



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL INDIA

EDITORIAL

Quarterly

'Walto' syndrome

'We are like that only' is often said or heard. It is an assertion of something that discounts the potential. This is reflected in a series of acts of commission and omission being committed by authorities and tolerated by people. Both seem to have withdrawn within the shell of cynicism and belief that 'nothing can be done' or 'nothing can happen'. In other words, no change is possible and the show shall go on with its clumsiness and resignations.

We blame weather for closed faucets and water logging; justify the jams on increasing number of vehicles; find fault with people's behavior in case of indiscipline on the roads. For every failure, there is a scapegoat. Delays are condoned, price escalation in projects is accepted as a matter of fact; extravagance in public spending is overlooked; waste is not frowned at; none is held accountable for damage, especially of food grains.

And there is no rationale in not doing the desirable. For twenty three years, the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act could not be notified, and there is no explanation. One is at a loss to know why candidates facing trials in heinous offences and behind bars are not debarred from contesting elections, despite the repeated recommendations of the Election Commission; why coalition governments should feel helpless to check the wrong doing; why Lokpal Bill is embroiled in controversies; why Lokayuktas are not in position in all

states and why those in position are helpless in taking suitable action; why single directive was brought back through legislation in the Central Vigilance Commission Act and double protection provided to senior public officials; why CVC's writ does not run in the states; why states should not have a prototype of vigilance act on the pattern of the CVC; why roads cannot be repaired as soon as these are damaged; why explanations of helplessness accepted; why pavements on which none walks are replaced frequently; why space meant for people to walk is not available for the purpose; why garbage is not lifted on time and permitted to rot; why, why??

There are many whys one shudders to mention. But it is only by seeking an answer to 'whys' that we can expect any action. It has to be sought assertively and repeatedly. Why not drop 'only' and see the difference? 'We are like that' that works, take things seriously, accept what is good, change for the better, not hesitate to point out faults and accept responsibility for our failings and rectify, not worry about nefarious alliances that compel one not be oneself and compromise with principles or postpone action that has to be urgent. Pusillanimitiy, thy name is weakness.

Integrity Pact

National Workshop was held at Management Development Institute, Gurgaon on April 9. Shri Sri Kumar, Vigilance Commissioner, delivered the keynote Address, besides lecturers delivered by the former Central Vigilance Commissioner Prityush Sinha and the TII Mentor Admiral RH Tahiliani. The Workshop was attended by CEOs and senior management from ONGC, HSCL, CONCOR, Oil India, and delegates from Tata, Siemens, Wipro, IBM, and an expert from Ministry of Defence. A few vendors had also participated.

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The red flags in the implementation of e-procurement were identified as a precaution. Solutions were sought. The workshop helped to clarify some of the important issues.

A bidders' meet was also organized at Ranchi on 26 May. It was attended by bidders of the Central Coalfields Limited. In the presence of the Independent External Monitors (IEMs), CMD CCL, Vigilance Director and the bidders shared their problems and sought clarifications from management and the IEMs. The Chairman and Director (IP) represented the TI India.

An assessment of the implementation of the Integrity Pact is under progress by an outside expert. The data from the management, vendors, independent external monitors are being collected and shall be tabulated. The object is to have an evaluation of the functioning of the tool by an independent agency.

Dr SB Pandey, US Pandey and Ashutosh Mishra made presentation on IP to Chairman Bihar State Electricity Board and the State Electricity Regulatory Authority on 21 April. The officials seemed to be convinced of the utility of the pact. Efforts shall be made to pursue the organizations to adopt the pact.

Pavan Hans Helicopters Limited has offered to sign the IP. The appointment of the independent external monitors is awaited.

Project Pahal

Grounding of Pahal in Bihar: The 'Committees of Concerned Eminent Citizens' have been formed in Madhubani and Darbhanga districts to support TII activities locally. Fair Election Campaign took place to motivate voters to vote during Bihar Panchayat Elections for responsive, qualified candidates in 30 Gram Panchayats of these districts. Ten **Model Gram Panchayats** have been identified and to make the dream of good governance a reality in these areas. More than 200 RTI applications and citizens' complaints have been taken up to improve service delivery and to make government official accountable.

Pahal in Chhattisgarh : The work done under this programme in TII's **Model Gram Panchayat, Mochh** in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh was awarded the **Best RTI Success Story** by the Madhya Pradesh Academy of Administration & Management, Bhopal in March, 2011. A delegation from Jharkhand consisting of **State Information Commissioner Mrs. Gangotri Kujur** and 15 newly elected Panchayat leaders visited this Gram Panchayat in April, 2011.

Development Pact (DP)

DP is being implemented in 14 panchayats of Chhattisgarh where political representatives have signed their development agenda. Committees have been constituted in ten panchayats to monitor and review performance. The process of implementation of DP in Jhupelaw panchayat (Pali, Rajasthan) is in progress.

Right to Service Acts

TII had been following suggestion to the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances for reviewing the citizens' charters in consultation with the stakeholders. It had also pursued the issue with the states. As a result, the government of Madhya Pradesh has enacted Public Service Guarantee Act, 2010. This was followed by Bihar Right to Service Act. Similarly, states of Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Goa, Punjab and Haryana too have followed in framing this law. It is now mandatory for public officials to provide service within the stipulated period, failing which the penalty can be imposed upon the concerned official.

The Government of Delhi too has cleared its Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011, to bring 40 services for ensuring timely delivery of services. The governments of Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Chandigarh have initiated the process for such an enactment.

Board of Management Meeting

BoM held on 25 June at Balwantray Mehta Vidya Bhawan, G K II. After briefing about TII activities during the preceding quarter,

issues raised by various members were clarified. Thereafter, the BoM discussed various issues like campaigning for an effective Lokpal, State Chapters' activities, financial statement, and approval of Membership applications.

Advocacy & Legal Advise Centre

An Advocacy & Legal Advise Centre (ALAC) has started operating at Jaipur by the TII's Rajasthan Chapter. This is the third centre, besides at Chennai and Ranchi. Keeping the utility of the project in view, more centers are being planned. This provides a channel for people to seek relief either by direct intervention of TII or by support in filing application under RTI Act.

Freedom From Corruption Summit

TI India and 5th Pillar organized a two day 'Freedom from Corruption Summit' on April 27-28 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Retired Chief Justice of India J.S Verma and Planning Commission Member Arun Maira inaugurated the Summit. The speakers included Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Dr S Y Quraishi, Roland Lomme from the World Bank, Bhairavi Jani from CII, Tim Daniel from Public International Law Group, London, Journalist Manoj Mitta from Times of India, noted columnist Gurcharan Das and Akere Muna from TI Secretariat. One of the speakers was a young, educated, and articulate lady Sarpach Chhave Rajawat from Rajasthan who, despite being highly educated, chose to join politics at the grass roots level. This appears to be a positive step when educated young persons start taking interest in the governance at the local level.

Discussion centered around the issues of black money and corruption in general. All the speakers echoed the importance of CSOs and NGOs in one voice in keeping the nation vigilant about the ill effects of corruption. They also said that anti-corruption organisations have an important role to play in empowering citizens in demanding accountability from their elected leaders, administrators and media.

Right to Information Act

Rajasthan Chapter organized a symposium on the use of RTI Act for fighting corruption, nepotism, misconduct and dishonesty in public institutions. Retired Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court released leaflets, brochures and booklets explaining the salient features of the RTI Act and methods to invoke law for seeking information. The Chapter is in close association with the Anti-Corruption Bureau for bringing about transparency in functioning of public officials.

The Odisha Chapter organized a one-day Workshop on RTI Day on the theme of 'Right to Information – Opportunities and Challenges' on June 15 in collaboration with Concern Worldwide and WOSCA, Keonjhar.

CAPART held a meeting of the Transparency Committee to ensure compliance of RTI Act's Section 4. It was attended by the Chairman who is a member of the Committee.

TI-FK South-South Exchange Programme

Mr. Binod Bhattarai from TI-Nepal, is joining TII on 24th July for ten months, while TII has selected Ms. Akanksha Pandey to be sent to TI-Bangladesh.

Lectures/Seminars/Discussions

- **Workshop on 'Transparency in Foreign Aid'** was organized by **Plan International** from 18-20th April to promote transparency and accountability norms in its Cash-For-Work programme in Tehri, Uttaranchal, where Mrs. Vineeta Singh, Project Director (Pahal), was the key resource person.
- A paper, based on TII's Pahal programme work in India and co-authored by Prof. (Dr.) Vaibhav Bhamoriya of IIMA, was presented by Mrs. Vineeta Singh, Director Project Pahal at the First Global Conference on Transparency Research at Rutgers University during May 17th -21st.
- TII Chairman met Commissioner of Police, Delhi, on 1 April in connection with some proposals to bring about transparency in police functioning, including the suggestion

to adopt IP in their procurements.

The TII Chairman addressed at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, on 'Reporting Corruption' on April 12.

The TII Chairman delivered a special lecture on 'Corruption-free governance' at India International Centre on April 15. The lecture was held under the aegis of IC Centre of Governance.

On April 19, the TII Chairman participated in a discussion on 'Black Money', organised by Foundation of Good Governance.

The TII Chairman delivered the keynote address on 'Governance in Public Health', in a seminar organized by XLRI in Delhi on May 19.

The TII Chairman also participated in the Round-table discussions organized by the Public Interest Foundation on April 21.

- The TII Chairman spoke to the Rotary Club on 'Corruption in Public Life'.
- A roundtable on the Lokpal Bill was jointly organized by the Lok Satta, Centre for Media Studies, Foundation for Democratic Reform, and TI India. It was attended by framers of the Jan Lokpal Bill, two former Chief Justices of India, representatives from the civil society and media. The object was to find a consensus over the proposed bill, clause by clause.
- Executive Director spoke to international trainees at Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, on 12 April. She also delivered a lecture on governance in public health, organized by XLRI on 19 May.
- Shri U.S. Pandey from UP Chapter delivered a talk on 'Ethics in Management' to a group of engineers under training at the Engineering Staff College of India, Hyderabad.

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