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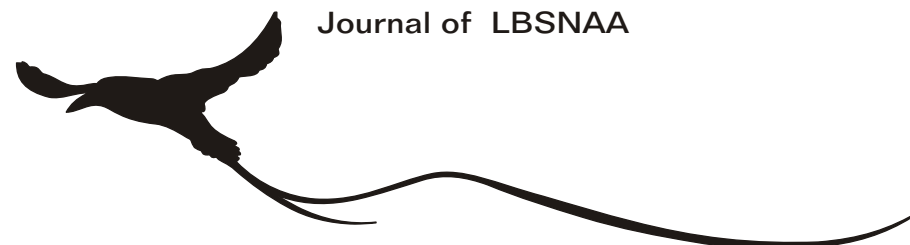
Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration

CONTENTS

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

Abstract

This is reproduction of the inspiring address to the participants of Mid- Career Programme Phase-IV given by the former President of India, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, at LBSNAA,Mussoorie on 15 June 2009.

Dear friends, I am delighted to address and interact with the participants of the Mid Career Training Programme and faculty members of Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy in this beautiful environment of Mussoorie. My greetings to all of you. The country today has an ambience with accomplishments in various sectors and with a sprit that "we can do it". All of you have contributed in your own way to this ambience. Yes, we have many challenges before us to meet our vision for 2020. But then we have to see them as opportunities for using our experience, our innovative capabilities, our technological potential, our networking skills and our values based on our civilizational heritage to achieve our vision and development profile.

For the sustainable growth in the global knowledge economy, the thrust has to be on the development of large number of creative leaders. I would like to talk on the topic "Creative Leadership in the Global Knowledge Society".

My experience with Civil Service officers

Friends, when I am in the midst of senior IAS Officers undergoing mid-career programme, my thoughts go back to three senior Civil Service officers whom I came across during different phases of my life. Shri TN Seshan was the Joint Secretary and later Additional Secretary during the seven years of SLV3 programme form concept to launch. One unique quality in him which I saw and cherished is, as a board member of SLV3, he would read the agenda papers fully and come ready with suggestions and questions on each one of the agenda points. Also, he will insist on reporting of the action taken on the

minutes of the previous board meeting. Both these actions of Shri Seshan enhanced the contribution of the board to the project and enabled me as a Project Director to keep up the project time schedule. His major trait was his determination to achieve the goals of the missions in time.

During the guided missile programme phase in 1982-1983, Shri Rao Saheb Krishnaswamy was the Cabinet Secretary when I was the Director, DRDL. Before the submission of the cabinet paper of the missile programme to the cabinet, there was pre-meeting with Shri Venkataraman, and the three vice chiefs of the Armed Forces were present. In the high level meeting, I was called to present the missile programme study report. There was tremendous criticism from the Armed forces that not a single missile has been successfully developed so far, and how you can sanction development and production of five missiles together. Dr. Arunachalam, the then SA to RM and myself explained the technical and leadership path of the programme. Still the members were not convinced. That was the time, Shri Rao Saheb Krishnaswamy made a remark which is still ringing in my mind. He said, "Hon'ble Minister sir, I heard all the discussion. But I would like to convey one thing. The time has come, we have to take a decision, exploring new path with courage. We should not be mixed-up with the past. Presently, we are seeing a committed passionate leadership for the missile programme. I consider that all the missiles should be developed, simultaneously in an integrated way." Based on this remark, Shri Venkatraman named the programme as Integrated Guided Missile Programme. After this meeting, within two months, the programme was approved by the cabinet, I got the necessary funds, human resource and a new management structure including the funds required for establishing certain key production facilities. Two strategic missile are in production and other projects and progressing.

The third unique instance happened when the missile programme was in progress. The missile programme is steered by a high level board called the Guided Missile Board. It was chaired by SA to RM with Defence Secretary, Secretary-Defence Production, Secretary - Expenditure, three vice chiefs - DGOF, CMD - BDL, HAL and BEL, Director - VSSC and Director - DRDL as members. When the programme was in the initial stages of progress, there was a large demand for development space, environmental facilities and assembly facilities due to safety considerations leading to a creation of a new complex. Fortunately, we had 2500 acres of land, but we needed additional

funds rupees 60 crore for creation of the new facilities with equipments for the project. Many of the members thought that it was very difficult and there would be a need for a new cabinet paper for sanction. Within a short span of six to eight months of the previous sanction, whether the government will sanction additional funds, was in doubt. I still remember Shri R. Ganapathi, the then Secretary- Expenditure said, "I like this programme. We must support the programme in full." He said that if the board approved, he would visit the site, discuss with the scientists and come up with a proposal for sanction. Board authorized him to do so. He visited DRDL and RCI area and recommended approval of the funds for the additional facilities which are vital for the timely completion of the missile programme. We got the funds and the programme progressed without any holdup. The programme was empowered to give a technology project for completion of the special facilities in two years.

I am referring to you friends, these incidents to illustrate, how the nation can progress exponentially through a fast decision making process by the policy and procedure making team in the government which has to be synchronous with the project team members who are executing the project. When you take a decision on a focused problem, you have to ask yourself "what can I give" or "how can I help". These are the two action oriented thoughts needed for accelerated national development today. Now I would like to discuss about the integrated thinking and action needed for second green revolution.

Second Green Revolution

I would like to visualize a system how district administration can become a partner to a mission. Let us take second green revolution as a mission by the Agricultural Ministry as a model. Agricultural Ministry has a target of producing around 340 million tonnes of food grains by the year 2020 with reduced land, reduced availability of water and reduced human resource. Now let us identify the stakeholders. The stakeholders are farmers, agricultural scientists, meteorologists, agricultural planners, seed bank, water and irrigation system managers, organic and inorganic fertilizers manufacturers, chemical and bio-pesticides manufacturers, farm equipment lending agencies, co-operative banking system and financial institutions, warehouses and godowns, procurement agencies, distribution system and the coordination ministries form the Central and State Government. The

success of the mission is totally dependent on the synchronized integrated action among all the stakeholders and also the integrated planning, funding, scheduling and proper execution.

I have been discussing with another great civil service officer, Shri MR Sivaraman, who along with the political leaders and scientists played a key role in the first green revolution. As you all are aware, the first green revolution of the eighties was the product of intensive and extensive extension work done by everyone connected with agriculture under the leadership of the District collectors. That was the time when the Blocks were the unit of development and were functional. Dr. D. Benor was the person who had laid the ground plan in coordination with ICAR for a national agricultural extension system. He defined extension as it relates to the process of carrying the technology of scientific agriculture to the farmer in order to enable him to utilize the knowledge to better his economy. Agricultural extension service seeks to impart the necessary skills to the farmers for undertaking improved agricultural operations, to make available to them timely information on improved practice in an easily understandable form suited to their level of literacy and awareness, and to create in them a favourable attitude for innovation and change."

The extension organization structure commenced with VLW- the village level worker who was the kingpin. At the block was the agricultural extension officer, the BDO was the team leader at that level. At the district level, district agricultural officer provided the technical support. The Collector was the leader. They collectively prepared an annual agricultural plan including plans for increasing irrigation potential, use of improved seeds and fertilizers. Plans were also drawn up for pesticides distribution. The village plan was executed at the village level by the VLW closely supervised by the agriculture staff. Inputs were arranged at the block level. Payments and supplies were made invariably through cooperatives. The Collector's role and effectiveness were judged by his performance in all these areas as they were measurable in a quantitative manner. This system has somehow gradually collapsed after the stoppage of World Bank funding in 1989.

Now there is a need to bring back the extension structure from the village to the district, so that we can ensure minimum growth rate of 4% per annum in our agriculture. Simultaneously, we should also use the growth in IT for improving the communication to the farmers. Also, we can screen films which can give first hand feel to the farmers on the use of technology. We should aim at synchronous seamless action from Secretary (Agriculture) GOI to the village level extension worker. The Collector should take the leadership role the second green revolution.

Rehabilitation after tsunami

I has visited Nagapattanam and adjoining villages in 2005 after the devastation created by tsunami of 2004. In a short period of five months, Shri Radhakrishnan, the then Collector of Nagapattanam had adopted a unique method of rehabilitation of the all the people affected by tsunami. He had created a rapid productive partnership with NGOs, relief organizations, citizens and the government functionaries to plan and execute the relief, so that the relief reached the people very fast and people were lifted away from the trauma created by tsunami. His work has been fully documented and I am sure it would have become a case study at LBSNAA.

Dimensions of knowledge society and Economic Development

Dear friends, the world is graduating towards the knowledge society. In the knowledge economy the objective of a society changes from fulfilling the basic needs of all-round development to empowerment. The education system will be promoted by creative, interactive self learning - formal and informal education with focus on values, merit and quality. The workers instead of being skilled or semi- skilled will be knowledgeable, self-empowered and flexibly skilled. The type of work instead of being structured and hardware driven will be less structured and software driven. Management style will emphasize more on delegation rather than giving command. Impact on environment and ecology will be strikingly less compared to industrial economy. Finally, the economy will mostly be driven by knowledge and knowledge driven industry. What is the linkage between the growth of the economic development and knowledge society. Let us look at:

- Nations Economic development is powered by competitiveness.
- The competitiveness is powered by knowledge power.
- The knowledge power is powered by Technology and innovation.
- The Technology and innovation is powered by resource investment.
- The Resource investment is powered by revenue and return on investment.

- The Revenue is powered by volume and repeat sales through customer loyalty.
- The customer loyalty is powered by quality and value of production.
- Quality and value of products is powered by employee productivity and innovation.
- The employee productivity is powered by employee loyalty, employee satisfaction and working environment.
- The working environment is powered by management stewardship.
- Management stewardship is powered by creative leadership.

For success in all missions we need creative leaders. Creative leadership means exercising the vision to change the traditional role form the commander to the coach, manager to mentor, form director to delegator and form one who demands respect to one who facilitates self-respect. Creative leader will have a mission to work with integrity and succeed with integrity. Also creative leaders are concerned about their corporate social responsibility and they would like to give more to the society than what they have drawn. For a prosperous and developed India, the important thrust will be on the growth in the number of such creative leaders who can create wealth to their institutions and also contribute to the upliftment of environment and people in their neighbourhood.

During the last five decades of my professional career, I have come across great human beings who have become examples for various dimensions of creative leadership. I would like to present few examples of creative leaders who have made unique contribution to the growth of India.

Now I would like to talk about creative leaders

Space Visionary

I was fortunate to work with Prof. Vikram Sarabhai for seven years and while closely working with him, I saw the dawn of the vision for the space programme in a one page statement. Witnessing the evolution of this one page by a cosmic ray physicist, a great scientific mind and be a part of the team which has been working ceaselessly for many years to realize the vision have been of really great learning for me. Also I am thrilled to see the famous vision statement of Prof. Vikram Sarabhai made in the year 1970 which states "India with her mighty scientific knowledge and power house of young, should build her own huge rocket systems (satellite launch vehicles) and also

build her own communication, remote sensing and meteorological spacecraft and launch from her own soil to enrich the Indian life in satellite communication, remote sensing and meteorology. The projects selected in space programme, are designed to meet the societal needs". Total 150 transponders are there in the geo-synchronous orbit for providing connectivity to the nation. If I look at this vision statement today, I am overwhelmed to see the results of this statement. Today India can build any type of satellite launch vehicle, any type of spacecraft and launch from Indian soil. India also has launched Chandrayaan and has successfully placed the satellite in Lunar Orbit and now it is preparing for manned missions to other planets. India has proved that through space science and technology, we can provide effective communication, resource mapping, disaster predication and disaster management systems. I would like to given an incident which demonstrate the vision of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai. How spiritual leader and scientific leader can come together for assisting the realization of foundation of space programme.

Purpose of Life : It was during early 1960's, the founder of Indian Space Research Programme Prof. Vikram Sarabahai with his team, had located a place technically most suited for space research after considering many alternatives. The place called Thumba in Kerala, was selected for space research as it was near the magnetic equator, ideally suited for ionospheric and electrojet research in upper atmosphere.

The major challenge for Prof. Vikram Sarabhai was to get the place in a specific area. As was normal, Prof. Vikram Sarabhai approached the Kerala Government administrators first. After seeing the profile of the land and the sea coast, the view expressed was that, thousands of fishing folks lived there, the place had an ancient St. Mary Magdalene Church, Bishop's House and a school. Hence it would be very difficult to give this land and they were willing to provide land in an alternative area. Similarly the political system also opined that it would be a difficult situation due to the existence of important institutions and the concern for people who were to be relocated. However there was a suggestion to approach the only person who could advise and help. That was "Rev Father Peter Bernard Pereira" who was Bishop of the region. Prof. Vikram Sarabhai, approached the Bishop on a Saturday evening, I still remember. The meeting between the two turned out to be historical. Many of us witnessed the event. Rev Father exclaimed, "Oh Vikram, you are asking my children's abode, my abode and God's abode. How

is it possible?" However, both had a unique quality that they could smile even in difficult situations. Rev Father Peter Bernard Pereira asked Prof. Vikram Sarabhai to come to church on Sunday morning at 9.00 AM. Prof. Vikram Sarabhai went to church with his team again on Sunday. At that time the prayer was progressing with the recitation of Bible by Father Pereira. After the prayer was over, the Bishop invited Prof.Vikram Sarabhai to come to the dias. The Rev Father introduced Prof. Vikram Sarabhai to the people, "Dear children, here is a scientist, Prof. Vikram Sarabhai. What do scientists do? All of us experience, including this church, the light from electricity. I am able to talk to you through the mike which is made possible by technology. The diagnosis and treatment to patients by doctors comes from medical sciences. Science through technology enhances the comfort and quality of human life. What do I do, as a preacher? I pray for you, for your well being, for your peace. In short, what Vikram is doing and what I am doing, are the same. Both science and spirituality seek the Almighty's blessings for human prosperity in body and mind. Dear Children, Prof. Vikram says, he would build within a year, near the sea-coast, alternative facilities to what we are having. Now dear children, can we give your abode, can we give my abode, can we give the God's abode for a great scientific mission?" There was a total silence, a pin drop silence. Then all of them got up and said 'Amen' which made the whole church reverberate.

That was the church where we had our design centre, where we started rocket assembly and the Bishop's house was our scientists' working place. Later the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS) led to the establishment of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and the space activities transformed into multiple space centers throughout the country. Now this church has become an important centre of learning, where thousands of people learn about the dynamic history of the space programme of India and the great minds of a scientist and spiritual leader. Of course, the Thumba citizens got the well equipped facilities, worshiping place and educational centre in an alternate place at the right time.

When I think of this event, I can see how enlightened spiritual and scientific leaders can converge towards giving reverence to the human life. Of course the birth of TERLS and then VSSC gave the country the capability for launch vehicles, spacecraft and space applications that have accelerated social and economic development in India to unprecedented levels.

Today, among us, Prof. Vikram Sarabhai is not there, Rev Peter Bernard Pereira is not there, but those who are responsible for creation and making flowers blossom will themselves be a different kind of flower as described in the Bhagwat Gita: "See the flower, how generously it distributes perfume and honey. It gives to all, gives freely of its love. When its work is done, it falls away quietly. Try to be like the flower, unassuming despite all its qualities". What a beautiful message, to the humanity on the purpose of life reflected the spiritual component.

Success and Failure Management

Three decades ago while I was working at ISRO, I had the best of education which won't come from any university. I will narrate that incident. I was given a task by Prof. Satish Dhawan the then Chairman, ISRO to develop the first satellite launch vehicle SLV-3, to put ROHINI Satellite in orbit. This was one of the largest high technology space programmes undertaken in 1973. The whole space technology community, men and women, were geared up for this task. Thousands of scientists, engineers and technicians worked resulting in the realization of the first SLV-3 launch on 10th August, 1979. SLV-3 took off in the early hours and the first stage worked beautifully. Even though all stage rockets and systems worked, the mission could not achieve its objectives, as the control system in 2nd stage malfunctioned. Instead of being placed in the orbit, the Rohini satellite went into Bay of Bengal. The mission was a failure. There was a press conference at Sriharikota, after the event. Prof. Dhawan took me to the press conference. And there he announced that he takes responsibility for not achieving the mission, even though I was the project director and the mission director. When we launched SLV-3 on 18th July 1980, successfully injecting the Rohini Satellite in to the orbit, again there was a press conference and Prof. Dhwan put me in the front to share the success story with the press. What we learn from this event is that the leader gives the credit for success to those who worked for it, and leader absorbs and owns the responsibility for the failure. This is the leadership. The scientific community in India has the fortune to work with such leaders, which resulted in many accomplishments. This success generated great happiness among all my team members. This is an important lesson for all youth who are aspiring to be tomorrow's leaders.

Leadership for self-sufficiency in food

The vision for the First Green Revolution emanated from the political leadership of Shri C. Subramaniam. With the Visionary leadership of Shri C.

Subramaniam, the team with the scientific leadership of Nobel Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaugh and Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, with the active support of Shri Shivaraman, Secretary Agriculture, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan in partnership with agricultural scientists and farmers liberated India from the situation of what was called "ship to mouth existence". Through an effort of historical magnitude, India attained near self-sufficiency in food through "Seed to Grain" mission. As part of this first green revolution, the country has been able to produce over 230 million tones of food grains per year now.

The political leadership and the scientific leadership has been able to build the capacity among our scientists, researchers and farmers to take up the mission of "second green revolution" which is indeed a knowledge graduation from characterization of soil to the matching of the seed with the composition of the fertilizer, water management and evolving pre-harvesting techniques for such conditions. The domain of a farmer's work would enlarge from grain production to food processing and marketing.

India has now embarked upon the Second Green Revolution which will enable it to further increase the productivity in the agricultural sector. By 2020 India would require to produce over 340 million tones in view of population growth and increased purchasing power. The increase in the production would surmount many impeding factors such as reduced availability of land, shortage of water and reduced availability of agricultural workforce. Our agricultural scientists and technologists in partnership with farmers have to work for increasing the average productivity per hectare from 1.2 tonnes to better than 3 tonnes. The type of technologies needed would be in the areas of development of seeds that would ensure high yield varieties even under constraints of water and land.

Leadership with transparency

The Delhi Metro Rail Project has given to the nation the potential of executing a fast transportation system using high technology with reliability through a time bound mission mode operation. Delhi, the Capital of the country with over 14 million populations, has the distinction of having a world class metro rail with frontline technologies. The work on the metro rail commenced on 1st October 1998 and the first phase with three lines covering 66 kms has been completed by December 2005. The second phase with 121 kms of line length is in various stages of completion and they all will be functional before 2010.

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation has brought to the country, the most advanced rail technologies for the first time. The notable gains to the country are, light weight stainless steel, sleek, modern trains with pneumatic springs, regenerative braking, public information display, wide vestibules and automatic doors. The sophisticated coach technology which was not available in the country so far, has been transferred to M/s Bharat Earth Movers Ltd., Bangalore, which is now assembling these trains with progressive indigenization. BEML is now in a position to supply train sets needed for Phase-II of Delhi Metro Rail Project and meet the requirement for Metros coming up in other cities of the country.

Mr. E. Sreedharan, the Managing Director of Delhi Metro has ensured that, all the scheduled sections were completed by their target date or before and within their respective budgets through his programme management skills. The dedicated and transparent leadership backed up with professional competence of Mr. Sreedharan has given to the nation, one of the best transportation systems of the world at the most economic cost. He is a recipient of many national and international awards. Also, he is in demand for undertaking the development of metro system in different countries of the world which he has politely declined due to pre-occupation with committed Indian programmes.

Leadership for science

I was reading the two volumes of the book titled "The Big and the Small- from the Microcosm to the Macrocosm" written by Dr. G. Venkataraman. In this latest book, author establishes fascinating link between particle physics and cosmology in two volumes. Since I am in the midst of the youth, I thought of sharing with you an incident narrated in the book about Sir CV Raman. Raman was in the first batch of Bharat Ratna Award winners. The award ceremony was to take place in the last week of January, soon after the Republic Day celebrations of 1954. The then President Dr. Rajendra Prasad wrote to Raman inviting him to be the personal guest in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, when Raman came to Delhi for the award ceremony. He wrote a polite letter, regretting his inability to go. Raman had a noble reason for his inability to attend the investiture ceremony. He explained to the President that he was guiding a Ph.D. student and that thesis was positively due by the last day of January. The student was valiantly trying to wrap it all up and Raman felt, he had to be by the side of the research student, see that the

thesis was finished, sign the thesis as the guide and then have it submitted. Here was a scientist who gave up the pomp of a glittering ceremony associated with the highest honour, because he felt that his duty required him to be by the side of the student. It is this character that truly builds science.

Conclusion

Dear friends, I have seen three dreams which have taken shape as vision, mission and realization. Space programme of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization), AGNI programme of DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization) and PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) becoming the National Mission. Of course these three programmes succeeded in the midst of many challenges and problems. I have worked in all these three areas. I want to convey to you what I have learnt on leadership form these three programmes.

a. Leader must have a vision.

b. Leader must have a passion to transform the vision into action.

c. Leader must be able to travel into an unexplored path.

d. Leader must know how to manage a success and failure.

e. Leader must have courage to take decision.

f. Leader should have nobility in management.

g. Every action of the leader should be transparent.

h. Leader must work with integrity and succeed with integrity.

For a paradigm shift in national development, we need large number of creative leaders and statesmen in the world. I am sure, Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy is in the mission of developing such leaders for the country.

My greeting and best wishes to all of you for success in your professional career.

May God Bless you.

BUSINESS PROCESS REENGINEERING OF CITIZEN SERVICES AND USE OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Amit Agrawal*

Abstract

Objectives of the paper are to explain the meaning and need of business process reengineering of citizen services, to familirise with reengineering approach, as well as some practical techniques that provides a frame for analysing citizen services. It also analyses the use of information communication technology for electronic delivery of citizen services after business process reengineering, especially in a context of low information communication technology usage in the public and in public office . It also discusses the generic approach outlined here for carrying out a business process reengineering exercise and understanding of the factors which are critical for successfully implementing reengineering.

Introduction

Business process reengineering is a management approach aiming at improvements by means of elevating efficiency and effectiveness of the processes that exist within and across organizations. Business process reengineering is also known as BPR, business process redesign, business transformation, or business process change management.[1]

The key to BPR is for organizations to look at their business processes from a 'clean slate' perspective and determine how they can best construct these processes to improve the way they conduct business. Considering business processes as a starting point for business analysis and redesign has become a widely accepted approach and is a standard part of the change methodology portfolio.[1] There are no standard methodologies for BPR, although different approaches can be said to have some common phases like initiation, analysis of the process, followed by design, implementation and deployment of new

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processes. Given the wide diversity in the nature and processes of organisations, it is not possible to have a common set of guidelines applicable to all. The principal commonality in all BPR approaches is their focus on organisational business processes as the basis for major change to achieve the organisation's strategic business goals rather than incremental change to achieve merely efficiency gains.

A business process is a collection of interrelated tasks which solve a particular issue. Examples of business processes range from operations processes like supply chain processes, customer relationship processes and product development processes to management/support processes like human resource processes, knowledge management processes, financial processes and technology management processes.[2]

Information communication technology (ICT) has been used primarily for automating existing work rather than using it as an enabler for making non-value adding work obsolete. Work that does not add any value for clients should be removed and not accelerated through automation. For being able to reap the achievable benefits fully, the use of ICT is conceived as a major contributing factor in BPR. While ICT has traditionally been used for supporting existing business functions, i.e., it was used for increasing organizational efficiency, it now plays a role as enabler of new organizational forms, and patterns of collaboration within and between organizations.[1]

However, benefiting from lessons learned from the early adopters, BPR practitioners now advocate a change in emphasis to a customer-centric, as opposed to an ICT-centric, methodology.[1] Information technology is seen today as only one albeit a very important one of many tools that are available for achieving BPR objectives.

In this article, we are concerned with the business process relating to citizen services, i.e., services provided by the government to citizens. Additionally, the focus is on use of ICT for electronic delivery of citizen services after business process reengineering, especially in a context of low ICT usage in the public and in public offices

The efficiency and transparency benefits of ICT with concomitant increase in system capacity, user satisfaction and accountability accrue even by applying ICT in existing business processes. However, ICT offers an

opportunity to carry out the entire process or parts of it in an altogether new way. To harness full benefit of technology, it is imperative that the existing business process be studied keeping this in mind. The key benefit of ICT, from the perspective of the citizens, is that it has the potential to make public services accessible on an anytime anywhere basis. This is not merely a matter of ease and convenience to the citizen. It also has the potential for freeing public services from the monopoly of public service providers, and associated problems like corrupt practices, by creating an environment which will result in sustained improvement in service delivery through introduction of competition and consumer choice in provision of public services. Government is necessarily a monopoly, with the potential for being beset with problems associated with all monopolies. However, monopoly control in access to offices, information or records can be done away with if ICT is used while suitably reengineering processes, so that access becomes possible on anytime anywhere competitive basis.

Fully electronic delivery of services is the ideal. However, in developing countries, access to ICT is low not only among the public but also among public offices. While law may permit use of electronic record, it may not be of practical utility for most citizens in respect of most of the citizen services, especially when the place where such record need to be presented may not have requisite capacity in terms of either infrastructure or trained human resource to be able to access, verify and process such record. It may be borne in mind that potential users of electronic records generated by governments include private establishments and persons like banks, educational institutions, etc. Further, in respect of record issued by a state government, public institutions and functionaries of all other states need to simultaneously have the capacity to access, verify and process such record, which is quite difficult given not only the problems of coordinated planning and implementation but also differences in applicable laws and administrative arrangements. Clearly, in such a context, there is a need for a non-electronic copy of the record, which can be accessed, verified and processed universally without requiring universal readiness in ICT capacities of all potential users of such records across varying legal jurisdictions and administrative systems. To achieve this, the anytime anywhere benefits of ICT can be coupled with a legally recognised system of intermediaries competent to access, verify and produce authenticated non-

electronic copies of such electronic public records, and to also generate authenticated electronic copies of non-electronic records. Such authorised intermediaries may operate on a commercially viable basis, thereby introducing the elements of competition and consumer choice in delivery of and access to citizen services at the government-citizen interface.

Two case studies are included, one illustrating fully electronic delivery in the context of a user set for which this makes sense, and the other exemplifying electronic delivery through a private intermediary under a legal arrangement mandating a reengineered alternative citizen-government interface for the general public. These are intended to serve as material for critical analysis of BPR approaches having contextual realism.

This is preceded by a discussion of a generalised approach to BPR of citizen services. It may be noted that successful examples of BPR of citizen services are few and specific to individual or closely related sets of services, and literature in this regard is limited. As such, the generalised approach outlined here does not represent a consensus on the subject. It seeks to serve as a frame for analysis, coupled with some practical techniques, which it is hoped would serve to initiate the reader into this important area on which a systematic body of knowledge is yet to develop.

A Generalised Approach to BPR of Citizen Services

Citizen services may be considered as generally involving four stages. A request for service is most commonly done through an application submitted in a prescribed form. Therefore, obtaining the form is most commonly the first stage. The second stage is submitting the form in the prescribed manner. The third is the processing of the application. Finally, after a decision is taken on the application, the decision is to be communicated and, in case of the application being granted, some desired end document like a license, certificate, permit, identification card, etc. is to be provided. Thus, the four stages of a business process involving applications may be identified as under:

Stage I   *Obtaining the form for applying*

Stage II   *Submitting the application*

Stage III   *Processing the application*

Stage IV   *Communicating the decision taken on the application and / or delivery of the document applied for*

An outline for studying and reviewing the processes in each stage follows.

STAGE-I : Obtaining The Form

Study

If the application has to be made in a prescribed form, a copy of the form must be obtained. It should be ascertained whether the form has been prescribed under some statute, or by rules framed under a statute, or an executive order issued from the level of the government, or an executive order issued from a subordinate office / body of the government. Copy of the relevant law etc. should be obtained. It should be ascertained whether photocopied or handwritten form is acceptable. The amount of any fee payable for issue of the form and permissible mode(s) of payment cheque, postal order, cash, treasury challan, non-judicial stamps, bank draft, credit card, money order, etc. need to be found out. The places - head office, field offices, field functionaries, authorised intermediaries as well as the modes of collecting the form in person, through representative, post / courier, authorised intermediaries, fax, internet etc. need to be ascertained.

Review

Once the study report is ready, it needs to be seen from the point of view of the reengineering the process. Such a review need not be limited to the use of technology. Very often a government process once put in place is never reviewed over a long period of time, even though the volume as well as requirements of citizens may have changed substantially. In fact, it may very well be that a major part of improvements identified in the review have nothing to do with ICT. The review should be essentially user-centric. At the same time, it should take note of the handling capacities, priorities and concerns of the servicing public offices.

There cannot be any exhaustive list of questions that may be asked in the review. It may be explored whether a prescribed form is really necessary and whether it may be replaced by an ordinary application. In case prescribing the form is felt to be necessary, it may be explored whether the form may be simplified and made more applicant-friendly, and whether application may be made using a photocopy of the form, or writing it in hand, or downloading it from the internet. Sometimes forms carry a fee, often of a trivial sum

which may even have a higher cost of collection than the amount received that necessitates delay or effort. A payment by treasury challan is a two-day process. Non-judicial stamps are sometimes out of stock and, in any case, involve a separate trip to purchase them. Preparation of money orders, postal orders, bankers' cheques and bank drafts is a process in itself. Payment by cash or cheque or credit / debit card are usually the more convenient modes of payment but are often not accepted in public offices especially for the small fee related sums, even though they are today accepted for utility bill and tax related payments that are larger. There is generally scope for increasing the range of acceptable modes of payment. But it should first be explored whether the fee may be waived altogether. A form fee is usually meant to cover the cost of stationery and to preclude waste of stationery and if one or more of the options like dispensing with the form or accepting handwritten forms or photocopies or downloaded forms is allowed, the cost of the form gets passed on to the applicant and, logically, the form should then be free. Other reasons for keeping a fee may be to keep out non-serious applications and reducing subsequent processing load. If such is the case, the desired result may be achieved by postponing fee payment to a later stage. Another area for process improvement is increase in the number of places from as well as the ways in which the form can be collected.

STAGE- II Submitting the Application

Study

Study of this should cover the present system by which applicants learn how, where, when and to whom to apply, as well as the time and means of delivery e.g., visiting the office, or through legal or paralegal professionals to be expected. Apart from any form fee that may have been paid for getting the form, there may be a separate fee for submission of the application and the mode(s) of payment cheque, postal order, cash, treasury challan, non-judicial stamps, bank draft, credit / debit card, money order, etc. need to be ascertained. The places / persons receiving the application - the head office, field offices, field functionaries, authorised intermediaries, etc. as well as the ways of submitting of application - in person, through representative, post / courier, registered post, authorised intermediaries, fax, Internet etc. should be identified. An exhaustive checklist of enclosures to be submitted with the application should be prepared.

Review

Before reviewing the process itself, there is a need to consider how the need for the process arises. Sometimes the process is a consequence or corollary of some other event and public offices need to consider initiating suo motu steps rather than initiating processing on application. For example, if a sale deed is registered, the process of correcting the entry in the land records mutation has to necessarily follow. Yet, authorities usually expect the buyer to separately initiate the mutation process by applying. Another example relates to caste certificate. Certain benefits are intended to accrue to members belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes all over India as a matter of government policy, and the procedure for availing all such benefits involves presentation of a government issued caste certificate. It follows logically that such certificates should be issued as part of a government programme, without waiting for an application. A third example relates to renewal of licenses etc., for instance gun licence. It is known in advance which licences are to be renewed and also that if they are not renewed, the gun should be impounded, not only on account of requirements of the law but also in the interest of preservation of public peace. It follows that proactive initiation of action by the licensing authority, like sending timely intimations to licensees, would be desirable. However, this is generally not done and the authorities wait for renewal applications to be filed. This is the case in respect of a number of other licenses / documents too. The question whether an application is really needed or whether the process should follow automatically in consequence of some other process must, therefore, be asked and appropriate modalities identified for automatic initiation of the process, to the extent possible and practicable.

Better systems and means through which applicants may gather information regarding the application procedure should be identified. Some of these are inquiry windows, helplines, websites, press releases, boards displayed at office and other public places, and discussion and distribution of written material at meetings of local government bodies.

Improvements relating to fee need to be considered on the same lines as outlined earlier for form fee. It needs to be explored whether the application fee can be waived and, if not, whether it can be collected at a later stage as well as whether more modes of payment can be permitted.

Regarding the form itself, it needs to be examined whether more places and ways of submitting the form can be permitted. One possibility may be to accept applications made over the phone. Phone-banking offers a parallel already in wide use. It needs to be explored whether enclosures required can be reduced in number, or their presentation postponed to a later stage. Simplification of the enclosure requirements e.g., in terms of wider range of acceptable supporting documents or wider range of persons authorised to issue or authenticate supporting documents is another area for process improvement. Another possibility may be to eliminate altogether the requirement for submission of some/all enclosures by accessing information already available in the processing office or in other public offices, which is often there in office registers or computerised databases maintained as a result of forms filled earlier for the same process or for some other business process. If a unique identification system is made operational, this may be done across the board.

STAGE -III : Processing the Application

Study

It should be checked whether any preliminary scrutiny of the application is done at the stage of presentation of the application. For subsequent processing, process flow diagram(s), a separate one for any distinctly identifiable sub-processes, should be prepared. To the extent information can practically be ascertained / estimated, this should show-

(a)   Places where processing is done

(b)   Processing persons / committees

(c)   Minimum / average / specified / maximum time (stage-wise and overall)

(d)   Number of applications per annum indicate peak day / month / season particulars if there is any peaking (e.g., weekly fair day, beginning of academic session, linkage with agricultural seasons, etc.)

(e)   Number of visits made by applicants or their representatives to pursue the application (minimum, average, and maximum) break these into stages:

(i)   Form collection

(ii)   Application submission

(iii)   Removal of objections in case of rejection

(iv)   Processing

(v)   Feedback

(vi)   Collection of document

(f)   Points on which decision is required and the bases on which the decisions are arrived at (oral evidence, public records, affidavit, spot inquiry, report from another public office or functionary, etc.)

Some processes require a spot inquiry by some authority other than the one in charge of the process. In some processes, report / opinion of some other subordinate or independent functionary or office may be required. Examples of such processes include house tax assessment, permission to cut a tree, police report for passport or arms licence, etc. If such spot inquiry, report or opinion is involved, full particulars including relevant laws, rules, instructions etc. should be obtained, along with copies of the law etc. It should be ascertained how the requisite report / opinion is being obtained: some ways in which this might be done are through correspondence, or by advising the applicant herself / himself to obtain and submit it, or by summoning the concerned person.

Common reasons for rejection of application should also be identified.

Review

Very often, no preliminary scrutiny is done at the stage of presentation of the application. A simple way of doing this may be to have a scrutiny-cum-acknowledgment note (SCAN) card with the receiving person, in which s/he simply keeps ticking checkboxes against a comprehensive list of the documents required. This becomes the duly checked acknowledgment of receipt of application if the application is found to be complete and in order and, if it is not, it serves as written advice tendered to the applicant regarding requirements remaining to be fulfilled for reapplying in case the application is found to be incomplete or otherwise not in order. Whatever the modality identified, preliminary scrutiny of application should be done in an appropriate manner at the time of submission.

Speedier processing is an important area of process improvement. Standard solutions in operations research for queue management and optimal time planning using PERT / CPM methods have relevance. One possible process improvement is to reduce the number of persons / committees involved in the processing sequence. Steps that involve the maximum time on the average or in the worst case should be identified, along with the reasons and possible solutions. The need for increasing the number of receiving counters or processing persons at any point in the processing sequence, either on a regular basis or during peak days / months / season, should be assessed.

Another possible approach for effecting improvement is to decongest the processing office. The possibility of delegation to a greater number of people / offices should be considered. Issue of licences, certificates etc. without time limit, or for a validity period longer than that obtaining at present can be examined.

From the point of the applicants, minimisation of the number of visits required to offices or functionaries is very important. This may be examined stage-wise. In the most citizen-friendly process, with some effort and costs on the part of the processing organisation, even without resort to electronic records, it should be possible to have a maximum of only one face-to-face interaction: all documents required from the applicant can be collected / signed at the time of pick-up / delivery of end document desired by the applicant, and processing and provisional decision done on the basis of the applicant's claims, subject to presentation and verification of supporting documents and signing of requisite declarations.

Other important areas are standardisation and transparency of decision-making. The steps in the processing sequence should be automatic and not require the applicant to pursue or request for the next step.

Wider choice should be afforded to the applicant in terms of acceptable evidence in support of eligibility for grant of application. Often, a set of specified documents are asked for and if these are not available the application is rejected. Such rejection is not based on a substantive finding regarding ineligibility of the applicant and is technical in nature. It is unfair because the applicant is not afforded opportunity to adduce alternative evidence in support of her/his claim. For example, if an applicant born in a hospital many years ago is unable to produce either the hospital maternity ward discharge slip or a certified copy of the hospital's birth records for the reason that the records have been destroyed in a fire or otherwise, s/he may be denied a birth certificate. In addition to any existing set of admissible supporting evidence, the possibility of allowing for oral evidence, other public records, affidavits, spot inquiry, report by a public office or functionary, etc. should also be considered. If it is considered feasible to allow for such additional ways of adducing supporting evidence, the applicant may be permitted to submit only the additional evidence, without having to apply afresh.

In case of spot inquiry, the possibility of ensuring that this may be done within a time limit should be examined. It should be considered whether the spot inquiry may be done at times indicated by the applicant in her / his presence, or at times intimated to the applicant in advance. In cases of address verification, it may happen that a negative report would be filed if the visiting public functionary who might be too overloaded to make repeated visits does not find the applicant. In case of site verification, incorrect appreciation of the site location or conditions may result in the event of absence of the applicant. Spot inquiry may be made more transparent and accountable by making the purpose of the inquiry known to the applicant in advance, and by making available a copy of the report, along with a speaking statement of reasons for recommending acceptance or rejection of the application. In the absence of these, applicants may be vulnerable to an unscrupulous inspector or assessor exploiting the applicant's lack of knowledge and absence of transparency. Effective redress too may not be possible for want of knowledge and the relevant record being contested. In case the applicant is expected to get and submit the report or opinion sought from some other functionary or officer, it should be considered whether the authority in charge of process should itself obtain the report or opinion within a reasonable timeframe. In case any report or opinion is being sought, the possibility of requisitioning the same electronically should be considered. For instance, the request for police verification from the arms licensor to the police chief and thence to the police station can be sent electronically, eliminating days of processing delay. Likewise, the possibility of receiving the report or opinion electronically or through fax could be considered.

The importance of time-bound processing of applications cannot be overstated. Setting of a time limit as well as making the delay transparent by publishing daily on the office notice board and / or website the dated list of applications received and disposed could be considered. There are processes in which permission or no objection is deemed to have been given in case no decision is taken within a time limit. If not already there, the possibility of introducing time-limited deemed permission or no objection should be considered.

Introduction of a status tracking facility should be examined. The stages to be tracked and the means helpline, fax, post, internet, authorised intermediary, etc. by which the applicant may track the status of processing should be identified.

STAGE-IV : Communicating Decision & Delivery of Document

Study

Very often, this stage gets the least attention from the administrators, even though without this no benefit accrues to the applicant. The first question to be asked is whether the decision on the application or the fact of the document being in readiness for being picked up is intimated to the applicant. In case this is being done, the way in which this is done should be ascertained. The pick-up or delivery points for the desired document office, authorised intermediary, doorstep etc. as well as the modes of delivery should be identified.

Review

In case no communication of the decision is being provided and it is being left to the applicant to come and inquire about the fate of her/his application, this must be rectified. Choice in the means of communicating the decision, as well as the means and point of pick-up or delivery, should be considered and offered at the cost of the applicant. For example, passport applicants in some countries are given the choice of taking delivery either through post or through authorised representative or in person. Possible means of communication or pick-up / delivery include pick-up by the applicant or her/his authorised nominee, post, fax, email, phone, or through authorised intermediary. Ideal situation would be if the pick-up or delivery time could be designated at the time of submission of application itself. Otherwise it should be intimated as soon as processing is complete.

Business Process Time

Although elements of this have already been mentioned in the preceding discussion, this deserves attention as an integrated whole for all the stages taken together.

Study

It should be ascertained whether a time limit is already prescribed and, if so, whether this is under a statute, a rule framed under a statute, a citizen's charter or other executive order, and a copy of the relevant statute etc. should be obtained. The extent to which the time limit is being adhered to be should be examined along with reasons in case this is not happening. It should be checked whether the time limit is till the point of communication of acceptance or delivery of the desired document.

Review

If there is no time limit, the feasibility of prescribing a limit should be considered. In case there is already a time limit, the possibility of improving it should be considered and solutions searched for in case it is not being observed. In case the time limit is not till the point of communication of acceptance or delivery of the desired document, an inclusive time limit should be prescribed. The time limit should be benchmarked against the experience of applicants' requirements and in case the time limit is generally not considered fast enough by a large number of applicants, solutions should be looked for to ensure delivery in the desired time frame. In case the time limit is not fast enough in a limited number of cases where applicants apply too close to a deadline

(a)   Can a higher charge fast track be provided for?

(b)   In cases involving

   (i) missed opportunity (admissions, employment, registration etc.), or

   (ii) illegality (expiry of licences / permits etc.), or

   (iii) other exigent / special circumstances (to the satisfaction of the competent authority)

Can incomplete or e-applications be provisionally accepted with time limit for completion?

The possibility of introducing time-limited deemed acceptance of application should be considered.

Case Studies

MCA21[4]

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Government of India, initiated MCA21 in 2006 to enable easy and secure access to MCA services to corporate entities, professionals, the public, financial institutions and banks, the Government and MCA employees. MCA portal is the single point of contact for all processes related to proactive enforcement and compliance of legal requirements under the Companies Act, 1956 and facilitates e-filing of various forms and applications. Permanent documents of existing companies, like memorandums of association, articles of association, current charge documents, etc., which were earlier maintained in paper form across various Registrar of Companies offices have all been converted into electronic format. The key service and benefits of MCA21 are as follows:

(a)   Online registration and incorporation of companies

(b)   Simplified and easy mode of filing of forms / returns

(c)   Registration and verification of charges anytime and from anywhere

(d)   Inspection of public documents of companies anytime anywhere

(e)   Building up a centralized database repository of companies operating in India and qualitative analysis of corporate information

(f)   Timely redress of investor grievances

The interface of the user with the system is in the form of either a virtual office or a physical facilitation centre. The virtual office affords anytime anywhere services through internet provided the user has the facilities to convert documents into PDF format through scanning, for which s/he may even use a cybercafé or kiosk. A user who does not have the requisite facilities can avail of the same at designated facilitation centres, which facilitate filing of e-forms, scanning of attachments, uploading filled-in digitally signed e-forms and generating challans for making payment of fee at any designated bank. These facilitation centres are to remain operational only for a transition period of three years, by which time it is expected that all clients will operate using the virtual office. First time users have to register with MCA and choose a user ID and password or digital signature, which are to be used for subsequent logins.

The system automatically does preliminary scrutiny of e-forms filed and indicates error messages in case of incomplete or invalid particulars. An e-form starts with the Corporate Identity Number (CIN), which is a unique identifier of a company. Upon entering the CIN, company details available in the database are automatically filled in. E-form contains tool tips for context-sensitive help. Instruction kits are also available. Blank e-form templates and instruction kit can be downloaded. An e-form may be filled either online or offline. Online filling implies filling while connected to the MCA portal through internet. Offline filling implies filling downloaded form offline and then uploading it. To begin with, only offline filing service was provided. An e-form may require certain mandatory as well as optional attachments, the list of which is displayed in the e-form. There is also a declaration from the user to the effect that the information given in the e-form and the attachments is correct and complete. Most of the e-forms require the digital signature of the Managing Director, Director, Manager or Secretary of the company. Digital signature of a third party like a bank, financial institution, chartered accountant, cost accountant or company secretary may also be required in certain cases. There is a facility to check the filled-in e-form for requisite validations.

The system calculates the fee payable and accepts online payment through credit cards and internet banking. Offline payment can also be made at designated bank branches through prefilled challan generated by the system. In the latter case, the system gets updated upon realization of payment by banks on daily basis. If the user does not make the payment in a designated bank branch by the expiry date mentioned in the bank challan, the user is sent an email that his form cannot be regarded as filed due to non-payment of fee.

Upon submission, a Service Request Number (SRN) is generated, which can be used for future correspondence and status tracking. Once the e-form has been accepted and payment of fees has been acknowledged, a work item is created and assigned to the appropriate MCA employee, based on predefined

assignment rules as part of MCA back office workflow automation. Upon registration, the authorized officer affixes her/his digital signature. When an e-form is accepted for processing, an acknowledgement mail is sent.

There are built-in facilities to do preliminary scrutiny and to facilitate modification of the e-form in case the MCA requires it to be re-submitted with modifications. The user may have to submit some additional supporting documents that were not submitted during the e-form filing but may be required for subsequent processing. Certain documents requiring stamp paper or stamp fees, like stamped memorandum of association, declaration on stamp paper, order of the Company Law Board or a court, etc. may also be required to be sent by companies in physical form. An addendum gets duly associated with the e-form that was submitted earlier using the SRN. MCA may also ask the applicant to provide some additional documents in support of the e-form already filed, so as to expedite processing. After processing is complete, the authorized officer affixes digital signature for approving / rejecting. When an e-form filed is approved / rejected by the authority concerned, email intimation is sent.

MCA21 also accepts investors' complaints against a company as part of free of charge investor services, without requiring digital signature, and provides complaint status tracking facility. Public documents are available for viewing by anyone, on payment of requisite fee. Physical delivery of a certified copy of a document is done as a paid service.

Chhattisgarh Citizen Service (Electronic Governance) Rules[3]

The Chhattisgarh Citizen Service (Electronic Governance) Rules, 2003 were framed by the State Government of Chhattisgarh under the Information Technology Act, 2000 enacted by India's Parliament. They embody a generalised codification of e-governance arrangements for a reengineered interface of citizens with the government, which is applicable for all kinds of citizen services covering all state government departments and bodies as well as local governments. The Information Technology Act authorises the appropriate government to frame rules for electronic governance, and in respect of subjects allocated to states, state governments are authorised to frame rules. The Act has a non obstante clause, making its provisions applicable notwithstanding anything in any other law, including state laws. Being a Parliamentary enactment, rules framed thereunder by one state

apply across states throughout India. The Act even has extra-territorial application, beyond the borders of India. The Act has also amended the law on evidence, to grant evidentiary value to electronic records as well as prints on paper of secure electronic records that fulfil certain system security related conditions. The law provides recognition to digital signatures for purposes of authentication of electronic records. Given low internet penetration, it also provides for intermediaries.

Under the Chhattisgarh Citizen Service (Electronic Governance) Rules, applicants may give desired information and documents to authorised intermediaries, along with the usual prescribed fee payable to the public office concerned as well as an additional service charge payable to the intermediary. This is as an alternative to the existing option of presenting the same in offices. Intermediaries are private persons selected through an open process by a committee chaired by the head of the district administration and having representation from the technical implementing agency and the municipal body. They are required to furnish adequate security to cover the cost of issue of digital signature certificate along with standardised digital signature certificate reading equipment and internet-based biometric thumbprint reading device, both of which are operable on the proprietary Windows as well as the open source Linux platforms. They are also to arrange for other infrastructure. They are to operate on a commercially viable basis, collecting service charges at laid down rates that are adequate to cover their cost and also provide a sufficiently attractive margin of profit. They are declared as public servants under the rules. Such an intermediation centre may also be set up by any public office. However, even in the case of a public office intermediation centre, the service charge is payable. This has been done in order to ensure cost-competitiveness and viability of the private intermediaries, which alone can provide the basis for proliferation without burden on the public exchequer and administration so that anywhere anytime benefits can actually be realised. The existing office counters continue till such time as the improved service level of the intermediaries (private / public office) carrying the additional service charge does not lead to migration of most client citizens to the latter.

The intermediary keys in the information required for the application and converts supporting documents into electronic form by scanning. The electronic application so prepared includes a declaration from the applicant

that the information and supporting documents are correct and absolves the authority competent to take decision on the application ('appropriate authority') as well as the intermediary from any responsibility in case the information is wrong. This addresses the concerns voiced by government servants and union members during the business process reengineering exercise. The application, including the declaration and supporting documents, is printed on paper in two copies and the applicant's signatures obtained thereon. One copy is given to the applicant and the other kept by the intermediary for his record. Thereafter, the intermediary authenticates the electronic record of the application with her/his digital signature and enters it into the prescribed computer resource in the prescribed manner, so

that it meets the requirements for it to have the same evidentiary value as a paper document under the Indian evidence law. The electronic acknowledgment of the entry has an application reference number, which is printed on paper by the agent and given to the applicant. The original papers are returned to the applicant and only the print of the e-application bearing the applicants signatures is kept by the intermediary. No paper is transmitted by the applicant or the intermediary to the appropriate authority.

The appropriate authority, assisted by staff acting under her/his direction, causes the digital signature of the authorised intermediary on the electronic record stored on the prescribed computer resource to be verified and the information contained in the record printed (duly signed by the staff in token of having verified the digital signature and compared the printed information with the electronic record) and placed before her/him in the form of an ordinary file. In case back end automation is done for any service, the back end processing for that service can also be done electronically. After arriving at a finding through the usual process (after inquiry, report etc.), the appropriate authority enters the final decision in the prescribed computer resource. In accordance with the decision, the necessary certificate, licence etc. applied for appears in electronic form on the prescribed computer resource, which the appropriate authority proceeds to authenticate with her/his digital signature and enter into the prescribed computer resource in the prescribed manner. Thereafter, print on paper of this document applied for is taken, signed and kept on the file, and the decision recorded on the file in ink.

The acknowledgment given to the applicant at the time of applying includes mention of the timeframe for disposal of the application and an application reference number. Using the application reference number, the applicant may ascertain the status of disposal of the application. In the event of the application being granted, the applicant may go to any authorised intermediary anytime and obtain print on paper of the digitally signed electronic record of the applied document from the authorised intermediary, who accesses the prescribed computer resource in the prescribed manner. The intermediary signs on such print, in token of having verified the digital signature of the appropriate authority and the print correctly displaying the information contained in the electronic record.

One example of a citizen service under this arrangement is issue of birth certificate, which is nothing but a certified extract of an entry in made a register of births by the registrar of births and deaths. The government hospital maternity ward daily updates online all births on the prescribed computer resource, authenticated by digital signature of designated employee. This is authenticated by the digital signature of the registrar every day and is accessible on anytime anywhere basis through any authorised intermediary, who after verifying the digital signature of the registrar on the relevant register of births entry will print the same and after comparing the print with the electronic entry, authenticate the same with his signature as being a true paper copy of the original electronic birth certificate issued by the registrar of births. The print includes an in-built declaration giving reference of the State Government's notification and bearing a statement to the effect that the copy is legally admissible for all purposes under the Rules framed by the State Government under the Parliamentary enactment. In case of births in private hospitals or nursing homes, the applicant can take it the nearest intermediary during business hours and make an e-application, rather than going physically to the Registrar's office during office hours on office days and once the Registrar had authenticated the entry made on the basis of the e-application supported by the scanned copy of the discharge slip authenticated by the intermediary, SMS and email intimations are sent to automatically to the applicant. Under the existing business process, the applicant had to present the hospital discharge slip to the registrar's office, wait for a few days for the clerk to enter it, the Registrar to authenticate, the clerk to then prepare the

certificate and again obtain the Registrar's signature, and then collect it. Further, in case the parents did not present the discharge slip themselves, the entry was made only upon receipt and entry of monthly return of births sent by the government / private hospital to the Registrar, rather than daily under the reengineered process.

Critical Factors for Successful Reengineering

A large proportion of BPR projects fail. There are several factors that contribute to this. The most important are lack of top management commitment to change, organisational resistance to change and unrealistic scope and expectations. The first two factors are interrelated. Want of management support leads to poor acceptance in the organization. Resistance to change weakens management's resolve. Apart from these, sometimes problems occur due to implementation of generic so-called best-practice processes that do not fit specific needs of the organisation. Excessive reliance on technological solutions alone is another pitfall. Management often sees BPR as a one-off project with limited strategy alignment and long-term perspective. Poor project management too is a threat.[1]

Extensive consultation within the organisation across levels during the analysis and design phase is critical for successful design as well as implementation. Concerns voiced during this phase must be squarely addressed in the design and the users convinced about the solution. Design has to provide for migration and iterations during implementation for fine tuning in light of problems encountered. Governments being large, open and structurally rigid with multiple channels of accountability, attention has to be paid to formalisation of arrangements and legal validity of the design to guard against problems at a later stage. It also needs to be borne in mind that capacities for BPR in Governments are very weak and proper institutional design to successfully and sustainably carry BPR through is extremely important.

Summary and Key Terms Used

Business process reengineering : Business process reengineering or BPR is a management approach aiming at improvements by means of elevating efficiency and effectiveness of the processes that exist within and across organizations. The key to BPR is for organizations to look at their business processes from a 'clean slate' perspective and determine how they can best construct these processes to improve how they conduct business. There are no standard methodologies for BPR although different approaches can be said to have some common phases like initiation, analysis of the process, followed by design, implementation and deployment of new processes. The principal commonality in all BPR approaches is their focus on organisational business processes as the basis for major change to achieve the organisation's strategic business goals rather than incremental change to achieve merely efficiency gains.

Business process : A business process is a set of logically related tasks performed to achieve a defined business outcome.

Role of ICT in BPR : ICT is conceived as a major contributing factor in BPR, in which it serves as enabler of new organizational forms and patterns of collaboration within and between organizations. BPR practitioners today advocate a change in emphasis to a customer-centric, as opposed to an ICT-centric, methodology. Information technology is seen today as only one albeit a very important one of many tools that are available for achieving BPR objectives.

Citizen services and ICT : These are services provided by the government to citizens. The key benefit of ICT, from the perspective of the citizens, is that is has the potential to make public services accessible on anytime anywhere basis. This has the potential for creating an environment, which will result in sustained improvement in service delivery through introduction of competition and consumer choice in provision of public services if ICT is used while suitably reengineering processes.

Direct delivery and intermediation in delivery : Fully electronic delivery of services is the ideal. However, in developing countries, access to ICT is low not only among the public but also among public offices. While law may permit use of electronic record, it may not be of practical utility for most citizens in respect of most of the citizen services, especially when the place where such record need to be presented may not have requisite capacity in terms of either infrastructure or trained human resource to be able to access, verify and process such record. In such a context, there is a need for a non-electronic copy of the record, which can be accessed, verified and processed universally without requiring universal readiness in ICT capacities among all potential users of such records and across varying legal jurisdictions and

administrative systems. To achieve this, the anytime anywhere benefits of ICT can be coupled with a legally recognised system of intermediaries competent to access, verify and produce authenticated non-electronic copies of such electronic public records, and to also generate authenticated electronic copies of non-electronic records. Such authorised intermediaries may operate on a commercially viable basis, thereby introducing the elements of competition and consumer choice in delivery of and access to citizen services at the government-citizen interface.

Delivery of citizen services: A citizen service may be considered generally as involving four stages: obtaining the form for applying, submission, processing and communication of the decision and delivery of the desired document. The process may be studied stage-wise to effect improvements in service levels. Some techniques for doing this are to increase choice in means of payments and communication etc., ensuring greater transparency and standardisation, improving access, reducing information requirements, ensuring time bound delivery and reducing the number of interactions and payments required. In the most citizen-friendly process, with some effort and costs on the part of the processing organisation, even without resort to electronic records, it should be possible to have a maximum of only one face-to-face interaction: all documents required from the applicant can be collected / signed at the time of pick-up / delivery of end document desired by the applicant, and processing and provisional decision done on the basis of the applicant's claims, subject to presentation and verification of supporting documents and signing of requisite declarations.

Critical factor for success : A large proportion of BPR projects fail. The most important reasons for this are lack of top management commitment to change, organisational resistance to change and unrealistic scope and expectations. Extensive consultation within the organisation across levels during the analysis and design phase is critical. Concerns voiced during this phase must be squarely addressed in the design and the users convinced about the solution. Attention has to be paid to formalisation of arrangements and legal validity of the design. Proper institutional design to successfully and sustainably carry BPR through is extremely important.

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DEVELOPING FUTURE CITIES

Sanjay Bhoosreddy *

Abstract

Urbanization is spreading rapidly and the issues and problems related to it are very different from those in administration of rural areas. This article explores the various problems afflicting our rapidly growing urban areas and examines the possible solutions to the same.

Introduction

The 21st century is the century of cities. Cities would be the dynamic growth centres and happening places also. It will have tremendous magnetic pull for both the human and physical resources. The world is also fast moving towards urbanisation. The growth of developing countries centres around urban areas. India, on path of rapid development, is not an exception. The estimates predict, the country becoming urban in the next three decades. Its "engines of growth" are experiencing steady positive development. In this backdrop, this article discusses the issues especially relating to housing and planning in urban areas in the country with special reference to Uttar Pradesh. While discussing about municipal administration only those aspects have been dwelt, which are relevant and have immediate bearing on urban planning. Before going into details of the urban issues let us understand the urban scenario in the state of Uttar Pradesh for better understanding.

Urban Civilisation

Urbanisation Trend: Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh is the most populated state in the country. The total population of Uttar Pradesh as per 2001 census is 16.61 crores which accounts

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for 16.17 % of country's total population. The urban content is 3.45 crores, which is 20.78 % of the total population of UP. This is much less than the national average of 27.78%.In terms of the land area, the state occupies 2,94,411 square kilometers. The urban area is 5,194.13 square kilometers, which is approximately 2.15 % of the total area.

If we analyze the census data, population density in urban areas in UP comes to 689 per/km and the growth of annual rate of population is 2.8 %. The decadal growth of urban population of UP is 32.88 % which is higher than that of national average of 31.13 %. The number of urban towns in UP is 670 and the number of Million Plus Towns is 6, which increased from 5 in one decade (1991-2001).

Uttar Pradesh registered an over all population growth of 25.80 % in 1991-2001 and 25.55 % in 1981-91, whereas urban population recorded the growth of 32.88% and 38.97% respectively in these two decades, indicating thereby an additional pressure in urban areas. This is primarily because of natural increase and migration from rural areas to urban areas and smaller urban centers to large urban centers. The smaller towns of less then 10,000 population registered a negative growth rate of (-) 68.57% in 1991-2001, whereas larger towns of more than 5,00,000 population witnessed growth rate of 48%. The details of urbanization in U.P. are summarized below in Table-1.

Table-1 : Urbanisation Scenario of Uttar Pradesh in 2001

• Total Population of Uttar Pradesh (2001)	: 16.61 Crores
• Percentage to India's Total Population	: 16.17 %
• Land Area	: 294,411 Sq. Km.
• Population Density	: 689 Persons/Sq.Km.
• Annual Rate of Population Growth	: 2.8%
• Urban Population of U.P.	: 3.45 Crores
• Percentage of Urban Population	: 20.78%
• Percentage of Urban Population (India)	: 27.78 %

• Decadal Rate of Urban Population Growth, U.P.	: 32.88 %
• Decadal Rate of Urban Population Growth, India	: 31.13 %
• No. of Towns, U.P.	: 670
• No. of Million plus Towns	: 6
› Kanpur	: 26.90 lacs
› Lucknow	: 22.67 lacs
› Agra	: 13.21 lacs
› Varanasi	: 12.12 lacs
› Meerut	: 11.67 lacs
› Allahabad	: 10.50 lacs
• Highest Decadal Growth Rate	: Agra (39.38 %)
• Lowest Decadal Growth Rate	: Varanasi (17.55%)
• Percentage of Urban Population in Million Plus Towns	: 28%
• No. of Towns above 5 lac Population	: 11
• No. of Towns with 1 to 5 lac Population	: 44
• Percentage of Population in Class-1 Towns	: 62%
• 72 % of the Urban Population is confined to 16 % or 186 towns.	
• 28 % of the Urban Population is confined to 84 % or 564 towns.	
• Highest rate of Population growth (48.10%) is recorded in Million Plus Towns	
• Negative rate of growth recorded in Class- 5 & Class- 6 Towns (Below 10,000)	

Source: Census Reports

The sudden increase in large urban areas has given birth to two major problems- poverty and gap between affordable housing against demand supply. Poverty is the dark side of our society, which leads to creation of slums, Jhopar-patti etc., thereby adding the worst environmental scenario in urban areas. The housing shortage by the end of the 9th Five Year Plan in 2001 was 7 lac units, which increased to more than 16 lac units at the end of Tenth Plan period. This includes the shortage and the demand.

The increasing gap between affordable housing against demand and supply also leads to unauthorised colonies, encroachments and other related problems. In majority of our towns the housing supply is far lesser than the demand and this shortage is increasing every year.

Major Issues in Developing Future Cities

The other important issue, which needs immediate attention of policy makers, planners and other key players including the citizenry, is the environmental issue. The major issues including environmental issues are as follows:

- **Maintenance of Green Areas**: Noticeable areas can be seen on any town map as green areas to perform as a catalytic agent for healthy and fresh environment for city dewellers but these areas are most ignored or poorly managed by the local authorities. Lack of funds, initiative, immediate visual necessity and benefits can be some of the reasons for this ignorance of green areas.

- **Squatting and slum settlements on public lands & green belts** : The green belts within and around the cities and public lands are the most vulnerable targets for the development of slums, which adds to unhygienic and deteriorated environment in the cities.

- **Traffic and Transposition** : Road network covers a large area of any city therefore, is instrumental in overall environment of the town;

  Encroachment on public roads : Due to inadequate regular monitoring or drives, the encroachment in the form of permanent and temporary structures, moveable or immovable has become a common phenomenon in our cities.

Increasing car ownership : Last two decades have shown a tremendous increase in automobiles especially in personal four wheelers, which cover more space on our roads that cannot be widened beyond certain limits.

Lack of Mass Transport System : Like many other states in the country, UP also is far behind many states to establish mass transposition system for inter and intra cities commuting.

Heterogeneous mix of transport modes : Roads of all most every Indian city carries every type of transport mode in a single given time period ranging from slowest moving rickshaws and bullock carts to fast moving two wheelers and four or above wheelers.

All the above factors generate the following environmental hazards; bottlenecks, reducing travel speed, noise and air pollution on and around major roads.

- **Sewerage system** : Sewerage plays one of the fundamental roles in the city environment. Sewage may be liquid or solid wastes in the form of garbage. The present scenario of our cites is as follows:

- **Sewage disposal** : Most of the liquid sewage is disposed into nearby rivers, nalas and the worst, into open ponds around the city without giving any treatment to neutralize its hazardous effects.

- **Inadequate sewage treatment facilities** : Larger cites in U.P. have sewage treatment plants but they are highly inadequate to cater the flow of our towns and moreover treatment process is not upgraded with coming up of new technologies because of inadequacy of funds with local authorities.

- **Segregation of garbage** : The millions of tons of garbage per year in any city are not segregated on the basis of its nature i.e. organic and inorganic. The surrounding agricultural areas uses organic urea which can be supplied at a much cheaper cost if proper segregation of garbage is carried out, thereby solves the problem of city authorities also in disposing a large quantity of garbage every year.

All these factors result into the most unhygienic environment conditions in cites. Dumping grounds not only create enormous air pollution, foul smell in neighbourhood but also form an ugly face of the town. This also reduces the land value in its immediate surroundings and as an end result in reduction of fund generation for the authorities. The untreated liquid wastes are damaging our rivers and ponds. The water bodies thus being used for liquid disposal can generate epidemics.

Most of the UP cities, like other cities in the country, have a mixed-use character, where rural activities like dairies, piggeries etc. are important main activities. The lack of open spaces required for such activities, especially in the core areas, generates poor environmental conditions.

The urban centers are expanding rapidly, so is the population, but the infrastructure facilities have failed to keep pace with the emerging demand. As a result, drains are overflowing, seevers are choking and the primary need of man i.e. water is diminishing day by day, roads are not maintained. Therefore, aesthetic look of urban centres are deteriorating.

Besides, there is total lack of accurate empirical or real time data on key parameters and performance indicators, which measure urban conditions and changes.

Broad information is available on different TV channels regarding air and noise pollution etc. but comprehensive and accurate data is not available for our planners and engineers so as to design and take curative measures or for Govt. to help in formulating necessary suitable policies.

The much used word 'environment' in this decade is not understood by masses in its totality. The lack of awareness is one of key issues for a better living environment in cites. If properly understood and taken care by masses it will help in keeping the cities clean. For this, massive campaigns and tutorials are required at every level of our society.

New Institutional Framework

The various aspects of environment are not a new phenomenon in housing and urban planning. Since inception various parameters were considered

and due weightage has always been given as and when it was required. The Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Government of Uttar Pradesh has developed new institutional frame-work on the basis of modern policy prescriptions to provide a fresh healthy living environment for city dwellers.

Environmentally compatible Master Plans & Zoning Regulations

For development of a city, master plan is the most powerful tool available with the authorities. Master Plans for a period of 20 years are prepared by a team of highly qualified planners, engineers, architects and experts from other disciplines. The growth of town is directed and controlled under the parameters of planning and environment. The State of U.P. has 670 towns out of which, 134 towns have been declared as regulated areas under different provisions and 58 towns are covered under master plans, which are designed to take care of a healthy living environment in broader terms.

Our towns have a mixed land use character based on our culture and living style, which generates poor and deteriorating environmental conditions. As an answer a user-friendly demand- oriented zoning regulation, which is one of the most effective tools for controlling over all environment of the city, was launched in the year 2001 by Housing Department. Under the provisions of the regulation:

- Permanent construction is banned in environmentally sensitive areas like green belt, riverfront, open areas etc. marked in master plans;
- Hazardous and obnoxious industries are segregated; and
- Permissibility of various activities are based on performance standards.

Building Bye-Laws

To control an individual building, may be of any use, is very important from micro to macro level point of view. Individual building provides light and ventilation to its dwellers and buildings collectively affects the over all environment. Some very key factors have been incorporated in common building bye-laws issued in the year 2001 for better environment, which are listed below:

- Minimum open space 15%,
- Mandatory plantation for various sizes of plots,
- Minimum set-backs,
- Heritage Areas conservation.

Rain Water Harvesting

Water is main source of life. For drinking purpose our mains source is under ground water, which is reducing alarmingly; as a result, people are switching over to other means, which are either too expensive or unhygienic. Government of U.P. has initiated a rain water harvesting policy and subsequently Housing Department made mandatory provisions in the by-laws and also issued necessary Government Orders. The highlights are as below:

- Conservation of existing Water Bodies in the cities are to be preserved as it is,
- Identification and preservation water recharge areas ,
- Creation of new water bodies in Housing Schemes has been made mandatory.

Regulation of High Rise development

One of the most recent policies issued by Housing Department is the regulation to regulate the high rise developments. It provides tremendous boost to better environment. The areas are to be demarcated which will be having height restrictions, primarily heritage zones, historical/ architectural monuments, green areas/open spaces/river front areas, security zones, etc., which will help in:

- Easing of traffic congestion in the central areas,
- Easing of pressure on infrastructure,
- Protection of environmentally sensitive area,
- Protection of areas having historical/cultural heritage.

Disaster Management

In the past frequent earthquakes have shattered the living environment in our urban areas. Housing Department has made mandatory provisions for

the safety of citizen. Adequate measures have been taken for the quality and safety of buildings more than 12 metres high or three stories or having a covered area of 500 square metres.

Legal Provisions against encroachments

To keep smooth flow of traffic and also to achieve better level of air and noise pollution, an effective amendment has been made in Section-26 of the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973 in 1997 for addressing the issue of anti encroachment activities.

Operation Green

Operation Green was initiated by the Govt. under State Forest Policy-1998, subsequently the Housing Department made appropriate provisions by fixing minimum 1% of total development cost of an area for forestation or green belt. As a result different development authorities in their jurisdiction have planted lakhs of trees.

Private Sector & Community Participation

Govt. is taking adequate steps towards privatisation including the development of new colonies or new townships and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, green belts by private / public sectors or community groups.

IDSMT Scheme

To check the population migration towards the larger cites by providing batter infrastructure in surrounding smaller towns, Centre- assisted IDSMT scheme was launched in Uttar Pradesh as well. Most of the services and facilities for which people migrate to larger cites were provided in the small towns. In all, 110 towns have been covered under this scheme.

JnNURM Scheme

The much ambitious infrastructure development reform-based and mission-mode Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) and its two omnibus schemes UIDSSMT and IHSDP are destined to play an important role in giving new life to cities. In UP, seven towns (Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Agra, Varanasi, Meerut and Mathura) have been selected under

the flagship JnNURM, and dozens of small and medium towns have been covered under other two schemes for development of infrastructure and reforms in governance. Huge central financial assistance has been allocated but because of institutional weakness the implementation is at snail's pace. Committed reforms have failed to attract our sincere efforts. If implemented earnestly, these schemes are aimed to give a face lift to our growing cities.

Strategy for Green and Sustainable Habitat

Many measures have been propagated for creating green and sustainable habitat in our cities. Some of these steps are as under:

- More emphasis on the development of critical urban infrastructure.
- Land acquisition through negotiation. Encourage farmers/land owners' participation in land acquisition and development of schemes. Development through land pooling & consolidation. State Sector to focus more on land
- Acquisition and development for EWS and LIG Housing.
- Priority to development of small and medium towns.
- Emphasis on preparation of Master Plan and their integration with infrastructure plans.
- To develop Vision Statement and Action Plans for all Development Authority Towns.
- More active participation of Private & Cooperative Sectors in land development and construction of houses.
- To arrange direct loaning to beneficiaries from Financial Institutions.
- Regularization of unauthorised colonies.
- Encourage low cost building materials and cost-effective construction techniques for Housing.
- Promote self-help housing and public participation in shelter programmes.

- Rainwater harvesting and conservation and management of water resources.

- To promote use of non-conventional energy sources.

- System improvement and capacity building of State Sector Housing Agencies.

In Nutshell

The abovementioned facts, figures and analysis highlights some of the important and concerted efforts of the Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Government of Uttar Pradesh with the programme and financial assistance of the Ministry of Urban Development, Urban Employment, Poverty Alleviation and Housing, Government of India for developing the cities in this most populated state in the country.

Every attempt is being made to make the cities clean, green and healthy. Our vision is to make cities livable by all and the mission of the governments is to go for inclusive growth of our cities, the modern paradigm.

INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY UNDER NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN NAXALITE AFFECTED AREAS

Gulshan Bamra*

Abstract

Balaghat district is one of the 33 most naxalite affected districts in India. The lack of employment opportunities, the difficult terrain and district's situation at the tri-junction of three states makes it a fertile ground for naxalism. With the coming into force of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2006 and the effective implementation of the Act by the District NREGA team, a very positive contribution in the socio-economic set up has been made. This has led to a definite change in the way the have-nots look towards the government machinery in the district. How the NREGA was implemented in the district with the involvement of the local community from the generation of awareness stage through planning to implementation stage is discussed in this paper.

Background

Balaghat District is located on the south-eastern border of Madhya Pradesh state touching the borders of Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra states. The district has a population of 14.97 lakhs residing in an area of 9229 square kilometers. Geographically the eastern part of district comprises of inaccessible dense forests, difficult mountain terrain in the central part and western part is divided into almost plain agricultural fields growing mainly paddy.

The major problems of the district include mono-cropped agriculture production, scarcity of industries and lack of alternative employment opportunities, low wage rates and unreachable geographical areas. These factors have led to a fertile ground for ideology of Naxalism to take roots in

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the district. The Naxalite ideology considering government machinery as responsible for the socio-economic plight of the people wants to establish the rule of the proletariat by violent overthrow of the present governmental regime. The lack of employment opportunities pushes the youth towards the Naxalism thought and ideology and they thus they are easily trapped to become Naxalites. A considerable part of the time and energy of the administrative machinery is wasted in dealing with this problem.

These areas have a very meager ballot value owing to small and dispersed habitations. Even in the present democratic set up might (of ballot) is right holds good and thus the district as a whole and such areas of the district in particular have been starved of funds for development. With the coming into force of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2006 the long cherished demand for the funds for development became easily available provided the administrative machinery acted skillfully. The district administration has to be on toes as the Act provides a statutory guarantee of 100 days wage employment on demand else unemployment allowance has to be provided within 15 days of the demand for wage employment.

Implementation Strategy

Cluster Meetings at weekly markets for work selection

It was considered wise to interact with the people first to create awareness, to assess their problems and their own priorities for development. The opportunity to do this was available for a cluster of villages in form of Rural Market Centres (*weekly haats*). On the weekly market days meetings were organised in almost all such clusters with the *sarpanches, upsarpanches, panchayat* secretaries, Joint Forest Management committee office-bearers and the related government officials. A total of 115 such co-ordination meetings were held through out the length and breadth of the district with the village level people's representatives reporting their active presence.

In these public meetings and discussions the problems of employment, road connectivity and small agricultural holdings with no means of irrigation facility were highlighted by the local people. The NREGA guidelines provided the remedy for exactly these kinds of problems. Therefore the priorities for work selection were framed in the order - road connectivity, land

development and irrigation facilities, plantation and the water- shed management.

Selection of the implementation agency

Executing the large number of sanctioned works and their effective monitoring required a very large number of implementation agencies with active participation of the people and their representatives. The existing line departments and their staff were too few for the NREGA works. Also with the huge funds and works in their hands the line departments were prone to arm twisting by the vested interests and the Naxalites. The presence of 693 gram *panchayats*, 500 forest committees and 11,515 Self Help Groups were seen as solution to these problems with the existing line departments. Therefore the priority was given to local *panchayats*, Joint Forest Management Committees, Self Help Groups and Water User Associations for making them implementation agencies at the grass-root level. The strength of the line departments was used for larger projects that needed more technical expertise and to give technical guidance and assistance in record keeping to the grass-root agencies.

Associating NREGA with government missions like *hariyali mahotsava* and *jal-abhisheka abhiyaan*

The government of Madhya Pradesh under the leadership of the Chief Minister has taken a lead to associate people in environment and water conservation through large scale afforestation activities in the rainy season (called *hariyali mahotsava*) and excavation of old and new water tanks in the summer season (called *jal-abhisheka abhiyan*) . The activities undertaken conformed exactly to the guidelines and objectives of the NREGA in the district. The momentum of these missions of the government gave a push to the NREGA activities in the district in the right direction. Thus a large scale participation of people was ensured and these activities became the grand celebrations.

Inter-departmental and inter-scheme convergence

The district needs an integrated strategy for tackling development and security challenges together. Strategy was prepared to develop team spirit and coordination between various departments, in order to implement the

plan with a new direction and a new vigour. An innovative use of the NREGA funds was required as many works required to be done do not fall in National Rural Employment Guarantee Act guidelines like restriction of wages to material ratio to 60:40. Thus other funds available in the district like Backward Regions Grant Fund, MP and MLA Local Area Development funds were used in conjunction with NREGA to address the specific local developmental problems.

Therefore the cash component from the other funds and schemes of various departments converged like water bound macadam (WBM) from the NREGA and blacktopping from PWD funds, cement concrete roads, construction of wells under NREGA and providing pumps under *Swaranjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana* etc. Thus through this convergence of different schemes people got not only more employment but also much wanted infrastructural and other assets were created.

Annual Employment Cycle

To check migration of the people it was felt that giving 100 days assured wage employment was not sufficient. To stop them from migrating out people needed employment in their village 365 days in the year. Thus in coordination with the other employment generating forest activities like bamboo felling and *tendu patta* collection an Annual Employment Cycle was ensured.

Implementation

Information, Education and Communication

To enable the workers to access their rights under the Act a multi-pronged awareness campaign was launched which included generation of awareness of the statutory rights of the workers, how to register, demand, get work allocated, receive proper and timely wages, understand their obligation to work-output and even to submit complaints and grievances. Similar awareness was generated for the public representatives, government officials and various committees at various levels to match the expectations of the workers. A plethora of IEC strategies were adopted like workshops, awareness camps, wall writings, hoardings, *nukkad* plays, posters and pamphlets, radio & TV programmes and press releases to name a few.

For wider publicity of the provisions and activities of the scheme a media cell has been constituted at the district. Additional officers have been appointed as media in charge in all *Janpad Panchayats*. A Radio program *Namaskar Balaghat* was conceived almost since beginning of the scheme to keep the villagers and other stakeholders updated, well informed and also to get their feedback. This Radio programme is broadcasted in mornings and now it is one of the favourite programmes of villagers.

Massive training and orientation

The effective implementation and monitoring the Act required not just awareness but thorough understanding of the provisions and rules of the Act and rigorous training for its proper execution on the field.

The officials of the implementation agencies required engineering, accounts and record keeping inputs for the works to be executed on such a large scale ensuring quality with quantity. The training workshops were held regularly for updating the knowledge and skills and addressing the problems and doubts encountered in the field execution.

For effective monitoring of every aspect of the scheme trainings were organized for all the three tier *panchayati raj* functionaries and the members of the vigilance and monitoring committees.

Finance Accounts and Audit

The timely release of the funds to the implementing agencies was ensured and monthly statements of the funds are obtained from the banks. The *panchayats* that spend more than 3 lakhs a month are monitored for their more expenditure, the *panchayats* that spent less for consecutive months were monitored for their slow progress works and the *panchayats* that have less than 1 lakh in their accounts were given top up funding to keep up their work tempo.

The implementation agencies have been mandated to keep all the book-keeping accurate and updated. To reduce the risk of financial leakages and to promote transparency and accuracy in the fund management the practice of monthly squaring of the accounts has been introduced. Apart from the statutory audits an attempt has also been made to disclose accounts in the monthly gram *panchayat* meetings and regular *gram sabha* meetings. This has

led to transparency, faith and empowerment of the people who can now question the application of the funds.

Planning, monitoring and inspections

A detailed survey has been done by *panchayats* with the help of the outsourced agencies to make a five year perspective plan and shelf-of projects were prepared accordingly and approved by three- tier *panchayats.*

The *panchayats* were trained to demand the funds by simple calculation to give wage employment to one person we require Rs100, thus to give 100 days job guarantee to a job-card holder we require Rs10,000 . If there are 500 job card holders in a village out of which 400 will actually demand work then total requirement of the funds for the year will be 400X10,000=Rs.40.00 lakhs for that village. The understanding of the huge funds that could be actually available in their village under their command made their eyes glitter.

The *gram panchayats* were trained to put pressure on the district machinery to get these huge funds and actually spend these funds in their villages for their development and prosperity. In this way the annual labour budget is made in all the *panchayats* and they demand for funds as required. Once the funds are available the *gram panchayats* are monitored for keeping at least 5 community works and 25 beneficiary oriented works on-going in every *gram panchayat.*

To ensure that the works are executed with quality both table and field monitoring is implemented. Table monitoring is ensured through MIS software and regular monthly meetings with a pre-determined agenda of the meetings. Similarly the issues highlighted by the MIS software and the problems reported in the press and through public complaints were evaluated in the field monitoring by different level of officers.

Regular inspections by authorities at the block and district levels and prompt corrective actions on the   inputs given by the district, state and nation level quality monitors has led to improved quality of the works.

Role of *Gram Sabha* and Social Audit

NREGA is a scheme of the people by the people and for the people. Thus the selection works and fixation of priority must also be done by villagers themselves. Real involvement of the people is ensured not just at the *gram panchayat* level but the *gram sabha* level. The regular meetings of the *gram sabha* are held. In district apart from the mandatory 4 *gram sabhas* (on 26th January, 14th April, 15th August and 2nd October) in the year special *gram sabhas* whenever required . These *gram sabhas* are well attended and in these meetings selection of beneficiaries, selection of works, progress of the projects and social audit of completed works is done.

Social audit is done in the presence of village members for whom the relevant records and accounts are made available including muster rolls of construction works. These records are read out in the presence of the villagers. During this process if there are any objections relating to the records or the measurement of works then physical verification is also done at the site and the report of the entire proceedings is sent to the higher authorities. The main part of the social audit report is published on the website in public domain.

Vigilance and Monitoring Committees

Transparency and accountability is a key to qualitative and purposeful work. To make it happen in reality public vigilance and monitoring is required. For this Vigilance and Monitoring Committees are formed at the district, block and village levels headed respectively by the MP, MLA and a person other than the *sarpanch* of the village. The meetings of these committees are held regularly and the scheme implementation issues are discussed thread-bare.

These committees have been well trained so that they can play their designated role effectively. The active participation of the members in these committees has led to their credibility and has ensured transparency, accountability and even redressal of the public grievances and complaints. The issues raised by the committees are addressed and information ion the action taken on these issues is reported in the next meetings.

Disclosure of information and Grievance redressal mechanism

To bring about transparency it was considered necessary that all the information of all the provisions of the Act and the works being executed under the scheme activities were made available to public. This was ensured through proactive disclosure of information to the public through work site boards and wall paintings, providing information demanded under the Right

to Information Act in letter and spirit and making the complaints and grievance redressal system very responsive.

The complaint boxes have been provided in three tier *panchayats*, and inspections registers & a complaint registers maintained at workplaces. The mechanism is in place for quick disposal of complaints with appropriate system of appeals. The appellate committees include public representatives too. Action taken on the complaints is placed before the meetings of the three tier *panchayati- raj* institutions.

Coordination with Banks and Post Offices

The decision has been taken for payment of the wages through banks or post offices only to the workers to circumvent complaints and possibilities of leakages of funds, to get free from exploitation of the vested interests and to increase the savings of the workers. To open bank accounts for lakhs of job card holders was a big challenge due to limitation of human and physical resources.

By organizing public meetings and workshops an environment was created to meet this challenge. No frills or zero balance accounts were opened for all job seekers by organizing camps in the *panchayats* in coordination with the *panchayats*, respective departments and the banks and post offices. At present, wages to all job card holders are being paid only through the banks or post offices.

Outcomes

Availability of employment opportunities throughout the year

Before start of the scheme limited employment opportunities were available in the district. With the implementation of the Annual Employment Cycle in convergence with various schemes already on going in the district workers seeking work could get employment opportunities throughout the year in their own village.

When we look at the statistics of the work force engaged in NREGA in the district in an year it is very heartening. In the financial year 2008-09 a total of 179.80 crores was effectively used in the district giving wage employment to 2.27 lakh people! A total of 135.47 lakhs of man-days were generated out of
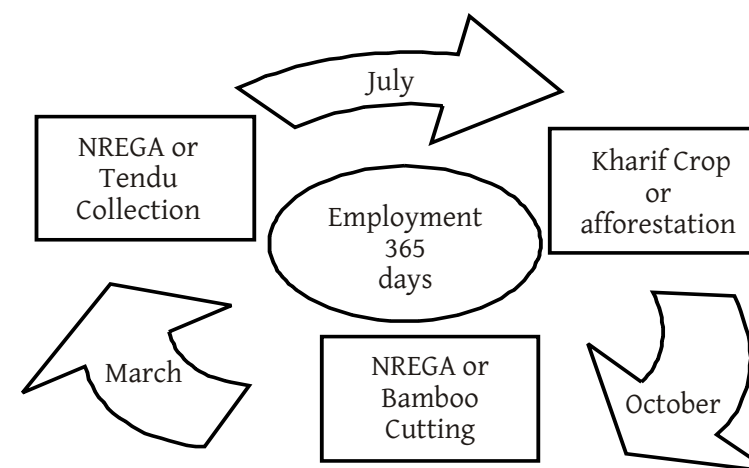

which 81.06 lakhs (60%) were for women, 15.02 lakhs (11%) for SCs and 40.17 lakhs (30%) for the STs. It is important to note here that the percentage of SCs and STs in the district is 8% and 22% respectively thus their share in the scheme is much more than their population.

Comparative analysis of expenditure and employment generated in Balaghat district compared to the district averages of MP and all India*

Year	Balaghat			Madhya Pradesh			India		
	Expenditure (In Crore)	No.of households provided employment (In Lakhs)	No of Districts*	Average District Expenditure (In Crore)	No.of households provided employment (In Lakhs)	No of Districts*	Average District Expenditure (In Crore)	No.of households provided employment (In Lakhs)
2006-07	133.90	2.48	18	103.48	1.59	200	45.31	1.05
2007-08	131.36	2.08	31	93.28	1.40	330	48.48	1.03
2008-09	179.80	2.27	48	74.06	1.08	619	43.91	0.73

*Source :- nrega.nic.in

No of Households provided employment (In Lakhs)
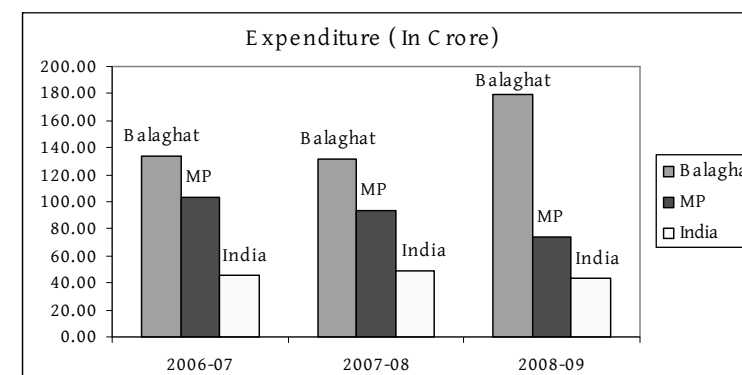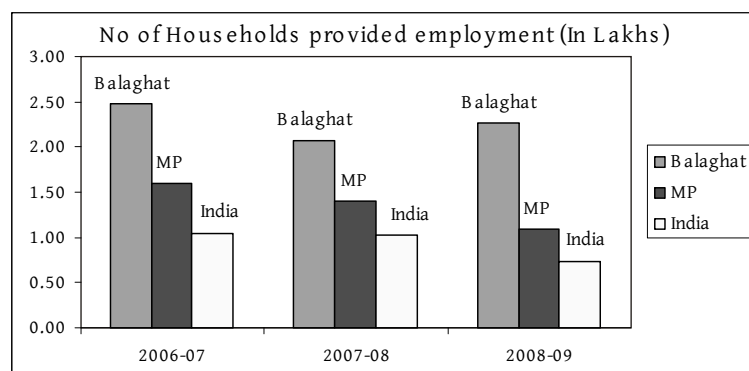
At the prevailing wage rates a worker that has completed 100 days earns up to Rs 8500 in a year from NREGA alone. A high women's participation means socio-economic empowerment of women and their say in the family decisions has surely increased. The participation of the SCs, STs and other weaker sections in large numbers has also resulted in their increased incomes and status in the society.

The inter-sectoral distribution of the fund utilization is given in the following table and depicted in the pie-chart.

Activity	Expenses on completed works (in Crores)	Percentage
Irrigation	54.63	42.11
Water Conservation	27.19	20.96
Road Connectivity	26.26	20.24
Afforestation	21.66	16.96
Total	129.74	100.00
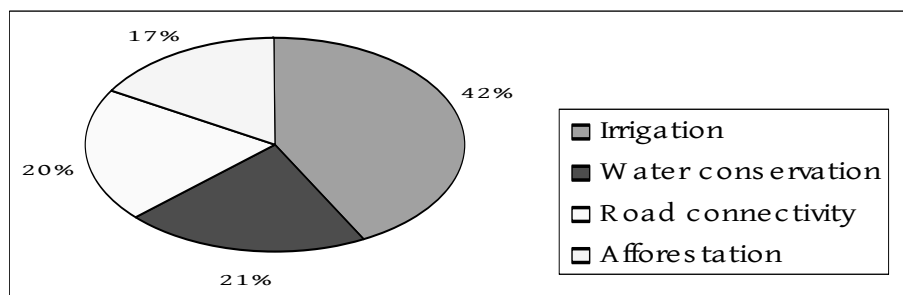
Increase in wage negotiation capacity of the workers and wage rate

Before start of the scheme in the district the wage rates were very low and there was inequality in wage rates for male and female workers. Due to paucity of employment opportunities the workers were forced to sell their labor at lower wage rates. With the implementation of the scheme and the availability of enough work at fixed and widely publicized wage rates market wage rate for other activities like agriculture and industrial labor also increased more than the expectations of any one. An analysis of the increase in wage rate from the data collected from the labor department is given below.

Year	Wage Rate
2004-05	30.00
2005-06	35.00
2006-07	40.00
2007-08	59.00
2008-09	70.00
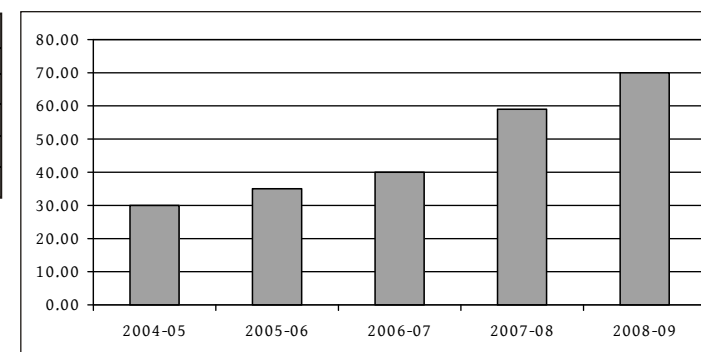
Halt on distress migration

With the availability of employment opportunities 365 days a year at higher wage rates the migration has decreased unprecedentaly in the district. An analysis of the data obtained from the village migrations registers is shown in the following bar charts.

| Year	Migration	
	Family	Population
2005-06	1452	4217
2006-07	1284	3664
2007-08	1140	3284
2008-09	1008	2840
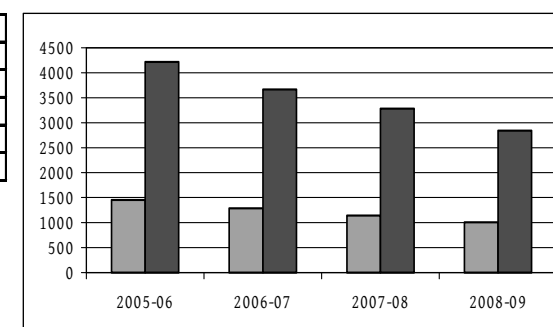
Road Connectivity to hitherto inaccessible and naxalite affected areas

A major part of the district still remained unconnected and thus inaccessible making it a safe haven for the naxalites. With the opportunity provided by NREGA an ambitious plan for rural connectivity was conceived with long through roads cutting across the naxal affected areas and many link and approach roads connecting these through roads. The construction work of the longer through roads was given to the Public Works Department and Rural Engineering Services whereas the construction work of links and approach roads was given to the local *panchayats* under the supervision and technical guidance of Rural Engineering Services.

Thus through this scheme not only the opportunity of employment was available in inaccessible areas but also new developed connectivity has helped the villagers to access markets for their minor forest produce and agricultural products. This connectivity has also opened new opportunities to the villagers for education and health as both the officials and villagers could approach each other freely. By this the whole areas, hitherto alienated, got linked to the mainstream of development.

The following table and chart shows an analysis of the connectivity achieved in the district based on data provided by the agencies engaged in road development.

Year	Route (kms)
2004-05	272.63
2005-06	520.24
2006-07	519.7
2007-08	2019.39
2008-09	2228
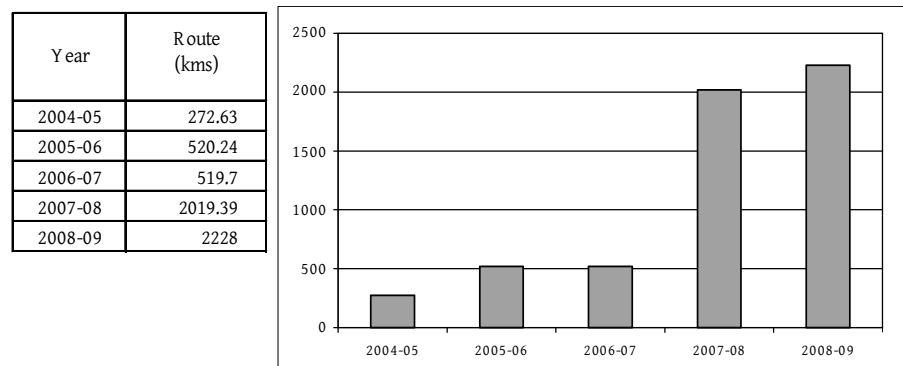
Development of irrigation resources

A total of 27,600 hectares of additional irrigation facility has been created in the district through the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. This has been achieved by renovation of the existing irrigation tanks and excavation of the new tanks, increasing the capacity utilization of the existing irrigation tanks by renovation of old canals and by excavation of new canals.

One very important intervention has been the renovation of the old irrigation canals of the British period hitherto neglected because of the want of funds. Thousands of kilometers of the canals have been given new life through this intervention resulting in increased capacity utilization of the existing irrigation schemes.

These interventions surely will have a long term positive impact on the agricultural scenario of the district resulting in increased crop intensity and diversity.

Bamboo regeneration and afforestation

No doubt Balaghat district is full of forest wealth. The district is known for its bamboo not only through out the state but in the whole country. The bamboo production is of high quality. But bamboo is also known for its gregarious flowering after every 35-40 years. After this gregarious flowering the plants die. This has happened in the year 2007-08 after 1967-68 in Balaghat.

Natural regeneration in the present context has become very difficult due to human pressure. Also in the natural regeneration because of excessive seeds in one place there is severe competition amongst the new saplings and thus the plants do not become very productive. Protections and elite selection of the better saplings is very helpful for preserving bamboo forests. In such a situation the availability of the financial resources in form of NREGA proved very timely. Thus a bamboo forest regeneration work was taken in many areas of the district.

Special importance is given to the bamboo production programme by the forest department through bamboo plantations not only in the forest areas but also in the private fields to provide an additional source of income to the villagers. Bamboo plants prepared in the forest nurseries of the district

under NREGA have been used for bamboo afforestation both in the forest and private lands securing the future of bamboo in the district.

A successful afforestaion activity requires not only good quality plant saplings but also an arrangement for their fencing and protection, watering and watch and ward care like the one required for a human child for 3- 4 years in a row. With the availability of required funds not only for a year but for the years to come, a concept of gram-van was conceived. In every village an area of 2-3 hectares was selected from the available community lands for afforestation with arrangements like fencing, well for irrigation facility and watches and ward for care. This community afforestaion intervention has been very successful and makes one forget the general criticism government afforestation schemes of the past have faced.

Improved agriculture

With the implementation of the soil and water conservation projects in the fields of the individual beneficiaries under NREGA and the implementation of the watershed and irrigation schemes at community level the agricultural area, production and productivity has definitely increased in the district.

A major success has been the individual beneficiary oriented sub-scheme under NREGA the *kapil-dhara yojana*. In this scheme the SC, ST and BPL farmers were given individual wells for minor irrigation. With the convergence of the *Swaranjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana* funds to give pumps these small and marginal farmers have become really prosperous. They can now not only get assured cereal crops but also have taken to vegetable and fruit farming resulting in their increased incomes and livelihood security.

Improved access to health and education facilities

Increased rural connectivity not only helped the government machinery to deliver health services to people by organizing health camps in rural areas but also more regular health services such as mobile health clinics and the *Janani* Express services to reach their villages.

The increased access and faith in the government officials to the people has also opened new opportunities to the villagers for better education and health avenues. Now both the officials and villagers can approach each other freely. A definite change in many traditional thoughts and beliefs is seen as means of transport and communication have improved. Thus promotion of

the health and education services has become easier. This has resulted in significant decrease in out of school children and increased institutional deliveries.

Proper exploitation of the forests in the naxal-affected areas

By the implementation of the scheme a new confidence and hope has been created amongst the villagers towards administrative machinery. The villagers have braved the threat calls of the naxalites to boycott forest activities like bamboo and tree felling and *tendu-patta* collection. Once they had stayed back in the villages for 100 days employment under NREGA they came forward to get employed in the forest related employment activities for 365 days in the year shunning the naxalite threats.

On the strength of the faith built up with the villagers the local forest officials also ventured in the interior areas for management and collection of the forest produce. Thus the forest activities became regular in these areas after years of their closure! The locals got huge employment and subsidiary benefits and the government's forest based revenues soared. Following table and chart analyses the trends in the revenue to the government from forest in the district.

Year	Revenue
2004-05	37.7
2005-06	33.91
2006-07	28.4
2007-08	48.02
2008-09	55.26
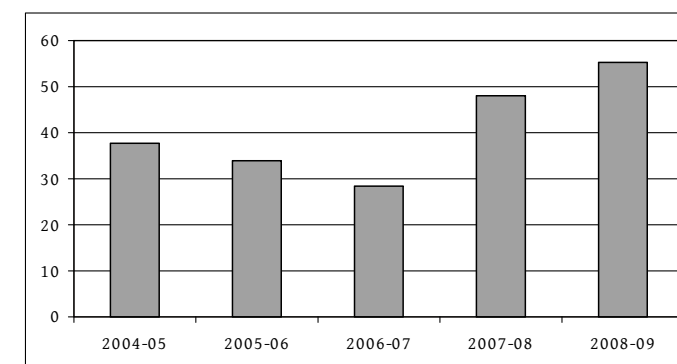
Effect of scheme on Naxalism

The inaccessible areas of the backward blocks of the district such as Baihar, Paraswada, Lanji, Birsa and Kirnapur are a safe haven for naxalites where they claimed their sovereignty. The police personnel are unable to reach the
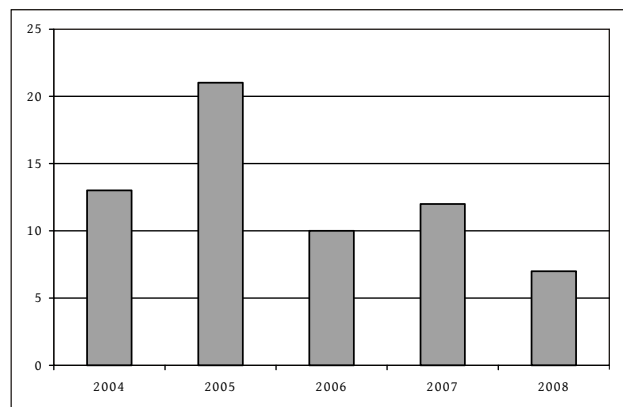
spot of naxal crimes on time and not able to give them formidable challenge.

Under the NREGA scheme the improved rural connectivity and increased public confidence and faith in the government system in the affected areas of district have led to a significant control in the naxal activities in the district. Now the police personal are able to reach the spot in the affected areas when required.

The local youth no longer seems to be interested in the Naxalite ideology, with no reports of new recruitments in the naxal dalams. Even those who were recruited in the past have either surrendered or arrested by the police with the inputs from the villagers. Now villagers feel safe living in their villages and the government officials feel secure visiting these villages for their official duties.

Following chart and graph shows an analysis of the naxal related crimes in the district over last few years. But one has to say these things only with a word of caution. It is pertinent to quote here an old saying "a fool can create more problems than a wise can answer."

effective and skillful implementation of the scheme has become a boon for the district.

The successful implementation of the NREGA has surely led to increase in self-confidence and socio-economic development of the poor households. The district also has seen a massive rural connectivity and improvement in the other basic infrastructure. The scheme has also resulted in immense capacity building of the public representatives and the government officials. One noteworthy outcome seems to be an appreciable decline in the Naxal activities in the district although it is too early to say.

Under the present circumstances not many districts not only of Madhya Pradesh but thorugh out India are affected by this Naxal menace. The district provides a successful example of implementation of the NREGA in the Naxal affected areas with the involvement of community and coordination of the various departments and schemes.

It is worth mentioning here that the Balaghat district NREGA team has been given Award for Excellence in NREGA Administration for the year 2007-08 by the Ministry of Rural Development Government of India.

Year	Naxal Crimes
2004	13
2005	21
2006	10
2007	12
2008	7

Conclusion

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme seems to be tailor made and especially made for the underdeveloped and backward areas like that in Balaghat district, where unskilled population is in plenty. Mobilising the available human resources and the funds available in the scheme in an effective manner has been the success of the district NREGA team. This

CIVIL SERVICES REFORMS: Training Implications (Potentials and Ponderables)

H M Mishra *

The Context

The civil services have historical roots in India. "Kautilya's Arthashastra" (313 BC), the most illustrious book, has a lucid description of civil services and civil servants of Mauryan India. It has dwelt upon the process of recruitment, qualification, conduct and vigilance over civil servants. Kautilya believed that the state derives its power from its subjects. Therefore responsiveness and accountability of civil servant towards subject should be a corner stone for it. With the changing regime and motives of rulers of ancient and medieval India civil services were especially tailored and designed to suit their interest. During 1000-1600 AD, Akbar contributed immensely and provided a frame work to revenue and civil administration. He created a cadre of civil servants and deserves credit for establishing the land revenue system (1457 AD) in the country. With the passage of time it became a major constituent of Indian taxation system. The fall of Moghul Empire and emergence of the East India Company which was subsequently taken over by the British Crown in 1858 through pronouncement of Government of India Act also made a mention of Indian Civil Services Act 1861. It gave birth to a Police State in India. Recruitment to it was almost confined only to the Britishers. In 1935 the British government decided to establish interim rule in the various provinces of India, which resulted in an increase of Indian subject in Indian Civil Service. At the time of independence, besides the Indian civil service, there were nine other central civil services in the country.

Demand for change

Independence brought about aspirations and hope in millions of Indians who were subjected to shackles of slavery and unequal treatment for centuries.

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To quote Nehru's immortal words, "When India awoke to life and freedom, it was in the midst of insurmountable problems. Illiteracy, poverty, low morale and, above all, untouchability or stringent social stratification posed unprecedented challenges before the young nation. The process of transformation from a bureaucratic polity to a democratic polity demanded three sixty degree changes in the attitude and orientation of civil servants." The roles performed by them in by gone era (land revenue collection, maintenance of law and order and, above all, serving the larger interest of the State) proved charming for role derivation in the changed political economy of the country (B S Raghavan, Hindu, 15th. August 2007). Wide spread poverty, illiteracy, backwardness and low morale amongst the commons became compulsive factors for evolution of developmental and welfare functions of the State. However, it required corresponding increase in the capacity of civil services to deliver reluiable, equitable and effective services. Thus, the enlarged fulcrum of the State created opportunity for employment for very large and varied sections of the society. It aimed to ensure participation of all sections in nation building. It also attempted to provide choice and voice to the people of India more especially to those that constituted denied deprived and oppressed classes. These became instrumental for attracting young boys and girls to join the services and share responsibilities in facing an incredible variety of formidable challenges over such a wide spectrum of sate activities.

Opportunity for cross fertilization

Now engineers, doctors, IT professionals are opting for civil services disdaining far more lucrative jobs in multinationals. This has created an opportunity for cross-fertilization of intellects and talents, but this would need systemic (structure and process) and environmental support. The time demands a high degree of creativity, innovation and integrity to enhance effectiveness in service in the emerging broad sectors of performance such as Industry and Commerce, Land and Water Management, Infrastructure Development, Telecommunication and ICT, Decentralized Governance, Planning and forecasting, Developmental Administration, Environment and Ecology etc.

Few observations

In this context it is important to ponder over the observations made by a senior civil servant:

"The IAS probationer of today gets a far wider and variegated training than I, like my pre-Independence colleagues, ever did. They are far better equipped to handle the far more complicated issues of today. But I have some doubt whether there is today the kind of character-building that I got in the first few months of my service, when I was taught what justified my very existence -- that I was there to serve the people. This had to do with humanity and devotion, give them justice within the law, do everything I could to help them improve their condition and to all this without committing even a single act of doubtful integrity" (B. K. Nehru). The former late Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi had also pointed out the deteriorating morale and ethics amongst the civil servants leading to public mal-administration in the following words:-

"We have government servants who do not serve but oppress the poor and the helpless, who do not uphold the law but connive with those who cheat the state and whole legions whose only concern is their private welfare at the cost of society. They have no work ethic, no feeling for the public cause, no involvement in the future of the nation, no comprehension of national goals, no commitment to the values of modern India. They have only a grasping mercenary outlook, devoid of competence, integrity and commitment". (Quoted from the article "Improving delivery of programmes through administrative reforms in India" Naresh C. Saxena)

A note circulated by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (vide its letter No. K-11022/23/96-P dated 6th November 1996) also observed "The public administration and the civil services at all levels are passing through difficult times in terms of eroded credibility and effectiveness of the civil service, growing public perception of an unholy nexus between certain elements among politicians and civil servants and criminals and increasing criticism of the low level of honesty, transparency and accessibility to the political and bureaucratic elements in-charge of administration. The present lack of transparency and the scope for manipulation of the system results in the criterion of merit being undermined by considerations of personal loyalty and complicity with unethical dealings. The absence of a well-defined structure for rewards and punishments, and the confusion regarding the desirable service norms for civil service has led to low morale and pursuit of career advancement at the expense of ethical values."

Reform : Looking beyond human aspects

All the observations mentioned above as also the debate with regard to incapability of the existing governance system have blamed bureaucracy for perpetuating inequality and injustice. One-fourth of India's population lives in absolute poverty despite planned efforts for the last five decades. It has degraded human values and also posed threat to peace and development. This existing developmental scenario has enhanced pressure for substantive change in policy, programme and procedures.

The evolving information technology and biotechnology have important implications for introducing systematic changes. It has substantially impacted the development paradigm, the organization of society, and the ways in which government structures operate. The failure and success of body polity lies in how policymakers and bureaucracy are responding to these challenges. The existing scenario also prompts us to look beyond the behavioural aspects of the problem viz the structure and the processes designed for governance and development administration. The existing structure and processes have contributed considerably to make civil service reforms gigantic. Sporadic attempts to address systemic (structure and process) aspects have yielded high dividend in improving the service delivery and reducing corruption through systemic support by introducing contestability and competition. For example, the Transparency International India has taken out Railways and Telecom from the list of organizational studies being conducted to measure level of corruption in public services. It is worth noting that even though the functionaries in these organizations have continued to remain the same, but the change in system and procedures has substantially improved the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness in service delivery.

> *"You represent a national establishment with a national responsibility. This gives you both power and responsibility. It also gives you the opportunity to guide a political leadership that is subject to the law of electoral change. Governments may come and go but the administration endures and must play its due role," Dr. Manmohan Singh, on Civil Service Day, 21st April 2007.*

Contextualizing reforms

There are positive signs of maturity and wisdom on part of the political leaders and the commitment of civil servant discernible in a few states and at the central government towards decentralized framework for governance (73rd. & 74th. CAA). It reinforces each other's to further improve people's welfare and the national interest. The political executive as well as the people have high expectations from the civil service within the decentralized framework of governance to assist and help political executives in formulating policies, plan and programmes focusing on:

- Citizen centric, inclusive and accessible governance;
- Security of the masses as they adjust to rapidly changing political and global economy;
- Responsive, accountable and quality basic services (health, education, water, sanitation, road, transport etc.);
- Bringing the citizens at the centre stage of decision-making in democratic polity and encourages participatory governance; and
- Fulfilling the demand for more personalized services;

Training implications of civil service reforms

The expectations of the people of India in the changed socio-economic and techno-political scenario suggest revisiting competence profile of individuals and group of civil servants. It also demands to re-look at HRD policy and training strategy in government especially in the light of globalization, decentralization and devolution of power, finances and responsibilities. Till recently, the recognition of training as a technique to enhance knowledge and performance was mostly confined to officer level in the government. Over a period of time sophistication brought about in the training of officers has grown manifold. The situation is fast reaching to a point where trained officers find themselves constrained to work with untrained support staff. Thus, there is a need to harmonize training and bring all levels of functionaries within the fold of training to get them acquainted with changing socio-economic, techno-political ethos and pathos.

Right type of training particularly for those who are working at the cutting edge will help them in performing "intricate and technical" tasks. They should not be pitch-forked into job without any training. This leads to ineffective functioning and improper procedure adoption. The old thinking that grade III and IV levels of public servants will develop their competency with the pace of time and experience through "trial and error" or by way of application of "thumb rule" is no longer relevant. It may lead to inculcation of inappropriate values and work culture. It also has inherent danger of waste of manpower and time. Systematic training is likely to provide opportunities to synthesize and enhance performance and competence. It may also help the employees in internalizing specific objectives of their own work and make them feel that they have a certain contribution to make to society. Besides, it will help in developing the spirit of cooperation with others in the transaction of business and right work ethics

In a rapidly changing environment, training has become still more relevant. It is perhaps one of the effective ways of preparing an individual to cope with the pace and magnitude of change. It also facilitates in achieving overall goal of performance improvement of individuals and groups working for or within an organization. Timely and need based training having emphasis on 'doing' rather than 'knowing' increases productivity, organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Therefore "training for all", as envisaged in the National Training Policy needs to be adopted in every organization. Provision of "Induction and in-service training" to all civil servants needs to be blended with in-situ training. It needs to be embedded in the personnel management system. Linking training with career progression as it is already in practice in few departments of government, will add glamour and importance to training.

To make training more purposeful and result oriented in government sector, there is a need to;

- Analyze performance problems of an individuals, groups or organizations arising out of the changed socio-economic and tecno-political changes;

- Develop mechanism for prompt response to groups and organizations in reviewing their training and non-training needs;

- Develop hardware, software and skill ware to cater to the large number of people and organization in solving their performance problems;

- Implement training as per the requirement Hence, delivery of need based training having choice for self-paced learning rather than forced learning;

- Hold periodically seminars/workshops/meetings to discuss priority and quality aspects of training;

- Manage a federated mechanism and strategy of training for all with an aim to improve "Efficiency and Public Good"; and

- Keep in mind that it is not sufficient to train a person solely for the present job but it should be directed to enabling individuals to perform their future work too.

Thus, training institutes need to be an integral part of the administrative reforms set up. Training institutes should be involved more and more in the design and development of need-based packages and should train the potential trainers amongst government functionaries who will in turn train the government employees. The concept of decentralized training will take root only when training functions are embedded in Government Departments. In such a scheme of things, the training institutes will play consultancy role in design, development and implementation of need-based training interventions.

The trainers of training institutes will be required to be equipped with the skill of "change-specialist" with emphasis on communication, negotiation and diagnostic skills. With an enlargement in the role of training institutes from training individuals to organizational effectiveness and playing a lead role in introducing reforms, the focus, priorities and methodologies of training will undergo substantial change. The traditional role of trainers generally restricted to providers of training will also undergo a change. The interface between organisations and training institutes will become more cohesive.

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REHABILITATING THE CHILD LABOUR

Saumitra Mohan*

It is believed that there are more children under the age of fourteen years in India than the entire population of the United States. Children under fourteen constitute around 3.6 per cent of the total labour force in India. Of these, nine out of every ten work for their own family enterprises in the countryside. Nearly 85 per cent are supposed to be engaged in traditional agricultural activities. Less than 9 per cent work in manufacturing, services and repair workshops. Only about 0.8 per cent work in factories.

Child labour is usually a natural consequence of a poor country afflicted by the sundry problems of underdevelopment. Government of India in cooperation with other state governments has been trying very hard for the eradication of child labour. National Child Labour Project (NCLP) is one of the important government interventions towards the realisation of this goal. Needless to say, the project has made significant difference in this regard.

Thousands of child labourers have been rescued and rehabilitated through the special schools run under the Project. These special schools run specially designed bridge courses so that these children can be suitably mainstreamed through consequent admission to formal schools. These children not only learn the three 'Rs' in the special schools, but also get some vocational training in the area of their choice. The children receive a monthly stipend of Rs.100 per month apart from getting regular nutritional and medical support.

Run by NGOs or local self government bodies, these schools have been doing reasonably well towards realisation of the Project objectives. Hundreds of thousands of children have been mainstreamed, but still there remains a lot which needs to be done to extirpate the malaise of child labour from our society for good.

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The practical experience in running the Project and the special schools across the country has brought forth many issues which need to be considered, if at all we wish to make a serious dent in this problem.

First thing which baffles one is the age cap of 14 for identifying the child labour. After all, what is the criterion whereby we need to confine our identification of child labour till the age of 14 only, something which is accepted internationally? Do we mean to say that the moment a child becomes 14, he ceases to deserve state attention and care? This is more so when we know that such a child deserves better nurturing to compensate for the poor family background and upbringing he has been getting.

If we stop state support at 14 only, then it is very much likely that the child would relapse to his previous fate. Stopping state support and care at 14 means that the child labourers shall always remain so and would never get out of the morass of an unflattering living standard. Hence, one believes and proposes that the age bar for the identification of the child labour be raised to 18. Consequently, all the relevant government support including monthly stipend, medical care and nutritional support should also continue until the child reaches the age of 18.

As per the extant norms, the stipend is supposed to be stopped once the child is mainstreamed into a formal school. That being the case, there remains no incentive for mainstreaming of the children as they or their parents don't wish to lose the financial benefit, hence children's academic performance gets negatively affected. So, one feels that the stipend should be continued even after the child is mainstreamed into the formal education system and the same should be continued till he or she reaches the age of 18.

After all, it is money that drives the poor parents to use their children as additional sources of income. So, some sort of pecuniary assistance should be provided and continued even after the child is withdrawn from the active employment and till he is completely mainstreamed.

Even though envisaged in the overall rehabilitation package, still the parents of the child labourers are not compulsorily entitled to get preferential treatment in allocation of different government benefits or goodies. One feels that there can be a general guideline in this respect so that there can be earmarked quota for such category of people as we already have with respect to SC/ST/OBC, war widows, ex-military personnel and the handicapped.

One another problem commonly faced regarding identification of the child labour relates to age determination. Whatever this project has done, at least,

it has generated enough awareness relating to the employment of child labour. Now, every one is aware that employing a child below 14 is an offence.

So, today when one goes about enforcing prohibition of employment of child labour, one is faced with the difficulty that the child himself/herself tells his/her age to be above 14 and the same is told by their employers/parents even though one knows for sure that the child is below 14.

But as there is no way to verify the same, one finds oneself helpless and handicapped to do anything about rehabilitation of such children. These children have not been to schools and their births are also not registered, so they manage to get an age certificate and proffer the same in support of their age which one is forced to accept for want of any other way to do the same.

One also feels that the exemption given to children working for their parents or in their family workshops/factories also needs to be withdrawn as the same defeats the very purpose of the Project. After all, a good number of such children are employed by their own parents and family members and as such, they start doing so from a very early age which has very negative implications for on their person including depriving them the unadulterated pleasures of an innocent childhood.

Again, there are some flaws in the ways in which the vocational training is supposed to be imparted in the Project-run special schools. As per present norms, while there is provision for the employment of vocational trainer, there is no separate allotment for the capital and recurring cost relating to these vocational training programmes, something without which there shall be difficulty in running these courses successfully.

So, there is also an urgent need to look into this aspect before we can expect to realise the true purpose and benefit of the vocational training. However, one also feels that a good portion of the recurring costs can be recovered if the products manufactured during the course of vocational training in these special schools are properly marketed and sold, at least, at break-even costs. But that depends on the specific Project, the range and quality of products manufactured and the ability of the Project personnel to be able to market the same.

Again, it has come to notice that the process of enforcement against the employment of child labour has been so designed that there has been very less enforcement in the field than expected otherwise. Because of sundry practical problems and the fact that the predominant majority of culprits employing child labour belongs to the poorer sections of the society, there is a general disinclination to arrest them or to penalise them.

Where the employers happen to be very well-off, they somehow manage to get away with the offence. It is here that we need to strike and ensure that the enforcement of the legal provisions of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act does take place so that the real objectives of the Act are realised.

Then, it has also been seen that many of the child labourers rescued are not immediately and suitably rehabilitated resulting in their relapse into child labour, something which should be strongly guarded against. Also, the amount of Rs. 20,000 for rehabilitation of every child labour is too meagre and needs an upward revision to be of any consequence. There has to be centrally designed rehabilitation package/scheme with better financial support, which could be suitably customised at the field level.

Then, it has also come to seen that many state governments hesitate to report more number of child labourers and recommend the requisite number of special schools to avoid attracting stigma of officially having larger number of child labourers as that reflects poorly on their developmental initiatives and performance. This aspect is very important and needs to be addressed urgently as in all this, it is the child labour which suffers, for whom the whole project is designed.

So, if less number of schools are recommended to hide the real picture, then there is also a problem of undertaking more enforcement activities as that would mean more child labourers in need of mainstreaming and rehabilitation, something which shall not be possible in absence of adequate number of special schools and for which, therefore, there does not remain much infrastructure and resources available.

There is not only a need for a renewed thrust towards tackling the problem of child labour, but there is also an imperative need towards making more financial allocation for the Project, not to speak of the need for certain conceptual clarification regarding identification of the child labour and revising certain aspects of the project design. Besides, more coordinated and synergised convergence is required to successfully eradicate child labour from this country.

WHO KILL THEIR DAUGHTERS MORE:
Insights from Census Data of Punjab

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Abstract

Girls in Punjab face a double dilemma: they are born in less numbers but die in more numbers. Altogether, more than one lakh girls might have gone 'missing' in Punjab during the last one decade on account of sex-selective abortions leading to fall in SRB, and additionally, about half of this number might have gone 'missing' on account of higher female mortality rates in the younger age groups. Regardless of the class, caste, religion, region or the income status, women in this state are increasingly going in for the sex determination tests and getting the female foetuses aborted. However, Sikhs, Non-SCs, literates /educated and rich are doing so at a much higher level/ faster pace than others.

Introduction

Sex composition of the human population is one of the basic demographic characteristics, which is extremely vital for any meaningful demographic analysis. Sex ratio[1] (SR) is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. Declining SR has grave implications, as it is an indicator of women's low status.

A significant feature of Punjab population is the preponderance of males over females. As per 2001 Census, out of a total population of 24.36 millions in the state, 12.99 million are males and 11.37 million females, resulting in an overall sex ratio (SR) of 876, which is significantly lower than the national average of 933. Although, the sex ratio of total population decreased by 6 points only during the decade 1991-2001, the sex ratio in the age group 0-6 (Child Sex Ratio) showed a decline of 77 points during this period. Decline in Child Sex Ratio[2] (CSR) in Punjab has been a cause of great concern.

It is believed that sex determination tests leading to increasing trend in sex-selective abortions/ female foeticide are responsible for this state of affair. In the last two decades, CSR has declined by 110 points. Table-1 gives the trends in SR, CSR and Sex Ratio at Birth[3] (SRB) in India and Punjab for the period 1981-2001. In Punjab, SRB has declined by 98 points during the last two decades.

There is lack of evidence on sex -selective abortions (SSAs) because most of the abortions are illegal and not reported. SSA manifests itself, however, in an altered sex ratio at birth (SRB), which in the absence of sex selection is about 950 (105 males per 100 females). According to United Nations, normal SRBs are found to lie between 103 and 106 males per 100 females for most societies. SRBs above 106 (below 943 females per 1000 males) suggest that pre-birth interventions are further reducing the likelihood of a female birth. The declining trend in SRB in Punjab in the past two decades as per various data sources like National Family Health Survey (NFHS), Sample Registration System (SRS), Civil Registration System (CRS), Special Fertility and Mortality Survey) (SFMS), Census and many micro studies etc. clearly point out that the altered SRB is the result of human interventions to prevent the birth of unwanted girl child by using the modern technology of sex selection, pre-birth sex determination and then aborting the foetus if it happens to be a female. The extremely low level of SRB of 833 in Punjab for the period 1984-98 as per NFHS-2 or 778 in 2000-02 as per SRS or 769 in 2001-03 as per CRS or 787 in 2000-01 as per census 2001 clearly show that Punjab's SRB is lowest not only in the country, but possibly in the entire world.

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[1] Conventionally, in India, the term 'sex ratio' is used to denote female to male ratio and is defined as number of females per 1000 males, while internationally it is denoted as male to female ratio. In this article, the term 'sex ratio' will be used to denote female to male ratio to conform to the Indian practice. However, as regards sex ratio at birth, both internationally as well as in India, the term is used as male to female ratio and is normally defined as number of males live births per 100 females live births. However, in this article, to enable easy comparison and avoid confusion, even sex ratio at birth would be expressed as number of females per 1000 males, and where ever required, corresponding figures in terms of males per 100 females would also be indicated.

[2] Number of girls per thousand boys in the age group 0-6 years.

[3] Number of female live births per 1000 male live births.

Table-1
Sex Ratio /Child Sex Ratio/Sex Ratio at Birth 1981-2001: India and Punjab

Census Year	Sex Ratio						Child Sex Ratio						Sex Ratio at Birth					
	India			Punjab			India			Punjab			India			Punjab		
	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U	T	R	U
1981	929	951	879	879	884	868	961			908	927	920	911	909	917	876	865	913
1991	927	938	894	882	888	868	945	948	935	875	878	866	900	898	908	857	856	861
2001	933	946	900	876	890	848	927	934	906	798	799	796	893	899	868	778	783	761

Source:SR and CSR- Census data of various years, SRB-SRS data various years (three years moving average)
Notes: T-Total. R-Rural, U-Urban

Not only the SRB is the lowest, sex differentials in mortality are highest in Punjab. As per NFHS, female NNMR are higher than male NNMR[4] by 10.2%, female PNMR[5] are higher than males PNMR by 77.8%, female IMR[6] are higher than male IMR by 31.2%, female CMR[7] are higher than males CMR by 303.4% and female U5MR[8] are higher than male U5MR by 57.8%. Even the SRS data show that in 2001, in Punjab, female IMR was higher than male IMR by 46.5% and female CMR was higher than male CMR by 42%. Hence, Girls in Punjab face a double dilemma: they are born in less numbers but die in more numbers. Altogether, more than one lakh girls might have gone 'missing' in Punjab during the last one decade on account of sex-selective abortions leading to fall in SRB, and additionally, about half of this number might have gone 'missing' on account of higher female mortality rates in the younger age groups.

For the first time, 2001 census collected data on children born in last one year by sex for different age groups of currently married women (CMW). This data can be used as a good indicator of sex ratio at birth and to get circumstantial evidence of extent of sex-selective abortions. Perusal of data in Table-2 shows that for the country as a whole, SR of children born in the last one year (CBLOY) (i.e. during the period March 1, 2000 to February 28, 2001) was 905. For Punjab, the SR of CBLOY is 787. This, when compared to CSR of 798 clearly point out that even in the last one year (from 2001 census)

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[4] Neo Natal Mortality Rate.
[5] Post Natal Mortality Rate.
[6] Infant Mortality Rate.
[7] Child Mortality Rate.
[8] Under Five Mortality Rate.

the SR has been falling, possibly due to increasing sex-selective abortions. Here it is interesting to note that age groups less than 15 years and 15-19 years have a much better SR of CBLOY (944 & 924 for India and 981 and 939 for Punjab). These two age groups have mainly 1st order and some 2nd order births and SSAs are rarely resorted to for 1st order births. Low SR of 15-19 years age group as compared to less than 15 years age group, which would have majority of births as 1st order births only, also show that even for 2nd order births in the age group 15-19 years, some people may be resorting to SSAs, especially those who want a two child family with at least one son. Further declines in the SR in the higher age groups further strengthens this apprehension of increasing SSAs at higher parity births For Punjab, SR shows a steep fall from 939 for age group 20-24 years to 822 for age group 25-29 years, then to 745 for age group 35-39 years, and 728 for age group 30-34 years. Then it starts rising to 750 for age group 35-39 years, 855 for 40-44 years, 884 for 45-49 years and 1157 for 50+ years. The higher age groups obviously have larger number of higher birth orders (3 and beyond even 6 and 7+) and there are people, who after achieving their desired number of sons, would continue child bearing to get a daughter and some of them even might resort to SSA of male child. Above unity SR of age group 45+ gives credence to this argument. This data and analysis will clearly demolish the argument of those who attribute the low SR of Punjab to genetically high propensity of Punjabi women to produce more males, as genetic propensity to produce more males would not change so dramatically in different age groups. The only explanation to this phenomenon is the human interventions under which people resort to SSAs to achieve their desired sex composition of family. People with desired family size of two children would like to have at least one son and those with a desired family size of 3+ may like to have at least one daughter also. The above analysis supports this line of argument.

Disaggregated Analysis of CSR/SRB

Regardless of the class, caste, religion, region or the income status, women in this state are increasingly going in for the sex determination tests and getting the female foetuses aborted. The husband and family cause this urge amongst women to destroy their own species. Greed has driven the doctors

and others in the medical profession to become active partners in committing the heinous crime of female foeticide. They may belong to a noble profession, but having originated from the same societal set up, do not see sex detection as an unethical use of technology but as merely facilitating a social need. Some people argue in favour of sex determination tests on grounds of people's right to decide their desired family size. Others say that the demand-supply law would ensure that the shortage of girls lead to their enhanced value in the society. The material prosperity of the state appears to have created more adverse conditions for females on account of the abuse of modern science and technology. In the paras that follow, a disaggregated analysis of CSR/SRB has been done to look for evidence as to which sections of the society in Punjab resorts to female foeticide more.

Table-2
SR of CBLOY by Different Groups and Age Groups of CMW: India and Punjab-2001

Age Groups	Total	SCs	Non-SCs	Hindus	Sikhs	Illiterates	Literates	Rural	Urban
India									
All ages	905	920	902	901	770	920	909	906	904
Less than 15	944	950	942	930	764	925	992	927	1043
15-19	924	933	922	923	929	923	932	922	936
20-24	898	912	895	896	796	905	904	896	906
25-29	883	900	880	878	724	899	893	883	882
30-34	892	908	888	885	713	908	889	895	878
35-39	917	931	914	911	751	926	910	919	906
40-44	964	968	963	962	853	963	968	962	972
45-49	1003	1019	1000	1002	873	1007	997	1007	988
50+	1322	1342	1318	1332	1215	1317	1346	1322	1318
Punjab									
All ages	787	845	757	808	770	845	749	786	791
Less than 15	981	964	990	1426	779	767	1167	831	1545
15-19	939	998	896	920	936	954	923	918	994
20-24	822	876	794	859	799	857	803	816	838
25-29	745	803	715	772	721	816	706	741	754
30-34	728	796	689	737	714	800	670	728	726
35-39	750	813	715	753	739	811	687	760	727
40-44	855	881	841	890	836	910	772	870	822
45-49	884	968	848	906	872	896	864	904	845
50+	1157	1304	1109	1091	1198	1168	1140	1199	1082

Source: Computed from Census of India 2001 data, fertility tables, F-series
Notes: CBLOY- Children born in the last one year, CMW-Currently married women, SC-Scheduled Caste

Region Specific Analysis

The level of SR and CSR in rural areas has always remained above the level in urban areas. During 1991-2001, SR increased by 2 points in rural areas, but declined by 20 points in urban areas. Since 1981, CSR has declined both in rural and urban areas. In rural areas, CSR declined by 79 points during 1991-01 and 49 points during 1981-91. In urban areas, CSR declined by 70 points during 1991-01, and by 54 points during 1981-91. During 1971-81, CSR had increased by 9 points in rural areas and 10 points in urban areas. However, analysis of SR of CBLOY shows that, overall, the rural SR has fallen below the levels in urban areas (786 vis a vis 791). For the age groups less than 15 years, 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years the SR is lower in rural areas. This points towards increased use of modern technology of ultrasound etc. for sex detection followed by SSAs by the rural population. This should act as a warning signal to the planners and administrators

There has been a historical consistency among various regions of Punjab with regard to SR. Malwa, which is characterised as a feudal region with late agricultural development, has the poorest SR. In contrast, Doaba[9] region has had the most favourable SR, always above the state average. The Majha region has had SRs hovering around the state average. Majha[10] Region has the lowest CSR of 789 while Doaba has the highest CSR of 805. CSR declined in all the three regions during 1991-2001; by 101 points in Doaba, 96 points in Majha and 76 points in Malwa[11]. Amongst districts, Fatehgarh Sahib has the lowest CSR of 766, while Firozpur has the highest CSR of 822. In fact, Fatehgarh Sahib district earned the dubious distinction of being the bottom most district in the country as regards CSR. Nine districts out of seventeen have CSR below 800. During the decade of 1991-2001, CSR has declined in all the 17 districts; the highest decline being in Fatehgarh Sahib district (108 points), followed by Patiala and Kapurthala districts (94 points); the lowest decline in CSR is reported by Moga (49) points. Out of ten bottom most districts in the country, seven are in Punjab, and remaining three in the neighbouring Haryana. Map-1 shows the changes in CSR during the period

[9] Doaba Region-Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Jalandhar & Nawanshahr Districts
[10] Majha Region Gurdaspur & Amritsar Districts
[11] Malwa Region Rest of the 11 Districts

1991-01 at the Tehsil level in various regions of the state. The shift of colour for almost all the Tehsils from yellow/green to light red/dark red during the decade 1991-01 perhaps aptly reflects the flow of blood of the unborn daughters of Punjab over its fields which once witnessed the Green Revolution.

Religion specific Analysis

Punjab has two major religious communities viz. Sikhs and Hindus. As per 2001 census, Sikhs constitute 59.9% of Punjab's population, while Hindus

Figure - 1 : SR of CBLOY 2001 : Punjab Hindus and Punjab Sikhs

Figure - 2 : SR of CBLOY 2001 : Punjab SCs and Punjab Non SCs

constitute 36.9%. For the country as a whole, Sikhs have the lowest SR (893), as against SR of 1009 of Christians, followed by Buddhists (953), Jains (940), Muslims (936), Hindus (931) and all India average of 933. As regards CSR also, Sikhs have the lowest CSR in the country (786), while Christians have the highest (964), followed by Muslims (950), Buddhists (942), Hindus (925), and Jains (870), the all India figure being 927. In Punjab, Sikhs have a better SR (897) than Hindus (846). But when it comes to CSR, Sikhs have a CSR of 780 as compared to 821 of Hindus, with the state level figure being 798. Hence amongst the two major religious communities of Punjab, viz. Hindus and Sikhs, the former is responsible for the decline in overall SR of Punjab (which could partially be attributed to sex selective migration of labour from states like Bihar, UP etc. to Punjab), while the latter has helped in improving it. However, when it comes to CSR Sikhs have a much lower level than Hindus. Even the analysis of SR of CBLOY (Table-1, Figure-1) clearly shows a much lower SR for Sikhs for all ages of currently married women (CMW), less than 15 years, 20-24 years, 25-29 years, 30-34 years, 35-39 years. Overall, SR of CBLOY for Sikhs is 770 and for Hindus 808. For almost all age groups, SR of Sikhs is lower than Hindus. The gap between the two is highest for the age group less than 15 years. This points towards the fact that prevalence of SSAs is much higher amongst Sikhs than Hindus in Punjab. What else can explain the variations in the CSR/SRB between Sikhs and Hindus, who in Punjab are exposed to otherwise similar situations in terms of health facilities, socio-economic and cultural conditions etc. Sikh population has recorded the lowest decadal growth rate of 16.9% during 1999-01 and has also shown declining trend in growth since 1961-71. In Punjab, the percentage of population in the age group 0-6 is 12.8% for Sikhs, 13.2% for Hindus and 16.3% for Muslims. Hence, this indicator, which provides a proxy estimate of the relative position of fertility among different religious communities, shows that with the decrease in family size of Sikh population, coupled with no corresponding decrease in the preference for sons, the people of this religious community are increasingly resorting to the practice of sex selective abortions to achieve their preferred family composition with at least one son.

Caste and CSR/SRB

Punjab is having one of the highest percentage of scheduled caste (SC) population to the total population, 28.6% as per 200l census, against a
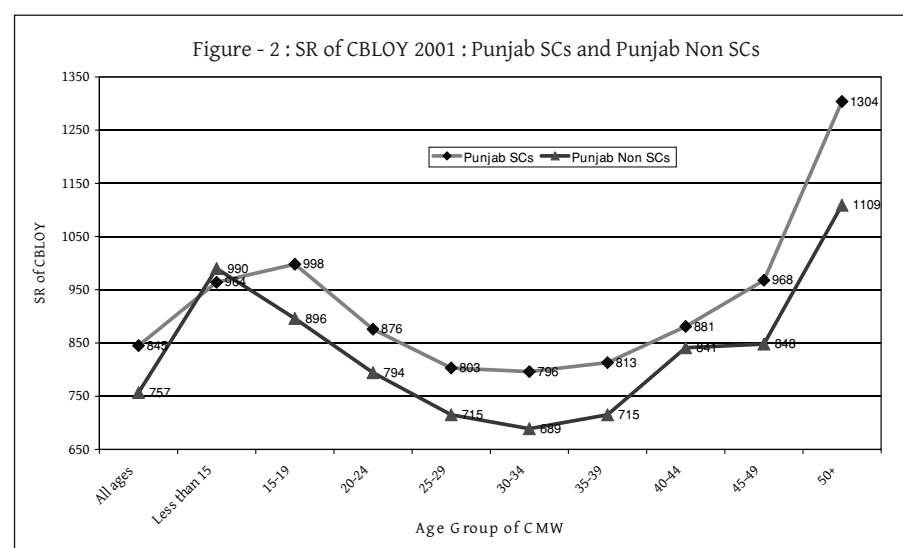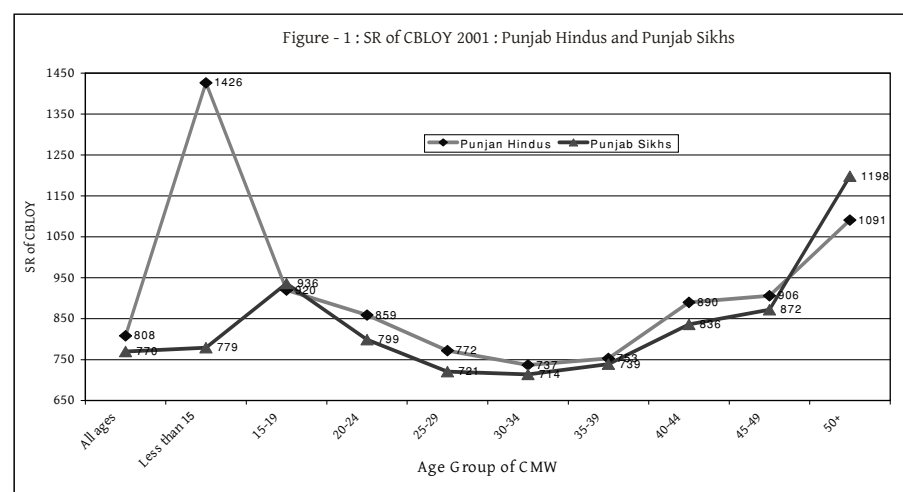
national figure of 16.2% only. For the country as a whole, SCs have a marginally better SR (936) as compared to Non SC population (932) and national average (933). In Punjab, SCs have a much better SR (892) as compared to Non-SCs (869) and state average (876). It is interesting to note that as per the previous three censuses since 1971, SC's SR was always less than Non SCs. It was for the first time in 2001 that SCs showed a better SR than Non SCs. SR of SCs have risen consistently since 1971, at a much higher rate than Non SCs, including the decade 1991-2001, during which the SR of Non SCs have shown a decline. As regards, CSR again SCs have a much higher CSR (861) as compared to Non SCs (767) and state average (798). During the decade 1991-2001, CSR of SCs has declined by 35 points, against a decline of 97 points amongst Non SCs and 77 points for the state as whole. Even the analysis of SR of CBLOY (Table-1, Figure-2) shows that SCs have better SR of CBLOY than Non-SCs (845 for SCs vis-à-vis 757 for Non-SCs). For the age group 15-19 years of CMW, SCs have SR of 998 against 896 for Non-SCs, for age group of 20-24, SCs SR is 876 as against 794 for Non-SCs, age group of 25-29, SCs SR is 803 and Non-SCs 715, age group of 30-34 years SCs 813, Non-SCs 715 and so on. This analysis shows that Non-SCs are resorting to SSAs more than SCs.

Figure-1: SR of CBLOY 2001: Punjab Illiterates and Punjab Literates
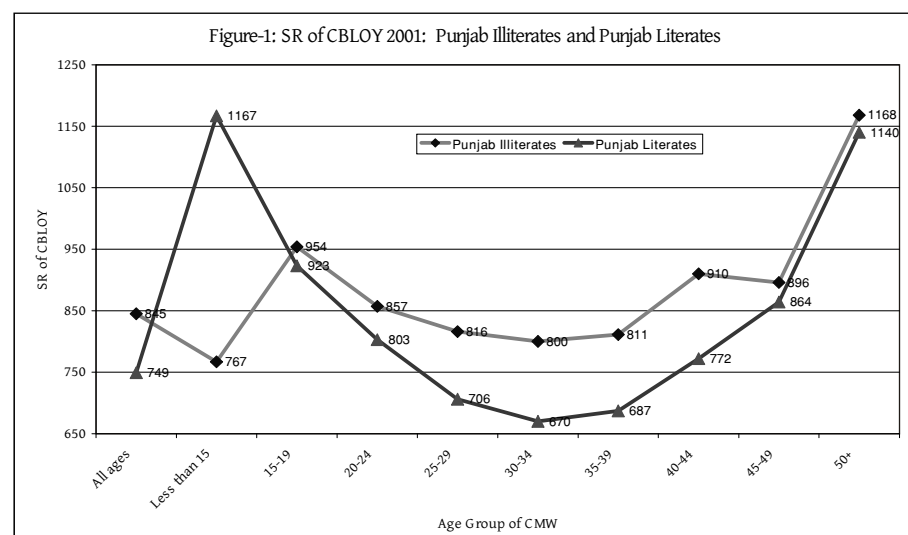
Literacy Levels and CSR/SRB

During the period 1981-2001, literacy levels, including the female literacy levels have risen in the country as well as in Punjab. But CSR has declined in the country as well as Punjab during this period. Analysis of data of SR of CBLOY for Punjab (Table-1 and Figure-3) show that overall, SR of illiterates is 845 vis-à-vis 749 of literates. Except for the age group less than 15 years, SR of illiterates is higher than that of literates. Even with the rise in the educational standards, the SR of CBLOY does not show much improvement. Hence, it appears that in Punjab literates/educated class are resorting to SSAs more than illiterates; the increase in literacy levels or even that of female literacy levels had no positive impact on the CSR.

Prosperity and CSR/SRB

The association between sex ratios and prosperity has been a subject matter of some debate. On one hand, there is the 'prosperity optimism' that prosperity may improve women's lot within the household and the society.

Table-3
SR and CSR by MPCE classes-50th, 55th and 61st rounds

NSSO Round	R/U	MPCE Class	Punjab		India	
			SR	CSR	SR	CSR
61st	R	Rs.1955 & above	842	710	914	838
		Below Rs.1155	927	1267	999	911
		All classes	897	833	953	897
	U	Rs.2540 & above	726	646	867	838
		Below Rs.2540	900	1066	939	908
		All classes	823	814	909	883
55th	R	Above Rs.950	785	541	858	804
		Upto Rs.950	996	1130	979	910
		All classes	908	838	941	900
	U	Above Rs.1925	825	278	837	819
		Upto Rs.1925	909	905	926	899
		All classes	832	803	900	883
50th	R	Above Rs.560	912	760	785	816
		Upto Rs.560	1010	789	958	907
		All classes	933	844	897	894
	U	Above Rs.1055	861	663	806	722
		Upto Rs.1055	989	908	932	925
		All classes	974	887	908	903

Source: Computed from NSSO data-50th, 55th and 61st rounds
Notes: T-Total. R-Rural, U-Urban, SR-Sex ratio, CSR-Child Sex ratio, MPCE-Monthly per capita consumption expenditure

You do not need to discriminate if there is enough for everyone. On the other hand, there is the stark reality of many regressive practices like dowry, murders or torture associated with prosperity. Many scholars have raised the issue of richer states having a low SR. Internationally more developed countries/regions have a much better sex ratio, always above unity; the less developed countries have a sex ratio below unity. In India, all the states that have shown large declines in CSR between 1991-01, viz. Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chandigarh and Delhi, are economically well developed.

Punjab with only 1.5% of geographical area of the country and 2.5% of country's population has one of the highest per capita income, but the worst sex ratio and child sex ratios. It produces about 20% of wheat, 9% of rice and 14% of cotton in the country. It is also 1st in average per hectare yield of rice, wheat and cotton. Punjab has earned the rare distinction of being called the "food basket of the whole country" and the "granary of India". It has been contributing 40-50% of rice and 60-70% of wheat to the central pool for the last about two decades. It has one of the highest per capita income in the country, highest per capita energy consumption, with 100% rural electrification and 98.8% roads connectivity to villages.

As Census does not provide data on income levels/prosperity status, in this section, NSS[12] data of 50th (1993-94), 55th (1999-2000) and 61st (2004-05) rounds (the 5th, 6th and 7th quinquennial rounds) on consumer expenditure has been used to analyse the relationship between economic well-being as indicated by levels of consumer expenditure and sex ratio (Table-3). Based on the indicators of household consumer expenditure, which reflects the standard of living and general well being of the population quite reasonably well, the states of Punjab and Haryana have very high standard of living and well being and low levels of poverty, but these are the states worst affected in terms of sex ratio and CSR. The same holds true of states like Gujarat and Maharashtra, which have shown sharp decline in the CSR. On the other hand, poorer states like Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, MP etc. have shown better levels of SR and CSR.

As per 61st round, the highest MPCE[13] class is Rs.1155 and more in rural areas and Rs.2540 in urban areas. For the country as a whole, the child sex ratio for all classes was 897. As against this, the CSR for the households in the MPCE classes Rs.1155 and above was 838 while for the households below this class was 911. Similarly, in Punjab, CSR for all classes was 833. Against this, CSR for households with MPCE Rs.1155 and above was 710. While for household below this class was 1267. Similarly, in urban areas, for India, CSR for all classes was 883 while for MPCE Rs.2540 and above it was 838 and for households below this class, it was 908. For Punjab, CSR for all classes was 814. As against this, CSR for households with MPCE Rs.2540 and above was 646 while for households below this class was 1066.

Similarly as per 55th round, in rural areas, for Punjab, overall CSR was 838 while for households for MPCE above 950, it was 541, and for households below this class it was 1130. In urban areas, overall CSR was 803 while for households in MPCE class above Rs.1925 it was 278 and for households below this MPCE class it was 905. As per 50th round, in the rural areas, in Punjab, overall CSR was 844. For households for MPCE above 560, it was 760 and for household below this MPCE class, it was 789. In urban areas overall CSR was 887, while for households in MPCE class above Rs.1055 it was 663 and for households below the MPCE class, it was 908.

The above analyses with regard to India and Punjab clearly show that rich households have much lower child sex ratio when compared to poor households. By and large, similar results are noticed for other states and also for overall sex ratio. This clearly establishes that prosperity has an adverse impact on the overall sex ratio and child sex ratio.

Conclusions

The above analysis shows that all the sections of society in Punjab, irrespective of religion, region, class, caste, income, status etc. are increasingly resorting to sex selective abortions. However, Sikhs, Non-SCs, literates/educated and rich are doing so at a much higher level/faster pace than others. Urgent state and societal interventions are required to stop this menace; otherwise it would be too late. Financial incentives based schemes may not bring any concrete results. Religious advocacy has also not worked,

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[12]National Sample Survey

[13]Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure

the 'Hukumnama'[14] issued by the 'Akal Takht'[15] immediately after the provisional results of 2001 census hardly had any impact on the Sikh masses.

Problem like female foeticide/sex selective abortions requires multi-pronged strategy/solutions. No single solution would work alone. Centuries old social evils cannot be eradicated in one stroke. Such things require legal, political, social and financial commitment right from grass-root level. PCPNDT[16] Act may not be an effective instrument in checking female foeticide as ultrasound centers could get away with sex determination on the pretext of diagnostic purposes only a mass movement could end the menace. It requires concerted efforts to change the mindset of the people towards girl child. We need to kill the circumstances that force the mothers to kill the unborn girl child under family pressure. To eliminate the prenatal sex-selection and consequent termination of human life is a herculean task. But big problems require big solutions.

Map-1

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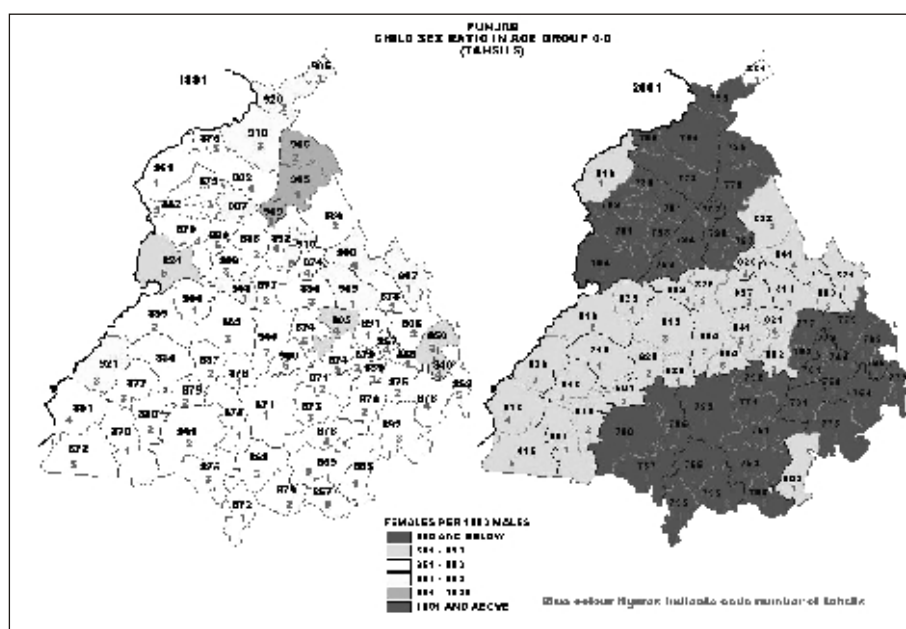
[14] Edict a formal order or command
[15] The highest religious and temporal seat of Sikhs
[16] The Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act

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REVAMPING THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN HARYANA : A Discourse Analysis

Dr. Raj Kumar Siwach*

The different parts of the country have witnessed a growing public outcry against the system of public administration and the public servants are being severely criticized for their irresponsiveness, insensitivity and lackluster performance to deliver services in the fields of law and order, transport, health, education, social sector, urban management and environment. The citizens' simmering rage has at times compelled them not only to hold officials hostage but also committing suicides for justice and fair treatment. That is why they are sometimes called ''millstone around the neck of citizens'' and ''vultures feasting on unfortunate populace.'' The former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi in this context observed: "The experiences of the vast majority of our people at the grassroots has been that the interface between the public and the administration is unresponsive, inefficient unsympathetic, often callous, sometimes even cruel to those whom they are meant to serve.'' To address these pathologies plaguing governance, reform initiative has become sine qua non.

The first ever exercise of the Haryana Administrative Reforms Commission (HARC) submitting its report on District Administration, therefore, needs to be examined vigorously. The report contains 56 recommendations on wide ranging issues affecting the cutting edge of administration. The basic approach is based on entrepreneurship and market model of governance.[1]

Territorial Restructuring of District Administration

Taking the cue from Delimitation Commission, the HARC (para 7.1) has recommended that Haryana should have 15 districts (comprising 6 complete Assembly Constituencies-ACs, with three adjoining districts constituency of compete Parliamentary Constituencies-PCs) Each district should have 3 sub-divisions each (comprising 2 complete ACs) which in turn, should have 2 tehsils comprising one AC each. The Tehsil being basic unit of administration with geographical continuity should be named after the name of respective AC, irrespective of its headquarter. It should be grouped into four heads-group A (purely urban), group B (predominantly urban), group C (significantly urban) and Group 'D' (predominantly or purely rural). Each group represents 5, 7, 12 and 66 ACs, respectively. For the reorganized Tehsil, one of the principal considerations should be balancing the population and to the extent possible segregating the rural and urban areas. There is no need to have sub-Tehsil and depending upon the need, it should either be upgraded as Tehsil or abolished altogether. Every tehsil should be divided into Kanoongo Circles (KCs), further into Patwar Circles (PCs). The proposed restructuring would cause minor adjustments in the Faridabad and Palwal districts. Similarly, the Police Stations (except the GRP and Gurgaon Commissionerate) falling under group 'A' and 'B' Tehsils should be sub-divided into 3 Police Stations (PSs) each by suitably carving them out so the population assigned to all three is nearly balanced. The geographical extent of group 'C' Tehsil should have one rural and two urban PSs, each with rural area falling completely within the jurisdiction of one PC. The group 'D' Tehsils should be sub-divided into 2 PSs each, taking the name and being geographically exactly co-terminus with the respective KC of Tehsil.

The proposed restructing envisages carving out 15 districts, 45 sub-divisions, 90 tehsils, 180 KCs and 1800 PCs, out of present 21 districts, 47 sub-divisions, 70 tehsils, 47 sub-tehsils, 119 blocks and 6764 villages. This recommendation, by and large, has wider political and administrative ramifications as the criterion of electoral calculation is neither feasible nor practical. Even at the national level, there is no proportional congruity between the number of existing districts and tehsils and number of ACs. Even the number of ACs in all states do not correspond with tehsils. In West Bengal and Bihar, no Tehsil exists at all. Thus, instead of topographical boundaries, the administrative convenience, decentralization and efficiency in delivery of services and citizens' satisfaction should be the main criteria. Not the optimum size, but whatever can be administered best is the best.

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[1] The report on District Administration contains 7 chapters, 56 recommendations and two annexure comprising 258 pages.

Reengineering Criminal Justice System

While expressing the concern over poor performance in the criminal justice system, the Commission, inter alia, ascribed it to lack of mutual institutional coordination between the Investigation Officers (IOs) and the Public Prosecutors (PPs), leading to erroneous basic data concerning registration of FIRs, placing challans before the court, rate of convictions and acquittals (para 5.7.1). The HARC, so, recommends that at the district level there should be a separate monitoring committee on Security, Investigation Prosecution and Law and Order comprising DC, SP and District Attorney to evaluate the professional success and failure rates of individual IOs and PPs and to take remedial steps accordingly (para 5.7.2).

But this arrangement will not be sufficient and the Commission in its forthcoming report on Police and Prosecution, should seriously consider other issues of police reforms. These include compulsory and immediate registration of FIRs, complete functional autonomy of the police, special drive for the recruitment of police officials and judges, installation of CCTV cameras in the police station, separation of investigation and law and order wings, upgrading professional capabilities of investigators, modernization of forensic labs and fixed tenure of the IOs, SHOs, SPs. To enquire into the misconduct and abuse of powers by the police, District Police Complaint Authority and District Police Performance and Accountability Commission are needed forthwith.

In spite of the plethora of Police Reforms Commissions, Supreme Court's directives and the PM's call, no one is seriously interested in moulding the police into persona grata of the masses. The crux of the criminalization, as per the Vohra Committee, is the organized nexus between the politicians, bureaucrats and criminals. The recently held conclave at the Panipat organized by the Sangh Pariwar, in the presence of Senior BJP leaders, offering the protection to Hindu monks allegedly involved in the Malegaon blasts hint towards such interplay.

Appointment criteria for District Officials

The Report also contains a career planning for the appointment of the DC and SP. For instance, the appointment of DC, the officer should have experience of various assignments consecutively as minimum 9 years of service or equivalent in IAS, meaning Junior Administrative Grade; 2 years as SDM or similar experience in Finance Department or Chief Secretary's office; ADC for at least for two years, one year as Administrator HUDA / Commissioner Municipal Corporation, Registrar of Universities, HoD or MD in Public Sector Undertakings. For the larger 10 districts, with population of a million plus, the post of District Commissioner in the Super Time Scale should be created (para 4.11.4)

Redesigning Public Grievances Redressal Mechanisms

A visit to the offices at the grassroots level reveals that the people are thronging there to get power, water, health-care, education and PDS stuff. Their frequent interactions with patwari, police constable, school teacher, health worker, daroga, linesmen and PWD (JE) present the real face of the government. But their grievances are not handed properly. On this issue, HARC recommends that the existing Public Relations and Grievance Committee headed by the minister and represented by all the MLAs, besides others, should be discontinued by substituting two different committees, one of them being the District Planning Management Council.

It should have powers to summon any paid employee in the domain of the State Government, save constitutional authorities, to recommend disciplinary actions for committing error in performing functions or has been prima facie guilty of incapacity, misbehaviour, negligence, breach of order; examining all governmental record, approving citizens' charter; drawing code of conduct; outsourcing under PPP mode and authorizing re appropriation upto prescribed limit for projects concerning local district level. The HARC, also laid down broad parameters for more structured and enabled system to implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate complaints received in the offices of DC, SP and SDM to be reviewed by the Divisional Commissioner. The ACRs of DCs, SPs and SDMs and the below officers should record a column on responsiveness to public grievances and redressal thereof (para 4.10.2). But this, in my view should be supplemented by more powers and immediate enactment of rules for the Lokayukta and the culture of openness under the RTI regime. An effective system of public grievances clamours for radical transformation in the mindset of governing elites whose thresholds receive groveling supplicants with folded hands holding chits.

Lessening the workload of DC

Today, the DC, in the words of Ramsay McDonald, acts as tortoise which supports the elephant upon which rests the Government of India. In Haryana, besides performing basic functions, he is preoccupied with steering around 100 committees in the District. The HARC recommended their regrouping of these committees into District Agriculture, Development and Social Welfare Committee, District Health and Social Welfare Committee, District General Coordination Committee and District Law and Order Coordination Committee. The District Development and Panchayat Officer (DDPO) should act as the umbrella agency within the office of DC looking after the delivery of welfare services, including supervising all categories of pensions. Ruling out the possibility of creating more posts of ADCs, it recommended the posts of Cluster Coordinators by synchronizing of the activities of the 68 departments and 38 PSUs into three clusters (para 4.8.3) under overall control of the DC. The Cluster Coordinators should be suitably enabled to take up the coordination and close supervision of the constituents of the district. But the Commission, in this direction, has missed the opportunity to hive off developmental functions to the panchayats.

The politics of frequent transfers

The neutrally and anonymity of the public servants are dyed in the politics of posting and transfers, treating them as 'shuttle-cocks'' to batter around frequently on political-caste, monetary and other extraneous considerations. Not on the basis of aptitude, past experiences and public spirit but on the basis of willingness to carry out the biddings of the politicians, they are transferred. The PM also wrote a letter to all CMs exhorting them to ensure stability of tenure of key officials to maintain law and order and to accelerate the development process because the mindless transfers have a debilitating impact not only their performance and morale but also on the process of governance. The HARC, therefore has rightly reflected this concern and recommended that the government should fix reasonable tenure for all district level officers, without ambiguity, mentioning it is the posting orders. Premature transfer should be allowed only in the cases of promotion, incapacity, misbehavior disciplinary actions, criminal proceedings and prestigious assignments responding to emergencies. Extension, if public interest demands, can be allowed. The

urgency to transfer before fixed tenure, if needed, should be recorded on the file with sufficient reasons, a copy of which should be available to any member of the public under the RTI Act. The premature transferred employee, save above cited reasons, should be paid one month salary as disturbance allowance (para 7.1.12)

Performance Appraisal and Specialized skills for District Officials

The HARC also felt the strong need to introduce target oriented performance and appraisal systems with consequent changes in ACR formats, wherein, Quarterly Self Appraisal Report showing self fixed targets and priorities of the heads of the offices to be shared amongst the officer concerned, immediate controlling officer and the DC on the last day of the months of April, July, October and January positively. The existing columns in the ACR formats should be substituted by incorporating the information on achievements in the departmental prefixed targets, promptness in redressal of public grievances, courteous with public and public representatives and integrity (para 4.14.2).

In the wake of challenges posed by globalization, IT, economic growth and social justice, the HARC felt the need of proper orientation and training of DC to make him 'highly mature and shrewd manager of contradictions'. Not only DC but all rank and file employees need job specific training for efficiently handling the assigned tasks. Experience has shown that the assistant posted at the establishment section doesn't know Civil Service Rules and the accountant is not well versed in the Account Rules. Retired persons, as resources persons, can be asked to impart them job specific trainings. The trainings should also be linked to promotions.

On the training and specialization front, we lack in-house think tanks as instrumentalities of governance to assess the bottlenecks in the implementation and future needs to design the public policy. In the USA, France, Australia and Sweden the technical competence and specialization of high order is promoted. In China the civil servants are sacked for failing efficiency level but here the dead woods are enjoying the benefits of politicians' patronage and the cushion of constitutional provision under article 311. They should learn the best innovative practices like the Beat Officer System of Trichy Community Policing (Tamilnadu), Chintan Shivars

and Nirmal Mission (Gujarat), Ashrya (Kerala), Bhoomi (Karnatka), Lokvani (U.P.), e-Sewa (Andhra Pradesh) and Online School System (New Delhi).

The faculty and infrastructural facilities at the training institutes also, besides setting up of training cells in each department and institute of urban management, need to be upgraded.

In addition to above mentioned, the HARC has also taken up below mentioned administrative concerns confronting the performance and working of district administration in the state.

- Setting up of Unified Disaster Management Force to respond emergencies and calamities.

- Common pool of group C and Group D employees and need based deployment.

- Mandatory display of visiting hours, no meeting days, telephone numbers of immediate superior authority and complaint box outside every public office.

- Restructuring revenue courts and strengthening the registration of documents.

- One time inventory of all government properties in a separate register to check the process of unauthorized encroachments.

- Remodelling of application forms and preparation of Citizen Biometric Data Bank.

- Unified land acquisition officers in the district to supervise land disputes.

- A close coordination between HUDA, HSIDC and Municipalities to develop infrastructural facilities in the cities to provide essential public utilities.

- Digitalization of land records

- Facilitating dissemination of information and rationalizing the application forms for citizen centric services through dedicated networks of information kiosks.

- Building of multi-storey residences for government officers.

- Inculcating the ethics of courtesy, politeness and promptness while dealing with the public and decent facilities for visitors.

- Curbing on playing land speakers, DJs during odd hours.

- Joint interactive seminars for public servants, public representatives and NGOs

- Holding DCs and SPs jointly responsible in cases of communal disturbances and caste riots.

- Conducting post-mortems after sunset

- Exploring the services to be outsourced for public interest.

An Ombudsman to address the frivolous complaints against government employees

- Curing the practice deploying employees as personal retainers.

- Transparency in openness in all the indents of the governmental purchases.

- Uniform entry level qualifications for group employees.

Reforming the recruitment process and identification of genuine beneficiaries : A missed opportunity.

The commission has not touched the process of the mode of the entry of the government employees except urging the need to redesign a uniform multi-skilled qualification for all ministerial inductions at group C non-technical level of posts. Hence, there is a crying need to reform the recruitment process because the Public Service Commissions of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and Punjab have perverted as money minting machines. Politicians of the all colours perceive the recruitment to various posts under the government as lucrative business reaping the rich dividends from the recommended candidates, who happened to be their supporters, workers or relatives. The competitive examinations and interviews have become mere formalities as the merit is inherited, acquired or purchased by links and luxmi. A rigorous study analyzing constituency wise proportional strength of the staff recruited, can establish the apparent existence of rotational merit remotely operated by the powers that be. Few people noticed it, but along with powers of posting and promotion, is only the breeding ground for politicization of civil services in India.

In Haryana much hyped hue and cry was raised over recent BPL survey because the contradictions in official poverty line do not capture the cost of basic necessities, particularly non-food components such as health and education. At the implementation level the BPL beneficiaries become the victim of corruption, pilferage and manipulation.

The widespread administrative culture : An impediment to reforms

The ecology of the administration under which its operations are conducted, makes it very clear that not rules and regulations but the rapport and relations with the official have considerable influence to derive benefits out of official transactions. Those who have slight of hand to maneuver the ruling elites, either by sycophancy or by offering benefits, have always been successful in getting the lion's share in employment, posting, transfers, promotion, post retirement benefits and other public entitlements. They are, sometimes, described as sycophants, power-brokers, coteries or courtiers roaming in the power corridors. They, in collusion with some vested interests in politics and administration, act as stumbling blocks to reforms strategies, taking them as a challenge to their age old hegemony of powers, prestige and status.

No doubt, the initiatives undertaken to reform the administration revolve round 'responsiveness' and 'openness' which elude at the stage of implementation as antitheses to the 'power' and 'discretion' deeply entrenched in the system of governance. No body wants to be 'responsible' but everybody expresses it glibly. A culture of brazen non-accountability is widespread everywhere. The crusade against the corrupt and insensitive governance launched by honest individuals, the media and the judiciary shall not be successful unless supported by committed youths under the dynamic leadership of honest and patriotic intellectuals. But, be cautious. The power holders, every time, shall topple down the reforms under the garb of ''voodoo politics'' wherein the *''aam admi''* plays the role of musk-melon which ultimately has to be chopped off whether it is under the knife or above the knife.

ESCOLA QUE VALE BRAZIL
A Program of Center for Education and Development of Community Action (CEDAC) funded by Vale Foundation the CSR arm of Vale Corporation

S. Giridhar and Dileep Ranjekar*

Abstract

This article is based on the visit by S Giridhar and Dileep Ranjekar of Azim Premji Foundation to the Escola que Vale program, a joint initiative of the NGO CEDAC and funding organization Vale Foundation in Para district in North East Brazil. The visit was the result of a meeting that at the "Education Think Tank" for Global Leaders organised by the Harvard Business School and Harvard Graduate School of Education in March 2009. Prof. Fernando Reimers of Harvard University recommended that a visit to Escola que Vale program would provide valuable insights that could have application in India, especially as there are strong similarities in the demographic and developmental status of the two countries. Effectiveness of such programs greatly depends on the extent of government support. Therefore role model schools were visited in Paragominas, where the municipality mayor has been totally supportive and then visited schools in a neighbouring municipality where the local government was not cooperative. We could contrast, compare and get a more rounded understanding of the challenges that such programs face on the ground.

Brazil : Brief overview and comparisons with India

It is often said that Brazil and India are comparable: both are developing countries and the Goldman Sachs report of 2002 states that Brazil and India will be economic superpowers by 2020. There are supposedly a lot of similarities in the education scenario. We briefly present certain critical facts and comparisons below:

- Brazil occupies nearly half of South America. Portuguese is the national language spoken across the entire nation. All the surrounding countries such as Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia etc speak Spanish.

- After the abolition of slavery in 1888, the country became a republic and after much churning made significant strides from 1970 to becoming more democratic.

- A multi ethnic diverse country, comprising the original inhabitants (called indigenous people), the descendants of Africans who had been brought as slaves, Portuguese, Hispanic, a strong Japanese community etc. From what we saw they are all well integrated and seem completely comfortable. Brazil boasts of "race of Brazilians" a successful amalgam of black, Indian and European strains.

- World's tenth largest economy. However there is deep and wide spread inequality; stark difference in the economic conditions of people: southern Brazil and the major cities (Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro) seem prosperous while the large population of people in central and north Brazil is not well off. Hence wealth is heavily skewed richest 20% holds 60% of wealth and 20% of population controls 88% of land.

- One Brazilian Real = Rs. 27; we guess that Brazil price parity ratio would be 4 times India.

- Interestingly there are significant parts of the country especially in the Amazon region which are designated as "indigenous tribe areas" where the laws of the land are not applicable. These tribes still live by their own rules and mores and perhaps may be comparable to the situation in our Andamans.

- People are extremely warm, open, forthcoming and friendly in this they are like Indians. We had personal experience of such warmth not merely from our hosts but also strangers.

- There is definite discipline on the roads, and civic amenities appear well organized.

- Although agriculture is very important, Brazil is also industrialized and has vast mineral wealth including some of the finest iron ore resources as well as coal, uranium, platinum and industrial diamonds.

- Over 95% people are Christians and Roman Catholicism is predominant.

- They are untouched by the fear of terrorism and are leading pretty relaxed lives. For example, we could easily meet and talk to one of their World Cup soccer stars in a café in Rio something unthinkable in India with our cricketers. They can lose to any country but not to Argentina in football.

- There are just two seasons: Monsoon and summer (when it is not raining it is summer). The weather is somewhat like coastal India in South Brazil warm and humid. North Brazil is close to Equator and the entire Amazon rain forest belt is one of the world's most unique environments. Given this tropical situation, North and Central Brazil produces excellent fruits mangoes, guava, papaya, melons etc such as we get in India.

- Brazil is often referred to as "Bel - India" a portion of the country resembles Belgium and the other resembles India.

- Rio has just been selected to host the 2016 Olympics. We are struggling to ensure we will host Commonwealth Games successfully!

- Brazil has one sixth of India's population and thrice our land area. We found no standing passengers in buses on Friday evening. Over past thirty years the views on population have gone cyclical. From looking at huge population and population density as a liability to looking at this as a huge resource and opportunity to recently again viewing large populations as a disadvantage.

A comparison of key socioeconomic indicators[1]:

Indicators	India	Brazil
Total area (land + water)	3.3 Million km^2 (90% is land)	8.5 Million km^2 (99% is land)
Total population, 2007	1169 million	192 million
Population 2007, under 18	447 million	63 million
Population density	364.4/km^2	22/km^2
Under-5 mortality rate, 2007	72	22
Infant mortality rate (under 1), 2007	54	20
Life expectancy at birth (years), 2007	64	72
% of infants with low birth weight, 20002007*	28	8

[1] Data refer to the most recent year available during the period specified in the column heading.

% of under-fives suffering from moderate ; & severe underweight	43	4
Maternal mortality ratio, 2005	450	110
Estimated number of people (all ages) living with HIV, 2007	2. 4 million	0.7 million
GNI per capita (US$), 2007	950	5910
GDP per capita average annual growth rate (%), 1990-2007	4.5	1.2
% of population below intl. poverty line of US$1.25 per day, 2005	42	8
% of central government expenditure allocated to defence	14	3
% of central government expenditure allocated to education	4	6
% of central government expenditure allocated to health	2	6
Total adult literacy rate (%)	66	91
Adult literacy rate: females as a % of males	71	101
Primary school net enrolment/ attendance (%)	83	94
Enrolment and attendance ratios: females as a % of males Net primary school enrolled	96	102
Child labour %; (514 years)	12	6
% of population urbanized 2007	29	85
Number per 100 population 2006, Internet users	11	23
% of population using improved drinking-water sources, 2006	89	91
% of population using improved sanitation facilities, 2006	28	77
Human Development Index Rank, 2008 (out of 177 countries)	132	70
Corruption Perception Index Rank, 2008 (out of 180 countries)	85	80

Brazil Education - Snap shot

Number of states and municipalities:	26 states and 5561 municipalities within these states
Number of Primary Schools	1, 65, 803 government and 32.594 private schools
Number of High Schools	17576 government and 6690
Number of children enrolled in primary schools	15 million in classes 1-5; 12 million in classes 5-8
Number of children enrolled in high schools	7.3 million

Source: IBGE (www.ibge.gov.br/english), Brazilian Statistics Institute Official, and the Ministry of Education (www.mec.gov.br)

The education sector in Brazil is ripe for reform and innovation. In such a large and diverse country, the system varies widely, producing some of the top professionals, while many of its students leave primary school with only the most basic literacy skills (Soares, 2003). An ongoing dialogue about the quality of education has been stirred in Brazil thanks to the institution of international comparative testing. Many organizations are rising to meet the demand for an improved education system. (Marianne Montalvo, April 2009, Harvard term paper)

Brazilian children are required to attend school from grades 1 to 8. Public schools are free and enrolment is universal. Free Mid day meal scheme is implemented across various states / municipalities. In the municipalities that we visited we found that over 90% of the teachers, school principals and pedagogic coordinators are women. The two Secretaries of education in the 2 municipalities that we visited were both women while the Mayors of both municipalities were gents.

Less than 30% of schools in Brazil are multi-grade schools and almost all of these are in the rural areas.

During the past 6 years Brazil has introduced a national school quality assessment system called the national basic education assessment that assesses schools once in two years. The schools are provided their performance scores along with comparisons with their municipality mean,

state mean etc. The average performances of fourth grade students residing in north and north east Brazil is consistently below their counterparts in south, south east and mid west regions. The system is struggling with the next logical step in the assessment cycle that of using these findings to build academic competence in the school faculty.

Brazil is one of the 67 countries that participate in the international PISA (Program of International Student Assessment). The results of PISA 2006 showed that the mean score of Brazil in Language and Mathematics was lower than the overall mean scores of all participating countries. This holds true both on an overall basis as well as in like to like comparison of Government schools and private schools. The performance of the top 5 % of Brazil children in international tests was less than the average performance of Canadian students (Martin Carnoy, presentation in Bangalore, Aug 2009)

In 1996 the then President Cardoso signed into law the guidelines for education which included the declaration that by end of decade, all teachers would possess minimum of post high school level of education. A decade later in 2006 just 1 % of teachers had an eighth grade level of education or less; however nearly 75% of these teachers were in north / north east regions of Brazil.

Brazil has a highly decentralized system of government and locally elected mayors of the 5000+ municipalities can appoint the secretary of education for their respective municipalities.

Center for Education and Development of Community Action (CEDAC)

Center for Education and Development of Community Action (CEDAC) is the civil society organization / NGO founded in 1999 by three former teaching colleagues with 20 years of experience each in the field of education, Beatriz Cardoso, Maria Teresa Perez Soares and Maria Cristina Ribeiro Pereira.

CEDAC philosophy: Learning is the reason for school's existence. There is need for teachers to be valued for their key role in school and society and in order for that to happen the entire educational system and the community must support their work in the class room. In every program and intervention the lens is always focussed on processes that surround the act of learning. They develop continuous training programs of teachers, principals, supervisors of the government schools to strengthen the professional culture.

CEDAC found that professional development for teachers was the essential need and it is to fulfill this objective that they developed the program Escola Que Vale (EQV). Building the capacity of the school principal is a key goal. School environment is discussed as one of respect, learning, dialogue and solidarity so that the whole school community will have a reference of democratic conviviality

The pedagogical and programmatic details are described in the section titled Escola que Vale.

Vale Foundation

Vale Foundation is the CSR arm of Vale Corporation. Vale Corporation was established in 1968 as a Public Sector undertaking and was privatized in 1997. It is among the biggest mining sector companies in the world. Its turnover is in the region of USD 39 Billion.

Vale Foundation was also begun in 1968 but at the time was limited in scope and vision to providing housing loan and facilities for employees to attract and retain them in the remote mining areas of Brazil. In 1998, Vale Foundation made a shift in its CSR objectives to focus its social investment on education. As a result they funded over 200 education programs. In 2002, a study by Mckinsey found that the results were not visible; the entire approach had been too scattered and dilute; and advised that the portfolio be shrunk to focus on educational programs that can have multiplier effect.

Consequent to their restructured focus, their flagship program in education is the "Escola que Vale" (Valuable School) where they fund the CEDAC to implement the program in identified geographies. This has been a 10 year partnership which has been nurtured well. CEDAC is an n ideologically strong rooted organization and Vale compliments them with funds, and systems and processes to measure, analyze, continuously improve the delivery and performance.

Vale Foundation has 20 members on its rolls and 3 members are assigned to Escola que Vale. The corporate office of Vale is in Rio de Janeiro.

Escola que Vale[2]

The physical dimensions of the program and partnership:

- Program is run in 26 municipalities of 4 states covering 470 schools[3]

- Annual investment for the above is by Vale Foundation is Brazilian Real 6.9 Million

- Coverage around 100000 persons comprising of: 95000 children; 2980 teachers, 470 school principals, 414 pedagogic coordinators and 38 local coordinators

- Program started in 7 Municipalities around 2000 and then extended to 26 municipalities.

- CEDAC (EQV) deploys 12 regional coordinators and 26 local coordinators to support the program on the ground

- Local Vale Corporation / Vale Foundation representative provides the administrative support / relationship bridge with municipalities

- Investment / school is around 16000 Brazilian Real / School

Background of Escola que Vale (EQV)[4]

EQV aims to provide continuous professional development for teachers as a mechanism to promote student learning, whole school reform and educational quality with the theory that teachers and their professional culture are central to this endeavour.
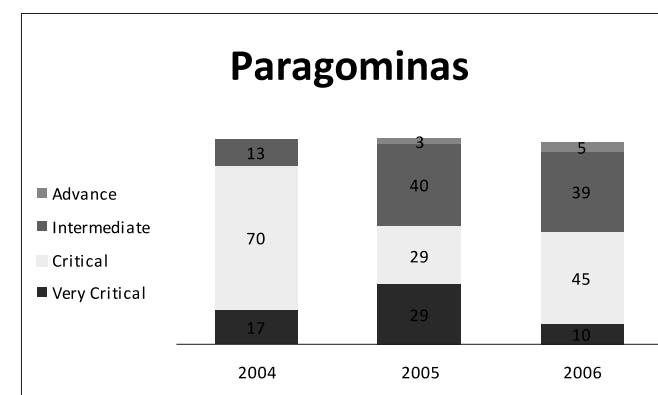
EQV trains teachers working from Pre-School through grade four, principals and pedagogic coordinators who are the staff of the department of education. The program takes place over the course of five years with a goal of self sustainability on the part of participating municipalities. The first three years schools receive onsite training and direct support from regional coordinators who visit the municipalities for one week every month. The final two years, municipalities represented by local secretary of education[5]

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[2] The phrase Escola Que Vale has two meanings: One that implies that it is the Vale Foundation program for schools. The other meaning is profound: "What is the value of school?"

[3] An average Municipality would have around 30 schools

[4] This section is written by extracting notes from the paper October 2007 on "Escola que Vale" by Carol da Silva Harvard Graduate School of Education

[5] Secretary of education in a municipality is perhaps equivalent to Block education Officer in India and reports to the elected mayor of the municipality.

and local EQWV coordinators and school principals are expected to continue and maintain the teacher training practices and systems established early in the program. Support for this is provided at a distance.

In each municipality where EQV works the program establishes in cooperation with local government and Vale Foundation a Resource Centre for teachers and community members. Teachers use this space for reference materials, meetings, access to computers and internet and training programs.

In 2006 an independent impact evaluation study applied a Portuguese exam to a sample of 634 grade 4 EQV students and also administered a questionnaire in 6 municipalities to 480 teachers, 55 school principals, and 49 supervisors. The study found that "when teachers adopt the classroom practices taught through EQV, students in those classrooms from low socioeconomic backgrounds have an average level of performance that is equal to that of peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds". The study found that teachers were largely positive about their experience and found the program helpful.

Performance of EQV Grade 4 children in Portuguese: 2004 to 2006 Brazil National Standard Assessment in Paragominas Municipality

EQV is considered a success in terms of impact on student learning, teacher collaboration and self esteem, and school reform. The program expanded from six municipalities to 24 municipalities in seven years but with this expansion, is facing challenges in building and maintaining relationships

with local government officials, administering in diverse locations and in developing reliable monitoring and evaluation system.

EQV is currently in discussion with Keystone UK to develop indicators for measuring the school quality and teacher, student performance

Teacher is the Focus:

The intensive nature of teacher preparation means that the methods are time consuming and makes the goal of self sustainability and expansion even more challenging. But this kind of teacher development is core to the philosophy of the program. The teacher reference guide of EQV defines quality education as:

- A school, that is committed to student learning
- The guarantee of continued opportunities for schooling of all students
- A school that is a space of ongoing professional development and classroom practices as an object of constant analysis and reflection by teachers, principals and supervisors
- An awareness of the value of knowledge in improving the quality of life and
- The involvement of the community and holding value for the local culture

The theory is that teachers play the central role and public, private and third sector partners must collaborate to ensure successful school reform and quality literacy instruction.

EQV tries to walk the talk in their training and training environment: weekly teacher meetings include lesson planning opportunities for teachers; discussion space on how and what their students are learning in the classrooms; space for broader theories of education. There are challenges in maintaining the fidelity of application of EQV's pedagogic philosophy across various locations but overall has been positive.

Local Government support critical

At the municipal level, EQV has spurred some secretaries of education (such as Paragominas) to take aggressive initiatives to promote the program. But this is not possible without the active blessing of the Mayor. The program relies heavily upon the cooperation of local government officials. Trainings

can take place only if the secretary aggress and provides time and space for them. The secretary and her team are responsible for school supervision, teachers and instruction. Secretaries growing from position of school principal are appointed by the politically elected mayor.

EQV is challenged by the frequent change of secretary of education in some of the communities they worked. It means spending additional time to build relationships with political appointees who may not be familiar with the program. This means that EQV team spends more time and energy on these relationships at the expense of planned teacher development aspects of the program.

Our visits to two municipalities emphasize the contrast in the program because of supportive and apathetic local governments

Building a strong academic team

EQV and CEDAC have over time built a strong team to develop and deliver training to their regional coordinators and the teachers in the EQV districts. The approach of CEDAC has been to recruit experienced private school teachers with their better pedagogical knowledge and induct them into the public school development program. The glue for the members is the project if they think it is good, that motivates them. The changes they are able to create are the morale booster. Vibrant mode of interaction between the members and preparing local leadership from within the education system is important.

Data and documentation

EQV maintains a database and this comes from regular evaluations of teachers and education administrators. Student performance scores are also a part of the database. EQV maintains a database of photos detailing physical changes in school buildings, cafeteria and class room organization.

Observations At Paragominas Municipality

Paragominas is one of the six municipalities of Para State in North East Brazil where EQV is being implemented. The capital of Para state is Belem and Paragominas is about 5 hours drive south of Belem.

EQV has been implemented for more than 6 years in this municipality. Hence the program is at a stage where the teacher development support is driven by the department and support is provided from a distance by EQV. It is one of

the municipalities where EQV has been successful. The Mayor of Paragominas is totally committed to development of his municipality, has an excellent rapport with Vale Foundation and CEDAC and believes in the power of EQV to transform education in his territory. Federal budget or state budget funds are available but only alert and proactive Mayors such as the Mayor of Paragominas utilize the funds. Education Secretary is handpicked by the Mayor. She is totally committed, knows every teacher personally and there is clear evidence of warm relationship between Secretary and the teachers.

The Teacher Resource Centre

The centre is housed in a building that is the property of the municipality and has been renovated and equipped by EQV. It is the hub of regular teacher interactions. The Secretary of Education is present to encourage and support this teacher development endeavour. The teacher Resource centre is called "Casa do Professor" in Portuguese. (Home of teachers)

Visit to Geraldo Pedro Sarmento School and Arnaldo Manoel Fernandes School

- Both schools have been with EQV for over six years
- Considered to be urban schools i.e. they are in the main town of the municipality
- Schools run two shifts during the day: 7 am to 12 noon and 12 to 5 Pm.
- Schools are large in terms of number of students, teachers, class rooms etc.
- Each shift had 450 children and 22 teachers (PTR of 20:1) with class rooms
- Here, the emphasis is not on providing a school in every habitation as in India.
- Children come from as far as 10-12 kilometers to the school
- The municipality provides transport to the children to come to the school.
- There was no multi-grade teaching in these schools.
- Mid day meal scheme is a standard facility

- School is airy, bright and clean to provide warm welcoming environment for children
- Excellent infrastructure provided by the municipality.
- Spic and span; neatly painted; had bright cartoons and pictures on the walls
- In addition to the Principal there is a dedicated pedagogic coordinator for the school. The pedagogic coordinator is the equivalent of our Cluster Resource Coordinator but in Paragominas the Mayor has arranged one pedagogic coordinator per school
- Separate rooms for Principal and pedagogic coordinator; the teachers have an excellent staff room for themselves which is very vibrant
- No corporal punishment in fact when we asked one of the teachers she was aghast!
- Well stocked library with chairs as well as rugs for those who wanted to sit on the floor.
- The day we visited - children of Class 4 were giving a public demonstration of their speaking and narrative abilities in front of all their class mates and teachers.[6]
- The school has its own mike set and speakers etc.
- The children many from lower economic backgrounds - wore clean clothes and good shoes.
- School uniforms are interesting. Only the T Shirts /tops are specific to the school while the trousers, jeans etc are the children's own choice
- Children speak confidently and are free with their teachers.
- After the children had completed their performance, school broke for mid day meal. It is generally rice, kidney beans and meat gravy. Children sit on tables and eat in orderly manner with spoons and fork. One of the visible differences brought by EQV in the school is the neat manner of mid day meals. Kitchen was clean and equipped with fridge

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[6] The ability of children to speak confidently and express themselves is a critical aspect of EQV. In her report of October 2007, Carol da Silva reports her conversation with Paula Stella the head pedagogic coordinator of EQV: "We believe that for these children it is very good both present and future to be able to speak, to demand their rights and express their opinions...."

and deep freezer; the cooks three ladies wore aprons and chef's cap; food inventories were stored neatly.

- Separate clean functional toilets with water

Clean kitchen, Children sitting on tables to eat ...

- Maintenance of student records is viewed by teachers as integral part of their responsibilities.
- The way the pedagogic coordinator and principal maintain and analyze the school and student performance was absolutely impressive. The walls of their rooms have a number of charts drawn and updated by them. Teachers provide the data and the coordinator converts these into summary tables and charts.
- Secretary compulsorily reviews school performance data whenever she visits the school
- Home work does not seem to be a major element of the day's tasks
- The school had a separate room with computers and printers
- Children's creations are displayed all over the school premises
- Teachers and principal are extremely proud of their school. It was visible in the way they allowed us to go around the school without the need to be around us and also in the manner they gave us a farewell.

Visit to neighbouring municipality where government is not supportive

- To get an idea of the situation when the local government is not supportive, we visited 3 schools in a neighbouring municipality where the mayor is completely apathetic.

- The indifference of the Mayor percolates to the secretary of School Education in this municipality. However she accompanied us on these school visits.
- What we saw at these schools:
  - In each of the three schools, the afternoon shift was in progress.
  - In each of the schools, one teacher was absent
  - Wherever teachers were present, teaching activity was in progress
  - In one of the schools, the principal came rushing from her home nearby
  - The kitchen and cooking facilities are good neat, clean with fridge and freezer
  - Each of the schools had a functioning toilet with water facilities
  - All schools well ventilated, adequate rooms, chairs and tables, a room for principal
  - Class rooms were bit shabby
  - All schools had electricity and ceiling fans. The schools also had computer with printer.
  - It was evident that the Secretary did not know the teachers either by face or name. This was in stark difference to Paragominas
  - The teachers of this municipality do not attend training programs of EQV their boss does not believe or encourage this development
  - Secretary is cynical. When we asked her if she had occasion to meet secretaries from other municipalities she said, yes once every few months but there is nothing to learn from such interactions.
  - Though teaching was taking place in these schools, the vibrant atmosphere and cheerfulness of the Paragominas schools was missing.
  - Attendance in these schools was less than the attendance at the Paragominas schools.

Takeaways from discussions with Beatriz Cardoso, Founder Director of CEDAC

Beatriz Cardoso the Founder Director of CEDAC has a doctorate in education from the University of Sao Paulo. She began as a pre-school teacher, also taught elementary school and has been on the faculty of the University of Sao Paulo in the school of education for 10 years. She has authored number of academic articles and books.

- Since we held our discussions after visiting EQV and witnessing the passion of the CEDAC and Vale Foundation members and the teachers in the field, we could focus our queries on key features of: change, sustenance model, political uncertainty, organization building and seamless working with funding organization.

- CEDAC believes that its initiatives and experiments must lead to changes in the system. System should develop the capacity to adopt the practices that prove successful in experiments.

- The approach of EQV is always as a "research" and not as a "package"

- Openness to learn: Although ideology is important, it should not come in the way of learning. Education is a complex social process; it is important to track learning levels. We found that a lot of emphasis is given to language learning and its assessment. Prejudice should not come in the way of learning from professional organizations. For example they will be open to Mckinsey like organizations doing impact evaluation.

- Since they are focussed on the mission of improving learning in class rooms, any study that attempts to measure learning in class rooms will be welcome.

- They want to see visible change in school and in class room. The approach is for whole school transformation.

- They have a healthy equation with their sponsor Vale Foundation. Vale Foundation respects the technical expertise of CEDAC and gives them necessary space. In return, CEDAC has cooperated by maintaining all the accounts and administrative requirements to meet Vale Foundation stipulations. Disagreements will be there but they are

healthy. CEDAC has also learnt to respect and adopt measurements, metrics, third party assessment etc.

- CEDAC do not believe in implementing programs with control and experimental groups because like many other NGOs they believe that the intervention or experiment should be for all and that this is a social right.

Learning and insights

- **Importance of visibly different look to schools** : EQV schools look different. It helps that the entire infrastructure is borne by the government in Brazil.

- **Communication of the benefits of the program to the teachers**: Teachers have got the "how is it beneficial to me in my role" message.

- **Significant Investment per school** : The program is cost intensive and overall budget per school of EQV is high. Spend what is necessary for the program, do not pull back.

- **Expand program through graduated steps** : First three years work directly with teachers and functionaries from about 180 schools in 7 municipalities; then based on their capacity development take a back seat while the functionaries take the driver's seat in the program. Then expand to 19 more municipalities.

- **Documentation and maintenance of data base** : Every transaction, meeting, event is meticulously documented, catalogued and filed both Video and written documentation. Ample number of academics and research scholars have studied and written about EQV.

- **Converting capacity building of the functionaries into actions by the functionaries** : By the end of three years, capacity building culminates in the willingness and ability of the functionaries (school principals, academic coordinators and teachers) to take charge of the program. They schedule and convene meetings. They maintain the database and analysis etc at the school in exemplary manner.

- **How to create and run a resource centre** : EQV resource centre is vibrant alive, well used, well equipped and is the hub of teacher interactions.

- **Organized, credible third party evaluation of program** : Proactively seek third party evaluation of the program. Invest time and effort on this aspect of the program.

- **Systematization and standardization of material critical** : As the program expands, the cascade model adopted by EQV poses a challenge for ensuring similar quality of teacher training and development across various regions. Standardization of material and processes (manuals, guidelines etc) will enable such challenges to be addressed better.

- **Do not work with isolated parts of the system**. Need to engage with all the parts if we have to make the transformation happen.

- **Theory of transformation important** such theory has to be constructed with local people they need to be clear what we are trying to transform. Some important principles

  › **Collaborate to develop a professional culture** in the local delivery system in the core business of system teachers make them discuss what they should plan, discuss how children learn, reflect how children respond.

  › Important to believe that every child can : Focus on improve reading and writing and developing ability to think among children.

  › **Important to do a lot of things at the same time** one action will not lead to learning improvement.

  › **Stability of the person** is a serious problem needs to be recognized and planned. Both bureaucratic and political instability are given and in a democratic society do not have a solution. Therefore we have to work around it.

  › **Process of reflection and change is not theoretical** but completely connected to action.

  › **Question the process if the outcomes are absent** but can't measure the process and results at the same time.

- **Large scale testing and transparent announcement of results does make a difference** a school cannot afford to be sitting tight when the results are bad. The newspapers can make life miserable for ill-performing schools.

- **Second level leadership and resistance groups important to sustain** important to develop and maintain a cadre of teachers who are powerful influencers and have the ability to perform against the top order.

Book Review

AGRICULTURE AILMENTS

Alok Kumar

Was it a mere coincidence that scores of farmers in Vidarbha were committing suicide while the Sensex was scaling new highs every day? Was it matter of chance that while India Inc was notching up double digit annual growth rates, the agriculture sector was Ianguishing at 2-2.5% per annum? Was it only fortuitous that the share of public investments and capital formation in agricultural and allied sectors has been consistently coming down, before it was recognized by the policy makers in the Eleventh Plan document? Was it only happenstance that the buffer stocks of food grains-which was overflowing in the early years of the new millennium- depleted to such alarmingly low levels last year that the Government had to resort to importing wheat to contain galloping price levels? The answer to all the above questions is a big NO and Sanjeev Chopra attempts to analyze the factors inherent in our political economy that were responsible for the less than adequate focus on the Agri Sector in this collection of freewheeling articles that were published as a weekend column in the Garhwal Post between 2007 and 2009. The result has been a refreshingly innovative analysis of the problems that afflict India's farming sector. While Dr Chopra brings to bear his considerable experience in handling the Agriculture & Horticulture portfolios as Secretary in the Governments of Uttarakhand & West Bengal in his articles, the solutions proposed appear to be simple and workable and are not constrained by departmental strait jackets that normally bedevil one who by profession looks at problem in departmental perspectives by virtue of his/her position in the government.

"Inclusive Growth" has been a buzz word ever since the debunking of "India Shining" theory in the elections of 2004. the results of the recent elections have reinforced the message that no political party can afford to be insensitive towards the needs of the agriculture sector if they want to win the mandate to govern. The Farm Loan Waiver and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) have been identified by many analysts to be the prime factors responsible for the success of the UPA. The policy making circles are in agreement that major investments are required in the agriculture sector which employs more than 60% of our work force but contributes to less that 22% of our GDP.

What ails Indian Agriculture? According to the author it has largely been the non liberalization of agriculture sector. While the license-permit-quota Raj has been gradually dismantled in the manufacturing sector, with the manufacturer generally free to decide upon his inputs and price his output, the farmer has not been given the freedom of setting price for his produce. The structural deficiencies in this sector have not yet been addressed in full measure. The Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act-ironically enacted with the objective of preventing exploitation of the farmers by traders and moneylenders-imposes restrictions upon farmers preventing sale to a contracted party of his choice. The disaggregated system of production and the inability to organize in the form of Cooperatives (micro managed by the Government as a result of the less than progressive cooperative legislation) result in the small farmers being hemmed in from all sides-she has no control on input pricing, nor on the pricing for her produce. As the author so eloquently puts it-"The Indian farmer today does not need protection: he needs freedom. The freedom to buy and sell his commodities". While we have no problems in people making money using various sophisticated instruments such as futures and derivatives on the stock exchanges, the moment food prices start going up due to normal market conditions, demands for banning trading on Commodity Exchanges (COMDEX) start appearing in the media. Why is that we are shy of using the same liberalization argument as in the other two sectors of the economy in favour of the farmers? The difference between the market prices and the farm gate prices of the agricultural products is largely pocketed by the traders and the middle men in the absence of warehousing and storage infrastructure. My hunch is that the policy on agricultural prices has largely been determined by the voice of organized urban consumer at the cost of unorganized rural producers.

The second aspect highlighted by the current agrarian crisis is the small and marginal farmer's lack of access to bank credit. While the right noises regarding financial inclusion has been made and Kisan Credit Cards have been issued, the recent spate of suicides painfully brought to sharp focus the grip of money lenders over the small and marginal farmers who are forced to

pay a usurious rates of interest. Coupled with our inability to draw up viable crop insurance packages, the farmers are rarely able to get the kind of return that is commensurate with the risk inherent in the nature of farm operations. So while return on equities of 25-30% is taken as a par for the course for industrial entrepreneurs and cheap credit is mandated to these units, we begrudge the 15-25% returns allowed to the farmers by the Commission of Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP) and that too when the MSP does not benefit a large majority of farmers. The Planning Commission has rightly brought the focus back on agriculture and provided huge allocations in the agricultural sector. Three major schemes- Rashteriya Kisan Vikas Yojana (Rs. 25000 crores), the Loan Waiver for small and marginal farmers (Rs. 70000 crores), and the Fertilizer Subsidy (Rs. 100,000 crores) alone account for over Two Hundred Thousand Crore rupees committed to the sector in central schemes alone. This is apart from the funds available under NHM, APEDA etc. Superficially, this would imply a major thrust on the sector enough for Fiscal Fundamentalists to point a finger at the ballooning subsidy bills. However the author points out that the Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS) in India is negative as compared to the farmers in Europe, Japan and US who are subsidized to the extent of 90% of the cost of production. Therefore, rather than getting caught in the futile debate of providing resources for subsidy vis-à-vis providing them for augmenting rural infrastructure, there is a case for increasing allocations on both heads. Is it not a matter of differing yardsticks being applied to differing sectors that while the Committee on Infrastructure chaired by the Prime Minister is willing to commit US $ 500 billion for creating state of the art infrastructure for faster turn-around of goods and services, the investments committed in cold-chain, warehousing and other agribusiness infrastructure is negligible by contrast ?

That said, however, the author cautions that mere outlays may not translate into outcomes, unless appropriate changes are also introduced in the agri-extension and agri-education systems. Drawing lessons from the Election process, the author suggests organizing the Agriculture and Allied Departments in the mission mode with clear allocation and deployment of resources; clear delineation of responsibilities with overall accountability for results.

The book covers a wide swathe of topics and outlines complex ideas in very simple words. Therefore it should be of interest not only to multiple audiences those engaged in policy advocacy in this crucial sector, but also to lay readers who are left wondering about our inability to make as significant a difference in the lives of our rural folks as compared to some of the other similarly placed countries.

"Agri Matter"-Dr. Sanjeev Chopra
Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, pp 192, price-Unknown (Forthcoming)