



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL INDIA

EDITORIAL

Quarterly

Festival of forgetfulness

It is ironical that in the midst of exposure of scams, the Prime Minister should advise us to ignore these and not contribute to the shrill. He has tried to downplay the damage done to the nation by obliquely hinting that if these had been taken supportively, damage would be less. He mentioned that 'Mindless atmosphere of negativity and pessimism that is sought to be created over the issue of corruption can do us no good'.

It is regrettable that he has played the same symphony that his predecessors in the party had been fondly selecting for public consumption. The notations are the same with slight variations. The first prime minister of independent India had warned 'We do not have to speak from rooftops that there is corruption as it creates an atmosphere of corruption'. He tried to push the wrongdoings of the then chief ministers and the jeep and the Mundhra scandals under the carpet while at the same time recognizing the need for setting up Santhanam Commission that recommended the institution of an ombudsman, still in the womb.

The second prime minister played it down as a universal problem, suggesting thereby that there was no need to worry as corruption was in the air and none was immune to its effects. The third prime minister expressed

helplessness when he acknowledged that only 15% of the benefits reached the beneficiaries, the remaining amounts slipping through the supply chain. This was a narrative of withdrawal, an acceptance of defeat. And during some of the financial scandals later on, another incumbent attributed these to systemic failure, thus blaming an amorphous entity over which the leader had no control.

Therefore, right from the beginning, the political class had been distributing the anodyne of patience to deal with disease rather than alert the nation to its menace. It would have been much better if we had started shouting from rooftops and the noises were treated as panic calls; if we had dissociated from the world phenomenon and uniquely proclaimed that while others may relent we shall not tolerate. How better would it have been if instead of expressing helplessness, the CEO of the nation had taken steps to plug the leaks, stem the rot, and owned responsibility for inaction that could propel him for action? And it could be effective if the systems were rectified to prevent subsequent malaise.

Rather than celebrate acceptance, patience, quiet, and inaction, the chief of the nation had an opportunity to change the script and have new notations for dealing headlong with the problem. He could have praised the mindfulness of the nation, activists, media, an odd bureaucrat who stuck his neck out and the judiciary, accepted the problem and launched a tirade for a solution.

BoM Meeting

The implications of the Civil Court's Judgment were discussed by Justice Kamleshwar Nath, member of the Board. He opined that the observations of the Court did not apply as there

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was no amendment to the Memorandum of Association and hence no violation of the Societies Registration Act 1860. However, the amendment of the R&R were within the jurisdiction of the BOM. After detailed discussion, the following actions were proposed:

1. Only Active Member (AM) would be eligible to contest BoM's election in view of the Arbitration Award.
2. Right to vote shall be conferred to all members as per R&R of 1998.
3. A committee comprising of Col. C. M. Ramakrishan (Convener), Gp. Capt. S.C. Bahri, and Shri Pankaj Agarwal was constituted to advice on the issue of criteria for AM with a view to making it more broad-based.

However, elections to the vacancies in the BOM in Dec. shall be filled in accordance with existing rules.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM is scheduled to be held on December 8, 2012 at Balwantray Mehta Vidya Bhawan, Greater Kailash Part II at 2:30 p.m. All the members are cordially invited.

Integrity Pact

The IP Cell participated/conducted the following activities during the quarter -

- o IX Anniversary of Vigilance Study Circle, Hyderabad, on 7th July.
- o Cluster Workshop against Corruption, Bhubaneswar, organized by PTF and Public Affairs Center on 16th and 17th Aug.
- o IV KIOCL's IP Annual Review in Bangalore on 24th Sept.
- o National Workshop on 'Integrity in Public Procurement & Whistle Blower Protection' on 22-23 Aug at New Delhi.
- o Workshop on 'Enhancing Framework for Transparent Procurement', in collaboration

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with Vigilance Study Circle, Bangalore, on 29 September.

- o Workshop on Enhancing Framework for Transparent Public Procurement on 29 September.

Development Pact

In his evaluation report on Development Pact (DP), Shri U.S. Pandey, Member of the Board, mentioned that 'highly exaggerated benefits flowing from the signing of DP have been projected and the shortcomings suppressed'. He recommended that the project should be dropped, and all the evaluations 'should preferably be done by a TII member or a committee of its members.

The Chairman clarified that DP was an off-shoot of TI's CRINIS project, introducing transparent functioning of politicians as the MOA of TI India aims 'to promote transparency and ethical governance and to eradicate corruption'. Therefore, the project would continue with an improved MoU.

It was decided to include in the Manual for Governance an item on 'Engagement of Experts'.

FK Exchange Fellows

Shri Avinash Kumar from TII has been sent to Nepal. Ms. Nauli Wimalarathna from Sri Lanka and Ms. Shristi Karki from Nepal joined TI India. for training and attachment.

ALAC

- o Number of Complaints: Delhi – 243, Ranchi – 160 & Bhubaneswar – 46, Patna – 125,
- o Citizen-meet-cum Nagrik Sahayta Shivar (Mobile ALAC) was organized at Neori Panchayat Bhavan, Kanke Block Ranchi on 23rd September 2012. Over 2,000 cases of outright graft, miscarriage of justice, public distribution system (PDS), BPL or Lal Cards, ration cards, schemes such as Indira Awas Yojana, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, old age and widow pensions were received.

- o A training session-cum-discussion for RWA/ NGOs was organized at Ranchi and Patna in Sept, 2012 on tools of good governance and legal rights.

Success Stories :

(A) Abduction of Minor Girl: Mr. Ratan Chaudhry, an auto rickshaw driver, approached ALAC (Helpline) regarding police inaction in case of abduction of his daughter, age 15 years, from Kapasheda house.

TII approached Jt CP/CP-Delhi who activated the system. The girl was rescued, and accused arrested on 05/09/2012.

(B) Kedarnath Singh called at ALAC helpline number (9334402323) from Bokaro, Jharkhand. He complained us about irregularities in recruitment of para-teachers. He was selected for the post but later on denied the joining letter. After verifying the documents relating to his claims TII approached the Lokayukta who had issued summons to Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bokaro in the case.

Pahal - Shaasan Sudhar Ki Ore

Pahal organized four social audits in Madhubani district and one training program on the 'Tools of Good Governance' in Darbhanga and a workshop on RTI in Patna.

During Social Audit, villagers questioned the implementation process of development schemes and transparency in the selection procedure of the beneficiaries of welfare schemes at panchyat level. Workshops were aimed at training people on tools to empower them to get their entitlements and strengthen service delivery system at grassroots.

At Patna, Pahal has launched a network of dedicated youth volunteers to help them to fight against the corruption. A state level conference on 'Issues emerging at grassroots on RTI' was also organized there on July 25. Around 150 people including representatives from the government, NGOs, academicians, advocates, RTI and human right activists, and

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students participated.

One Ward Sabha was also organized. Pahal is proposing to organize Vishesh Gram Sabha in the villages of Madhubani district.

Pahal was restarted in Odisha to empower poor people and women to seek their entitlements. A series of training programs has been planned.

TII's Youth Volunteers for Improving Governance has been initiated. Initially, 30 Post Graduates in Social Sciences and Rural Development from different educational institutes of Patna have been registered as volunteer for TII anti-corruption activities.

It is proposed to publish a booklet reflecting the experiences of RTI users in the project areas. Along with motivating people to fight against corruption, booklet will also serve as Guide to the RTI users.

Lecture/Seminar/Meeting

- o ED participated in the 'core value month' of NTPC as Speaker on 25/09/12
- o ED participated in a meeting on 'Mining and Society' organised by colleges of Shillong on 27/09/12

Forthcoming Events

Lecture by Dr. Balbir S. Sihag, Professor Emeritus, University of Massachusetts, Lowell (USA) on 'Kautilya's Ideas on Governance and their Relevance to Indian Condition' at the Lecture Hall -II, India International Center, (Annex), New Delhi, on 15 November at 5.30 pm. It would be presided by Dr Lallan Prasad, former Head & Dean, Dept. of Business Economics, University of Delhi.

The TI India's Fourth Annual Lecture will be delivered by social scientist Prof Dipankar Gupta on 'Corporate Corruption & Informal Labor; Role of Business Ethics' on December 10, 2012 at the Lecture Hall - II, IIC (Annex), New Delhi at 6 pm.

All are Cordially invited.

State Chapters' Activities

Uttar Pradesh

The AGM was held on Sept 29. It constituted a 2-member sub-committee to visit Civil Court and suggest improvements needed for convenience of litigants. It also considered the launch of a "HELP LINE". The chapter objected to the High Court fixing Rs.500/- as RTI fee for seeking information. It had taken up with the UP Chief Minister to ensure appropriate appointments of Information Commissioners in accordance with the recent decision of the Supreme Court. The issue of the decision of government to exclude Lokaykta from the purview of RTI Act was taken up with the Governor of UP.

Rajasthan

The Chapter representatives met the Governor on 22 August to apprise her about its activities, including the introduction of Integrity Pact, effective application of Right to Services, and timely sanction for prosecution of corruption cases. A letter has been addressed to the Chief Minister requesting him for an early action in cases of corruption pending for sanction to prosecute. On a PIL by the chapter regarding undue Toll Tax collection, the Rajasthan High Court issued notices to the Government & other non-petitioners.

TI India's Advocacy & Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) Anti-Corruption Help-Lines

Delhi	011- 2623 2323
Patna	09304 22 0023
Ranchi	09334 40 2323
Jaipur	0141- 2742 799
Bhubaneswar	0674 - 2555 525

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