

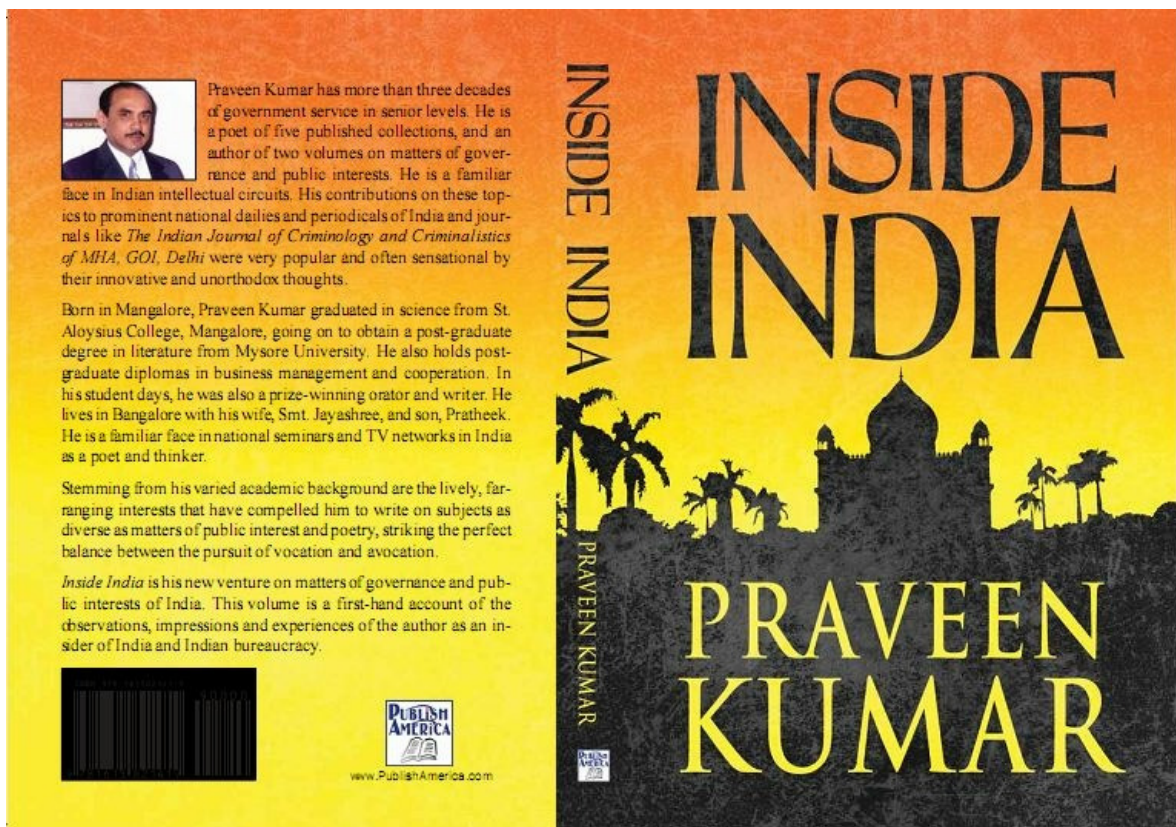
Samples from

INSIDE INDIA

On public affairs in post independent India

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Publisher **PublishAmerica, LLP, Maryland, USA**



PREFACE

The Hong Kong-based Political & Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) in a 12-page report on a business survey of 12 economies of Asia released on June 3, 2009 where 1,274 expatriates working in these countries were interviewed showed Indian bureaucracy at the bottom at the 12 position as the least efficient bureaucracy after Philippines and Indonesia in 10 and 11 positions respectively. The report says that working with the country's civil servants in India is a "slow and painful" process and it continues to report that "They are a power centre in their own right at both the national and state levels, and are extremely resistant to reform that affects them or the way they go about their duties". This content is also the theme of this volume, "Inside India".

The cause of the malady is analysed and remedies are suggested in the article, 'The Crumbling Steelframe of India' of this volume. The deterioration is a post-independence phenomenon. The once steelframe of Indian bureaucracy of the British vintage gradually crumbled to its extant putridity under the sad auspice of its corrupt and incompetent *el patron*, the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) and the deterioration trickled fast downwards in the last six decades to bring India to this sad state of affairs. "Inside India" is the story of this fast rotting situation.

The story in "Inside India" is by an insider, insider in India as well as in Indian bureaucracy for more than thirty-one years at a senior position. This volume is a first hand account of the observations, impressions and experiences of the author as an insider.

Naturally, most illustrations in this volume are from Karnataka police where the author served as a senior police officer for nearly three decades. However, this makes no difference to the over all picture of India as situation is not much different elsewhere.

In spite of well-known notorieties of the degenerates like A.R.Nizamuddin, R.S.Chopra and other scoundrels of the similar ilk in Karnataka police, situation is better there than some of the more notorious state police organizations of India. Their core weakness there lies in sweepingly conforming to the rotten system and bad culture against conscience to cover own tracks. It is mere cowardice of mediocrity and gross selfish interests of ignobility and nothing more. Yet, no way can Karnataka police be called as an efficient, healthy and responsible bureaucratic setup yet.

Faithful assessment must precede reconstruction. This volume is an effort in this direction. Complacency leads to stagnation and is a dangerous indulgence in a rotting situation like India's. This volume is intended to breach the vicious indulgence involved and inspire India to its rich potentialities on the way to much dreamed of world leadership.

India is a civilization of diversities and a culture of contradictions. India's is an inclusive way of life. Along its long history, it saw umpteen falls and rises without losing its innate vitality and always rose from worst quagmires unscathed. This resilience of India underscores its unique heritage spawned by its thoughts and philosophies that perhaps are nearest to the true nature of the universe that the scientific world of today is

engaged in to probe, discover and formulate as the Grand Unification Theory (GUT).
This is the secret of the eternal strength of India.

This resilience of India gives hope. The present fall is not forever. Time of revival shall come. India shall see a better system replace the present corrupt and incompetent UPSC and a healthy administrative system replace the extant inefficient and rogue bureaucracy. This volume, “Inside India” is a small attempt towards this beginning.

I acknowledge with deep humility that this work would not have been possible without the inspiration of my late father Shree R.D.Suvarna who instilled in me right values and a sense of dignity without which I would not have been what I am now. I would be failing in my duty if I fail to express my gratitude to late Shree A.R.Sridharan, IPS (rtd.), former Director General of Police and former Hon'ble member of the Karnataka Administrative Tribunal for his unstinted support and encouragement to my intellectual exercises. He is a rare oasis of pristine values and dignified restraint in the desert of Indian bureaucracy.

I fondly thank M/S PublishAmerica, Maryland, USA who publish this volume and its staff members and all others who contribute to make this volume a success by their devotion, contribution and labour.

June 6, 2009

PK

INDIA AND ALL INDIA SERVICES

Aux grands maux, les grands remèdes. Timely remedy is best. But, belated remedy is better than no remedy at all. Perhaps the greatest among the legacies of the British rule that caught with free-India was its steelframe of the All India Services. Fortunate to India, the Indian political leaders of that vintage in their best wisdom in an age of honesty, humility, integrity and other higher values decided to continue with the All India Services legacy of the British with minor adaptations in spite of the inchoate mad rave to indigenise everything and obliterate all traces of the foreign rule. Kudos to the leaders for their wisdom in keeping an efficient tool of administration intact. But, alas, the euphoria proved to be ephemeral. The rapid degrading of values and passion for excellence and efficiency in India of the post-independent vintage was to progressively obliterate all the advantages of the sound judgement of the whilom leaders. The deterioration was to be complete in the next five decades and we now stand exactly in that compita. The situation calls for les grands remèdes.

Dispensability

The fall was ominous. Every system is bifacial; external structure and internal character d'accord constitute a true system. The advantages of the gestalt of the All India Services of the British vintage was to be bientôt frittered away by the falling values and rising material aspirations of India of the sixties and sinsyne. The All India Services of the post-independent vintage dearly lost in the battle for internal character. Negative selections and recruitment, deviant values and aspirations of its members thus selected and recruited and mismanagement of the All India Services in governmental realms because of its obvious dispensability in terms of excellence and strength of character – all badly contributed for the extant triste state of affairs in the realms of the All India Services.

A major advantage of the All India Services is its all India nature; its members as a plexus from all over India carrying out administrative functions at senior levels throughout the length and breadth of the country give it a sense of oneness and belonging. Another advantage inherent in the concept is the belief that the best minds chosen from all over the country are entrusted with the prime function of the nation-building through the structure of the All India Services. They are commendable concepts indeed and worked to perfection during the British era and perhaps for a decade thereafter. It is distressing to note that the same advantages turned to acute disadvantages in the last five decades in our own hands proving what Churchill said about natives ruling India.

Survival of the Fittest

If a single reason for the steep fall is to be accounted, the albatross can be found squarely fitting in on the lap of the fast disappearance of the ancien regime of pristine values and the accrescently valid concept of the survival of the fittest gaining ground at all levels in the last half century, it be in politics, administration, professions and even social service. Pristine values of grace, integrity, humility, fairness and humane approach are increasingly at a premium. Reaching top by any means is the motto. The gestalt of the All India Services was conceived and designed to overcome exactly this milieu. But, alas, it proved no match to the sweeping sleight of the Indian talent.

Crisis of Material

The primacy of the katabasis necessarily goes to the crisis of material, it be in the members of the All India Services or the selecting and recruiting agency for the services or the governments that manage the services. Right people are not in right positions. None can contend that a vast country like India does not have people of right fortitude, strength of character and creative talent who can withstand the lure of survival instinct at the cost of their conscience, however bad be the milieu around. India does have people of such calibre in its fold even now as it was always. The tragedy is that the agency charged with the sacred responsibility of identifying such talents and selecting, in the deviant

intelligence of its equally mediocre human material that lacks creative depth, is failing the country by doing just the opposite by filtering such talents away as incompatible with the present political dynamics and thereby perpetuating the rotten state of affairs in the country. What India needs at this juncture are men and women who can stand for their conscience *nec cupias nec metuas*.

Vicious Circle

Politics being the art of possible, it is to the credit of the Indian politicians that they did job *extraordinaire* in taking full advantage of the pusillanimous All India Services of the post-independent vintage in the last half century to promote the interests of their own, their political parties and the political field in general though at mammoth cost to the interests of the country, its public morale and its people. The situation has spawned a vicious circle to the advantage of the political masters wherein the All India Services are seized with a crisis of confidence in the popular mind as far as its superior merit, integrity and competence are concerned and in that further helped the politicians to corner the whilom superior services. No state or union territory now needs them. They prefer local talents. Those forced on them by the Central government are sidelined to insignificant jobs unless there are special reasons involving *quid pro quo*. The situation only can add to the parochial and regional sentiments in the country and boost divisive tendencies rather than working as a unifying factor.

The All India Services are fast losing the sheen of their all India nature because of the inadequacies of the agency that makes selections to the services; there is undoubtedly wild demand for superior merit, integrity, efficiency and excellence in running the country and the rare virtues do prove the *aex triplex* of the services. No sane political leader can ignore the need of such rare talents helping in running the country. Sadly, the All India Services not to be that in free India.

Strength of Character

Excellence and courage to stand up to conscience go together. It is these that made the All India Services of the British vintage the steel frame of India. If anything, the extant All India Services lack both. There is nothing like a steep fall. None know it better now than the members of the All India Services. They must double bend to the dictates of criminal nuances of their political masters for survival or face sidelining. Most condescend and rise to glory while a handful resist and perish. The situation needs strength of character kat' exochem to stand up and cleanse the system and can be met only by diligent selections and support by men of true calibre. Sadly India is dearly lacking in this department.

Virtus post Numnos

Situation is extremely bad in public administration even in best of the states of India. A cut of 10% to the concerned minister from every fund released, it be for developmental works or a special law and order programme, is a normal affair and treated as a legitimate cut. It would be followed with other cuts down the line. Any resistance is invitation to be shunted out and sidelined as an inconvenient and problematic candidate. Either you connive in the crime or perish. There is no third choice. It is the case with plump postings also. It is virtus post numnos. Either you bribe and connive in criminal activities with those who count or waste your entire career in insignificant posts. There is no other choice. Most in the extant All India Services willingly oblige and see the glory of their career. They are in majority and call themselves practical. But, practical at what cost? The trend grievously belies the very raison d'être of the All India Services.

How the situation can be saved and the tide reversed? The only way out is restoring the All India Services to its whilom glory of excellence and strength of character. This involves right selection. Excellence and strength of character once around, naturally rally efficiency and integrity around and perforce compel political bosses to see reason and follow the rule of law. Political leaders as zoon politikon, what really they are,

are nothing if not chameleonic to the milieu around as a professional compulsion. It is left to the senior civil servants at the All India Services rank as a group to create right atmosphere as a model of the public service. Political leaders have no option but to fit in to the frame. This is why once the All India Services was called the steelframe of India. Indian constitution makers did provide a right gestalt for that. It is left to us to infuse right character to the system before it is too late.

TIME TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CIVIL

SERVICE

The All India Service were once called the Steel Frame that held India, a country which consisted of diverse political systems, comprising British Indian and many other big and small princely States, together. If India is one today- though in truncated form- the efficiency of its vintage. All India Services is as much responsible for this as the might of the British Empire.

The credit for India having made impressive progress, both in the domestic and international fields and having survived the uncertain, initial years of democracy, under leaders who had no experience of ruling a country of India's size and diversity, also goes to the original All India Services- to its traditions and efficiency, that continued to survive for some years even after Independence.

The sterling performances of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel in the unification of India and the brilliant achievements of Jawaharalal Nehru in the international field are as much the success stories of their civil servant secretaries and advisers as of the leaders themselves.

The fall in standards of the All India Services, in the values of their officers and in their efficiency and performance, is symbolic of the fall India itself has experienced.

The All India Services experienced a setback after Independence. This deterioration was in depth of ideas, quality of performance and honesty of convictions of their officers. With this deterioration, to All India Service are no longer in a class of their own. Its members can no longer claim a distinguished standing in society as the All India Services have been reduced to merely good careers.

The Civil Services had inherited, as a result of their exclusive place in the higher levels of administration, high pay packets and good perquisites, attractive service conditions and an awe-inspiring tradition. But since this was not accompanied by superior performance, the consequence is that the reins of democratic India are now in the hands of people who are in no way superior in terms of intellectual worth, administrative skill or human qualities. This is a tragedy for a democracy struggling to progress.

The British created the All India Services to handle the administration of the country. They recruited talented people, imparted the best possible training to them and invested them with the trust, powers and opportunities to carry out their responsibilities.

They took care of all their personal needs, provided them with many opportunities for growth and surrounded them with a halo of exclusivity by endowing them with high social status and providing them with generous creature comforts.

Independent India needed brilliant people to handle its complex administrative problems and to implement its developmental schemes. It is tragic that India after independence not only failed to realise the importance of maintaining its Steel Frame and improving upon it, but positively contributed to its collapse in a very short span of time.

Indian leaders wanted the All India Service of independent India to break away from the British model they had originally been based on and they gave expression to this desire by altering the name of the Services. It is ironical that the change in name also initiated a steep fall in the quality of the Civil Services.

At present, the Indian Administrative Services is not even a pale shadow of the old Indian Civil Services. The Indian Foreign Service stands nowhere near the brilliant

Indian Political Service and the present Indian Police Service lacks the backbone and professionalism of the good old Indian Police.

A major cause for the disappearance of excellence from the All India Services of independent India was the secret tendency of the new leaders to look at the All India Services as their rivals in running the country, rather than as the backbone of the State. A subtle fear of the All India Services inherited from British India days accompanied by a sense of awe that the services inspired because of the halo worn by its predecessor, stirred the new leaders who made every effort to cut the Civil Services to size and show them their proper place.

SORRY STATE OF AFFAIRS

This occurred together with a fall in the standards of management of the Civil Services because of the failure to recognise the importance of the Civil Services in administering the nation. This fall succeeded in bringing the All India Services of the post Independence era to its present state.

This brought the Services closer to the people of India in a way, while stripping it of all its brilliance, excellence and efficiency to give India a mediocre All India Services to handle its administration. And the result of this is the present state of the country.

The poor state of the Civil Services attracted people of poor calibre. This led to all kinds of evils including corruption, opportunism and lack of moral strength to stand by one's values and convictions.

This situation led to loss of face and subordinated the All India Services to the ambitions of the political leadership. It has been a long journey from the bold and awe-inspiring All India Services that existed at the dawn of Independence to the present meek and servile All India Services without any backbone to stand erect and hold its head high.

The reasons for the fall and the mechanism that brought about the change, are not far to seek. Everything that made the All India Services of the British days a powerful adminicle for the administration was just swept away while its new avatar in independent India was brought into existence.

The glory of the old All India Services was built on the 3 basic strengths of faultless recruitment, perfect training and the maintenance of the highest standards of professionalism and character to sustain it throughout. These strengths held the Steel Frame of India together for nearly a century. But independent India just failed to give these factors the importance they deserved while constituting its version of the All Indian Services.

The primacy British India gave to the process of selection of people of high calibre to the All India Services is perhaps the single major factor that made the Civil Services among the best in the world. Promising people with maturity and intellectual superiority were selected young through a vigorous and efficient filtering process of a carefully devised elaborate public civil examination process under the guidance, supervision and control of highly qualified professionals in the field.

Rarely was anything other than exceptional merit considered in the process of selection and human weakness like nepotism, corruption and parochial considerations rarely interfered in the process, as Britain was not prepared to compromise and accept anyone less than the best in the higher levels of administration. These people were, after all, to sit on equal terms with them and help in administering the country! These high standards in the process of selection and recruitment, made the All India Services of British days, a really superior cadre.

REASONS FOR DETERIORATION

The grand structure of British rule was to be mercilessly demolished later by independent India. Unimaginative and messy selection and recruitment procedures,

which were poorly conceived and unskilfully executed became the order of the day. Corruption, nepotism, narrow considerations and caste and economic reservations corroded the foundations of the newly-constituted All India Services as time passed.

The reasons for this deterioration in the Civil Services are many. The first is the general lack of passion for quality and excellence in the Indian psyche. The agency in charge of the process of such selections, namely, the Union Public Service Commission, unlike in the British period, is unfortunately increasingly being manned by people unequal to the task either in terms of their professionalism, efficiency and passion for brilliance or in their basic character itself.

As the selection of members of the UPSC became politicised, mediocre people came to fill the slots and in the process, selections to the All India Services suffered. Since members owed their memberships or chairmanship to their political leaders, they could not avoid the obligatory quid pro quo. This continues to be the state of affairs today.

The Indian Civil Service, which once produced giants like K.P.S. Menon, now produces in its new avatar of the IAS and Allied Services only pigmies without voice or strength of conviction. In this matter, they are like those in the crippled institution of the union Public Service Commission who select them. The Steel Frame of the IAS has now become a gilded plastic frame with its steel conscience crumbling into a plastic conscience in the present uncertain political atmosphere. A Steel Frame Civil Service would never have permitted such a degeneration.

The degeneration is manifest at all ranks in all services, whether it is the administrative service, the foreign service, the police service, the forest service, the central services or the specialised services, whether at the sub-divisional or provincial level or at the highest levels of Central Government. The degeneration is uniform everywhere.

Whether it be in creative genius, intellectual heights, strength of character, moral values, width of human interests or noble qualities, the Civil Service of the post-Independence era are third rate. It does not have its own voice or any originality. Its members either as Chief Secretaries of State Governments or as Secretaries of various ministries of departments, are at best paper-pushers and mindless approvers of reports incompetently prepared by subordinates down the line.

Imagine people of such calibre presiding over the entire Civil Services. Thus develops a vicious circle that promotes the degeneration of the Civil Services.

Sturdy and sterling All Indian Services are indispensable for the survival of democratic and united India. Whether it is a cadre of generalists as the Indian Administrative Service is, or cadres of specialists in the fields of judiciary, health care, engineering, economics, foreign service, police etc the existence of All Indian Services functions as the basis of governance of India and adds to the emotional bonds binding the country together.

Also, as a pool of the cream of the people, it is supposed to bring distinguished and brilliant people to the job of administration of the country and thereby ensure good government to the country.

THE REMEDY

Any dilution of the high standards of these services is certain to throw the country to the wolves. British India knew this and perhaps, independent India also knows it. But it does nothing to arrest the dangerous fall in the standards of its All India Services.

India is preoccupied with myriad issues relating to economic and social development and perhaps the rapid deterioration of its All India Services does not appear to be important in comparison with these burning issues. But such a feeling is

wrong. All India Services are a precondition for the survival of India. India must realise this fact and act fast.

This brings us to the quintessential question as to how the Civil Services can be brought back to their original standards and glory. How can we get back the original ideas, quality and performances and honesty of convictions that existed earlier?

The first and foremost task in this regard is pruning the Civil Services to a small brains trust of brilliance and commitment which will steer the country in the right direction by giving competent advice on statecraft and actually running the administration to political leaders.

A TINY SELECT GROUP

Merciless pruning of the extant services to create this tiny, efficient and highly responsible core is a priority task. Only brilliance and the highest potential should be the criteria for membership in this nerve-centre.

This brains trust must be kept beyond the purview of extraneous constraints like reservation of any kind and even age restrictions. The guiding principle here is bringing together the best talents without restraints of any kind, for ensuring best results. The services should not be treated as an employment opportunity for the elite, but as the foundation of the Government.

INTELLECTUAL CALIBRE

The training programmes for the services have to be made relevant today. Matter taught has to be updated every year by experts and made changing event to the brightest among the new recruits, unlike present training programmes which are intellectually impoverished, irrelevant to the times and which in no way help ensuring the right attitudes at the higher levels.

Another need is to make the passing of a promotional test, of a very standard, held by the UPSC or a similar Central agency, mandatory for promotion at every level. Only such tough measures will keep the Civil Services fit and productive as is required for the sound health of the administration of the country.

TONING UP THE UPSC

Overhauling the present mediocre Union Public Service Commission to create an efficient and responsible set-up capable of handling the enormous responsibilities under Article 320 of the Indian Constitution, is essential in order to arrest the degeneration that has set in, in the set-up. This has led to blunders in identifying talent and in managing the Civil Services.

CREDIBILITY OF THE UPSC

In a recent case, 3 promising officers from the State cadre of a southern State of India, were denied selection by the UPSC to an All India Service for no obvious reason for 10 years from 1990, while their juniors were elevated. The acute frustration and demoralisation caused by this led to the break-up of the family of one of the promising trio.

Violent behaviour by him repeatedly in public led to very embarrassing public humiliations, and ultimately involvement in a murder case led to his conviction. This is how a reckless and irresponsible UPSC ruined a promising life for no reason at all.

However, another of the trio was an officer of enormous inner strength as well as a poet and an intellectual of the highest calibre. He weathered the frustration of the 9 years to rise to a very high level in individual achievement and public esteem to the shame of the irresponsible UPSC.

The incident created much resentment in the State against the recklessness of the UPSC and considerably lowered its credibility. Such transgressions are common these days with the present state of affairs in the UPSC and the overhauling of the organisation should be aimed at preventing such irresponsible actions that can have such tragic consequences.

REORGANISATION OF THE UPSC

The way to prevent such unprofessionalism on the part of the UPSC lies in transforming it to a highly efficient outfit managed by people of unimpeachable character and efficiency. This objective can be achieved by suitable amendment to Articles 316 and 317 of the Indian Constitution to ensure that only suitable people become Members and Chairman of the organisation and remain in the saddle only as long as they retain their moral and professional calibre.

This can be made possible by constituting a committee comprising the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Chief Commissioner of the Central Vigilance Commission and the Speaker of Parliament as members. The Vice-President of India should be the Chairman and clear the names for appointment as Members and as the Chairman of the UPSC for a fixed tenure. These people should also be empowered to initiate actions for their removal by an appropriate procedure in fit cases.

Appropriate changes to this effect in Articles 316 and 317 of the Indian Constitution are likely to plug the existing loopholes that allow too much political interferences in the process of the selection of Members and Chairman of the UPSC and thereby in its fair functioning.

NEED OF LEAN AND MEAN CIVIL SERVICES

Civil services are the pillars on which the gestalt of a nation stands and structure is built. Pillars need strength and height to make an edifice stable and meaningful. So also are civil services. Civil service is a mammoth plexus of complex interfaces spliced together to facilitate the governance of the country pro bono publico. It is not a decorative piece of the public administration. It has to be purposive and focused and deliver goods efficiently without proving a burden to the structure. It should be lean and mean and feracious. Inefficient and bloated civil service only tends to be furacious.

Indian national leaders by 1947 had come to appreciate the advantages of having a highly qualified and institutionalized administration in place a la the elite Indian Civil Service and allied services of the colonial British Raj especially at a time when social tensions threatened national unity and public order. Indian Constitution established the Indian Administrative Service and other civil services to replace the colonial Indian Civil Service and allied services and ensure uniform and impartial standards of administration and promote effective coordination in social and economic development.

Although the elite public services continue to command great prestige, their social status declined in the decades after independence. India's crème de la crème are increasingly attracted to private-sector employment where salaries are substantially higher. Public opinion of civil servants has also been lowered by popular perceptions that bureaucrats are unresponsive to public needs and corrupt. Corruption has become a growing problem as civil servants have become subject to intense political pressures.

The Indian civil service system has followed the classical Weberian model and tends to be conformist in the process of cooperating with the politicians. The public perceives the Indian civil service system as the no-change agents. It lacks innovativeness, initiative, empathy, and drive for change. The Government of India and its 25 provincial governments spend about 3.5% of the GDP on its civil servants. They employ about eight

million in the civil service, which is 50% of the employment provided in the organised sector.

The Fifth Pay Commission in its report submitted in January 1997 had suggested a 30% downsizing of the civil service across the board. According to the Ferrel Heady configuration, the Indian civil service system has a majority-party responsiveness. The sense of mission held by it is a mixed bag of compliance, cooperation, policy-responsiveness, constitutional responsiveness, and guidance. Though the configuration of Philip Morgan identifies the Indian civil service system as the principal agent of the state, some of the characteristics of the patrimonial state still pervade the country and to that extent its civil service system.

Vishnugupta of the Mauryan period authored a treatise known as Kautilya's Arthashastra around 313 BC wherein he laid down the qualifications of the civil servants for appointment to the court. He opined therein that loyalty and sincerity should be the main qualifications in a person to be appointed as a civil servant and recommended a system of checks and balances in the appointment of civil servants covering clearance by the vigilance department, a continuous watch on their performances and quotidian performance report to the king on each key civil servant. The recommendations hold relevance even today after 23 centuries in a democratic setup. The civil service contrived by Akbar, the Great had welfare and a regulatory-orientation. The British model of the civil service in the earlier stage were far away from the common people and never tried to mix with and impress upon the people. They had least interest in the transformation of the Indian society. The British government set up the Indian civil service in 1911 to strengthen the British administration and its colonial base in India. The independence of the country posed new challenges to the civil servants. Welfare of the people and the internal peace and security became the prime tasks of the civil services.

The onset of economic planning in India in 1951 with the First Five-Year Plan enjoined on the Indian civil services the role of development administration covering the administration of public enterprises, regulation of the private sector, formulation of socio-economic and political policies, elimination of poverty, development of rural areas,

combating inflation, effective monetary management, reduction of gender gap, elimination of social inequity inter alia. India encountered severe resource crunch in early 1980s that further deepened by the end of the decade leading to a new economic policy in 1991 that saw a rollback of the economic activities to liberalisation and privatisation at macro and micro levels in the changed global environment. While civil servants acted as personal servants of rulers in ancient India, they became state servants in the medieval age and acquired the complexion of public servants in the British India. The ethos of the civil services changed to development-orientation in 1950s and to a facilitator's role in the 1990s to meet the challenges of the democratic needs of the teeming millions. The point here is that the civil services is and has to be a nebulous body sans its own agenda, commitments and ideologies in a democracy and function subordinate to the national needs and policy prioritized by the political leaders. Indian civil services of the British vintage worked so and the civil services of the democratic vintage nolens volens must follow tout de suite. That is the democracy India consciously opted for and obliged to follow.

In his letter dated October 15, 1948 to the Constituent Assembly, Vallabhbhai Patel, the then Deputy Prime Minister opined, "...an efficient, disciplined and contented service assured of its prospects as a result of diligent and honest work is a sine qua non of sound administration under a democratic regime even more than under an authoritarian rule. The service must be above party and we should ensure that political considerations either in its recruitment or in its discipline and control are reduced to the minimum, if not eliminated altogether." These are truly prophetic words relevant to the present India that penetrate the conundrums of its civil service issues. The emphasis is on an efficient and neutral civil service. However, the problem here is the undue extension of the concept to conceive two power-centers between political policy-makers and civil service executives. Justice M.P.Thakkar while hearing a Special Leave Petition of a senior civil servant, Jagdish Chander Jetli in Supreme Court in 1988 observed inter alia, "The appointment of the Secretary to Government of India is not on the basis of a competitive examination where a candidate who secures 99 per cent of marks has to be appointed. Even when a person appoints a cook or a watchman, he looks for a person in whom he has faith. How

can Government of India appoint any person as Secretary in whom it has no faith?" and the SLP was dismissed by the Supreme Court. The two contrarious observations sum up the ground realities and the predicament of the civil services of India in a democratic milieu. It must maintain its integrity and independence, and en attendant earn acceptability and faith of the political leadership. This calls for a tact and skill kat exochem. A civil service sans that cadeau crumbles to be the handmaid of the political leadership for survival and sycophancy reaches new heights every passing day to the level of suspending an acolyte from service for spelling wrongly the name of the daughter of the materfamilias of the party in power while sending an invitation.

Struggle between survival and dignity is as old as human history is. Going for dignity and right values ignoring survival factors is not everybody's staple. It takes tremendous inner strength and resolve. It is this rare calibre that is the indigence of the extant civil services of India. It is this rara avis that must constitute the pillars on which the plexus of the civil services must rest. These powerful pillars perforce must be limited in number to avoid degradation by mass mélange and absorption of anyone of some pull and money power and safeguard standards in excelsis. Indeed the best does not come for peanuts. Whatever goes for is far more worth of it. Secondly, a perficient, resourceful and workaholic lean civil services replacing extant sedent and inefficient bulk of workforce certainly provide a solution to the evils of the administrative overhead apportioning the major part of the public expenditures of the Government.

Efficient and small is always effective. Right selection and steadfast upkeep of high standards are easier while size is small. A plexus of civil services built on this bedrock can do wonders to the country. What India needs now is a lean and mean civil services imbued with industry, talent, honesty and commitment extraordinaire to its responsibilities. A beginning can be made in creation of a new lean and mean superior service above the present Indian Administrative Service with liberal perks and service benefits even after retirement to attract the crème de la crème. A specially constituted board of professionals and experts free from political obligations must handle selection and the management of the new Service. Its selection and recruitment must be a multi-polar strategy devised with a passion to enroll the best from whatever source, field or age

group sans extraneous obligations like reservations in this nonesuch Service. The guiding principle here is maximum yield out of maximal talent, integrity, commitment, industry, and responsibilities en revanche of extraordinary benefits in service and outside. Such a top-brass guiding administration by personal example at the helm provides a new job culture down the stream and helps trimming the civil services as a body to be a lean and mean force, again well compensated, running the administration of the country, ipso facto drastically cutting down administrative and establishment expenditures on account of the lean workforce while tremendously increasing its efficiency and per efficient output. A conventional assessment is that an efficient and hardworking workforce of 10% of the present size in India should conveniently be able to handle the affairs of the country better and more effectively at a farthing of the present administrative overhead. This is what India needs now.

Insulation of the civil services from the temptations of money and power is a major challenge. Making its members free from all major needs of life once they joined the service would be the cheapest strategy open to achieve this telos. The lean civil services instituted for the country should be made a highly contented and respected entity while its job and responsibilities are made equally challenging and trying. This is a give and take policy with provisions for ruthless extraction of those who fail to stand up to the challenges in hand. A major need of such a civil services is absolutely professional recruitment and management of the services at all levels under the close purview of a professional body responsible to the Chief Justice of the country. Even indirect political pull even from the highest levels in recruitment or management perforce pollutes the civil services tout a fait. A clear bifurcation of the responsibilities of the political and administrative wings of the Government as policy and decision makers and as advisors and executives is sine qua non for the advent of such a refrain in running the Government. Any attempt at overstepping the other should be viewed as a serious violation of the code of Governmental procedures.

The suggestions made here are easier said than done. For one, it needs amendments to the Constitution. For the other, politics being the art of possible, the political leadership would never compromise with any effort to make away flaccid civil

services that has come to its prise from a hard struggle that is half-a-century long. Yet, this is the besoin India now cries avec acharnement for.

CRISIS OF RIGHT LEADERSHIP IN INDIA

If leadership is the soul of democracy, right leadership is the soul of right democracy. Leadership is adjectives to the language of the democracy. It decides the nature and the quality of the democracy. There can be right or wrong democracy depending on the nature and content of the leadership to carry the democracy forward. None can doubt the success of the experiment of democracy in India. However, none can swear on the quality of the democracy India has grown in its backyard. The problem lies in the quality of its leadership.

Leadership Culture

It is rather facile to contend that people in a democracy get the leadership they deserve. It is specious in theory, but need not be necessarily true. Leadership of a country's orienter distinct from its people and perforce creates the leadership culture. It is true about the USA, it is true about the success stories of democracy in European countries and it is true about India. Though *sittlichkeit*, patriotism and intellectual calibre of the people do have a bearing on such matters, it is the leadership culture that mostly decides the nature of the leadership that emerges. People are just prisoners of this pernicious limitation. Their will makes little difference in a preordained setup and given system. India sadly lost in this vital department while building the edifice of its democracy.

Multidimensional Leadership

Leadership in a social milieu is necessarily multitudinous and multidimensional. Political leadership is its only one dimension though most important one and in that statutorily incorporated to the body of a democratic institution. Six most important

leadership segments of a democratic milieu come from political, media, nongovernmental organisations, and popular, intellectual and administrative fields in that order of effectiveness. Popular segment covers miscellaneous fields including films, cricket, other sports, industries, science and research and similar professions. Leadership basically functions as creators of the public opinion and ideally expected to lead from the front. These segments in a healthy democracy spawn a mechanism of checks and counter-balances. USA showed it; major European countries lived it. An egregious Watergate scandal pulling down the flamboyant presidency of Richard Nixon can happen only in the USA. An organised evolution of a written constitution leading to the establishment of a democratic institution under the very nose of the royalty can take place only in a European country like Britain. These are examples of right leadership evolving right democracy.

India of the first half of the 20th century too showed right leadership in liberating the country from the foreign rule. It was the combined thrust of the Indian leadership in different segments like political, local media, nongovernmental organisations, popular fields, intellectuals and patriotic elements in the administration working in tandem made independence to India possible earlier than otherwise.

Leadership in Independent India

Independence made Indian leadership taste money, power and the luxuries of serving the people and the endless possibilities its diverse permutations and combinations provide. Nothing is like a mammoth lure and nothing is like a gargantuan greed. Leadership in India appeared like an endless foison of opportunities to rob and grab. Those who had the sinew and mental sturdiness to exploit jumped to the wagon in streams and created a new set of leadership for India at the cost of the ancien regime inspired by lofty ideals and guided by the motto of service. Corrupt and ruthless to the core, the new leadership easily cornered the scrupulous old order in opportunistic political games of money, power and muscle

gained in the process. Leadership in the milieu became nothing more than a daring massive investment for multifold returns, a pure commercial venture. Crime paid. Deception and flamboyancy became sine qua non for leadership. That is why leadership became a dirty word in India. And Indians as they are, accepted the reality to the extent that they now think twice before accepting anybody without the merit of a criminal past as their leader. It is more so in the leader of the leaders segment of the politics. That is how Phoolan Devi or Pappu Yadav succeed as leaders and Veerappans dream their glory in political leadership. Criminals constitute the spine of the political leadership in states like Bihar and Uttara Pradesh.

The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards he sets for himself. “Integrity is the most valuable and respected quality of leadership” says Brian Tracey. “The prime role of a leader is to offer an example of courage and sacrifice” says Regis Debray. This is rarely to be a case in the Indian leadership in whatever field. The reason is that the fall in the political leadership perforce percolated into lesser fields and binged their leaderships with similar mesquinerie and base pursuits. It is true of media, non-governmental bodies, intellectuals, popular figures or administrators. Greed and pressures both worked in the process. Though sparks of freedom and true leadership surfaced from time to time in all these fields in the last six decades, they are far in-between to a country of India’s size and diversity and mere isolated initiatives like fishes out of water and soon died down literally and figuratively. The fallacy lies in apostasy, either for greed, or poor leadership material going for sensationalism in selfish or commercial pursuit, or more accurately both reinforcing each other as models from one generation to the other. However, true attempts at right leadership do exist here and there in all fields and they are succeeding. This is important. This gives the hope of regeneration in the future.

Right Leadership

According to Dr. John C. Maxwell, a leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way. He is the guide and philosopher to those below him. A leader is the personification of trust to his followers. He is their hope and future. It is sin to let them down to seek own ends. "A leader is a dealer in hope" said Napoleon Bonaparte. W.H. Auden says, "No person can be a great leader unless he takes genuine joy in the success of those under him." Right leadership is integrity, conviction, sacrifice, commitment to people and values, and ability to blend with their dreams. Right leadership is ability to guide and lead people in right path. Leaders are models to others. Self-seekers and criminals have no place in its scheme. Commercial angle has nothing to do with it. Sensationalism, claptrap and partisan approach never feed leadership qualities. Leadership qualities flourish in right values, right decisions and right actions. Concern to those below is its main mantra. All these key factors of the right leadership are thrown to winds in India after independence.

The celebrated Chinese Philosopher of the 6th century BC, Lao Tzu opines, "A leader is best when people barely know he exists, not so good when people obey and acclaim him, worse when they despise him". Leadership is service au fond and exposure comes only as a derivative. It is just the opposite in the extant Indian leadership where service is a front and tool for exposures, self-aggrandizement, further boost upwards and attainment of selfish ends. It is neither right leadership nor is it even leadership. It is a travesty of leadership. It is making fun of leadership. Indian leadership has degenerated to that at all fronts. It no way fit in to the frame laid down by Harold J. Seymour for a true leader when he says, "Leaders are the ones who keep faith with the past, keep step with the present, and keep the promise to prosperity." Extant variety of Indian leadership has neither a past nor a future and only has a greedy present. *Ca ira*. No aberrations last *in perpetuum*. India eagerly awaits to *prepon*.

RECONSTRUCTION OF INDIA

India is the land of spirituality. Love and pursuit of knowledge and higher values are the essence of its nature. This foundation gives India a unique character and inner strength unseen in the community of nations of the world and makes it a world leader in spiritual life. The depth gained by this commands other nations of the world to see India with awe and respect even in the extant commercial ambience of the present world. Its great sons like Gauthama Buddha, Mahavir, Ashoka and Mohandas Gandhi are unique gifts of India to the world of sublime thoughts in practice. India could spawn such gems because the mien of life here supported them and their ideals. This was true upto the first half of the 20th century. What followed was an apostasy from the radicate path.

The second half of the 20th century saw the caduac of gross commercialization of the Indian mindset and consectaneous degradingolade of its ingenerate higher values. The contabescence is so endemic in its spread that all walks and strata of life in the country saw the sweeping metabasis and the concomitant atrophy. Indian politics, bureaucracy, business, professions, intellectuals, literature, media, art and cultural movements, and you name the field, that saw the fall. A pusillanimous India at the aurora of its independence like fish out of water lost its soul in pursuit of the material carrion that was inebriating the world in the midst of the prolate commercialization. It was a triste trade-off. It was a distressing relegation of higher values and inner strength to oblivion. Developed countries became its ideal. Japan and USA became its models. Wealth and power became its Gods. Rich and powerful became its heartthrobs. India began to see the dream of becoming a world power. Multi-nationals and stock exchanges became its peremptory saviors. Nothing is wrong in that per se. But at what cost and for what end? A dead India was too occupied with the glorification of its carcass to think of it.

The fall was ominous. It was of the people and their spirit. It was their ideals and their values. It was their attitude and the focus of life. They forgot their legacy and its strengths that sustained them through all the convolutions of the history. They lost the

pristine adaptability that saw them move *pari passu* with the changing time while retaining the core of their higher values. The Indian National Congress that held high the spiritual flambeau of the nation for nearly a century turned a corrupt and power-hungry body and swept away principles that sustained it till then under the carpet of political expediency. Jana Sangh and its later avatar that came to existence to preserve Indian values and culture turned the most visible icon of the Indian values and the leitmotiv of its spiritual lumiere, Shree Rama, into a most hated name by its inhuman and unprincipled political misadventures.

India always stood for the cardinal values of truth, simplicity and a value based system of life and always absorbed the *zeitgeist* within these parameters to enrich itself. The hallmark of India is its confidence in itself and its values and it sustained it through all the travails of its long history. It never lost its soul and never found the need to blindly mimic the specious coups of the world around. It algate stood on its own feet and proved the strengths of its fundamentals even in worst scenarios. Extant India looks far from that proud and confident India.

Present India's democracy is a misnomer. It is a soulless process in the body of a democratic form, or better, a feudal rule bought over by money, muscle and deceit. India is deluding itself by calling itself as a great democracy of the world and dreaming to be a world power. Compages do not make vibrating structures *inter se*. They require inner strengths as their spine to stand erect to stand out in the world. Present India lacks that little potion that in the past was India's essence *passim*.

The malady is prolate. From politics to familial relationships, from bureaucratic attitudes to intellectual manoeuvres and from commercial world to cultural fields, its footprints are deeply etched to emaciate the country *ab intra*. All higher values are thrown to winds in pursuit of specious material bonanza and the life has become a no-holds-barred utter trade-off. The environment is poisoned, and isolated struggles to inhere to time-tested pristine values are stifled to evanescence in midst of the reign of mesquinerie. The claves of the changed attitude are shortcuts and reaching desired end by any means.

This with the concomitant degrading of the leadership qualities of the democratic vintage spawned a dangerous broth of fawn, deceit and muscle power. The pristine values like excellence, patience, pride, grace and dignity are relegated as impotent to the dustbin of the history. Hero worship and opportunism became the ticket to clamber the ladder of the self-promotion in the mien of the undermined merit. Money and power built a mutually serving vicious circle and became inviolable ends and means of any meaningful life. Quantity overtook quality. Respect lost its halo. Crime paid. Corruption, protests and violence gained currency as the only tools of success. 'Grab and rob' became the mantra of survival. Who could not rise to the levels became misfits. This is extant India.

Ex-Prime Minister Charan Singh as the Chief Executive of the country once rightly claimed that corruption imbues from above. It is true of all modes of corruption and decay of standards. Its manifestation in the fall of higher values in governance of India of the democratic vintage shook the very foundation of the highly developed value system of the country existing till then. Both ruling party and opposition parties found their salvation in winning the next election non obstante means and found money, muscle power and garish display of strength pay in the process. Indian public life restructured itself to these needs *sinsyne*. Everything is forgotten in the pursuit of power, and governance became subservient to this end. With the fall in the ideals of the governance and the Government system, that in the people was not far away. Instinct for survival preceded everything else. The trend corroded confidence in higher nuances of the value system. Greedy politicians, self-seeking media, demoralized bureaucracy and hapless *hoi polloi*, all added to the mix. And India prepared a poisonous broth in which it boils *jusqu au bout* unless it reverses the process by sheer *deus ex machina*.

Indian culture is a sublime edifice of the best absorbed from all sources it came in contact with and built on the foundation of the potent values of simple, honest and healthy practices. India always went for sound practices with both material and spiritual dimensions to it. The tragedy of the present India is that it continued the process of the adoption sans the ingredient of the adaptation to its rich heritage of spiritual and enduring values and practices. It has become just a copycat of whatever appeals to its senses and

fancy. The need of appeal to deeper realms like reason and insight is tout a fait forgotten. Often, mere compages are gone for without as much as thoughts for its inherent soul or underlying foundation. A striking instance is India's version of the democracy where deception and criminal record constitute the provenance of political leadership en face that practiced in the USA and other western countries where merit and personal probity constitute the bedrock of the successful public life. It is this sheer perversion of the democratic ideals and the concomitant deception and criminality that India calls as the greatest democratic experiment in the world.

Nothing that is not honest and truly sincere ever succeeds. Indian democracy just is not that. Compare extant democratic India with the present China or the resilience shown by Japan and Germany after the Second World War or the progress seen in countries like Singapore. Honesty and true sincerity in the political leadership is the only allee that leads to the true bonanza of a nation. Indian democracy as practised today is an antithesis a toute force of this cardinal need.

Another striking manifestation of present India is its narrow vision. Indian intellectuals and Indian media lead the field stripped of independent and original thinking. Rather than leading the country from the front in the restricted couloir of right thinking and higher values, they fish in popular trends and perceptions to boost their commercial gains. Often, popular catchwords like socialism and economic reforms or nationalism and globalisation become claves of attitudes without as much as going to the depths of the social dynamics and relevance to India. This again is an expression of the prevailing contumely to excellence and creative originality apart from the prevailing commercialization of the intellectual and media fields. Accrescently Indian media now relies on sexual appeal on its pages to catch readership or viewership. It is absurd to expect high public sittlichkeit or high ideals from such a provenance. Lack of true commitment or pride for the own ab intra is another serious Achilles' heel.

Fall of individual pride ironically is another depravity of the Indian version of the democracy and its political stirrings. Apotheosis of political figures for self-promotion is

the order of the day. Character and merit are relegated to oblivion in this mad rush. Sycophancy and glorification of dynastic rule are its inevitable offshoots. Personalities gained currency over values and principles and personality-cult gained tremendous boost. Recent event is attempts to protect a religious leader from criminal charges at the cost of the values of a sacred religious seat he holds. This trend expresses itself in sprouting of myriad statues of political leaders often of dubious repute at public places a grands frais. Those with money and power have become virtual Gods even for intellectuals and media in this whilom land of spirituality. High character and true merit have become grossly irrelevant. Contrast this with the USA where key Government posts go to those from the academic field and even a minor strain on character or private life is enough to bar a candidate from winning the Presidential election.

Violence truly pays in Indian democracy. Reasons, fairness, honesty, law or gentle persuasion has no place here. That is why protests and violence have become the order of the day. People cannot be blamed for that. Those in politics and bureaucracy in India sit so high in their ivory towers of insensitive power and exclusiveness that nothing reach and move them unless a message is packed with blood and violence to comminate their secure power base. Otherwise their responses to the plight of the nation and the common man is Neronian or lukewarm al piu. Contrast this with the USA Government's mammoth response in creating a new Homeland Security Department after the 11/9/2001 militant attack on its land and its concern for the security of its citizens. Everything of the public domain in present maledict India is acted only on political compulsions or lobbying of the rich and powerful. This is democracy for India.

Every country has its own tournure along the corso of its life. India sine dubio finds itself at its cafard in its post-independent days. A half century is too short a period in the life of a country to resile to its pristine soul and India may need to boil in its own ephemeral materialistic broth before it begins de nouveau in right course. India did see umpteen ups and downs along the course of its long history and algate resiled to its pristine soul amain. The present one perhaps is one of such an aberration and has no encheason to be different from that.

RIGHT ORIENTATION IN GOVERNMENT

SERVICE

Government service in a democracy is the service of the people by the people for the people within the reticulation of the rules and procedures in force. It is the core service of the governance and implements the will of the people expressed through the collective political leadership. It is the tool that really manages the country on the tapestry of the adopted policy by exercising all the wherewithal of a management tool-box like planning, organizing, execution and control by its ubiquitous presence. Right orientation is sine qua non for the self-management through own representatives under the political leadership in the government. People au naturel are unifocal in self-interests au fond. An orientation of the right kind to lift them in the direction of the larger interests of the largest part of the population is the raison d'être of any government service. It is this higher direction that ideally differentiates those in government service from the hoi polloi. Reality is different in the field. The reasons for that are as diverse as wrong orientation and wrong people in the service.

OPTIONS

The choice is bifocal to redeem the situation: either select only the people of right orientation of larger interests in heart or inculcate the right orientation by right training, right practices and right job culture on those who are selected. The process of selecting the people of right orientation to the behemoth of government service of Indian dimension is easier said than done. The Indian institutions constituted for the purpose are too ill-equipped for the job and too steeped in inefficiency, corruption and lack of positive approach for any perficient performance even in responsibilities of far lesser magnitude. India has no alternative but to go for the latter option of inculcating the right orientation.

The second option at best is a weak shadow of the first. Its tools are directed towards attitudinal change. The tools are too weak for the immanent changes warranted even if presumed that right training, right practices and right job culture to bring about the new avatar exist at all. Human nature is too complex for such an easy metabasis. Right tools are becoming ascensively far afar to find in the extant power-hungry milieu of the present government service. The legacy of the colonial rule in power-centric governance continues even after more than five decades of the independence. The prise of the power-orientation in preference to service-orientation is accrescently going tenacious in government service. Combined with the fact that lesser mortals are now joining the fray of the government service courtesy selection institutions nonpareil to the job, the situation can only be imagined. People of all kinds join the service and indulge in all kinds of loots and sins. People accustomed to long colonial rule are taking umbrage under the Karmic Law as the misdeeds in name of governance by their own people are found to be the ineluctable reality of life. They take epinosic satisfaction by the facts that the situation is worse in neighbouring and African countries. We are taught to be patriotic and committed to the country and the government which sins against us. We are perorated with such inutile plangent phrases as ours is the biggest democracy in the world and we are a nuclear power ad manum to be a super power of the world that signify nothing to most Indians weighed down with misrule. Only right orientation in government service can save the country from the entoilment and spread a new entrainment in the people.

LARGER INTERESTS

The raison d'être of the government service is its orientation towards larger interests en face the extant tournure of the narrow interests critical to human nature. Larger interests imply a sense of right and wrong, sensitivity to others' sufferings and a genuine love for the human kind. Even after presuming the exiguity of such noble qualities in the ambience around, the standards existing in the extant Indian government service is far from satisfactory and horrific tout court by any standards. It is just perversion drunk by the temulence of power. It is erratic to say the least. It is insulsiy at

best and perversion at the worst. It is twisting rules and procedures to meet self-interests al piu. What is striking is the fact that it has become the culture of the governance of free India. India has become free perchance to let its government service to have a dissolute culture of its own choice sans interference ab extra. This seems the ground reality of the last five decades of the Indian independence. An example illustrates assez bien the degingolade of the government service and those who man it.

WRONG MODEL

A Mathematics lecturer from a college joined government service four decades back. His fastus from the sudden rise perforce cost him his seniority in preference to a junior during the training. His unpopularity among the public got him an entry as “immature” in ACR. He got an important posting on promotion where he betrayed gratuitous harshness that cost him the post in less than a year to be posted to head a training institute.

This is where the crunch of running the government service comes to the fore and exposes itself in puris naturalibus. A training institute is the first point of tryst of a recruit with his future service and its head his true model to become. Hundreds of young recruits passed out as officers in the next three years from the institute with its head as a model binged in them. Later, many a precious careers withered under the peise of the wrong model. The wrong orientations received during the training make inveterate and lasting impact that cannot be easily deracinated. Wrong models unwanted other-where heading training institutions is the first symptom of a grave malady the government service is suffering with.

The officer was denied decent postings promotion after promotion. He was sent on deputation to head a middle sized state undertaking. His misconduct there led to a state-wide agitation of its staff in 1985. Later, he was deputed to head the state prisons department. His stewardship there witnessed an unprecedented mafia gang war within the

four walls of a prison resulting in murder of an egregious inmate in 1995. An enquiry by the Home Secretary arraigned the officer for serious lapses.

MISCONCEPTION

The officer headed his department for five months before retirement. This is another post where the fonctionnaire serves as a model to the subordinates. His appointment to the post was opposed by some on the grounds of merit. This gave rise to two groups in his favour and against in the department. The new chief in excelsis in his career acted avec acharnement against those belonging to the opposite camp by sending them to insignificant posts in god-forsaken corners of the state. He, drunk in the fulgour of his new status, unreasonably acted on some others assuming the role of a soi disant motivation specialist and brought gratuitous sufferings to them. A naïve officer with complete fide et fiducia on the new chief sought transfer back to the state capital to any of the umpteen vacant posts existing. The new chief promised an immediate posting and consented for the subordinate going on leave pending the transfer. Thereafter, the chief went on delaying the transfer by encouraging the pianissimo subordinate to extend the leave for the next four months until himself retired. The subordinate au desespoir approached the State Chief Secretary only to find that the latter was advised by the chief not to meet the subordinate. The Chief Secretary did just that. This speaks volumes about present administration. The achilles' heel lies in the mediocrity and the inability of those in higher levels of the government service in this star-stricken land to comprehend what really constitute administration and misconceive it as a show of ruthlessness and cruelty. The justification of the chief for his queer and perverted conduct oblivious of the sufferings and agony caused was that he was doing all those things as a motivation specialist to help the subordinate in his career! His preposterous motivation skills ens rationis was really a cloak to his native sadism that cost the enfeebled subordinate his faculty of trusting anybody. This is a case of pure schadenfreude en pure perte.

SERVICE

The core of right orientation in government service is an understanding of the sufferings of others and willingness to mitigate it through the accepted means of rules, laws and procedures. Power is only the subsidiary of the process and comes to play as a tool in aid of making service to the people possible. There is no place for fastus, show of power, schadenfreude and playing with the lives of others in the scheme. It is humility and a gemutlich sense of service to others that is fundamental to it. Any government manned by the people without these essential ingredients is bound to be a heath of tyranny and face the wrath of the plebeian in rerum natura. That is why the manning of the government service warrants utmost care and expertise in running the government. The edifice of the right governance stands on the terra firma of the right orientation. The governance is just nonexistent or leads to a welter of tyranny of the people in the skein of wrong orientations.

RIGHT PLACES

The right orientation can be either inborn or acquired. In absence of appropriate tools to trace inborn orientations with certitude, only the process of acquiring the right orientations can be depended upon. Right models have tremendous impact on the process as do wrong models. It is the models and the precedents that determine and festinate the orientation of the future. Models in right places have tremendous impacts in enracinating right orientations in the body of the government service. Head of an institution that trains recruits exercises powerful influence on the recruits. So also the head of the department. Right orientation in government service can be made a reality by manning these key posts with right persons.

Another tool towards this end is encouraging right orientation by the reguerdon of good postings. The objective is bifarious: it inspires the adoption of the right course; also, rewards to the right people a natura rei act as a stimulant to create the right job culture.

Such a stimulant is brillier par son absence in Indian ambience. It is the reason why government service now is not what it should be in a democracy.

POWER

The nature of the government service now is power-oriented; that is, the exercise of power for the sake of power. It has become an *idée fixe*. There is not even a tinge of service orientation in the extant government service. Even the pretence is left to the care of the political leadership that must depend on the *hoi polloi* for survival. Those in government service need not even pretend to that as they have a secure tenure of service and go impervious to the plebeian. The accrescent falsidical sense in government service now is that they are meant to implement the wishes of the political leadership without any commitment to the ordinary people. The falsetto must be replaced with a sense of service to the people. There is no deliverance to the country without it.

The power-orientation of the government service is the seed of all ills of the country. Power corrupts. So, any government service erected on the pillars of power cannot be anything but corrupt. A corrupt government corrupts the country and a country under seize and caught in the tourbillon of corruption cannot be anything but tyrannic. This is the maelstrom India finds itself with now. The country can be saved from the *avertus* and a stage for the *risorgimento* can be set only by giving right orientation to its government service. It is a gargantuan task. The path of corruption is easy, but retracting the course back is difficile and almost impossible. But it is a job that has to be attended to on priority in national interests. If not a *pas de geant*, the problem has to be approached in farthing-steps. Relief from the temulence of power cries for the priority attention. Once the cobweb is removed, the space will be free for the inculcation of service-orientation within the limits of the policy and the rules and procedures in force. Right placement of the right models is crucial to the process. That brings the apollyon of the government service to heels to ultimately wipe out of the system and dawn a new era of a healthy government service in the country.

VALUE SYSTEM IN INDIAN BUREAUCRACY

The word 'value' from the French root *valoir* suggests a sense of worth as rising from the innards of the conscience. The perception of a given value varies with the various lectiones of the amoebic milieu. The dependence of the value structure on milieu is the source of all the corrida de toros of the human world. The value system of an individual and an organization of which he consciously or by compulsion is a part are rarely identical. This basically is the source of all human conflicts. This is more so in the present age of accrescent entoilment of human activities. Nowhere in the extant world, the conflict of value systems is found as obvious as in the behemoth of the Indian bureaucracy. That is why people with a strong conscience find themselves in cul-de-sac in government service unless they adapt personal value structures to the needs of the bureaucracy that is mediocre at the best and criminal at the worst.

CONTRARIOUS VALUES

The value system in bureaucracy is bifarious: inherent values and survival-oriented values. The two facets of the same value system further metagrobolise the complexity of the value system of the bureaucracy *ab intra*. Add apocryphal elements in the garb of values natural to the Indian bureaucracy to the broth, the field is ready for all the dramas of this world.

A person's *locus standi* in the affairs of his life is subject to his position in the *mélange* of these often contrarious values at diverse ambiances. Adamantine commitment to a value has no place here. Skeely manoeuvring of positions from time to time, unfortunately, decides the success in life. If value is understood by its true definition, the extant formula of flexibility for success is nothing but refutation of the concept of values *per se*. This is the ineluctable fact of life to which human activities have devolved themselves. An illustration suffices to make the point clear.

A young officer in 1960s began his career in a South Indian state with commitment to the high values of public service laced with strictness and discipline of very high order au naturel to his age and the nascent stage of his career. He was a terror to wrong-doers in 1970s as a district level executive officer and proved very successful in his work. His unimpeachable integrity as also no-nonsense mien rendered him unpopular among both subordinates and superiors. He was removed from his district posting in less than a year on the pressures of the vested interests and never found a responsible posting sinsyne with a profile in official records as immature inter alia. His failure lay in his individual value system not being attuned to what the bureaucracy expected of him.

SURVIVAL INSTINCT

Being enervated by the developments and angst-ridden, he realized that he has no future in the career with his own convictions and values. This turned him so much inward that he became proficient in psychology and soon got doctorate in the subject. He did everything to reconcile his traits and nature to the imperatives of the bureaucratic values. He went out of his way to please everybody and made it his habit. The changes found favour with none with the aura popularis yet defying him and he went on losing mainstream postings as rose in rank and even remained without posting for nearly a year in 1990s at a very high rank on the suspicion of gross negligence in discharge of duties leading to a serious disaster as a consequence of his newly acquired traits of casualness. With the ablet, his nature saw the affret of enthusiasm to please the political leadership of the state a toute force as he approached the benchmark of the selection to the post of the head of the department. As the popular perception continued to be against him as a candidate for the coveted post, the energumen began to play the caste card with the political leadership a corps perdu. His efforts to undermine the chances of a senior backfired as the latter after retirement as the head of the department filed cases against the former succeeding him as the departmental chief. The point is that the officer succeeded in heading the department as the altitissimo of his career though for a short period by the surgery he performed on his persona, convictions and innate values. Though flexibility paid, one wonders whether the quid pro quo was worth the surgery and

could not be a person more in harmony with himself if he had continued with his pristine value system avec acharnement. His predecessor is another example of the same process but for that that after finding failures of the new values to provide the aex triplex he needed, he took recourse back to his innate values and won court battles to head the department.

CRISIS OF VALUES

The tragedy of the officer was that the process of the changes found him shedding away truly noble values innate to him. His integrity became a disaster in the process. His name as the Managing Director of the state's Tourist Development Corporation in 1980s was linked to his young PA after he was noticed spending long hours with her under locked doors and irregularly elevating her to officer's rank to the consternation of the entire staff that went on state-wide strike against the Managing Director. He was also suspected of wrong-doings in purchase of hundreds of cars by the Tourist Development Corporation to run as tourist cars.

It clearly is a case of honest besoin to adapt to the imperatives of the bureaucracy for survival going awry. The attempts are justifiable on the grounds of the survival instinct basic to human nature, because the bureaucracy as it is has no value for anything extra muros. It recognizes only its values and remains adamant to anything ectogenesis. Therefore, the choice for a principled officer is between an unsuccessful career for adhering to one's own values and convictions or quitting. Good jobs are difficult to come. Ergo, ordinary mortal's survival instincts lead to sacrifice his values and principles to adapt to the requirements of the bureaucracy at any cost to the self and its convictions. Everybody cannot be a saint. Thus the need to adapt own values to the bureaucratic imperatives is ineluctable until Indian bureaucracy grows to be mature enough to accept and absorb higher values ab extra.

XENOPHOBIA

A process of ossification has set-in in Indian bureaucracy in absence of real growth and evolution after independence. The political leadership find the development to its advantage. The bureaucracy found itself as fish out of water when its leading guides returned to Britain after independence. Those who handled the higher bureaucracy sinsyne followed from where the British left with their own mediocre interpretations of an ideal bureaucratic setup. The result is the extant bureaucracy of India devoid of creativity, initiative, understanding and a sense of public service. This reduced the definition of the public administration to mean use of rules and procedures to delay or obstruct decisions or actions just for the purpose of proving existence. The new setup developed a queer xenophobia towards deviations from the set patterns as a threat to the very existence of the bureaucracy. The mindset evolved to a pernoctation against any fresh breeze ab extra and a tendency to deracinate any move to that end in the bud itself. Nothing fresh can leak-in to such a bureaucracy a huis clos.

BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE

The indifference is limited to the values ectogenesis to the home-grown value system. The three factors that exercise true prise on Indian bureaucracy beyond the limits are caste affiliations, political patronage and money power. They have become pollent values inter se. You can buy practically anything from the present Indian bureaucracy with them en arriere. And you find what virtually is hell on the Earth without these factors to back you.

The bureaucracy of India in the last five decades has become a law to itself with an opus musivum of a ribald culture spreading tentacles of a reticulation of rights and wrongs beyond the reach of any known precepts of decent human conduct. Here, power is the supreme deity that absterges all sins, reasons and feelings. That naturally renders the rank in bureaucracy the highest virtue and age, merit, character and human dignity eat dust in the milieu. Such a bureaucracy is a perfect ground for the growth of all types of

evils and human weaknesses. There was a Sanskrit scholar with moderate successes as a writer in a provincial language holding a very senior post in the bureaucracy of a South Indian state. He held huge functions for the release of his books by dignitaries including the state Chief Minister. A junior who became distinguished as a poet and as a writer decided to release his book through the Governor of the state. The senior in the bureaucracy out of sheer jealousy spread canards and exercised his personal weight to ensure that the function was cancelled just twenty-four hours before the release of the book by the Governor of the state. This is Indian bureaucracy after independence in puris naturalibus.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

The cardinal question is why the Indian political leadership tolerated such an obstructionist bureaucracy for all these years. The reason is that the political leadership finds itself comfortable with the ossified and unenlightened bureaucracy. There is no danger of an enlightened bureaucracy overshadowing it and taking all the limelight for positive performances. On the other hand, an inert and unenlightened bureaucracy is a handy tool to bear the burdens of all failures. An ineffectual bureaucracy naturally brings higher stature to the political leadership in public perception. It has become a fashion in India to blame the political leadership for all evils of the country. The true blame for the maelstrom the country finds itself with, must lay on the threshold of the crippled bureaucracy and its blotched value system. Sine dubio, Indian political leadership now is more enlightened than its bureaucracy. The edge of the bureaucracy seen in pre-independent era is no more evident now. The reason is that the political leadership kept its doors open for fresh air and updated its value system from time to time unlike the bureaucracy. While the bureaucracy rarely looks beyond the edges of its desk and never outside the window, it is the political leadership that navigated India through diverse innovative phases like NAM, mixed economy, socialistic pattern of society, social control and now economic reforms. Even the recent Agra Summit to bring peace to the South-Asia region is a fine example of an innovative political leadership.

An enlightened bureaucracy with a noble value structure is a great blessing to any country. Unfortunately, Indian bureaucracy at all levels flourish on the ruses like falling on each other to lick the boots of the rich and powerful and bending double over to please the political leadership or play the caste card. These ruses always payed a *natura rei* in the ambience of the Indian bureaucracy after independence courtesy the tendency of the political leadership to play the bureaucratic minions against each other. This prevented the evolution of higher value system in Indian bureaucracy.

Every setup strictly has its own culture and value system. An individual perforce reconciles his personal values with that of an organization when he chooses to be its part. He is required to sacrifice his own convictions and values in the service of the larger interests of the organization. The predicament is perficiently brought out by William Butler Yeats in two lines of the poem, “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death” when the airman sings,

**“ Those that I fight I do not hate,
Those that I guard I do not love;”**

Such a situation is common while organizational objectives and values take precedence over individual objectives and values. The conundrum of such a reconciliation lies in resorting to the adaptations while the organization as in Indian bureaucracy suffered degrading in its value structure en face the higher value structure of the individual. The ambience necessitates the individual lower himself to the lower world to fit-in for survival with the full knowledge that he is becoming a lesser human being in the process. That is the true challenge on the fresh recruits to the government service in India who enter the services with starry eyes and true commitment to the public service inspired ab imo pectore and soon end-up perforce in the quagmire of conflicting values.

REQUISITES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Governance is steering and guiding the country in its course by right policies, decisions and actions and the apparatus invested with the responsibility is government. A government may have different gestalts, colours and priorities depending on the needs and circumstances of the country at the time. Steering the rudder in proper direction through all weathers constitutes the core of the governance. Those holding and attending the rudder decide the destiny of the country. Their character, attitudes and competence determine the tournure of the future of the country and its people.

TWO TIERS

Governance in a democracy is a bifarious exercise with the political rung controlling the policy and decision-making apparatus while the administrative rung handling the decision and action apparatus of the governance. The political and administrative faces are the two sides of the same coin of the governance. The political rung represents the will and aspirations of the people. People get the politicians they deserve. Any expectations and manipulations about the will of the people are undemocratic au fond and unconstitutional even. The case is tout a fait different with the administrative rung which functions as an interface between the policies and its implementation and between the political rulers and the hoi polloi in the matter of governance. While political leadership is ephemeral VVIP guest-component in the arena, the civil servants are the abiding framework of rules and procedures within which the minutiae of the governance are conceived and built brick by brick. It is these civil servants at diverse ranks, levels and fields that really hold the rudder of the governance to steer the country in whatever course their composite character and competence permit. The true governance depends on their abilities and attitudes.

CIVIL SERVANTS

They are professionals in the field of governance unlike the political leaders who handle governance en masse per accidens. They are career administrators and specialists nominated by choice all their lives and constitute more than 99% of the manpower in the field of governance. It is they who by their conduct and attributes decide the nature of the governance in the country and constitute the mainstay of the government irrespective of what party comes to power and who control the reigns of power. Karunanidhi as CM heaping corruption cases against and putting former CM Jayalalitha behind bars and Jayalalitha reciprocating by the same coin when she comes to power or Bofors gun case of the Congress and Tehelka tape case of the NDA in the centre are all dramas of gratuitous media hype of little significance to the future of the country until the character of the administrative rung remains unchanged. The political face can make really little change to the country. It makes little difference to Bihar who heads the government until the civil servants there change their character and mindset. It is unrealistic and too simplistic to presume that the political leadership provides model to the administration down the line. The bureaucracy of India is too hardboiled a unit for such a quick change of colours. The reality is the other way round. The political leaders who come to power have no alternative but go down the line with the demands of the bureaucracy or perish. Politicians as they are, do adapt to their survival instincts and barter their visions for possible quid pro quo in power. The bureaucracy in India really enjoys a commanding position in the governance of the country.

WRONG ATTITUDES

The tragedy of India is that their position and importance is not matched by requisite qualities, merit, passion and commitment for effective and good governance. The Indian bureaucracy is seized with wrong attitudes and evils that waste it away internally. Competence has become a disaster. Wrong people in wrong jobs is a serious malady enervating the public administration of the day. Political heads are wrongly blamed for the havoc. It is the bureaucracy for its own parochial ends at the cost of the

bureaucratic integrity and ideals that invite the trouble and guide the political leadership in the evil path.

HUMAN ELEMENTS

The extant bureaucracy ensemble is marked by lack of human concerns and empathy for the fellow men. Being as rigid as rules and procedures of which those in the bureaucracy are custodians of is wrongly accepted as en regle for those in the bureaucracy. This has deprived the elements of heart and compassion from the body of the bureaucracy. Initiatives, novel ideas and creative pursuits are seen as the antithesis of the governance. This has deprived the elements of brain and intellect from the corpus of the public administrative system. The result is a deadweight-bureaucracy weighing down on the live India and sucking it dry with evils and misuse of the powers invested on it for governing and steering the country ahead.

INTEGRITY

India is an egregious forerunner in the world among countries most corrupt in public life. The root cause of this grave malady is India's corrupt governance pregnant with inefficiency, indifference and gross temulence of power devoid of human elements. Bureaucratic measures have become synonymous in popular parlance and perception in India with foolhardy decisions and actions far removed from reality. Lack of accountability is the leitmotiv of governance in India. This is a malengine consciously evolved ab intra to safeguard self-interests. Power sans accountability rendered governance in India an evil per se.

INSENSITIVITY

The evils of governance need not always be directed only against outsiders. Inscience knows no boundaries. Even those within may become cruel victims of its grossly unrealistic and farcical decisions as in the case of a highly talented and multifaceted genius who joined government service in 1978. He was soon recognized for

sheer brilliance and purity of character as a diamond that can fit anywhere and as a peacock among the fowls. Soon the recognition itself turned a noose on his neck. It was assessed by the inscient bureaucracy that his outstanding attributes might prevent him from becoming popular among the seniors and prevent him from reaching higher levels. A two-pronged strategy was devised. He was to be roughed-up and denied promotions to rub-off his superior qualities and the intimidating aura till the detrition by the sufferings forces him down to the ordinary level. Once the job is accomplished, his lost seniority was to be restored a few years before retirement.

ATROCITIES

He was denied promotions following the meretricious career plan year after year till his junior colleagues became senior to him by two ranks. He was posted to most humiliating posts and harassed endlessly. However, the process got caught in a skein as the infaust officer refused to come down from his immanent and really superior qualities even after two decades of immanity and sufferings while the bureaucracy refused to yield and give up its illegal and unconstitutional stance until the officer condescends to the mediocre levels. The refusal of the officer to approach judiciary against the ill treatment for redressal and his resolve to depend solely on his talents and character helped the establishment to persist with the preposterous process a corps perdu. His morale remained en bon point and high throughout non obstante serious humiliations and endless grief. He aequo animo sought refuge in other fields and won nonpareil accolades from everybody by sheer talents. His tormentors tout de suite followed him there too. The head of the State Intelligence who himself a small-time writer and published a few books in a regional language used esoteric threats in 2000 on the publishers of the accurst officer to discourage them from publishing his books. The publishers who already had published half a score books of the officer returned a contre coeur two manuscripts of the officer in sheer desperation a natura rei expressing helplessness en face the police interferences.

TRANSPARENCY

Fanciful premises bordering madness tout court leading to irresponsible and erratic career plans of that dimensions are possible only in governance utterly lacking in accountability and only a sacred country like India can produce such gross grief, sufferings and humiliations eo nomine noble intensions en pure perte. Lack of transparency makes such etourdi atrocities possible and permits its practice for decades en pantoufles as in the case study.

PUBLIC CAUSE

The case is an eye-opener to how merit, talent and character of very high order meted out by the mediocrity of the governance in the Indian milieu. Jealousy is common. Anybody junior receiving limelight is seen with resentment and suspicion. The major achilles' heel of the governance in India is its inability to understand others' predicaments. Governance in quiddity is safeguarding national interests and the welfare of the people. These factors perforce involve empathy with the people and sensitivity to their interests. These are the springboards of good governance. No governance worth the name can render meaningful public service sans the spirit of building bridges to the hoi polloi in whose service it draws sustenance and what constitutes its raison d'etre. Good governance must be built on the terra firma of human concerns and sensitivity to others' predicaments.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Another requisite of good governance is accountability. It gives sanctity to power and makes it meaningful and relevant in the scheme of governance. Power is a raw energy. Accountability gives it sophistication and purpose. Governance sans accountability has the tendency of hijacking the country to the pit of evils that power breeds. Checks and counterchecks serve the purpose of good governance by rendering itself to the litmus test of accountability, ipso facto bringing in the elements of responsibility to the field of governance. In the ambience of civil servants functioning in

the shadow of the political leadership, the former mastered the art of evading accountability and responsibility. The successes boldened them to the derring-does of larger dimensions. The recent US-64 debacle is the point. India can ill-afford repeat performances of that dimension and must save from such disasters in future through an uneluctable parameter of accountability that alone can dawn an era of responsible governance in the country.

OBJECTIVITY

A cardinal principle of good governance is objectivity and fair play. The governance as public administration is inevitably circumvented by pulls and counter-pulls of diverse kinds to influence decisions and actions. The compulsions for yielding to either side are enormous and it reduce the governance to a mere play or dynamics of lobbyists and influence-pedlars. A good governance must stand up to the pressures. This requires tremendous inner strength and singular commitment to the public cause. It is easier said than done. However, this commitment is sine qua non for good governance. While accountability is an apparatus to protect the governance from the indulgences of the fonctionnaire ab intra like greed, irresponsibility and love for easy life, the shield of objectivity protects it from the ectogenous onslaughts of pressures, temptations and threats. While accountability must evolve as an external mechanism ingrained in the body of the governance, objectivity is an inner faculty either inborn or acquired as the fond of good governance.

IMBALANCES

Good governance should have its powers and responsibilities amated and evenly distributed in the fabric of the governance. This ensures smooth governance d' accord with the principles of democracy. Another factor core to good governance is a balance of powers and responsibilities propped up with transparency in state affairs. Responsibilities sans powers end up with failures in performance and powers non compris responsibilities breed undue morgue and lead to harassment of the public. Governance sans transparency

is at the root of all evils and goes tout au contraire to the very rationale of the democracy. It can neither be fair nor earn the trust of the people.

OPEN MIND

No governance is worth the salt without a passion for developmental and welfare activities in national interests. The passion widens the horizons of the mind as against that circumscribed by isms of theoretical hang that can never provide a good and open governance. A passion pure and clear for the welfare and development of the nation and its people by any means is a prerequisite for good governance. Only that keeps mind open for all developments worldwide and absorb really the best for the country.

VISION

The most basic requirement of any good governance is a vision, an ability to look ahead to the future of the country with great expectations and endless possibilities in sidelines. This is potential of evolving the governance to greater heights to herald an era of successes and prosperity. Visions carve paths to the future and prod the governance to navigate along the course. It provides a break from the quotidian plod in preference to innovative strides to fulfil the vision. Governance sans vision is like building an edifice at random without a plan or blueprint. It at best is a random erection. Vision gives direction and purpose to the governance. It gives a grandeur and a proportion to the process. No governance can be good and complete without a vision to steer ahead and a true governance can be built only on the terra firma of a vision. The old concept of a prosperous India is based on the vision of “Rama Rajya”. The new concept of India coming of age is based on the vision of a world power or a regional power in Asia. Once a vision of that dimension is en arrière to back, it is easy to put the pluses and minuses to conceive a strategy towards the end. Otherwise, governance is nothing more than mechanical motions.

India in its long history saw governance of all kinds, proportions and dimensions and survived through them. It saw the worst and the best in its 2500 years of recorded history. It, like other old civilizations of the world, has worked as the crucible of various experiments in governance. The governance in India now is based on this long experience. It is the collective will for good governance that is lacking in India. The consequence is that the hoi polloi suffer and the country fails to reach the height it is potential of. The besoin of the extant India is the evolution of a collective will to have a good governance. People must pool their energies to force a good governance for the country. Indeed the job is not easy and the resistance from those in charge of the governance whose interests lie in the status quo is bound to be hard. But, this cannot be a reason to leave the matter of this dimension unattended as the fate of one billion people depends on this development. Only such a collective will can devolve truly good governance for the country.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN EMERGING INDIA

Indian culture treats women with utmost reverence. Woman is identified with *Adi Shakti* or the primordial energy; she is considered as the *prikriti* or the basic nature; she is compared with the mother earth. Woman's *avatar* as mother is treated as the highest manifestation of human relationships. It is mother who gets precedence over all other principles of life including father and god in importance. She is considered as the moving force of life. It is presumed that there is a woman behind every great event of the world. Indian scriptures state that where women are revered, god resides there. Great epics of India like Ramayana and Mahabharata revolve around female characters like Sita and Draupadi. This is only an illustration of the status of women in India, the honour and reverence with which they are held from time immemorial, the importance given to them in the scheme of the history and affairs of human life. Nobody can gainsay these factors in the scheme of Indian life. However, these are conceptual realities. In a country and culture where a sacrificial animal is treated as sacred and worshipped before slaughtered, conceptual realities remain far removed from ground realities and may even symbolise dangers ahead as ground realities. It is particularly true about the status of women in India.

Nature created women different from men with a definite purpose. Balance is stillness and stagnation; imbalance is motion and progress. Nature designed life and motion by means of the imbalance brought about in the traits of men and women. In the process, women find themselves at the receiving end. They ended up as the weaker half of society by their very nature and are naturally handicapped in a world of men, by men, for men. In a world where strength commands charity and weakness receives cruelty and humiliations, women suffered all along the centuries with patience and in silence. This part of woman is symbolised in tradition by calling her as the Mother Earth who bears all sufferings. The cardinal principle of the survival of the fittest applies to the weak natural attributes of woman which renders her less fit for survival than man. She

must live with his atrocities unless and until society in an enlightened mood comes to her rescue.

The immane approach of the stronger world to its weaker counterparts has to be countered with strong arm methods of the state power. In an enlightened age such as this, people in public life are sufficiently sensitized to this issue and more and more legislations come up to stop stronger people from riding over the weak and meek. India too has several legislations that have become Acts to protect its women folk.

Atrocities against women in India are mainly rape and unnatural offences, dowry deaths, abduction and kidnapping for various purposes and outraging their modesty apart from minor acts like various marriage offences, dowry and other harassments, insulting the modesty, causing miscarriage without consent and prostitution. Most of these offences are punishable under the Indian Penal Code: in sections from 375 to 377, for rape and unnatural offences; abduction and kidnapping girls for various purposes being punishable in sections from 364 to 369, offences related to marriage being subjected to penal provisions in sections from 493 to 498; outraging the modesty of a woman in section 354 and insulting the modesty in section 509 being offences. Section 314 makes causing miscarriage without women's consent, a punishable act. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1993 (No.43/83) provided for in camera trial of rape cases and also enlarged the scope of rape cases by placing the burden of proving innocence on the accused persons apart from making penal sections more mordant, particularly in cases of custodial rapes by public servants. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 with the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls (Amendment), Act, 1986 and rules framed by states u/s 23 of the Act deal with offences relating to immoral traffic in women and girls.

Sensitization of the people and the government in the recent past to the ground-realities has brought sea-changes in the status of women. Rise in female education as noticed in the first decades of the present century opened up the *abode* of the resistance to sexual discrimination. Though the process was very slow *in principio*, it

gradually picked up pace as decades passed by. Nineteen- seventies is a watermark in the process. The advent of Mrs. Indira Gandhi in 1966 and the grit and strength displayed by her as the Prime Minister of India and as the only real woman among the parliamentarians of the time, revolutionised the concept of womanhood in India. It became a fashion even in tiny villages of India to comfort while a female baby was born, that who knows, the child may also become a Prime Minister or somebody big like her. Though India have innumerable valiant queens in its history who led huge armies against formidable armies and fought *jusqu au bout*, they were out-of-turn phenomena at their respective times and seldom touched the chords of the women among the commoners. But, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was a product of the time, of the process of the awakening of the women, and in turn, as a phenomenon, she greatly contributed for the advancement of the process.

The Indira Gandhi phenomenon helped to improve the status of women in India in another way. It crumbled male chauvinism. It humbled male pride. The historical coverings of great leaders of India of the time before Mrs.Indira Gandhi exposed the halo of the male superiority as hollow. It made it patent that it is the power one weilds that makes the difference, not the sex of the person who weilds it. Indeed, these are subtle realisations that shook the thoughts of the people though none said it in so many words to them. Rise of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, *sine dubio*, will remain as a meith in ameliorating the status of women in the annals of Indian history.

The trend of women going for jobs and pursuing professions started far before the advent of Indira Gandhi at the centre-stage. Her advent revolutionised the trend. After Indira Gandhi, women in jobs became more a rule than an exception and they looked for progressively higher slots and sought fields where never before women stepped into. As a result, more and more fields and higher and higher slots opened up for them. As time passed by, the reservations towards recruiting or promoting women thinned and ultimately disappeared. As a result, sexual discrimination in jobs is a matter of past now. More and more people realise that is skill and other abilities that count in doing a job

well and not the sex of the performer. As far as jobs are concerned., sexual equality is a reality already.

Economic strength generated by jobs has successfully boosted the self-Image of women in India. Economic liberation is the touch-stone of all other liberations. The power, status and influence generated from the jobs add to the solidification of the status of women in emerging India. Evils like dowry are bound to be wiped out of the earth of India in the emerging atmosphere. Being an evil, inveterate in Indian soil from millenniums, a historical process like deracinating the assuetude of dowry cannot take place overnight. Such a historical process takes its own time. And emerging India happily is on the road. It is only a matter of time before India is free from the *prise* of this shameful menace.

Dowry death cases have become sensational topical issues these days with the public being highly sensitised to the menace of the offences with the unfortunate swelchie of cruel practices and circumstances deliver an innocent girl at death's door. All institutions of society including the government, press, women's organisations, judiciary and police handle dowry death cases on a special footing. Each such case outrages the patience of thinking people and rouses the passion and outcry against the perpetrators of the offence. The police too give special importance to the investigation of these cases and closely supervises the investigation process..

Marriage is often called the second birth in a girl's life; it brings an entire metamorphosis in the form and contents of her life and in the process exposes her to inopinate adaptation problems. It is an irony of nature and social customs that it is the woman who is delicate in nature rather than the man, who is selected for this difficile gauntlet of transformation in the process of familial socialising. Percase, the gentle and amenable *caractere* of the female breed expose hers to the natural selection for the purpose. In the process death of the most unfortunate of them by *felo de se* or homicide because of the grind of the circumstances has become an unfortunate phenomenon. Dowry is only one though *primus inter pares* among various immane manifestations of adjustment problems to which the tender psyche of a young girl is exposed after her

marriage. An integrated approach to all these symptoms of adjustment problems to which a girl is suddenly exposed while her persona is yet unprepared to meet the gauntlets alone can bring deliverance to the fairer sex of the human genre. The entire process of social legislations and their enforcement is only a distant link in the whole catena of luctation warranted to achieve this end.

The emerging sexual equality has another happy face *vis a vis* the conceptual reality of the reverence and importance given to women in India and Indian culture from times immemorial. The equality of man and woman on the field certainly tilts the balance of advantage in favour of woman because of the favour with which she is accustomed to be seen. This tilt of balance is not a forced one on the man, but one volunteered hors de combat because of the natural attributes of a woman's characteristics. This tilt is already in evidence. Given equal chances, woman is favoured in recruitments and promotions because of her natural sincerity, honesty and devotion to work. In this sense, women are overtaking men. The process is on. They are *in limine*. It is a happy development. It is civilisation. It is culture. It is good for the future of the humanity. Humanity can survive only if women with their far superior attributes, lead men *en face* in addition to being driving forces *en arriere*. Man sans woman is not only incomplete, but also lightless and lifeless

Not that woman and man are really equal. Nature meant them to be unequal for its own purposes and process. Basically, they are in-comparable quantum, separate entities by themselves. If to be compared at all, woman has an edge over man. Often the reality is distorted by man by his brutish physical strength as against the gentle mental and spiritual attributes of woman and he forcibly cornered all opportunities of growth. If women are opened up to their *de jure* opportunities, women as nature designed it for them, go ahead of men and lead them to a far better world than existing now. A cultured and civilized world must provide this natural opportunity to its women-folk for its own good. This is what is happening in emerging India.

IN PURSUT OF EXCELLENCE

Excellence stands for quality *in excelsis* unlike the quantity of the commercial and the material morass though excellence in no way represents the antithesis of the mass commercial ventures. It basically is an attitude reinforced with focused and dedicated strivings for perfection. It is the katabasis of this attitude and passion in everyday life *en face* the race with time in the milieu of manipulative competitions of commercial edge that makes life less *dignus* in the world we live in. Excellence gives value to life.

Excellence is a measure of the height scaled in achievement. Only the bests can reach that height. Excellence signifies a superior human worth. Its disappearance suggests mediocrity encompassing all walks of life and complacency engrossing it.

What is Excellence?

According to Booker T. Washington, “Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way”. Perry Paxton says, “Existence is in the details. Give attention to the details and excellence will come”. But, the credit of the most promising peroration on the nature of excellence must go to Sun-Tzu (Wu), a Chinese military strategist (535 BC – 228 BC) when he figuratively declares in his celebrated book, *der Unsterbliche*, The Art of War, “supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting.” Excellence is an edge over and something extra in value addition. It is the positive outcome of persistent and relentless focus of talent over time to rise above the mediocrity and make a rare break in standards. It is not easy to come. Focused talent, persistent hard work, infrangible spirit, endless patience and consistent passion for excellence as the inviolable hallmarks constitute the bedrock of the process of excellence. Excellence is an outcome of superior spirit.

Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Superior spirits autograph their works with excellence. It takes a long time to bring excellence to maturity. Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better. *Vera incessu patuit dea*.

Excellence is the outer dazzle of the inner *lumiere*. It needs to be cultivated; it needs to be imbued and perfected by endless endeavour. It is not for feeble minded and broken spirits. Excellence comes only out of excellence.

Mother of All Breakthroughs

Excellence is the mother of all breakthroughs. It is the tool that takes life to its limits to open up a new vista of possibilities and constitutes the building blocks of the history of the human evolution, it be in science, technology, research, politics, governance, professions, arts, trade, commerce, industry, war strategies or big or small performances of individuals or groups or nations. It is the abracadabra of the forward thrust of the human evolution. The present technological advancements of the West, the past philosophical supremacy of the East and India, the present competitive edge of Japan, South Korea and China in industrial output and Singapore in public administration in the East, stunning achievements of the USA in the field of space research, the superb works of the Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the field of education and research, the watch industry of Switzerland, each is no such paragon of supreme excellence in human endeavour and accomplishment.

India too had and has its share of excellence. It's Vedas and Sanskrit language, its Buddhism as a religion, its Nalanda University as a centre of learning, its progress in astronomy, mathematics and other fields of science are classical examples of supreme excellence of the *ancien regime*. It can boast attempts at excellence in certain fields even in this dark age of moral degradation and pure commercialization of the human spirit; Indian Institutes of Technology, a few institutions like the Missionaries of Charity, a handful of national and regional newspapers and journals *inter alia* showed commendable commitment towards excellence contranant to the reigning zeitgeist namely commercialism and sensational moorings and withstood its temptations.

Passion for Excellence

Excellence is not easy to come. It is limited by umpteen obstacles immanent to human nature like greed, complacency, and commercial tendencies, manipulative competition, corrupt practices, parochial indulgences, lure of quick returns and primarily, the *chaltha hai* mindset that distract focus away from excellence. Lack of passion for excellence is the underlying cause. Also, the ambience of poverty and survival instinct, the pulls and pressures of the democratic politics and the race with time of the extant commercial world add to the problem. After all, *necessitas non habet legem*. Survival is the foremost instinct. It is true for all, it be artists, politicians, professionals, industrialists or a plebeian. In a commercial world where time is money, the brooding leisure needed for the pursuit and appreciation of excellence and perfection is hard to come and perforce seen in a milieu lacking in passion for excellence as a waste of precious time and opportunity. It is true of India and most of the developing countries of the world.

Indeed, wider competitions ensued from the liberalisation and globalization do render excellence *sine qua non* for survival in the open market. The need of competing in the ambience of the *welt geist* of excellence is bound to have salubrious impact on the passion for excellence in the Indian mindset. It is a saving grace of the globalization in disguise.

Three Dimensional

Excellence is three-dimensional; while ultimate performance is its exoteric face, it is the value system and the thoughts and the planning that go for the chevisance that really lay the foundation for the excellence. A performance, however brilliant be, does not constitute excellence *per se*. Right *sittlichkeit* holds its own place in the scheme. Coming to the national scene, committed economic reforms covering liberalisation, privatization and globalization for the economic growth of the country are great. But, the efforts with all its intellectual content *en arriere* can never apportion the title of excellence until the measure takes the hardships of the hoi polloi in the process and the needs of the time in to account and decide. After all, it is *salus populi suprema lex est*. It

is so also with the Hindutva and the need of protecting the religion and its culture from the onslaught of the time. Any thoughtless measure at the cost of the humanity at large and the rightful processes of other institutions is bound to be counterproductive. Such things have nothing to do with excellence. In history, brilliant military strategy and organizational skills and superb leadership qualities of Adolph Hitler only led him to doom because his historic accomplishments for Germany had perverted values of revenge, aggression and spine-chilling holocaust as its bedrock and he lost a rare historical opportunity of bringing about unparalleled organizational and leadership excellence into being, because of his tragically negative objects and emotions. So also the extant USA by its aggression on Iraq. India relegated excellence to oblivion under its self-rule. Even constitutional bodies created to promote excellence in government services have become rule and procedure enforcing bodies in native hands rather than going proactive to promote excellence. It is a *triste affaire*.

The noblest search is the search for excellence. *Laborare est orare* wherever there is search for excellence. Charles C. Krulack says, “Excellence just doesn’t happen; it must be forged, tested and used – it must be woven in to the very fabric of our soul until it becomes our nature”. Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better. Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784) preconises, “Excellence in any department can be attained only by the labour of a life time; it is not to be purchased at a lesser price”. Excellence is in brass tacks; excellence is in wholeness; excellence is there in the interdependence between the brass tacks and the wholeness. Excellence is in cause and excellence is in accomplishment; excellence is there in the values those inspire the acts. Excellence is a life long mission of a committed soul and an attainment of a steadfast spirit. Perhaps keeping this truth in mind, John W. Gardner (1912 –2002), a US official and a writer proclaimed in his work on Excellence, “Some people have greatness thrust upon them. Very few have excellence thrust upon them”. Such a *rara avis* is excellence to pursue and achieve.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure is a network of facilitating structures for a process, be it poverty eradication programmes, economic growth process or any other programme of human endeavour. It is a labyrinth of relevant and useful facilities created to enable human endeavour realize a process. Infrastructure is process relevant. The infrastructure needed in a rural area is different from that needed in an urban area. They are different things crying for different means. A Government is meant to go for general infrastructures required for all sectors and ensure on priority benefits for maximum numbers. After all, *salus populi suprema lex est*.

Industrial Sector in deliciis

Democracy is feudal in reality involving stiff competitions between diverse sectors and interest groups to gobble the *res gestae* available from the State. Power begets power and money begets money. So, it is powerful sectors that succeed and corner infrastructure development programmes of the State to their advantage when the State sleeps and forgets its responsibilities. It is what is happening in recent India about the powerful industrial sector in deliciis. Slogan oriented Indian media and pneumatic Indian economists are devoted tout a fait to its shallow cause. The devotion has gone to the extent of a few publications recently warning some Indian cities to develop infrastructures to the satisfaction of the IT and other industries, or else

Priorities in Infrastructure

Women in villages in India die during delivery for lack of motorable roads to take them in time to taluq hospitals and women here walk miles for a pot of water. This is the extent of the lack of infrastructure in India. Infrastructure is essential. Basic needs and amenities of the plebeian should be its priority. Next in order come the needs of decent living like good roads, bridges, effective communication system, uninterrupted power

supply, decent health and education system and so on. Major projects like dams and irrigation systems, mining and steel plants, railways and highways networks are also required to bring about the general economic growth of the country. Commune bonum is its litmus test. The desirability of an infrastructure depends on who are its focus and how desperately is it needed. A country has no right to waste its exiguous fund on exclusive prodigal schemes to benefit a narrow sector like the industry under the fig leaf of the economic growth. The perverted argument provided in support of the industry is that Indian industrial products should be made competitive in the world market and that economic growth itself functions as an infrastructure for the well being of the common man and therefore all public expenditures for the industry is justified as a vehicle of the economic growth. The argument is perforce distal from the field reality in the ambience of the homo homini lupus. Industry is commerce au fond. And therefore profit and self-indulgence is its ultimate stimuli. State protection to an uncompetitive industry at the cost of poor man's advantages is a misplaced priority. Any benefit accrues to the public from this is minor and irrelevant to the quantum of the public expenditure.

Pampering the Industrial Sector

Often, exports and foreign exchanges, and employment opportunities are advanced as reasons for pampering the industrial sector at the cost of the common man. Foreign exchanges basically serve big industries for imports and foreign tours and those who have excess money to indulge in. India can earn more than adequate foreign exchanges to meet its essential needs including in defence and science and research without pampering big industries and without undercutting the minimum needs of the plebian. And creating eurhythmic employment opportunities by flooding the industrial sector with huge public funds and special and costly favours is a myth created by intelligent industrialists, and naive economists and media lacking in depth and blinded by serious myopia.

Economic Growth

Economic growth is necessary. It is basically future looking. Making India an economic super power in 25 years is a noble dream. But, people come first and reality of today is more important than the dream of 25 years hence. Tomorrow can wait, but not today. Only those who suffer it can know the pain of poverty and want. It is sheer sin to ignore their sufferings and divest funds that rightfully belong to their welfare to the accounts of the well-to-do industrialists behind the deceptive and elusive slogans of economic super power and the future prosperity. No Singapore, South Korea or China of the 21st century vintage can be built on the carcass of the suffering common man. Ameliorate his life standards to a reasonable level and bring the economic growth through him. That is true economic growth of a democratic milieu. That should be the policy of a democratic State. Otherwise, it would not be different from that of the egregious Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot in 1970s in Cambodia that tried to bring forcible Communist glory to that country over the carcass of the Phnom Penh citizenry.

Taste of the Free Spoils

The argument is not at all against industries, economic growth or even infrastructures, but about emphasis and priority. All those are necessary for the balanced growth and survival of the country. The issue here is undue zeal and unintelligent championing of the cause of the rich industries at the cost of the hoi polloi as India witnesses today.

Broad concrete roads, flyovers, uninterrupted power supply, efficient energy network, and excellent communication systems are welcome as pro bono publico initiatives. But, when they come as facilitators of rich industries, parameters of the projects are adapted to the needs of the latter at prohibitive costs to the public exchequer. The infrastructures, industries demand and got include acres of prime lands in and around metropolitan cities at ludicrously low throw away prices for non-operational and often ostentatious purposes, special tax exemptions running for multiple crores of rupees,

exclusive cyber or electronic or similar industry oriented parks with ultra modern facilities, concessional bank loans, specially constructed access roads to their headquarters and so runs the endless list. Some state Chief Ministers easily obliged them in oodles for their own personal, party and political reasons and lost next elections. L' appetit vient en mangeant. As the industries got the taste of the free spoils from the Government, their greed grew and recently went to the extent of threatening the Governments of shifting to other states if their further demands were not met. Bonded media also added its mite to this silly threat. So goes the game in this maledict India.

What India needs are a holistic approach to its infrastructure developments rather than lopsided favours to the powerful and their cronies who cry wolf under misleading claims and slogans. A nation belongs to all and must serve the interests of all sections of the people including the rich and the poor, and the industrialists and the farmers and protect who are weak and powerless. In the circumstances of exiguous resources crunch, a fair policy of eurhythmic division of what is available is called for. This cardinal need is algate forgotten in India, and Palman qui meruit ferat with the active support of influential cronies in right places - politicians, bureaucrats, economists and media here. And the common man is a tragic loser in this triste game. The State policy should be people oriented in a democracy and it must endeavour to enrich their life. All growths including economic growth must emanate from this foundation. Only such growths endure and make the country prosperous. No foreign exchanges and exports, no palatial glass edifices of industrial houses, no seven-figure salaries for a few, no wanton gambling in shares and stocks inter se really make India an economic giant. Singapore, South Korea, Japan and China from Asia and European countries and the USA built their economic edifices on the bedrock of its people's general prosperity and strengths. A few Everests do not make India a highland. Going for flowers at the cost of roots is a negative trend fuelled by shallow understanding of the issues. Infrastructure being the soul of any development, right focus on its priorities is what India needs now and sine qua non for its onward march.

DEMOCRACY FOR WHOM?

Democracy in puris naturalibus is the rule of the powerful, by the powerful, for the powerful. It is a concept popularised by the powerful of the West for their own advantages all over the world though the concept as a priori theory as the rule by the people is based on sound principles and noble intentions. The second chapter of the democracy namely liberalisation is another instance of a noble concept based on the sound principle of free dynamics of human forces going awry as a policy of the powerful, by the powerful, for the powerful. Again, the powerful of the West are found pushing through the agenda of popularising the concept a toute force as a state policy all over the world for their own advantages. The result is that the world is increasingly becoming a haven for the rich and powerful at the cost of the hoi polloi.

FAILED HOPE

India valiantly fought against foreign rule for more than a century with the hope of bringing deliverance to the country and eutaxy for its people. The half-century of the democracy sinsyne proved the mendacity of the hope and enthusiasm. The situation can be described in following two stanzas of the poem, “To A Conscript Of 1940” by Herbert Read:

We think we gave in vain. The world was not renewed.
There was hope in the homestead and anger in the streets
But the old world was restored and we returned
To the dreary field and workshop, and the immemorial feud

Of rich and poor. Our victory was our defeat.
Power was retained where power had been misused
And youth was left to sweep away
The ashes that the fire had strewn beneath our feet.

EXPLOITERS

The only difference India saw in democracy is the shift in exploiters from the foreign rulers to the rich and powerful among the natives. While the foreign exploiters were circumspect and scrupulous in their exploitations for the fear of the world opinion and their native moral scruples, the native exploiters threw their *conscia mens recti* to the wind and turned ruthless in their greed and heartless in their exploitations of the poor and unenlightened mass of the co-patriots. They have neither the moral scruples nor the fear of the world opinion. Nor the supremacy of the *hoi polloi* in a democracy fluster them. For, their native intelligence is too pollent to be caught by such foolish concepts. They learnt the tricks of the trade *assez bien* early. They know how their side of the bread can be buttered and why there is nothing on the face of the Earth including votes and status that they can't purchase with their money and power. That was the doom of India's democracy and its people.

BRITISH RULE

India under the British was not worse than the present India if not better. Those who lived in both the ages speak *una voce* and hold testimonies for the irrefutable fact as far as common man is concerned. Life was easy and quiet. There was a feeling of security everywhere. The air was pregnant with a sense of morality and respect for higher values. The public life was clean. There was no violence around except for the oragious political struggle. There was no *tourbillion* of corruption as it is now. Merit always counted. Not every thing was venal as of now. Life always moved on expected lines and people could plan their life and future.

AN EVIL PROP

The *degringolade* of India subsequent to its democracy is often blamed on its population explosion in geometric progression and the accrescent complexity of the life pattern of the present world. It is partially true. The complete truth lies in the plurisie of

the evils of the democracy that contributed to the descent as an evil prop to the rich and powerful.

UNFAIR JUDGEMENT

Elders who lived in both the era and independent and sagacious enough not to be clouded by pseudo-idealism and concepts of foreign origin swear that the British really ruled India well non obstante tremendous odds of the freedom struggle and the alien nature of their rule. The progress India saw during the period was immense and the country could move *pari passu* with the world in the matter of progress and modernity. India saw large-scale developments during the period in all fields including social, cultural and administrative spheres courtesy the initiatives and the active encouragement of the British rulers. Disparaging the measures as moves of administrative convenience or as moves to strengthen their prise over the country is a malengine tout court on the plebeian and a mal-propaganda natural to our native evil ingine to cover up our mal-administration in the democratic ambience. Administrative convenience begetting precedence in the unending schedule of priorities is a common administrative practice anywhere in the world. A major move like introduction of the railways in India in the 19th century was misprised as a move to help British entrepreneurs in India. Such an unfair reclame goes against the spirit of a balanced view and betrays our flair for tilted judgements. The priorities of the British administrators certainly were more objective and accountable in administration en face what we encounter by our own rulers now around: selfish to the core a fond.

DEMOCRATIC INDIA

India under democracy has become a playground of the rich and powerful and a field of their unethical manoeuvres and consecutaneous mega scams. Yet, they are not satisfied with the opportunities a la main. They found their opportunity in an extension of democracy namely liberalisation which is vigorously marketed these days by the Western powers to meet their own interests. Thus, the powers of the West and the powerful of the

country are now joining hands to further undermine the interests of the poor, weak and the ordinary. It will lead to a situation where only strong become stronger and perforce weak, weaker. Democracy is not just freedom. It is the rule of the people comprising rich and poor, weak and strong, powerful and powerless, competent and incompetent, able and unable, hopeful and hopeless and the ordinary people. Democracy in its extant gestalt and liberalisation by its very concept promote the interests of only the rich, strong, powerful, competent, able and hopeful few. It is not democracy at all in true sense of the noble concept.

DEMOCRATIC RULERS

India of the democratic vintage has its rich and powerful either indulging in criminal acts or being in nexus with criminals to further promote their personal agenda of becoming richer and more powerful. In the process, criminals are becoming real power-centres and criminality is gaining in respectability in the country. This made life in the country unsafe and violence, a daily matter. Merit lost its primus. Personal competence has become secondary or tertiary to money and power in its ability to boost fortunes. Status and social position have become the custodies of the rich and the powerful. Election as a democratic apparatus being money-centric rendered money the centre for power. This brought money and power closer. Big money being less than a dream sans resorting to illegal activities in the circumstances of extant rules and laws rendered criminality prolate and commonplace in India and an ineluctable ladder to gain power and position in the democratic government. This led to a strange situation of lawmakers leading the gang of law-breakers to ensure power and position in the next election. Can these rulers who perforce break their own laws provide honest governance to the country? How can the country and its people depend on such democratic rulers for their security and welfare? India is facing such a conundrum now.

FEUDAL NATURE

Democracy made India a feudal nation with innumerable political parties swearing against each other for the sake of political power. It made the country a divided house with each faction going for the blood of the others and turning the country ensemble to a huge factious village. Hatred and opposition have become the leitmotiv of the public life. Violence and intrigues have become the accepted means of ascendancy. Democratic practices undermined the foundation of peace, harmony and unity of the nation and weakened the fabric of the moral values and ethical practices in the public life of the nation. The crème de la crème of the country opted out of the endless strife for power and position and politics became the dernier ressort of scoundrels in India as popular saying goes. What can be the character and merits of the rule provided by such people at the helm? It is where democracy brought India to.

REAL TRAGEDY

Democracy in India brought real changes to the rich, powerful and the political class at the cost of its infima species. It removed all the hurdles from their path to become richer, more powerful and establish political dynasties. British were too moral conscious to allow such things to happen during their rule. They maintained certain minimal values in public life that ensured some degree of equal opportunity in all fields depending on merit. Democracy removed the hurdle for the native rich and powerful and they found their deliverance in symbiosis and synergy. That is the tragedy of the democracy for the weak and the ordinary of the country.

SPECIAL PREMIUM

The advent of democracy is marked by accrescent tax burden on the people in the name of developmental and welfare activities. The wealth so extracted was frittered away by inefficiency, corruption or sheer wastage. The benefits meant for the people seldom reached them thanks to inefficiency, corruption and the pestilent middlemen who act as the conduits of democracy. The toil of the people was looted as taxes to provide for the

security and luxuries of the soi disant aristocracy of the democratic vtntage who assumed special premium for their own lives.

UNEQUAL COMPETITION

More and more prop of liberalisation is provided to democracy these days to make the latter further pro-rich and powerful. That provides the upper strata of the society more elbow-space for manoeuvres and deceptions to put their money and power to better use and renders the poor and weak hors concours. Scams of the dimension of US-64 in the UTI are possible only in such an ambience. Competition is the clavis of the concept of liberalisation. Competition among the unequal in a nation where nearly half of the population lives below the poverty line and less than 1% can be credited to be rich and powerful is nothing more than a mockery of the principle of an equitable society as well as of the vaulting intentions of democratic principles like the rule of the common man and welfare of all.

DEMOCRATIC FOCUS

Liberalisation per se is not bad as is democracy. It is its concept of *suum cuique* as opposed to the concept of social responsibility and the unjust practices that poison the atmosphere. It is a matter of focus of the democratic leadership at the helm of the governance. Liberalisation as a policy is discussed in India for more than a decade now in the ambience of protecting the interests of the lesser rich of the country from the competition of the more rich of the world. The plebeian has no place in the scheme of things of a policy of that dimension. This can't happen in a true rule of the people, by the people, for the people where poor and weak constitute more than 95% of the people.

A CONSCIOUS POLICY

An ideal rule in quiddity is a rule pro bono publico that protects the interests of all sections of the people including rich, poor and weak. But the policy initiatives for the purposes have to be pro rata to the numerical strengths of the respective sections. It is not

the case in India's democratic environment. Here, the rich and powerful rule the roost and the state policy *au mieux* is directed to their protection as a conscious policy while the poor and powerless are left to their own fate to meet both the ends. Because, it is the rich and powerful who count in the democratic schemes of the country to keep power while the hapless poor and the weak can wait endlessly in the state priorities. This is Indian democracy.

HUMAN NATURE

The achilles' heel lies in the human nature of seeking power, wealth and opportunities and those who possess it. Present Indian rulers are not a rebours to this nature nor those others manning the peripherals of a democratic institution in India like the media and the intellectuals as opinion makers of the country. They save some exceptions tend to be sensational-centric and prefer to move with the lee tide in lieu of going to the stark truths. They are proved more prone to be affected by concerted propaganda and twisted rationale than the ordinary man. That is why an evil like unrestrained liberalisation is accepted as a deliverance by them *una voce*; that is why political leaders in India are glorified in magazines and newspapers as great heroes sans consideration to their values, merit, performance and ethical standing in public life. It is their power and status *ex consequenti* that count over the merits of great performers who are relegated to the inconspicuous corners of the pages. The common man himself gives precedence to power and mammon over merit at his own cost. That is the prise of money and power on the human kind *tout a fait*.

ELEMENTARY NEEDS

Democracy, *sine dubio*, is an ideal concept. The concept presupposes certain elementary needs essential for the success of the concept in practice. Equality among the majority of the population leading to equal opportunities *en principe* is centric to the concept. This is not the case in India. Ergo, the failure. Winston Churchill once said that democracy is a bad form of government, but it is the best among the available. Coming

from a politician of the democratic dispensation, the *faire bonne mine* should be taken with a pinch of salt. Is there no deliverance to a poor nation like India and other nations of its ilk in Asia, Africa and South America apart from democracy that does not behave to the diversities of their populations?

What is the *besoin* of these nations is a system of government wherein around forty select people of sound attributes of heart and head as a team rule the country a la present day cabinet and general assembly in one with another team of around forty responsible people functioning as an accountability team to keep *pernoctation* over the governance with the present institution of the President *mutatis mutandis* responsible for both the teams. Both teams function as permanent bodies with 25% of the teams retiring once in every three years without an opportunity for reappointment and together on their own wisdom decide the replacements *ex quocunque capite* for both the teams from the people of proven abilities, integrity and character. The teams together structure the new teams *ex mero motu* once every three years after each replacement of the 25% of the teams. The *clavis* of the new *gestalt* is selection of the right people of proven attributes of heart and head *ex professo*. The teams together can remove a member of the either team *ex concessis* when proved *indign* for the position and task. Indeed, the *ebauche* needs myriad details of immense intricacies to be efficacious. The effort is worth a try in the interests of a billion Indians.

The book is available online at the following site

ISBN: 978-1-61582-141-9 PAGES:367 PRICE: \$24.95

<http://www.publishamerica.net/product85331.html>

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