



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

IIPA
NEWSLETTER



Vol. LVIII No. 2

February 2014

www.iipa.org.in

INSTITUTE NEWS

National Workshop on Right to Information

The Department of Personnel and Training in collaboration with the IIPA organised the captioned programme on January 9. Inaugurating the workshop, Shri V. Narayanasamy, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, highlighted the measures being taken by the government towards strengthening the RTI Act. He emphasised the need to strengthen *suo motu* disclosure and online application. He outlined the steps being adopted at the governmental level to bring transparency and openness in governance. In his welcome address, Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Director of IIPA, observed out that the RTI Act is a great initiative towards promoting transparency in the working of government. He expressed that it is necessary that the government departments take necessary steps for better records management and proactive disclosure of information. Dr. Syamal Kumar Sarkar, Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training, in his address stated that the idea behind enacting this Act is to bring about greater accountability and contain corruption. Smt. Sushma Singh, Chief Information Commissioner, Central Information Commission, opined that proactive disclosure by the government is the right way to proceed under the Act. She complimented the DoPT for its guidelines for providing *suo-motu* disclosure of information by the departments. The inaugural session was followed by a panel discussion on "Ensuring Compliance of Suo-motu Disclosure Commitments: From Villages to Central Ministries". The eminent group of panelists included: Shri Satyananda Mishra, former Chief Information Commissioner in Central Information

Commission, Shri Rajendra Singh, Magsaysay Award Winner (a.k.a. Waterman of India); Shri Prabhu Chawla, Editorial Director of The New Indian Express; Ms. Maja Daruwala, Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI); Shri Manoj Joshi, former Joint Secretary (RTI), Department of Personnel and Training; and Dr. R.K. Verma, Co-founder of 'RTI Foundation of India', moderated the panel discussion. The afternoon sessions were devoted to presentations on 'Best Practices' and 'Success Stories on RTI' and presentations by DoPT RTI Fellows of 2012, on the respective topics of their fellowship. Around 150 participants participated in the workshop which included policy-makers, RTI activist, academicians, researchers, and representatives of NGOs working in the area. Prof Sujata Singh and Dr. Sapna Chadah coordinated it.

Know India Programme

Sponsored by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, the captioned programme for Indian diaspora youth was conducted at IIPA on January 3-4 with a view to promote awareness on different facets of life in India and the progress made by the country in various fields e.g. economic, industrial, education, science and technology, communication and information technology, and culture. The programme provided a unique forum for students and young professionals of Indian origin to visit India, share their views, expectations and experiences and to develop closer bonds with the contemporary India. In this programme, young girls and boys (18-28 years) of Indian diaspora who never had a chance to visit India were exposed to the rich heritage of the country including art/culture, impact of advertisement, theatre, astronomy

The IIPA fraternity extends its greetings to all its readers for Basant Panchami, Guru Ravidas' Birthday, Shivaji Jayanti and Swami Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti

and Indian eco-system. They were also exposed to deliberations on various aspects of Indian governance including federal structure of India, e-government case-studies of rural India and disaster preparedness strategies of India and ethics in administration. Dr. Charru Malhotra and Prof. V.K. Sharma coordinated it.

Programme on Municipal Governance and Urban Development

Sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme, Kabul, the programme was conducted at IIPA, for senior experts, practitioners and elected functionaries from Afghanistan who are involved in the municipal governance and urban development management, from January 1-13. In his inaugural address, Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Chairman of IIPA, referred to good citizenship, civic virtues, winning the trust and faith of common man and optimum use of resources as prerequisites for effective municipal governance and development. Mr. Syed Mujtaba Ahmadi, Economic Councilor from the Embassy of Afghanistan, graced the occasion as a special guest. Abdul Baqi Popal, General Director of Municipal Administration (GDMA), Kabul, Afghanistan delivered the special address. He emphasised that finding new forms of revenue, effective service delivery and solid waste management should be the major concerns of municipal governance and most of the problems could be solved if every challenge is transformed into an opportunity. Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Director of IIPA, delivered the valedictory address focusing on five important aspects of relevance in the context of urban governance in Afghanistan:

planning for small cities with corridor and hub type of development, effective waste management, working out with cheaper technologies to generate electricity out of waste, and raise municipal finances by charging on all services provided through supply lines. Ms. Sofia Dahiya, Capacity Development Advisor, Afghanistan Sub National Governance Programme, United Nations Development Programme, also graced the inaugural session. The programme was designed to :

- (i) examine process and pattern of urbanisation and associated issues and implications thereon;
- (ii) list key elements of municipal governance and inclusive urban development;
- (iii) identify key issues in the urban planning, management and finance;
- (iv) identify indicators of good urban governance;
- (v) examine urban sector reforms in India and elsewhere at national, provincial and town level;
- (vi) identify best practices on municipal management having potential for wider adaptability; and
- (vii) prepare a roadmap for good urban governance in Afghanistan.

Prof. Vinod K. Sharma, Prof. K.K. Pandey and Dr. C. Sheela Reddy coordinated the programme.

Training of Trainers Programme on Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare

Sponsored by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the programme was conducted at IIPA by its Centre for Consumer Studies for heads/presidents/secretaries/directors of NGOs/VCOs from January 6-10. Besides enhancing their knowledge and skill in the area of consumer protection and consumer welfare, the programme was designed to enable the participants to: (i) understand the

need and importance of consumer protection and welfare; (ii) acquaint with the national and international dimensions of consumer protection and the role of various stakeholders; (iii) explain the various provisions of the Consumer Protection Act and other legislations having a bearing on consumer protection; (iv) discuss the legal dimensions of consumer protection in different service sectors such as medical, telecom, etc; and (v) develop training skills. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and in-house faculty. Prof. Suresh Misra and Dr. Mamta Pathania coordinated it.

Workshop on Social Conflict Analysis and Resolution Approaches

Sponsored by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the programme was conducted at IIPA from January 13-17. Besides enabling the participants to evolve a comprehensive understanding of social conflicts and approaches to conflict resolution with social justice, the programme proved a forum for experience sharing and analysis of actual conflict situations and resolution strategies by the participants while insights from scholarly work in the area were shared to facilitate discussion on the possible approaches which they considered meaningful in their own specific context. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and in-house faculty. Prof. Dolly Arora coordinated it.

Workshop on Polluted River Stretches—Preparation of Action Plan

Sponsored by the Central Pollution Control Board, the captioned programme was conducted

at IIPA by its Centre for Climate Change, Environment and Drought Administration on January 17. Apart from equipping the participants with the theoretical and practical understanding of the subject, the programme was designed to enable the participants to: (i) extend and promote the sustained and effective use of the hydrologic information system (HIS); (ii) contribute to improved productivity and cost-effectiveness of water-related investments in the 13 states and eight Central agencies; (iii) create data centre, water quality data validation, conservation of data into information and quality assurance; and (iv) strengthen the laboratory personnel in HP-II agencies in Central and state government departments. Dr. Shyamli Singh and Prof. Vinod K. Sharma coordinated it.

Provisional Training Programme (PTP-13)

Sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, the captioned programme, part of Indo-Afghan partnership for strengthening sub-national governance in Afghanistan, was conducted at IIPA for the Afghan delegation from January 22-February 3. Apart from providing the participants with a broad understanding of various facets of public administration, the programme was designed to: (i) expose them to various good practices in India and to draw lessons from them; (ii) equip them with knowledge and skills to better manage conflicts and disasters; (iii) enhance their capacity in managing development programmes/projects; and (iv) develop soft skills for enhancing their performance. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and programme coordinators, Prof.

Request to Branches

In our endeavour to put the record straight, the chairmen/secretaries of regional/local branches are, hereby, requested that to make little effort and update the status of the members in their respective branches, so that the list of active members can be updated. You are, as such, requested to kindly check/verify the list of members of your branch and communicate to us the present status/valid addresses of members taking care to eliminate the non-living members from the list. The branches may also like to pursue the matter with such defaulting members whose membership have been kept in abeyance due to non submission of membership format and revive their membership.

Vinod K. Sharma, Prof. K.K. Pandey and Dr. C. Sheela Reddy.

Workshop on State-Civil Society Interface for Improved Policy Performance

Sponsored by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the programme was conducted at IIPA from January 27-31. The programme brought together civil servants in policy-making and implementation positions and civil society actors operative at various levels. The deliberations involved experience-sharing as well as analysis of various possible strategies of state-civil society interface in India. It broadly focused on: (i) engagement with policy process; (ii) delegation of tasks; (iii) involvement in service delivery; (iv) role in implementation; and (v) role in monitoring, evaluation and feedback process. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and in-house faculty. Prof. Dolly Arora coordinated it.

IPSA National Award for Prof. Noorjahan Bava

Prof. Noorjahan Bava, former Member of IIPA's Executive Council, has been honoured with the First National Political Scientist Award- 2012 in recognition of her commendable and phenomenal

contribution to the study and development of political science and public administration through teaching, research, curriculum development, seminars and public administration.

Book Review Discussion

The Institute organised a book discussion meet on the book entitled *India's Late Late Industrial Revolution: Democratizing Entrepreneurship* by Prof. Sumit K. Majumdar, Professor of Technology Strategy, School of Management, University of Texas on January 6. This volume provides an exhaustive survey of India's industrialisation, from ancient times to the present. It explains India's current growth in the context of the industrial revolutions of Europe and North America, and the later industrialisation experiences of Asia; and also shows how India's industrialisation is being driven by autonomous entrepreneurship, and contrasts it with the past when the government played the most important role. The volume discusses almost everything related to economic growth, the Asian industrialisation, including the story on Samsung's foray into microwave oven, the licence raj, differing views of the leaders of the times, role of governments, the growth of Indian industrialists and the

generation of alternatives that led to the coinage of the term *jugaad*. The author presented a broad framework of the book in a very lucid manner. The reviewers and the discussants critically examined the thought content of the book and shared their observations and comments with the audience. The panelists while focusing on the importance of the book expressed that for the country which weathered the storm of 2007-08 global financial crises, is now finding ways to clamber out of the economic slowdown that stares it in the face. The discussants were Dr. Subramanian Swamy, former Union Minister; Shri T.S.R. Subramanian, former Cabinet Secretary; Prof. Pranab Banerji of IIPA; Shri Ashish Joshi, DDG, Department of Telecom; and Shri Arvind Kumar, CVO, NBCC. Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Chairman of IIPA, presided over the programme. Dr. Usha Munshi coordinated the programme.

Faculty News

• Prof. P.K. Chaubey chaired a panel discussion on “Growth and Beyond” in the National Conference on “Challenges of Development:

Revisit to Inclusiveness”, organised by the Zakir Husain College, New Delhi on January 17. Earlier, Prof. Chaubey delivered a lecture on “Political System and Political Party Management in India’ for Chinese delegation from Shanghai Administrative Institute, PRC, on December 13. He also delivered the inaugural address to the National Seminar on “Environment and Sustainable Development”, organised by the Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut on December 17.

• Dr. Manan Dwivedi, Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Administration: (i) presented a paper in the International Seminar on “The Role of Bahrain and Qatar in the Gulf Cooperation Council: The Interface with the Great Powers” in the Gulf Studies Centre, School of International Studies, JNU, in October; (ii) panelist in the African Studies Division, School of International Studies, JNU, in a seminar titled as, “Role of BRICS, new nations and Africa” in October, 2013; and (iii) appeared several times in December-January, 2014

in TV channels such as Zee News, Channel One and Reporter 24x 7 to delve inside the results of the Assembly elections in the states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh with a forecast on the 2014 general elections.

Programme on Water Quality Network Plan

Sponsored by the Central Pollution Control Board, the programme was conducted at IIPA from January 29-31. Coordinated by Dr. Shyamli Singh and Prof. Vinod K. Sharma, the programme was designed to give thrust on strengthening of water quality monitoring network by working out the basic requirements of water quality monitoring in surface and ground water; identification of monitoring sites; reconnaissance survey and demarcation of water bodies; development of monitoring protocol; data validation; conversion of data into information; quality assurance; and rationalisation of monitoring stations for establishment of water quality monitoring network all along the country being operated by various monitoring agencies.

NEWS FROM BRANCHES

Assam Regional Branch

The branch organised a lecture-meeting on December 28, in which Shri Jatin Hazarika, Chairman of the branch, spoke on “Administration—then and now”. He spoke about his various incidents faced and encountered during his long 43 years of service career in a lucid manner. The talk was preceded by an executive committee meeting of the branch wherein the death of Shri Kamaleswar Bora, life member of IIPA and former Vice-Chancellor of

Dibrugarh University was condoled.

Bihar Regional Branch

On the occasion of National Consumer Day on December 24, the branch teamed up with the Department of Food and Consumer Protection, Government of Bihar in organising a Inter-district College/School Debates and Essay Competition on “Awareness of Consumer Rights”. Shri Shyam Rajak, State Minister of Food and Consumer Protection, gave away cash prizes of Rs. 5000 each with memento and

certificate to 14 participants and winners of competition. Shri Shishir Sinha, Principal Secretary, State Department of Food and Consumer Protection; Shri A.V. Sinha, Chairman of the branch; and Dr. Navanit Sinha, Secretary of the branch, participated in the function.

Budaun Local Branch

The branch organised two Model Village Development Programmes on November 29 and December 22. During the meetings it was decided that the motivation and training

programmes should be held for gram panchayats and others for expediting the development activities of the village. The branch also organised Human Rights Day on December 10. The Chief Guest Smt. Sahana Siddique, Founder President of Asim Siddique Memorial College, stated that it is the responsibility of the colleges that they should propagate and promote human rights in society. Shri Anwar Alam, Chairman of the branch, presided.

Gulbarga Local Branch

The branch jointly with Rotary Club, Gulbarga organised the following lecture-meetings on November 29 and December 24: (i) Shri Gururaj Kulkarni, Advocate, spoke on "Human Values"; and (ii) Shri Baswaraj, Chairman of the branch, spoke on "Awareness on Consumer Protection". Shri Maruti K. Pawar, Secretary of the branch, presided over both the programmes.

Howrah Local Branch

The branch jointly with the Department of Political Science, Shibpur Dinabundhoo College organised a seminar on "Violence against Women: Causes and Remedies" on December 23. Prof. Sujato Bhadra, Human Rights Activist, Department of History, Shibpur D.B. College, gave the key-note address. Prof. Asish Ray, Secretary of the branch, gave the introductory speech; and Rtn. Dilip Kr. Das, Chairman of the branch, presided over the programme.

Jammu and Kashmir Regional Branch

The branch jointly with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies and Central University of Jammu organised a seminar on "Conflict Early Warning: Regional Security and Implications for J&K" on December

23. Prof. P.R. Chari, Shri Ranjit Gupta, Dr. D. Suba Chandran and Shri Sushant Sareen discussed the regional security developments in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan and their implications on Jammu and Kashmir, while Dr. S.S. Bloeria, Dr. Ashok Bhan, Prof. Rekha Choudhry and Dr. Shujaat Bukhari discussed the recent developments within the State and their future implications. The branch jointly with Jammu and Kashmir Traffic Police organised an open house discussion on "Traffic Management in J&K" on January 16. Jenab Choudhary Mohd. Ramzan, Minister of CAPD and Transport, was the Chief Guest; Shri Sourabh Bhagat, Transport Commissioner; and Shri Muneer Ahmed Khan, IGP Traffic, were Guests of Honour. The Minister announced that the State Government has initiated process for amending the obsolete Motor Vehicles Act to make it more stringent. Shri Bhagat informed about leveraging technology in issuance of driving licenses, video recording of driving tests, etc. Shri Muneer Ahmed Khan assured that the suggestions will be implemented and traffic police will keep safety of roads users uppermost in their mind. Earlier on January 4, the branch organised a talk on "Supreme Court: Expounding Philosophy of the Constitution of India" by Prof. K.L. Bhatia, Professor at National Law School, Jodhpur. He explained how the Apex Court had carried out its transformative responsibilities by interpreting the Constitution with changing realities and filled the vacuum wherever the legislature or the executive had chosen a preservative stance.

Karnataka Regional Branch

The branch jointly with University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore organised a conference on "Food

Security in India—Issues, Suggestions for Effectiveness" on September 7. The Chief Guest Shri S.V. Ranganath, Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka, inaugurated the programme and delivered the key-note address. He stressed that there is a need to prevent spoilage and wastage of food grains during storage in addition to increasing the agriculture productivity. Shri S. Ramanathan, Chairman of the branch, endorsed that apart from increasing foodgrain production, there should be proper storage facility. Dr. D. Srivasan, Vice-Chairman of the branch, expressed that there is need to economically account for 1000 million ton of food grains that may have to be imported if food security is not supported by increase in agriculture productivity. Dr. K. Narayana Gowda, Vice-Chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences, in his presidential remarks, mentioned that increasing food grain production by increasing productivity is the major responsibility of the University and in the past 50 years it has contributed immensely to the production technologies.

Karimnagar Local Branch

The branch collaborated with the Karimnagar Consumers' Council in organising National Consumers Day on December 24. Activists from entire district numbering 300 attended. Officials from civil supplies, legal metrology, public health, transport interacted with consumers.

Odisha Regional Branch

The branch organised the Members' Annual Conference on December 26. Dr. Ashwini Kumar, Governor of Nagaland and Manipur, was the Chief Guest. Shri Syed Maqbool Ali, Vice-Chairman of the branch, gave the welcome address while Shri Damodar Pradhani,

Secretary of the branch, presented the activity report of the branch and declared the result of the Annual Essay Competition held among the college students on the topic “Increasing Violence against Women—Causes and Remedies”. Shri Bipin Bihari Misra, Chairman of the branch, presided over the programme. To celebrate the World Human Rights Day, the branch teamed up with Biju Patnaik Police Academy to organise a symposium on “Changing Dynamics of Human Rights Today’s India” on December 10. It was sponsored by Odisha Human Rights Commission. Shri Amiya Bhusan Tripathy delivered the key-note address. Shri Syed Maqbool Ali gave the welcome address; and Dr. Ashwini Kumar Tiwari, Director of Centre for Human Rights, Odisha Regional Branch, introduced the theme. Shri Bipin Bihari Misra presided over the programme. Earlier, the branch organised a seminar on “Public Private Partnership” on October 25. Addressing the members, Shri Sanjib Kr. Hota, former Chairman of the branch, focused on the operating systems of public private partnership in order to boost the economy of less developed state. Shri Syed Maqbool Ali, Vice-Chairman of the branch, stressed on the basic importance of PPP. Shri B.B. Misra, Chairman of the branch, presided. The branch also organised a seminar on “Recent Political Culture in India—Need for

Reforms” on November 11. Dr. Pratip Kumar Misra introduced the subject. Shri Sarat Chandra Misra and Prof. L.N. Misra, former Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University spoke on the subject. Shri Syed Maqbool Ali presided and observed that India is changing economically but we have to reassert our political culture as that influences the growth and development of the country.

Rajasthan Regional Branch

The branch jointly with Management Development Academy and Prakrat Bharti Academy organised the following lecture-meetings on December 17, 18 and 19: (i) Prof. Ramesh K. Arora, Chairman of the branch, spoke on “Swami Vivekananda and the Spirit of Success”; (ii) Shri S.S. Bissa, Visiting Professor, Centre for Good Governance, HCM RIPA, spoke on “Mahatma Gandhi and His Mission”; and Dr. Pratibha Jain, former HoD, Department of History, University of Rajasthan, spoke on “Dr. Ambedkar and His Mission”. Shri D.R. Mehta, Chief Patron of Prakrat Bharti Academy, presided over all the programmes.

Tamil Nadu Regional Branch

The branch in association with Post-Graduate and Research Department of Public Administration, Anna Adarsh College for Women, Chennai, conducted a seminar on January 18 on “Election System In Indian-Changing Scenario”. The

seminar was chaired by Thiru.P.R. Sampath, Chairman of the branch. In his presidential address he briefed the electoral system in India and its evolution from 1952 to till date. Thiru. N. Gopaldaswami, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, in his key-note address elaborated Indian electoral system. He also shared his experiences as Chief Electoral Officer in conducting elections in India. Thereafter Inter College Level Oratorical Competition was held on the same topic. Dr. V.N. Viswanathan, Secretary of the branch, acted as a judge for the Oratorical Competition.

West Bengal Regional Branch

The branch organised a seminar on “Administrators-Politicians Interaction” on January 2. Prof. Asish Ray, Secretary of Howrah Local Branch, and Dr. Syamal Kumar Ray, former Professor of Political Science, University of Burdwan, were the principal speakers. They referred to several case studies of relation between politicians and administrators. Methods of interaction between politics and administration were discussed. It was stressed by the speakers that demoralisation among the politicians and excessive political interference had an adverse impact upon the morale and efficiency of the civil servants. Prof. Sibransan Chatterjee, Secretary of the branch, presided over the meeting. Shri Suryya Ray, Chairman of the branch, was the moderator.

NEWS FROM STATES

Karnataka

Transformation of Mineral Administration through e-Governance

In the recent past, the mining

sector in the State was characterised by large scale illegal mining and severe leakage of royalty payable to the government which was the result of inadequate manpower, manual

processes, loopholes in the system and weak enforcement. It was at this juncture the State Government introduced the project Transformation of Mineral Administration through

It is tact that is golden, not silence — Samuel Butler

e-Governance through Department of Mines and Geology to plug the loopholes in the entire mining value chain. In the extraction phase, the system validates the compliance of the lessee with various government regulations, which has led to a near total arrest of illegal mining. The new system has several checks to curb illegalities in the transportation of minerals. By this system, total transparency in transactions between the department and the lessees has been achieved and at the same time, efficiency of such transactions is greatly enhanced. There is a significant improvement in the departmental service delivery; reduced harassment to lessees; and reduced drudgery for officials. In just one year, the new system has achieved a 33 per cent increase in government revenue through royalty and other taxes despite suppressed mineral extraction because of the temporary ban on iron ore extraction by the orders of the Supreme Court. With the resumption of normal mining activity, the revenue that can be realised will be much higher. Through e-auction of iron ore, Rs. 7,000 crore have been realised in just one year.

Kerala

Improving Transparency through e-Housing

The Scheduled Caste Development Department (SCDO) of Kerala initiated a web-based e-Housing project to improve transparency in the process of providing housing assistance to the scheduled caste beneficiaries. Scheduled caste groups faced several constraints in applying for housing allowance from the government. Apart from the regular delays in receiving

disbursements, the complicated procedures combined with no option to track applications make the process cumbersome. The beneficiaries had to skip several days of work and physically visit the department to request for funds at different stages of construction; wasting time and effort. Moreover, there was no transparency as to how much amount was being disbursed in their account. In order to overcome these challenges, government introduced a web based solution to specifically target the beneficiaries. E-housing project, launched in February 2011 by SCDO in Kerala with Centre for Development of Imaging Technology, ensures time-bound, efficient, transparent and error-free housing applications. SCDO allots a total of Rs 1 lakh to each beneficiary at particular construction stages and is disbursed in four installments: first 15,000, second 30,000, third 40,000 and last, 15,000. Since the execution of the project, a total of 1423 houses have been built, 2000 beneficiaries have opened postal savings bank and an amount of Rs five crore has been disbursed through the system.

Madhya Pradesh

Caring Touch for Disabled

Special Project for Assistance, Rehabilitation and Strengthening Handicapped (SPARSH) project is being run by Social Justice Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh. The objective of the SPARSH is to leverage the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to facilitate effective management and administration of the activities related to the welfare of target population in a manner so as to ensure better services; use

of ICT for proactive and effective implementation of various provisions as per the spirit of the 'persons with disabilities'; to facilitate identification and registration of Persons with Disabilities (PwD), mentally retarded, multiple disability and dependent old age persons without financial income, etc. The project covers door-to-door survey in the entire State, nearly one lakh remote habitats have been covered to identify and register as the PwDs. Over eight lakh people have registered as PwDs, Children with Special Needs (CWSN) and their family members. Over 700 urban and rural local bodies are supposed to provide assistance and other benefits to such persons. Departments/ Nodal Agencies are working for the welfare of such persons. Institutions/NGOs are also working for the welfare of such identified persons. Portal provides a common and integrated platform for effective implementation, monitoring, evaluation and enabling environment for this project. The project has made possible to plan and extend the services as per the actual requirements of the individuals. Monthly and routine work involving the release of the financial assistance to mentally retarded and mentally disabled has been simplified and automated as the system generates the bank advice and allows the transfer of funds directly into the account of the concerned person. Online portal also facilitates direct interface of the PwDs with the government, thus eliminating the need of middleman for their benefits/assistance. The web portal is seamlessly integrated with the following: (i) SMS to the registered users on the schemes and camps organised in any area; (ii) voice call alert system to create awareness

Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship — Benjamin Franklin

about disability, opportunities, schemes, rights of PwDs; and (iii) toll free call centre to provide for guidance and assistance.

Rajasthan

Mobile Query System

LifeLines Education is a digital inclusion initiative aimed at enabling academic-pedagogic support for rural school teachers in Rajasthan through mobile. OneWorld, the Government of Rajasthan and UNICEF have partnered to launch

the programme, which reaches over 4.5 lakh teachers in over 100,000 schools in the State. Accessible on a toll-free number, the service is mediated in the local language whereby the telephone serves as the medium of user interface. High-end communication technology and custom-made computing applications are configured at the backend to support integrated call handling and management of a very large audio and text database. Enabling continued academic guidance and

didactic advisory to teachers, via phone and in their local language, LifeLines has established itself as an effective support platform in rural Rajasthan. Teachers today recognise LifeLines-Education for providing them with access to curricular instruction and teaching guidance from experts, which they acknowledge is having a positive impact on the standard of qualitative learning. This recognition of LifeLines is reflected in its increasing demand and usage by teachers.

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Quotable Quotes

- *Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together* — Vincent van Gogh
- *Originality is nothing but judicious imitation. The most original writers borrowed one from another* — Voltaire
- *He that won't be counseled can't be helped* — Benjamin Franklin
- *Advice is like snow—the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind* — Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- *Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end* — Seneca
- *To keep your secret is wisdom; but to expect others to keep it is folly*— Samuel Johnson

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