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Vol No. 04 | Issue 02 | April – June 2022

IIPA DIGEST

Building Capacity for Governance

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

GANDHIJI's TALISMAN

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test:

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him.

Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?

Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away"

स्वच्छ भारत
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

VOL No. 4 ISSUE No. 2
APRIL — JUNE 2022
PAGES: 56

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Editor in Chief
Surendra Nath Tripathi

Editor
Amitabh Ranjan

Joint Editor
Meghna Chukkath

Copy Editor
Usha Jha

Design
Nandita Thagela

Published by
Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi - 110002

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Editorial

The world is back to normal post the covid-19 catastrophe with hopefully a little less fear of the virus. The Government of India successfully vaccinated 90% of its adult population and the life as well as the lifestyle of the people is back to usual. Ofcourse, the loss of lives and peace will haunt us for several years to come.

The geo-politics will continue to impact the internal policy-making as well as external diplomacy. Amidst all these, the Government is trying to maintain the equilibrium between social welfare and inflation, its stance between the global power play and its role in maintaining peace internally as well as outside. With this thought in mind, we bring to you the second edition of this year which covers a variety of topics on relevant issues.

The first article on bridging the gender equity gap sheds a light on the gender inequality that continues to remain a major barrier to human development. The write-up also highlights the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Report 2021 seeking urgent action in this regard.

Under Health Watch, the author covers the contribution of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) and their successful endeavour in India's public health experiment which is rooted in village community.

Guest Talk on water security for socio-economic development and economic growth highlights the water woes in India and the author's anecdotes.

The spotlight for this edition is on the Government's Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) programme enabling the socio-economic development in India. The article cites the World Bank study on the impact of the programme as well as other studies.

The viewpoint on Indian losing the industrial race dwells on how India a millennium back in 1000 as the golden bird had a share of 30 % in world's GDP now dwindled to 4.2% after Independence?

The article on India's foreign policy covers the challenges of the present time in post covid-19 situation. Furthermore, an article on the theory of democratic decentralization and local governance administration explains the concept, approaches and perspectives on decentralization.

The write-up on Mission Karmayogi explains the importance of training to government officials citing a case study of police force and their in-service training. It emphasizes the idea of training as the most important component of the employee's personality development and capacity building that can only be possible through the regular interval of in-service training.

The edition ends with the information on the recent policy announced by the Government of India i.e. National Air Sports Policy 2022 followed by Governance@Work.

Hope you find this an interesting read. ■

— Surendra Nath Tripathi

NTRI inaugurated by Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Amit Shah at IIPA campus

With a view to commemorate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebration by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah was invited to inaugurate the National Tribal Research Institute (NTRI) at IIPA campus.

The Union Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated NTRI on June 7, 2022. In his address, he said that this National Tribal Research Institute is coming into existence according to the vision of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. There are many Tribal Research Institutes in the country, but there was no national link connecting many diversities of tribal society and this institute built according to the vision of Shri Narendra Modi will become that link.

The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Shri Arjun Munda and other Cabinet and State Ministers, including, the Minister of Law and Justice, Shri Kiren Rijiju; MoS Tribal Affairs, Smt. Renuka Singh Saruta; MoS Minority Affairs, Shri John Barla and the MoS of Rural Development and Steel, Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste and other dignitaries graced the occasion.

Accordingly, the NTRI will be a premier and apex National level Institute and will become the cynosure of tribal concerns, issues and matters in academic, executive and legislative fields. It is also expected to become the nerve-center of tribal concerns, issues and matters in academic, executive and legislative fields. The Institute will further collaborate and network with other reputed research institutes, Universities, organizations as well as academic bodies and resource Centers in the future.

It will also monitor projects of Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs), Centres of Excellence (CoEs), research scholars of NFS and set up norms for improvement in the quality of research and training. Its other activities are to provide policy inputs to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as well as State Welfare Departments, Design studies and programmes that improve or support socio-economic aspects of tribal lifestyles, create and maintain of Database of PMAAGY, provide guidelines in setting and running of Tribal Museums and showcase rich tribal cultural heritage of India, under one umbrella.

On a similar line, IIPA has been entrusted with the task to strengthen training and active research in various aspects of tribal welfare by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Government of India. For this purpose, a Centre of Excellence has been established at IIPA and is named as the Centre of Tribal Research and Exploration (COTREX). ■

— Amitabh Ranjan

BRIDGING THE GENDER EQUITY GAP: THE WAY FORWARD

Gender inequality continues to remain a major barrier to human development. Women and girls are continued to be discriminated against in provision of basic facilities like health, nutrition, education, etc. This discrimination manifests later by way of their lesser involvement in economic activities, labour force participation as well as in political representation. This has serious negative consequences not only for the development of the capabilities of women, but also for the progress and development of the world as a whole.

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Report 2021 has highlighted the need for urgent action in this regard. India's overall ranking has slipped to 140th position from the112th position in 2020 in the Global Gender Gap Index. This index benchmarked 156 countries using tools for cross country comparison and provides a numerical grading for the gender gap between men and women in four key areas. This index can help countries identify the weak spots and then prioritize the policies for course correction that will most effectively close the gender gaps in the identified areas.

The report used fourteen variables to create the index and thirteen out of these are from publicly available "hard data" indicators from organizations such as International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The report examines the following four overall areas of inequalities between men and women globally.

1. Economic participation and opportunity outcomes on salaries, participation levels and access to high-skilled employment;
2. Educational attainment outcomes on access to basic and higher level education
3. Political empowerment outcomes on representation in decision-making structures
4. Health and survival outcomes on life expectancy and sex ratio etc.

In the case of India, most of the decline occurred on the political empowerment subindex, where India regressed 13.5 percentage points, with a significant decline in the number of women Ministers from 23.1 per cent in 2019 to 9.1 per cent in 2021. Though this is an area of concern, it has also been seen that the report is based on data regarding political representation of women in the legislatures only. The percentage of women among the elected representatives at the Gram Panchayat level (decentralized government at the village level) has seen an increasing trend. Although the Constitution provides for "not less than one third" reservation for women in Panchayats, it is seen that 21 Indian states have provided for 50 per cent representation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. As on date, out of about 31 lakh elected representatives of Panchayats, 14.5 lakh are women. This translates into 46% of elected representatives in decentralized governance of the country being women. This is a large number, though this has not been incorporated in the WEF report.

[1] Global Gender Gap Report 2021, World Economic Forum

[2] Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt of India, Annual Report 2020 – 2021

Notwithstanding the above, economic participation of women in the society has declined. Improvement in this key sector is urgently required and this would have a significant influence on the other areas as well. As per the WEF report, decline took place in the economic participation and opportunity subindex and India's gender gap on this dimension has widened by 3 per cent this year, leading to a 32.6 per cent gap closed till date.

The indicators used in the report for economic participation and opportunity are labour force participation, wage equality for similar work, estimated earned income, women as senior officials, managers, professional and technical workers.

According to the report, among the main drivers of this decline is a decrease in women's labour force participation rate, which fell from 24.8 per cent to 22.3 per cent. In addition, the share of women in professional and technical roles also declined to 29.2 per cent. The share of women in senior and managerial positions also remains low. Only 14.6 per cent of the senior positions are held by women and there are only 8.9 per cent firms with female top managers. Further, the estimated earned income of women in India is only one-fifth of men's, which puts the country among the bottom 10 countries on this indicator.

However in terms of literacy, 96.2 per cent of the educational attainment subindex gender gap has been closed, with parity achieved in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Though gender gaps still persist in terms of overall literacy, almost one third (34.2 %) of women are illiterate as compared to 17.6 per cent of men, there is a definite improvement and the gap is narrowing. Unfortunately, the closing of gender gap in terms of literacy is not being reflected in women's economic participation and provision of economic opportunity. On the contrary the participation of women in labour force has gone down.

The reasons for this decrease in economic participation need to be analyzed and action taken to rectify this. It is quite obvious that reducing the size of the population/ pool to draw people from, for paid economic activity can only have an adverse effect on the economic growth of the country. According to an article analyzing the reasons for this downfall, in the *Financial Express*, it was stated that unpaid care work continues to be a woman's responsibility, with women spending on an average five hours per day on domestic work, as against 30 minutes for men (NSSO, 2019). Women face inordinate mobility restrictions such that only 54 percent can even go to a nearby market alone (NFHS, 2015-16). Women regularly sacrifice wages, career progression, and education opportunities to meet family responsibilities. In addition there are safety considerations, and other restrictions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also affected women more, resulting in massive job losses for them, especially informal workers, and slower recovery of their microbusinesses. It has also increased their domestic work, deepened gender digital divides, disrupted girls' schooling and placed millions of female health workers at risk.

It further suggests that to chart a gender-sensitive socio-economic recovery, post-COVID-19, the government, the private sector, media, and the social sector need to work together to improve working conditions, reduce wage gaps, increase opportunities for women across sectors, and change mindsets. State governments may establish gender-based employment targets for urban public works. Central or state governments can consider introducing wage subsidies to incentivise hiring women in micro, small and medium enterprises. Governments could introduce mandatory or incentives-based gender targets in skill training institutions. Corporates should track the proportion of women at different levels of seniority across job roles. Firms and NGOs should come together to invest in bridging the digital gender divide as well.

According to a Mc Kinsey report, during Covid, despite the added stress and exhaustion, women were rising to the moment as stronger leaders and taking on the extra work that came with this. Women compared to men at the same level, are doing more to support their teams and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Increasing the number of women in the work force not only has a positive impact on women empowerment but also on the overall development of society and nation. The value addition that women provide in the work force is very substantial. Several empirical studies have gone to show the positive impact, that higher number of women have, on the work place. A Mc Kinsey Report has brought to the fore, that greater gender diversity on the senior executive team corresponded to the higher performance uplift in their data set. For every 10% increase in gender diversity, earnings before interest and taxes rose by 3.5%. Women leaders have a key measurable impact on an organization's bottom line. Women leaders provide a different set of skills, imaginative perspectives, and, importantly, structural and cultural differences that drive effective solutions. A more creative standpoint followed, which was seen to unplug the finer details that could go unnoticed otherwise.The 'centre for creative leadership' research has also shown that more women in workforce resulted in more job satisfaction, lesser burnout, more meaningful work and more organizational dedication not only among women but also among male employees.

[3] Unseen reasons for fall in women's participation in labour force in India: *Financial Express,* online, 2nd March 2021.

[4] Mc Kinsey Report: Women in the Workplace, September 2021.

A United Nations report 'The Time is Now' addresses the gender dimension of corruption and stresses the need to act immediately. This 2020 study underlines the importance of understanding how national, cultural and social norms interact and shape corrupt practices. It emphasizes that gender equality policies can have a positive effect in preventing and countering corruption and also vice versa. The linkage between gender empowerment and lower level of corruption has also been established through various researches/ hard data.

Another research has shown that countries with a greater proportion of women among top decision makers in legislatures have lower levels of income inequality. A greater share of women cabinet ministers resulted in greater levels of confidence in the national governments. It re-established the findings that when women hold more executive leadership positions and their companies are more profitable. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams are 21% more likely to outperform the national average. Increasing access to resources and women's leadership in agriculture could increase agricultural yield by 20-30%. When more women leaders hold cabinet positions, there is a trend towards increased spending on health services. Their decision-making over land and household income improves access to education and healthcare for their families.

Taking cue from the above, at the national level, there is an urgent need to mainstream gender equality in all economic policies at all levels of decision-making. Inadequate representation of women in political, technical, labour force as well as leadership roles is definitely an area of concern. Not only do we need to continue to work on improving the literacy ratio but also to bring about real empowerment through economic participation. Also the fact that girls and women are doing well academically, and the gender gap in education is being reduced, needs to be translated into increased participation of women in the work force and their contribution in economic activities.

The Covid pandemic has further hampered the progress towards gender parity and has amplified the gender gap despite the fact that a large number of women were at the forefront of the fight against Covid as essential workers in health as well as family care. The lockdown and the consequent digitalization/ online nature of work has adversely affected the informal sectors like textiles, handicrafts, and other small scale industries where women participation played an important role. There is an immediate need to revive such industries. The Government, Public Sector Undertakings and other organisations need to take affirmative action to increase the hiring /recruitment of women in the workforce, ensure that equal wages are paid to men and women. They need to create environments that are conducive to working of women, like day care system for children, rest rooms and other basic facilities for women.

Awareness generation for sharing of household burden and parental responsibilities equitably also need to be done. The gender stereotyping in childcare and household chores is to be reduced. All stakeholders should deepen their understanding of the entire gamut of issues which impact participation of the women in economic force and start making systemic changes. More researches could be commissioned to delve deeper into the causes of these gender gaps so that the lacunae can be plugged. At the societal level improving the status of women in society especially focusing on rural areas, remote areas and the economically challenged groups could be undertaken.

Structured skill development of women could be undertaken in identified areas which are likely to take off in future. Areas like cloud computing, data analysis, documentation, supply chain management and other IT based activities which are likely to be the major job providers in near future should be identified and focused on for vocational education and training. If required, re-skilling and re-training need to be done. During pandemic, women emerged as caregivers for the sick and were at the forefront of the medical field, whether it was doctors, nurses and other caregivers. Training / skill development for professional caregivers may also have a huge job potential in the near future.

Organisations could also support women through flexible working hours, support system, etc. Areas of concern like safe transportation to and from the work place especially in rural/ remote areas has to be taken care of ,as top priority. Public transport systems need to be strengthened. Growing use of technology especially the 'push button technology' where running of machine and equipment can be done using minimum force/ strength, can go a long way in increasing the participation of women in fields which were earlier considered male dominated like factory workers, drivers and other equipment operators where heavy machinery is used. Organisations whether public or private sector could also think in terms of making it mandatory for

[5] The Time is now: Addressing the gender dimensions of corruption, UNODC

a certain percentage (around say 20% to begin with) of women workers in each of their labour based contracts where contractual workers are employed in PSUs, etc.

At the managerial level also, despite the fact that criteria like competence, merit are used for recruitment and promotions, due to societal mores, traditional factors, women are traditionally under-represented and do not get their due. This needs to be rectified not only by increasing intake of women but also ensuring that they are not discriminated against in promotions and other career advancement. A lot of good work has been done recently towards women empowerment across sectors. However, the pace has to be picked up.

It is observed that when Panchayati Raj Institutions initially introduced reservation for women, there were several misgivings of real political empowerment being passed on to women as the system of *'Sarpanch patis'* was seen in many states where, though the woman was the *Sarpanch* of the village: however the effective power was wielded by her husband giving the name *Sarpanch pati*. However, it is seen now, after several years, there is steady improvement and now more and more women *sarpanches* are wielding actual power. This goes on to show that once a system is put in place, there may be initial resistance to change but over time these affirmative actions do bring in fruitful results and a real change in the society.

The Ministry of Home Affairs' advisory relating to 30% reservation of women in police force is a very innovative step and several CPMS, BSF, CRPF, ITBP and other battalions where women are being recruited are benefitting from this. In Indian Army also lot of stress is being laid, even by the judiciary to induct more women and bring in a conducive environment for their working.

Recently several women have started working as Chairpersons in many male dominated public sector organizations like SAIL, EIL, SCI and ONGC. Even in judiciary, more women judges are appointed in the High Courts and Supreme Court.

Based on the findings of a committee constituted for women being empowerment , NTPC Limited, one of the public sector undertakings in the power sector, has in 2021 has taken several measures to try and bridge the gender gap. A batch of 50 engineers, exclusively women, was recruited in 2021. This is particularly heartening as in engineering field, there are usually very few women in such organisations. Also several changes were made in the general recruitment and promotion processes rendering them objective so that biases that may creep against women at the time of recruitment and promotions are minimized. Regarding more women in labour force, efforts are being made at various field units. In one of the company (NTPC), in Jharkhand, female operators for operating 100 tonne dumpers /dump trucks are being deployed. To increase participation of women MSE vendors, a special Vendor Development programme was organized by NTPC in association with MSME Development Institute in January 2022.

It is time to bring in more and more of these practices across sectors and across states through a concerted campaign wherein women in large numbers are allowed to enter the workforce and work effectively and contribute towards economic development, progress of the nation and the world at large. ■

Author

Dr Praveen Kumari Singh
(The author is Additional Secretary, CVC)

Trishaljit Sethi
(The author is Director General (Training), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India)

ASHA: SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERIMENT ROOTED IN VILLAGE COMMUNITY

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recognized the contribution of India's 1 million Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is acknowledged that ASHAs facilitate linking households to health facilities, and play pivotal roles in house-to-house surveys, vaccination, public health and Reproductive and Child Health measures.

In many states, ASHAs are involved in national health programmes, and in the response to a range of communicable and non-communicable diseases. They get performance-based payments, not a fixed salary like government servants. There have been agitations demanding employee status for ASHA workers. The idea of performance-based payments was never to pay them a paltry sum – the compensation was expected to be substantial.

Genesis & evolution

The ASHA programme was based on Chhattisgarh's successful Mitanin programme, in which a Community Worker looks after 50 households. The ASHA was to be a local resident, looking after 200 households. The programme had a very robust thrust on the stage-wise development of capacity in selected areas of public health. Dr T Sundararaman and Dr Rajani Ved among others provided a lot of support to this process. Many states tried to incrementally develop the ASHA from a Community Worker to a Community Health Worker, and even to an Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM)/ General Nurse and Midwife (GNM), or a Public Health Nurse.

Important public policy and public management lessons emerge out of the successful experiment with Community Workers who were not the last rung of the government system – rather, they were of the community, and were paid for the services they rendered. The idea was to make her a part of the village community rather than a government employee.

Over 98 per cent ASHAs belong to the village where they reside, and know every household. Their selection involved the community and key resource persons. Educational qualification was a consideration. With newly acquired skills in health care and the ability to connect households to health facilities, she was able to secure benefits for households. She was like a demand-side functionary, reaching patients to facilities, providing health services nearer home.

Building of a cadre

It is a programme that has done well across the country. As skill sets improved, recognition and respect for the ASHA went up. In a way, it became a programme that allowed a local woman to develop into a skilled health worker.
The ASHAs faced a range of challenges: Where to stay in a hospital? How to manage mobility? How to tackle safety issues? The solutions were found in a partnership among frontline workers, panchayat functionaries, and community workers. This process, along with the strengthening of the public infrastructure for health with flexible financing and innovations under the Health Mission and Health and Wellness Centres, led to increased footfall in government facilities. Accountability increased; there would be protests if a facility did not extend quality services.

The Community Worker added value to this process. Incentives for institutional deliveries and the setting up of emergency ambulance services like 108, 102, etc. across most states built pressure on public institutions and improved the mobility of ASHAs. Overall, it created a new cadre of incrementally skilled local workers who were paid based on performance. The ASHAs were respected as they brought basic health services to the doorstep of households.

Issue of compensation

There have been challenges with regard to the performance-based compensation. In many states, the payout is low, and often delayed. The original idea was never to deny the ASHA a compensation that could be even better than a salary – it was only to prevent "governmentalisation", and promote "communitisation" by making her accountable to the people she served.

There were serious debates in the Mission Steering Group, and the late Raghuvansh Prasad Singh made a very passionate plea for a fixed honorarium to ASHAs. Dr Abhay Bang and others wanted the community character to remain, and made an equally strong plea for skill and capacity development of Community Workers. Some states incentivised ASHAs to move up the human resource/ skilling ladder by becoming ANMs/ GNMs and even Staff Nurses after preferential admission to such courses.

The important public policy lessons are the need to incrementally develop a local worker keeping accountability with the community, make performance-based payments, and provide a demand-side push with simultaneous aug-

mentation of services in public systems. The system can sustain and grow only if the compensation is adequate, and the ASHA continues to enjoy the confidence of the community.

Debate over status

There is a strong argument to grant permanence to some of these positions with a reasonable compensation as sustaining motivation. The incremental development of a local resident woman is an important factor in human resource engagement in community-linked sectors. This should apply to other field functionaries such as ANMs, GNMs, Public Health Nurses as well.

It is equally important to ensure that compensation for performance is timely and adequate. Ideally, an ASHA should be able to make more than the salary of a government employee, with opportunities for moving up the skill ladder in the formal primary health care system as an ANM/ GNM or a Public Health Nurse. Upgrading skill sets and providing easy access to credit and finance will ensure a sustainable opportunity to earn a respectable living while serving the community. Strengthening access to health insurance, credit for consumption and livelihood needs at reasonable rates, and coverage under pro-poor public welfare programmes will contribute to ASHAs emerging as even stronger agents of change. ■

Author

Amarjeet Sinha

(The author is a retired civil servant who was associated with the design and capacity-building thrust of the ASHA programme for more than five years)

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION DAY LECTURE ON WATER SECURITY FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

On this occasion, I would also like to pay my homage to the founder of this 105-year-old institution, who did a great service to humanity and future generations. So, my sincere gratitude goes to the founder of this institution His Highness 7th Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan. It was his foresight, his vision that today, Osmania University, the seventh oldest University in India continues to produce several great human minds ever since its inception.
If someone has to learn about leadership or has to build a leadership development programme, they must come here to get insights from this institution. I am indeed intrigued by the fact that so many leaders have come out of this place in so many walks of life. I think it would be a great experience and learning to dive into its rich past and present. I am sure Telangana as well as the people sitting here must be very proud of this fact. And I am sure that many of our future leaders are already sitting here, and in the coming years, we will witness brilliance flourishing from this university.

Friends! Let me congratulate you on this foundation day, that you as a faculty member, as a student, and as an alumnus, are associated with this prestigious institution.
Coming to today's lecture, I compliment Professor Ravinder, Vice-chancellor, and my very dear friend Mr. K V Prasad for coming up with this idea and choosing the theme 'Water Security to Sustain Economic Growth and Prosperity'. I was requested to be part of this gala event, first of its kind, and share my ideas and vision of the water sector. More importantly, I am here to address a crucial question – How to manage water as a resource, which is playing the most critical part in our socio-economic development?

At times, when something is very near to us and is readily available, we don't realize its value. I think many of us in some way or other understood the value of 'Oxygen' during this Covid-19 pandemic. We had always taken the availability of 'clean air' for granted. But during this pandemic, we realized how valuable this resource is. Our needs and quest to survive do not imply in any way that we have the right to destroy our natural resources by cutting down trees or producing uncontrolled Carbon dioxide (CO_2), Carbon monoxide (CO), or many other polluting agents. We must be sensitive and start thinking about the use and abuse of nature and natural resources.

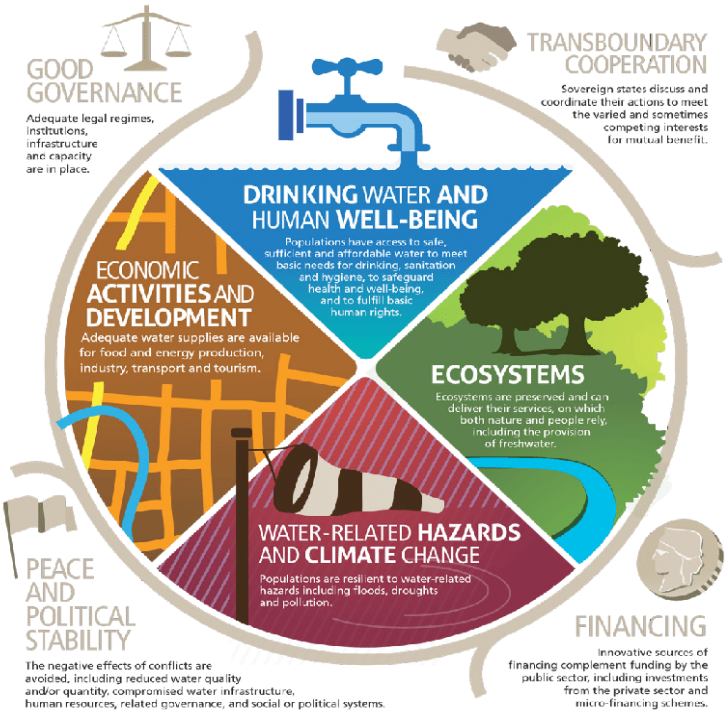
Imagine the ways in which we struggled for oxygen during the COVID-19 pandemic. I don't think we should be waiting for any kind of pandemic to realize the importance and value of water. I don't think we can afford it. So friends, today's topic is 'water security to sustain economic growth and prosperity.' In a country like ours, with 1.37 billion, that is 137 crores people, every person is having his or her own aspirations and challenges to meet. With expanding economic activities and improving quality of life, demand for water is rising manifold.

Telangana has faced the issue of water shortages in the past. Many states in India have faced challenges in socio-economic development and economic growth, because of the unavailability of adequate water. In a country like ours, where almost more than 40 percent of the area falls under the arid or semi-arid region, 256 out of 734 districts are water-stressed. With such statistics, one can realize the value of water. However, whether water is a finite or an infinite resource is something to ponder upon. Whatever water we have under the ground or over the ground, is limited in quantity. Also, the water cycle is known to all of us. From the Himalayas through the snowfall to the underground reservoirs that we have, the finiteness of the resource is evident. Talking about the number of rainy days, these are about 20 to 30 days. The water we receive through this rainfall must be stored and used judiciously. Take, for example, food grains; keeping in mind our future needs, we grow, store, and use them. If it is a drought year, the food grains stocked up help in mitigating the food crisis. This kind of traditional wisdom has existed before and is age-old in the country. Similarly, such kind of wisdom needs to be underscored for water. Whatever water we get from rainfall, we have no choice but to store it without allowing it to get polluted. The Telangana State Planning Board vice-chairperson is sitting here, and I am sure that he will be taking this forward.

I think we will realize how it is nearly becoming impossible to construct big dams. It has become next to impossible because of environmental and anthropogenic factors. Hence, storing water becomes paramount. There can be only two ways of doing so. Firstly, existing infrastructure in the form of dams, reservoirs, or tanks needs to be improved to increase and utilize their full capacities. In the morning, I was told about it in detail and I'm very proud of the fact that it has been done in Telangana. All water tanks in Telangana have been de-silted, repaired, and restored. This is the first step towards achieving water security. Secondly, the storage of rainwater can be done through aquifer recharge. That too has been done here and, in many states.

I have spent a considerable time of my life in Gujarat. The years 1985, 1986, and 1987 were drought years. In those

years, Rajasthan and Gujarat faced many challenges in ensuring water for everyone. The need for a framework for water-stressed areas was realized. As a result, National Drinking Water Mission was launched at the national level. From 1999 to 2001, eight states were reeling under drought and water crisis. These circumstances led to a commitment to resolve and avert the crisis and the development and use of various water-related technologies over time.



In Gujarat, in those years, 8,000 to 10,000 water tankers and trains were used to ensure drinking water for people. In 1999-2000, the GDP growth of Gujarat was 1.2 percent. In the following year, it was negative; that is – 4.89 percent. Concomitantly, in the five-year period from 1997 to 2002, Gujarat's GDP grew by only 2.6 percent. We witnessed and lived through those kinds of scenarios. With more than 28 percent population comprising youth and rising expectations of people to provide jobs, better facilities, and improved standards of living, the administration and governance were focused on providing drinking water rather than creating opportunities.

Against this backdrop, at the beginning of 2002, I was fortunate enough to be given an opportunity to address the challenges emerging in Gujarat. Through several initiatives, we started building a water-secure state. One of the most important of all activities was a decentralized, demand-driven, and community-managed water supply programme. It was done by making sure that water becomes everyone's business. From 2002 onwards, water governance meant involving people, restoring water bodies, de-silting tanks and reservoirs; interconnecting basins, and inter-basin transfers of water. Today, in Gujarat, just like in Telangana, people are not facing any kind of water scarcity.

I was told that farmers in Telangana are now growing two crops. That indeed is possible when water is managed properly at all levels. Imagine the kind of socio-economic development that happens when a state becomes water-secure. These are the kind of models that have been developed in the country. Let me give you a few facts and figures and I urge people like you to take this forward.

In 1951, the country's per capita availability of freshwater was 5,177 cubic meters. It declined to 1,508 cubic meters in 2014. It is estimated to decline further to 1,465 cubic meters by 2025 and 1,235 cubic meters by 2050. If it declines any further to around 1,000 – 1,100 cubic meters, then India could become a water-stressed country.

We must understand the gravity of this situation. Our population is increasing and so is our demand for water in all sectors. We have no choice but to make more and more water available to our citizens for conducting different activities. Although water cannot be produced, it can surely be recycled. Whatever we get from the rainfall, we must catch it, store it and use it. You might say that there is a whole sea or ocean surrounding the peninsula and we can desalinate it and provide for meeting all our needs. This can be very well taken as an argument. But as we all know, at this juncture, it is next to impossible for a country like India to use desalination technology to fulfil the massive water demands of its people.

In India, absolute poverty has come down rapidly in the last ten to twelve years. The study shows that today less than 10 percent of people are below absolute poverty, and the goal for next 6 – 7 years, is that not a single person should be living below the poverty line by 2030. If absolute poverty can be brought down from 22 percent to below ten percent in a span of ten years, then the goal to alleviate this ten percent population above the absolute poverty line can also be truly achieved.

If we can provide water security to our populations; if our farmers are able to grow more than one crop, if we are able to save the precious time and energy of our women which gets wasted in fetching water, then we would be able to convert their economic activities towards achieving high economic growth. Hence, for India to achieve the goal of a 5 trillion economy by 2025, we must ensure equitable water distribution.

If some states are having floods and other states are reeling under droughts, that also highlights the issues in water management. To address these gaps, the Government of India is working on the inter-basin transfer of water. Wherever plenty of water is available and allowed to get wasted, we may channelize it to the areas where it is needed most. I personally feel that the time has come for us to focus on sound water management. Efficiency in water management is the key to improved quality of life. You must have noticed that in the last 7 – 8 years, the Gov-

ernment of India has taken many initiatives to achieve water security.

Before we think of collecting rainwater, the first and foremost step is to put an end to open defecation. If left unchecked, one can very well imagine the quality of the rainwater collected. This was the very reason that in 2014, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched to make the country 'open-defecation free'. Similarly, the revival of rivers was taken up because the realization had dawned that water is at the centre of all developmental initiatives. Namami Gange project was started and now thirteen more rivers have been taken up for revival and rejuvenation.

Also, in 2019, at the national level, a new ministry was formed by the name 'Ministry of Jal Shakti', which now deals with all aspects of water management. Whether it is demand, supply, technology, or utility development, the ministry caters to it all. It was also in 2019 that for the first time 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan' was launched. The idea was to 'make water everyone's business' and involve every individual in water management. Thereafter, a mission with an outlay of Rs 3 lakh 60 thousand crores was started by the name 'Jal Jeevan Mission'. Its goal has been to provide clean tap water to every rural household so that our mothers, sisters, and our family members would not have to run errands in the search for water. I am happy to acknowledge that in Telangana, under the Mission Bhagirathi, this has been achieved. There are many other states or UTs, wherein now more than 90% of rural households have tap water connections.

Simultaneously, to decentralise water governance and involve our panchayats and women groups in rural areas, under the 15th Finance Commission, for a period of six years, around Rs. 1 lakh seventy-two thousand crores have been allocated to Panchayati Raj Institutions. Also, every state is getting tied grants for panchayats to manage water and sanitation annually.Under Jal Jeevan Mission, source development and source sustainability are equally important, so that the developed water supply system remains functional throughout its lifespan. I have been apprised of the fact that today in Telangana, there is no need to supply water by road tankers to people as every household has access to clean tap water. This one-time investment in the infrastructure is a first great step, but its long-term operation and maintenance are equally important. To sustain it and ensure that people continue to have access to clean tap water is the need of the hour. If we think through this, we might come to agree on the fact that while in rural households of Telangana, we might have succeeded in delivering clean tap water but in urban areas, the situation might be different. We still lack the confidence to drink and use water *directly* from the tap. In seminars and gatherings, we use bottled water instead. Surely, we do so because of convenience, but at times, the need for bottled water arises because of our lack of trust in tap water supply.

In every village, sensor-based IoT devices need to be installed so that the quality of tap water is checked, and people can have confidence that the water is safe to be consumed. To ensure that our children drink safe water, we all should know that the water that we drink is indeed potable. Hence, the next stage of utility development to ensure clean tap water is that in every supply system, there must be sensor-based devices propelled by Internet of Things (IoT), available on everyone's phone for him or her to check the status and quality of water.

Imagine that in our homes, we can test one's blood glucose levels but we are yet unable to test our water! Despite all the technological advancements, we have yet not developed a handy instrument that can check for water impurities. Hence, we must empower our citizens with real-time technologies, such as a domestic water quality testing device for drinking water, with the help of which they can inform their supplier that the water that it is distributed is clean or not. The ease of pouring water into that device, testing it, uploading the data, and ask for the water distributor to respond with a solution in real-time will make the water governance transparent and accountable, thereby putting the system in place.

In our country, we have more than 2,000 water quality testing laboratories in the country. However, most of us do not know where they are located. To bridge the gap between the citizens and water governance, the Government of India has opened all these laboratories to the public so that any citizen can go and get their water sample tested at a nominal cost. Afterwards, they can avail their reports online. That is the way forward to a transparent water governance. The time has come that our water supply or public health departments aim to cross the first level and reach the next stage. In this exercise, the youth of India, academicians, and scientists have immense responsibility on their shoulders. We need to develop the kinds of technologies and innovations that are futuristic, sustainable, and citizen-friendly.

Let's take another aspect. When we export one kilogram of rice, do we think of it in terms of the amount of water exported virtually through it? Whenever we export any highly water-intensive crop, we are not just exporting that particular quantity of crop or vegetable or fruit. We are essentially exporting water that is hidden in its produce. If there is an indiscriminate use of water in the production of such commodities, we would not be able to achieve water security. Some research papers have argued that it takes around 1,800 liters of water to produce one kilogram of rice. Exporting such amounts of virtual water from any arid and semi-arid regions of India would lead to a water crisis in the future. What we need is education and awareness generation, and a kind of economic model that needs to be developed by young and vibrant minds like you, which makes sure that we do not trap ourselves in a grim situation through such exports.

Let us take another example. Most of us on average, get around 150 – 200 litres of water per person per day in our homes. If we think carefully and check our consumption patterns, we will realise that we do not really need this much amount of water. In cities like Hyderabad or Secunderabad, an average each family must be getting around 1,000 litres of water per day. As per my understanding, an individual needs around 4 – 5 litres of water for drinking; 5 – 10 litres for cooking, and around 10 – 20 litres for bathing and washing. This drops down to around 50 – 60 litres of water use per day, an amount that can easily satisfy the daily need for water for each person. But our water consumption is far higher than what is needed. If we try to figure out our water consumption, we will conclude that it is not in washing or bathing rather, it lies in the flushing of our faecal matter! The water that we need to dispose of 300 – 400 grams of human excreta, amounts to more than 100 litres. Through gravity, the faecal matter is taken 20 – 30 km away from your locality to water treatment plants, it is then treated and sometimes even unfortunately so, released to natural ecosystems and habitats. The so-called modern sewer system was developed more than a hundred years back. Today, this accounts to be the most inefficient and redundant technology, given the water shortages we have in and around the world.

New innovations and technologies need to be developed and make the human excreta disposal systems sustainable and efficient. We have travelled in airplanes, and we know how efficiently human excreta is collected with the use of just 100 – 150 ml of water with what is known as vacuum toilets. We must think hard about the reasons for not inculcating such practices and technologies into our neighbourhoods, communities, and building structures. In modern buildings and apartments, the need of the hour is to collect the faecal matter through suction technologies. The proper management of faecal matter only requires a few simple steps namely, removal of odour, disinfection, combustion, utilization of gas for electricity, and what remains can be used as manure. In this way, consumption can be reduced from a hundred litres to a few litres in the disposal of human excreta.

The water that is used in the kitchen or bathing can also be collected separately, disinfected, and put into secondary uses. The demand for water can thus be readily reduced from 200 litres per person to around 60 litres per person. Out of these 60 litres, we can recover around 40 litres through reuse and recycling. This is the way forward for sustainable living that is not just water-friendly but also environment-friendly and futuristic. I am standing on the podium at one of the greatest universities. It is over here that I urge young minds to think and address such emergent issues and work on solving them. We need such leaders to emerge and provide a kind of leadership that converges sustainable development with environmental protection and judicious resource management. More importantly, we

need thinking beings who can move beyond just consumption and evolve best practices in all walks of life.

When it comes to agriculture, since India is largely dependent on its success, if we do not use technologies like micro-irrigation, and keep using flood irrigation, we will face huge water shortages in the near future. In Gujarat, we began micro-irrigation in a big way and our irrigated area doubled in ten years. The solution again, lies in water-use efficiency measures. Adopting such economic policies where we keep a tab on water consumption, through its measurement, is the key. There is a need for a revolution in our understanding of various aspects of water. Our knowledge systems need to be better equipped with modern-day challenges.

Finally, I come to the policy interventions, which we need to be understood and adopted:
Water must come into our day-to-day thinking and discussions, and it must become everyone's business, not just of the government alone.
Rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge for storage in our watersheds and aquifers is the way forward. There is no alternative to this. For this to succeed, the whole nation must remain Open Defecation Free (ODF) to save water from major impurities.
The usage of pesticides must be limited, and policy intervention is required for the same. We thoroughly need to reduce our spending on treating surface water or drawn from aquifers that are polluted by chemicals. This can be done simply by appreciating that prevention is better than cure.
We need to revive our old water storage systems by using traditional knowledge and wisdom. We have the example of Late shri Vishweswarya, who created the system of two reservoirs in southern India, which shows how people were involved in the process of conservation of water. We must capture that energy, where people get involved in rainwater harvesting, conservation, and recharge of groundwater.
Water use efficiency needs to become the norm. 85% of the water is used in agriculture and if we reduce that consumption by 5%, 10%, or 20%, huge water resources can become available for industrial or domestic use. Water use efficiency holds the key to water security.

Recycling water is the key. My experience with the government, be it in Gujarat, or at the national level since 1997 in the water sector, has taught me a lot. We are talking about consumption per family, per village, or overall, but none of us are really talking about the recovery of water. For water recoveries, there is no authentic data available. I appeal to this university, students, and faculty to investigate this aspect of water management. Under Mission Bhagirath, we need to know how much water is being recovered. With the data, we can re-evaluate and focus on the recycling of water. Administrators and engineers need to be examining this kind of data on a daily basis.

Usage of technological interventions is a must. One would realize that in the recent past hardly any path-breaking technological intervention has taken place in the water supply sector or management. Sprinklers and certain domestic devices for water conservation have come up, but issues like disposal of human excreta, recovery of water, or measuring and monitoring have not been in focus. Without measuring the usage of water, there can be no management of water. We must use technological interventions, especially in Hyderabad and Bengaluru, which are the

mecca of technology. My request to the university, and the Deputy Chairman is that sensor-based IoT devices are installed where the quantity of water supplied and recovery of water is measured. Sensor-based IoT devices and other automated technology should be part of this institute so that everyone knows how much water is consumed and recharged.

Leadership roles for women are the need of the hour. In water management, especially in rural areas, WASH committees need to be set up with mandatory 50% women as a sub-committee of the panchayat to operate, maintain and manage water supply, greywater, and local water resource management. Imagine a situation in a village where there is a groundwater-based drinking water supply and a farmer puts a tube well next to this for irrigation purposes. This will impact all households as the water supply gets interrupted. Such situations need to be tackled and water conservation activities need to be carried out at large scale. In the last 30 – 40 years, fetching water has been the biggest issue for women and young children. In Gujarat, the government has done its best to make sure that women are empowered within their communities to take up water issues in their own hands. Hence, women should be empowered to take leadership roles, control, and command to achieve water security. This positive intervention, wherein every village has a, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) committee comprising 50% to 100% women members responsible for operating, maintaining, and managing water supply and carrying out quality tests, will bring a sea change. Imagine if women were trained and sensitized about testing, treating, and managing water, it will improve the health of not just one family but the whole community. Such investment in women and girls can bring tremendous change and enhance productivity.

When we say, water should be everyone's business, it means sharing knowledge, information, and experiences and working together with academic and technological institutions, state governments and their departments, parastatal organizations, foundations, and NGOs to change people's lives. The motto with which Jal Jeevan Mission started was 'building partnership, working together, and changing lives'. I think that this should be the motto for all of us, to make sure that we achieve better living standards, quality of life, and prosperity. ■

Author

Shri Bharat Lal
(The author is Director General, National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG))

PMGSY, RURAL ROADS PROJECT IN INDIA

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) programme contributed to India's efforts to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The economic and social impacts of PMGSY have been significant and substantial for enabling the stakeholders in terms of better opportunities and sustainable development in India.

A World Bank study on the socio-economic impacts of PMGSY (2021) has documented the following (i) PMGSY improved accessibility, particularly in hilly areas, as a result of which people in hilly areas made more trips to work per week; (ii) PMGSY enhanced the access to economic opportunities which triggered a shift in the structure of employment in rural India from farm to non-farm employment, particularly non-farm employment outside the habitation; (iii) PMGSY improved farm-to-farm connectivity, with PMGSY roads yielding an eight percent increment in the share of crops transported to markets for sale, a tripling over levels was observed before the PMGSY roads were built and (iv) PMGSY roads had a significant positive impact on human capital formation in rural India, with equal benefits to the boys and girls.

Relevance of the Project

The World Bank's Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) for India 2018 had identified improving connectivity as a priority area which considered improving rural connectivity to be a very important aspect for giving the people better opportunities and sustainable development. It was believed that adequate all-weather rural connectivity could lead to improvement in educational and health outcomes, more occupational choices, foster female entrepreneurship, higher incomes, and also lead to improved connectivity of villages to markets, schools, and hospitals. To realise these objectives, it was imperative to work with states so as to build robust maintenance policies and dedicated funds for maintenance. The 2018-22 vision laid out by NITI Aayog, the policy think-tank of the Government of India ("Strategy for New India@75", November 2018) has recognized the PMGSY Program's efforts at accelerating the pace of connecting habitations and stressed the importance of transforming the economy in rural areas which is integrated through the creation of modern rural infrastructure and resilient value chain system.

Achievement of the Objectives / Outcomes

A World Bank study as well as several research studies undertaken on the socio-economic impacts of PMGSY have documented the following:

Efficacy: The strengthening of the systems and processes of the program for the expansion and maintenance of all - season rural access roads, resulted in enhanced road connectivity, and improvement in economic opportunities and social services sector for the beneficiaries in the participating states.

Enhancement of Road Connectivity: The Project increased the proportion of the rural population with better connectivity to all-season roads.

Strengthening of systems and processes of the program for the expansion and maintenance of all-season rural access roads: The project supported the national and state- level systems of PMGSY. This led to the expansion and maintenance of all-season rural road access through the strengthening of institutions, which targeted the improvement of the program's policies, institutions, systems, and implementation mechanisms.

Prioritising the use of green designs which are climate resilient along with new technologies: Green and climate resilient designs" were achieved by constructing / rehabilitating roads using "Environmentally- optimized Design Guidelines. (Adopted by The National Rural Roads Development Agency, NRRDA),

Improved asset management: Technical assistance under the project helped 19 states in India to establish road maintenance policies, and to prepare a generic framework for developing similar Asset Management Plans (AMPs).

Effectiveness of Public Expenditure: The project supported the overall governance for rural roads delivery by: i) establishing an inventory database; ii) operationalizing & capacitating Geographic Information System (GIS) Cells in States; iii) improving road safety management; iv) improving project management.

Improved Institutional Effectiveness: The project supported the training of Government officials, by enhancing gender-based capacities, and the development of an effective citizen feedback mechanism.

Road Safety Management: The project incorporated road safety engineering measures in the designs of rural roads. A road safety manual was issued for the use of rural road engineers.

Environmental and Social Aspects: The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and the Environmental Codes of Practice (ECOPs) developed under the Project have been mainstreamed in the design and construction of both project roads and other PMGSY roads.

Strengthening Programme Management: Key and central program documents and tools were developed / improved, including the Detailed Project Report (DPR) Manual; the Online Management, Monitoring and Accounting System (OMMAS); the e-procurement system; and Procurement & Contract Management Manual. These helped in mainstreaming the overall operations, technical design, quality control and accounting, and safeguard provisions in PMGSY.

Improved economic Opportunities and Social Services for Beneficiary Communities: Over the medium to long-term, improved rural connectivity led to improvement in economic opportunities and social services for beneficiary communities in the participating states. Multiple studies have shown that rural roads, in particular those under PMGSY, have had positive impacts not only on poverty alleviation, but also on many other socio-economic and human development indicators, and on almost all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These studies observed growth in small industries and businesses, and even an incremental shift out of agriculture and into the non-farm labor sector. Some of the studies observed a trend towards urbanization in the immediate area where rural road connectivity improved.

Conclusion

Various studies were undertaken by eminent researchers with reference to the PMGSY. The findings of these studies are encapsulated as under:

Title of the Study	**The Road to Opportunities in Rural India: The Economic and Social Impacts of PMGSY, Matias Herrera Dhappe, Muneeza Mehmood Alam, and Luis Andres, Mobility and transport connectivity Series, The World Bank Group, 2021**
Main Findings	This report presented the results of an impact evaluation of PMGSY that uses a difference – in – difference approach and panel data from the states of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan collected in 2009 and 2017. Key findings include: PMGSY improved accessibility, particularly in hilly areas. On an average, people travelled to their destinations, particularly work, in shorter time, thanks to improved connectivity, but they did not change the distance travelled. Reductions in travel time were greater in hilly areas. PMGSY increased access to economic opportunities, triggering a change in the structure of employment in rural India. The improved accessibility provided by PMGSY roads triggered a shift from farm to non- farm employment, particularly non-farm employment outside the habitation. PMGSY improved farm-to-market connectivity, but it had limited impact on farming practices. PMGSY roads yielded an eight-percent increase in the share of crops transported to markets for sale, a tripling over levels was observed before PMGSY roads were built. PMGSY roads had a positive impact on human capital formation in rural India, with boys and girls benefiting equally. Improved rural connectivity provided a long-term and sustained boost in the living standards of rural populations as it allowed various households to accumulate wealth and human capital. In the habitations studied, rural roads had a positive but small effect on the average wealth of households, equivalent to adding small appliances (like a pressure cooker and radio) to the household's assets.

Title of the Study	**Rural Road Infrastructure & Agriculture Production: Evidence from India, Yogita Shamdasani, National University of Singapore (NUS), 2021**
Main Findings	This paper estimated the effects of improvements in infrastructure under a large rural road-building program on production decision in agriculture. Remote households that gain access to program roads diversify their crop portfolio, adopt modern agricultural technologies and increase hired- labor use. Supporting evidence suggests that program roads increased the mobility of agricultural workers by integrating village labor markets across space which in turn enabled the adoption of labor – intensive production practices, these findings highlight the importance of last- mile connectivity in remote areas across the developing world. This suggested that there are potential gains that can arise from coupling infrastructure projects with other commonly used policy instruments such as fertilizer and irrigation subsidies. Further, given that treatment effects are heterogeneous across space, the paper argued that spatial targeting should be made an important consideration when designing such policy interventions. Findings from the paper also demonstrated that gains accrued to agricultural household beyond the households targeted by the program, highlighting the importance of incorporating network effects in the design of transport policy.

Title of the Study	**Discussion paper on Rural Roads and the SDGs, Mr. S. Vijay Kumar, TERI, 2019**
Main Findings	This paper highlighted SDGs as an analytical framework to understand the role and potential of the rural road network. Rural roads and the complementary policies and strategies in fact have impacts not only on poverty, but on many other socio- economic and human development indicators, and almost all the SDGs. Most of the impacts are positive, and even those with negative consequences can be managed for reducing adverse impacts. The analysis in this Paper indicates that in the rural areas of India, not only those responsible for achieving each SDG leverage the potential of the road connectivity for the purpose at strategy and implementation stages, but also the authorities responsible for rural roads must make institutional, policy and management improvements to ensure that rural roads have the best potential for the purpose. This would require the creation of coordination mechanisms like "State Road and Transport Development Boards" and regulatory systems like a "Rural Roads Management Act", as well as rational asset management strategies for the entire road network.

Title of the Study	**Market Access and Structural Transformation: Evidence from Rural Roads in India. Sam Asher, Paul Novosad, 2016.**
Main Findings	This paper highlighted that road construction leads to a large reallocation of labour out of agriculture and into (manual) labour markets. The results are strongest in locations close to large cities, where commuting and short-term migration are expected to be most profitable. Rather than facilitating growth of the non-farm sector in rural areas, road construction appears to facilitate the access of rural labour to external employment. These labour market outcomes are associated with a nearly ten percent increase in earnings. Findings of this paper suggested that the poor state of rural transportation infrastructure in developing countries must be taken seriously as a barrier to the efficient allocation of labour across space and sectors. The paper finds no such evidence of a rise in migration following road construction, lending credence to research proposing factors other than the state of rural transport infrastructure to explain India's low rates of rural- urban migration. This paper highlighted a growing literature on the linkages in labour markets across space and suggests that transportation infrastructure may be an important determinant of flows of capital and labour between rural and urban areas in developing countries. It provided evidence that workers can participate in non-agricultural labour markets without moving to cities when market access to urban areas is sufficiently high.

This paper is a Review of the PMGSY in India. The contribution of the World Bank has been seminal to the project. The impacts of PMGSY are not only positive but also significant and substantial for enabling the various stakeholders in terms of better economic opportunities and social services for beneficiary communities in the participating states.

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Author

Dr. Sarita Mishra Kolhe, IRS
(The author is the Secretary, Interim Boards for Settlement, I, II & III, New Delhi. Income Tax Department, Ministry of Finance, Government of India)

INDIA: LOSING GUILDS, LOSING THE INDUSTRIAL RACE

The raging unemployment crescendo in contemporary India is attributed to the systemic lack of industrial jobs in the manufacturing sector. Some Eurocentric scholars regard Hindu socio-cultural values, institutions and clergy (Brahmins) as anathema to economic and industrial development. If it is so then how did India a millennium back in 1000 AD as the Golden Bird had a share of about 30%[1] in World GDP that dwindled to 4.2% *on India's Independence? Did India fail to take policy leaf out from the ancient India Statecraft for creating a conducive ecosystem for 'mass manufacturing jobs' in modern India?*

Did Hindu ideals or life goal orientations (*Dharma, Artha, Kama,* and *Moksha*) straitjackets development of entrepreneurial spirit, innovations and curtailed attainment of economic prosperity for India bequeathed by the industrial revolution in the West?

According to Eurocentric scholars, the class that also includes some Indian scholars, the three principal culprits are religious doctrines that value renunciation (*tyaga*), contentment (*santosh*), predestination, caste (*jati*) and clergical (*brahminical*) orthodoxy.

The political and socio-economic institutions in ancient and medieval society were bequeathed by underpinning cultural-religious values. So taking first things first, the Eurocentric perspective fails to look beyond the Oriental charm especially in the context of Hinduism. Notwithstanding the spiritual undercurrent, Hinduism is fundamentally hinged on materialism and celebrates these-worldly pleasures. The credence to this is the celebrated *Gita,* which builds on *karamsu kausalam* i.e. excellence in works, *Arthashastra* (the science of wealth), *Tantra, Lokayata* (the sect of people), *Kamasutra* (text on love and sexuality), *Ananga Ranga* (stage of love), etc.

In *Srimad Bhagvata* (4.25.38) the qualities of a desirable man extolled to King Puranjana are-a wise one who excels in contemporary and spiritual knowledge is innovative and also adept in female sexuality (*ratijnam*) and one lacking in all these, are foolish and beasts.

In the Hindu way of living, the pursuit of *Artha* and *Kama* was expected to be hemmed by *Dharma*. This was necessary for exercise unbridled craving for worldly pleasures that may instigate injustice, deceit, anger and unwarranted violence in the journey of individual life through different stages. *Dharma* here refers to both moral universalism and moral particularism (*swadharma*) that anchors human life for the highest good. The whole pantheon of Gods in Hindu mythology Kamadeva, Rati, Viswakarma, Twastar, Kuber, Lakshmi, etc. are ordained to develop, motivate and foster innovations and materialistic attainments in human life. Interestingly, the most recent manifestation of this is the news of consecration of 'Corona Devi' idol in a temple in Coimbatore to protect people and their loved ones from the deadly disease ravaging the nation-young and old, rich and poor.

Shrenis-the turbochargers of the Golden Bird

In ancient India, one of the socio-economic institutional manifestations of materialism in the Hindu doctrines was the emergence of *Shrenis* (Guilds) that predated Gautam Buddha (480-400BC). The *Shrenis* turbocharged ancient India's prosperity with autonomous, decentralized, and innovative manufacturing and commerce arrangements. *Arthashastra* regarded Guilds force or *Shrenibala* as a pivotal organ of the six-fold army of the King.

The *Shrenis* with their insignia, flags, coins, seals also enjoyed the liberty of arranging for their own safety. They even invited Kings who in turn used to deposit money with the Guilds and were paid handsome interests on them. The *Shrenis* in return earned not only whopping investments for manufacturing,but also political prestige from the royal deposits. The Guilds apart from the ordinary court of justice in mercantile matters also acted as Banks of public deposit for common people. The competition among Guilds to attract maximum deposits from both elites and laity and mutual lending among themselves provided almost pure competition benefits to depositors who used to earn to the tune of 15 per cent typical rate of interest. The huge capital with Guilds optimized with the *laissez-faire* policy of Kings and provided the momentous impetus to manufacturing and commerce in India that earned it the sobriquet of 'the golden bird'.

Political turmoil and weakening of Shrenis

The political upheaval that followed the death of Harsha and the period of invasion from 700 AD onwards that culminated with the establishment of Sultanate rule in 1206 AD led to the fossilization of Guilds into castes and subcastes. The economic cooperation among *Shrenis* withered away because they lost status as Banks of royalty. This was primarily because Islamic law prohibited earning of interest (riba) on deposits. The public deposits too dwindled owing to disruption of trade and commerce due to political upheavals and the epoch of horrendous periodic misfortune of famines that largely sapped humans and humanity in India after the 10th Century AD.

Shrenis as springboard of subcaste crystallization

The early medieval period witnessed acceleration in the crystallization of castes and subcastes from the *Shrenis* such as oilmen, artisans, moneylenders, betel sellers, traders, weavers, etc. This was mainly to ensure political and economic security to the members in periods of political and economic pandemonium. This stymied professional flexibility existed earlier owing to flourishing manufacturing and vibrant trade links due to great demand for Indian goods in the overseas markets of Europe and Central Asia through the artery of commercial prosperity – the fabled silk route.

In the pre-sultanate era, *Shrenis* needed greater trained manpower and so were quite liberal in including new members from other *Shrenis*. They nurtured novices/new entrants with necessary financial help and induction training to equip them with basic skills and knowledge of enterprise including *Shrenidharma*. The transformation of *shrenis* as castes and subcastes with endogamy as a pivotal and universal feature further stonewalled the institution. This is also substantiated in a 2016 study by the National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG) Kalyani, West Bengal, where the researchers by looking at the block length of ancestral genes pinpointed the era when endogamy in Hindu society began to emerge as a central feature that prevented the mixing of varnas. The epoch of caste as an endogamous dominant institution started sporadically in the 5th AD and accelerated with political and economic turmoil after 800 AD and almost crystallized in the medieval period barring a mixing of forest-dwelling tribes that ended a couple of centuries back.

Further, the withdrawal of state legitimacy to *Shrenis* to arrange for their own safety and to act as an ordinary court of justice dealt a blow to their prestige. The regressive outlook and political upheaval in medieval India led to falling in India's share of Global GDP from almost 30% at the end of the first millennium in 1000 AD to 25% during Akbar rule which was marked by greater political stability and consensual administration.

Guilds - receding in India and their emergence in Europe as an engine of Industrial revolution

It is unfortunate to note that when the Guilds as an engine of economic and social prosperity in India were gasping for life, Guilds in the Middle East and Europe were at the formative and fragmented stage. The Guilds in Europe turned out to be the nucleus of the industrial and technological revolution.

In Europe, the Great Divergence resulted in the technological and industrial revolution in the traditional social fabric of pre-industrial Europe where rights and liberties were extended to groups, estates and other corporate identities rather than to individual citizens. The group and estate based rights in Europe, Japan and elsewhere with prohibitions to inter-group mobility were similar to caste-based rights in India. It will be interesting to note that in England the birthplace of the Industrial revolution, the adult franchise to all women was granted in 1928.

Catalyst of the entrepreneurial growth in modern India-caste associations

The various studies of entrepreneurial growth in India by prominent sociologists like Milton Singer, Edward Shils, Helen Lamb points to the adaptive and fluid character of traditional institutions like castes (*jatis*), extended families and kinship. Helen Lamb observes that "One is puzzled by the apparent contradiction between the hierarchical view of society as contained in Indian caste and the vigour of Indian trading community".[2]

Caste associations were instrumental for seed money, investment and savings in the developmental phase of enterprises. The new entrepreneurs in British Raj had not emerged from traditional merchant castes or hereditarily rich. Bengalis, Parsis, and Gujaratis emerged as industrial entrepreneurs and began to catch up with the British entrepreneurs at the dawn of the 20th century. This was especially in shipbuilding, locomotives, colliery, Iron and steelworks, hydroelectric works, cotton textile industries, etc.

Clergy (Brahmins) and social reforms

Clergy (Brahmins), the socio-cultural elite among Hindus were not mere cultural transmission belts of alleged 'ossified' cultural values and principles rather they equally spearheaded the *Bhakti* movement. The *Bhakti* movement can be labelled as 'proletarianisation of Hindu culture' that advocated the message of egalitarianism, truth, non-violence and devotion among the masses.

The malleability was historical because the advent of Islamic rule dealt a deadly blow to the status privileges of *Brahmins* who were still smouldering in the ideological heat and concomitant cultural dominance of Buddhism and Jainism till the 8th century.

Edward Shils, an eminent sociologist, observes that Brahmins have been forerunners of westernization in India. In British India, the English educated Brahmins were at the vanguard of radical social reforms movements – Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra, Veda Samaj in Madras, Arya Samaj in North-West India that effectively fought horrendous social evils like *sati*, infanticide, slavery, untouchability, the familial abdication of widows, etc.[3]

Colonialism - the death knell for manufacturing in India

'Colonialism' significantly contributed to the decimation of the manufacturing sector and jobs in India. This was primarily because the promotion and perpetuation of colonial rule necessitated the introduction of toxic ideological, administrative and economic structures. This was indispensable to disrupt, destroy, and decimate the innovative spirit, native pride, industrial and commercial arrangement of the captured colony. It propelled pauperization and traditionalization-ideological, political and economic of masses in colonies like India.

In 1820 India's share of Global GDP further slide to 18.1% and finally, the nadir was when the British left India in 1947 around which it was merely around 4.2%. One is sadly reminded of Sir Philips Francis, a leading member of Bengal council who chided and lamented, "the white collectors are not much honester than black ones..it makes a wide difference to Bengal whether embezzlement are committed by Natives, who keep the produce of their roguery in the country, or by Europeans who carry it away."[4]

Post-Independence-debilitating socialist hangover

Independent India lacked a congenial atmosphere for the mass manufacturing sector with socialist hangover lingering even in the communist countries. This was in sharp contrast to the socio-economic legacy of the land where rulers uninhibitedly promoted *Shrenis* - the powerhouse of manufacturing jobs through *laissez-faire* policy and huge capital for their development.

Surprisingly, even after elapse of two decades of gaining Independence in 1967, Indian policymakers were sceptical over the creation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and pooh-poohed its idea of the paradigm shift in industrialization strategy from import substitution to export orientation. The revised strategy by ASEAN nations enabled tapping the 'comparative advantage' of these nations in the international trade. This heralded the emergence of Asian Tigers in the 1980s riding on the burgeoning manufacturing jobs in the labour-intensive industries that transformed the destiny of these nations and their citizens in a span of two generations. Belatedly, India under the visionary leadership of Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao in 1991 courageously cut the Gordian knot and heralded economic liberalization.

Post Script- The author often wonders, if there had been an Indian equivalent of Meiji rule of Japan which under the aegis of Bunmei kaika (Civilization and Enlightenment) pioneered industrialization and modernization of Japan through Iwakura mission of Japan in 1871, it must have been Maharaja Sayaji Rao III (1875-1939) of Baroda. Maharaja Sayaji Rao III similarly attempted that apart from radical social changes also sponsored scholarships to brilliant students including underprivileged ones for elite universities of England and USA and one among whom was prodigious Dr B. R. Ambedkar.

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Author

R V Upadhyay
(The author is a public servant and the author of *Ethics, Integrity and Aptitude in Governance* published by SAGE Publications, 2018. Views are strictly personal to the author)

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND THE CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IT FACES POST COVID-19

This paper throws light on the concept of Independent India's Foreign Policy, its objectives and the challenges posed by Covid-19 on its bilateral, multilateral and strategic relation vis-a-vis its next door neighbors as well as other nations. It has been witnessed how India has suffered during the pandemic right form economic contraction due to lockdown, supply of medical equipment's, vaccine diplomacy, border (Galwan) issue and non-traditional threats during and post pandemic. This paper further suggests a way forward with which we can partially address and device a dynamic and global strategy to counter the traditional and non-traditional challenges faced by India's international relations vis-a-vis foreign policy, where "India, that is Bharat" as a largest democracy in the world plays a role of a constructive, result-oriented and a rule abiding nation with a pragmatic and a reformed multilateralism approach.

Introduction

It was in August 1947 when India got its Independence from the British Raj and today in 2022 we are celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to commemorate 75 years of Independent India in every aspect. During these seven decades, India as an independent nation has encountered different internal and external challenges. However, with the changing scenarios, India's Foreign Policy has also been constantly evolving since its independence right from Panchsheel, NAM, and Anti-colonialism to Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas. It is based on the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is One Family). The entire world community is a part of one single-family and the members of the family must work and grow together, trust each other and live in peace and harmony. India's foreign policy is outlined by its historical aspects, cultural values and ethos, geopolitics, geoeconomics and strategic components. It is a framework that shapes the perception of a nation to influence its Soft as well as Hard power and a web of political, social, cultural and economic relations between nations via regional, bilateral and multilateral platforms and an in-depth analysis of the symbiotic relationship between international law, security, diplomacy and governance between the nations around the world. The thrust of foreign policy changes with respect to the international situations. As we all are aware of the fact that in an interconnected and globalized world the outcome of an event in one part of the world has both positive and negative impacts on the other parts of the world as well. As recently the entire world has witnessed the global impact of the Russia-Ukraine war be it on the economic or political front. Therefore, the study of foreign policy becomes vital for every nation to understand and delve deep into the national interests of other nations in terms of geopolitics, geoeconomics, historical aspects, society, cultural value systems, and role of state and non-state actors and security.

Objectives of India's Foreign Policy

National Interest: The primary objective of India's Foreign Policy is to secure its national interests. This includes securing India's borders to protect territorial integrity, countering cross-border terrorism, energy, food and cyber security, non-discriminatory global trade practices, infrastructure, protection of the environment, regional stability and international peace. In a globalized world, foreign policy should be flexible and pragmatic to respond to emerging situations.

International Engagement: Diplomatic channels, bilateral and multilateral relations and regional groupings help us to push India's national interests and promote its social, economic, cultural and political aspirations that have a positive impact on the country and its citizens. To ensure that India's voice is heard on global forums and to have a positive influence on issues of global concerns such as terrorism, climate change, institutional reforms, etc.

Neighborhood First Policy: India's former Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee once remarked "You can change your friends but not neighbor's". The neighborhood remains a primary diplomatic and a central pillar of India's foreign and security policies since 2014. In recent years, one of the key pillars of India's foreign policy is the "Neighborhood First" policy. It is based on improved connectivity, infrastructure, strong development cooperation, security, people-to-people contacts, non-reciprocal, outcome-oriented approach and to build a secure and stable neighborhood. The policy aims to ensure that our neighbor's also benefit from our economic development and growth and focus on improving ties with India's immediate neighbor's.

Trade and Commerce: Promotion of foreign trade and investment is one of the most important tasks and a harbinger of a healthy relationship between two or more nations. Attracting FDI or helping Indian industries to establish in foreign countries acts as a catalyst to foster relations between nations. It is important to create an external environment which is conducive to the inclusive development of India so that the benefits of growth can reach the grassroot level.

Diaspora Engagement: Around 180 years ago thousands of landless workers were sent out of India under the British Raj as plantation workers to different parts of the world e.g South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, etc. These workers now comprise both Non-Resident Indians and Persons of Indian Origin and form the Overseas Indian Community which is around 35 million. Several top tech companies from Microsoft to Google are headed by People of Indian origin and the same goes for the heads of Governments of 6 nations eg. Portugal, Guiana, Seychelles, etc. India has received around $87Billion as a remittance in 2020-2021, we have a full-fledged division to handle overseas Indian affairs in the Ministry of External Affairs. Indian Diaspora is a perfect example of India's soft power and has been pivotal in shaping the design of India's foreign policy. The proactive engagement with our overseas community helps us to engage with the governments of the day and make a blueprint of our foreign policies.

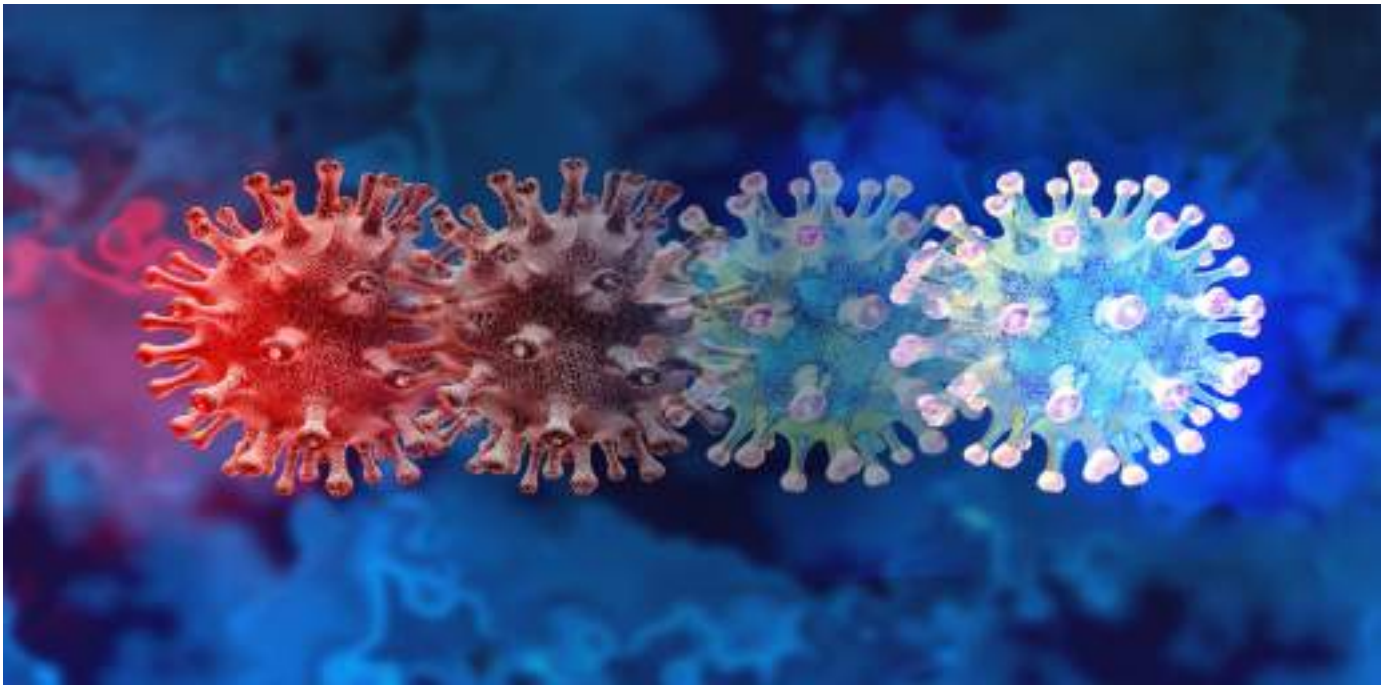
Challenges ahead for India's Foreign Policy

Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic which initially was a health emergency gradually turned into economic turmoil (Shringla, 2020). The pandemic pressed the doorbell of India when the nation was already facing maritime disputes and border security issues with China and Pakistan (Chadha, 2021). Developed nations took the advantage of COVID-19 and affirmed influence over the developing and under-developed nations during the pandemic with respect to vaccines, PPE kits, ventilators and other medical equipment required for covid patients. The pandemic gave rise to a new normal where not only India but nations across the globe were left untouched by the winds of geopolitical and geo economic storm and gave rise to new Non-Traditional threats (Foreign Secretary's Remarks on "India's Foreign Policy). Recently India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar highlighted how the Covid-19 pandemic has altered the dimensions of nations from trust and transparency to awareness and decentralization of globalization. Some fluctuations were also witnessed vis-a-vis India-US relations. During the Covid-19 pandemic when the US was going through a deadly covid wave India lend a helping hand by exporting medical supplies and easing export restrictions, however, the US was reluctant to reciprocate when India went through the same phase (Kurup, 2021).

Issue of Afghanistan and Taliban

In 2022, when India and Afghanistan were concentrating on the past infrastructure and other developments and India's future plans to help prosper Afghanistan, both nations were unaware of the fact that the time is not far when these developmental issues and progress they have made so far were going to be highjacked with an unexpected political shift. It was none other than the Taliban which took over Afghanistan's political system and the entire picture was turned upside down. Though, India didn't offer any resistance to counter the Taliban's plan of action (Haidar, 2022). However, we cannot deny and ignore the possibility that in the future Taliban with the support of Pakistan may revive cross-border terrorism and militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. Secondly, Pakistan's close proximity with China, the two nuclear powers may result in security as well as a diplomatic challenge for India to counter the traditional and non-traditional threats from its next-door neighbor's (Saran, 2022). On the other hand, during 2019-2021, the international community garnered support over the farmer's protests on the agriculture bill issue and the govern-



ment's crackdown on protestors, violence in Jammu & Kashmir and North- East, as well as attacks on minorities became a bilateral issue (Haidar, 2022). Traditional diplomacy was all about territorial control and resources. However, lately, with the advent of the digital revolution and new technologies, a threat of geo-technology vis-a-vis geo-politics and geo-economics has emerged. In today's world the components of national strength latest technology rather than territory (Foreign Secretary's Remarks on "India's Foreign Policy).

Issues between India and China

In 2020, India also witnessed armed forces deployment along both sides of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and the fatal clashes in Galwan valley (Haidar, 2022). Concerns were also raised over China's expanding influence in India's neighboring countries which call for a strong and strategic response from India (Saran, 2022). The other important and strategic issue faced by India is China's Belt and Road initiative which India has boycotted on the grounds that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) or Belt and Road initiative trespasses disputed territory in PoK which is claimed by India. As of now, India's challenge is to ensure Chinese troops return to the status quo with respect to April 2020 when the aggression at the LAC began and to keep a hawk's eye on the political and economic activities of the Chinese in our neighborhood (Haidar, 2022).

Way forward

India should focus on a dynamic and responsible global strategy in a multipolar world (Foreign Secretary's Remarks on "India's Foreign Policy"). India's vision should be guided by a leadership role that allows her to participate and contribute to the emerging world order with a progressive approach to foster developments. While addressing the Raisina Dialogue in 2021, India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi remarked, "the Covid-19 pandemic has presented us an opportunity to reshape the world order, to reorient our thinking. We must create systems that addresses the problems of today and challenges of tomorrow. And we must think of the entire humanity and not merely of those who are on our side of the borders".

India is doing quite well to foster close relations with the new Quad comprising of India, Israel, the U.A.E and the U.S. also known as I2U2 and the former Indo-Pacific Quad which is already on an active mode since concerns over China continue to rise. Henceforth, to further improve its position, India should aggressively push its Act East policy and participation in Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Secondly, it should ponder over of becoming a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum APEC and finally, the option of the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTTP) may also be considered in which China is not a member yet (Saran, 2022). India's foreign policy must also act to counter non-traditional security challenges such as cyber-attacks and bio-weapons (Harsh Vardhan Shringla, 2020). The Indian model of development i.e. Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas is comprehensive and works on multiple platforms such as grants-in-aid, line of credit, capacity building and technical assistance. Last but not the least, an effective, efficient and flexible foreign policy which promotes global goodwill project India as a world leader.

Conclusion

The fundamental issue with India's foreign policy is to ensure that India's engagement on international platforms should be consistent with respect to modern-day realism. The current global environment is challenging and sailing

through some rough patches since World War II. Henceforth, a progressive commitment and pragmatic resolution are required on strategic and diplomatic terms to counter the traditional and non-traditional threats which hinder our growth and prosperity. Covid-19 was a harbinger to show the world that if anything goes wrong in one part of the world it will impact and have serious repercussions on the entire global community and no one will be left untouched, therefore, every nation should respect its territorial integrity and move ahead with a progressive, responsible, inclusive and an innovative approach for the world as a one family. India as the largest democracy in the world can surely and positively contribute to ensuring a sustainable future.

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Author

Vivek Puri

(The author is a PG student in Public Administration, Himachal Pradesh University. Formerly content creator for civil services coaching institute in Chandigarh)

THEORY OF DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION

The Concept of Decentralization

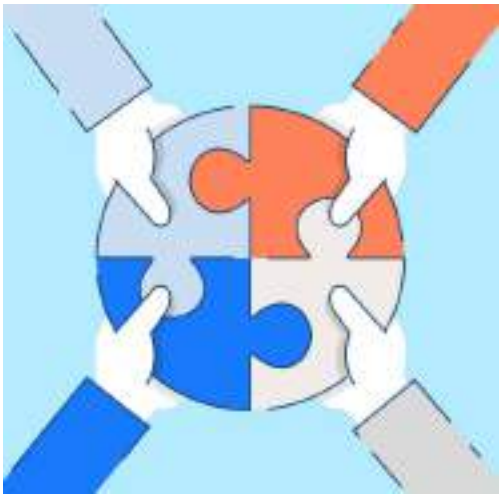
The word 'decentralization', literally means 'away from centre'. Decentralization of authority means dispersal of decision-making power to the lower levels of organization (B.L.Fadia and Kuldeep Fadia, 2010. The locus of decision -making is transferred from Central governments to regional, municipal or local governments (Elizabeth Linda Yuliani, 2004). Decentralization cannot be easily defined and it has many forms and dimensions. Decentralization is the process of redistributing or dispersing functions, powers, people or things away from central location or authority. There is no common definition of decentralization and its meaning varies because of the different ways it is applied. The concept of decentralization has been applied to management science, in private businesses and organizations, Political Science, Law and Public Administration, Economics and Technology.

Decentralizing government is thought to be conducive to good governance, although experience suggests decentralization alone is no guarantee. It can be a means to encourage participation in the public policy process and can hold governments more accountable for their actions. At the same time, decentralization enables local officials to take responsibility for economic and social development. For instance, decentralization can foster a more efficient use of resources if projects are locally conceived, and economic performance can be improved since local entrepreneurship tends to flourish in decentralized settings where there is often greater access to credit and information on business opportunities.

The term "decentralization" implies not only the devolution of powers, but also a process in which responsibilities and duties are transferred by a higher or central authority to the institutions or organizations at the lower levels, thereby providing to the latter adequate incentive for autonomous functioning. Decentralization has spatial aspect ,i.e. when the activities of wide organization are spread over a wide geographical space ,then planning and control of the widely dispersed activities may be done better not from central headquarter but away from it. The other arguments in favour of decentralization are that decentralized units function better because of autonomy given to them and central control is reduced. In organization theory, decentralization is an aspect of intra-organizational differentiations, i.e. in large-scale organization, decentralization is done through segmentation and arrangement and self-sufficient clusters or decentralized divisions are formed and these clusters have their own domain. Decentralization has also been approached from the point of view of organization decision-making. In a complex organization numerous decisions are taken and efficiency is achieved if decisions are taken quickly. Therefore, when speed assumes critical importance, decentralized decision-making is being given importance.

Organizational decentralization manifests itself in territorial dispersion of units and delegation of authority .For instance, field administration in the form of district and sub-divisional administration, represents decentralization through territorial differentiation and dispersion. It is an important part of state administration. Field administration lies away from state headquarters to provide access to the client. Delegation of authority accompanies territorial dispersion of the governmental unit. Kochen and Deutsch in their seminar paper entitled, "Toward a Rational Theory of Decentralization: Some implications of a Mathematical Approach," have advanced the theoretical knowledge about decentralization in politics and organizational designing. According to them, a functional theory of decentralization has to be related to organizational task performance and ultimate survival, i.e. the survival of organization depends on the feedback of information from the environment in order to ascertain the results of their actions and to take corrective measures. The issue of centralization versus decentralization has to be examined from the point of view of exchange of information and of things and persons with the environment. They look at decentralization as a problem in logistics. Decentralization is rational or cost-effective if movement of messages, men, and materials lead to successful task performance in relation to meeting the demands and pressures from the environment.

Approaches to the Concept of Decentralization:



The different approaches to the concept have been clearly and profoundly presented by Fesler James W. He classified the different approaches to the concept of decentralization in the following four categories: the doctrinal, the political, the administrative and the dual role.

The Global Perspective

It is well documented that decentralization was a well thought and executed style of governance in ancient world. There are many sophisticated debates on decentralization in the political literature of 18th and 19th centuries. When there was no adult franchise in the western world then emerged the concept of devolution of power to the people. The British system of local government found in South Asia, Africa, Australia and North America was conceptualized as a devolved local self- government with the characteristics of a representative elected council and citizen's participation, while in Europe, parts of North and West Africa and South America, it was distinguished by deconcentration, that means domination of executive and presence of rigid hierarchy. Decentralization is conceptualized as a deconcentrated administrative organ for relieving administrative congregation, because over centralized governance did not make it clear what needs to be done for different places and how to meet the desires of the people.

The globalization pushed more countries to adopt quasi-market economies including the countries which had dictatorial, authoritarian, totalitarian governments. Good governance came to be seen as transparent, reprehensive, accountable, and participatory and its need arose. New concepts of decentralization emerged as well. During the 1970s and 1980s, globalization forced some governments to recognize and realize the constraints of central economic planning and management. During the same period shift in development theories and also change in strategies of international aid agencies like World Bank, IMF, etc., away from central economic planning and trickle-down theories of economic growth towards meeting basic human needs, growth with equity objectives, and participatory development also led to increasing calls for decentralization. International aid organizations promoted decentralization as essential for development carried out by local communities and local governments. There was awakening that decentralization will accelerate development, will remove bureaucratic bottlenecks which arose because of centralized government planning. Governments at that time followed three primary forms of decentralization, deconcentration, devolution, delegation until the late 1980s.By the mid- 1980s with the continued weakening of those economies which followed central planning, disappearance of cold war, increase in international trade and investment, the conventional concepts of economic development and governance and also of decentralization forces got reshaped by economic and political forces prevailing at that time. There was fall of authoritarian regimes in Latin America in 1980s and in Central and Eastern Europe in 1990s and switching over to market economies and rise of democratic principles in East Asia renewed the interest in decentralization. The countries in Latin America, Central Europe were overseeing the transition from state planned economies to market-economies and were focusing on strengthening private sector, downsizing large central government bureaucracies, and also strengthening local governments. In fact IMF, World Bank and other international development organizations also prescribed decentralization as part of structural adjustments to promote good governance, restore markets in those countries which were seeking aid from these institutions. Not only these aid institutions which put condition of decentralization upon countries, there was pressure from various groups like political, ethnic ,other economically peripheral groups to get greater autonomy in decision-making and strong control over utilization of natural resources, e.g .Africa. The central governments in Africa was not able to deliver effectively and provide services to local areas and this led to discontent among masses and hence calls for decentralization. The demand for decentralization(devolution) were

raised in other large number of countries like India, Belgium, Quebec, Wales,Scotland, Malaysia ,Baltic Countries, Mexico ,former USSR, etc as there was discontent with regard to allocation of national expenditures. Moreover, there was,"New Public Management"movement in 1990s in rich countries which also influenced the international development organizations and many reform-oriented public officials in developing countries. During the same period, a book Reinventing Government which discussed about reforms in United States, also influenced the other countries to go for decentralization for providing quality services to people .This book and advocates of, New Public Management" supported that local problems should be dealt with by local people as they are conversant with the problems of their respective areas and government can achieve its objectives by participation of people at the grassroots level.

The Emergence of the Concept of Decentralization in South Asia

The factors that contributed to the emergence of concept of decentralization in South Asian countries are being discussed below:

As mentioned earlier, many changes took place in the closing decades of the last millennium in many spheres and these included changes in governance also. The decades of 1950s and 1960s focused on centralization but that could not cure the maladies prevailing at that time. So demands for poverty alleviation, civic amenities, and better health facilities were raised by people and civil society groups in several countries and central governments were pressurized to deal with myriad problems. The need for decentralization was felt and expert writings in 1970s also promoted decentralized system of governance. Ultimately in 1980s, debates in support of decentralization picked up momentum and this decade saw beginning of wave of decentralization which swept the globe. During this period, i.e. 1980s many influential people in African, Asian and Latin American governments, in international development agencies, and in academic life became enthusiastic about decentralization. This led to adoption of decentralization in developing countries to achieve the development goals. The phenomenon of decentralization became a reality in Third World countries and they included South Asian countries also. There are many diverse factors which contributed towards sudden emergence of decentralization as a major theme in South Asian countries. These factors are historical, social, political and economic. Some of the important ones are summed up as follows:

The South Asian countries like India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, etc were governed by authoritarian regimes. There were movements to bring democracy and finally these countries underwent transition from autocratic to democratic .The establishment of representative form of democracy at the national level in these countries is reckoned as the first initiative towards returning power back to the people. Once democratic governance was established at the national level then political devolution from centre to state, provinces, or local governments came fast on the heels of national re-democratisation. Hence in these countries, decentralization can be seen as the 'second wave' of democratic reform.

What has also led to emergence of decentralization for the governance at local level in South Asian countries is, presence of village councils in the olden times as they used to be very effective in dealing with local issues. This belief in the village councils led to opinion building for setting up of local self- government institutions as near to the people as could be in some of these countries through political decentralization, e.g. Panchayats in India. The other cause or factor which led to movement toward political decentralization is presence of ethnic diversity in some

of the countries. The ethnic groups demanded political autonomy. For example, in India, over centralization of power at the Centre led to many problems, and unrest in many regions also. This made the political devolution necessary to manage stresses and strains. Similarly in Sri Lanka also there was sense of alienation in north-eastern region and in order to remove that sense of alienation and diffuse tension, elected provincial councils were established. Besides these factors, there are other fundamental reasons which caused decentralization to become a widespread phenomenon. The centralized form of development could not reach the beneficiaries, i.e. rural communities. For example in India centrally Sponsored schemes were started but they did not involve the local people for village development and hence failed. In Nepal also the distant Centrally controlled system could not reach the remote mountain hamlets.

One reason which cannot escape notice is that in South Asian countries with the adoption of economic liberalization policies, the process of decentralization picked up the momentum. The government decentralization started taking place simultaneously with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes and economic liberalization policies. Conceptually, there is a logical connection between privatization and decentralization, if the context is reduction of control of central-state structures over economic decision-making and also that decentralization will help in reaching the beneficiaries and deliver tangible benefits arising out with economic liberalization. Moreover, some international donor agencies also encouraged decentralization as part of an overall Structural Adjustment Programme. Definitely economic liberalization contributed towards providing favourable climate for the promotion of local governance institutions, but it would not be right to consider economic decentralization as a predominant factor.

Last but not the least, the nationally planned development or centralised form of development adopted in developing countries was followed in East European Bloc. But in this Bloc, the centralized planning for development failed, leading to inequality and poverty. The central administration was inefficient and irresponsive. This gave lesson to developing countries to rethink and this generated consensus as well as favourable climate for decentralization. The studies have shown that the causes which led to decentralization differ from country to country. There is no single factor which is sufficient to explain the decision to decentralize in all countries or in a single country. Decentralization in one country could be due to combination of causes. For example advent of multi-party political systems in Africa, the deepening of democratization in Latin America; the transition from command to a market economy in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union; the need to improve delivery of local services to large populations in the centralized countries of East Asia; the challenge of ethnic and geographic diversity in South Asia ,as well as ethnic tensions in other countries and the attempt to keep centrifugal forces at bay by forging asymmetrical federations ;and the plain and simple reality that central governments have often failed to provide effective public servicing are the multiple causes which made the decentralization widespread in developing countries. ■

Authors

Dr. Suresh Vadranam
(The author is Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science (DDE), Pondicherry University, Puducherry)

Jayaprada Sahoo
(The author is Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Ravenshaw University Cuttack, Odisha)

MISSION KARMAYOGI – CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) –Karmayogi is an important programme for the civil servants. Through this programme, in-service training is provided to upgrade the skills and behaviour of the civil servants towards service delivery and make governance efficient. With the introduction of this mission, it becomes imperative to include public service motivation into the training programme to connect the human resource development:

"National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) – Mission Karmayogi-- is an important programme for the civil servants. Through this programme, in-service training is provided to upgrade the skills and behaviour of the civil servants towards service delivery and make governance efficient. With the introduction of this mission, it becomes imperative to include Public service motivation into the training programme to connect the human resource development. This should be intended to motivate civil servants in their work, which is impossible without the public service motivation and assessment of the works of the civil servants in a realistic manner through the modern administrative theories of the open model and Simon's bounded rationality. This will holistically address the problem. The course materials need to be developed to motivate the civil servants and address the prejudices against the marginalized communities. Ultimately, the aim should be to link the training and performance together."

Jacob Mincer also known as the father of modern labour economics has contributed to the empirical underpinnings of human capital theory, which reshaped the discipline of labour economics. According to Mincer (1984), "Growth of human capital is both a condition and a consequence of economic growth. Human capital activities involve not merely the transmission and embodiment of available knowledge but also the production of new knowledge, which is the source of innovation and technical change that propels all production factors. This latter function of human capital generates worldwide economic growth regardless of its initial geographic locus."

As we know that the civil servants come from society, and society guides their behaviour norms. Whether good or bad depends on society, and training plays a critical role in performance, especially in-services training. It is mainly based on developing a human resource which is the most complicated part of the administrative machinery. Against this backdrop, it becomes necessary to relook at the whole training programme holistically.

In –Service Training: A Case Study of Police Force

This section focuses on the significance of in-service training in Indian police forces. When investigating the factors that lead to state police officer under-training, it is feasible to uncover that police officers are not effectively prepared owing to a lack of in-service training. Only around 6% of policemen receive in-service training that is closely connected with their performance. As per the report on the state of policing 2019, "it is undeniable that there is a correlation between a lack of training and bad performance." One example of a lack of training is a widespread view among police officers that complaints of gender violence are unfounded, or that migrants and members of transgender or minority communities are inherently more likely to commit crimes (Report on the State of Policing in 2019**)**. More research on this report is required for in-service training. In-service training is lacking at the police constabulary level as compared to upper level personnel. This has a direct impact on how police forces operate on the ground.

II.I Situating Gender in Police Force

The male personnel dominate the entire setting of the police services in India. In addition, there is a poor behaviour toward women among the police force. Within the police force, there are clear anti-women prejudices. There are profound biases against female personnel, with the belief that they are incapable of handling difficult problems. (Status of Policing Report -2019)

Certain statements made by police personnel (both male and female) show special anti-women sentiments in the force-

- The first statement is that 'being in the police requires physical strength and aggressive behaviour, which women lack.'
- The second statement is that 'women police are incapable of handling high-intensity crimes and cases.'
- While third and last statement is that 'because of inflexible working hours, it is not feasible for women to work in the police force as they cannot fulfill their household duties due to this.'

These assertions contradict the accomplishments of female police officers. Kiran Bedi, a female police officer, ex-

emplifies how women may provide effective services within the police force. The above-mentioned misconception regarding women in police forces must be dispelled. Subsequently, at the ground level, there is a serious requirement of in-service training in terms of gender sensitization, and such problems have to be addressed by the comprehensive psychological training not only limited to men but also to women (Because in this research, women have also participated) (Status of Policing Report -2019).

Other deep prejudices are against the transgender community. More than 27% of police personnel feel that transgender communities are naturally inclined towards crime (Status of Policing Report -2019). Training modules are to be created with different case studies to change the mindset and transform the attitudes of police personnel. One of the most important administrative theories is propounded by Herbert Simon and is known as bounded rationality(A study of Decision-Making Process in Administrative Organisation, New York by Herbert Simon). According to this theory, any system cannot be rational or irrational, but an administrative man takes decisions according to the general information available to him. Therefore, decision making ability should be a priority for the police personnel and civil servants as well. Regular in-service training could enhance the person's ability to make the appropriate decision, so training should have multiple course modules for the different sections of the personnel according to the local requirement.

The Transition from the Rules-Based To Roles-Based Training

We have to relook at the overall behaviour of administrative personnel so that performance management should be established. Higher authorities have authoritarian attitudes towards subordinates within the organization and cannot handle the situation in democratic ways, directly affecting the government's working style. This also affects the service delivery. Consequently, citizens suffer from terrible services provided by concerned authorities. Public service motivation should be directly linked with human resource management. Then, it will directly enhance the capabilities of the civil servants, and the quality of the service delivery will also be improved.

As mentioned earlier, public service motivation needs to be linked with human resource management properly and should be channelized through regular training for the civil servants. Gaps in the assessment of the services of the civil servants are given in the following –Table.

Table No.1

Present	Desired
• Individual rankings	• Process
• Appraisal	• Joint review
• Periodicity - annual	• Periodicity - more periodic
• Outputs	• Outputs/Outcomes
• Performance and pay not related	• Performance related pay
• Ratings - Top-down	• Ratings - Consultative
• Directive	• Supportive
• Monolithic	• Flexible

Source: Second Administrative Reform Commission (10th Report)

The points mentioned in the Table no. 1 are elaborated below--

- In the present system, the individual ranking is present rather than the collective ranking. However, there should be a focus on team building rather than individual ranking. Training programmes should concentrate on developing team-building qualities among the civil servants, which will improve their capacity.
- The present Appraisal system is opaque in nature rather than open, directly affecting the performance of the civil servants. There is an urgent need to revise the Appraisal system. It should be a 360-degree evaluation.
- The top-to-down approach generally means orders that come from the higher authorities to lower authorities without consulting the latter and knowing the ground-level problems. These problems could be addressed by the training programmes on how to engage the subordinates in the decision-making process. It will holistically address the problem.
- The monolithic approach in the administration rather than problem-solving brings more rigidity to the rules. So the training programmes must include the best practices in the training.

Herzberg's Two-factor Theory and Training Programmes
Another most important motivational thinker was Frederick Herzberg. He propounded a two-factor theory which is also known as motivational theory. His theory is significant for the public service motivation to human relation theory and can also be used as the theoretical base for the training programmes. According to Herzberg, there are certain factors which may create job satisfaction at the work place.

IV.I Hygiene factors

- Company policy and administration
- Supervision
- Salary
- Interpersonal relations
- Working conditions

The factors above are for the workers so that they don't get dissatisfied with the work in a short period of time. But long-term motivation is not possible from these factors, and public service motivation is not possible under the hygiene factors. In simple terms, hygiene factors mean employees could work properly but are not satisfied in the long-term.

IV.II Motivation factors

- Achievement
- Recognition
- Work itself
- Responsibility
- Advancement
-

The motivation factors are for long-term satisfaction of the employees at the work place. They are directly linked to the public service motivation for the service delivery in such a manner that service delivery capacity is improved and an efficient way to manage the human resources is accomplished.

Given below is the description of the motivation factors –

1. Achievement- When the person has the freedom to work based on his discretion to achieve the goal and is also awarded by the higher authorities (For example, Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration), it motivates the public servants to work.
2. Recognition – The seniors recognize the work, leading the subordinates to work confidently and creating a workmanship spirit.
3. Responsibility – A sense of leadership in the work motivates a person to work with full dedication to achieve the goal (it also creates internal accountability with the human mind)
4. Advancement – To get an opportunity for promotion and enjoy higher responsibility is a matter of pride for the person itself.

However, to develop such qualities, we have to design the training modules accordingly to link public service motivation to the human resource management directly and further utilize the human resource in the best way for service delivery and good governance.

Integrated Government Online Training (i-Got)
During the pandemic, this very innovative mechanism to utilize the Digital media for the training of the civil servants was initiated. Different types of courses are available in different languages to train the civil servants.

Online learning couldn't be an alternative to the offline but online portal i-Got can reach the remote place, and every personnel could be trained in an accessible way. i-Got-learning can be more interactive with two-way learning from the experts and practitioners at the grassroots level. However, we have to develop the mechanism i-Got- more dynamic in nature to share the best experience from the grassroots level on the portal.

1. A few examples are mentioned here-

The Government of India has

started an online RTI(Right to Information) portal to seek information online from any department related to the Union government and other Central level agencies so that anyone can easily file the RTI and file a first and second appeal. Citizens can access information fast and easily. The training programme should include the experience of the citizens by getting the services from the online RTI portal. Then it should be shared with the different state training centres through the i-Got-learning platform. This will be a two-way learning programme.

2. Recently Delhi government has started the home delivery of services in which several listed services were delivered to citizens to their homes as per their convenience. These are purely citizen-centric services, where the people could access the services as per their desire.

- Here training will play a significant role in delivering the services properly to the citizens (Best practices available in the market can be adopted, and learning video can be uploaded on the portal).
- The training must include the experiences of the private sector like Amazon and Flipkart etc., to enrich the service delivery mechanism.
- Comptroller and Auditor General of India have said that the speed post service of Indian post is more efficient than private-sector courier. It can be a case study for the other departments, and a few learning videos can also be created on this topic and made available for the online portal.

3. An Analysis of Citizens' Charter and its Role in Public Services

Introduction to the First Report on Citizens' Charter- released by Prime Minister John Major in 1992 states that "The Citizens' Charter sees public services through the eyes of those who use them. For too long, the provider has dominated, and now it is the turn of the users. The Citizens' Charter will raise quality, increase the choices, secure better value and extend accountability (Cabinet Office U.K., 1992)."

Following observation was made by Bernard Herdan Report on the citizens charter (From Citizen's Charter to Public Service Guarantees: Entitlements to Public Services)

"The Charter Mark scheme is something of an unsung success story. Charter Mark holders are generally very positive about the scheme. They feel it is a valuable management tool in driving up standards and that it helps motivate members of staff. There is much anecdotal but little hard evidence of the Charter Mark's effectiveness. The Charter Mark Scheme continues to prosper, but percentage penetration of the whole public sector – and therefore overall impact – remains quite low. There is now a very low level of public awareness of the Charter Mark, and members of the public displayed a general skepticism about quality schemes and awards that we met in focus groups. However, on balance, people believe that holding some form of quality scheme or award might influence choice where this applies. It is to be noted that most public services do have performance standards and report to Parliament and the public on how well they have met these. Most public service providers also measure customer satisfaction levels; however, this is often not particularly rigorous. Comparisons even within sectors are difficult to make, with a few notable exceptions. We have also recognised that there has been research in a number of countries on the fundamental drivers of customer satisfaction. Such research has been undertaken in the UK and generated consistent conclusions.

In summary, the key drivers of customer satisfaction within public services are considered to be:

- Delivery of promised outcomes and handling problems effectively
- Timeliness of service provision
- Accurate and comprehensive information and progress reports provided
- Professionalism and competence of staff and treating customers fairly
- Staff attitudes – friendly, polite and sympathetic to customers' needs.

The public service delivery is the most important component of the government that depends upon the three pillars (The concept of public service delivery emerged in the 1990s, with New Public Management and Citizen Charter's evolution in the UK).

- Timeline- (Particular service will be delivered within a maximum time limit)
- Quality – (Services nature and quality matters for the citizens)
- Grievance redressal (Address the complaint of the citizens as soon as possible)

For these high qualities, effective training is needed to deliver the services efficiently.

1. Ways to Enhance Public Service Delivery
   - Increase specialization and induct lateral entry- Due to the specialization in the governance, where people are inducted in the government from outside, training should be more inclusive and holistic, which can only be brought through a specific and specialized training programme.
   - Recently the Union home ministry has approved the policy for induction of transgender in the Central Armed police forces. This has required the government to introduce different training centres for specific gender sensitization training modules for the Central armed police forces personnel to understand the importance of the transgender in the forces. Here online courses also are prepared so that any person can have remote access to the courses
   - Similarly, the Aadhar enabled technology has to be used, which also needs specialized training and content.
   - The new technology has been adopted by the Government of India, which is called RAS (Rapid Assessment system). This technology facilitates the overall Interface to the citizens for improving the quality of services, both online and offline, its website and application. This type of application needs specialized training to understand the technology properly and create awareness. (Technology has not only helped in improving public service delivery but also the feedback part of it).

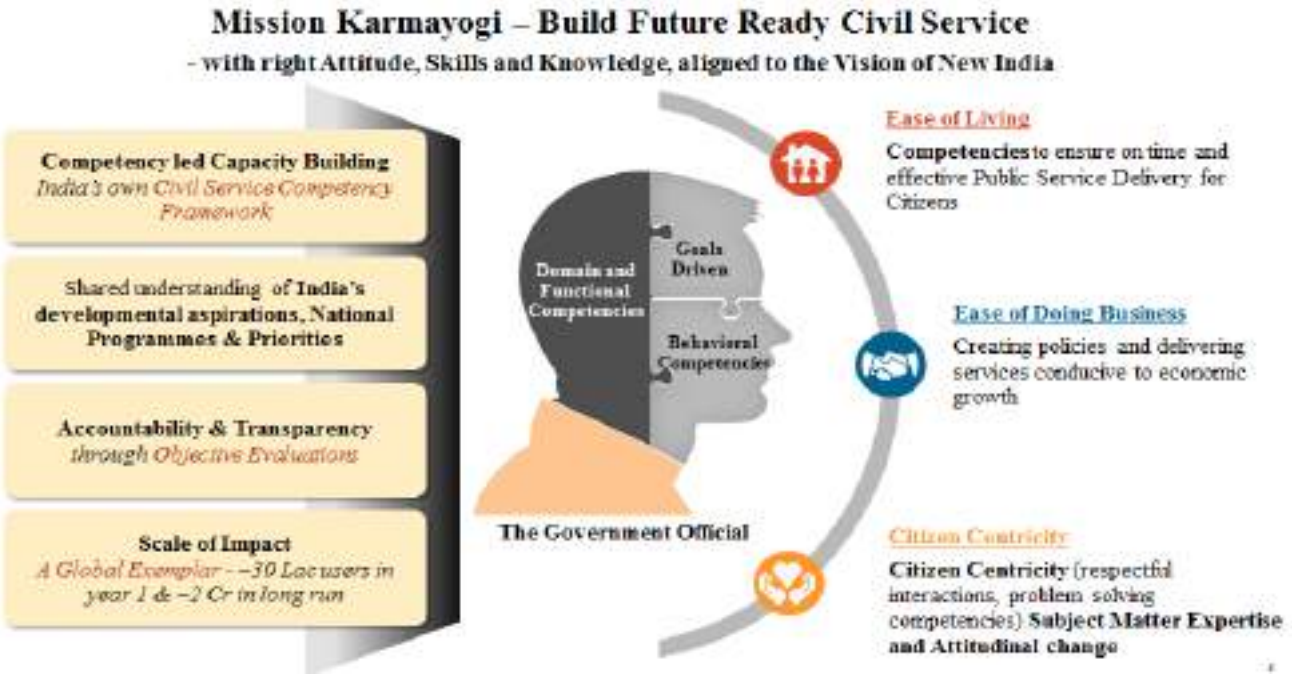
2. Indian Administrative Service (IAS) for the in-service training

At present, the IAS officers have in-service training to enhance their capabilities in their respective domains. Despite that, the "Committee to Review In-service Training of the IAS officers" (Yugandhar Committee, 2003) has underlined the problem of in-services training of the IAS officers.

"Officers who have already put in several years of service cannot be treated like graduate or postgraduate students and they find the lecture method to be extremely boring. They also find that there is very little to learn from the faculty of the training institute, even if it is one of the prestigious institutes like an IIM. As far as the other Institutes are concerned, the impression is that the programmes are very badly structured, with efforts being made to only fill in the different lecture slots purely based on the supply available. The programme lacks any meaningful structure, and hence the participants' lose interest. As a result, the objective of offering a meaningful sabbatical to facilitate some fresh thinking is not achieved. It was also reported to the Committee that many officers felt that the learning came largely from interaction amongst colleagues working in other states rather than from the faculty of the Institute itself. The Committee was informed that in many cases, options for a particular training programme are exercised based on the venue and timing of the programme and not based on the contents of the programme. This clearly shows that some of the officers do not value the possibility of learning from the training but only the opportunity it offers to take a break".

In-service training seems to be a formality, so we have to relook at the training in a holistic manner to improve the capacity in the real sense.

- The senior officers need the expertise of the respective domain. From the Joint Secretary to the above levels, the officials must have specialization in their domain, and training should be formed according to that.
- Some in-service training programmes should be designed so that outside IAS officers can also participate like from the other services, industries, corporate world and NGOs, etc. This will enable them to learn from



each other and exchange experiences and challenges.

- A higher level should focus on policy formulation and policy execution for the training in a specialized way.
- Performance should be linked to the training for the promotion and career progression.

Ultimately the core purpose of the training is to deliver the high qualities of the services with the participation of the citizens in the governance. The 6th Pay Commission rightly mentioned here that–

"The institutional structures of top-down management and isolated managerial efforts have proved inadequate for satisfying performance, i.e., delivery of results and outcomes. There is over-reliance on' command' models of administrative effort for service delivery. Citizens and service users are stakeholders and participants, not just 'customers.' This role needs to be institutionalized in the administrative structures linked to the specific organizational service delivery. This participation of stakeholders in the process design and their institutional integration into the decision and delivery framework can be based on a 'cooperative model 'of consultation and co-production. Institutional norms and practices become habits and routines and must be consciously analyzed, confronted, and substituted with alternate institutionalized practices. This perspective of purpose is also important for determining the type of Performance Related Incentive Scheme (PRIS) developed and adopted. The importance of a systems shift from top-down monitoring to stakeholder-citizen participation and co-production with transparency and checks is critical for better public service delivery." Such mindset has to develop in our civil servants that they are dealing with customers and they (Civil servants) have to count the participation of the citizens in their governance. Also, the government should know that it may only be possible through an intensive training programme concerning how to engage with the citizens. Qualities of the services will only be improved when we participate and take the feedback from the citizens."

We have to strengthen the internal accountability mechanism to improve our services and ensure that proper grievance redressal within the organization could be possible. Our training programmes must have a mechanism to train our personnel to strengthen the internal accountability mechanism. It will enhance our service delivery.

1. **Institutions and Mechanisms that Promote Accountability in an Organisation---**

- RTI (Right to information) for delivery of the services – That should be improved by accepting the application online and opening Common Service Centres (For remote access of the services).
- Citizens-oversight committees-- These should be developed for the participation of the citizens in the governance and to take feedback (Training of the personnel on how to engage the citizens).
- Civil society/watchdog bodies--- To participate in the governance process and take the suggestion from the civil society organizations.
- Media--- To engage and create awareness regarding the government schemes and to interact with media.
- To conduct surveys related to citizens' satisfaction over the services delivery.

2. **Goals of Training**

The four important goals of the training are as follows:

- Responsiveness- To meet the citizens' demands and act according to the demands of the citizens.

- Commitment – Work under the Democratic values and ethos, the most important concept is "Neutrality," which most civil servants lack. That concept was well defined by our great leader Sardar Patel. "It needs hardly to be emphasized that an efficient, discipline and contended civil service assured of its prospects as a result of diligent and honest work, is a sine qua non of sound administration under democratic regime even more than under an authoritarian rule. The service must be above party, and we should ensure that political considerations, either in its recruitment or in its discipline and control, are reduced to the minimum if not eliminated altogether."

- Concept of the neutrality-- It is most important in public governance. As Paul Applely said, civil servants should not be confused with the concept of political neutrality and programme neutrality. Ultimately civil servants have to advice the policy formulation with a free and fair mind without any political consideration. As Sardar Patel said on the role of the civil servants, "Today, my Secretary can write a note opposed to my views. I have given that freedom to all my Secretaries. I have told them, `If you do not give your honest opinion for fear that it will displease your Minister, please then you had better go. I will bring another Secretary! I will never be displeased over a frank expression of opinion."

- Awareness- to be familiar with modern technology and learn these techniques quickly with social and economical realities.

In an assessment on the governance of India, the World Bank said that
"The civil service in India, the legendary 'steel frame' of the British Raj, is today battling against onslaughts to its relevance. The strength of the civil service in India lies in its extraordinary pool of skills and talents, its field experience, its extensive networking, its appreciation and overview of the functioning of the government at the cutting edge, its understanding of delivery systems for a development, awareness of the formal and informal socio-economic networks in the field, its 'can deliver' attitude, its role in national integration, its ready adaptability to the new and unfamiliar situation and tasks, and its social orientation, bolstered by intense competition among the officers."
As clear from the above assessment, the World Bank had recognized the importance of civil servants in governance.

Conclusion
Training is the most important component of the employees' personality development and capacity building that can only be possible through the regular interval of the in-service training. The prime motive of the training is to develop the following qualities common in the civil servants: Accountability, Transparency, Equity and Inclusiveness, Participatory, Consensus Orientation, Following Rule of Law, Effectiveness, and Efficiency. To institutionalize these qualities in training can facilitate in the following ways-

- People first- To address the problems of the citizens with empathy, especially for the underprivileged class.
- Strategic thinking- To understand the environment properly on how to address the problem in a holistic way.
- Organizational awareness – To understand the organization properly and interact with the members.
- Takes accountability means the leadership qualities should be developed to take responsibility for outcomes (whether success or failure).
- Conceptual thinking – The ability to address the problem by connecting the dots and addressing the stereotypes image.

Gandhiji said, *"Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? … Then you will find your doubts, and yourself melt away."*

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Author

Manish Kumar Tiwary
(The author is Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Delhi)

INDIA LAUNCHES NATIONAL AIR SPORTS POLICY 2022 (NASP 2022)

With a view to make India one of the top sports nations by 2023, the Civil Aviation Ministry under the Government of India has launched National Air Sports policy 2022. The policy is launched with an aim to provide a safe, affordable, accessible, enjoyable and sustainable air sports ecosystem in India.Air sports, as the names suggests, includes various sports activities involving the medium of air - like air-racing, aerobatics, aero modeling, paragliding, para motoring, skydiving to name a few. India has a large geographical expanse, diverse topography, and fair-weather conditions. We also have a large population, especially the youth with the growing culture for adventure sports and aviation. The Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia while launching the policy said that the Ministry wants to create an environment of adventure, thrill and sports in the country. For this, they will leverage the energy of the youth below the age of 35 that accounts for 70 percent of India's population which is larger than the total population of Europe and three times that of USA. The main objectives of this policy will be to promote an air sports culture; enhance participation and success of Indian sportspersons in global air sports events; and most importantly promote design, development and manufacturing of air sports equipment in India in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.India with its huge geographical expanse, extending from the Himalayas, mountainous regions, states in the northeast, plains in central India, coastal regions on the western-eastern coastline has an ability to have the widest diversity of air sports. The policy, according to Minister, will serve to attract air sports enthusiasts from all over the world, especially those who live in areas where harsh winters prevent them from participating. It is believed that air sports enthusiasts from Europe, North America, and Australia would flock to India to practice in the winters.

Key Objectives of NASP 2022:-

a. Promote an air sports culture in the country
b. Enable adoption of international good practices in safety including but not limited to, air sports infrastructure, equipment, operations, maintenance and training
c. Develop a simple, stakeholder-friendly and effective governance structure
d. Enhance participation and success of Indian sportspersons in global air sports events; and
e. Promote design, development and manufacturing of air sports equipment in India in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

As per the release, at present the market size is at around 5,000 air sports practitioners creating around Rs 80-100 crore of annual revenue in India.

The Air Sports Federation of India under the Ministry is planning to collaborate with the armed forces of India, Central Armed Police Forces and various state police forces as they have excellent training facilities, equipment and instructors for air sports.

> ***Speaking on the future of Air Sports in India, the Minister feels that Rs 8000-10000 crore annual revenue can be targeted to generate over 1 lac direct jobs. And the economic multiplier benefits in terms of travel, tourism, support services and local infrastructure development will be over three times***

The ministry will encourage State Governments and Union Territories as well to develop the necessary infrastructure and facilitate promotion of air sports and tourism.

The policy will cover the following air sports in India: -

1. Aerobatics
2. Aero modeling and model rocketry
3. Amateur-built and experimental aircraft
4. Ballooning
5. Drones
6. Gliding and powered gliding
7. Hang gliding and powered hang gliding
8. Parachuting (including skydiving, BASE jumping and wing suits etc.)
9. Paragliding and para motoring (including powered parachute trikes etc.)
10. Powered aircraft (including ultra light, micro light and light sports aircraft etc.)
11. Rotorcraft (including autogyro)

This may include development of new air sports centres, construction of new runways or repairing existing ones, development of new launch pads and landing pads; and financial support for events and training. With this policy, India foresees a potential to be among the leading nations in the world of air sports. ■

– Meghna Chukkath

Governance@Work

Good Governance to bring ease of living in the life of a common man

05 APR 2022

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, who is also In-charge Ministry of Personnel (DoPT)/DARPG and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan released the State Governance Report titled "Madhya Pradesh Sushasan and Development Report-2022".

The programme was attended by all the Union Ministers from Madhya Pradesh including Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Shri Virender Kumar and Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste as well as senior bureaucrats from the Central and State Governments.

While complementing the Madhya Pradesh State government for coming out with a comprehensive report and working in close collaboration with the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in the Union Ministry of Personnel, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Union Ministry of Personnel has been constantly endeavouring to pick up the best practices followed by each State and then motivate the other State Governments to replicate the same practices respectively. He complimented Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan for having pulled out the State of Madhya Pradesh from the dubious stigma of being a "BIMARU" State to a highly progressive State excelling most of the other States of the country in several indices like the agriculture-index.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan appreciated the Modi Government's efforts in coming out with several governance reforms. He also hailed Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh for his constant and consistent focus to develop vision for India @2047. He said, for many years, Madhya Pradesh is on a fast track movement and will soon be able to achieve exemplary targets in every sphere.

Single Window Portal for benefit of pensioners and superannuated elder citizens

12 APR 2022

The Minister Chairs the 32nd Meeting of Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) for Review and Rationalisation of Pension Rules i.e (CCS) (Pension) Rules, 2021Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh announced setting up of Single Window Portal for benefit of pensioners and superannuated elder citizens. The Portal, he said, will not only enable constant contact with pensioners and their associations across the country but will also regularly receive their inputs, suggestions as well as grievances for prompt response.

Addressing the 32nd Meeting of Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) for Review and Rationalisation of Pension Rules i.e (CCS) (Pension) Rules, 2021, Dr Jitendra Singh said under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several revolutionary changes were brought in since 2014 in Pension Rules for bringing "Ease of Living" to the common man.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the objective of Common Pension Portal is to create a single window digital mechanism for pensioners to raise their grievances and get the same resolved without approaching different authorities in person. He said, all Ministries responsible to process, sanction or disburse pension dues, are interlinked to this system and grievances are forwarded after assessment to the concerned Ministry/Department for resolution. Pensioners as well as Nodal officer can view the status of the grievance online till disposal in the system.

SCOVA is a useful platform for holding consultation with the stakeholders i.e. the pensioners through their Associations and concerned Ministries/Departments. It provides the Associations an opportunity for raising their issues concerning pensioners' welfare etc. directly before the concerned Ministries/Departments. Pensioner Associations from Jammu, Jaipur, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Chandigarh and other parts of the country participated in the meeting.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that since the launch of Doorstep Service for submission of Digital Life Certificate (DLC) through Postman in November 2020, more than 3,08,625 Life Certificates through India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) have been done. The facility to submit life certificate online through Jeevan Pramaan-Portal was launched by the Prime Minister in November, 2014 with the objective to provide a convenient and transparent facility to pensioners for submission of Life Certificate. He also added that Doorstep banking for collection of Life Certificates is in place in 100 cities by Public Sector Banks and the number of Life Certificates done through Banking Agents is 4253.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that Face Authentication Technique through Android phone for submission of life certificate digitally has been launched on 29.11.2021 and till date, more than 20,500 Life Certificates through face authentication have been done. Similarly, he informed that as on date total number of DLCs submitted by the Central Government Pensioners is around 1,07,75,980 /- since 2014. In 2021 total DLCs submitted till date is 19,80,977.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the 'Bhavishya' platform, an integrated online pension processing system is at present being successfully implemented in the main Secretariat of 96 Ministries/Departments including 813 Attached Offices. As on date, more than 1,50,000 cases have been processed ie. PPOs issued which includes more than 80,000 e-PPOs. The Minister also informed that Bhavishya 8.0 released in August, 2020 with a new feature to PUSH the ePPO in Digilocker. Bhavishya' is the first application to use the Digilocker Id based PUSH Technology of Digilocker.

The Minister said that the Department had started in 2017 the unique experiment of holding Pension Adalats to resolve chronic grievances of Central Government Pensioners, falling within the four walls of extant policy and the First Pension Adalat was held on 20.09.2017. So far, the Department has conducted a total of 6 Pension Adalats. The next Pension Adalat is scheduled to be held on 05.05.2022.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the earlier Pension Rules were notified 50 years ago in 1972. Since then, a large number of amendments to the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 have taken place. He said, in the light of such changes and several office memoranda clarifying different provisions of these Rules, the Department has brought out a revised and updated version of the Rules i.e. Civil Services (CCS) (Pension) Rules, 2021.

Dr Jitendra Singh clarified that the revised Rules do not make any changes in regard to entitlement of amount of pension, family pension or gratuity. However, the new Rules bring about several new policy and procedural improvements over the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972. Also, some provisions in the old rules, which have become redundant over a period of time, have been omitted from the new Rules, the Minister added.

Nagaland Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio calls on Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and discussed a wide range of State related issues ranging from development to placement of All India Services officers

14 APR 2022

Nagaland Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio called on Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh and discussed a wide range of State related issues ranging from development to placement of All India Services officers.

Neiphiu Rio appreciated Dr Jitendra Singh's keen interest and focus on development of Northeast and said that the people of the State always look upon him as their messenger in the national capital who is always ready to follow up issues of their concern.

Chief Minister of Nagaland brought to the notice of Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also Minister In-charge Department of Personnel & Training (DoP&T), some of the issues related to deputation and placement of IAS officers in Nagaland. In response, Dr Jitendra Singh said, he will ask the Department to give due consideration to all these issues and examine what best can be done.

The Chief Minister also requested the Union Minister to follow up with the Central Government the progress of some of the other proposals of projects in Nagaland. The Union Minister in return said that his office will take due cognizance of this.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, it is primarily because of the high priority given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Northeast has undergone miraculous transformation which is difficult to believe and the Northeast Model of Development is now being cited as a development model in other parts of the country as well. He said, the most striking example of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's priority for the Northeast is evident from the fact that in the first six years of his tenure as Prime Minister before the COVID pandemic, he had undertaken more than 50 visits to the North Eastern States, including frequent visits to the State of Nagaland. This, he said, may be more than the total number of visits undertaken by all the earlier Prime Ministers put together to the North Eastern States.

15th Civil Services Day function inaugurated

20 APR 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here that citizen-centricity will determine the India @2047 Governance model

Inaugurating the 15th Civil Services Day celebrations at Vigyan Bhawan here, Dr Jitendra Singh said, citizen friendly approach will be the only viable option for civil servants in the new governance model. Quoting the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said, "The true meaning of Civil Services Day is dedication to the common man, and each Civil Servant must have steely resolve to bring significant improvements in the lives of the common man".

Referring to the theme for Civil Services Day 2022 which is "Vision India@2047 – Bringing Citizens and Government closer", Dr Jitendra Singh said, over the years the expectations of common man has increased and the Civil Servants have to do a serious introspection about their future role with a clear focus on delivery. He said, we must focus on officers having 25 years of active service ahead and the current officers must help in their capacity building for making India a frontline nation, when it celebrates the 100th year of Independence in 2047.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, one can't visualise India @2047 through the prism of 2022. He said, the future governance models may redefine the role of a civil servant and governance may pass on more and more to the citizen domain, thus truly personifying the spirit of "Minimum Government". He, however added that the nature of Indices relevant to 2047 must be perfectly visualised. The Minister said that an intricately interwoven interface of technology, new indices and Artificial Intelligence may take over in a big way in coming years.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Civil Services Day marks an occasion to celebrate the untold examples of Civil Servants doing the right thing and producing results in critical areas using innovative approaches. It is also an occasion to mark the seminal changes in Indian Administration, to rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in the Service of the Nation.

Dr Jitendra Singh referred to Sardar Patel's address to the first batch of the Indian Administrative Service in Metcalfe House, New Delhi as saying, "Your predecessors were brought up in the traditions of which they kept themselves aloof from the common run of the people. It will be your bounden duty to treat the common man of India as your own".

Referring to Mission Karmayogi's main mantra of moving from "Rule to Role", Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Civil Servants must train themselves for a new and challenging assignment as most of the flagship schemes of the Government are now hugely Science and Technology based.

Dr Jitendra Singh also inaugurated an exhibition on the Awarded initiatives of 2019, 2020 and 2021 on the identified Priority Programmes and Innovations and chaired a Plenary Session on the topic 'Vision India @ 2047-Governance'.

In his address, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba said that Civil Services Day is a day of celebrations as well as a day for reflection and introspection. He said, Transformational Approach of Aspirational Districts proves what regular indicator based monitoring can achieve and now the saturation approach will ensure that benefits of welfare schemes will reach to the last man in the queue.

Secretary, DARPG Shri V.Srinivas in his address said that PM Awards for Excellence in Public Administration have been instituted with a view to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts & Organizations of the Central and State Governments for the welfare of common citizens.

Following 6 priority programmes have been identified for the Awards to be presented on Civil Services Day 2022: Promoting "Jan Bhagidari" or People's Participation in Poshan Abhiyan, Promoting excellence in sports and wellness through Khelo India scheme, Digital payments and good governance in PM SVANidhi Yojana, Holistic Development through One District One Product scheme, Seamless, End-to-End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention (District/Others) and Innovations (Centre, State and Districts).

10 Awards for 5 identified Priority Programmes will be given this year, while 6 Awards shall be given to organizations of Central/ State Government/Districts for innovations.

Former Cabinet Secretaries, former Secretaries, Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Chief Secretaries/ACS/Principal Secretaries and Heads of Central Training Institutions/ Resident Commissioners joined the event in Vigyan Bhawan. PCCsF/ DGsP/ Addl DGsP/ District Collectors, Academic Institutions, State ATIs/ Assistant Secretaries and IAS officers of 2013-17 batches who have served as Assistant Secretaries also joined the event virtually.

District Administration's lauded for achievements under ADP

25 APR 2022

As part of Union Government's special outreach Programme to get first hand appraisal of various developmental parameters, Union Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Dr.

Jitendra Singh chaired a meeting at Dak Bungalow, Baramulla in J&K and reviewed progress of work being carried out under the Aspirational District Programme (ADP).

Speaking on the occasion Union Minister said that Central Government is committed to raising the living standards of its citizens and ensuring inclusive growth for all. He said that ADP closely focuses on improving people's ability to participate fully in the developmental economy.

The minister said that the areas such as PM Fasal Bima Yojana, electronic National Agriculture Market, Bharat Net facility in each Panchayat, financial inclusion shall be some of the aspects to be addressed under ADP.

Deliberating on the mechanism of the programme Dr. Singh said that the districts are encouraged to first catch up with the best district within their state, and subsequently aspire to become one of the best in the country, by competing with, and learning from others.

Praising the work done in Baramulla under ADP, he said that by means of aspirational district there is contribution at different levels of work culture, social culture and behavioural culture to achieve the standard prescribed benchmark. He praised the utility of the model and said that it is based on a scientific approach which has the scope of dynamic real-time evaluation.

He said that government is committed to take Baramulla to the maximum of its potential in sustainable development and economic growth with proper follow-ups from time to time. Praising the biodiversity of the district he said that Baramulla is one of the oldest districts of J&K with huge forest reserves. He expressed his view of organising biotechnology workshops in the region to make people aware about the technological innovation for effective cost and time management.

After taking a comprehensive review of different parameters which have contributed to making Baramulla as one among the aspirational districts of India, Dr. Singh lauded the role of district administration for its efforts in achievements under ADP. He also directed the concerned officers to work with utmost dedication in order to be amongst the top in the ranks of the Programme.

Meanwhile various issues hampering the path of overall progress were thoroughly discussed in the meeting which the minster assured shall be taken into consideration for their timely resolution. Deputy Commissioner Baramulla and other officials of the district administration were also present in the meeting.

Noteworthy to mention that Centre has directed Union Ministers to visit different aspirational districts for official appraisal of the ground level assessment of the initiative. Launched by the Prime Minister in January 2018, ADP aims to quickly and effectively transform under-developed districts across the country. The broad outline of the programme includes Convergence, Collaboration and Competition among districts through monthly delta ranking, all driven by a mass movement.

National Good Governance Webinar Series 2022-2023

27 APR 2022

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions is organizing the National Good Governance Webinar Series over the year from April, 2022 to March, 2023.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space will be Inaugurating the National Good Governance Webinar Series on 28th April, 2022.

The mandate to hold virtual conferences/Webinars with District Collectors and other Officers over the next 12 months on a specific theme / Sector, in which past award winners since the inception of the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration under that sector be invited to present their experiences given to DARPG, is being taken forward by conducting 13 National Good Governance Webinars over the year.

One webinar on an identified sector/theme will be held every month. The 13 webinars would be on different themes under the good governance initiatives that have been felicitated the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration in the past years since its inception in 2006. The themes selected for the National Webinars are proposed to cover multiple sectors like health, education, environment, disaster management, priority programmes, Jal/water management etc. The awarded States/ Districts will present their exemplary work in these National Webinars, the purpose being to highlight the best practices and award-winning initiatives for replication by other States/Districts.

The first webinar in the series is commencing on 28th April, 2022 on the theme 'Improving Service Delivery' under which two awarded initiatives will be presented. "SAKALA" the initiative conferred with PM's Award in the year 2012-13 to the Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms, Government of Karnataka and the initiative **"**e-Seva**"** conferred with PM's Award in the year 2006-2007 to the Government of Andhra Pradesh will be presenting under the theme of "Improving Service Delivery".

Sakala, made possible through the Karnataka Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act 2011 (amended in 2014), has been an example of success in time-bound service delivery to citizens. e-Seva is a good governance initiative that incorporates the vision of National e-Gov plan "Public Services Closer to Home" and its objective is to provide smart, citizen centric, ethical, efficient and effective governance facilitated by technology.

Chairman, IIPA Dr. Jitendra Singh addresses the Convocation of 46th and 47th Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA)

29 APR 2022

While awarding postgraduate degrees in Public Administration, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also Chairman of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), called for integrated curriculum. He said, the Professional Training Modules of Public Administration need a relook in the light of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's India @2047 vision.

Speaking at the Convocation ceremony of 46th and 47th Advanced Professional Programme on Public Administration (APPPA) in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the current challenges also demand a healthy mix of Civil and Military disciplines and more and more integration of courses are required.

On the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh presented postgraduate degrees of M.Phil and Diploma in Public Administration to 31 participants of 47th APPPA and M.Phil. Degree through Punjab University, Chandigarh to the participants of 46th APPPA.

Earlier, Dr Jitendra Singh presided over the signing of MoU between IIPA and Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics, BISAG-N for preparing Civil Services Mentoring Module. S. N. Tripathi, Director General, IIPA and Shri T.P.Singh, DG, BISAG-N signed the agreement. The Minister also released a report on Socio-Economic Assessment of SAP in India.

Addressing the Convocation, Dr Jitendra Singh noted with satisfaction that the APPPA Course has undergone changes and new areas like Atmanirbhar Bharat and Mission Karmayogi apart from

other important government initiatives have been covered. He said, this makes the course more relevant and useful and it has given a good exposure to rural and urban development schemes. It has helped the officers in better understanding and appreciation of various socio-economic schemes, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, exposure to foreign training has some merits, but administrators must focus to find Indian solutions to Indian problems. He also recalled that IIPA has been resilient enough to tide over the precarious pandemic situation and dispense with the conventional mode of face-to-face training, however there was some blending whenever the circumstances demanded so.

The Minister said, 47th APPPA, besides the number it carries had many more significances as it became the first batch ever in the history of IIPA to be an audience to the oration of special address by the in-service chiefs of all three wings i.e. Army, Navy and Air force. The 47th Advanced Professional Programme on Public Administration (APPPA) has come to a conclusion after 10 momentous months.

Referring to the drastic and visible change in the work culture since May, 2014, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge, Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out several out of box decisions like doing away with the time old practice of getting documents attested by a gazetted officer and replacing the same with self-attestation, doing away with interviews for lower rung selections and abolition of more than 1500 obsolete rules/laws.

The Minister was informed that in the 46th APPPA course, the participants got the opportunity to visit Gujarat, Sikkim, Darjeeling as part of their rural, urban and forward area visits and IIPA organized special lectures and talks on very relevant topics of Indo-China Border Conflicts, Indo-Pakistan Relations, Mission Karmyogi & FRAC Strategy, New Education Policy etc. which enriched the knowledge the participants of 46th APPPA.

The APPPA course got started in 1975 and was first of its kind in the Mid-career training segment designed for middle level Civil Servants and Defence forces officers. About 1600 officers have attended this course so far from 1975 and this programme has been the flagship programme of IIPA.

APPA deals in a variety of subjects useful for middle level officers to prepare them for more responsible leadership and decision-making positions. It encompasses a wide range of modules from Public Administration, Finance, Digital Governance, Cyber Security, Agriculture economics, Urban Governance and Consumer Protection to Environment and Climate Change and Social Systems.

Rashmi Chowdhary, Additional Secretary DoPT, S. N. Tripathi, Director General, IIPA, Amitabh Ranjan, Registrar IIPA, Faculty and officers of IIPA and all the participants of 46th and 47th APPPA course attended the Convocation ceremony

7th All India Pension Adalat in New Delhi

05 MAY 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has introduced a number of path breaking reforms including relaxation in the provision of Family Pension for divorced daughters and Divyangs, introduction of Face Recognition Technology through mobile app for ease in submitting Life Certificate by elderly pensioners, Electronic Pension Pay Order, assistance from Postal Department to facilitate pension process etc.

Addressing the 7th All India Pension Adalat in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said that steps like extension of Family Pension to differently abled child of a deceased Government employee/Pensioner or giving a major hike in the Family Pension emoluments for Divyang children of a deceased government servant/pensioner are not only pension reforms but these are social reforms having wide implications.

Dr Jitendra Singh emphasised that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government follows the Mantra of Good Governance for bringing "Ease of Living" to the common man. He said, under guidance of Mr Modi, out of box ideas and solutions are being devised for the well-being of pensioners. He said, the purpose of Pension Adalat is to resolve the grievances of beneficiaries in a prompt manner as well as to learn the procedural bottlenecks in disbursal of benefits.

Dr Jitendra Singh directed the senior officials of the Department to come out with a comprehensive "Manual for Pensioners" based on the feedback received from all the Central Ministries/Departments and Subordinate Offices for bringing further ease to pensioners. In the Pension Adalat, the Minister randomly interacted and obtained feedback from the Pensioners, Staff and Officers dealing with the cases in Delhi and about 225 locations across the country. Over 1000 cases are listed for the resolution and the Department is giving special preference to cases pertaining to family pensioners and super senior pensioners aged 80 years and above.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Pension Adalat initiative was started in 2017 by the Department which is leveraging technology for speedy resolution of Pensioners' grievances. The model adopted is that all stakeholders to a particular grievance are invited on a common platform and the case is resolved as per extant policy. He informed that since 2017, some 22,494 pensioners' grievances have been taken up and 16,061 matters resolved on the spot.

Dr Jitendra Singh in his concluding remarks said that the primary objective of the exercise is to provide "Ease of Living" to the Pensioners and to prevent litigation which involves financial stress to the pensioner as well to the Government and at the same time is a very lengthy process. It also creates an All-India impact and convey a message to all the Ministries/Departments/Organizations the importance this Government attaches to Pensioners' individual grievances, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that the earlier Pension Rules were notified 50 years ago in 1972. Since then, a large number of amendments to the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 have taken place. He said, in the light of such changes and several office memoranda clarifying different provisions of these Rules, the Department has brought out a revised and updated version of the Rules i.e. Civil Services (CCS) (Pension) Rules, 2021.

V.Srinivas, Secretary Pension stated that the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has ensured end-to-end digitization of the Pension payment process by making BHAVISHYA software mandatory for all the Ministries to process their pension cases. He stated that this software has laid out dead-lines for every stake holder to complete the Pension processing so that pension is started on time. All Ministries have been instructed that their Nodal Officers should conduct weekly review meetings of pending grievances ensure accountability of Government officials dealing with Pensioners' grievances.

Dr Jitendra Singh addresses the three day Orientation Programme on Urban Governance for Mayors/Chairpersons and Municipal Commissioners/ Chief Executives Officers from Urban Local Bodies from Jammu & Kashmir at IIPA in New Delhi

11 MAY 2022

Addressing the Orientation Workshop/Programme on Urban Gov-

ernance for Mayors/Chairpersons and Municipal Commissioners/Chief Executives Officers from Urban Local Bodies from Jammu & Kashmir, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Sciences, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology, MoS PMO and Minister of State Ministry of Personnel and Public Grievances, Dr Jitendra Singh , who is also Chairman Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), emphasised municipal infrastructure and said that small and medium towns of the UT will play an important role to develop municipal infrastructure as enabler to economic activities particularly in the areas of processing agro-produce, weaving industry, and development of IT services.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that transition from agriculture sector to manufacturing is particularly important for J&K which has taken up specific steps towards rapid economic growth and investments in the state economy, particularly during the last three years. These steps will bring a shift in the economic profile of the state and create more jobs in manufacturing and services.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Prime Minister Modi has great plans for the development of J&K and accordingly, we have established urban local bodies as per 74th Constitution Amendment Act. He said, with elected bodies, application of urban missions of Government of India like the development of Infrastructure, improvement of quality of life, environment, mobility, water and sanitation will achieve full potential.

Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that the three day orientation programme will provide a suitable exposure on government missions, schemes and programmes. He noted with satisfaction that towns in state are taking important steps in Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), Livelihood promotion, AMRUT (ATAL Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) and PMSVanidhi which is helping street vendors with working capital loans and concessions on timely repayment and digital transactions. The Minister added that water, sanitation, mobility and housing are key areas of attention. He said, Jal Jeevan Mission is focussing on Har Ghar Nal se Jal and informed that the state has achieved ODF (Open Defecation Free) status for all the urban areas. Smart Cities Mission is providing infrastructure and governance, while PMAY is focusing on affordable housing.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, in the light of global examples, India has also followed expansion of manufacturing and services within and around urban areas and this non-farm sector is providing 86 percent of GDP whereas only 35-40 percent population is living in urban India. He said, it is visible in our country that the states with the above average level of urbanisation have much higher per capita income than states with low level of urbanisation like Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha etc. The states from Gujarat up to Tamil Nadu have either achieved 50% mark (Tamil Nadu) or are closer to the urban majority, the Minister pointed out.

Coming back to the J&K, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the UT has 27% urban population in 2011 and this poses a challenge to move towards half way mark of urbanisation which means more attention on industries and investment in coming decades. This journey process means acceleration of urban sector reforms effectively for municipal services and infrastructure as initiated by our urban missions and underlined that the role of elected leaders of municipal bodies will be important to achieve this goal as these leaders constitute a pool of grass root leaders and promote a bottom up leadership in our federal structure of democracy.

In his concluding remarks, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the organisation of this course by IIPA in the 75th years of Independence has special significance in view of our plans for India@2047. He said, during the next 25 years India will undergo a transition from semi-urban (25% plus) to urban majority society and economic growth and urbanisation will go hand in hand. The Minister hoped that this three day visit on urban governance will provide live cases and agenda for each of our elected representatives and will add to our efforts to make the State a clean, green and productive city.

Release of e-book Civil List-2022 of IAS officers

13 MAY 2022

Releasing the e-book Civil List-2022 of IAS officers at North Block, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that in the last 8 years, several pathbreaking reforms have been undertaken by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), which can be categorised as reforms related to Governance and reforms related to practitioners of governance.

Releasing the e-book Civil List-2022 of IAS officers in North Block, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the dynamic list will help in selecting the right officer for the right assignment based on available profile and is a vital source of information on the officers manning various posts for the general public. He said, the e-book IAS Civil list is an effort by the Department to contribute towards Digital India initiative of the Government of India.

Referring to governance reforms inspired and guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, Dr Jitendra Singh listed out several out of box ideas like abolishing the century old colonial practice of attestation of documents by a gazetted officer and replacing it by self-attestation, doing away with interview for Group-B (Non- Gazetted) and Group - C posts in the Central Government since 2016, three month Central stint for fresh IAS officers as Assistant Secretary, change in the nature of PM Excellence Award and abolition of around 1500 rules, which have become obsolete.

Similarly, the Minister pointed out that the Mission Karmayogi is the most revolutionary change pertaining to practitioners that is the civil servants. The e-book IAS Civil List also adds to the 2nd category of reforms.

This is the 67th edition of the Civil List and the second edition of e-book in pdf with unique search facilities and hyperlinking of contents for ease of access of information. The IAS Civil List contains vital information in respect of officers' batch, cadre, present posting, pay scale, qualification and date of superannuation along with their overall cadre-wise strength, number of IAS officers retiring in next five years including number of IAS officers appointed based on Civil Servicers examination from 1969 onwards. The list also contains photographs of IAS officers.

The Department of Personnel and Training is the cadre controlling authority of IAS officers and the Civil List is prepared with the help of inputs received from the State Cadres. The e-book IAS Civil List, 2022 is also available on the website of the Department at https://dopt.gov.in.

Centre will train 20,000 Jammu & Kashmir Govt officials in grievance redressal

16 MAY 2022

Centre will train 20,000 Jammu & Kashmir Govt officials in grievance redressal and the task will be undertaken by the Department of Administrative Reforms, Union Ministry of Personnel.

This was announced here by Union Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, while inaugurating a two day Regional Conference on the theme "Bringing Citizens and Government Closer – Through Administrative Reforms" at SKICC Srinagar.

The Regional Conference is being organized by the Department

of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), GoI in collaboration with UT of Jammu & Kashmir. The conference is being held in the backdrop of replication of good governance practices in Union Territory of J&K. 16 PM Awardees presented their innovations in the 2 day event.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that the Jammu & Kashmir grievance system had already been integrated with the Central Grievance Portal in October, 2020, thus making it the first Union Territory of India to have its district level grievance offices integrated with Central Government Portal of CPGRAMS (Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System). Describing it as a successful story of the first-ever experiment to integrate District Portal with State and thereof with the National Portal, the Minister hoped that this mechanism will also be emulated by more States and Union Territories.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Jammu and Kashmir became the first UT in the country to have Good Governance Index and was also first to launch District Good Governance Index for 20 Districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in January this year. He said, the Index represented a major administrative reform in benchmarking good governance at District level and a significant step for timely collation and publication of statistics at State/ District level.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that governance reforms must be taken to next level and he proposed the idea of Aspirational Blocks on the lines of Aspirational Districts based on 41 scientifically evolved indices and aimed at bringing districts lagging in certain parameters at par with the best performing districts.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has accorded the top priority in bringing the overall development in J&K UT. "Prime Minister's objective scientific approach even in designing, structuring and planning in administrative reforms has worked to a great benefit as it is based on very objective parameters," he said. Citing examples of Baramulla and Kupwara being under the Aspirational District Program (ADP) he lauded the Central Government's such initiative which he called dynamic in approach based on real time evaluation.

Speaking during the meeting, Union Minister said that Central Government is committed to raising the living standards of its citizens and ensuring inclusive growth for all. He said that ADP closely focuses on improving people's ability to participate fully in the developmental economy.

Taking about reforms in governance he said that it becomes imperative to reform rules that have become obsolete over time. Keeping pace with the contemporary time is the need of the hour. Such reforms are an example of minimum government and maximum governance and reform perform and transform slogan, he said.These are not only governance reforms which are being spoken about but also huge social reforms which are meant to carry India on the path to become a part of the global world.

During the two-day event, presentations are being made on priority programs from the Prime Awards for Excellence In Public Administration, 2021; Promoting "Jan Bhagidari" or People's Participation in Poshan Abhiyan; Promoting excellence In sports and wellness through Khelo India scheme; Digital payments and good governance in PM SVANidhi Yojana; Holistic Development through One District One Product scheme; Seamless, End-to-End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention (District/Others) and Innovations (Centre, State and Districts). One Session is also on the theme "Improving e-Service Delivery in J&K."

In his address, Secretary, DARPG, Shri V.Srinivas said that the conference is an effort to bring the Government and Citizens closer through various administrative reforms at centre, state and district level. This is being enabled by use of digital technology, pursuing next generation reforms and innovations with policy objective of "Maximum Governance, Minimum Government", entailing Government process Re-Engineering, Universal access to e-services, excellence in digital Initiatives at district level and excellence in adopting emerging technologies and use of ICT Management.Shri Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary UT of J&K while addressing the inaugural session of the Regional Conference informed about the various reforms around good governance and effective implementations of schemes and initiatives over the recent past.

Dr Jitendra Singh proposes to share best practices in Governance Reforms with Gambia, particularly in areas like pension reforms, e-recruitment and grievance redressal

17 MAY 2022

In an interaction with the Permanent Secretaries of the Govt of Gambia, who are currently in India to attend a one week Capacity Building Programme on Public Policy and Governance, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh emphasised technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven governance, which, he said, is going to become an essential part of our future working.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a clarion call for adopting Next Generation Reforms by bridging the gap between government and citizens. He said, in order to translate this vision into reality, several initiatives such as Secretariat Reforms, Swachhta Campaigns, Benchmarking of Governance and Services, Redressal of Public Grievances & Improving Service Delivery, recognizing meritocracy and replication of good governance practices have already been undertaken.

This is the 3rd Capacity Building Programme being organised for Permanent Secretaries of the Gambia by National Centre for Good Governance, NCGG in collaboration with MEA under ITEC. 25 participants are attending the training programme being held in New Delhi from 16th May to 21st of May. This programme is being organised under the aegis of the MoU signed between DARPG and Public Service Commission of the Gambia on 8th July, 2021 on Refurbishing Personnel Administration and Governance Reforms.

After giving a patient hearing to many of the Gambian Secretaries, Dr Jitendra Singh informed the delegates that India's shining governance and electoral reforms are being emulated by several countries in the world. He told the secretaries to adopt technology-based reforms in administration. The Minister said, India is celebrating its 75th year of Independence as Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav and it is the fittest occasion to underline that bilateral relations between India and Gambia have been very cordial and friendly.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, in the last nearly 8 years, India has resorted to use of technology in Governance Reforms in a massive way for achieving end-to-end service delivery without human intervention and offered to share such best practices with Gambia. He pointed out that the reforms that have been implemented through technology intervention to bring transparency in the day to day administration include implementation of e-Office, e-Leave management system, Employee Information System, Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW), Aadhar enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS), Pension Sanction and Payment tracking System (Bhavishya), Public Financial Management System (PFMS), Web Responsive Pensioner's Service for pensioners, introduction of Face Recognition Technology for elderly pensioners, Family Pension to differently abled child of a deceased Government employee/Pensioner, Electronic Pension Pay Order etc.

The Minister said, the widespread adoption of e-office has created paperless offices in the Central Secretariat and enabled smooth governance functioning not only in the pandemic but also in day-to-day functioning. The organisational reforms coupled with significant reforms in Personnel Administration undertaken by the Government include Mission Karamyogi and Lateral recruitment. The Central Secretariat has adopted the initiative of increasing efficiency in Decision Making in Government wherein the channel of submission has been reduced to not more than 4 levels from 7-8 levels. The Desk officer system adopted by the Government has ensured single point of file disposal. This has shown increased efficiency in processing of cases.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Mission Karmayogi envisages continuous capacity building of every officer through digital mode in order to prepare him for every new assignment taken up by him and at the same time also enable the authorities to scientifically choose the right officer for the right assignment. The main mantra is moving from 'rule based to role based' governance. Similarly, as part of reforms in the field of recruitment, the GoI has constituted the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) for conducting Common Eligibility Test (CET) in order to provide a level playing field to every job aspirant across the country, regardless of his socio-economic background, the Minister added.

The Minister said, in order to redress public grievances, there is a dedicated Centralised Public Grievances Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) online system for grievance redress. CPGRAMS facilitates citizens to lodge their grievances for redress from anywhere and anytime (24x7). The year 2021 witnessed 21 lakh Public Grievances cases being received on the CPGRAMS with 19.95 lakh cases being redressed.

Dr Jitendra Singh conveyed his best wishes to all the Senior Permanent Secretaries of The Gambia for the training programme and also for a comfortable stay in New Delhi.

Referring to the usefulness of Capacity Building training programmes, Mustapha Jawara, High Commissioner of Gambia requested Dr Jitendra Singh for more such training modules for mid-level officers besides the senior secretaries in the Gambian government. He sought specific help from the Indian government in areas like pension system, grievance redressal and e-recruitment. The Indian Minister agreed to extend all help and added that the best practices in other governance areas will also be shared with the African partner.

NRA gearing up to conduct computer-based online Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to Non-Gazetted posts by the year-end

22 MAY 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that there will be Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to Non-Gazetted posts from this year, and the first such test is being scheduled to be conducted before the year end.

Chairing the joint meeting of all the six Autonomous Bodies under the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) at North Block here, the Minister said, the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) under DoPT is gearing up to conduct computer-based online Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to Non-Gazetted posts by the year end. This will be a game-changer providing ease of recruitment to the job aspirants, with at least one exam centre in each district of the country.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Common Entrance Test is a path-breaking reform carried out by the DoPT to bring about "Ease of Recruitment" for young job aspirants and it will prove to be a major boon for youth, especially those living in far-flung and remote areas. He said the historic reform will provide a level playing field to all the candidates, regardless of his or her background or socio-economic status. There will also be a huge benefit to women and Divyang candidates and for those who find it financially unaffordable to appear for multiple tests by travelling to multiple Centres.

Initially the test will be conducted in 12 languages including Hindi and English and will later on add all the languages mentioned in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the "whole of Govt" concept which has not only removed silos but also facilitated an integrated holistic approach in governance with all the different Ministries, Departments and agencies of the government collectively addressing each issue, without one leaving it to the other. He said, the entire context and concept of governance is undergoing reorientation to suit the current needs and requirements of 21st century India.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the review exercise of the Autonomous Bodies functioning under central Ministries/Departments is of utmost importance in view of furthering the aim of "minimum government, maximum governance", efficient use of public funds and reducing financial burden on the Government Exchequer, besides making the governance people-friendly.

Heads of all the 6 Autonomous Bodies gave a detailed presentation about the mandate, work, budget and aims and objectives of the Institutes. These included National Recruitment Agency (NRA), Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), Civil Services Officers Institute (CSOI), Grih Kalyan Kendras (GKK), Central Civil Services Cultural and Sports Board (CCSCSB) and Kendriya Bhandar (Registered under Multi State Cooperative Societies Act).

In line with the mandate of the Department of Expenditure Dr Jitendra Singh directed the senior officials to explore the possibility of the merger of Grih Kalyan Kendras (GKK) and Central Civil Services Cultural and Sports Board (CCSCSB) due to overlapping mandate and aims and objectives. He asked the officials to come out with a feasibility report within one month.

The Minister also guided the Kendriya Bhandar to open more outlets at centers of Grih Kalyan Kendras and IIPA for increasing sales and cost-cutting. He asked the Kendriya Bhandar to go whole hog to promote its unique product of organic pulses and build a brand for the same. He also lauded the KB officials for achieving 500 percent growth in sales from Rs 750 crore in 2027-18 to Rs 4,000 Crore in 2021-22.

Family pension rules relaxed for missing Central government employees

23 MAY 2022

In a major relief, particularly for government employees serving in militancy affected areas like Jammu & Kashmir, North-East as well as Naxal prone pockets, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh announced that the Government has relaxed family pension rules for missing central government employees.

According to the earlier rule, the next of the kin of an employee would not receive the family pension, if he went missing and the family pension would not be paid till the missing Government was declared dead in accordance with the law or till seven years had passed since he went missing. As per new the OM, in all cases where a Government servant covered by NPS goes missing during service, the benefits of family pension will be immediately paid to the family of the missing Government servant and in case

he re-appears and resumes service, the amount paid as family pension during the intervening time of his missing period can be accordingly deducted from his salary.

Referring to the new OM of Department of Pension in this regard, the Minister said, this is going to provide huge relief particularly in those regions where instances of government employees going missing are reported more frequently. He said, cases of abduction of central government employees working in violence-prone areas have come to the fore and therefore to instill confidence and to protect them and their family interests, the changes in the pension rules were brought about.

Minister informed that if a Government servant covered by the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 goes missing, the benefits of arrears of salary, family pension, retirement gratuity, leave encashment, etc. are paid to the families of the missing employees in accordance with the instructions issued dated 25.06.2013. He said, the matter has been examined in consultation with Department of Personnel and Training, Department of Financial Services and Department of Expenditure and considering the hardship faced by the family of such Government servants, it has been decided to extend the benefits of this Department's OM No. 1/17/2011-P&PW (E) dated 25.06.2013 to the families of Government servants covered by NPS who go missing during service.

The other provisions of the OM states that in all cases where a Government servant covered by NPS goes missing during service, the benefits of family pension may be paid to the family if the missing Government servant had exercised option for benefits under CCS (Pension) Rules on death or discharge from service on disability/ invalidation or the benefits under CCS (Pension) Rules is the default option under the Central Civil Services (Implementation of National Pension System) Rules, 2021. The benefit of arrears of salary, retirement gratuity and leave encashment shall be paid to the family in all cases where a Government employee covered under NPS goes missing during service, irrespective whether the employee had exercised option for benefits under CCS (Pension) Rules or under the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (Exits and Withdrawals under National Pension System) Regulations, 2015. Payment of the benefits to the family of the missing Government servant would, however, be subject to the conditions and procedural requirements, as mentioned in this Department's OM dated 25.06.2013.

In the case of a Government servant covered under NPS goes missing during service and his family is given family pension under CCS (Pension) Rules or CCS (EOP) Rules, the Permanent Retirement Account under National Pension System would remain suspended till the Government servant re-appears or till he is declared dead in accordance with the law. In the event of re-appearance of Government servant, the NPS account would be re-activated and the same account under NPS will become operative. Recoveries of payments made to the family of missing NPS employee would be made from the indemner as provided under this Department's OM dated 25.06.2013. However, in the event of Government servant being declared dead at any time or after seven years, Government contribution and returns thereon from the accumulated pension corpus under NPS would be transferred to the Government account and remaining corpus comprising of employees' contribution and returns thereon would be paid to the nominee or legal heir as the case may be in accordance with CCS(Implementation of NPS) Rules, 2021 and family will keep getting benefits as per CCS (Pension) Rules or CCS(EOP) Rules, as the case may be.

Dr Jitendra Singh reminded that ever since Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare had introduced a number of revolutionary reforms including relaxation in the provision of Family Pension for divorced daughters and Divyangs, introduction of Face Recognition Technology through mobile app for ease in submitting Life Certificate by elderly pensioners, Electronic Pension Pay Order, assistance from Postal Department to facilitate pension process etc. He said, moreover steps like extension of Family Pension to differently abled child of a deceased Government employee/Pensioner or giving a major hike in the Family Pension emoluments for Divyang children of a deceased government servant/pensioner are not only pension reforms but these are social reforms having wide implications.

Kashmir essential part of Modi's New India journey: Dr Jitendra Singh

31 MAY 2022

Kashmir is an essential part of PM Modi's New India journey. It is time to avail of the enormous new openings initiated over the last 8 years, which are shaping the destiny of 135 crore Indians, under the able guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This was stated by Union Minister of State (I/C) Ministry of Science and Technology, Minister of State (I/C) Ministry of Earth Science, MoS in the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh while addressing a public gathering at Budgam.

Titled "Gareeb Kalyan Sammelan", the event was organised at the Bihishte Zahra Park in Budgam to mark the completion of eight years in service of the current government.

Dr Singh said that a three-tier system of government has been introduced for the first time in Jammu and Kashmir in seventy years and it will not be long before people get to see and feel the benefits of such a system.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister deliberated on different centrally sponsored schemes and different initiatives launched by the Modi Government to ensure equitable development of people of Jammu and Kashmir, something which they had been deprived of for long for no fault of theirs.

The Minister also distributed benefits under Mudra, PM Svanidhi, Ayushman Bharat, PMAY-G and various agriculture and horticulture related schemes and distributed various logistics among them.

The Sammelan was also addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi through virtual mode from Shimla. The PM also credited Rs 21 thousand crore in farmers' accounts through DBT mode on the occasion.

The Minister later on also interacted with the District and Sectoral Officers in a meeting convened in New Conference Hall Budgam. During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Budgam Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza through PowerPoint presentation highlighted the overall district profile, major achievement of various departments in sectors including power, water supply, roads, social welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture and allied activities. The Minister took stock of status of various sectors including health, education, water supply and construction of roads among others.

On the occasion, Dr Singh laid e-foundation of different development projects including Watalpora-Wahabpora road, upgradation of Gariend-Wadwan road, and upgradation of Dajimalik Gund, Punch Gund, Nijloo Wahpora including Mamgund Road. E-foundation was also laid for one receiving station at Ompora Budgam.

The Minister also e-inaugurated OPD Block, Operation Theatre and Wards at SDH Nagam, additional accommodation for Model Higher Secondary School Chadoora, Middle Anganwadi Training Centre at Karipora, Budgam and Govt. High School Wagoora B.K Pora, Budgam.The Minister also e-inaugurated District Bilingual Website designed and developed by NIC Team Budgam. It is pertinent to mention here that the website will act as a vital link between the District Administration and citizens so far as dissemination of information is concerned.

An awareness cum training programme on eco-friendly and sustain-

able farming methods and demo and distribution of solar pumps by Science and Technology Department was also held at Sheikh-ul-Alam Hall on the occasion.

Commenting upon the potential of Budgam, the Hon'ble minister said that the district has biggest assets in the form of agriculture, horticulture and other allied activities. He said that in this direction, more areas need to be explored so that maximum resources are tapped for socio-economic development of public.

The Minister emphasised upon holding of massive awareness campaign and instructed KVK Budgam, Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines and SKUAST to hold joint seminar cum awareness programmes in the near future to give further boost to agricultural activities across district Budgam. Some villages in Budgam shall be identified and developed as solar villages, the Minister announced.

While concluding, the Minister applauded efforts of District Administration Budgam for the steps and initiatives taken for overall development of the district. The Minister also hailed the sincere coordination and joint synergy between District Administration and elected representatives including DDCs, BDCs and PRI workers of the district.

Book on 8 Years of Administrative and Pension reforms released

1 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh released a book and its e-Version on 8 Years of Administrative and Pension reforms (2014-2022).

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said, eight years of administrative and pension reforms under Prime Minister Narendra Modi are aimed at social transformation.

Delivering the inaugural address at a webinar on Administrative Reforms and Pension Reforms (2014-2022) in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, large scale use of technology and integration approach are the twin pillars of both the revolutionary Governance and Pension Reforms carried out in the last eight years.

Dwelling on Pension Reforms, Dr Jitendra Singh said, ever since Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare had introduced a number of revolutionary reforms including relaxation in the provision of Family Pension for divorced daughters and Divyangs, introduction of Face Recognition Technology through mobile app for ease in submitting Life Certificate by elderly pensioners, Electronic Pension Pay Order, assistance from Postal Department to facilitate pension process etc.

He said, moreover steps like extension of Family Pension to differently abled child of a deceased Government employee/Pensioner or giving a major hike in the Family Pension emoluments for Divyang children of a deceased government servant/pensioner are not only pension reforms but these are social reforms having wide implications.

Referring to the last month's decision for relaxation of family pension rules for missing central government employees, Dr Jitendra Singh said the move will instil confidence among the employees working in extremist-infested and violence-prone areas. He said, the new rule has done away with seven-year mandatory wait and, in all cases, where a government servant covered by NPS goes missing during service, the benefits of family pension will be immediately paid to the family of the missing Government servant and in case he reappears and resumes service, the amount paid as family pension during the intervening time of his missing period can be accordingly deducted from his salary.

Dr Jitendra Singh also informed that at the behest of the Prime Minister, the Department also started a portal entitled "Anubhav" to show-case the experiences in Government of retiring officials which has now become a huge resource base for us. The Department not only introduced the concept of Pension Adalats but has leveraged technology to hold digital Adalats through video-conferencing. He informed that since 2017, some 22,494 pensioners' grievances have been taken up and 16,061 matters resolved on the spot in Pension Adalats. The Minister said, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has ensured end-to-end digitization of the Pension payment process by making BHAVISHYA software mandatory for all the Ministries to process their pension cases. He stated that this software has laid out dead-lines for every stakeholder to complete the Pension processing so that pension is started on time.

On Administrative Reforms, Dr Jitendra Singh listed out several out of box ideas like abolishing the century old colonial practice of attestation of documents by a gazetted officer and replacing it by self-attestation, doing away with interview for Group-B (Non-Gazetted) and Group - C posts in the Central Government since 2016, three month Central stint for fresh IAS officers as Assistant Secretary, change in the nature of PM Excellence Award and abolition of around 1450 rules, which have become obsolete.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, after 2014, the process and selection of PM's Excellence Award have been institutionalised and now this is based on the performance of the district, rather than that of the District Collector or individual civil servant. He said, another improvisation brought is to assess the scale and rating of the implementation of Flagship Schemes in the district.

Referring to Mission Karmayogi's main mantra of moving from "Rule to Role", Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Civil Servants must train themselves for a new and challenging assignment as most of the flagship schemes of the Government are now hugely Science and Technology based.

e-Book version on major reforms and achievements of DoPT of last eight years released

03 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh released a book on major reforms and achievements of the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) during the last eight years. He also launched an e-book version of the same.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been instrumental behind reforms like self-attestation and abolishing the interviews with his out of the box thinking and his encouragement to initiatives aimed at achieving ease of governance resulting in ease of living for the common man.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that it is quite visible that the Prime Minister Modi accords high priority to administrative reforms that he announced decision like abolishing the interviews from the ramparts of the Red Fort during the Independence Day speech and the DoPT worked tirelessly to bring it into effect within a short time of three months. Dr. Singh said that the Prime Minister's vision of minimum government, maximum governance is the idea behind all such reforms brought out by the DoPT in the last eight years.

The Union Minister termed all these reforms as socio-economic, futuristic and citizen-centric, with people's participation, which ensures that every citizen gets equal opportunity. He listed out a number of key reforms, achievements and initiatives by the DoPT such as proposed Common Eligibility Test, Mission Karmayogi, setting up of National Recruitment Agency, Citizen-centric online RTI portal. The Minister noted that the initiative of mandatory

stint of Assistant Secretaries with the central Ministries / Departments was a huge experiment which has paid off extremely well to the benefit of the Government of India.

Talking about various training programs being conducted by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the sole aim of these training modules is to train the officers and people's representatives about several flagship schemes of the government and how to prepare themselves well to help people in getting benefits of such schemes.

Dr. Jitendra Singh mentioned Prevention of Corruption Act as a tool to bring transparency in governance by ensuring enough safeguards for honest officials. He said that zero tolerance against corruption has been the top priority of the Modi government.Dr. Jitendra Singh complimented the entire team of DoPT for putting sincere efforts to bring out this E-booklet and said that this will be shared with other Ministries / departments, as well. Senior officials of the Department of Personnel & Training were present on the occasion.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, Vision India @2047 must take into account optimum utilisation of India's capacity resources

03 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that Vision India @2047 must take into account optimum utilisation of India's capacity resources.

Chairing a meeting of Advisory Committee on Vision India @2047,organised by Department of Administrative Reforms (DARPG), Dr Jitendra Singh said, Capacity Resource Management is going to present a huge challenge for India as the country prepares a roadmap of 25 years of journey ahead. He said, adopting 21st century management practices represents a significant challenge for Governments and it is with this objective that Prime Minister Modi has embarked on the ambitious Vision India@2047 initiative.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), blockchain, drones, Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, 3D printing and virtual reality (VR) are going to have a huge impact on all aspects of life including governance. He said, though, it is difficult to visualise the exact shape of India that emerges 25 years from now, but one thing is certain that when independent India turns 100, it will be the world's Technological and Economic powerhouse.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, several initiatives, policies, schemes and programmes during the last 8 years of Modi Government have contributed to the dawn of New India and the emergence of AtmaNirbhar Bharat, but there are challenges on many fronts that need innovative solutions. Calling for integrated approach for problem solving, the Minister underlined that there is need to increase trust and reduce compliances for "Ease of Living" for common man.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, as we formulate the Vision for Governance, "Climate Change and Disaster Management" must become an essential pillar of training for civil servants. Visualising the role of Artificial Intelligence for Disaster Management, the Minister informed that a mega Science Mission on Climate Research will soon be unveiled. He said, new opportunities and new challenges will keep emerging and therefore the civil servants must gear up to seize the initiatives at the right moment. He added that to bring citizens and Government closer, digital institutions have to be created.

Dr Jitendra Singh also laid great stress on ethics in delivery of public services and visualised that in coming years technology will propel a model of Governance by Citizens. He said, the Government has tried to ensure digital infrastructure as a core utility to every citizen by providing unique digital identity, access to common service centres and has provided thousands of Services on Demand by seamless integration of services across Departments/Ministries.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the unprecedented scale at which several programmes have been implemented like One Nation One Ration Card, e-Office, CPGRAMS, Passport SevaKendras, e-Hospital reflect in the Government's willingness to adopt 'Building to scale Building to last' approach where Reforms are deep rooted and long lasting.

Shri V.Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG informed that in 2021, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has strived to adopt the Whole of Government Approach in implementing 3 critical campaigns aimed at deepening administrative reforms. The initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making envisaged reducing the channels of submission, financial delegation, operationalization of e-Office version 7.0, Digitization of Central Registration Units and Operationalization of Desk Officer System in all Ministries/ Departments.

Some of the eminent Sectoral Experts who presented their views for India Vision @47 included Prabhat Kumar, former Cabinet Secretary, Ajit Kumar Seth, former Cabinet Secretary, Sanjay Kothari, former CVC, Dr C. Chanramauli, former DoPT Secretary, Dr K. Radhakrishnan former ISRO Chairman, Prof Himanshu Roy, Director, IIM, Indore, Prof Abhay Karandikar, Director, IIT Kanpur, Dr R. Balasubramaniam, Member-HR, Capacity Building Commission, S.N. Tripathi, DG, IIPA.

Development of the Himalayan States like Uttarakhand has been top priority of the government in 8 years: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh

04 JUN 2022

After interacting with the beneficiaries of various government schemes in Raiwala, the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh chaired the 'DISHA' (District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee) meeting at Dehradun.

Members of Parliament Ramesh Pokhriyal and Naresh Bansal also attended the meeting.

The Union Minister said that the aim of the Union Government is to achieve 100% saturation of government schemes in a true sense. He added that it means that district magistrates use their discretionary powers to ensure that no bonafide eligible beneficiary remains outside the cover of the scheme.

Considering the frequent man-animal conflict in Uttarakhand, the Union Minister suggested to the district officials, a collaboration with the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research to find ways to reduce animals venturing into habitated areas.

Deliberating the implementation of the 'Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana', the Union Minister said that all banks should follow similar criteria while deciding on the eligibility of the applicant. While reviewing the construction under Gram Sadak Yojana, the Minister advocated taking into account the recent urbanisation of 'rural' areas and said that this means that higher standards of road construction should be adhered to. While discussing the hilly and often inaccessible nature of farming in Uttarakhand, the Union Minister recommended the greater use of drone technology in agriculture in collecting data, applying insecticide or conducting surveys.

Dr.Jitendra Singh outlined the need for such outreach meetings by

stating that this provides a useful tool to flag issues that our varied geography engenders. Dr Singh said that it is a priority for Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi that hilly and newly founded states like Uttarakhand are brought on the path of rapid development.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh advocates integrated training modules in governance for Central Training Institutions

06 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh advocated integrated training modules in governance for Central Training Institutions.

The Minister was presiding over a joint meeting attended by senior officials of the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) and Central Training Institutions like Lal Bahadur Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) Mussoorie, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM) and CBI Academy.

Dr. Jitendra Singh called upon CTIs to prepare institutional interactive curriculum and come forward to involve other training institutions of the country in this endeavour.

Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed on specialised training faculty from different strata and inclusion of more women faculty members amongst other issues. He also floated the idea of having visiting resident professors for the institutes.

The Union Minister said that the CTIs should work with more cohesion and integrated approach in order to try to learn and benefit from each other's expertise.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the era of generalisation is over and there is a need for a Role specific module and Panel to impart citizen-centric delivery mechanism, which is the core of all Governance Model. He also called for increased use of technology in learning and training modules.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's penchant for Governance Reforms, Dr Jitendra Singh added that in this transformation, CTIs have a huge role to play in training and shaping the officers for execution of the tasks throughout their careers.

Dwelling on the theme of Integration, Dr Jitendra Singh said that Indian Institute of Public Administration, IIPA has established a Mission-Karmayogi Resource Cell at IIPA and is working in close coordination with National Capacity Building Commission, LBSNAA and other central training institutions (CTIs).

The Minister assured all CTIs to look into the issues of shortage of faculty and at the same time advised them to become financially self-sustainable.

He said that the aim of "Mission Karmayogi" is to impart futuristic vision to civil services which could effectively determine the roadmap for next 25 years and shape the Century India of 2047.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh interacts and felicitates first 20 All India Toppers of IAS/ Civil Services Exam 2021

07 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh interacted and felicitated first 20 All India Toppers of IAS/ Civil Services Exam 2021, who called on him at the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) headquarters at North Block here. The result of the exam was declared on 30th of May.

Among the first 20 IAS/Civil Services toppers invited by Dr Jitendra Singh, the first three toppers this year Shruti Sharma (First), Ankita Agarwal (Second) and Gamini Singla (Third) happen to be women, followed in that order by Aishwarya Verma, Utkarsh Dwivedi, Yaksh Chaudhary, Samyak S Jain, Ishita Rathi, Preetam Kumar, Harkeerat Singh Randhawa, Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak, Yasharth Shekhar, Priyamvada Ashok Mhaddalkar, Abhinav J Jain, C Yaswanthkumar Reddy, Anshu Priya, Mehak Jain, Ravi Kumar Sihag, Diksha Joshi and Arpit Chauhan.

In his welcome address to the top-20 rankers and their family members, Dr Jitendra Singh described the 2021 batch of Civil Servants as the "Architects of Century India". He said, when India is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav coinciding with 75th Year of India's Independence, this Century Batch with 25 to 30 years of active service ahead will charter a new course when independent India turns 100.

The Minister said, onus will be on them to become active partner in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of New India that leads the rest of the world. He said, under Prime Minister Modi, India is already on the ascent and Civil Servants of this new genre have the privileged responsibility of taking it to the top league in the global arena.

During introduction of the 20 toppers, Dr Jitendra Singh pleasantly noted that there are 10 engineers and two medicos among them and hoped that they will add value to the work assigned to them in carrying out various specialized schemes and programmes introduced by the Modi Government in the last 8 years. The Minister hoped that the technocrats will be able to do justice to the highly specialised flagship programmes of the government in sectors like Health, Agriculture, Water, Environment, Industries, Education, Skills and Mobility to name a few.

Dr Jitendra Singh also pointed out that apart from the first three toppers in Civil Services Exam-2021, there are 8 female candidates out of 20 toppers, which is nearly 40 percent and asserted that we are closely arriving at gender parity. The Minister also took note of the demographic change happening over the last few years and said that they represent a pan-India coverage as these candidates hail from the States/UTs of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Telangana. He said, this gender and demographic change augurs well for a diverse country like India.

The Minister also underlined that even candidates having done schooling from Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya School and Government schools are cracking the exam, while earlier it was mostly confined to elite schools.

Dr Jitendra Singh said after he joined the government in 2014, he had introduced in the DoPT a new tradition of personally inviting the All India Toppers to North Block and felicitating them and since then this tradition continues.

Responding to some of the suggestions of toppers that India language students face difficulties and challenges in taking up the exam, Dr Jitendra Singh said that Indian Government is committed to promote Indian languages and efforts are on to translate the engineering and medical books in Indian Languages through professionals. He also reminded the officers that National Education Policy, NEP-2020 will also address some of the challenges.

The Minister also informed that The National Recruitment Agency (NRA) under DoPT is gearing up to conduct computer-based online Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to Non-Gazetted posts by the year end. He added that to begin with, the test will be conducted in 12 Languages and gradually it will include all the lan-

guages mentioned in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

Dr Jitendra Singh also recalled some of the path breaking reforms brought in for the young probationers and IAS officers during the last seven years. These, he said, included introduction of a 3 month stint of mentorship at the Central government before giving over to the respective State or Union Territory to join the allocated cadre.

Dr Jitendra Singh in conclusion said that interacting with the successful candidates is always a learning experience for future course corrections. He wished that in their great career ahead full of diverse opportunities and challenges, they would be able to give their best to the country. The programme was attended by all the senior officers of the department.

PRIs meet at Majalta, Udhampur in J&K

12 JUN 2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said at Majalta, Udhampur in J&K that Prime Minister Narendra Modi personifies the true essence of democracy, wherein common man from a humble background can rise to the highest echelons on the basis of sheer merit and people's popular support.

Addressing a meeting, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the true essence of democracy is that whenever a new child is born, regardless of whatever is the social or economic status or lineage of the household, the mother should have the confidence to dream that in a democratic order, even her child has the opportunity to achieve the highest position in hierarchy. If that be so, Modi's rise to the position of Prime Minister restored the faith of common people in the democratic strength and the values of India. At the same time, it also marked the end of dynasticismthat had resulted in family rule of successive generations at the Centre.

Dr Jitendra Singh noted that the public welfare schemes and programmes introduced by PM Modi during the last eight years for the benefit of deprived sections of society are in fact redemption of six decades of struggle by BJP for establishing a governance system based on the principle of "Appeasement to None Justice to All". He said, soon after taking over as Prime Minister, Modi had committed himself to the service of the poor and equitable development of the neglected sections and regions of the country. Looking back, one can evidently say that he has walked the talk, he added

Another striking feature of Modi's welfare schemes is, said Dr Jitendra Singh that they have sought to introduce a new culture and a new political culture in the country. The benefits like Ujjawala Scheme and PM AwasYojana reached the neediest, regardless of caste, creed and religion or even the political affiliation or vote bank considerations. As far Udhampur-Kathua-DodaLok Sabha constituency, Dr Jitendra Singh said, not only national level projects like Devika River Project and PakalDul Hydro Power Project were initiated, several of the stalled projects like Shahpur-Kandi project and Rattle project were introduced. At the same time, North India's first Industrial Biotech Park, the first Express Corridor from Katra to Delhi were initiated and rare in a single constituency that got three government Medical Colleges.

On the occasion, Pamphlets were also distributed highlighting 75 major development projects initiated in Udhampur-Kathua-DodaLok Sabha constituency during the last eight years.

Dr Jitendra Singh also addressed a booth level meeting and visited a Dalit family during the visit. He was accompanied by BJP J&K Vice President PawanKhajuria and local Sarpanches, Panches and PRIs.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh releases the second edition of the National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment 2021, NeSDA 2021

13 JUN 2022

Jammu & Kashmir tops among all the Union territories of India in e-Governance services delivery, which has also enabled it to save around Rs 200 crore annually that was incurred in carriage of physical files during the Annual Durbar move between the two capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar.

This was stated here by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, while releasing the National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment report, prepared at the initiative of Department of Administrative Reforms in the Union Ministry of Personnel.

The Minister lauded the UT of Jammu and Kashmir for achieving this position with an overall compliance of nearly 90%.

Addressing the National Workshop on e-Office and Launch of National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA 202), Dr Jitendra Singh informed that in the Union Territories category, Jammu & Kashmir was assessed for the first time in NeSDA 2021 and scored the highest amongst all UTs for six sectors. He said, after coming into force of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 with effect from 31 st October, 2019, J&K became the first UT in the country to have Good Governance Index and was also first to launch District Good Governance Index for 20 Districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in January this year.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the operationalization of two Secretariats in Jammu & Kashmir was possible because of e-Office and that has put an end to Annual Darbar move carrying over 300 truckloads of files between the two capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu. This also saved Rs 200 crore per annum and led to uninterrupted work culture in the entire UT without any official break of six weeks for organization of files in Jammu and Srinagar respectively.

The Minister said, the adoption of e-Office has enabled the simultaneous operationalization of both Jammu and Srinagar Secretariats and was one of the biggest reforms related to the practice of Darbar move.Dr Jitendra Singh released the second edition of the National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment 2021, NeSDA 2021. The report has been prepared covering the assessment of States, UTs, and focuses on Central Ministries on their effectiveness in delivering online services to citizens. The report also provides suggestions for governments to further enhance their e-Governance service delivery systems.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, 28 Ministries/Departments have already adopted e-Office version 7.0 along with digitization of the central registration units enabled creation of paperless secretariats where receipts move online, files move online and correspondence moves online. He said, the migration schedule of the remaining 56 Ministries/Departments has been drawn up and by February, 2023, all Ministries will have e-Office version 7.0. The limited file movement with 4 levels of submission and adoption of the desk officer system has ensured that non-performing officials can no longer hide files, the Minister added.

Referring to some of the success stories, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the uninterrupted functioning of the Central Secretariat in the pandemic and lockdown was possible because of e-Office. Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and Secretaries had access to Virtual Private Network and could take policy decisions on e-files during this period.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the adoption of e-Office in DRDO, represented a milestone as it demonstrated that Departments with multiple field offices could use e-Office for real time transfer of files. He informed that in 2022, DRDO collaborated with DARPG in propagation of the use of e-Office in DRDO and all field offices

of DRDO and the Headquarters. Similarly, e-Office has enabled the seamless movement of files to IFD and Department of Expenditure. E-Office version 7.0 is a significant advancement on e-Office over 6.0 with a number of new features, enabling references to external offices. This has enabled seamless movement of files to IFD and Dept of Expenditure.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, India's e-Governance policies have shown improvements and citizen satisfaction levels have risen and, in many ways, Technology has succeeded in Bringing Government and Citizens closer.

In conclusion, Dr Jitendra Singh expressed satisfaction that in assessment of State portals, Kerala became a front runner and the progress made by Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh in NeSDA 2021 was also commendable. In Service portals, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Meghalaya have topped the rankings. All States/ UT's have shown improvements in the promotion of integrated service portals and the number of services being offered on their state portals.

In his address, V.Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG said, that DARPG currently monitors adoption of e-Office on its dashboard on a daily basis on its dashboard, submits progress reports on e-Office implementation in its monthly DO letters to the Cabinet Secretary and circulates information to the Council of Ministers. Further DARPG had instituted certificates of recognition to institutions that achieve 90 percent of e-Office digitalization. The significant increase in number of instances and users under e-Office was possible because of these untiring efforts.

In NeSDA 2021, 1400 services across all States and UTs were assessed as compared to 872 in 2019, an increase of over 60%. 74% respondents of the nation-wide citizen survey conducted during the study had stated that they are satisfied with the e-Services provided by the States and UTs. The e-Services of Finance and Local Governance & Utility Services sectors were the most widely used by citizens. The rising trend of e-Services delivery shifting from single silo departmental portals to integrated / centralized portals has resulted in higher citizen satisfaction.

The Minister addresses the mammoth 'Jan Kalyan' public rally at Kathua in Jammu

14 JUN 2022

Minister of State (I/C) Science & Technology; Minister of State (I/C) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here that Narender Modi's 8 years as Prime Minister gave India vision for 2047 and laid the roadmap for the next 25 years of Amrit Kal which would witness the ascent of India as a front-rank nation in the world.

Addressing mammoth 'Jan Kalyan' public rally at Kathua in Jammu, Dr Jitendra Singh said that these 8 years witnessed unprecedented development and growth, but what is often not discussed is the subtle rise of self-esteem in the common Indian as well as reinforcement of self-confidence in party workers.

From the point view of a common man, these 8 years, since 2014, said Dr Jitendra Singh has been a journey from pessimism to optimism and from hopelessness to hope. There were times when Indian youth going abroad were sometimes shy of disclosing their identity whereas, they are not only held in high esteem but also preferred for professional jobs and Start-Up initiatives by their western counterparts.

While releasing a pamphlet enumerating 75 major development works and initiatives during the last 8 years in the Lok Sabha constituency of Udhampur-Kathua-Doda, Dr Jitendra Singh said if one start-up the from entry at Lakhanpur, one would come across a monument of development after every 2 or 3 kms which were set up in the last years. These, he said, include Keediyan-Gandiyal bridge, Maharaja Gulab Singh's Statue, Seed-processing plant, Bio-tech Industrial Park, highway village, centrally funded engineering college, Kendriya Vidyala,Juthana bridge, above 200 bridges including, Udhampur river Devika project, Bhaderwah higher altitude Medicine Institute, Kishtwar airport, Chenani Nashville tunnel, Atal setu, Express road corridor from Katra to Delhi etc. In addition, there have been about 200 bridges and at least 3 new national highways.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Kathua's Birla Park, the first of its kind, set up about 3 years back, is rated better than the Green Belt Park in Gandhi Nagar Jammu. This is possibly the only Lok Sabha Constituency in which 3 central government funded Medical Colleges were set up within 4 years, he added.

Bhavishya bags 3rd Rank in recently released NeSDA-2021 Assessment

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare will soon launch Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled Common single Pension Portal for the benefit of pensioners and elder citizens. This will also help seamless processing, tracking and disbursal of pension.

Interacting with beneficiaries of Bhavishya, a Portal for Pension Payment and Tracking System, Dr Jitendra Singh said, in keeping with PM Narendra Modi's motto of "Ease of Living" for all, AI supported portal will send automatic alerts to pensioners and superannuated elder citizens. He said, the Portal will not only enable constant contact with pensioners and their associations across the country but will also regularly receive their inputs, suggestions as well as grievances for prompt response.

Most of the superannuated senior citizens including from paramilitary services and those about to get superannuated lauded the prompt pension processing through the Bhavishya platform and thanked the Union Minister for such seamless seva. Some of the hiccups from the banking side were brought to the notice of the Minister, which he said, would be taken care of automatically in the AI enabled portal with fixed responsibility.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Bhavishya has ensured End-to-End digitization of the Pension processing and payment in tune with Modi Government's objective of transparency, digitization and service delivery. He also advised the officials to conduct pre-retirement workshops at regular intervals to counsel them and learn from their experiences. The Minister reiterated that pension reforms are not only governance reforms, but have huge positive social implications.

Dr Jitendra Singh also complimented Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare for bagging the 3rd Rank for BHAVISHYA as per the recently released National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment 2021, among all the Central Government e-Governance Service Delivery Portals. He informed that the ranking is based on Accessibility, Content Availability, Ease of Use, Information Security & Privacy, End Service Delivery, Integrated Service Delivery, Status & Request Tracking. The Minister said, being a small Department, it is truly a milestone achievement since this has been done completely in-house by utilising the services of NIC and without spending huge amounts on outsourcing.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the 'Bhavishya' platform was made mandatory for all central government departments since 01.01.2017 and this system is at present being successfully implemented in the main Secretariat of 97 Ministries/ Departments including 815 Attached Offices, along with 7,852 DDOs on board. He also informed that as on date, more than 1, 62,000 cases have been processed i.e. PPOs issued which includes more than 96,000 e-PPOs.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Bhavishya 8.0 was released in August,

2020 with this new feature to PUSH the ePPO in Digilocker. Bhavishya' is the first application to use the Digilocker Id based PUSH Technology of Digilocker and 3892 e-PPOs have been pushed to Digilocker till date. Bhavishya provides an option to retiring employees for linking their Digilocker account with "Bhavishya" to get e-PPO. This initiative has created a permanent record safe from destruction of pensioners. He said, the 'Bhavishya' system has now been made available on a Mobile App, thereby making it simple especially for those Para Military Forces who are out in the fields to keep track of their pension cases.

Secretary, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Shri V. Srinivas said, PPO in Digilocker eliminates delays in forwarding PPO to new Pensioners, as well as the necessity of handing over a physical copy. Considering that a very large number of retirees are from CAPFs who serve in far flung areas of the country, such a software is a boon both in terms of Ease of processing as well as speed and accuracy in pension processing.

From the retiree filing his/her papers online till issue of the PPO in electronic format going into the Digilocker, this platform has shown the intention of complete transparency and efficiency of the Government. Every stakeholder has a deadline to complete their part of the pension processing and alerts keep going on the pensioners' mobile. As was in the past, this obviates the necessity of the retiree to keep chasing his file from seat-to-seat months before his retirement. Since the software is fed with the latest pension rules, the calculation of pension is accurate and as per rule and not based on the interpretation of the dealing staff.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare will soon launch Art the benefit of pensioners and elder citizensificial Intelligence (AI) enabled Common Single Pension Portal

15 JUN 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today informed that the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare will soon launch Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled Common single Pension Portal for the benefit of pensioners and elder citizens. This will also help seamless processing, tracking and disbursal of pension.

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Source: PIB

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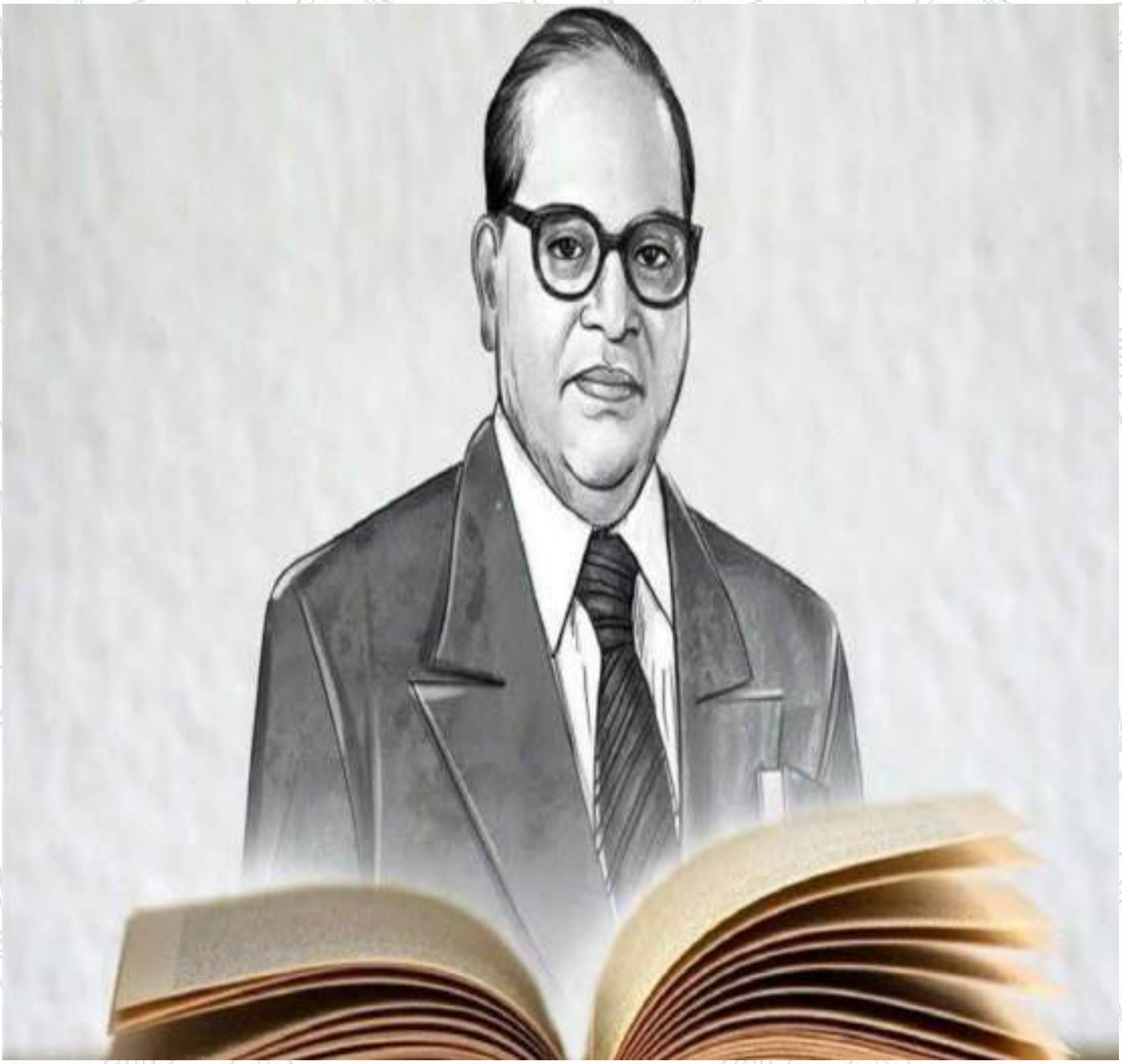
DR. AMBEDKAR CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



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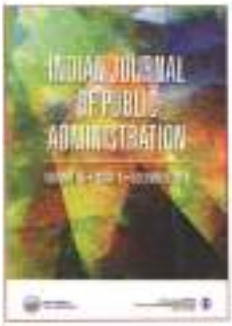

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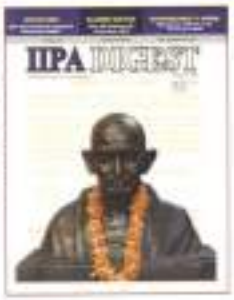
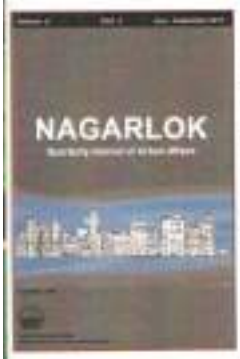


The magazine covers news, stories and features related to latest initiatives and trends of government.



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The journal accepts manuscripts covering topics related to Urban Studies with a focus on Urban Life, Metropolitan System, Urban Economic Development, Urban Finances, etc.

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INDRAPRASTHA ESTATE, RING ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110 002

011-23468363 | 011-23356528

helpdesk.iipa@gmail.com | iipa.org.in | @iipa9

Published by Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi - 110002
and Printed at Future Prints Private Limited, Daryaganj, New Delhi- 110002