roost. The disdain and contempt for politics among the citizens is growing to an alarming level.

Indians do flex of their diversity but have failed increasingly to achieve even an iota of 'unity in diversity'. The phrase has been more a rhetoric than a reality on most occasions in Indian political process. The sloganeering around the phrase 'unity in diversity' is often resorted to by political parties, yet they leave no stone unturned to polarize the electorates along caste, colour, creed, religion, region, and gender identities. This has led to a dystopia where diversities have become a reason for the decline of political structures and institutions jeopardizing the social fabric of the nation.

Power and competition for power are as central to politics as money is to economics and food is to life; yet power must be contested for development, citizen-building and nation-building. However, the recent phase in Indian politics is characterized by usurpation of power by democratic means by political parties. Electoral democracy revolves more around the future winnability of the candidates, rather than quality of the candidates; silencing the opposition or ineffective opposition, rather than accommodating the opposition if it talks sense; maligning the images of the leaders rather than appreciate their qualities and beg to differ on models of development; opposing the opposition for the sake of doing so rather than merit-based opposition. These are mere glimpses of the state of naught that Indian democracy has arrived at. Election manifestos invariably promise moon not even a utopian state thereby misleading the electorates and destroy their future sense. Therefore, it is high time that a thorough analysis of the changing nature of political parties becomes imperative so that causes and remedies could be hammered out for a better future and to meet the challenges of governance in contemporary India.

### **Changing Nature of Political Parties: Its Meaning**

Political parties are vehicle of democracy. A political party is a group operating to secure the control of a government. It is the link between

### Declining Character of Political Parties....

the electorate and the government. Earnest Barker rightly compared political parties to conduits that carry the process of social thought from the voluntary area of society into the area of government. These are the institutions that transform the social thought into political action. It is *sine quonon* for an indirect and representative democracy. Political parties must have a well-knit organization and a philosophy, or a combination of ideal and material objects. They aim at constituting and controlling government by constitutional means. Parties strive to secure power not for themselves but for their leaders and hence preponderance of the leaders is an inseparable part of the party system. Political centre of gravity lies in the party system. Undoubtedly, hospitality to a plurality of ideas is its essence. It is also a major vehicle of opinion and ideas and acts as an agency to translate public opinion into public policy. Thus, entire governance and political process revolve around the institution of political parties in a democracy.

Over the years since independence the political parties that supposed to bridge the economic and geographical gaps of sectionalism and seek compromise on public policies have contributed more towards politicization of the community and entire political processes within the Indian democracy. Rather than nationalizing the interests of the electorate, it has contributed towards narrowing and localizing the interests. Therefore, there remains hardly any doubt that the nature of political parties in terms of their functions has grossly changed since the inception of independent India. The causes that led to these changes are being discussed below.

#### **Extenuation of Intra-Party Democracy**

Intra-party democracy has become a victim of historical circumstances, since the days of the then Prime Minister Late Smt. Indira Gandhi when she abolished the process of election and adopted another method for selecting leader or President of the political party. Other parties followed suit. Soon political parties degenerated and deteriorated to an extent that the internal democracy within political parties became casualty giving rise to political parties which are family firms. Politics which Aristotle defined as matters pertaining to affairs of the state has now been reduced to a business and political parties are behaving like a corporate house hungry for power.

Corporatization of political parties has led to attenuation of service to the people and the nation-state. Parties are more concerned about the collection of fund and amassing of wealth so that they can use the same to enhance their prospect of winning elections and grabbing

power. They have become a handmaiden of corporate houses in this process giving rise to an unhealthy nexus between economic and political power which is increasingly detrimental to the political health of the state. Once in power, these parties work more for benefitting their fund contributor rather than the needy people and the state; development thus is by the way rather than planned development for nation-building, citizen-building and empowerment of the poor. Corporate donations to different political parties accounted for 89% of all the donations. Corporate houses have collectively donated 956.77 crores from 2012-13 to 2015-16 as compared to 378.89 crores (87% of all donations) over four years from 2004-5 and 2011-12. BJP received 705 crores from 2,987 donors. In the seven years from 2004-5 to 2011-12, the BJP (Bhartiya Janata Party) has received 192 crores. Congress Party has received 198 crores from 167 donors. NCP (Nationalist Congress Party) received Rs.50.73 crores from business houses. CPI (Communist Party of India) and CPM (Communist Party of India-Marxist) have lowest corporate donations at 18 lakhs and 1.89 crores respectively.<sup>1</sup>

### **Violent and Filthy Inter-Party Rivalry**

Accommodativeness among the political opponents is the very essence of democracy. This could have been possible only when the political parties would have been working in accordance with an avowed political ideology. Since the role of ideology in politics has taken a back seat, sad plight of interparty rivalry has become one of the dominant features of the political parties over the last couple of decades. Political parties of all shades resort to cheap instruments to malign the image of each other. The character of the party has changed to such an extent that anyone questioning the government's policies is viewed as enemy. Intolerance on the part of ruling party has engulfed the accommodativeness and democratic nature of political parties of all hues. There is no place for healthy discussion or a constructive opposition and the result is people get misguided because they fail to judge the right candidate due to the acute rivalry between the parties, where they resort to all sorts of lies and false promises. What they say at the time of elections they do not really mean either during the election or once in power. Like one Prime Minister had promised that Rs. 15 lakhs would be deposited in the bank account of the poor people once they are in power, which was never fulfilled as also there could not

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<sup>1</sup>Ritika Chopra, "In Donation to Political Parties, the Corporate Lion's Share Keeps Growing", *The Indian Express*, August 28, 2017.

### Declining Character of Political Parties....

have been any rhyme or reason for doing so. Such statements are an idiomatic expression (*jumla* as it is called in Hindi) that was given during the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha polls. Everybody knows that this black money doesn't go to accounts of people and no party or leader of the country can confiscate the black money and transfer it to the accounts of the poor. Therefore, every political party resorts to unlimited *Jumla* during their campaign which they never intend to fulfil except to lure the masses to vote for them. Such activities and trickeries have certainly denigrated the political parties in the eyes of the people. The manner and might with which the political power is contested by political parties have maligned the very image of politics which otherwise is a sacrosanct activity. It has certainly denigrated the quality of governance in the country.

### **Primacy of Election Management over Development Discourse**

The nature of politics has been changing with each successive union and state elections. It is increasingly getting focussed more around management of electoral processes to enhance the winnability of the candidates of political parties rather than around the development discourse. Election management for power has taken precedence over power for development with the consequence that political parties are now employing professionals from the field of management to do the work for them and get them elected to power. Such changes speak volumes about the declining capacity of political parties in terms of their vision about development and social, political and economic modernization of the country. Role of professional management of electoral process has led to one good thing that it has reduced the role of muscle power but the bad thing is that it has led to increased role of money. Though estimates differ in different accounts but the average expenditure in the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election has been predicted to the tune of Rs.30,000 crores alongside the official expenditure by Election Commission of India towards conducting elections which was a little over Rs.3426 crores.<sup>2</sup>

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PTI, "Government Spent Rs.3426 crores on Lok Sabha Polls", *The Hindu*, May 23, 2016, [www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com) According to this report the government had this time raised the cap of spending by a candidate from Rs. 40 lakh to 70 lakhs, which was expected to push up the total expenditure to the polls. The projected expenditure to elect the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha is said to rival the US\$7 billion (approximately Rs.42000 crores) spent by candidates and parties in the 2012 US Presidential Elections. It was in tune with this that some newspapers had projected that the expenditure by different parties were to the tune of Rs.30000 crores in 16 Lok Sabha elections.

## **Declining Capacity of Political Parties: Crisis of Governability**

Political parties resort to governing the populace through symbolism. They install the statues of various leaders and change the names of streets, airports and institutions. Although this may be used to strike nationalistic feelings among citizens but pursuit of such symbolic activities on the part of political parties amounts to populist nationalism. This does not add to any education, skills, empowerment and citizen-building. Empowering the people helps in citizen-building which further leads to society-building, with consequent easing of the task of nation-building. Citizen-building, society-building and nation-building will certainly enhance the states capacities and purify the processes of governance. It is because a qualitative individual is always an asset for the nation whereas the incapacitated individuals generate an immature system as a whole. Accordingly, resorting to all these kinds of symbolic projects the political parties keep the people ignorant, immature, uneducated and maintain the status quo so that they can be duped each time there is an election with false promises and populist nationalism. It is in their larger interest to fool the people all the time in their game of power struggle.

Eulogizing and appropriating the great men of the past is not a new trend in politics and this political editing has occupied the centre stage in almost all the political parties. The renaming of the Aurangzeb road in Delhi after former President APJ Abdul Kalam; Mughalsarai railway station after Deen Dayal Upadhyaya; Fiazabad to Ayodhya, are to name but a few. Names of several districts were also changed by BSP chief Mayawati which was responded by Samajwadi Party by reverting to the previous names. Some icons such as Ambedkar, Kanshi Ram, Ram Manohar Lohia, DeenDayal Upadhyaya, Sardar Patel, Jay Prakash Narayan, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vir Savarkar, and Bhagat Singh are frequently used and eulogized by the leaders. There is no problem in celebrating the philosophies of such thought leaders who contributed immensely towards making of India. However, appropriating the thoughts of the leaders in a particular framework and particular ideology deepens the differences among the leaders, people, as well as the parties. This shows that the political parties are gradually losing their orientation for development and their main focus remains to win the war of words over each other. There is always a recurring attempt to erase the legacy of one leader and establish the dominance of other. Owing to increased role of money and management in electoral process, the quality of leaders has considerably gone down. Money helps towards managing the winning prospects of leaders in the election fray. Lack of quality

### Declining Character of Political Parties....

leaders gets reflected in terms of political parties' capacity to govern. Consequently, they resort to false promises at the time of election, and governing through symbols, populism and authoritarianism once in power. This has led to crisis in governability on the part of political parties. They do not have effective control mechanism of state's institution namely, bureaucracy, police, investigating agencies, electoral agencies etc.

### **Politicisation of Issues Pertaining to Polity**

The social, economic and political issues which require to be addressed in right earnest and in the spirit of conflict resolution are always politicized to serve the vested interest of political leaders and political parties. Society is a witness to the fact that even the most heinous crimes like rape and murder are quickly politicized to an extent that victim sounds like perpetrator of the crime and one who has committed the crime is declared as victim. Even other serious issues like corruption, taxation, demonetization, poverty and hunger are no exception to the rule and even such social issues get embedded into the quagmire of political one-upmanship.

The demand of reservation by the several communities is increasing gradually. The special favours made by the youth leaders such as Hardik Patel to join the party which supports reservation speaks volumes about the pitiable condition of the political parties in India. Political parties are also swayed away by such demands without considering its authenticity. This gradually spills over to the other communities and the regions giving rise to more and more such baseless demands. This not only fans the flames of discontent giving rise to the communal tensions across the different states but also threatens the very existence of a unified India. Thus, politicians create their vote banks by exploiting the various issues and deepening the cleavages of the society. The politicians play with the sentiments of poverty struck people with false promises and the attempts for their development starts and ends on paper itself. This is the reason that in spite of so many programmes and advertising of policies the people remain eternal victim of poverty, hunger and other social ailments. In Indian political system, some communities, minorities or people are always used as pawns to achieve narrow ends. In this way issue of reservation, castes, religions have become so important issues of politics that the task of development is left behind and goes down the list of priorities.

## **Opposition for the Sake of Opposing**

Merit-based opposition is the very heart of a progressive and thriving democracy. The heartbeat of democracy gets derailed and democracy is bound to suffer from frequent attacks and at times suffer from incurable ills in absence of merit-based opposition. Indian democracy has arrived at such crossroads where arguments and counter-arguments of political parties become difficult to be deciphered in terms of their rightness and wrongness. Political parties have been criticizing their opposition not on the basis of the merit of issue under consideration; rather most criticism are maligned and based on wrong motivations.

Merit-based opposition is one of the strong pillars of democracy which has become extremely weak and ineffective with the evolution of democracy in India. Today it is one of the biggest crises of democracy because a failed opposition paves the way for the centralization of power which is a direct threat to the roots of democracy. Presently it has not been able to build a strong consensus in favour of any demand for progress and prosperity of the citizen, society and the state as a whole; nor when it comes to criticizing the ruling party. The role of opposition has been reduced to making offensive statements and mud-slinging on each other. The political parties lack well-crafted policies and good leaders owing to which the standard of inter-party rivalry and debate has been continuously on the wane. The weakness of opposition and deteriorating standards of debate has shaken the very foundation of democracy. Accordingly, people's confidence is loosening with each successive election. Since the development agenda has acquired a mere cosmetic functions to be placed on the election manifesto and elections are largely based on maligning the image of political parties and their political leaders, the parties too have lost their orientations for long-term planning in the interests of the economic development and citizen-building. Consequently, the political parties lack capacity to govern in the right direction and overall the governance process is haywire.

## **Maligning Image of Opposition Leaders is the Main Tool of**

### **Contesting Elections:**

Political parties are mostly polemical parties by now. All parties at the time of elections go to the utmost extent to malign the image of their opponents in the eyes of electorates. They resort to all sorts of invectives and personal slanders against each other. At times such slanders are discovered; at times it is cooked; and at times it is made viral on the social



### Declining Character of Political Parties....

media; all to tarnish the image of opponents as it will have potentials to make a dent in their political vote bank. Therefore, vote-bank politics has acquired a place of primacy in the political discourse and election campaigns which is extremely detrimental not only to democracy but also the political culture of the polity. Such development has led to the marginalization of the developmental and modernization issues.

Campaigning on the eve of elections revolves more around the personal slanders of political leaders against each other pertaining to their character and personal life. This has given rise to the debate as to whether 'personal is political or not'? Should personal character of political leaders be kept out of political process? Is there a difference between public and private life of a leader? Should the personal life of political leaders be allowed to become an issue during the time of election? The social scientists need to develop a discourse around the issue and settle the same to provide a fair orientation to political campaign and electoral processes in the country.

The case of Hardik Patel whose videos were released on the social networking sites amidst election campaign for 2017 Gujarat Assembly election is one such example. Similarly, the caricatures and stories of all political parties are viral on the social media and Whats App groups. The war of words lead to blame games where no one is seen talking about *modus operandi* for development. Political parties have acquired an image of bankruptcy in terms of their ideas and ideology for development. This speaks volumes about their lack of capacity for a healthy development of the polity and ways of enhancing and ensuring cohesiveness and cohabitation within society. They are found contributing more towards the unmaking of the society for creating vote-bank. Obviously then it would lead to crisis of governability on the part of political parties and hence poor governance in the country.

### **Election Manifestos: Tool to Misguide Electors**

Election Manifesto (EM) which once use to be the main plank of contesting election for political parties has now lost its relevance to an extent that nobody bothers about discussing the promises made their in. Political parties promise almost moon in their election manifestos and include what they never mean to achieve during the course of their governance period. They endeavour to make it as elegant and as attractive as possible. It was through the EM that the ideology and vision of social, political, cultural and economic modernization of the country were used to be spelled out by different political parties. Unfortunately, and to the detriment of political process in the country

the same has been reduced to a cosmetic approach to provide a strong face-lift to political parties and their leaders.

Such EM has become a tool to misguide the electorates by resorting to rhetoric and high-sounding promises. 'India Shining', 'New India Campaign', 'Good Days Ahead', 'Bharat Badal Raha Hai', 'Corruption Free India', are some such constructs which emanates from the election manifesto and promises of different political parties which they hardly ever achieved or intent to achieve. Political Parties often resorts to pamphleteering and poster-war among themselves in an attempt to outshine each other or destroy the image of each other. Hence, the sanctity of Election Manifesto stands destroyed in the eyes of the electorates. Consequently, the voters hardly ever read or cast even a cursory glance on the EM of political parties. However, these are better read and analysed by the parties themselves so that they can develop counter argument against them and could make fun of each other's EM and promises to the people. It is owing to such circumstances that many of the educated electorates do not even go to cast their votes as they develop this opinion that all leaders are a 'bundle of liars' and nothing is going to change for better whosoever wins. Indian democracy thus is more often sacrificed on the altar of 'tyranny of masses', which are largely illiterate or semi-literate but not educated to have an analytical bent of mind and judge the leaders. Today, in the digital era they are left at the mercy of virtual world campaigning and keep groping in the dark and remain misguided to the hilt. Under such circumstances election manifestoes have been reduced to yet another means to grab power by foul means causing tremendous damage to the process of governance.

### **Electorate's Ignorance: Predator's Choice**

All kinds of political rhetoric are used to praise the potentials of the youth, and feel good news of the demographic dividend are convinced to them. However, there is the flip side of the story too. The same youth are quite apprehensive to enter the institutions for change such as journalism, political parties because they do not want to get drenched in the quagmire of dirty politics. They are discouraged to enter such platforms. On one hand, there is a temptation and feeling to change these institutions for better, and on the other, they cannot match up to the deeply entrenched determinants of power such as money, caste, influence etc. They are caught in the dilemma and are unable to showcase their talents, merit and sincerity.

### Declining Character of Political Parties....

There are other sections of youth who make their way in politics through the youth wings of various political parties and become leaders but rather than doing constructive works, they contribute towards politicizing the educational institutions. The universities which should be the laboratory for future leaders have become a battleground for political parties where student leaders and student community are used as pawn in their hands to serve their vested interests. The political parties have started using even the student leaders in their game of power struggle. The student community is being polarised and politicized in the name of caste, religion and all other primordial identities.

Such ignorance on the part of University students has converted them into predators before the leaders and parties. It has hampered the very purpose of serving the nation through educated future leaders with an analytical bent of mind. Therefore, the present breed of youth in the country are a half-baked lot which are if attracted towards political process of the election they may cause more harm to the polity than benefits; irrespective of the fact that onus of a better India in future lies on their shoulders.

Apart from the youth there are some people at the grassroots who do not even understand their political structure, their rights and duties. They are completely unaware of the programmes that are announced and advertised. The policies that are devised do not trickle down to them and they are kept in the dark. It seems that they are deliberately kept illiterate and uneducated to keep them away from the mainstream structure. The height of ignorance is visible in various violent demonstrations and protest. On such occasions it has been found that it is the maximum young people that take part in vandalism and mass killings in the name of caste, religion, reservation and regionalism. The case of violence that was perpetrated in the aftermath of the arrest of Ram Rahim and release of the movie Padmavati are some such examples where the energy of the youth were channelized towards destructive purposes. The useless agitations are one of the very important reasons for the slow growth of the nation as it becomes the cause of: wasteful use of energy of youth; destruction of exchequer's money; destruction of public properties; change in the orientation of the administration from developmental works to administrative works are to name but a few. It is perturbing to see the youth participating in such baseless issues rather than protesting over the issue of unfulfilled promises like: farmer's suicide; poverty eradication; creation of employment opportunities; facilitating free and fair elections; provision

of free and meaningful education; growth and development of infrastructure and other pressing challenges of society. No one is seen discoursing about these issues. Therefore, it is useless to expect the reform in the structure if the relevant population of the nation is engaged in such acts. Overall, the governance will always be on the wane under such circumstances and would lose hope of ever improving.

### **Changing Character of Leaders: Changing Lexicon of Politics**

The politicians are the representatives of the people and are expected to maintain their personality profile and standards in their public speeches. In the course of being sarcastic, they not only insult the leader but also the office they are holding and the institution itself. People have the responsibility of maintaining the standard of the nation and political debate during and after the election process. The reckless use of language against each other has severely denigrated the sanctity of political debate in the country. The defamatory and indecent words that are used to oppose different political opponents have degraded the politics and political process. Each party remains busy researching the ways and means to make fun of the other in the eyes of the people. The narrative of election campaign has undergone tremendous change for the worse. The development discourse is almost absent and has been overtaken by populist promises which are never meant to be fulfilled by political parties and their leaders. Unparliamentary words have entered in big way in political debate and deliberations of the political parties. Undoubtedly, this has undermined severely the process of governance in the country.

### **Reasons for the Sagging Nature of Political Parties**

Political parties and their leaders have come to realize that what the educated lots think, write and debate hardly matters when it comes to votes during the elections. What matters most is the ignorance of those poor lots which go to vote. Therefore, it is they who are to be manipulated in whatever ways possible. Therefore, they resort to populist measure in almost all walks of their life: they talk rhetoric to them whether it is about arousing their nationalistic feeling; emancipating them from their wretched conditions; fulfilling their unlimited wants and all other needs.

Obviously then they never endeavour to empower such lot through education and exposure so that they are able to think and articulate for themselves. Accordingly, all they endeavour for is to devise means and

mechanism woo those electorates who stand in line to cast their vote at the time of elections. This is the primary reason that the political parties and their leaders resort only to 'bundle of lies' and 'false promises' on the one hand; and tarnish the image of their opponents by foul and ugly means in the eyes of such electorates. This has led to deterioration of the character and nature of political parties with consequent impact on governance.

### **What needs to be Done?**

Undoubtedly, governance in contemporary India is passing through not only a rough patch but is derailed beyond imagination. The political system as a whole has developed rot at all levels of governance. The problems are innumerable. Therefore, one needs to think what must be done? There could be solutions which may sound idealistic and not feasible; yet the rot has reached to a stage where some out of the box thinking is the need of the hour. Some such suggestions are as follows:

- (i) ***Incremental Adult Suffrage***: The suffrage which is universal at this stage needs to be reformed. It is high time that the proportional voting arrangement be made in accordance with the qualification of an electorate. This shall motivate if a doctorate is in possession of five votes compared to a graduate; and would motivate a graduate if he/she has somewhere three votes compared to an illiterate. This would also help towards containing the 'tyranny of masses'. Those who go to cast their votes in bulks lured by false promises or for some petty benefits doled out to them either in cash or in kind would then have less contribution in the unmaking of the system. Therefore, the weighted voting arrangements must be made at earliest. This would help improve the quality of democracy and consequently the governance in the country.
- (ii) ***Reforming the Political Party***: Structure of the political party requires immediate reforms. This is needed for intra-party democracy. The leaders who are to contest the assembly elections must be elected through a party conclave on the lines of United States. The leaders of political parties must be elected by the enrolled electorates within the parties. The intra-party primaries will have profound impact on party members and their loyalty towards the party. Only the elected candidates through primaries must be allowed to contest assembly elections. This shall substitute the present system where the high command

or some coterie impose party candidates on the electorates leading to intra-party discontentment as well as rift at times. This shall enhance and ensure democratic accountability on part of political parties. This shall also broaden the social base of political parties and would enhance their accountability in the eyes of the electorates. Intra-party democracy would also help consolidation of democracy in the country as a whole as such parties would never circumvent democracy once in government. This would also help towards containment of diminishing quality of public deliberations in Indian politics.

- (iii) ***Political Education within Political Parties:*** Political parties must undertake the task of political education of their members. This will help strengthen the democratic structure of the party as well as of the country, as the leaders would be well aware of the issues pertaining to their society and polity. This shall make them increasingly accountable to the people, country and the party. Their deliberative capacity will also get enhanced and would serve the purpose of development of the country. Hence a de-schooling of political leaders and members in arbitrariness, haphazardness, criminality, and ill-habits will be initiated and their proper schooling in good governance and policy-making will be done.
- (iv) ***Bi-party system:*** It is high time that Indian polity must adopt two-party system by law rather than allow it to evolve through convention. A multi-party system is a huge burden on the exchequer, business community, and democracy as a whole. The prevailing system has turned out to be highly costly affair giving rise to number of other anomalies like corruption, regionalism, sub-nationalistic loyalties, to name but a few.
- (v) ***Institutionalisation of Intra-party democracy:*** The entire process of party hierarchy and structure requires to be institutionalized through an act of Parliament. This would also help towards improving transparency in the internal functioning of the parties. The parties shall cease to be a private limited of an individual or a handful of leaders. This will also lead to subsequent institutionalisation and transparency in flow of funds to political parties. Corruption also will get reduced and may gradually come to a halt. This will also help towards entrenchment of hierarchies within parties to an extent that the internal conflict is regulated and fragmentation is contained.

## Declining Character of Political Parties....

Democracy overall will consolidate with consequent smoothening of the processes of governance.

- (vi) ***Qualifications to be legislators must be determined:*** This is the most needed reform that a certain criteria must be fixed to become a political leader. Educational qualification is the most needed one as one cannot imagine how a semi-literate or an illiterate person could become law-makers in a democracy. It was precisely on this account that Plato and Aristotle termed democracy as a form of government where “rule of ignorance” exists on the name of ‘rule of law’. The elected rulers must be made to undergo an orientation program in governance and be made aware to the laws and policies of the country. A congregation of qualified representatives would restore the ever sagging deliberative capacities of parliament and provincial legislatures. Qualified legislators would get to know what they are voting for on the floor of the House; would learn what their manifesto promises; understand legislative agendas; with consequent improvement in governance.

## Conclusion

The rise of one party will strike at the roots of political pluralism and close the doors of diverse opinion and dissent. On the other hand, if the opposition does not take a strong stand citizens should be ready to welcome a sham democracy. Multi-party democracy will continue to be huge burden on the exchequer. The regional parties will be worst affected by the centralization of power. Lack of political leadership within political parties is a major problem which cannot be overcome unless dynastic politics, money power, intra-party democracy and the various factors are taken into account along which a reform of political parties is initiated. Political competition has taken an ugly turn with every leaders becoming polemical of the other and resorting to mud-slinging.

Therefore, the entire political energy to improve governance would become meaningful only when political parties are reformed structurally and functionally. An institutionalization of healthy political parties is the vehicle of not only democracy but also that of governance in the country. Therefore, failure of governance or the perpetuation of poor governance in contemporary India is mostly on account of degrading and deteriorating nature of political parties from bad to worse. It is high time that sources of political finance; the criteria for membership

of the political parties; intra-party democracy; legislated primaries for the political parties be initiated and adopted at earliest. Strengthening of political parties and an improvement of its membership would ensure the improvement in the health of democracy and governance within Indian democracy.

Political parties' promises of constitutional reform, good governance and a New India would continue to be a distant dream unless political parties are reformed and their own house is first put in order. The democratic aspirations of the people and governance in contemporary India would improve by leaps and bounds only when political parties are made healthy and an institution of highest order; rather than any tinkering with the Indian constitution or other institutions of governance within the State of India. Therefore, the most important challenge before contemporary India is arresting the fast deteriorating health of political parties to arrest the failure of governance as well as crisis of governability, and ensure the consolidation of democracy.

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# Good Governance Initiatives: A Study of Odisha

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## Introduction

Good governance is an ideal which is difficult to achieve in its totality. Governance typically involves well-intentioned people who bring their ideas, experiences, preferences and other human strengths and shortcomings to the policy-making table. Good governance is achieved through an on-going discourse that attempts to capture all of the considerations involved in assuring that stakeholder interests are addressed and reflected in policy initiatives. **Kautilya** in his treatise '*Arthshastra*' propounded the qualities of good governance by the ruling king as follows: In the happiness of his subject lies his happiness, in their welfare his welfare, whatever please himself he shall not consider good. India follows republic, democratic and secular form of governance, and the values which are enshrined in our constitution. The term "governance" means a political unit for the functioning of policy-making for both the political and administrative units of Government. Good governance is based on the conviction that man has the ethical and rational ability, as well as the absolute right, to govern himself with motive and just. The concept of good governance is associated with capable and real administration in democratic set up. In practical terms, there are three particular features of good governance that make it significance in the working of the government.

- 1) First, the empowerment and capacity of government to frame and implement policies and discharge functions.
- 2) Second, the form of political will.
- 3) Third, the process by which authority is exercised in the management of country's economic and social resources for development.

It also reflects the attitudes of the people towards the functioning of the so many agencies of the government. "Good" governance promotes gender equality, sustains the environment, enables citizens to exercise

personal freedoms, and provides tools to reduce poverty, deprivation, fear, and violence. The UN views good governance as participatory, transparent and accountable. It encompasses state institutions and their operations and includes private sector and civil society organizations.

Good governance is significant in public institutions to conduct and manage public affairs and resources to guarantee human rights in free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law. It is significant because it promises to deliver on the promise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Good governance is thus, a function of installation of positive virtues of administration and elimination of vices of dysfunctionalities. It makes the government work effective, credible and legitimate in administrative system and citizen-friendly, value caring and people-sharing.

### **Concept of Good Governance**

In 1992, the World Bank published a report entitled, Governance and Development, which explored the concept further and its application. In 1997, the Bank redefined the concept “good governance” as a necessary precondition for development. Good governance is to promote and sustain holistic and integrated human development. The central focus is to see how the government enables, simplifies and authorises its people, regardless of differences of caste, creed, class, and political ideology and social origin to think, and take certain decisions which will be in their best interest, and which will enable them to lead a clean, decent, happy, and autonomous existence.

Good Governance manages and allocates resources to respond to combined problems of its citizens. Hence states should be assessed on both the quality and the quantity of public goods provided to citizens. The policies that supply public goods are guided by principles such as human rights, democratization and democracy, transparency, participation and decentralized power sharing, sound public administration, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness, equity, and strategic vision. Depending on the context, good governance has been said at various times to encompass: full respect of effective participation, human rights, the rule of law, multi-actor partnerships, and accountable processes, political pluralism, transparent and institutions, an efficient and effective public sector, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, political empowerment of people, equity, sustainability, and attitudes and values that foster responsibility, solidarity and tolerance. The Human Development Report issued insists on “good” governance as a democratic exigency, in order to rid corruption, provides

rights, the means, and the capacity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and to hold their governments accountable for what they do.

### **Eight Elements of Good Governance**

Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law. Good governance is responsive to the present and future needs of the organization, exercises prudence in policy-setting and decision-making, and that the best interests of all stakeholders are taken into account.

- 1) **Rule of Law:** Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced by an impartial regulatory body, for the full protection of stakeholders.
- 2) **Transparency:** Transparency means that information should be provided in easily understandable forms and media; that it should be freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by governance policies and practices, as well as the outcomes resulting there from; and that any decisions taken and their enforcement are in compliance with established rules and regulations.
- 3) **Responsiveness:** Good governance requires that organizations and their processes are designed to serve the best interests of stakeholders within a reasonable time frame.
- 4) **Consensus Oriented:** Good governance requires consultation to understand the different interests of stakeholders in order to reach a broad consensus of what is in the best interest of the entire stakeholder group and how this can be achieved in a sustainable and prudent manner.

### **Equity and Inclusiveness**

The organization that provides the opportunity for its stakeholders to maintain, enhance, or generally improve their well-being provides the most compelling message regarding its reason for existence and value to society.

- 1) **Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Good governance means that the processes implemented by the organization to produce favorable results meet the needs of its stakeholders, while making the best

use of resources – human, technological, financial, natural and environmental – at its disposal.

- 2) **Accountability:** Accountability is a key tenet of good governance. Who is accountable for what should be documented in policy statements. In general, an organization is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions as well as the applicable rules of law.
- 3) **Participation:** Participation by both men and women, either directly or through legitimate representatives, is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation needs to be informed and organized, including freedom of expression and assiduous concern for the best interests of the organization and society in general.

### **Shifting from Government to Good Governance**

Governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented. Shelly defined governance as a process that is dedicated to achieve three great objectives through an effective and people-oriented mechanism of bureaucracy: alleviation of poverty, creation of productive employment and social integration. Accordingly, Langlands defined governance as good management, which underpins good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes. In this sense, governance means an effective process of decision making for implementing government programs and services. Hirst considered that the word 'governance has come to be seen as an alternative to government' Where in government a political actor is the only role player for service delivery, in governance this responsibility is shared between the state, people and private sectors. Rhodes contemplated the word governance 'can be used as a blanket term to signify a change in the meaning of government'. In connection with defining the word, he showed basic and common elements like participation of all stakeholders, accountability, transparency, minimising state authority, and vertical networking. Thus governance means a significant change in the meaning of government, entails a new way of governing with less intervention of state and more engagement of people in the system of public service delivery. Barten *et al* suggested 'governance could be considered the result of the participatory approach to development'. Thus it could be said that governance is the shadow term of good governance, as the central element in both terms is the same: that is, people's participation.

For the last couple of decades the notion of good governance has been

## Good Governance Initiatives: A Study of Odisha

a popular discourse among the intellectuals, politicians, aid agents, development workers, and administrators. This is not only because of the increasing demand for the economic development, but more so because of the extensive expansion of the role and responsibilities of the government to the people. Today, governments of the developing countries recognise the significant impact of participatory good governance over aid effectiveness.

International development agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and others use a functional approach to describe good governance, focusing on management factors to promote economic issues. They regarded good governance as good functions of government machinery that help to achieve sustainable and self-reliant development and social justice. Accordingly UNDP identified three bases of good governance: Economic, participatory and administrative. Economic governance deals with sound decision-making processes within a country's economic arena, which particularly focus on poverty reduction and equity promotion. Political governance deals with good processes for formulation of policies for the people of the country. Administrative governance deals with the participatory process of policy implementation. Encompassing all three bases, good governance constructs the processes and structures that 'guide political and socioeconomic relationships'.

Good Governance can be seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences, participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable and it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.

It has been emphasized almost unanimously that governance has to be based on the principle of accountability of those who are responsible for it. Accountability, in fact, implies that the bureaucracy should be answerable for what they do or don't do? This is sought to be administered in a parliamentary system through questions, debates, discussions, budgetary approvals, committees and such other methods by parliament. The executive is to be responsive to the people through their representatives. It is, however, also true that this mechanism has

increasingly proved to be ineffective for reasons of decline in the quality and character of debates and the representatives, transformation of parliamentary system into a cabinet system of government, criminalization of politics and fragmentation of society and politics. Secondly, accountability is also ensured through judicial review of the governmental decisions or laws. The citizens are also seeking judicial intervention through Public Interest Litigation (PIL) for prompt action on certain issues affecting the common life. Such practices are in vogue, directly or indirectly in several countries like New Zealand, Canada, Australia and India. Recently, a more effective mode of public accountability is the system of citizens' charter. The idea is to change the bureaucratic culture to include people friendly attitudes instead of patriarchal, indifferent, casual and callous behavior to citizens. The old feudal values must give place to modern democratic values in bureaucracy.

An accountable system of governance, thus, presupposes the following functional and behavioural traits of the civil servants: (i) Achievement oriented behaviour, (ii) Judicious use of authority, (iii) Pursuit of happiness of the people, (iv) Use of reason and experience as the basis of decision, (v) Shirking of work to be identified and punished, (vi) Time bound implementation of Policies and Plans, (vii) Strength of character, intelligence, perseverance and extensivity of civil servants, (viii) Uprightness, friendliness and firmness of devotion in dealing with others, and (ix) Capacity for doing a work which should be supplemented by the skill-in-action and question for perfection.

In every country a number of institutional and legal arrangements have been made to secure the prevalence of the characteristics of an accountable administration. For example, in India setting up of institutions like Central Vigilance Commission and national commissions for Women, Schedules Tribes, Schedules Castes, Minorities and Backward Classes, National Labour Commission, National Commissions for Human Rights and Minorities, and Comptroller and Auditor General of India are some such efforts or steps to administer social, legal constitutional and systemic commitments in bureaucracy. It seeks to remove the tendencies of administrative bias, corruption, alienation and secrecy. The aim is to make administration poor-sensitive, gender-sensitive, and more sensitive to the demands and grievances of the public. The purpose is to prevent undesirable acts or behavior and to promote efficiency and integrity of public servants. The Governments have also initiated a number of other measures to see the actual operations of accountability in administration. A reference can be made to the following: (i) Management by Objective (MBO), (ii) Machinery

for the redress of public grievances, (iii) Recognition of the Right to Information, (iv) E Governance and Information Technology use, (v) Democratization and Decentralisation of power, (vi) Empowerment of the marginalized groups, especially women, (vii) Fair Competition between public and private sectors, and (viii) Review of a number of laws, rules and regulations.

In order to establish accountability at the level of local Government and empowerment of the marginalized groups, Indian Parliament passed 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts in 1992 providing for among other things 33.3% reservation for women and for scheduled castes/tribes in proportion to their population, decentralized development planning, enhancing financial abilities through increased financial powers and support to the local bodies. Decentralization and democratization thus are made benchmarks of development administration. Moreover, 79 ministries and departments of the central government are operating the structure of citizens' charter. This charter is an account of : (i) Time limits and standards for services, (ii) Avenues of grievance redressal and (iii) Putting in place monitoring system and independent scrutiny of simple mention of the charter.

A number of States and Union Government have created special agencies and units to deal with the grievances of the public emanating mainly from non-reachability of the officials, absence of a time frame for disposal of the cases and unsympathetic attitude of public officials. Accountability is related to the system of openness and transparency. If the decisions are not taken in a transparent and open manner, one can question the impartiality of such a decision. There shall be much less place for favouritism, nepotism and prejudice in the treatment of the citizens. Indian Parliament has enacted the Right to Information Act to facilitate openness in government. Central ministries and departments have set up facilitation counters with wide publicity for the purpose of information and making complaints.

### **Successful Good Governance Initiatives: A Study of Odisha**

A study of vital statistics reveal that Odisha today is poised to leap into a new era of hectic growth and development. Seen in the backdrop of the dark clouds of the economic slowdown around the country, Odisha could show up as the silver lining. The factors contributing to the steady growth graphs in different sectors across Odisha are many, but it seems that the biggest contributor has been the decade and half long political stability in the state that helped in steady policy formulation and implementation. The different sectors which are on the upswing are

manufacturing, agriculture and the social sector. These form the plinth on which the state has endeavoured to beat the general sluggish economic growth trend in the rest of the country. These are stepping stones in, what the state calls, its inclusive growth agenda route. Odisha's aim is to promote a high and sustainable growth momentum and, as a result, faster poverty reduction as its aim for a broad-based inclusive growth. The Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik, has been able to understand the issues faced by the people and has arrived at solutions that are simple, and having immense bearing on the lives of the people. The government has been addressing developmental issues basically on three fronts-industry and commerce, social and socio-political. The stress on industry is bearing fruit, and the state is on way to great achievements. In the social sector, the state deals with age-old issues that need deep understanding to deal with. As in other parts of India, every situation in Odisha is unique to the region and has to be dealt in with the right spirit. This has been achieved by the current dispensation.

### **Economy**

The State Government that inherited a virtually collapsed economy in the year 2000 had an uphill task ahead. It took the challenge upon itself, and a series of prudent economic policies and pragmatic strategies to boost the industrial sector were initiated. Soon the situation started to improve, and now Odisha is a frontline state in terms of economic growth and investment offers. The State recorded an average annual growth of 8.23 percent in the 11th plan period. Continuing the momentum, the State is all set to achieve a nine percent growth in the 12th plan period. The real per capita income in Odisha at 2004-05 prices has increased from Rs.14, 862 in 1999-2000 to Rs.26,900 in 2011-12, indicating an increase of over 77 per cent during the period. The State has achieved the highest reduction in poverty with a drop of 24.6 percentage point as per Planning Commission estimates.

In terms of investment, too, the State has become an attractive destination for national and global industrial houses. A stable Government with a series of progressive industrial policies has helped the industries sector to take a parabolic growth. The recent RBI report suggests that the State has received investment offers to the tune of Rs. 53 thousand crores in 2012-13, which is, infact, the highest among all the Indian states. The socio-political issues are mostly related to the churning of world economy that the country cannot neglect. Starting from child health to overall health of society and education to employment training and employment generation, all these have pre-



occupied the mind of the Chief Minister. At this point, the State has done wonders with the resources available. The other important segments are health and life-skills training, the services sector and Tourism.

With the introduction of the good governance initiatives, the following fruitful developments are noticed in the economy: (i) Per capita income rising from 14,862 in 2000 to Rs.61,678 in 2016-17, (ii) Percentage growth rate of GSDP in Odisha at Constant price based on 2004-05 prices was -1.72 in the year 2000-01 which increases to 9.14 in the 2012-13. But at constant price based on 2011-12, the GSDP growth was 3.52 in 2012-13 which increases to 6.16 in 2015-16 in same constant base rate, (iii) The exports from the state have increased from Rs.19,082 crore in 2015-16 to Rs.40,872 crore in 2016-17 with merchandise exports from Odisha registering the highest growth rate of 114 per cent which is highest in the country. (iv) Between 2012-13 and 2016-17, in terms of USD, shipments from the state witnessed a positive growth of 17.60 per cent against the negative growth of 2.07 per cent in overall exports of India. In the year 2001-02 the export turnover of the state was merely Rs.563 crore. It rose by 72 times in the year 2016-17, (v) Due to the expansion of IT companies Infosys, Tech-Mahindra, WIPRO, TCS have created 4700 additional IT Professional jobs, (vi) IT export from the state which was only Rs.91 Cr. in the year 2000 has increased to Rs.3400 Cr. in the year 2016-17, and (vii) The IT exporting companies in the state which were only 35 in the 2000 increased to 115 in 2017 generating IT employment on only 1500 in the year 2000 and 17000 in 2017, (viii) As per Household Consumer Expenditure data of NSS (National Sample Survey) up to 2011-12 poverty in Odisha (rural) has declined by 24.6 percentage points that is from 57.2 % to 32.6 % between 2004-05 and 2011-12, and (ix) Between 2004 to 2011-12, 58,57,599 number of people raised above poverty line.

### **1. Heavy Industry**

Growth in the manufacturing industry is the accepted norm for inclusive social growth that comes along with the growth in the overall development potential of a region. Engagement of unskilled and semi-skilled workforces by way of providing direct and indirect employment is helping to raise a large number of people above the Poverty Line. The State's Industrial Policy Resolution has a policy framework that promotes industrial investment. This has led the State of becoming the investment destination of the country and is slowly but certainly becoming the hub of India's emerging industries.

- a) **Steel:** While a number of steel plants have come up in the State the decks are now clear for the largest Foreign Direct Investment ever coming into India – the steel plant to be set up by Korean Steel giant POSCO. Its last hurdle, the environment clearance from the Ministry of Environment & Forest has been granted, and work is expected to start soon. The steel sector not only employs a large number of people directly, but also has the potential of generating allied employment in downstream units that come up alongside. A steel plant in itself is a game changer for any region. Steel would be a natural addition to the existing industry support system that exists. Odisha already has 10 per cent of the installed steel producing capacity of the nation, and backs it up with 25 per cent of the total iron-ore reserves of the country. Such natural synergy is expected to take the state ahead of competitors in other regions.
- b) **Aluminium:** The other mineral strength of the State is aluminium. Odisha tops the country in installed capacity and actual output and this is also a sector with huge employability, thus providing sustenance to several families in the lower income group.
- c) **Power:** Odisha is home to the largest resources of power grade coal in the Country. The power sector's support is vital for the growth of heavy industry. The private sector participation in this crucial sector has been opened through the Government's proactive stance and several Independent Power Plants are now set to take part in the generation of electricity. This proactive policy has not only made the state self-sufficient in power production servicing its many needs, especially of heavy industry, but also made the State power-surplus. The State Government has now taken several steps to improve the infrastructure in the distribution and transmission sectors with investment in new lines, transformers and replacement of old equipments in a phased manner. Odisha is one of the few states that does not give state subsidies in the power sector, a decision that is quite admirable in the present scenario.

Realizing that loss in distribution is the biggest setback in power utility, the government has set ambitious programmes for improvement of transmission and distribution system, reduction in distribution loss, shifting of transformers from schools, colleges and Anganawadi premises to prevent accidents, setting up separate feeder for Agriculture/Fishing Clusters, System strengthening of elephant corridors etc. Apart from this, through effective implementation of Rajiv Gandhi Grameen

Vidyutikaran Yojana, Biju Grama Jyoti Yojana and Biju Saharanchal Vidyutikaran Yojana access to electricity for all has been systematically ensured. The Special actions that the government has taken can be gauged from some projects in certain sectors. Here are some of the projects launched by the Government.

## **2. The Agriculture Sector**

While it is making huge strides in the fields of heavy industry and other areas, the mainstay of the economy of Odisha remains agriculture. More and more people are migrating to the cities in search of jobs and more are getting integrated to the urban economy in the State, a phenomenon that is being repeated all over the developing world. Yet, agriculture remains the mainstay for Odisha. In Odisha, agriculture still provides employment and sustenance, directly or indirectly, to more than 60% of the population. This involves 58 per cent of the total workforce of the state, making it the largest employment sector in the state. The current world food scenario demands more production and hence it was only wise for the State Government to realize the potential of this already established sector and provide it all the impetus it needs for the new century.

Keeping this in view, the State Agriculture Policy has been implemented that draws from a separate budget created just for this sector. The landless agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the Other Backward Classes are now in focus as the government stresses on their development and coming out of decades of obscure existence. This budget will have a provision of Rs.7161.84 crore and will serve the well-being of the farmers' community and allied sectors. This budget has been introduced in the state, being next to Karnataka in the country. It includes a special agricultural package for the farmers. Apart from this, farmers will be benefited with the bonus recently declared by the State Government.

The farmer loans are now extremely farmer-friendly, coming at 2% interest from cooperatives and commercial banks. There are also deferred payment of arrear for agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the Other Backward Classes and for those affected in floods and hurricane Phailin. Most of the issues that plague a farmer have been looked into. The big issue in irrigation has been the equipment needed in Lift Irrigation Projects. Minor Lift-Irrigation Projects have been installed and the repair and renovation work of the defunct L.I. Projects are being undertaken through Biju Krushak Vikash Yojana.

To make these effective, the State has introduced special feeders that will provide uninterrupted electricity supply to the lift-irrigation points. This is not just for the farmers, but also for the Cluster Cold Storage meant for the Fishermen. The useful employment of manpower and resources, for one, and the resultant irrigation potential of the State increasing by another 1.2 lakh hectares and thereby benefiting 1,17,000 farmers and marginal farmers. To add to this Kissan Credit Cards issued in favour of the farmers have been converted to Smart Cards for easy access to agricultural loans. To sincerely address the health care concern of the farmers of the state, Health Insurance facility upto Rs.1 lakh per annum under Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana has been extended to the farmers and agricultural labourers for a maximum of 5 members of their family.

Based on NSSO's Situation Assessment Surveys for 2012-13 & 2002-03 farmer's income doubled. In real income terms, Odisha is the top performer with a CAGR of 8.3 per cent closely followed by Haryana (8%), Rajasthan (7.9%) and MP (7.3 %). Odisha is 3rd highest contributor for food grain procurement in the country in the year 2016-

In this year 100 Lakh MT of rice was contributed by Odisha to PDS. Agriculture credit is Rs.19275.8 crore in 2015-16 which was Rs.783.21 crore in 2000-01. This is an increase of 25 fold. Total food grain production is 77.13 Lakh MT in 2015-16 which was only 49.75 lakh MT in 2000-01. The state has received Krishikarman Award 4 times for bumper production of paddy. Animal husbandry contributes 26.4 per cent of monthly family income of agriculture household which is highest in the country. In last 3 years 4 Lakh hectares has been irrigated.

### **3. Agriculture & Allied Sector**

In the state like Odisha where 62 per cent population still continue to depend upon this sector for their livelihood. The percentage of agriculture and allied sector contribution is 19.91 per cent in 2016-17 which was 60 per cent in 1960's. As per the accepted theory on stages of economic development, it is a positive change. The focus of this government is to provide facilities for agriculture & irrigation for optimum growth of this sector. Since 2013-14 around 4 lakh hectares additional irrigation potential has been created. In these years 50476 deep bore wells have been completed. From 2013-14, state has introduced separate agriculture budget. Since 2014-15, the agriculture budget is increased by 85.21 per cent in last three years. In 2017-18, the agriculture budget is Rs.14930 crore. Institutional credit was always

a challenge for farmers. State govt has made provision to give agriculture credit at the rate of 1% interest rate. The total farm credit was merely Rs.611 Crore in 2000-01 which increases to Rs.19275.8 Crore. The State govt is planning to roll out direct benefit transfer (DBT) for fertilizer subsidy from February 1, 2018. This will ensure transparency and plug the gap the fund pilferage. In 2014, the state government had declared to create 10 lakh hectare additional irrigation potential creations, 4 lakh hectares have been already added. To achieve the remaining target State cabinet approved project like Gangadhar Meher Lift Canal system, Nabakrushna Choudhury SechaUnnayan Yojana, Parbati Giri Mega Lift Irrigation Projects.

All these impetus given to Agriculture have boosted production and the State registered a record production of 11.4 million tone food grains. The Chief Minister received the Krishi Karman Award from the President of India in recognition of impressive farm output. Such developments, however, cannot be done in isolation. The infrastructure has to come up for that as well. So there is greater focus now on development of productive infrastructure to ensure peoples' access to basic facilities like healthcare, education, clean drinking water, sanitation, rural connectivity, electrification and common service centres. With the vision of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, several initiatives have been taken to address problems for the overall development of the State.

Since 2008 the State Government has been implementing the Rupees 2 per KG rice programme for all BPL families, AAY beneficiaries and APL families in 8 KBK Districts, boarders of ST/SC hostels and from November 2011 about 6.2 lakh Poor and Left Out(PLO) families of 19 poorest districts of the State. From February 2013, the state has converted this scheme into the historic 1Rupee per KG rice programme. At present about 56 lakh families and 4 lakh individuals are being covered by this flagship food security programme.

#### **4. The Social Sector**

No amount of development can be sustained without concomitant development in the social sector. Odisha has addressed this issue on an urgent basis. To this end the Government of Odisha has budgeted for many welfare schemes in the following sub sectors:

##### **a) Health**

Key indicators emanating from studies in this sector show that there has been a steady improvement of the health of the general population of the state in recent years. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), for

example, has drastically been reduced from 75 (SRS-2005) to 57 (SRS-2011). This decline has been the steepest compared to data from anywhere around the country in the last seven years. Linked to that is the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR). This too has fallen substantially, from 358 (SRS-2003) to 258 (SRS-2009). The above two generally start off the counting to life expectancy at birth. That indicator has shot up from 59.2 years during 2001-05 to 63.5 during 2006-10, a considerable gain.

Health care services for the people in general has seen improvement through the implementation of schemes that ensure quality health care services. This includes the Emergency Medical Ambulance Services known as 108. Along with this the State Government has been vigorously pursuing vital primary and emergency health services through IMR mission, Mobile Health Units in backward and tribal dominated areas. Health services have been made available to 2 lakh people by organizing Health Camps under Biju Grameen Swasthya Seva Shibirin 100 places in the rural area of the State. The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana aids in capacity building, while the Integrated Child Development programmes have been strengthened.

The State has taken healthcare to another level by providing medical treatment assistance up to Rs.3 lakh. This will be available to all the BPL families, APL families in rural area having annual income of Rs.40,000 and upto Rs.60,000 for APL families in urban areas as well as to inmates of Mentally Disadvantaged Rehabilitation Centre, Orphanages and for the unknown persons involved in accidents.

Once upon a time Odisha was dubious for its high IMR & MMR. Since 2005-06, the IMR is reduced from 68 in 2005-06 to 40 in 2015-16. This figure is better than national figure. It established 2 new govt. medical colleges at Koraput and Baripada and another 4 would be come up in the near future. Free drug distribution scheme called "NIRAMAYA" is being implemented up to the PHC level under which 573 drugs are supplied to patient. Considering the menace of rising number of cancer patients in the state, government has established Cancer Day care Chemotherapy unit in 25 districts headquarter hospitals.

#### **b) Education**

The State has been taking rapid strides in this respect, and several indicators in the education sector can tell a wholesome story. The 2011 census revealed that the state has an overall literacy rate of 73.45% that rivalled the national average of 74.04%. The basic idea was to increase enrolment in schools. That has substantially increased. Along

with increased enrolment, the dropout rate at the primary level has come down sharply – from 41.8% in 2000-01 to 0.43% in 2011-12. These two factors together have given a shot in the arm to the State's primary education sector. To make education freely available, the State has taken initiatives for expansion and improvement in education at all levels. Through the Odisha Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at primary grade have increased from 99.06% and 91.83% to 99.69% and 93.30%, respectively. The support system includes free text books and uniforms to students. The State also provides free cycles to all girl students and boy students of disadvantaged sections in class Ten as an incentive to pursue study beyond 10th class.

By extending the scope of Scholarship to 10,000 students at primary and upper primary level, Pathani Samant Merit Scholarship for 7500 students at class 6th, 9th and +2 level excelling in mathematics, annual student scholarship to 24500 students at junior, senior, postgraduate and technical education level and educational support to the children of construction workers, fishermen and other disadvantaged social groups it has been very sincerely attempted to provide catalytic changes in the educational system. The aim is to have 100 per cent enrolment. So the government has relaxed the norms for opening of new primary schools. Special efforts are being made especially in tribal areas to reduce dropouts. Beyond primary and school education, the government effort is developing the infrastructure of the ITIs, Diploma and skill development etc.

Besides the following targets are achieved in the educational sectors:

(i) Established 160 CBSE pattern Adharsha Vidyalayas in 160 blocks of the state. (ii) Dropout rates in Primary Schools in Odisha are reduced from 41.80 per cent in 2000-01 to 2.82 per cent in 2015-16. (iii) Dropout rates in Upper Primary schools in Odisha are reduced from 57.00 per cent in 2000-01 to 3.87 per cent in 2015-16. (iv) Dropout rates in Secondary schools in Odisha are reduced from 70.6 per cent in 2000-01 to 6.02 per cent in 2015-16. (v) From 2014-15 onwards Scholarships have been provided to 10,000 Primary & Upper primary level school students for which the annual budget is 4.29 Crore in 2017-18. (vi) Pathani Samanta Mathematics Talent Scholarships have been designed to give scholarship to students from Upper Primary level to +2 level for which annually budget allocation is 2.5 crore. (vii) State Government is going to start free school uniform to all boys of Primary & Upper Primary schools from Classes I-VIII, which was earlier limited to all girls and SC, ST, BPL students of these schools. (viii) Two new medical

colleges are already started from 2017-18 academic sessions in interior districts like Koraput and Mayurbhanj. Another 7 MCHs are in pipeline.

This established has increased the MBBS seat to 850 from 450 to meet the requirement of qualified doctors in the state. (ix) After the success of Super 30 model for IIT-JEE preparation for economically backward but meritorious students since 2015. From 2017-18 academic sessions government has started medical coaching in same line. (x) 08 Model Degree colleges are already started from academic sessions 2017-18 in 08 educationally backward blocks of the state. Govt has planned to establish another 10 Model degree colleges in such blocks. (xi) Under Kalinga Siksha Sathi Yojana students are eligible to pursue professional courses with education loan @1% per annum. (xii) The state government announced 'Mo School' Campaign to promote and facilitate volunteerism to give back to their alma maters. Under this initiative whatever is contributed in terms of funds for developing schools, the state will contribute double the amount.

#### **c) Employment**

The State stresses on “skill development and placement linked employability,” for which “a large number of vocational and technical institutions have been empanelled to impart training and facilitating in getting employment.” The State Employment Mission has been ensuring these skill trainings. To create entrepreneurs and well trained human resource base, 1.5 lakh young men and women are being imparted with employment-based training through Nijukti Mission every year. Odisha government recommends Election Commission of India to give 5% reservation to transgender. The state government is going to launch Tiritiya Prakriti Suraksha Abhiyan (TPSA). Under this initiative, they will be provided with scholarship for education as well as scholarship for skill development to earn a decent livelihood. To motivate and encourage young minds for innovative ideas, the state government launched the Odisha Youth Innovation Fund Scheme. Under these deserving innovators would be rewarded with Rs.50,000 for new ideas and Rupees one lakh for any demonstrative product, prototype, patents and incubated products of services.

#### **d) Housing for the Poor:**

Through 'Mo Kudia' scheme, Pucca dwelling houses are provided to eligible poor families excluded from the purview of Indira Awas Yojana. Under this scheme, a sum of Rs.75,000 is provided to the beneficiaries in 18 Integrated Action Plan districts while Rs.70,000 is provided to the beneficiaries of the remaining 12 districts.



## 5. Social Security Network

The State from its own resources is providing a monthly pension of Rupees 300 to nearly 20 lakh eligible old, widow, destitute and disabled beneficiaries throughout the State under Madhubabu Pension Yojana. Enhanced pension amount of Rupees 500 is also being paid if the beneficiaries cross 80 years of age. Annual summer and winter assistance is being provided to the above beneficiaries. A total of 86,47,544 families 3,23,90,807 members covered under NFSA. . The digital initiatives undertaken by the department for Paddy Procurement and usage of PoS device in food grain distributions has been recognized and awarded with “ 41 GEMS of Digital India” by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India. . Since FY 2014-15, 13,64,124 households staying in *kutcha* houses have been shifted to *pucca* houses. Odisha is the first state in the country to grant land rights to slum dwellers in Municipalities and NAC area and property rights to those residing in Municipal Corporation area. The Odisha government has introduced the Senior Citizen Policy-2016. Government is already approved setting up a corpus of Rs.7.4 crore initially and set up old age home in each district. A pilgrimage scheme called BaristhaNagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana is already in force in the state of Odisha.

Through the above innovative Mamata scheme the State Government has been providing Rs.5000 in four phases to the pregnant and nursing mothers in the state to compensate resultant loss of income and for ensuring proper care of the mothers and their children. By now about more than one million women have been assisted and funds to the tune of Rs.403 crore have been transferred to their accounts directly.

## 6. Women Empowerment

The State Government believes in political empowerment of women where they can take decisions on development agenda. Legendary leader and former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik, recognizing this potential of women, had started 33 percent reservation to women in Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies. Taking his initiative forward on empowerment of women, the State Government has increased the reservation of women in these bodies from 33 percent to 50 percent.

The State's flagship programme Mission Shakti aims at the empowerment of women. It has covered nearly 58 lakh women in rural and urban Odisha and in order to make the women of the State self-sufficient and improve their economic condition, over 5 lakh 36 thousand Self-help Groups have been formed under Mission Shakti Programme. Through different income generating schemes and Bank

loan they have been empowered both socially and economically.

Furthermore, to lessen the physical stress of women at working places, the State Government has provided financial assistance of Rs.10,000 to each Self Help Group for purchasing drudgery reduction equipment. This level of empowerment is critical to the overall prosperity and growth of the state. The skilling process through the State Employment Mission takes up this challenge, creating opportunities at the same time. The following developments deserve noteworthy: (i) 5 Million Women being empowered through the Mission Shakti Self-Help Group movement. (ii) To address the issues of women affected by violence, One Stop Centre is operational at the Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar. 24X7 Toll-free Women Help Line is operational since 8th March 2017 to provide immediate and emergency response to Women affected by violence. (iii) MAMATA scheme has benefitted more than 30.57 lakh women in the State. It is the largest conditional cash transfer (DBT) maternity benefit scheme implemented in the country. (iv) According to 2015-16 NFHS-4, 63.5 per cent women now owning immovable assets like house and/or land jointly or alone which is the highest proportion nationally among all big and progressive states. This figure is only 38 per cent nationally. On counts of women empowerment and cashless revolution, progressive States like Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh were behind Odisha. (v) Biju Kanya Ratna: Taking cognizance of the problem of the declining child sex ratio in the state, particularly in the districts of Dhenkanal, Angul and Ganjam where Child Sex Ratio (CSR) is 877, 889, and 908 respectively which is lower than the all India CSR (918) and all Odisha CSR (941); this programme has been launched since 2016 to sensitize and mobilize the community and all stakeholders on the value of the girl child. The objective is to prohibit gender based sex selection.

### **7. Rural Connectivity:**

To construct bridges for providing all weather rural connectivity Biju Setu Yojana was started in 2010 and has moved fast forward in providing all-weather connectivity to all the villages in the State. The objective is to construct 600 bridges within 3 years with the expenditure of Rs.2085 crores. With the Objective to convert all rural roads to Cement Concrete Roads, the State has currently allocated Rs.1,000 crore for construction of 5,000 kms. of cement concrete roads in rural areas. The state has now 11584 Km of multi lane roads in place of 2234 Km of Two- Lane/ Multi Lane roads in 2000-01, even after transferring its assets of 2118 Km to the National Highways. Single road ratio is reduced to 24.73%

in 2016-17 from 73.92% in 2000-01. In last 17 years 318 Major Bridges have been completed. . As per the latest report of MoRD, GoI, Odisha is leading among all states in the implementation of the PMGSY. Out of total target of 7,000 Km for the year 2017- 18, Odisha has already completed 2911 KM which is highest among all other states. In Last five years 500 bridges have been completed with an expenditure of Rs.1350 crore under Biju Setu Yojana.

### **8. S.C. & S.T. Development:**

Land Rights to the Tribals :Odisha has achieved the rare distinction of distributing land rights to maximum number of tribal families under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 and individual titles to the extent of 4.37 lakh hectares of forest lands have been granted in favour of 324737 forest dwelling tribal families including 17145 most primitive and vulnerable tribal groups(PVTGs). For facilitating residential education to the S.T. & S.C. category students, total 2689 nos. of 100-bedded Hostels have been constructed out of which 2471 nos. of Hostels are meant for the girl students. Stipend/Scholarship of over Rs. 200 crore provided to more than 12 lakh S.C. & S.T students annually. 56 thousand tribal families of 7 backward districts covered under Food Security through OTELP.

The Gopabandhu Grameen Yojana is meant for development of rural infrastructure in the key areas of *sadak, bijli&panān* in the districts not covered under Backward Region Grant Fund. Safe drinking water to provide safe drinking water to 22,984 villages, 8,592 piped water supply projects have been implemented. It has been targeted to supply drinking water to 854 Gram Panchayats by the end of March, 2014. Besides, steps have been taken to facilitate piped water supply to 1048 tribal villages through OTELP.

### **9. Tribal Rights & Upliftment**

Odisha, the Pioneering state in India has distributed 6.11 lakh acres of land to 4.10 lakh Individual Rights title-holders and 2.86 lakh acres of land to 5,900 Community Rights title-holders under the landmark legislation of “The Scheduled Tribes & Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006” as on 2016-17. Odisha is the first state in the country to have granted the status of Gram Sabha to Palli Sabha under this Act, to enable tribal people residing in remote hamlets to file claims for determination of its nature & extent and for further processing. During last 17 years the tribal literacy rate is increased to 52.24 % in 2016-17 from 37.75 % in 2000-01. A total of 1670 residential schools have been constructed in last 17 years. In 2000-

01, there was no residential school for ST & SC in the state. This facility will remove the access related difficulties of 4.6 lakh students of the state. . Under ANWESHA initiative 13,000 ST, SC students are enrolled in private schools to get quality education.

Special attention is being paid for all-round development of backward and underdeveloped regions of the State. For this, State Government has implemented Biju KBK Yojana for undivided Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi districts with a provision of Rs.120 crore and Biju Kondhamal O' Gajapati Yojana implemented for Kondhamal and Gajapati districts from its own resources. Under these schemes, infrastructural development of these regions relating to Electricity, Road and Water has been undertaken.

#### **10. Tourism**

Odisha has always been a tourist's ideal destination. The state has embarked on making this lucrative sector more attractive for visitors, with the launch of the new Tourism Policy. This policy aims at creating more tourism infrastructure that will not only bring in the mega bucks, but also generate employment. There will be ample opportunities for self employment and there are many incentives woven into the fabric of the initiatives to attract investors to the State. The other special actions that the government has taken can be gauged from some projects in certain sectors that it has undertaken.

#### **11. Facing the Fear factor**

The 1999 Super cyclone had virtually spelled doom for the State. Fourteen years since then, another cyclone Phailin, having the potential of similar devastation, hit the coastal districts of the state. But this time, the State was ready. A coordinated evacuation plan was executed with text book precision and nearly a million people were evacuated before the cyclone hit. And then, the world noticed us, the brave people of Odisha. The special representative of UN Secretary General came to Odisha and met the Chief Minister to personally handover an award in recognition of the effort. Now we are on a mission to maximize our preparedness and support other states and countries facing similar calamities by sharing our experiences.

The knowledge of millennia has come to the aid of Odisha. Age-old habits have been found to be sound in scientific base, traditional hospitality has been transformed into huge business ideas in tourism and the immense natural wealth has carried the state forward to new frontiers of the modern world. The Government has been able to

superbly blend tradition with modernity, thereby keeping the interests of the tribals and the downtrodden high in the minds of policy makers.

The United Nations (UN) appreciated Odisha Government's handling of cyclone Phailin. According to Margareta Wahlstrom, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction said that "Today, Odisha is a global leader in disaster management and risk reduction after Phailin Cyclone. During Phailin, the death toll was

Affecting 13.2 million people in 171 blocks in 18 districts of the state. 814 multipurpose cyclone and flood shelters are in line with designs proposed by IIT, Kharagpur. Out of which 516 cyclone shelters and 275 flood shelters are already completed.

The transparency is key to effective governance. Therefore, the State Government with a single-minded determination has been putting in place better mechanisms to infuse transparency into administration. The State was one of the pioneers to implement confiscation of properties of public servants convicted in corruption cases and establish a number of special courts for swift trial of corruption cases. The State has again taken another pioneering initiative with the passing of the Odisha Lokayukta Bill in the State Legislative Assembly. This is going to be an all encompassing mechanism in handling transparency issues in the State. The State also implemented to Right to Services Act 2012 under which citizens are ensured of timely delivery of as many as 63 services of 10 Government Departments. This has ensured a hassle-free provision of services to our citizens.

Travelling around the State, one finds the nature of development work impressive because these are found to be in sync with the ethos and beliefs of the people of the region. Human aspirations are aligned with their roots, and hence it was necessary to address situations in the backdrop of a culture of millennia, not alienating the population with a top-down approach. Odisha is growing, bottom up, towards a modern State, high on productivity and prosperity. The Naveen Patnaik dispensation deserves credit for this.

Inclusive growth, a topic that the state is not deviating from, can be achieved if the current push towards overall growth is maintained. The state has to move ahead with all power and determination and the skill and stewardship of the State's Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik should suffice.

# Inclusive Governance: Demand for Regional Autonomy in India

Deepak Yadav

Inclusive Governance is a system and practice of governance characterized by accountability, responsiveness and integrity among public sector service providers by ensuring gender equality and social inclusion in policies, programs and practice of the Government of India. 'Inclusive Growth' was both the title and the overarching goal of the Eleventh Five Year Plan of India. The key component of our 'strategy of inclusive growth' must be inclusive governance as the means of empowering the disadvantaged, with the aim of enabling them to overcome their poverty. It is the effective empowerment of the, disadvantaged through the effective devolution of functions, finances and functionaries to the representative institutions of local self-government on the principle of subsidiary (which states that anything which can be done at a lower level should be done at that level and no higher level), that will pave the way to the effective implementation of other measures of inclusive growth. These include:

- Stepping up investment in rural areas, in rural infrastructure and agriculture
- Increased credit availability, particularly to farmers and others, and offering them remunerative prices for their crops
- Increased rural employment, including the provision of a unique social safety net in the shape of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme
- Increased public spending on education and health care, including strengthening the midday meal programme and offering scholarships to the needy
- Investment in urban renewal, improving the quality of life for the urban poor
- Empowering the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes, minorities, women and children, socially, economically and educationally

### Inclusive Governance: Demand for Regional Autonomy in India

- Ensuring that, through public investment, the growth process spreads to backward regions and districts of our country. (Aiyer and Tiwari, 1999).

The United Nations Development Programme defines governance as “the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country’s affairs at all levels. Governance comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their political rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.” According to U.N Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Good Governance has eight characteristics:

a) *Participation*: Participation in administration by both men and women is the key cornerstone of good governance. Participation may be direct or indirect. b) *Rule of law*: Good Governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires protection of human rights, independent and impartial police force, and bureaucracy. c) *Transparency*: It means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. Right to Information Act of India plays a very effective role in this regard. d) *Responsiveness*: Good Governance requires that institution and process try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe. e) *Consensus Oriented*: Good Governance requires reaching a broad consensus in a society on what is in the best interest of community and how this can be achieved in a sustainable and prudent manner. f) *Equity and Inclusiveness*: A society’s wellbeing depends on the overall development of its people including women, poor, as well as economically and socially backward people without which real progress of the society cannot be achieved. Their proper representation in the decision making process is very important. g) *Effectiveness and Efficiency*: Good governance means the process and institutions produce results that meet the needs of stake holders while making the best use of resources at their disposal. h) *Accountability*: Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Every governmental system whether it is public or private should be accountable to the people. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and rule of law.

The demand for regional autonomy has been a much debated issue in the Indian democracy for a long period of time. The question of to what extent regional units should be given freedom was discussed at length during Constituent Assembly debates as well. Article 1 of the Indian constitution declares “India that is Bharat shall be union of states”. Indian union was established with incorporating basic features

Deepak Yadav

of both unitary and federal form of governments and thus creating a federal form of government during peace time and converting it in to unitary one at the time of crisis. The success of Indian democracy has been a matter of great debate around the world and also the matter of great curiosity. The successive US presidents while visiting Arabian and African countries never forgets to mention success story of Indian democracy and with the suggestion that despite the adverse circumstances if democracy can flourish in India, it can be practiced anywhere in the world.

To define autonomy, it is the capacity of a rational individual to make an informed, un-coerced decision. In moral and political philosophy, autonomy is often used as the basis for determining moral responsibility and accountability for one's actions, choices, mistakes, failures, etc. One of the best known philosophical theories of autonomy was developed by Kant. For the purposes of this analysis, regional autonomy is "an arrangement aimed at granting a certain degree of self-identification to a group or state that differs from the majority of the population in the state, and yet constitutes the majority in a specific region." (Lustick: 2004:225) The autonomous region typically will take on certain powers previously under the domain of the central government to allow the self-identifying group greater freedom to manage its social structures and available resources. While previously thought to be a facilitating step towards independence, many countries now consider regional autonomy a useful mechanism to accommodate secessionist groups while maintaining the state's territorial integrity. (Lapidoth: 1997) Thus, a poorer democratizing state that lacks a wide range of means and resources for conducting a counter insurgency campaign can utilize regional autonomy to win over the target population and also decrease insurgent violence.

Unity in diversity is the hallmark of Indian democracy. India's federal structure is inspired with the Canadian federation with strong central authority and the weak regional constituent units. The constitution makers while giving central government overriding powers were very much aware about disintegrative forces active at the time of independence in India. They consciously chose to go for a strong centre and weak states so that unity and integrity of nation can be protected.

With twenty nine states and seven union territories after seventy two years of independence, Indian republic is growing stronger. More and more states are now demanding greater autonomy in financial and administrative matters is the ample proof to show that now states are in the position to bear more responsibility. It is because of successful



functioning of Indian democracy, most of separatist demands from Indian union have died down and those who wanted independence are now calling for a separate statehood (e.g. issue of Greater Nagalim by NSCN-IM).

The issue of autonomy changes its connotation in the context of Indian polity and in this socio-political milieu has to be studied in a federal context. Autonomy in the classical sense would mean a community's legitimate, sovereign right to self-determination or self-legislation, unimpeded by any external intervention. However, any attempt to study "autonomy" in the classical sense in the Indian case is bound to lead to conceptual delusions and contradictory conclusions. Autonomy in the Indian case has been primarily used to denote the demands of plural regional-ethno-national identities for a greater degree of self-administration within the larger federal framework of the Indian constitution. The other form of autonomy, which seeks to promote the idea of self-determination outside the purview of the Indian federation, is usually termed secessionist, anti-statist, and anti-national. For a clearer understanding, one could term the former an "integrationist model of autonomy" and the latter a "disintegrationist model of autonomy."

The Indian state was confronted with demands for the reorganization of the states (provinces or federating units) immediately after independence. Upon the recommendation of the States Reorganization Committee (SRC) of 1953, headed by Fazal Ali, the provinces were reorganized on the basis of language. By the 1960s, the provinces seemed to have settled down within the redrawn boundaries. The larger province of Bombay was divided into Marathi-speaking Maharashtra and Gujarati-speaking Gujarat. Punjab was trifurcated into a Punjabi-speaking Punjab, Hindi-speaking Haryana, and Pahari-speaking Himachal Pradesh. The Kannada-speaking areas of Bombay were transferred to the state of Mysore/Karnataka, and similarly, Telugu-speaking areas of the Madras province were transferred to Andhra Pradesh. The linguistic reorganization looked complete and the first phase of reorganization of the states within the Indian union was over.

Before independence, most of India was divided into British-administered provinces and nominally autonomous princely states, which were governed with British advice. After the partition of India, some of these administrative divisions became part of the Dominion of Pakistan, whilst the remaining states and provinces formed the Dominion of India. The colonial system of administration continued until 1956 when the States Reorganization Act abolished the provinces and princely states in favour of new states which were based on language

and ethnicity. Several new states and union territories have been created out of existing states since 1956.

The Bombay Reorganization Act split Bombay State into the linguistic states of Gujarat and Maharashtra on 1 May 1960 (Aggarwal: 1995). Nagaland was created on 1 December 1963. The Punjab Reorganization Act of 1966 created a new Hindi-speaking state of Haryana from the southern districts of Punjab state, transferred the northern districts of Punjab to Himachal Pradesh, and designated a union territory around Chandigarh, the shared capital of Punjab and Haryana. Statehood was conferred upon Himachal Pradesh on 25 January 1971, and Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura. On 21 January 1972 the Kingdom of Sikkim joined the Indian Union as a state on 26 April 1975. In 1987, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram became states on 20 February, followed by Goa on 30 May, while Goa's northern exclaves of Daman and Diu became a separate union territory. Three new states were created in 2000; Chhattisgarh (1 November 2000) was created out of eastern Madhya Pradesh, Uttaranchal (9 November 2000), which was renamed Uttarakhand in 2007, was created out of the mountainous districts of northwest Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand was created out of the southern districts of Bihar on 15 November 2000. The central government has announced the formation of 29<sup>th</sup> state Telangana in 2013.

### **Provisions in the Indian Constitution to Control the States' Autonomy**

- 1) *Article 256* of the constitution states that "Obligation of States and the Union The executive power of every State shall be so exercised as to ensure compliance with the laws made by Parliament and any existing laws which apply in that State, and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of such directions to a State as may appear to the Government of India to be necessary for that purpose. The Indian parliament exercises commanding powers over the state functioning. *Article 248* (Residuary powers of legislation) Parliament has exclusive power to make any law with respect to any matter not enumerated in the Concurrent List or State List.
- 2) The presence of *All India Services* (IAS, IPS, IFS etc.) have ensured uniformity of administration throughout India. But same uniformity has put up serious curtailment on the rights of states. These officers are controlled by the central government but function under the state governments. Many times due to extra protection given to these officers, state governments find it very

difficult to punish them for the deliration of duties. Suspension is the maximum punishment state government can award to these erring officers.

- 3) *Article 352-360* which contains the emergency provisions empowers the President to suspend distribution of powers between centre and states and takeover the administration of a state or states, if he is satisfied that there is threat to Indian union or there is breakdown of constitutional machinery within the state.
- 4) Appointment of *Governors* by the President to supervise the functioning of state governments has been a major bone of contention between union and the units.
- 5) The *Planning commission (NITI Ayog after Jan 1, 2015)* though an extra-constitutional body exercises overriding powers over states in the matter of planning and financial matters. The role of Finance Commission has been reduced by Planning Commission and state governments always complaint for highhandedness of this extra-constitutional body.
- 6) *Article 356* Provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery in State

If the President, on receipt of report from the Governor of the State or otherwise, is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the President may by Proclamation, (a) assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State and all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by the Governor or anybody or authority in the State other than the Legislature of the State; (b) declare that the powers of the Legislature of the State shall be exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament; (c) make such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the president to be necessary or desirable for giving effect to the objects of the Proclamation, including provisions for suspending in whole or in part the operation of any provisions of this constitution relating to anybody or authority in the State Provided that nothing in this clause shall authorize the President to assume to himself any of the powers vested in or exercisable by a High Court, or to suspend in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Constitution relating to High Court.

- 7) *Article 254*: Inconsistency between laws made by Parliament and laws made by the Legislatures of States If any provision of a law made by the Legislature of a State is repugnant to any provision of a law-made by Parliament which Parliament is competent to enact, or to any provision of any existing law with respect to one of the matters enumerated in the Concurrent List, then, subject to the provisions of clause (2), the law made by Parliament, whether passed before or after the law made by the Legislature of such State, or, as the case may be, the existing law, shall prevail and the law made by the Legislature of the state shall, to the extent of the repugnancy, be void
- 8) *Article 285*.The property of the Union shall, save in so far as Parliament may by law otherwise provide, be exempt from all taxes imposed by a State or by any authority within a State.
- 9) *Article-280. Finance Commission (1)* The President shall, within two years from the commencement of this Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of every fifth year or at such earlier time as the President considers necessary, by order constitute a Finance Commission which shall consist of a Chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President. (2) It shall be the duty of the Commission to make recommendations to the President as to (a) the distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under this Chapter and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds; (b) the principles which should govern the grants in aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India;
- 10) *Article 302*. Power of Parliament to impose restrictions on trade, commerce and intercourse Parliament may by law impose such restrictions on the freedom of trade, commerce or intercourse between one State and another or within any part of the territory of India as may be required in the public interest. Any other matter referred to the Commission by the President in the interests of sound finance. The Commission shall determine their procedure and shall have such powers in the performance of their functions as Parliament may by law confer on them.

### **Regions Seeking Statehood in India**

In the 1950s and 1960s, in the wake of the movement for constitutional recognition of Hindi as the national language, there was a lurking

suspicion in the minds of the political elite in the southern states of India that the elite of the northern region' "perceived to be mainly of Aryan racial stock' were intent on subjugating the predominantly Dravidian south through their language policy. The anti-Hindi movement in the south had assumed violent proportions and there were demands for the secession of southern states and establishment of Dravidistan. The Indian state demonstrated remarkable wisdom in accommodating the demands of the southerners and recognized English as an official language along with Hindi.

However, this spirit of accommodation gradually gave way to statist-integrationist zeal and all demands for autonomy were treated with force, leading to complications further down the line. The unwillingness of the state to share its authority with the constituent units was the primary reason for this "siege" attitude. During the 1980s, an increasingly closed and paranoid Indian state adopted a siege mentality when confronted by demands for autonomy, which bordered on secession. The demands for autonomous statehood within the Indian union were also unfavorably received by the central administration.

The 1980s saw the rise of secessionist movements in Punjab, Kashmir, and some of the northeastern states (Nagaland, Manipur, and Tripura). The movements for autonomy in several regions" Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Uttaranchal, and Gorkhaland" also gathered momentum and made their presence felt on the political horizon. The response of the ruling Congress Party under Rajiv Gandhi was to negotiate with the leaders of the more assertive movements. There were a series of accords with the Akali Dal leadership in Punjab, with the All Assam Students' Union (which later became Assam Gana Parishad), and with Gorkha leader Subhas Ghising in 1985. In all these cases, the central government led by the Congress Party seemed accommodating and granted some amount of autonomy to the assertive units. In the case of Jharkhand, the Congress tried to absorb the assertive leadership and thus defuse the movement. There are many more regions in India who are seeking statehood:-

*Delhi:* Delhi also known as the *National Capital Territory of Delhi*, is a metropolitan region that includes the national capital city, New Delhi, and together with the neighboring cities of Baghpat, Gurgaon, Sonipat, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, Greater Noida forms the National Capital Region, with a population of about 22 million residents. The political administration of Delhi more closely resembles that of a state than a union territory, with its own legislature, high court and an executive council of ministers headed by a Chief Minister. New Delhi is jointly

administered by the Union government and the local government of Delhi. The previous National Democratic Alliance government introduced a bill in Parliament in 2003, to grant full statehood to Delhi, but the legislation was not passed.

*Vidarbha:* Vidarbha is a region that comprises the Amravati and Nagpur divisions of eastern Maharashtra. The State Reorganization Act of 1956 placed Vidarbha in Bombay State. Shortly after this, the state reorganisation commission recommended the creation of “Vidarbha state” with Nagpur as the capital, but instead it was included in Maharashtra state, which was formed on 1 May 1960. Support for a separate state of Vidarbha had been expressed by Loknayak Bapuji Aney and Brijlal Biyani Vidarbha. The demand for the creation of a separate state is based on allegations of neglect by the Maharashtra state government. Jambuwantrao Dhote led a popular struggle for Vidarbha statehood in the 1970s. Two politicians, N.K.P. Salve and Vasant Sathe, have led 21st century attempts to bring about a state of Vidarbha.

*Harit Pradesh:* Harit Pradesh is a proposed state, which would comprise 22 districts of Western Uttar Pradesh, currently forming six divisions – Agra, Aligarh, Bareilly, Meerut, Moradabad, and Saharanpur. The main reason for the demand for a separate state is the perceived cultural and economical differences between eastern and western Uttar Pradesh, in that the western part resembles Haryana and Rajasthan more than it does eastern Uttar Pradesh. The most prominent advocate for the creation of the new state is Ajit Singh, the leader of the Rashtriya Lok Dal party. (The Hindu. 26 December, 2009). Mayawati also supported the formation of Harit Pradesh in December 2009. The then ruling Samajwadi Party under the leadership Akhilesh Yadav opposed any division of the state.

*Purvanchal:* Purvanchal is a geographic region of north-central India, which comprises the eastern end of Uttar Pradesh state. It is bounded by Nepal to the north, Bihar state to the east, Bagelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh state to the south, the Awadh region of Uttar Pradesh to the west. Purvanchal comprises three divisions – Awadhi region in the west, Bhojpuri region in the east and the Baghelkhand region in the south. The most commonly spoken language in Purvanchal is Bhojpuri. Purvanchal area is represented by 23 Members of Parliament to the lower house of Indian Parliament, and 117 legislators in the 403 member Uttar Pradesh state assembly or Vidhan Sabha. Districts- Azamgarh, Ballia, Chandauli, Deoria, Ghazipur, Gorakhpur, Jaunpur, Kushinagar, Maharajganj, Mau, Mirzapur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Siddharth Nagar, Varanasi. (The Hindu, 7 March 2005).

*Bundelkhand:* The Bundelkhand region of central India encompasses twelve districts of northern Madhya Pradesh (MP) and five districts of southern Uttar Pradesh. The area once known in history as Bundelkhand is identified with the districts of Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalaun, Hamirpur, Banda, and Mahoba in Uttar Pradesh, Sagar, Chattarpur, Tikamgarh, Panna, and Damoh in Madhya Pradesh and parts of Gwalior, Datia, Shivpuri, and Chanderi. It is located in the central Hindi belt, south of the Yamuna River, between the fertile Gangetic plain stretching across northern UP and the highlands of central MP. This region has recently witnessed a movement for the recognition of the separate state of Bundelkhand led by Raja Bundela, a film actor.

*Gorkhaland:* Gorkhaland was granted autonomous council status in August 1985. However, in the wake of the recent formation of three new states, the Gorkhas have renewed demands for a separate state for the Gorkha people, comprising parts of the hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong, and Kalimpong. The Gorkha National Liberation Front and the Gorkhaland United Front have recently marked the renewal of their agitation for Gorkhaland with a series of strikes.

*Bodoland:* Several Bodo insurgent groups have been working since the 1960s for goals that range from the establishment of a Bodo autonomous council, to a separate Bodo state within India, to total independence from India. The Bodos were granted an autonomous council in February 1993, but were unsatisfied with the amount of autonomy in this arrangement and demanded a separate state, which soon led to demands for “a sovereign Bodoland.” The Bodos have taken to violence to drive their points home. Their violent expulsion of non-Bodos from the region has resulted in the displacement of more than 87,000 ethnic Santhals, and a smaller number of Bengalis and Nepalis have been displaced by the violent conflict between Bodo insurgents and non-Bodos in western Assam. (Hinduonnet.com.) Ethnic tension is rife in Assam, which is home to many ethnic groups. Some groups, such as the Assamese and Bodos, have lived in the region for many centuries. Others, including Bengalis, Santhals, and ethnic Nepalese, migrated there during the 1800.

*Kamtapur:* The movement for creating a separate state of Kamtapur from the state of West Bengal is being spearheaded by the Koch-Rajbangshis, who mainly inhabit areas in north Bengal and parts of Assam. Besides statehood, they are also demanding the inclusion of the Kamtapuri language in the Eighth Schedule and the propagation of the Kamtapuri language and culture through state-controlled radio and television. The two organizations taking the lead in this field are the Kamtapur Peoples’ Party (KPP) and the Kamtapur Liberation

Organization (KLO). The former is more moderate; yet its leader, Atul Roy, reportedly said recently: “We will not abandon our demand for statehood, and if Rajbongshi mothers have to lose their sons for achieving the goal of statehood, so be it.” (The Telegraph. 14 October 2010.)

*Vindhya Pradesh:* Vindhya Pradesh was a former state in central India, named after the Vindhya Range. The state covered an area of 61,130 km<sup>2</sup> (23,600 sq mi) and was created in 1948 by the merger of 34 princely states in the eastern part of the former Central India Agency. It was merged into Madhya Pradesh in 1956, following the States Reorganization Act. In 2000, Srinivas Tiwari, ex-speaker of the Madhya Pradesh assembly, called for nine districts to be separated from Madhya Pradesh to create a new state of Vindhya Pradesh, although this was rejected by the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. (Bhattacharyya: 1977).

*Saurashtra:* Saurashtra was formed by union of different princely states and Kutch was a separate princely state which became border state after independence of India. Saurashtra and Kutch were Part-B and Part-C states of India respectively. Both were separate states till 1956 and later merged with Bombay state following the States Reorganization Act. They became part of Gujarat state after bifurcation of Bombay state on May 1, 1960 following Mahagujarat Movement. Some people demand return of statehood to Saurashtra and Kutch citing slow development of the regions. (<http://daily.bhaskar.com>).

*Mithila:* Mithila is proposed to cover the Maithili speaking regions of Bihar and Jharkhand. There are twenty-four Maithili-speaking districts in Bihar: Araria, Banka, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, East Champaran, Jamui, Katihar, Khagaria, Kishanganj, Lakhisarai, Madhepura, Madhubani, Monghyr, Muzaffarpur, Purnea, Saharasa, Samastipur, Sheikhpura, Sheohar, Sitamarhi, Supaul, Vaishali, and West Champaran. There are six Maithili-speaking districts in Jharkhand: Deoghar, Dumka, godda, Jamtara, Pakaur, and Sahebganj. (The Indian Express, 14 April 2004.)

*Coorg:* The Kodagu Rajya Mukti Morcha (KRMM), which roughly translated means the Movement for the Liberation of the State of Kodagu, is an organization led by N. U. Nachappa that has campaigned for a separate state of Coorg to be carved out of the present state of Karnataka. The declaration by Deve Gowda, the then prime minister of India, in 1996 that Uttarakhand would soon be granted statehood, gave a further boost to this movement. The Kodagu or Coorg district is the smallest district in the southwest of the Karnataka state. Until its



amalgamation into the Kannada state of Mysore (now Karnataka) on linguistic grounds following the recommendation of the States Reorganization Commission, the Coorg functioned as a Part “C” state from January 1952 to 1 November 1956 “slightly less than five years. The KRMM sponsored the “Madikeri Declaration” of 22 November 1956, projected as the Cauveryland charter of rights, followed soon after the “Gowda Declaration,” which formed the framework and the inspiration for the KRMM to lead Coorg to the “liberation of Kodagu and its creation as a separate Ethnic State.” The KRMM was later known as the Coorg National Council (CNC) with Nachappa as its secretary-general. The CNC also has a web site to promote its cause.

*Kosal:* The Kosal region is located in Odisha state, between 19° 37'- 23° N latitude and 82° 28'- 85° 22' E longitudes comprising the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Debagarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Sonapur, Boudh, Bolangir, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Athmallik subdivision of Angul district and Kashipur block of Rayagada district. It is surrounded by Jharkhand state on the north, on the east by the dist of Keonjhar, Angul and Kandhamal; on the south by Rayagada, Koraput and on the west by Chhattisgarh state. This geographical area comes under the Western Odisha Development Council.

*Tulu Nadu:* Tulu Nadu is a region on the border between the states of Karnataka and Kerala in southern India. The demand for a separate state is based on a distinct culture and language (Tulu, which does not have official status), and neglect of the region by the two state governments. (The Hindu 13 August 2006.) To counter these demands and accusations, the Karnataka and Kerala state governments have created the *Tulu Sahitya Academy* to preserve and promote Tuluva culture. The proposed state would comprise three existing districts; Dakshina Kannada and Udupi in Karnataka, and Kasaragod in Kerala.

## Summing Up

The demand for more states is the ample proof of the success and vibrancy of the Indian democracy. Despite the adverse circumstances and brief experience of forceful imposition of emergency by Indira Gandhi, Indian democracy has become mature enough after seventy two years of independence to cater the needs of demands for new states. The system of democracy that is practiced in many of the developing and underdeveloped societies in the Third World puts more emphasis on the mechanism of democratic governance than on values of democracy and liberalism. The consequent calculus of electoral politics has led to the growth of immensely stratified entrepreneurial elite,

especially in multicultural/pluralist societies like India, who have sought to build their constituencies on ever-proliferating ethno cultural identities. This has fractured the existing civil society and ruptured the uniting links and necessitated the introduction of fresh and refined bonds of unity. The state with its inertial status-quo-ism has failed to take the lead by redefining its relations of power with the constituent units. This has led to systemic violence. The Indian federation has temperamentally behaved as a “union” and not a “federation” .However, the leadership in the country has to take care to adopt federal principles to judge such cases of autonomy and gradually devolve powers (especially financial powers) to the units if it is to contain such ethno cultural assertions. The basis for the creation of new states should be based on administrative efficiency and sustenance of the region.

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# Good Governance and Indian Democracy

Nirmal Jindal

The concept of good governance is very commonly used in the modern political systems. The word governance suggests the process of decision making and decision implementation. It involves various formal and informal actors like government and non governmental actors that are instrumental in policy making and implementation of the decisions and policies of the government. According to Keohane and Nye, "Governance implies the processes and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restrain the collective activities of a group. Government is the subset that acts with authority and creates formal obligations. Governance need not necessarily be conducted by governments. Private firms, associations of firms, non governmental organizations and associations of NGOs all engage in it, often with governmental bodies, to create governance; sometimes without governmental bodies."<sup>1</sup> For instance in urban areas various actors like media, lobbyists, international donors, civil society etc play significant roles in influencing decision making. Similarly in rural areas various actors like landlords, farmers associations, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders etc play significant roles. According to UN Secretary General, Koffi Anan, Good governance is ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law, strengthening democracy, promoting transparency and capacity in public administration. He considered good governance as the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development. The World Bank report (1992) entitled 'Governance and development' defined good governance the manner of governance in which power is exercised in management of a country's economic and social resources for development. In other words, the aim of good governance is to develop opportunities to eliminate poverty and inequality in the society. It can be defined as an instrument of social justice by capacitating and empowering people to be able to avail opportunities of state services.

In the fast globalising world, the issue of good governance has become quite critical. The people from the countries of the global south with

massive illiteracy and poverty are unable to be assimilated to the process of development. In the age of globalisation world market forces are primarily concerned with growth and the issue of inequality or the benefit of the people on the margins is not their concern. The main challenge in neo-liberal system today is how to achieve general and social good without sacrificing growth. In this regard it is argued that the political leaders need to focus on capacity building for inclusive development. Good governance can be ensured by effective leadership by initiating capacity building programmes for inclusive development. In modern times the role of Civil society, NGO's, trade unions, cooperatives etc play a significant role to influence government policies for inclusive development and social good. Though civil society is playing an important role for the cause of good governance, the state is facing a serious challenge about how to maintain balance between the market, civil society and government. The modern state acts not only as a facilitator for the development programs but works in coordination with the market and the civil society. Therefore, large sections of society still get marginalised in the modern state as the task of good governance faces serious challenges from diverse sources. In this context , the paper highlights the meaning of good governance; the actions taken in this regard and the challenges to achieve the objective of good governance. The significance of e-governance for more efficient and accountable behaviour of the state is also discussed in this regard.

### **Good governance in Indian traditional wisdom:**

The idea of good governance though appears to be new, it is as old as human civilization. The idea of good governance is reflected and rooted in Indian traditional wisdom. The terms like 'Ram Rajya' or Gandhian concept of 'Antyodaya' are reminders of states responsibility for the social good. In Raj Dharma the rule or code of conduct was considered superior to the will of the ruler. Dharma meant the duty of the ruler towards the ruled. The ruler had to govern as per the norms or code of laws. In great epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, the rulers abided by the principles of good governance. In Kautilya's Arthashastra also welfare of people and economic development was given the top priority in the seven elements of state power. The protection, welfare and prosperity of people were considered most significant for state security. Kautilya's idea of good governance was based on the fundamental principles of accountability and justice.<sup>2</sup> In the early period of Indian political history most of the rules were followed as suggested by the international institutions in contemporary times. According to the United

Nations good governance has eight characteristics, “It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimised, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of some of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the concept of good governance is neither new nor western as it had been present in the traditional Indian wisdom.

### **Democratic -secular politics -means of good governance:**

After independence India adopted a democratic secular system and reflected most of the characteristics mentioned in the UN report. India aimed at good governance due to the reason that after independence welfare state was perceived as a guarantor of social justice and orderly society. The preamble of the constitution of India focuses on moral and human values and inclusiveness of all in the governance of the country. Besides the directive principles of state policy, sixth and seventh schedules included various provisions for equity and inclusiveness. However, in modern state, Good governance incorporates not only the institutions of governance but also its legal and regulatory mechanisms, role of judiciary, civil society as well as cultural values of people. Good governance depends on the capacity of the government to represent the interest of the people by developing policies to represent their interest. Therefore, governance includes not only policies of sovereignty but also to achieve social good by focusing on human security. At the time of independence India was encountering the problem of hunger, disease, poverty, inequality, therefore the freedom fighters had a dream of an India where all such problems would be eliminated and people would be empowered. The good governance in our national leaders perspective aimed at protecting and serving their citizens. The aim was not only territorial security but also human / individual security. Gandhi ji argued that swaraj or independence will be meaningless for poor and hungry in independent India. In this regard, Gandhi ji mentioned that “when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?”<sup>4</sup> The Indian leaders at the time of independence therefore aimed at the upliftment of the people at the grassroot level.

### **Good governance a unique experiment:**

India, after independence introduced democratic system for free and open participation in the political process and ensured civil liberties to all the citizens of the country. It was ensured that all political leaders have to be accountable to the government and policy makers and civil servants be guided by the professional ethics. The freedom of press and independent judiciary are also critical to the aspect of good governance. After independence though India introduced political democracy with a mixed economy. The rule of law became the supreme and court became the guardian of the law of the land. As India was a diverse and heterogeneous nation, constitution introduced equal law for all irrespective of caste, creed, colour, sex, religion or any other difference. Despite partition of the country on the basis of religion, India adopted secular political democracy. Besides, the Constitution granted special rights to some minorities. For instance the religious minorities were allowed to have their own educational system. The minorities were also allowed to use their religious practices in regard to their matters of marriage and inheritance of property. Though Indian state adopted secularism and did not have its own religion, the factors of caste and religion had been used for the political purposes. Due to special cultural rights to different cultural communities, the social cohesiveness started depleting and never developed as expected by the constitution makers. The rise of suspicion, greed, hatred, prejudices, rivalries, reflected low social capital. These were also characterised as appeasement policy for minorities to seek their support in elections. It led to politicisation of factors like religion and caste. Gradually communalism and sectarianism became quite prominent in national politics. The political authorities also appeared less sensitive to criminalisation of politics due to the role of caste and religion in electoral politics.

Rajni Kothari argued that political parties and administrative systems have failed to mediate social conflicts and restore faith in the democratic process among the people. According to him, "The result has not just been political instability, but also a tendency to engage in activities that fragment and destabilise the social order. The conflicts include social violence, the rise of negativist identities (communal and otherwise), and the growth of doctrines of exclusion and dispensability according to which entire populations are dismissed as unwanted." (Rethinking Democracy, 2005) In Indian electoral politics, the leaders/ politicians tend to use social cleavages in order to win votes which has been proved quite detrimental to Indian democratic

structures. Identity politics in India has become a serious challenge to the country's well-being. The Feminist, LGBTQ+, Dalit movements are all examples of identity politics.

In *Rethinking Democracy*, Rajni Kothari argued that democracy has failed to achieve its objective of human emancipation and survives merely as a dream. He proposed an alternative model of a decentralized, participatory and emancipatory democracy.<sup>5</sup> Bidyut Chakrabarty in his book *Indian Politics and Society since independence* talks about the influence of sociological factors on Indian politics.<sup>6</sup>

The sheer size and population of India puts it right beside the great players in the world. From one party system as coined by Rajni Kothari to a by-party system and multi regional party system India has come a long way in its experiments with democracy. This criticism comes from a very valid concern as mentioned by Suhas Palshikar, that Indian state as envisioned by its makers was to be a democratic state and a welfare state. This means that democracy could come about only by ensuring the welfare of all. In pursuance of which, the noble experiment of democracy challenges its very premises in the classical sense of the word which means individual freedom and protecting Individuality.<sup>7</sup> Liberal Socialists like Minnoo Masani who argue that socio-economic change cannot take place without an all powerful state fall prey to the idea that it is the state's responsibility to first equalize the society and only then democratic models can function. In most of the western countries one of the causes of their development was that they were homogenous societies. In these countries, the state did not encounter the problem of establishing democracy in a heterogeneous framework as in India. Prof. Ashutosh Varshney, argued that India's experience at welfare policies are particularly different from the west because in West, pro-market reforms were not met with severe criticism for three reasons, which are, "universal suffrage came to most western democracies only after the Industrial Revolution, which meant that the poor got the right to vote only after those societies had become relatively rich; a welfare state has attended to the needs of low-income segments of the population; and the educated and the wealthy have tended to vote more than the poor."<sup>8</sup> But in India, we adopted universal adult franchise much before a modern industrialised economy began and statistics show that the poor tend to vote much more in comparison to a reluctant upper-rich class which makes them the most important voting portion and this makes pro-market reforms to be a mere political tool at the hands of the political parties. India's experience is also different from the East Asian countries, where countries like: South Korea and Taiwan

Nirmal Jindal

adopted adult franchises only as late as the 1980s whereas other economies like that of China and Singapore are yet to become liberal democracies. Moreover these societies were homogenous societies. Fukuyama (1995) suggested that “Cultural characteristic fosters trust in societies and it is societies that are marked by trust that are industrialised and economically developed” Other societies low on trust quickly fall in the trap of the state intervention which can be proved detrimental to the development. These societies development is hampered by extreme rules, contracts, litigations and bureaucratic involvement. The individual cooperation to pursue joint welfare is the main challenge in these heterogeneous societies.

The emergence of coalition government has further increased the use of sectarian factors in Indian politics. Due to the evolution of criminalisation and communalisation of politics, the role of civil society, media and judiciary has become quite critical in Indian political system. Though free and fair elections had been introduced to choose the representatives of people and to achieve the purpose of good governance but Indian politics in last few years defeated the purpose of elections due to the use of caste and religion in Indian politics. Often the society witness sectarian conflicts which hampers the execution of secular values and slows down the process of personal accomplishments and social justice.

After independence Indian government also granted special rights to some of the states in order to generate confidence in the public of those states. However, the experiment in Kashmir and North East failed due to the rise of insurgencies in these states. In Kashmir the insurgencies and terrorism posed serious threat to the life and property of Kashmiris and about five lakh Kashmiri Hindus had been driven out of valley which was a serious blow to the secular values of the political system. Such insurgencies seriously threatened the Indian objective of good governance.

### **State and administration:**

The challenges that India faces domestically are varied. One is the Indian state itself. The core functions of a modern state range from being a regulatory state, law and order state, public good state. Indian bureaucracy was introduced primarily to provide necessary services to the state. These bureaucrats exercised power in the interest of the state and remained free from the concern of local interest. The national orientation and professional ethos in bureaucracy were required for



the industrial development strategy in the second and third five years plan. However, bureaucracy could not manage public undertakings well. Rather bureaucracy enabled politicians to appropriate administration to their partisan and personal interests. Therefore, Indian administrative system also failed to work for social and economic development objectives. The shift from core values of freedom movement and the emergence of 'inspector raj' and 'licence raj' hampered the process of development and contributed to the corrupt practices. Rampant corruption and favouritism surrounds bureaucratic allocations and government machinery has been used to serve personal interests. The state became a predatory state instead of playing the role of a development state in which resources are invested for the good of the society as a whole. The misallocation of resources, imposition of regulations, control on economy, bureaucratic corruption for investment licence and government contracts had hampered the process of development. The official corruption, unnecessary delay in providing justice, mindset of the people, and complex procedure of administration, rigidities, and complexity and over centralisation of the administrative system have rendered even the best of schemes ineffective. Bureaucracy is called the engine of good governance. The government implemented different welfare policies like PDS, NRHM, MGNREGA, Prime Minister's JAN DHAN YOJANA, etc. which are very influential for good governance. But because of corruption practices among our bureaucrats our Government cannot achieve success in implementation of these programmes.<sup>9</sup> The "engine of good governance" is bureaucracy should be people oriented and duty bound without which it is not possible to establish good governance in real sense of the term. Corruption should be eliminated from lower to the upper level of administration without which the concept of good governance become meaningless.<sup>10</sup>

In order to increase transparency and increase efficiency of administrators, capacity building programmes need to be organised. It will develop organisational culture which depends on good leadership. The proper utilisation of funds for development purposes requires absolute transparency in the system which can be achieved to some extent by e-governance and also by use of newly introduced methods like RTIs etc. The reason for bureaucratic domination and corruption is the lack of awareness and assertiveness on the part of the people caused by the illiteracy and lack of knowledge about their own rights. The political awakening and better organisation of social groups can also force the government to respond to their expectations and demands adequately.<sup>11</sup> In the neo-liberal world the emphasis is on building state capacities enhancing technical and professional capabilities of the

bureaucrats. There is also a need for new institutions, organisations to promote greater participation of people in the governance. Good governance can be ensured by institutional pluralism and decentralisation of power. The 73rd and 74th amendments sought to advance the concept of local self government. The role of panchayats and cooperatives was gradually enhanced to decentralise the power and better functioning of the system. However the functioning of these organisations like panchayats and communities is hampered due to the lack of literacy, awareness, backwardness and social conflicts. The state can play a significant role in increasing the effective functioning of these local units. The second administrative reform Commission laid stress on establishment of an ombudsman type of institution to make administration more accountable towards the people. On 15 June 2005 the parliament passed the historic Right to Information Act to increase administration's accountability. India's present PM Modi emphasized the significance of inclusive, transparent and responsive good governance.

In order to strengthen democracy by empowering civil society and countering bureaucratic influence and power, institutional pluralism needs to be encouraged. The institutional mechanisms need to be introduced to make opportunities accessible to all the people at the grass root level. The cooperatives, joint committees between users associations are instrumental in facilitating collective decision making. These require legal and structural changes to improve the efforts towards good governance.

### **Shift from welfare to empowerment:**

In the changed circumstances of neo-liberal economies, the need for strong civil society is felt. Civil society can be strengthened by financial, legal and institutional empowerment of people. They need institutions which give them power to decide and legal rights to manage their enterprises. There is need for new institutions to serve the interest of participation and development of people. The introduction of information and communication technology can further boost the efficient functioning of the system and increase transparency. The local communities and local agencies can also be introduced to manage their affairs and resources. Macro level institutions will also increase constitutional order in the societies.

Education is perceived as an essential tool for socio-economic development by empowering youth. Educating the nation was not just

about utilising human capital but also transforming the norms (role played by gender, caste and class location of a student who wishes to pursue a course of her choice in determining her ability to do the same) and structures attached to primary and higher education. Due to illiteracy, people are still victims of superstitions and backwardness and also ignorant of their rights and legal aid available to them. Nor do they have the capacity to seek justice. The costly and long procedures further discourage people to fight for their rights. The courts are also unable to protect the life and liberty of people granted by the rule of law. Sometimes courts are misused also. For instance large numbers of cases of Public interest litigations (PIL) are failed in court. The PILs are introduced for defending the interest of the deprived whereas it is used primarily for the purpose of settling scores and seeking publicity.

The empowerment of the people by education, health and property is perceived to be one of the ways of development and elimination of poverty. Mahbub Ul Haq in his UNDP (1992) report had clearly emphasised the necessity of health and education for people of the global south and also women empowerment in order to deal with the problem of over population explosion and environment pollution. India being a country of youth needs to make use of its demographic dividend by people empowerment and killing its youth. The people empowerment by Human resource development and capacity building have been perceived as the main tools for inclusive development leading to social equality. The government introduced various programs and schemes for marginalised sections of the society by making public funds available to them for their development. The modern state acts not only as a facilitator for the development programs but works in coordination with the market and the civil society. Consequently, various micro financing institutions like SEWA in Gujrat and self help groups in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu functioned quite successfully and people were benefited immensely by such schemes.<sup>12</sup>

The state affirmative action for marginalised sections like SC & ST people was also viewed as one of the tools of good governance. However, after the Mandal Commission in 1990, the other backward classes were also included in the preferential policies of the governmental employment scheme. Earlier the government schemes recognised only the social backwardness and not the economic backwardness. Therefore, people already uplifted sometimes continue to avail the preferential government benefits. Whereas, others on the margins continue to be poor and backward. In 1972, Indira Sawhney and others vs Union of India and others decided to exclude the socially advanced persons (the

creamy layer) from OBC. Therefore, as per the judgement, the children of people holding eminent positions in government and rich farmers eligible for reservation in services. The children of family having income of RS 2.5 lakh per annum are not eligible for reservation in services.<sup>13</sup> Apart from affirmative action for backward classes, the government introduced special programmes for upliftment of women. The role of women in panchayats and local governance has increased remarkably in the last few years.

#### **E. Governance:**

In changed times, the modern state faces twin challenges: providing quality service delivery and transforming its own administrative structures, thereby making it more accountable and transparent so that fruits and outcomes are distributed among beneficiaries in just and equitable way. In this regard, e-governance can act as a catalyst in ensuring equitable access to public services and the benefit of economic growth to all. E governance will be contributory in transforming government functions and delivery mechanism. It will also strengthen good governance by promoting transparency and accountability in government through proliferation of ICT in management and operations which will opportunities for citizens to be more actively involved in the policy- and decision making process of the government. E-governance can lead to end of corruption. The broader and quicker dissemination of information can help in empowering citizens and facilitate informed decision making. The increased transparency and accountability among government leaders can lead to effective governance. E-governance can be beneficial in many ways: it can increase government productivity; restrain corruption; cost savings in delivering social goods; improve life of disadvantaged communities by facilitating their participation in the political process and delivering much needed public goods and services. Information and communication Technologies (ICT) can also be used in the service sector, education, transportation, medicine and shopping etc. It can also be useful in curbing corruption, inefficiency, mismanagement, poor governance and business stagnation and so on.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Conclusion:**

The issue of good governance on the one hand is facing challenges due to the emerging new problems like women empowerment, demand for empowerment of socially and economically backward people, environment security sustainable development, challenges of globalisation and liberalisation as well as the speedy changes in science and technology. On the other hand and the demand for good governance

is constantly rising due to the political awakening among all sections of society including both prosperous and disadvantaged groups. The result is that people have become more politically aware, more assertive, better organized and more impatient with other social groups and with governments that do not respond adequately to their rising expectations and demands'.<sup>15</sup> The decentralisation of power, reformation and capacity building at the administrative organisations, human resource development programs, and move towards efficiency and transparency by e-governance can lead towards inclusive and equitable development. Moreover, in countries like India the vocational skills and rural development focusing on the agricultural sector can increase the employment opportunities for youth. As 80% of the population lives in villages, elimination of poverty in the villages can contribute significantly in addressing the challenge of poverty elimination and inclusive development in India.

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Nirmal Jindal

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# Good Governance and Grass Root Democracy: Some Musings on the Panchayati Raj System in the State of Kerala

Sabu Thomas

## Introduction

The term governance is widely used in the modern vocabulary of political science (Boyte, 2005). The use of the term signifies a paradigm shift in the outlook of political theory towards a people oriented and participatory model of administration of public affairs. Earlier the term government was well accepted as the synonym of power deployment and diffusion. But in the modern society, where hegemonies were rejected and public sphere and civil society notions challenged the authority, automatic power diffusion in horizontal plane became imminent. With the advent of complex society, individual actions became irrelevant in the face of new set of issues, which required collective choices. Further the 'hollowing of state capacity' made dents on the 'Government' claim to give way to 'Governance' (Crozier, 2010). The emergence of 'critical citizens' (Norris, 1999) also demanded new patterns of governance. Political scientists who were engaged in studying 'who gets, what, when and how' were forced to reflect upon new themes. The new themes included 'why Americans hate politics' (Dionne, 1991), the vanishing vote (Patterson, 2002), the decline of the public (Marquand, 2004) and disaffected democracies (Pharr & Putnam, 2000). In this context Anderson (2010) defines a molecular democracy which incidentally changed the citizen- government relations. Molecular democracy assures more intimate and personal governance solutions that may extend even to the peripheries of society.

The term 'governance' suggests that government is no more an authoritarian controller, rowing and leading the society, but a co-operative steer-man, helping for safe voyage and anchorage for the civil society<sup>1</sup>. The term governance accommodates formal and informal structures in the decision-making process. Government is only one of

the actors in the process, leaving larger room for civil society and its institutions. The governance theme is associated with good governance which implies participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive governance which follows the rule of law.

Osborne & Gaebler (1992) are of the opinion that governance is about 'reinventing' government functions rather than refutation and revolutionisation and it is more or less people oriented than system-centric<sup>2</sup>. Generally, it is defined as the political direction and control exercised over the actions of the members, citizens or inhabitants of communities, societies and states<sup>3</sup>. The World bank links governance with good governance. World Bank also developed six indicators for good governance, named Kaufmann-Kraay-Mastruzzi Worldwide Governance Indicators and they include voice and accountability, Political Stability and Lack of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law and Control of Corruption<sup>4</sup>

### **Good Governance and Decentralization**

Good governance has become a cream theme of modern political debates. It suggests larger interactions between state and society as a key ingredient of modernity. There should be evident power devolutions and entitlements that reaches to the deep grass roots. As such every political system boast about decentralized structures and procedures in governance environments. They also eagerly accommodate these structures into their constitutional system. By the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments, the government of India incorporated the Panchayati raj system in the constitutional scheme. However, the implementation the scheme had a haphazard trajectory. Even after the amendments, many states are yet to move into the realization of the decentralization dream.

Kerala is one of the earliest states to assimilate the decentralization spirit and the result is the empowerment of local self-government in the length and breadth of the state. The state government was generous enough to create an autonomous sphere of decentralization and this move was further accelerated with the peoples planning programme. Grama Sabhas were conducted, election held, plans prepared and tax heads are ever increasing. The political action in the decentralized structures is also showing vibrancy with the mainstream political parties shifting their orientations in the grassroots. Local government institutions are strengthened with more and more powers. Incidentally



the Kerala model of decentralization was projected as one of the major pillars of the Kerala model of development.

The theme of decentralization is strongly aligned with good governance. This needs moving further from the formal institutions and legal structures. The civil society elements are to be incorporated in the process of decentralization. According to Mahatma Gandhi, these villages were to be primary units of decision making. It is not only another unit of administration rather the real power fulcrum of the national political system. The village Panchayats are supposed to be village republics with a capacity to maintain local life and economy. It was also conceived as an alternate economic system to counter the inequality and injustice in the society.

However, the implementation of Panchayati raj system in the state is much oriented toward creating structures and offices. Panchayati raj system is strengthened at the cost of Grama sabha. The political potentials of the Grama Sabha is almost a forgotten story. There are routine Grama Sabha meetings and routine discussions. But these institutions were almost chained to the mandatory provisions and failed to become an active political space. At times the growth of grass root organisations were much obstructed by the long shadow of local government institutions and the surrounding politics. It is also observed that the local political structures are yet to be decentralized and they act as an extension of national or state political sphere.

### **Democracy, Decentralization, and the State**

Democracy is well accepted by most of the political systems in the world as a sustainable governance theme. However, there are different notions about the operation of democracy which varies from the Hellenic model to the neo-liberal competitive model. Democracy is founded on the principles of public participation and engagements. It suggests larger interactions between state and society as a key ingredient of modernity. There should be evident power devolutions and entitlements that reaches to the deep grass roots. This devolution is structured on the assumption that decentralization will work as a guarantee for individual political entitlements. Once individual democratic political entitlements are assured the, citizen will take over the role of active participants in the decision-making process. This in turn positively contribute to the quality and quantity of democracy.

The global acceptance of democracy as a viable political system was met with many challenges. Many of these challenges are inbuilt

deficiencies of democracy itself and were to be dealt with political solutions. The challenges include absence of democratic awareness, absence of venues of interactions, shortage of democratic services, absence of confidence, absence of democratic connectivity etc. In the long run there is also erosion of public values that held people attached to their systems. Patterson (2002) argues that generational replacement is a major concern for erosion of democratic participation. The new entrants to the arena of politics is well informed and well educated on the theme of democracy, but still the ascendancy of the private over the public reduced the public motivations to endorse democracy as a part of life. Pattersons argument can also be validated in the context of globalization and its demand for competition, consumerism and consumptions. The deepening of capitalist disciplinary logics into the social fabric (Dowling & Harvie,2014) also narrows down the state choices, particularly in social reproduction. The burdens are eventually transferred to the home and society. The ideas of redistribution or democratization were also not sufficient to effectively address these concerns. The next step is democratic inclusions (Manor, 2004).The system should develop capacities of accommodation and toleration so as to admit larger voices of the society including the peripheries. The elitist version of democracy should be replaced with a deliberative model with more thrust on the grassroot population and institutions. With this in mind, many governments in developing countries have undertaken political reforms which include development of new policies, institutions, and strategies to promote the empowerment and inclusion of ordinary people, especially the poor. The inclusion project is not limited to the participation and mobilization but also aligned with a larger proposal for capacity enhancement for and their collective action.

The decentralization movement is a bigger political project,that moves beyond increasing voting percentages or multiplying political recruitments. It brings larger legitimacy and acceptance to the government systems and public policies. Government gets multiple access points to its constituencies and can operate with enhanced efficiency, economy, and effectiveness.

The democratic advantage of decentralization is beyond the conventional engagements and participation and extends to larger individual freedom and personal flexibility that emanates from lesser centralized monitoring and control (Best & Krueger, 2011). Individual rights and liberties seem to be more secured and extended by the association of communities and neighbourhoods. The 'man-in-community' is a closer ally of the 'pervasive state'. Here pervasive state

is to be taken as the antithesis of the deep-state. Pervasive state operates in the context of consensus and co-habitations. Thus, it needs pervasive social structures and emotional structures. The argument is that the decentralization and the resultant 'man-in-community' establishes smooth democratic transitions in a given society.

Development of social capital is another fundamental issue in the operationalization of democracy. Social capital is a dear theme for modern sociologists. It denotes the social relations and social connectivity. It operates through social networks. According to Robert Putnam social capital is the, "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit". The resultant trust and cooperation becomes a significant tool in poverty alleviation and local development. It also create active spaces for social engagements and high volume democratic transitions. Further there is positive impact on economic performance and growth (John & Chathukulam, 2002).

*"It has also been found that the discourse on social capital, by not recognizing the conflict-oriented notions such as power, class and gender, among others, provides a neutral discursive space in which interests of all hues can communicate. High stocks of social capital, it is claimed, will lead to active civic engagement and the rise of an active civil society. Civil society high-lights the role of interest groups, social movements, organized private non-profit, self-governing, and voluntary agencies, which occupy or create social space beyond the full control of the state apparatus" (John & Chathukulam, 2002:1940).*

In the development of social capital, local communities can play a significant role. The local communities provide strong affinities and lasting social bonds. These affinities and bonds in turn provide effective democratic interactions and better life situations. The decentralization thus boosts social capital formation and provide a fertile ground for democratic action.

### **Decentralization: Kerala Experience**

The state of Kerala occupies a special position in the national developmental scenario. The state has many unparalleled achievements in human development. The state secured a unique position in the field of education, health, democratic initiatives, decentralization, and public

action (Tharamangalam,1998; Heller, Harilal, & Chauduri, 2007, Thomas & Parayil,2008).Kerala has a literacy rate comparable with the literacy rate of many advanced countries. In the case of health indicators like infant mortality , maternal mortality and life expectancy, the achievements of the state are above national averages and also at par with developed regions of the world (Rao K. S., 2017).

Being a small state with limited resources, Kerala faces many hurdles in the trajectory of development. The industrial and infrastructural growth in the state does not provide much promises. Many designate it a remittance economy, which thrives on foreign remittance from the Keralites working in Europe and middle East. Agriculture production in the state also shows negative trends. In fact, the absence of strong productive sector and shortage of natural resources prevented the state of Kerala from building up a strong economy. At the same time per capita income status of the state shows an edge over the national figures and there is an evident steady growth.

**Table 1: Comparative Statistics: Kerala and India (2011 Census)**

Sl. No.	Item	Kerala	India
1	Population	3,33,87,677	1,21,01,93,422
2	Literacy (Percentage)	93.91	74.04
3	Sex Ratio (No. of Females per 1000 males)	1084	940
4	Health Index	0.817	0.563
5	Income Index	0.629	0.271
6	Education Index	0.924	0.568
7	Human Development Index	0.790	0.467
8	Life expectancy at birth (2002-06 Figures)	74	63.5
9	Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1000 live births-,2007 data)	12	55
10	Death Rate (Per 1000,2008 Data)	6.6	7.4
11	Per Capita state income (2015-16 in Rupees)	124773	78502

*(Source, Compiled from Economic Survey 2016, Planning Board Kerala, and Census Report Government of India 2011)*

Against many structural and natural limitations, the state has excelled in many areas of human development and has developed a new developmental paradigm. This is termed as the 'Kerala Model of Development' in which high level of human development has achieved against low level of economic growth. The high physical quality of life in Kerala is at par with the developed western states. This unique model of development has been keenly observed by many developing and under developing countries and taken Kerala as a role model to their development trajectory.

The state of Kerala is also in the top list of democratic decentralization initiatives. The state has a strong network of local self-government institutions that reach the length and breadth of the state. The socio-economic structure of the state is also well-suited for devolution innovations.

*Democratic decentralization is expected to succeed in those circumstances where literacy rates are high, inequalities of wealth are not pronounced, land distribution is equitable (and has been redistributed when necessary), and caste cleavages do not create insurmountable barriers to community cooperation. Most of these conditions hold in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and West Bengal, and, incidentally, all three states have embraced decentralization as a tool for development (McCarten & Vyasulu, 2004:734).*

The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act & The Kerala Municipality Act were enacted in the year 1994. These acts laid the foundation of a three-tier system of Panchayat in the village, block, and district level. Local governments were vested with the powers and responsibilities of economic development and social justice in their respective areas.

**Table 2: Decentralization in Kerala**

Grama Panchayaths	941
Municipalities	87
Corporations	6
Cantonments	1
Total	1035

(Source: Government of Kerala)

Sabu Thomas

The state government was generous enough to create an autonomous sphere of decentralization and this move was further accelerated with the peoples planning programme. GramaSabhas were conducted, election held, plans prepared and tax heads are ever increasing. The political action in the decentralized structures is also showing vibrancy with the mainstream political parties shifting their orientations in the grassroots. Local government institutions are strengthened with more and more powers. Incidentally the Kerala model of decentralization was projected as one of the major pillars of the Kerala model of development.

The state had disinvested its monopoly over health sector, education, sanitation, social welfare, agriculture, and the like. The local bodies were entrusted with these responsibilities to a considerable extent (Gangadharan, 2010). The decentralization project in Kerala is heavily responsible for maintaining the celebrated Kerala model of development. With the peoples planning campaign the state has set a benchmark in the participatory development process in India. Gramasabhas and Grama panchayats are now accredited as the cornerstone of the developmental process. It is also to be noted an amount of Rs 6227.5 Crore which comes around 23.5% of state plan outlay was earmarked for the Local Self-Government institutions in the state (As of Feb 8,2017). This shows an increase of 13.23% above the previous plan allocation.

The crux of the story is that the state has invested heavily on local self-government and tried hardly to make it a third structure of Indian federal structure. Community level initiatives were promoted in these institutions via organizations like neighbourhood groups and Kudumbasree. These organizations also promoted the formation of strong social capital at the village level. The result is evidently a vibrant political scenario as evidenced in the periodical power sharing by the two political coalitions in the state- LDF and UDF.

### **Decentralization and Institutionalization**

The theme of decentralization is strongly aligned with democracy. These need moving further from the formal institutions and legal structures of centralized democracy. The civil society elements are to be incorporated in the process of decentralization. However, the implementation of Panchayati raj system in India and also in the state of Kerala is much oriented toward creating structures and offices. Instead of entitling the community via organizations like Grama sabha, new

mid-structures are being created under different designations. It is admitted that the communities are getting stronger and people are bonded with high affinities of social capital. Still the people level politics is yet to emerge. The idea of 'local' itself is subjected to re-examination in the context of institution building in a neo-liberal setting rather than democratic innovation.

*The 'local' stands at the heart of neoliberal discourses about good governance, but is conceptualized in terms of a new institutional architecture rather than in terms of relations between and amongst social classes. This obfuscation of class relations equally endorsed by sections of the liberal Left who privilege 'the community' as an arena for progressive social change – depoliticizes understandings of concrete social realities. (Pattenden, 2011:164)*

The political potentials of the Grama Sabha is almost a forgotten story. These institutions were almost chained to the mandatory provisions and failed to become an active political space. At times the growth of grass root organizations was much obstructed by the long shadow of local government institutions and the surrounding politics. It is also observed that the local political structures are yet to be decentralized and they act as an extension of national or state political sphere. A notable concern in this context is the high vibrancy of party politics in the local self-government structures. Local self-government institutions and community groupings like Grama sabha acts as recruiting points for higher political office, specifically in the party hierarchy. The shadow of this state and national level party level politics extends to the grassroots organisations like Grama sabha.

### **Elapsed Paradigm**

Another concern with decentralization is its compatibility with democratic models. Local structures are often perceived as mechanisms to ease democratic stresses. It also works as breeding platforms for national and state politics, rather than instruments of power devolutions. The million-dollar question here is that whether direct democracy is in close quarters with decentralization or are they strange bed mates. The democratic challenges to local governance paradigm also includes the social structure, culture etc.

Sabu Thomas

*Democratic decentralisation in the country is constrained by challenges such as feudal social structures, ignorance of citizen's rights, gender bias, secretive modus operandi of corruption, opaque technical and financial documents, lack of alternate oversight institutions like civil society organisations, self-help groups, etc.*(Tambe, Subba, Basi, & Rai, 2016:95)

In an interesting study on Decentralization and class relations Pattenden (2011) suggest that a surge in fiscal decentralization may impact upon class relations by increasing levels of non-productive accumulation by dominant class. This accumulation occurs through the appropriation of public resources rather than production. The dominant class also acquires a higher role in the allocation process also. The result is further strengthening of class division in the given village community. It follows that decentralized structures are, in certain circumstances re-enforces the existing cleavages and divisions and may introduce new divisions also'

The issue here is that many of the policy circles presume the decentralization as democratic cup of tea which is half full. The optimistic line of thought links it with higher political values and adds secularistic spices. There is also jubilant claims of party-less democracy and public sphere. At the same time political realism has to admit that the decentralization cannot be separated from the basic political process. Local self-government institutions operate in a wider political frame work and cannot be separated from the essential ingredients of politics. Interestingly the major ingredient here is the centralization tendency of political process. This brings the contradiction of the elapsed paradigm.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Decentralization is acclaimed as a positive instrument to better quality of democratic interventions and actions. It is the foundation of the great arch of civil society. But in locations where political inequality is more evident, decentralization evidently widens the gap and creates spaces of injustices and oppressions. Stand-alone decentralization projects produce only myths of democratization. The decentralization innovations needed many preconditions like institution building and capacity buildings. Sustainability of such initiatives is another major concern for bettering democratic quality. This sustainability can be achieved with community involvement in the political process in grass



roots. The grass root institutions like Grama Sabhas is running short of these community involvements. Grama Sabhas should be invested with more power and functions. But these powers should be delegated only after assuring the success of Panchayat level decentralization. The decentralization project in the state of Kerala evidences the success of depending on community structures for the development of a social base for democracy. These structures are to be kept aloof from the long shadows of 'pervasive democracy'. This is a difficult task to be undertaken, but can be possibly done with delinking decentralization project from political project.

In a closer view, the attempts of political devolution start as a delegation initiative and is incidentally a well-designed plot for political convenience rather than democratic bonus point. This brings an oxymoron to the process - Decentralized centralization. The logic of decentralization thus appears to be inconsistent with the much-celebrated value statements of democracy.

The present suggestion is that the decentralization is not a 'magic remedy' for the ills of current democratic deficiencies. It should be built up along with new institutions and social structures rather than physical infrastructures and policy pronouncements. A new culture of democratization is also necessary to improve the scenario. Public participation in Grama sabhas and in grass root institutions are not taken for granted. It is to be evolved and not to be imposed. The community level initiatives should be taken as a 'solid bank' for securing social capital and this social capital can be later invested for better sub structures of decentralization.

### Endnotes

- [1] According to Newman governance' is a term that has become central to analyses of shifts in the role of the nation state, in the process of policy making and policy delivery, and in the nature of power and influence in the public policy system. Briefly, it is argued that the power of the nation state has been eroded and that governance processes are now characterized by multi-level interactions between different tiers within and beyond the nation state. (Newman ,2005:719).
- [2] To many, governance implies identification of horizontal networks of public, private and non profit organisations as the new active structures against hierarchical organisational decision making pillars.
- [3] According to Bingham, Government occurs when those with legally and formally derived authority and policing power execute and implement activities; governance refers to the creation, execution, and implementation

Sabu Thomas

of activities backed by the shared goals of citizens and organizations, who may or may not have formal authority and policing power. As an activity, governance seeks to share power in decision making, encourage citizen autonomy and independence, and provide a process for developing the common good through civic engagement.

- [4] According to world bank “Good governance is optimized by predictable, open and enlightened policy making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent processes and a strong civil society participating in public affairs”.

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Good Governance and Grass Root Democracy...

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# Good Governance & India: Issues, Challenges and Prospects

S. Prabhakar

## Introduction

Governance has no definitive meaning. It has wide connotations. Governance has been debated for ages. Good Governance is of the recent phenomenon. 'Good Governance' has many characteristics. Primarily, it has to have transparency, accountability, the rule of law and the last but not the least it should serve the people or public at large. Development and growth should be people-centric if good governance is to become a reality.

It has rightly been pointed out by scholars<sup>1</sup> that in the absence of good governance, no development schemes can bring any improvement in quality life of the citizens. It has also been stated that if the power of the state is exercised in an improper way, then the poor will suffer the most as poor governance leads and reinforces corruption, poverty, etc.<sup>2</sup> If there has been good governance or for that matter 'governance' in the real sense, we would not be seeing social inequalities in the world.

As per a scholar, "Good governance is not a final product. It represents a continuous quest and an endless effort. The quest is for mass prosperity and liberal democracy and the effort is towards sustaining and upgrading whatever level of good governance has been accomplished."<sup>3</sup> It is a universal fact that the fruits of good governance rarely reaches the masses. Masses are left out though they constitute over 80 per cent.

In 1992 report - "Governance and Development", the World Bank has defined good governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development".<sup>4</sup> Due to improper use of resources, we often come across lopsided development resulting in inequalities.

There are many other important features in the Indian Constitution. The prime among them is that we have the parliamentary system of government; we have fundamental rights and duties, directive principles of State policy, secularism, independent Judiciary, free press with reasonable restrictions, etc.

India has evolved over the years. It has traversed difficult terrain over the past seven decades. Democracy and governance has flourished with the setting up of institutions for the running of the country.

We have come across ups and downs in the past seventy two years. We were without food once, we have overcome that situation. Democracy has taken the roots in every conceivable sphere. We have institutions doing good work over decades. Our institutions like Election Commission of India, Comptroller & Auditor General of India, RBI, UGC, CBI, Central Vigilance Commission, Planning Commission have all contributed in their own way.

India could witness Green Revolution, White Revolution, IT Revolution in the last seven decades. Many achievements can be showcased which resulted in growth and development in the last 70 years. Efforts have been made by successful governments since Independence to uplift the life of its people. Various means and methods were adopted to see that the hopes and aspirations of the people are accomplished. Past achievement showcases enormous efforts to implement various Five Year Plans primarily focusing on agriculture and industry which has ushered in conceivable improvement in the lives of people.

An attempt has been made in December 1992 through the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment to Indian Constitution, to bring good governance through panchayati raj institutions. This initiative has brought about sea change in dispensing governance at the village level.

Jawaharlal Nehru, our first Prime Minister, in his midnight speech on 14-15 August, 1947, 'Tryst with Destiny' stated about opening up of an opportunity and greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Then he went on with a question: "Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?"<sup>5</sup>

It is high time to look back, after over 72 years of Independence, to know how much of our efforts have been converted into triumphs and achievements, whether we have grasped the opportunity provided to us, and where do we stand now in terms of providing basic amenities of food, clothing and shelter to poor and downtrodden, and fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the citizens of our country.

This paper specifically deals with the issues, challenges and prospects of good governance from the view point of environment, health, and corruption.

## **Issues and Challenges in dispensing Good Governance**

Good Governance should result in poor and downtrodden too receiving the fruits of growth and development. But the data proves the contrary. Data in the public domain shows that the fruits of liberalization, privatization and globalization adopted by India in July, 1991 had not percolated down to the lowest stratum of society.

We have many challenges. The path to good governance is not a smooth one. It is riddled with difficult terrain and the same needs huge involvement with unstinted and undiluted attention and focus by any government. Issues and challenges of governance right from 1947 needs to be looked into before we move ahead. Seventy two years is a long period in any country's coming into existence. Young India confronted many issues as it moved ahead with its developmental plans to uplift the people from poverty. Some issues could be solved to a very great extent but many are still persisting. Terrorism, poverty, removing inequality, fighting malnutrition, improving the standard of education to name a few. The list is long.

Terrorism alone in Jammu and Kashmir resulted in loss of 58 civilians, 71 security forces personnel, and 173 militants/infiltrators, up to September, 2018.<sup>6</sup> This loss of human life has become a recurring feature year after year. If we add the loss of lives in the insurgency and naxalite activities in the North East and rest of the country respectively, we see a humungous figure, a disturbing number so to say. We have erased terrorism activities from Punjab. One can only hope that there would be an end to terrorism, insurgency and naxalite activities in the Jammu and Kashmir, North East, and naxal affected States with the infusion of good governance and removing lopsided development across the country.

Price rise is a perennial problem each Government since Independence had to face. Improvement in health and education has always been a task for the governments to attend to in order to facilitate the citizens with basic medical aid and good health and a better and standard education system.

Governance also means that no citizen is left hungry. But the ground reality is entirely different and disturbing. In 2018 India ranks 103 among 119 countries on Global Hunger Index.<sup>7</sup> In 2017, India was ranked at the 100<sup>th</sup> position. India is ranked below many neighbouring countries like China Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. It is a matter of urgent attention for the government to address. There is a need for the government to address the issue of hunger on war footing.

In Human Capital Index, we are ranked 115<sup>th</sup> out of 158 countries in the world.<sup>8</sup> The ICT (Information & Communications Technology) Development Index recently put India at 134<sup>th</sup> place amongst 176 countries.<sup>9</sup> In the Global Impunity Index, which measures the dangers for journalists, India was 14<sup>th</sup> out of 14 countries with the worst record where we are in league with countries like Somalia, Syria (war-torn, terror-ridden Syria), Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>10</sup> When it comes to the Rule of Law Index, India, the largest democracy was 62<sup>nd</sup> out of 113 nations.<sup>11</sup> India is below a newly declared democracy in our neighbourhood, Nepal. India needs to improve its standing in many aspects.

We have not been able to improve as much as the expectations of people as revealed in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report. As on 14 September 2018, India is at 130 out of 189 countries in the latest human development rankings.<sup>12</sup>

The Right to Information (RTI) has ushered in a revolution in transparency in the country. Thus resulting in a facet of good governance. But in the recent data brought out by the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), a Canada-based non-governmental organization, along with Access Info Europe, India has slipped in global RTI ratings a rung further in 2018 to the sixth position. It is reported that India ranks lower than small countries like Afghanistan and Serbia. According to the rating agencies, India scored 128 out of a possible total of 150 points. Out of the 61 indicators, India's points were downgraded under nine indicator categories.<sup>13</sup>

Plight of women in terms of mental health in our country is not worthy of mention. Gruesome incidents taking place every day is the yardstick by which we can measure the life of women. It is astonishing to find from a study by Lancet Public Health journal that 37% of women are committing suicide in the world are Indians. Indian men are not far behind with 24%.<sup>14</sup>

When it comes to sports, the less said the better. Though some improvement is reported in the sports realm, overall we lag far behind considering our huge population. Though our performance in various sports discipline is good in Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, when it comes to Olympics, our performance becomes dismal. India won a total of only 28 medals so far. First in 1900 with two medals in athletics. Hockey team won eleven medals in twelve Olympics between 1920 and 1980<sup>15</sup>. A relook at our sports policy to improve our performance in commensurate with our vast population in international sports event in different disciplines is to be implemented immediately.

## **Good Governance and Environment**

With vast industrialization sweeping the nation in the last couple of decades, clean air has taken a beating. It is reaching monumental proportions bordering on catastrophe. Sunita Narain, Director General of Centre for Science and Environment is of the opinion that to combat poor air quality requires more than an emergency action plan. She has also stated, “it requires an effective counter-strategy to cure the degrading air.”<sup>16</sup>

The most glaring issue of recent origin is climate change and environmental degradation. Growing air pollution levels beyond imaginable limits is a serious cause for concern. As of now, India tops in under-5 deaths due to toxic air. In 2016, 60,000 under-5 children died as per the World Health Organisation (WHO) Report.<sup>17</sup> Another WHO Report says, air pollution was responsible for the deaths of over one lakh children under age 5 in India in 2016, and over 7,000 children between age 5 and 14.<sup>18</sup> Another astonishing fact is that India has huge deaths under 5, that is, 1,01,788 as compared to Bangladesh – 11,487, Bhutan – 37, China – 11,377, Nepal – 2,086, Pakistan – 38,252, and Sri Lanka – 94. How can we claim that we are going in the right direction in other spheres when our children are dying of air pollution?

News items in media give a disturbing picture on environmental degradation and the role of different stakeholders. Supreme Court was shocked over disappearance of 31 hills in Aravalli area of Rajasthan resulting in directing the State Government to stop illegal mining in a 115.34 hectare area within 48 hours.<sup>19</sup> As per another report, the Supreme Court orders halt to illegal mining in Aravalli hills. The apex court has also expressed shock over ‘vanished’ 31 hills in the Aravalli area of Rajasthan and had asked the State to stop illegal mining in the area within 48 hours.<sup>20</sup>

Air pollution in India has now become a national public health crisis. Why should it not be when 14 of world’s 15 most polluted cities are located in India.<sup>21</sup> Current WHO report bears testimony to our pollution woes, particularly in Delhi where air quality hit the severe level. Situation of pollution across the globe has become so humungous that for the first time the World Health Organisation (WHO) called a global meeting to tackle pollution.<sup>22</sup>

Are we moving closer to environmental disaster? It seems so considering the fact that 14 out of the 15 most polluted cities in the world were in India; in 2018, 2 million premature deaths in India were attributed to



pollution. According to the Yale University's Environmental Performance Index, India ranks 177<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries.<sup>23</sup> India needs to do a lot without any further loss of time. Innovative schemes and policies need to be given effect to with immediate effect to retrieve the situation and to save our vast population affected by air pollution specifically. Worse and bad air quality is creating havoc in the lives of the people of our country.

We have been facing higher than normal rainfall. We have seen devastation in Visakhapatnam, Srinagar, Chennai, cloud bursts in Uttarakhand, floods in Kerala. These are some of the recent incidents due to excessive rainfall. Climate change is not a national phenomenon. It is there for the universe to see.

We have seen drought in Cape Town, South Africa; searing heat waves in Europe are clear indications of effects of climate change. Hurricane Florence flattened the Carolinas in the United States, and Super typhoon Mangkhut did the same to parts of the Philippines.<sup>24</sup>

In 2018, in US, California wildfires led to 79 deaths, destroyed nearing 10,000 homes and more than 2,500 other buildings; evacuation of over 150,000. More than 1,200 people were listed as missing from the Camp Fire in California fire.<sup>25</sup>

As per the study released by the UN officer for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in October, 2018, natural disasters had cost India \$ 80 billion in 20 years.<sup>26</sup> Adding the existing woes, vehicular emissions too are going up as we are adding lakhs of vehicles to the road.

Efforts are being made by the government. Setting up of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) is an outcome of good governance. Since its inception in 2010, NGT has been playing a major role in the realm of environment. NGT's initiatives are many. NGT has overruled the Union Environment Ministry's three 2016 notifications that exempted mining of minor minerals like sand.<sup>27</sup> It has formed a Special Task Force to stop illegal scrap units when it comes to know about dismantling of heavy vehicles allegedly leading to air pollution; NGT directing States to come out with action plans within two months to stop river pollution. NGT had pulled up Haryana government for felling 7,000 trees<sup>28</sup>. Universal efforts are also put in place to contain environmental degradation. Ocean Cleanup team has headed to the Pacific Ocean in September, 2018 and it hopes to clear half of the infamous 'garbage patch' in the next five years only if all the systems are put in place and made operational.<sup>29</sup>

S. Prabhakar

Lessons can be learnt from China. In a matter of just four years, Beijing could change the worst air quality scenario by setting for itself time-bound targets and implementing a comprehensive regional action plan.<sup>30</sup> It is worthwhile to quote a few specific steps taken by China here. China identified key polluted regions and came out with time-bound action. Implementation rules were issued and adhered to strictly; restricted the number of vehicles in Beijing to six million vehicles by the end of 2017; environmental watchdogs imposed fines totalling Rs.150 crore; undertaken a massive greening programme; about 4,022 hectares of urban green space has been created. With the result, Beijing recorded 226 blue sky days (good air quality), compared to just 176 in 2013.<sup>31</sup> It is time to emulate China and replicate what it had done to reduce air pollution drastically.

A recent report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has woken up the world from the deep slumber and sets of alarm bells. Editorial<sup>32</sup> quote the said Report, “The world is already 1°C warmer than the pre-industrial levels and, if present trends continue, the rise in average temperatures will breach the critical barrier of 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052. India already faces threat of deadly heat waves as per the UN climate report.”<sup>33</sup>

The next UN Climate Conference will be held in Poland in December, 2019. The BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) group met in November, 2019 to put pressure on developed countries to meet 2020 climate efforts, and to “progressively” and “substantially” scale up their financial support for future action.

It is stated that India stands to lose the most from climate change. In the article, ‘*Our time begins now*’<sup>34</sup>, its authors – Sujatha Byravan and Sudhir Chella Rajan expressed the urgency to come up with a roadmap to transit quickly to a near-zero carbon economy. Need to take inputs by policymakers from academia, community workers and the public. They opined that political pressure and activism across the globe may soon turn the tide in other countries but insisted that India needs to begin now with its enormous untapped successes.<sup>35</sup> Public Policy needs to address gamut of issues before come up with a scheme. Though burning crop residue has been creating havoc in the past couple of years, in 2018 too, it seems nothing has change with the result this year too we had to face a foggy autumn and disastrous winter. Policymakers need to work on it swiftly.

Controlling pollution has become the most important duty of any Government. All other stakeholders too should play a prominent role.

Air pollution affects the health of everyone. A new push to save and secure environment is needed. Drastic changes in the existing policies are direly required. Protecting environment should become the first priority.

A clean environment is a genuine demand of the people of any country. It is an onerous task for any government to bring a divine balance between the development and safe living. It is easier said than done.

### **Good Governance and Health**

Health is of paramount importance. But when it comes to various parameters of health, there is much to be desired in India. India is confronted with multifarious health issues. While India has 18 per cent of the world's population but it has 32 per cent of the global burden of respiratory diseases, which is second only to heart disease, as per the Global Burden of Disease Data.<sup>36</sup>

When it comes to life expectancy in India, we are placed as low as 164<sup>th</sup> out of 224 nations and in our region only Pakistan ranks worse.<sup>37</sup> India lost 2.6 lakh children under the age of 5 years to pneumonia in 2016.<sup>38</sup> As per the study conducted by a global study by Johns Hopkins University and the global charity organization, Save the Children, Pneumonia can kill 17 lakh Indian children by 2030.

Prevalence of diabetes has gone up by 150 per cent in 26 years. It is reported that India had the highest incidence of tuberculosis and the largest number of cases of multi-drug resistant TB. Three years ago, India and Nigeria accounted for 40% of under-5 diarrheal deaths. Added to this dismal picture, 60% of new leprosy cases globally are in India. In 2017, India recorded the highest number of malnutrition cases; we also have highest number of stunted children in the world. case<sup>39</sup> Need to relook at policy initiatives in vogue to bring about changes on the ground.

There is no denying of the fact that we could see development all around us particularly since India adopted liberalization, privatization and globalization in July 1991. Yet we see poverty, inequality, etc. on the one hand, and accumulation of wealth with a few on the other hand.

When we talk of increase in income inequality, India is ranked 132<sup>nd</sup> among 152 nations in a new index tracking commitment to reducing income inequality prepared by Development Finance International and Oxfam.<sup>40</sup> These data shows India in a very poor light. Policymakers need to look at the issues afresh to ensure fruits of development reach

S. Prabhakar

the lower strata of society to bring in equity in society.

### **Corruption**

Menace of Corruption existed even in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. It is not a recent phenomenon. Though climate change and terrorism are threatening the universe, most would agree that corruption is one of the biggest threats in the world today. No country is outside of corruption. Corruption destabilises good governance, halts growth et al. The list is unending.

Many serious issues are confronting our nation. These are not of the recent happenings. These have been brewing for the last many decades to be precise. Now they have taken the shape of a serious turn for worse. If we desire to build a new India, we need to eradicate corruption first. Is it possible to eradicate corruption? If we want to build a new India, then, there is an urgent need to eradicate corruption. Is it easy? It is not easy. Why is it? It almost became a way of life or part of life.

Then, whose responsibility is it to eradicate corruption? I would emphatically say, it is the responsibility of every one. Everyone is a stakeholder in eradicating corruption. This insurmountable task of eradicating corruption is not going to be achieved with just the initiatives of the Government or the Central Vigilance Commission but other stakeholders like the Judiciary, an independent media, civil society.

Here, I would like to quote Mahatma Gandhi - 'Corruption and hypocrisy ought not to be inevitable products of democracy, as they are undoubtedly are today.' This remark was made in 1936. This is true of today too. Is it not? Corruption is defined as a state of being bad and dishonest, especially in matters concerning money. Corruption is all pervasive. It has not left any sector, any area untouched.

Though we have Acts like the Prevention of money Laundering Act, the Benami Property Act, the black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) & Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, etc. to curb corruption and economic crimes, more efforts are required to erase the menace of corruption from the society. When ethics take over greed we can think of corruption-free society

As stated earlier, prime challenge before us is how to eradicate corruption. Corruption has spread far and wide. It has affected the vitals of the economy. Recently, in a function organized by the Central Vigilance Commission on the theme – Eradicate Corruption – Build a

New India – President of India Ram Nath Kovind. He stressed, “It would be better to take preventive steps against corruption as preventive vigilance was better than punitive vigilance.”<sup>41</sup>

How to eradicate corruption? What measures are in place to ensure corruption-free society? Onerous task and the major role to weed out corruption is that of the Government. Government has been playing its role through its institutions. Central Vigilance Commission(CVC), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Central and State governments are playing a pivotal role. The premier institution of the Government of India is ‘Central Vigilance Commission’, which aims at promoting integrity, transparency and accountability in public life.

Corruption is a global phenomenon. Transparency International with their corruption perception index score (CPI) published in 2018 lists 10 least corrupt countries in the world. Canada, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, New Zealand. 10 most corrupt countries of 2018 in the world are Venezuela, Iraq, North Korea, etc. In Asia, we have Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Vietnam in the list of corrupt countries. India is placed at 81<sup>st</sup> out of 180 countries.

Everyone would agree that at one point in time of one’s life, they must have paid bribe to get the things done. Mostly, people pay bribe when it comes to getting some public services done. It is an accepted fact that a first whiff of corruption emanates from a dishonest government official with authority. Authority of a government official should not go unchallenged.

Easy access to the redressal mechanism should be put in place. Right to Information (RTI) Act has helped the common way to access information from the government. It should not be misused. Transparency and accountability should become the hallmark of governance in the country.

Whatever we are aspiring for as a nation – be it good governance, health for all, social justice, removing poverty, safety of women, preservation of environment, improving infrastructure, providing basic amenities of food, cloth and housing to the poor and disadvantaged sections of society, bringing poor into the mainstream to taste the fruits of growth and economic development, etc.

## **Conclusion**

The data stated in this paper paints a gloomy picture but we should not

S. Prabhakar

get despondent as we have been making renewed and strenuous efforts, facing daunting challenges in every field particularly ever increasing population. A balance needs to be brought in to ensure fruits of development reach the needy and disadvantaged sections.

To bring in good governance, there is an urgent necessity to end corruption because without a fair, transparent and accountable system in place, fruits of development would not percolate down to the poorest of the poor. Central and State Governments should be made people-centric through provision of good governance through its plans, schemes and programmes. Corruption needs to be tackled with strict and stringent laws as it throws up a huge challenge in the development and functioning of our democracy itself. Putting in place Lok Pal with all the powers is a step in the right direction.

Various ills as enumerated in this paper are eating the vitals of our country. The dreaded ones are terrorism, corruption, environmental degradation, malnutrition, poverty to name a few. There is a need to address these pressing issues in order to bring in development in the real sense of the term. There is also a need to look back the path of development and growth we have adopted from the nascent days of our Independence. In spite of our efforts, rather claims that we have done a lot in various fields, which this author too endorses, have we done enough would be the question to be answered.

Ultimate aim of good governance is to provide basic healthcare, ensure basic essentials of life like food, clothing and shelter, create good employment scenario in the country, ensure law and order, etc. There is a need to take forward the concept of good governance in order to make it a reality in the real sense of the term. There is no dearth of laws, rules, regulations. What plagues us is the strict adherence of implementation of laws.

Good governance becomes a reality only when all sections of society enjoy the fruits benefits of plans, policies and programmes of government resulting in inclusive growth by removing inequalities. Each pillar of democracy needs to function in the overall interests of good governance leading to smooth functioning of the governments, both at the Centre and in the States. Concerted efforts being made in different spheres augur well in making 'good governance' a reality not just a dream to aspire for.

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S. Prabhakar

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# Good Governance & Parliament of India

S. Prabhakar

## Introduction

The smooth relationship between different pillars of democracy is a prerequisite for good governance. Each pillar has its unique role and a designated duties and responsibilities to perform. Governance per se is to serve the people in a wide sense, to provide basic amenities to the people at large, and to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people. It literally means to govern in a good way. 'Good governance' has many characteristics. Each one leads to the welfare and wellbeing of the people in a sense. All the schemes, plans and programmes of the government aim at extending benefits or fruits to the people.

A school of thought is of the opinion that good governance is a misnomer. It is easier said than done. Good governance needs a lot of efforts to put in place. Every Government, be it at the Centre or in the States, try to provide good governance to its people by utilizing limited resources and overwhelming demands. It is an arduous task to provide smooth functioning of their governments. With growing general awareness of the public also due to social media, governments face it a lot of difficulty in dispensing governance leave alone good governance to the general public.

According to C.P. Bhartwal, 'good governance' has to have participation, accountability, predictability and transparency as essential elements.<sup>1</sup> Another author stated that the concept of 'governance' is not new. It is as old as human civilization.<sup>2</sup>

Way back in 1997, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its 1997 policy paper, defined 'governance' as "the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels."<sup>3</sup>

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S. Prabhakar

characteristics of good governance are participation, consensus orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equitability and inclusiveness and the rule of law.<sup>4</sup> It is by any means a long and strenuous route to ensure good governance by any government. The most difficult in a democracy is to arrive at a consensus which results in delay in implementation of any policy decision. Precisely keeping this view, B.R. Ambedkar during the debates in the Constituent Assembly stated that as we are opting for a parliamentary democracy over presidential form of government, we have to be patient as it takes time to endorse any decision as it entails time to bring around all parties.

Subhash Kashyap further states, “It ensures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.”<sup>5</sup> This cannot be further from truth as we have seen in the last seven decades of our Independence.

We are in a federal set up. Centre, States and Panchayats have a designated role in the functioning of our democracy and smooth running of the country. Under federalism, legal authority is distributed across national, state and local governments in the nation of India. Part XI of the Indian Constitution specifies the distribution of legislative, administrative and executive powers between the Union/Federal/Central government and the States of India.<sup>6</sup>

When one talks of governance or thinks of the word ‘govern’, one unconsciously comes into contact with the word ‘Parliament’ as Parliament has the role to ensure accountability of the government of the day; to provide good governance to the people; to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people. Parliament covers whole gamut of issues and nothing is outside the realm of Parliament. But only some of the issues were highlighted in this paper.

This paper highlights the role of Parliament, initiatives of Parliament in the realm of good governance, the role of Judiciary, judicial reforms, electoral reforms, parliamentary reforms, road ahead and conclusion.

## **Parliament**

Under Indian Constitution, Parliament has a special place. Parliament of India is an apex legislative body of our country. It occupies an important position in our democratic set up. Parliament is a fulcrum

around which activities of State revolves which results in good governance.

Parliament ensures accountability of the Executive. Clause (3) of Article 75 of the Constitution proclaims that “the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People.” Through its functioning Parliament ensures accountability of the Executive, which in turn results in good governance. Capturing power is easy so to say but after assuming power, ensuring good governance becomes a tall order. It needs lot of efforts to dispense good governance.

Our Constitution has the doctrine of separation of powers. It has clearly stated separation of powers among three organs of government – the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. Way back in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the French scholar Montesquieu pointed out that placing power in the hands of only one organ or group in a government entails tyranny. American politician, James Madison, better known as the ‘Father of the American Constitution’ also believed the same and articulated the following, “The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive and judicial, in the same hands whether of one, a few, or many and whether hereditary, self-appointed or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.”

Separation of powers was discussed and debated in the Constituent Assembly. Each pillar of democracy has to perform its functions within its domain. Each pillar is a separate entity. Legislature is empowered to legislate laws and issue enactments. The Judiciary is responsible for interpreting laws and adjudicating disputes. But we could from time to time Judiciary framing laws and issuing orders and courts issuing issued laws and policy related orders through their judgements.

To elaborate, a government of the day comes across huge challenges of humungous nature to deliver good governance to the people. Whenever people choose any government, their expectations from the government goes up by several notches. With limited resources a government has to do a lot of manoeuvrings or a balancing act to keep a find balance between the budgets available and fulfilling promises.

In the past seven decades, we have nurtured and encouraged participatory democracy. Indian Parliament has been instrumental in ushering in social change and development through progressive legislations and meaningful debates on crucial issues facing the nation, thus, paving the way for good governance, which constitutes the basic principle of our Constitution.<sup>7</sup> Through its initiatives Parliament contributes in its own way towards good governance.

## **Parliament and Good Governance**

Many departments and ministries of Government of India aim at providing good governance through its plans and programmes. In the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, through questions by Members of Parliament, government highlights as to what it is doing in the realm of good governance under different ministries.

For example, in response to a question<sup>8</sup> by Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo from Odisha as to whether any panel has been constituted on Good Governance, while responding in the negative, the Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions stated that eight Groups of Secretaries (GoS) were constituted on 01.01.2016 to deliberate on eight thematic areas which have a direct bearing on the socio-economic development of the country and to come up with a roadmap for achieving specific outcomes. Out of these, one Group was on the subject of 'Good Governance – Challenges and Opportunities'.<sup>9</sup>

Departmental Action Plans are being prepared based on the recommendations arising out of the reports. The Ministries/Departments have sent these Action Plans along with implementation schedule to NITI Aayog which has been entrusted with the task of monitoring and implementation of the same.<sup>10</sup> These processes are being contemplated to ensure good governance in the government.

While responding to a question<sup>11</sup> on integrating good governance in space technology by Nanabhau Falgunrao Patole from Maharashtra, Minister of State delineated various measures being undertaken in the Government of India including action plans to enhance functional effectiveness, facilitate planning and decision making and space technology is being used by various Ministries/Departments in planning, monitoring and evaluation of developmental activities in various sectors, which include agriculture, forestry & environment, water resources, urban planning, infrastructure development, asset mapping, mineral prospecting, ocean resources, meteorology, satellite communication, location based services, tele-education, Tele-medicine and disaster management support.<sup>12</sup>

On another occasion, in response to a question<sup>13</sup> on 'Good Governance Week' by Jagdambika Pal from Uttar Pradesh, Minister of Communications and Information Technology stated various initiatives unveiled under "Digital India" during the "Good Governance Week" held from 25 Dec to 31 Dec 2015.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, on yet another occasion in responding to a question<sup>15</sup> on measures being taken by the Government

of India to achieve the goals of 'Good Governance' by Santosh Ahlawat from Rajasthan and P. Karunakaran from Kerala, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad stated in an elaborate way various schemes being implemented like 'Digital India' to bring about good governance.

He also stated that his Government has also launched "Good Governance and Best Practices" scheme which aims to promote/replicate the best practices of e-Governance and successful e Gov applications.<sup>16</sup>

In January, 2018, when a Bill to hike the salary of Supreme Court and High Court judges came for discussion in Lok Sabha, Members of Parliament had expressed their concern over judicial overreach while calling for a transparent system of judicial appointments. While responding to the debate, the Law Minister stressed on need to reflect on the present collegiums system of appointments in the higher judiciary.<sup>17</sup>

The participation of Members of Parliament in Lok Sabha brings out the initiatives of the government of the day on ensuring good governance.

In December 2017, the Supreme Court has approved the Centre's scheme to set up 12 Fast Track Courts to decide 13,680 cases against 1,581 tainted politicians within a year.<sup>18</sup> This was the result of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay seeking a lifetime ban on convicted lawmakers from electoral politics.

As can be seen, there is a close interface between Legislative and Judiciary. Though both have a designated role to perform as per the Constitution, more often than not we come across instances of interface between two pillars of democracy.

## **Judiciary**

The role of Judiciary is clearly demarcated in the Constitution. It is an important pillar of democracy. Ensuring swift dispensing justice would go a long way in bringing about a marked improvement in our judicial system. It has fulfilled its responsibility commendably in the past 70 years. Judiciary, one of the venerable pillars of democracy, plays an important role in dispensing good governance. For a democracy to sustain, survive and flourish, Judiciary has to be independent. plays an Judiciary when it is impartial and of Justice should be dispensed at a normal price. At present, it has become costlier or expensive.

Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu, stated that Judiciary has a critical role in 'accelerating India's transformation and in ensuring that justice is delivered speedily, transparently and dispassionately'.<sup>19</sup>

A very important development took place concerning Judiciary and Legislature. In October, 2015, Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act and the 99<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment as 'unconstitutional and void'.<sup>20</sup> With this judgement the Collegiums system remains operative. While delivering the verdict, Supreme Court said that Judiciary cannot risk being caught in a "web of indebtedness" towards the government. The said amendment sought to give politicians and civil society a final say in the appointment of judges to the highest courts.<sup>21</sup> It is a matter of great interest that the Bench admitted that all is not well even with the Collegiums system of 'judges appointing judges', and that the time is ripe to improve the 21 year old system of judicial appointments.<sup>22</sup> But in the United States, Brett Kavanaugh has to answer questions from Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee before he is appointed as Judge in the United States Supreme Court.

In order to make our democracy vibrant and long lasting, there is a need to ensure our Judiciary is independent and impartial. Senior-most judge of the Supreme Court Justice J Chelameswar opined recently that an impartial and independent judiciary is critical to the survival of liberal democracy and expressed concern over the apex court chocking with the growing load of pending cases.<sup>23</sup>

The main problem plaguing the courts is pendency of cases. It takes years, and in some cases decades to see conclusion of a case. For example, it took three decades for the Delhi High Court to hand out a verdict in Hashimpura massacre which targeted and killed 40 Muslims in 1984. It started with filing of first charge sheet in a court after 11 years only in 1996 in Ghaziabad court. With the intervention of the Supreme Court the case was shifted to Delhi in 2002 and a fresh charge-sheet was filed in 2006.<sup>24</sup>

Every new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court exudes confidence about cutting pendency, making justice accessible to the poor and the marginalized sections of society. As of now, there are 2.78 crore cases pending in lower courts; 32.4 lakh in high Courts and about 55,000 in the Supreme Court.<sup>25</sup> Of late judicial activism and Judiciary encroaching upon the domain of the Legislature and the Executive grew. However, when queried about this, the then CJI-Designate Ranjan Gogoi,

remarked, “There is no question of stepping out of the separation of powers.”<sup>26</sup>

Though demarcation of roles and responsibilities of each pillar is outlined in the Constitution, of late, Judiciary has come up with orders which clearly falls in the realm of Executive. We can find a lot of overlapping. Time fixed for bursting of crackers during Diwali; asking the Centre why no policy is framed for farmers; Vishakha guidelines on sexual harassment by Supreme Court; Supreme Court directing the Centre to distribute food grains in 2010; and the appointment of the Special Investigation Team to replace the High Level Committee established by the Centre for investigating black money deposits in Swiss Banks are some of the instances where Judiciary played the role of an Executive. But these have never been a norm but exceptions in extreme conditions.

With the evolution of parliamentary democracy, a need was felt to bring reforms in judicial, electoral and parliament.

### **Judicial Reforms**

Some High Courts take an average of four years per case. This needs to be curtailed considerably. Another factor came to light is that pendency is higher when it comes to civil cases as per the study conducted by Bengaluru-based Daksh.<sup>27</sup> This issue too should be addressed.

Justice should be made accessible. As of now, there are 2.78 crore cases pending in lower courts, 32.4 lakh in High Courts and about 55,000 in the Supreme Court.<sup>28</sup> This is the major cause for concern.

A process has to be evolved in India like the one in the United States where Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee quizzes the nominated Judge before he is appointed as Judge in the United States Supreme Court. At present, we have the Collegium System in vogue where Judges appoints Judges.

Fortunately, the new Chief Justice of India, Justice Ranjan Gogoi talked about cutting pendency and making justice accessible as his priorities. It augurs well for the justice system of the country. One can only hope that long pendencies should be curtailed to a very great extent.

### **Electoral Reforms**

When it comes to electoral practice, we have evolved the most in this realm. The most satisfying episode of this long journey since 1952,

S. Prabhakar

when the first Lok Sabha elections, is that we have very successfully conducted 16 Lok Sabha elections, apart from hundreds of State Assembly elections in the States and Union Territories.

When it comes to electoral reforms, there is a need to bring restrictions on contesting from more than two constituencies and to disqualify persons with criminal records, check distribution of freebies during election time, malpractices at election time, elimination of non-serious candidates, restriction in Independent candidates, etc.

In 2014 Lok Sabha elections nearly 70 per cent of Members of Parliament were elected by minority of votes cast and legislators were elected with less than 15 per cent of votes cast. This should change. A system should be evolved whereby legislators are considered elected when they get 50 per cent plus one vote.

To win an election, we see voters are bribed sometimes; wealth is flaunted to entice voters. Seeking votes in the name of religion too is a corrupt act. Election Commission of India is doing its part by reforming electoral laws, and electoral scene has evolved for good since former Chief Election Commission, late T.N. Seshan's time. At present, any MLA or MP convicted in a crime is debarred for the remaining of his term and for a period of six years.

The former Secretary General, Subhash Kashyap suggested that Chief Election Commissioner and the two Election Commissioners should be appointed on the advice of a Committee consisting of the Presiding Officers of the two Houses of Parliament, ministers of Law and justice, outgoing Chief Election Commissioner and the leader of largest party in opposition in Lok Sabha. Accepting the suggestion would go a long way in bringing fair and just method of appointment in the Election Commission.

Changes were brought about in the electoral processes from time to time. In 2001 a slot of NOTA - None Of The Above - has been introduced in the voting machine, thus, recognising the supremacy of the voters.<sup>29</sup> Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) were introduced. In 2011, electoral reforms relating to State Funding, Lack of Internal Democracy, Issue of Money Power, Criminalisation of Politics, Negative Voting were raised (Tabassum and Sadashivam, 2011).

The latest on NOTA is that fresh polls would be ordered if NOTA gets most votes. Fresh elections shall be held for the post. This announcement came from the Maharashtra State Election Commission.<sup>30</sup> This order



will be applicable to polls and bypolls to all municipal corporations, municipal councils and *nagarpanchayats* in the State with immediate effect.<sup>31</sup>

### **Parliamentary Reforms**

When it comes to parliamentary reforms, number of days of session needs to be addressed urgently. Just to cite an area where urgent attention is needed is the number of days of Parliament Session has come down drastically. If we see the first three Lok Sabhas – 1952, 1957, 1962 – it sat for around 150 days a year. There has always been a demand for 100 days of Parliament Session per year.

There is a need to increase the number of days of Session in a year to at least 90 or 100 days from the current 60 or 70 days. This would lead to more accountability of Executive to the Legislature. On an average, State Assemblies sit for 28 days a year.<sup>32</sup>In 2017, Uttar Pradesh Assembly sat for 17 days. In contrast, Kerala Assembly sat for 151 days<sup>33</sup>. Here too, a reform is required very direly.

The other important reform required is to have more people's representatives. At the time of first Lok Sabha elections in 1952, our population was 42 crore and we had 543 Members of Parliament (MPs). In 2014, our population is 129 crore with almost the same number of MPs, that is, 545. Whereas in the case of the European Union with 28 countries, for 50.8 crore population, they have 751 MPs.

In the case of United States of America, as per 2017 census, has 32.57 crore population with Congress having 535 voting members with 435 representatives from the House of Representatives and 100 from senator. With less people's representatives representing three times of the people there is a glaring imbalance in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the people. Delimitation of parliamentary and assembly constituencies should be done afresh with massive growth in population and representation has been lopsided. As explained above, presently, one people's representative, either representing Lok Sabha or Assembly, represent three times of the more people in comparison to 1952.

The imbalance in the representation of people with the representatives of people should be looked at afresh keeping in view the population of our country in 1952, which is 42 crore, and in 2014, 129 crore and bring about increasing the number of representatives of people considerably.

S. Prabhakar

Vice President of India and Chairman of Rajya Sabha, the Upper House recently expressed the need to have some code of conduct for the Members of Parliament while commenting on frequent disturbances in the last Monsoon Session of Parliament.<sup>34</sup>

Legislators should be provided with training so that the standard of debates, both in the Chambers and in the Committee meetings would see a marked improvement. Though Orientation Programme is conducted for the new Members of Parliament, it may be made more structured.

The former Secretary General, Subhash Kashyap suggested setting up of a Parliamentary Reforms Commission or a 'Study of Parliament Group' outside Parliament as was done in the United Kingdom before the comprehensive procedural reforms in the 1970s.

### **Road Ahead**

There is a need to constantly review functions of institutions under Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. What is to be stated or promised in the manifestoes by political parties during elections should be streamlined. Priority needs to be accorded to usher in reforms in different spheres – be it electoral reforms, administrative reform, political reforms, legislative reforms, judicial reforms, police reforms, parliamentary reforms, etc.

Need to build in consensus on holding simultaneous elections to both Lok Sabha and State Assemblies and to bring in amendments in the relevant laws. Recommendations made in the Report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution should be considered. For example, setting up of the Standing Committee on Economics.

Functioning of institutions like CBI, RBI, CEC, CVC, IB, UGC, NHRC, etc. should be reviewed and made more independent and accountable. More teeth should be given to these important institutions. Human rights should be promoted and protected; human rights violations should be stopped. Panchayat institutions should be reviewed and strengthened with more financial powers and be made independent.

Functioning of Public Service Commissions in different States should be made more accountable and transparent. Transparent methods should be adopted in recruitment processes.

## Conclusion

One cannot find any fault in our functioning as a parliamentary democracy because though we have not made much headway in eradicating poverty, ensuring perfect model of democracy, nevertheless, we can claim, with more and more evidence before us, of achieving a lot in every conceivable field in the past 70 years.

Many issues have come to haunt our country. With the steely will of the people, with the active support of the Government, we could overcome all the issues.

To ensure good governance, governments need to erase the menace of corruption; public policy should serve peoples interest and be made people-oriented.

Our ultimate aim is to promote good governance so that social equity is established in the society, challenges are faced with steely resolve in order to eradicate poverty, bring in equitable distribution of wealth, providing good education, ensuring better health schemes to the poor. Ultimately providing inclusive growth to our people should be the goal so that fruits and growth reaches the poor, downtrodden and disadvantaged sections of society too.

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# Good Governance in India: The Imperatives of Human Rights Based Development Approach

Suresh R

## Introduction

The term good governance implies the effective management of a nation's resources in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people's needs. Therefore the rule of law, transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public sector management; and an active civil society are all essential components of good governance. It appears that good governance is closely related to the system of government. The democratic system has been considered as the best form of government for good governance, as it aspires for the welfare of all and strives to solve problems amicably through deliberations.

When we examine the issues related to good governance in India it is important to see the governance system prevalent in the immediate past. India was under the colonial rule for about two hundred years before becoming independent in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. This had an impact on the present governance system in India. The colonial power had established the administrative system in British India to cater their requirements. The concerns of native population were reflected neither in their policies nor in their administration. Most of these administrative practices are still following in the governance of India without major change.

Though India has adopted a democratic system of government which functions on the principle of consent of the people, the administrative system in India is not responsive to the people's demand or aspirations. This is mainly because of the dichotomy between local needs and administrative system which has been formed for entirely different purpose. The British administrative system was established to cater the British colonial interests. The advent of independence and adoption of a democratic system of governance demand a new set of institutions

and administration. The key areas of administrations such as district administration the police administration the educational administration etc. are clear examples of colonial influence. Even after seven decades of independence no major changes are effected in the administrative system. The British pattern of district administration with district collector holding all administrative power is still practiced in India. Similarly the one and a half century old 1861 Police Act is still form the basic document for maintaining law and order in India. Again the official Secrets Act of 1923 is being practiced which permit even now the officials to keep most of the official transaction as secret and the people have no access to these documents.<sup>1</sup> A minor amendment to this act was effected with the RTI Act of 2005, till then for nearly for fifty seven years after independence India's democratic system was carrying the colonial Act without any change. Further some of the draconian law such as AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) is in force in the north eastern part of India and Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>2</sup> The prevalence of such Acts and legislations which is in contravention to fundamental human rights guaranteed in part III, and also against the democratic principles enshrined in the constitution of India.

In the educational field we still practice the colonial method of creating different layers in the society. Those who have access to learn the elite language of English have a better position in administration and governance than their less fortunate counterparts who study in their native language. This anomaly in the educational system is well reflected in the higher bureaucracy of India. Though there are provisions for reservation of post in government services including higher bureaucracy the representation of backward classes, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are not in proportion to their population even after seventy two years of independence.

Again the rural development programmes and strategies are initiated and implemented by the bureaucracy who has little knowledge about the local requirements of the rural people settled in various regions. The beneficiaries of any rural development programme except the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MNREGP) are identified and implemented by the bureaucrats. Though the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitution amendment Acts<sup>3</sup> propose democratic decentralization, in actual practice, the panchayati raj institutions are functioning without adequate resources or administrative mandate. In tune with the colonial administration the district collector wield all administrative power in the district administration. The administrative machinery is entangled with rules and procedures and it is neither

effective nor efficient to find solution to the problem confronted by common man in their daily life.

The official statistics of the government of India shows that the economy has grown at an average annual rate of about six percent for the last five years. However, the gap between rich and the poor is widening at an alarming rate. India's recent economic growth has been attributed to the service industry, but sixty percent of the workforce remains in agriculture. The small farmers are still entangled in debt trap and forced to commit suicide.<sup>4</sup> It shows that the benefits ongoing economic reforms process is not reaching the rural area where the majority of the population struggle to earn a livelihood. The economic disparity between the haves and have-nots is further aggravated with social inequality prevalent in the Indian society.

Though formally the caste system has been abolished in India, informally it is practiced in the Indian society. In the prevailing social hierarchy in India, the lower castes are treated inferior. The slow pace of social mobility in the Indian social system shows that caste determines one's social status in the society. It appears that the effects of caste system and the practice of apartheid policy are same. The prevalence of apartheid like caste system and economic inequality in India also adversely affects good governance.

Those who are socially and economically deprived cannot expect good governance. They further landed up in a vicious circle from which they cannot come out. The social inequality augment poverty and this in turn leads to illiteracy and illiteracy leads to unemployment. Therefore under the prevailing socio economic inequality condition those who are backward and poor cannot come out of this vicious circle. This again point towards the denial of human rights to those who are born in socially and economically backward class family. Low family socio economic level and low level of education are examples of social determinants that negatively influence good governance. It appears that the human right based development approach would helps to address the problem of socio economic inequality and good governance in India.

### **Bureaucracy and Economic Development in India**

According to Fred W Riggs bureaucracy and economic development are intimately interdependent.<sup>5</sup> Similar views were expressed by a number of social scientists.<sup>6</sup> An effective and efficient bureaucratic structure is sine quo non for progress especially in developing countries.

Therefore effective and efficient bureaucracy has been considered as an important agency to promote and sustain the development process. However a close look in the actual functioning of bureaucracy in India shows that it fails to incorporate the ideals for which it has been established.

Indira Gandhi the former Prime Minister of India disgustingly referred to the administrative machinery as 'the stumbling block in the country's progress' and reiterated the necessity of creating an administrative cadre committed to national objectives and responsive to Indian social needs. She found in 'committed bureaucracy' the answer to the ills of Max Weber<sup>7</sup> concept of bureaucratic neutrality that crippled the development process in India due to lack of commitment. She had an earnest belief that only a committed bureaucracy can bring about the desired change in India.

However, the committed bureaucracy created another major problem as observed by the Vohra Committee Report of 1993 which was set up to look into the criminalization of politics.<sup>8</sup> The report observed that the mafia and the criminals enjoyed the patronage of politicians and the protection of government functionaries. It pointed out how the nexus was virtually running a parallel government, pushing the state apparatus into irrelevance. The illicit nexus between bureaucracy and political executive poses another major threat to good governance in India.

Too many rules and procedures not only lead to corruptions but also people losing faith in the administration. The former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi himself admitted that the administrative cost for implementing people welfare programme is seventy five percent of the actual allocations. That means if rupees 100 is to reach a beneficiary by means of subsidy or other welfare fund rupees 75 has been spend as administrative cost and the actual beneficiary gets rupees 25 after a prolonged delay. Thus most of the welfare programmes aimed at poverty alleviation are not reaching the actual beneficiaries.

The higher bureaucracy in India is trained mainly to maintain records and follow procedures in the administrative system which were developed and practiced during the colonial rule. They are not exposed to the real ground situations. Most of them come from urban elite family background. They are not aware of the problems of seventy per cent of the population who dwells in rural area. Therefore, it is not surprising that they are indifferent to the aspirations of the rural people. The bureaucrats treat the ordinary people as their subjects who live at their



mercy. The concept of civil servants as the servants of the people is yet to emerge in the Indian administrative system. This again adversely affects the prospects of good governance in India.

The indifferent attitude of bureaucracy towards the people is visible not only at the higher bureaucratic levels but also at the middle and lower levels. The problems of the people were addressed not from individual case by case basis but by age old colonial system based rules and procedures. Those who approach the government departments for various purposes were treated with suspicion. This again is rooted in the administrative system during the colonial rule. The mistrust which prevails between the civil servants and the ordinary people is a major problem before good governance in India.

The age old Colonial Acts, rules and procedures need to be changed at the earliest. Minor changes or half hearted attempt towards such changes have little impact. Any move towards good governance in India has to incorporate measures to sensitize the bureaucracy to address the people's problem in a friendly and positive manner. A genuine democratic decentralization is to be effected.

In a democratic system delay in taking decisions add to the problem of effective and efficient administration. The state service delivery is an important component of development strategies. However the present service delivery in India is not up to the expectation of the people. That is why India still confronted with the same problem such as poverty, illiteracy and unemployment etc. even after the implementation of eleven five year plan since independence. One of the focal point of all five year plans since independence has been eradication of poverty. However, even after sixty four years of planned economic development programmes framed and implemented through a colonial based bureaucracy nearly one third of the population still remain below poverty line. Therefore, one of the options is to initiate a rights based development approach because under this approach situation analysis is used to identify immediate, underlying, and basic causes of development problems. Again under this approach people are recognized as key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services and participation of people is considered as both a means and a goal.

The 'compulsions of coalition government' and lack an able political leadership with providence too adversely affect good governance in India. The existence of draconian laws such as AFSPA reminiscence of the colonial days is still prevalent in some parts of India. The judiciary

which acts as the custodian of fundamental rights of the citizen is overloaded with pending cases which leads to delay in delivery of justice. Thus the institutional mechanisms established under the democratic system in independent India are not properly functioning to satisfy the aspirations of the poor people who constitute a major portion of the population.

### **Good Governance in India and Economic Inequality**

The official statistics of the government of India shows that the economy has grown at an average annual rate of about six percent for the last five years, reducing poverty by 10 percent. However, 40 percent of the world's poor still live in India, and 27 percent of the country's population continues to live below the poverty line. More than one third live on less than a dollar a day, and 80 percent live on less than two dollars a day. India's recent economic growth has been attributed to the service industry, but 60 percent of the workforce remains in agriculture.<sup>9</sup>

The disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', is increasing at an alarming rate. The technology professionals are accumulating wealth and living in luxury. The cities are growing in all directions and farmlands are being acquired to build luxury townships, golf courses, five star hotels, and clubs. The poor farmers get paid off, and are forced to move further away from the town where there are no infrastructural facilities like water supply, transport and electricity. While on the one side India is growing as an IT superpower, on the other side everyone turns a blind eye to the majority of the population who live in rural area, untouched by the economic growth.

It is quite obvious that India's recent economic growth has not trickled down to the bottom. For the poor, lack of basic health, education and skill development mean that not only are they in a miserable condition today, there is not much hope for the future either. The official statistics below further support this statement.

1. 27.5 percent of Indians live below the national income poverty line.
2. More than 60 percent of women are chronically poor, as are 43 percent of Scheduled Tribes and 36 percent of Scheduled Caste groups.
3. More than 90 percent of the overall workforce is employed in the informal economy; 96 percent of women are in the informal economy.

4. 48.6 percent of farmer households are in debt, and only 27 percent have access formal credit.
5. 296 million people are illiterate and 233 million are undernourished.
6. 254 per 100,000 live births is the maternal mortality rate and is an indicator not only of the quality of maternal health care services but also of the level of empowerment of women.<sup>10</sup>

The basic question is that can a country where one third of the population are illiterate and living below poverty line be expecting good governance. While India's educated elite are revealing in their new found status on the global stage, inequitable distribution of wealth and opportunities are shaking the very foundation of India's economy. The prevailing economic inequality therefore had an adverse impact on good governance in India.

The governmental structures have so far contented themselves by chalking out only strategies for promotion of economic and social rights since independence. Even those strategies have hardly borne any fruits because of rampant corruption at the political executive as well as permanent executive levels. The UN estimates shows that millions of people in India live in a state of abject poverty, without food, shelter, employment, health care and education. According to UNDP Report of 2010, Indian society is a highly inequitable society where the richest 10 per cent consume 33.5 per cent of resources and the poorest 10 per cent get only 3.5 per cent of resources. Around 233 million people are chronically hungry. Around 51 per cent of the population does not have sustainable access to affordable essential drugs. Infant Mortality rate is 68 per 1000; under 5 child mortality rate is 93 per 1000; 26 per cent children are underweight; and 24 per cent of the population is undernourished. The maternal mortality ratio is 440 per 1, 00,000 and 72 per cent of the population does not have access to improved sanitation.<sup>11</sup>

It is the prevailing grave economic inequality which leads to the identification of three India by the Department for International Development (DFID) in Britain that: global India, developing India and poorest India.<sup>12</sup> Global India is the India of the new service industries, a growing industrial sector, and large farmers. Global India is prosperous, linked to the global economy and reaping the benefits of globalization. Developing India is the India of small farmers, micro-enterprises and village industries, with some links to the modern

economy, but with low productivity and limited access to public services. Poorest India is the India of the marginal farmer, landless agricultural labourers and urban slum dwellers, where people live in extreme poverty and basic public services are mostly absent.<sup>13</sup>

The Indian Parliament adopted 86th Constitutional Amendment whereby elementary education has been made fundamental right in the Constitution.<sup>14</sup> Despite the 86th Constitutional Amendment; around 35 per cent of the population is still illiterate. About 50 million children are out of school. Even where enrolment is high, the dropout rate is over 50 per cent by the time the students move over to high school. Gender Parity Index is 0.82. It means for every 1000 boys enrolled, there are 820 girls seeking admissions. A country with such an unequal distribution of opportunities and wealth can ever promise good governance?

### **Good Governance in India and Social Inequality**

India was the first country in 1946, to raise its voice against apartheid at the UN, and played a leading role towards its abolition. The Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and affirms the right to equality, including equality before law, and equality of opportunity in matters of employment as fundamental rights. The Indian Criminal Code and the Indian Penal Code contain provisions which prohibit racial discrimination and dissemination of ideas which promote disharmony on various grounds including race.

In the international area India played an active part in the drafting of the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and was among its early signatories. India considers that besides theories of racial superiority, that are a legacy of the colonial period, the other sources and causes of racism and racial discrimination must be addressed. These include glaring economic disparities amongst various parts of the world which sustain and strengthen racist attitudes; the onslaught of bigotry, chauvinism and violence on diversity, pluralism and tolerance; absence of democracy, constitutional order and rule of law; political concept in which foreigners are regarded as rivals or competitors and a threat to local prosperity, culture and identity; immigration, citizenship and refugee laws with racist overtones and political platforms such as neo-Nazism that are based on race related hatred and discrimination. India also voices its concern on the policies of oppression of national, sectarian and linguistic minorities.

### **Caste System in India – Is it apartheid?**

Even though India championed the cause of apartheid in all international forums apartheid like social stigma, caste system, is still prevalent in India. This appears to be one of the reasons that recently the officials of the Ministry of External Affairs in India strongly rejected the opinion of the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that there is similarity between apartheid and caste system in India. Though there is much similarity between apartheid and caste system prevailing in India, the acceptance of these proposition would put India in a very embarrassing situation in international forums. That is the reason behind the fact that India is against equating apartheid with caste system in international forums.<sup>15</sup> The Indian delegation appeared before the UN human rights forum refused to share data on the steps taken to end caste system in India. Instead, India argued that descent based discrimination does not constitute racial discrimination under the specific UN treaty, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It was India that suggested the definition in the Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination be expanded for descent based discrimination to include caste when the treaty was being drafted. India's current position simply disavows its own past stand on the subject.

Though formally the caste system has been abolished in India, informally it is practiced in the Indian society. In the prevailing social hierarchy in India, the lower castes are treated inferior in the society. The slow pace of social mobility in the Indian social system shows that caste determines one's social status in the society. The effects of caste system and the practice of apartheid policy are same. The only difference is that while apartheid policy had the official support, caste system has only the informal or societal support. Thus, with regard to the effects caste system in Indian society, and the apartheid or racial discrimination practiced by the Whites in South Africa, there is much similarity between these two social evils. The existing caste system in the Indian society appears to be one of the causes for low profile involvement of India on the human rights issues in international forums. In this context it is interesting to note that the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution B R Ambedkar had rightly observed on the eve of the introduction of the new constitution of India that "on the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950 we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality". The prevalence of apartheid like caste system and economic inequality in India also adversely affects good governance. It appears that the prevailing socio economic inequality problem can be better addressed through human rights based development approach.

## **Human Rights Based Development Approach towards Good Governance**

The human rights based development approach offers the possibility for progressive interventions of the state into the social economic inequality in three ways. First, International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination signed by most countries in the world and thus can be considered to embody **universal values** and aspirations. Second, human rights conventions place a legal obligation upon states. This view was endorsed by Mary Robinson, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. She said “Ha human rights approach adds value because it provides a normative framework of obligations that has the legal power to render governments **accountable**”.<sup>16</sup> Third, human rights-based language can help to **direct policy**. It shifts the focus of debate from the personal failures of the “poor” to the failure of macro-economic structures and policies implemented by nation states and international bodies (World Trade Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.) to eradicate poverty. Hence, poverty in this context is no longer described as a “social problem” but a “**violation of rights**”.<sup>17</sup>

The rights based approach also helps to address the problem of socio economic inequality and good governance in India. Those who are socially and economically deprived cannot expect good governance. They further landed up in a vicious circle from which they cannot come out easily. The social inequality augment poverty and this in turn leads to illiteracy and illiteracy leads to unemployment. This is well reflected when one examines the unfilled vacancies reserved for backward classes and scheduled castes for the want of qualified candidates. Therefore under the prevailing socio economic inequality condition those who are backward and poor cannot come out of this vicious circle. This again point towards the denial of human rights to those who are born in socially and economically backward class family. Low family socio economic level and low level of education are examples of social determinants that negatively influence good governance. The programme initiated under inclusive growth appears to be based on the human rights based approach towards development.

Again the IT enabled e governance makes the administrative system more transparent, accountable and effective. The legislative measures such as Right to Information Act and Citizen Charter, Right to Public service Right to Food etc.<sup>18</sup> are some initiative towards reforms in administrative system towards good governance. Another positive trend

in this area is the role of civil society organizations in the governance of the country is being increasingly visible and acceptable.

However, minor changes and reforms in certain areas are not enough to realize good governance in India. What is needed is a major change in the administrative system and governance. However, the Indian bureaucracy, especially the higher bureaucracy is grown very powerful to nip in the bud any reforms initiated by the political executive. The weak political executive always travels through the beaten track shown by the permanent executive as that path is easier and less risky. The 'compulsions of coalition' and lack of a long term perspective along with bureaucratic inefficiency adversely affect India's move towards good governance. The existence of social and economic inequality in India appears to have further aggravated the problem of good governance. In such a situation the human rights based development approach<sup>19</sup> appears to be the best means towards good governance in India. For all programmes under this approach focus on marginalized, disadvantaged, and excluded groups. Moreover this approach also envisages the participation of the people both a means and end.

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- [1] This Official Secrets Act 1923 enacted on 2 April 1923 during the British period, and it is nearly ninety one years old. See [www. india.gov.in/allimpfrms/allacts/3314.pdf](http://www.india.gov.in/allimpfrms/allacts/3314.pdf) 12/12/2011
- [2] The AFSPA is in force in most of the North Eastern States and Jammu & Kashmir. This act empowers the armed forces to arrest and conduct search and even kill people who are suspects anti national activist in view of the armed forces officers. Though there is worldwide protest against this inhuman law by the human right activist the government is not ready to repeal this act mainly because of compulsion from security forces. In all international forums concerned with human rights protection and promotion India was criticized for the enforcement of such anti-democratic laws.
- [3] The Indian Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 came into effect from 24th April 1993. The revitalization of Panchayati Raj manifested through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment owes its origin to Prime Minister of Rajiv Gandhi. He said that "If our district administration is not sufficiently responsive, the basic reason is that it is not only sufficiently representative. With the decay of Panchayati Raj Institutions, the administration has got isolated from the people thus dulling its sensitivity to the needs of the people". The 73rd & 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Acts it was expected that PRIs come up under the Acts would be devolved functions, finances and the functionaries to enable them to emerge as institutions of self-government. The PRIs are expected to play a

Suresh R

multifaceted role. They are vehicles for political education and training in leadership. They have to be responsive to the needs of the community, impart values of equality and liberty, be transparent, accountable and efficient and to provide opportunities for mass participation in the process of development. The Problems and Prospects of Good Governance...

135 [www.planningcommission.nic.in/aboutus/committee/wrkgrp/wg\\_decn.pdf](http://www.planningcommission.nic.in/aboutus/committee/wrkgrp/wg_decn.pdf) 12/12/2011.

- [4] The Hindu daily dated 20 March 2014.
- [5] Fred W Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries, 1964, pp. 243-59.
- [6] Ferrel Heady for instance believes that a highly efficient well organized and effective bureaucracy is first necessity for development in developing countries. Report of Personnel Administration, Administrative Reforms Commission, Govt. of India 1969 p 1
- [7] Max Weber's bureaucracy is characterized by hierarchical organization, delineated lines of authority in a fixed area of activity, action taken on the basis of recorded written rules, and rules are implemented by neutral officials, career advancement depends on technical qualifications judged by organization, not individual.
- [8] The Vohra Committee submitted its report in 1993. It maintains that the activities of crime syndicates/mafia organizations which had developed links with and were being protected by government functionaries and political personalities. The Times of India, 13 May 2012.
- [9] The Economic Times 11 Jan 2012
- [10] *Ibid.*
- [11] The UNDP Report 2010 [www.hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013](http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013) 12/12/2011
- [12] The Department for International Development (DFID Annual Report) 2007
- [13] *Ibid.*
- [14] The Indian Parliament adopted 86th Constitutional Amendment whereby elementary education has been made fundamental right in the Constitution.
- [15] Suresh R Foreign Policy and Human Rights: An Indian Perspective, Madhav Books Gurgaon Haryana 2009 p 33
- [16] The UNHCHR statement by Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights World Summit on Sustainable Development Plenary Session Johannesburg, South Africa 29th August 2002. [www.un.org/events/wssd/statements/unhchrE.htm](http://www.un.org/events/wssd/statements/unhchrE.htm) 12/12/2011.
- [17] The Extent and Nature of Absolute Poverty Final Report to DFID:R8382
- [18] The Right to Information Act 2005 empowers the people to seek information on any matter except some documents related to defence,



## Good Governance in India: The Imperatives of ...

external affairs etc. Right to Public Service and Citizen Charter empowers the people to get certain services from the government offices in a time bound manner.

- [19] In the human rights based development approach people are recognized as key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services. The participation of people is both a means and a goal. The strategies of rights based approach are empowering. Again under this approach both outcomes and processes are monitored and evaluated. All programmes under this approach focus on marginalized, disadvantaged, and excluded groups. The development process is locally owned. The programmes aim to reduce disparity. Under this approach both top-down and bottom-up approaches are used in synergy. The situation analysis is used to identify immediate, underlying, and basic causes of development problems.

# Panchayati Raj Institutions and Good Governance in India

Sudhir Singh

Assertions in favour of democratic decentralization are often founded upon the notion that the democratization and empowerment of local political bodies will create institutions which will be more accountable to local citizens and more appropriate to local needs and preferences. However, international experience has shown that even the most ambitious attempts at decentralization have failed to overcome regional and local dimensions of poverty and inequality. Moreover, the power to decide local development initiatives is often highly dependent on a state apparatus that respect the autonomy of local political institutions.

Because of its size and its relatively ambitious efforts to decentralize government, India provides an important context for understanding the ways in which decentralization can improve the performance and accountability of local government institutions. In 1993, the Government of India passed a series of constitutional reforms, designed to democratize and empower local political bodies – the *Panchayats*. Thenceforth, the experience varied in the attempts at *Gram Swaraj* (or village self-rule).

In 1993, these constitutional reforms intended to empower and democratize India's rural representative bodies – the *Panchayats*. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Constitution formally recognized a third tier of government at the sub-State level, thereby creating the legal conditions for local self-rule – or *Panchayati Raj*. Early experiences have also revealed considerable uncertainty and confusion about the precise political, administrative and fiscal powers Panchayats have in relation to the States, line ministries, and local user groups. This in part reflects the fact that the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment gave the State governments considerable autonomy to interpret and implement the constitutional reforms.

India, of course, is not alone in this process. Decentralization has emerged as a dominant trend in world politics. In 1998, the World Bank estimated that 12 out of the 75 developing and transitional countries with populations greater than 5 million had embarked on a

process of political devolution.<sup>1</sup> At the heart of this transformation is a number of complex yet inter-related themes. One is an ideological shift, in which the legitimacy of central state-led development has been challenged on the grounds that it produces systems of governance that undermine national economic performance and effective public policy.<sup>2</sup> The second is a (remarkably widespread) political agenda, which asserts that the decentralization of public administration and the introduction of locally elected bodies will produce systems of governance that are better able to meet the needs of poor and politically marginal groups in society. A third and related theme suggests that democratic decentralization is a political strategy that national élites have used to maintain legitimacy and control in the face of political disintegration. Here it can be argued that economic liberalization, political regionalism and the rise of powerful inter- and sub-national actors have weakened the traditional nation state created the conditions under which more local identities could emerge.<sup>3</sup>

Assertions are also in favor of wider critique of central state planning, which holds that large and centrally-administered bureaucracies represent an inefficient and potentially destructive means of allocating resources (and generating wealth) within society. Two assertions are generally used to substantiate this claim. One argues that central state agencies lack the 'time and place knowledge' to implement policies and programmes that reflect people's real needs and preferences. The second and related assertion is that time and place gaps give local officials unlimited ability to distribute resources and extract 'rent' as they see fit. Such outcomes are believed to be particularly prone in poor countries, where government represents a vital source of wealth, and mechanisms to ensure accountable governance are often poorly enforced. In theory, decentralization would undermine these opportunities by creating institutional arrangements that formalize the relationship between citizens and the state, giving the former the authority to impose sanctions (such as voting, recourse to higher-level authorities) on the latter. Decentralization is also thought to create the conditions for a more pluralist political arrangement, in which competing groups can voice and institutionalize their interests in local democratic forums. Finally, it is argued that decentralization creates institutions that are more amenable to local needs and preferences.

However, a problem that is well traced in the literature on decentralization is that the devolution of power will not necessarily improve the performance and accountability of local government. Indeed, in many cases, decentralization has simply empowered local

élites to capture a larger share of public resources, often at the expense of the poor. Reflecting on these relatively long-standing problems, an important strand of scholarship in the decentralization literature has argued that the underlying distribution of assets and entitlements will have an important bearing on the extent to which marginal groups are able to take advantage of the mechanisms and opportunities created by decentralization, and improve their ability to gain access to the resources provided by the bureaucratic state. Within rural areas (which are often the central focus of decentralization), such assets and entitlements would include land, land tenure, formal property rights, and full rights of citizenship. An important hypothesis that emerges from this scholarship is that societies in which the distribution of assets and entitlements is relatively equal will produce more effective and accountable forms of governance.

### **Decentralization & Good Governance**

In ancient times when monarchy was only mode of governance and it was known for centralization, Kautilya insisted for decentralization. In modern times J.S.Mill had advocated for decentralization and good governance. Mill provided two important arguments for local democracy; first, that local political institutions are 'a school of political capacity', making citizens capable of genuine and informed participation and second that such institutions would be more efficient if informed by local interests and local knowledge. Local democracy, thus became a way of enabling both participation and deliberations, of effecting a form of direct democracy, and so imparting a richer and more immediate meaning to the democratic ideal than the rather minimal conception of it implied in the idea of elections. Another argument for decentralization is that local based people are well versed about the problems of the locality therefore formulations and implementations of the plans are yielding better results. The people, on this account, are the best judges of their needs and aspirations, and decentralization ensures that those who are likely to be affected by decisions participate in the making of them.<sup>4</sup> In the Indian context, the ideal of local democracy, as incorporated in the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments, has been invested with these hopes and more.<sup>5</sup>

Decentralization is one of the most important reforms of the past generation, both in terms of number of countries affected and the potentially deep implications for the nature and quality of governance. A decade ago, estimates of the number of its experiments ranged from 80 per cent of the world countries to effectively all of them.<sup>6</sup> According

## Panchayati Raj Institutions and Good Governance in India

to Campbell in Latin America “local governments” begun spending 10-50 per cent of central government revenues. He calls this “the quiet revolution” and argues that it has generated a new model of governance based on innovative, capable leadership, high popular participation, and a new implicit contract governing local taxation.<sup>7</sup> Decentralization schemes across the rich and poor countries are intended to improve governance. Britain which is an icon of unitary state model has also adopted decentralization to ensure governance. It is aimed at “re-balancing power between citizen and government in order to move us away from a centralized Britain to a more democratic, decentralized plural state.”<sup>8</sup> In India we have coalition in states and at the centre also since 1989 election until 2014 every central government was a coalition government. It has given a say to the regional parties to contribute into the formulations of decisions which is friendly to state and thus pave the way of governance. Just before 1988 it was a Congress dominated centre and the state system minus 1-2 abbreviations and the Sarkaria Commission was constituted in 1983 to ensure justice between the centre and the states particularly for the justice-based division of resources and the prevention of the misuse of central laws particularly Article 356.

Many state governments had been dismissed by the centre while using Article 356 right from maiden communist regime in Kerala in 1957 till the Bombai decision came in the mid of 1990s.

But today no regional parties are singing the saga of discrimination from the centre despite different party dominated coalition is ruling at the centre. (NDA vs UPA rule since 1998). In this way Indian system has become more federal despite the fact remains that intend of the constitution is not like that. It is due to growth and sustenance of the regional parties and its say in government formation at the centre. Indirectly it has proved a push factor for good governance and decentralization of power. Another important push factor is the growing clout of the judicial activism. Indian judiciary has even superseded American judiciary in activism since last 29 years coincided with coalition rule at the centre and the states. Although this phenomenal growth of judiciary has been controversial but the fact remains that it has given a new flip to the urge of good governance and decentralization.

Some countries have party systems that give national elites dominance, while others give priority to local elites, and still others balance the power of the two. Where national elites dominate parties, local leaders can be forced to acquiesce to institutional changes that compromise

Sudhir Singh

their powers. Examples include Mexico under the Institutional Revolutionary Party during 1929-2000, and India under the Congress Party during 1947-96. By contrast where local elites have dominance, the party system can be used to force national elites to accept sub national abuse of common pool resources.<sup>9</sup>

### **Good Governance & Inclusion**

The 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan put its philosophy as inclusion and 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan philosophy had been sustainable inclusive development. PM Modi ( 2014 onwards) has coined the slogan '*Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas*', it means to include all for the development for all. At the outset of 21<sup>st</sup> century India has achieved many landmarks at developmental plank but there are gamut of aspects where India could be compared with low income countries. The relevance of social exclusion has been incorporated into the development lexicon in a number of ways. The term "social exclusion" was first used in France in the 1970s to distinguish the excluded who then comprised a wide variety of people; disabled, suicidal and elderly persons, and abused children, among others. <sup>10</sup> coined by anthropologist Oscar Lewis , the term 'culture of poverty' refers to a unique value system of the poor. It was Lewis's belief that the poor are socialized into believing they deserve to be poor, leading to low aspirations , low effort and inability to escape poverty. Since then it has been used in the social science literature to distinguish from and add to the concept of poverty and to denote rules of exchange and practices that keep groups out; the term can also sometime mean different things to different people.

Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen calls these the "relational roots of deprivation, whereby membership in a particular group (women, lower castes, indigenous people, or persons with disabilities) limits the "functioning" of individuals to acquire or use their capabilities.<sup>11</sup> Social inclusion is therefore not about outcomes alone, but about the process that leads to these outcomes. Poverty and social exclusion are two different things. Poverty focuses only on an absolute measure of individual well being; income, consumption, or human development. In contrast, social exclusion focuses on process on non-economic means that exclude certain groups from equal access to basic goods and services that, in turn, determine their well being. Exclusion involves unequal access to full exercise and protection of rights and liberties, including, sometimes, the denial of basic human rights. Even today caste system despite much legislation is prevailing across the country. Ambedkar in

his famous book *Annihilation of Caste* (1936) had opined that caste will be annihilated but till date it is existing and thus negating the central requirements of inclusion and sustainable development.

Nandan Nilekani has stressed about positiveness to achieve about caste free inclusion. According to him

“ I still think that after a long and convoluted path, after many a stumble and wrong turn , a different kind of moment seems to be upon us. There is a sense of hope across the country, which I believe is universal. There is a momentum for change.”<sup>12</sup>

But in practice since the passage of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments structural positive changes have taken place in this direction. One third seats of PRIs have been reserved for the SC & STs. It has transformed the rural sector and has given a free equality of opportunity. It has also paved the way of governance and accountability.

It is argued that the purpose and objectives of decentralization in India is basically driven by two factors. First, decentralization through representation and voice for the disadvantaged groups; and second, effective , because of more participatory, development. It could also be argued that while the first has been realized to a greater degree than the second, there remains serious constrains on the realization, and institutionalization of both these goals. It has already been stressed that inefficient devolution of functions, excessive dependence on state and central governments , and the dominance of mainstream administrative departments and functionaries are among the factors contributing to the poor performance of the PRIs. It is need of the hour to provide safeguards to the PRIs from these lacuna and strengthen its structure through some local tax collection as its own mobilization of funds. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments clearly intended that PRIs should be institutions of self government through which the people would participate in the process of planning for economic development and social justice , as also in the implementation of schemes for this purposes. The structures designed to facilitate this process is three layers of PRIs (the Gram Panchayat, the Panchayat Samiti and the Zila Parishad). The bedrock of this pyramid structure is gram sabha , composed of all citizens eligible to vote.

### **Public Accountability & Corruption**

Democracy is supposed to provide a master position to people. During monarchy the king was insisting that he/she is the representative of

Sudhir Singh

the god on the planet therefore he has no accountability for the people and he/she is accountable to the almighty god. However, Kautilya despite working under a monarch laid the foundation of modern democracy when he declared that happiness of the people are the happiness of the king. But in practice majority of the kings were embedded with the doctrine of divine power and thus negated people from participation. In contrast modern democracy is intended to make people as the custodian of the system and ensure welfare state instead of the police state.

The question of public accountability has been treated far more extensively than that of political competition in the decentralization literature. The theory of decentralization and public accountability go back to Mill, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and de Tocqueville, who debated the optimum size and conformation of political units that served the interests of their citizens. The modern treatment of this question is perhaps best represented by the widely cited Wallis and Oates, who argue that decentralization can make government more responsive to local needs by “ tailoring levels of consumption to the preferences of smaller , more homogenous groups.”<sup>13</sup> The PRIs have brought accountability within the domain of the public at least in the rural sector due to uniform expansion of its structures since last 21 years. It is an open secret that at the upper level we have not been able to ensure people participation to the large extent but at the village level at the same time the PRIs have been able to ensure people participation and accountability. Growing accountability at the grassroots level has therefore curtailed the prevalence of corruption in a massive way. It could not be claimed that with the introduction of the PRIs corruption has been eliminated but of course it has been radically reduced. This trend has put a pressure at the national level as well for zero tolerance for corruption and entire transparent government.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Inequality remains a persistent challenge in many economics today. In Asia and the Pacific , inequality has risen between 1993-2003 despite growth rates that have lowered poverty incidence.<sup>14</sup> But at the same time it is widely debated due to expansion of global media and the civil society. The process of globalization has further added a new flip in this prevailing debate. Inequality has become a major item on the development agenda in recent decades. After decades of rapid economic growth around the globe, economic gains have been threatened by the global financial crisis of 2008 and the ongoing euro zone crisis. While



## Panchayati Raj Institutions and Good Governance in India

economic theory has always maintained that growth is a necessary but not sufficient condition for improving standard of living, the recent economic crisis have reinforced this view even in developing countries. Concept such as equity, fairness, and justice in the distribution of economic benefits are no longer in the realm of philosophers and theorists. Rather, they are now in the forefront of policy design and economic reform in both developed and the developing countries. Globally too there is immense prevalence of dissent against the regimes even democratic which has remained under performed. In India too, all parochial elements of electoral politics are withering away and issue of governance is slowing but steadily taking root as the determiner of voting behaviour.

In a competitive democracy, by contrast, we can understand the argument that decentralization re-orientes accountability incentives downward to voters as an opening-access argument- because more public officials beholden to more citizens, effectively incorporating more people and more information into a society's governance. Thus the key elements that allows decentralization to spur close to open access transition is open, competitive democracy. Subjecting public office to elections is what changes the incentives politicians throughout the system face when that system is decentralized. Election less decentralization does not have the same effect.

Former PM Rajiv Gandhi stated in the Parliament in 1985 that out of every rupee only 17 paisa is going at the grass root level. It means that 83 paisa is evaporating in the air. Today after 33 years of that statement, PRIs have ensured that at least 2/3 allocated resources reaches at the grass root level. We have witnessed the implementation of decentralization since last three decades. We have already adopted uniformity of periodical elections and rights of these grass root bodies. Despite many odds and less support from the bureaucracy and the political leadership, it has transformed local governance. Beside it has ensured participatory nature of democracy. Women representation has also ensured. There is immense need to consolidate the process. The concept of human development is not a new concept but it has roots in Indian philosophy. The PRIs experiment has also ensured relative human development at the grass root level and in addition has played a major role in the capacity building of the vulnerable groups.

Amartya Sen stressed that weaker sectors of India needs to be taken into mainstreaming process of development then only real progress on human development plan could be possible. Despite all high voltage

Sudhir Singh

saga of progress, it is an open secret that one third of our population is not availing the amenities which they must avail being the citizen of the country. Majority among them live in rural sector. Mass level migration from village to urban sectors is self explanatory. We have to make our village autonomous and for that we have to revise our planning process according to Gandhian concept of centrality of village as the cardinal source of strength to our economy. PRIs have done commendable job in this direction and its success rate has been quite satisfactory. But we have to remove gamut of bureaucratic hurdles which is creating problems in the service delivery mechanism of the PRIs. After two and half decades of its compliance on uniform basis throughout the country there is utmost need to strengthen it at grass root institutions.

Since the adoption of LPG process, India has done well and slated to sustain the process. India is projected to grow at 7.5% in 2019 and 7.7% in 2020, an impressive lead (over one percentage point) ahead of China's estimated growth of 6.2% in these two years, according to latest data provided by the IMF.<sup>15</sup> Many global studies have come out with the conclusion that better governance facilitated this process. Globally also it is conducive for India due to many prevailing security architectures.

It is estimated by gamut of estimates recently that by 2028 India will be third biggest global economy after pushing Japan.<sup>16</sup> Being an Indian we must be proud of its realization. But the billion-dollar question remains unanswered that without mainstreaming huge rural sector in the mainstreaming of development, it seems to remain an imagination.

Kautilya has stated 2400 years ago that the kings must nurture their subjects as a new born baby is being nurtured by his/her parents. Rural India constitutes roughly two third of our population, they need to bring at par with their urban brethren than only real notion of sustainable development will be realized. We have adopted democracy as mode of governance therefore we have to provide basic amenities to all citizen and further delegation of power will be ensuring the process. It has the capability to develop the rural sector at par with the urban sector and in addition could slow down the massive migration from the rural to urban sectors. The realization of better development at the rural sector will push Indian economy towards more resourceful and in that scenario, our country will achieve the real notion of Gandhi's Talisman or modern version of Sustainable Development.

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