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EDITORIAL

Transparency in jeopardy

Since the promulgation of the Right to Information Act, 2005 there have been strides in progress towards transparency. Ordinary people felt empowered by securing information from officials and, in most cases the administration conceded to its fault by correcting the deficiency, and then reporting that the inadequacy did not exist. Such has been the power of the Act and the enthusiasm of the users.

But of late there have been disturbing trends to whittle the authority of the Central Information Commission in various ways. All wings of government like the legislature, executive, and judiciary seem to be inimical to the discourse of transparency. The issues pertaining to the defence deals having no reference to any area of strategy or policy, are not permitted to be discussed by citizens' representatives in the Parliament, including a demand, against the Supreme Court decision that was on the basis of a 'sealed cover' report that contained ambiguous information wherein the contestants were denied the benefit of openness. The transaction was only between the Central Gov-

ernment and the Court. This hit credibility and created a haze of doubt.

Similarly, the Government has not given convincing reasons why the title of the 'Institute of Excellence' was bestowed upon a non-existing institution. It is like a pre-natal award to the unborn for its contribution in the field of education. More baffling is the insistence of the government to select for its defence aviation a local partner, in preference to the experienced public sector undertaking with a record of success and laurels in contributing to the aeronautic technology. Be it mentioned that the Ministry of Defence is committed to invoke the Integrity Pact, a tool de-

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Annual Subscription for Calendar Year 2018

As per amended Rules & Regulation, TII members are required to pay Annual Subscription of Rs. 250 as soon as possible, failing which members will not be able to contest/vote in forthcoming BoM Election which is to be held in the second week of February 2019. Members can pay subscription through Cheque/Draft in favour of '**Transparency International India**', and sent at Qr. No. 4, Lajpat Bhawan, Lajpat Nagar- IV, New Delhi - 110024 or make online payment **through NEFT** and inform us through mail.

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Members may consider paying of subscription for 3 - 4 years together.

Please ignore if already paid.

BoM Election & Annual General Meeting - 2018

TII's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2018 is scheduled to be held on 02 March, 2019 Saturday at 15:00. Schedule for BoM Election along with related papers are being send by post, email and mobile SMS.

signed by Transparency International India. The mandate is valid not only for all the defence undertakings under the ministry, but has been signed by over fifty undertakings of the government, including the behemoths like the ONGC, SAIL, Airport Authority, etc. And to an ordinary mind it is puzzling why reasons for reversal of the recommendation of Supreme Court collegium for elevation of judges and the inclusion of others without an iota of doubt or scrutiny from the government, are not made public. It did not stir the conscience of the government, like in earlier cases, to seek clarification on how with regard to the twin criteria of seniority and merit the candidates were picked up from bottom and the middle thus invalidating both the principles of selection and jeopardizing the claims of all others in-between.

Whenever there are instances of this nature, the thinking Indian conjures up reasons for opacity, the total silence, and the negation of practice to discuss the national affairs in Parliament. He questions the unjust, unreasonable, and unfair outcomes unless his inquisitiveness is appeased. His imagination runs riot in the direction of negativity and casts serious doubts upon the sustenance of democracy on the path of a dangerous course. The more there is the cloak, the more is the distrust of institutions. And despite the Election Commission's mandate to declare level of education of every candidate contesting elections, based upon of the Supreme Court's decision in the Association for Democratic Reforms case, why should some politicians not make public their qualifications so as to appease public sense of doubt?

The sooner the discourse of transparency is brought back on the elevated pedestal from which an attempt has been made to dislodge it systematically, gradually,

and imperceptibly, the better would it be for the rule of law and the course of democracy with an adherence to causes of integrity for the good of people who are gasping for good governance.

Vigilance Awareness Week 2018

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) observes the Vigilance Awareness Week every year, In this week, through its various outreach activities, it seeks to motivate stakeholders to collectively participate in the fight against corruption and also aims at raising public awareness about its detrimental consequences. This year, the Vigilance Awareness Week was observed from 29th October to 3rd November, 2018 on the theme "Eradicate Corruption-Build a New India".

As a part of this campaign, Transparency International India (TII) conducted Joint Outreach Programs during the Vigilance Awareness Week with ONGC, CONCOR, BEL, TCPO, BSNL, MTNL, BSES & many other Public Sector Undertakings.

Shri P. S. Bawa, (IPS Retd.) Advisor, Shri S. R. Wadhwa, IRS (Retd.), Chairman, Shri A. K. Jain, Treasurer, Smt. Kiran Aggarwal, (IAS Retd.), Board Member, Shri A. K. Mehra, Board Member of Transparency International India and other prominent speakers from TII delivered lecture in various organization during Vigilance Awareness Week 2018.

Integrity Pact

- The Integrity Pact team prepared training module for an upcoming training program for City Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra (CIDCO) on various topics i.e. Arbitration and Public Procurement, Public Procurement Practices, Real Estate Regulation and Development Act (RERA), Swiss Challenge Models, tools of good governance etc.
- TII conducted a workshop on "Arbitration and Public Procurement" for City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra Limited on July 20, 2018 at MTDC-Karla, Pune.

Brij Bhushan Singh (Deputy Director, IP & PAHAL, TII) gave the introductory remarks for the workshop followed by insightful sessions by two speakers- Ms. Kshama Loya (Leader in the International Litigation and Dispute Resolution Practice Group, Nishith Desai Associates) and Shri V.K Jain (Former Executive Director Air India & Member IIMM).

- Another workshop was conducted by TII on “Integrity Pact and Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance Tools” for CIDCO Officials on the 28th of July, 2018 at MTDC-Karla, Pune. Shri Pradeep Rath (Company Secretary, CIDCO) welcomed all the speakers and the participants to the workshop. Col. Goerge K. Poonjatt (Defence Personnel and senior trainer), Ms. Bijal Shah (ERP Corporation Pvt. Ltd.) and Shri Rama Nath Jha (Executive Director, TII) were the key speakers of the training programme.
- TII team conducted Tender Analysis of CIDCO from 8th October, 2018 to 11th October, 2018 at Navi Mumbai.
- On 12th October, 2018- TII conducted a workshop for CIDCO Officials at MTDC-Panshet, Pune. The topic of the training workshop was “RERA & Swiss Challenge and Reverse Auction in Public Procurement”. Ms. Sneha Telang, (JLL) and Mr. Anup Krishnan Mehra, (Former Director, MOIL Ltd. And IEM, SAIL) were the key speakers of the training workshop.
- Shri Rabindra Nath Guru, Member, TII attended the IP Review Meeting and Vendors Meet on 19th November, 2018 at KIOCL, Bangalore.

Advocacy And Legal Advice Centre

Around 33 complaints were received at TII, New Delhi on anti-corruption helpline during the period of July-Dec 2018.

Based on input from Whistleblowers, a few letters were sent to the Chief Vigilance Officer of some Public Sector Undertakings about the alleged involvement of senior officers in corrupt practices like manipulation in appointment processes, misuse of guest house and other allowances, etc.

Advocacy

- Brij Bhushan Singh (Deputy Director, IP & PAHAL, TII) attended FICCI-KAS Dialogue Series titled ‘Rule of Law: Strengthening Indo-German Ties- IPR and Legal Cooperation’ held on 9th August, 2018 at FICCI Federation House, New Delhi.
- Shri A.K. Jain (Treasurer, TII) participated in the roundtable forum on “Ending Impunity of Kleptocrats and Accomplices: Do We Need an International Anti-Corruption Court?” conducted on 14th August, 2018 at the India International Centre, New Delhi.
- Prof Madhu Bhalla (Vice Chairperson, TII) gave a lecture at the 5th Anti-Corruption Compliance and Risk Management Master Class conducted by AMCHAM INDIA on the 29th of August, 2018 at Hotel Le Meridian, New Delhi.
- TII had given suggestions to Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions regarding enlarging the definition of corruption and protection of whistleblowers. The ministry thanked TII for its valuable suggestions and said these would be considered in due course of time.
- Rama Nath Jha (Executive Director, TII) and Brij Bhushan Singh (Deputy Director, IP &

PAHAL, TII) participated in “Conflict Of Interest (CoI) In Public Policy: A Roundtable Conference” on 11th September, 2018 organized Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) at India International Centre, New Delhi attended by many top government officials including Vice Chairperson of Niti Aayog.

- Chairman S.R. Wadhwa gave a lecture on “Accountability and Transparency in Local Governance” at the three weeks training programme conducted by Human Settlement and Management Institute (HUDCO) on 20th September, 2018 at HUDCO House, New Delhi.
- Chairman S.R. Wadhwa, A.K. Jain (Treasurer, TII) and Rama Nath Jha (Executive Director, TII) had a meeting with Shri K.V. Chowdary (Central Vigilance Commissioner, CVC) on 25th September, 2018 regarding the status of Integrity Pact and recent Anti-corruption law in the country and future collaboration between CVC and TII.
- Brij Bhushan Singh (Deputy Director, IP & PAHAL, TII) participated in “Interaction with Civil Society Organization” conducted by Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 4th October, 2018 at Chankayapuri, New Delhi.

- Brij Bhushan Singh (Deputy Director, IP & PAHAL, TII) gave a lecture on “Public Procurement, Norms and Transparency” at the three weeks training programme conducted by Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) on 4th October, 2018 at HUDCO House, New Delhi.

UN Anti-Corruption Day

- To mark the UN Anti-Corruption Day, TII organized a joint-program with Balwantrai Mehta Vidya Bhawan, New Delhi on 10th of December, 2018 in which different inter-school events were conducted for the school students. Shri S. R. Wadhwa was Chief Guest.
- In celebration of UN Anti Corruption Day 2018, TII conducted a day-long workshop at SBI headquarters in Mumbai on “Procurement Ethics and Right to Information Act, 2005” on 13th December, 2018.

Publications

- An online survey was conducted by Transparency International India in collaboration with Local Circles known as India Corruption Survey 2018.
- TII published the Second Annual State Transparency Report 2018 on the eve of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (RTI) Day. The report highlighted many issues relating to implementation and low & high of the RTI Act from 12 Oct 2005 till 2017.
- TII published a short report on the functioning of Lokayuktas on the eve of Anti-Corruption Day (8th December, 2018).

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