

Corruption, Participatory Development and Good Governance

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CORRUPTION IS one of the most serious consequences of poor governance.

A country with widespread corruption invariably has low investment rates, poor economic growth and limited human development. There are few countries in the world, like as Indonesia, Kenya, Angola, Madagascar, Paraguay, Nigeria, Bangladesh, and India – where it pervades every corner of public life. The public will find the cost of delivering this service inordinately high. Corruption has no positive effects. It hits the poor hardest, it makes a mockery of financial systems and it actively works against the legitimacy of the state. Poverty, development, growth and investment – all suffers at the hands of corruption. Its effects are extremely damaging, far reaching and all pervasive. For India, the world's largest democracy, it is a painful irony that despite a good foundation of democratic institutions, she has a score of only 2.7 out of 10 in 2002, was ranked 71st out of 102 countries for corruption. As per Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (2005),

India scored 2.9 out of 10. Since then, her ranking has kept falling. A survey conducted by Transparency International cites India as far worse than China and refers to her as a country where bribery and corruption are among the worst in the world. In a developing country, resources are always scarce and demand greater than supply. The recipients of public services are mostly the poor, illiterate, ignorant and weak. Thus it is the ordinary men who suffer most from misgovernment and corruption. In India, even the highly educated lack the power to protest. There is no accountability or transparency among public servants. It is difficult to define corruption. There is no consensus on the definition of corruption, because what is perceived to be a corrupt activity is based on a society's acceptance and level of tolerance. Corruption is generally defined as a kind of illegitimate favor for immediate or future personal gain for doing an official work which one is supposed to do free of charge and objectivity. In most of the developing countries, corruption is like a virus. It has infected almost every social and economic activity.

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Conceptual Framework of Participatory Development

- In December 1989, the organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) released a "policy statement on development cooperation in the 1990s". It cited sustainable development, concern for the environment, and participatory development as the most important issues on the development aid agenda for the 1990s. Addressing the importance of participatory development, it states that stimulating productive energies of people, encouraging broader participation of all people in productive processes, and a more equitable sharing of their benefits, must become more central elements in development strategies and development cooperation. This strategy is premised on four essential approaches, like as –

- a) investment in human resources in the broad sense, including education and training, meeting the needs for food and health care, and efforts to eradicate AIDS and narcotics problems;
- b) strengthening of political system, government mechanisms, and legal systems in which democracy and respect of human rights are secured;
- c) effective use not only of central governments, but also of local organizations and self government, nongovernmental organization (NGO)s, and the private sector; and
- d) the establishment of open and competitive market economy structure to mobilize individual initiative and dynamic private enterprise.

The objective of economic and social development in developing countries is to set in motion a process of self – reliant and sustainable growth through which social justice can be achieved. Development within a developing society aims at building into society the mechanisms that will ultimately permit self – reliant growth with out foreign assistance, at sustaining stable growth patterns for economic development in harmony with the environment, and at providing equal and appropriate opportunities to take part in development to overcome income gaps, regional disparities, and inequalities between men and women. For this to be possible, the central focus of development is not necessarily to boost production of material goods; instead, it should be to foster and enhance people's capability to have a role in their society's development. To this end, people should be willingly involved in a wide range of development activities, as agents and beneficiaries of development. It is this participation that is important. Participatory development as an approach to development that is designed to enhance sustainability and self – reliance and to achieve social justice through improvements in the quality of people's participation.

Participatory development is not an attempt to replace the top down development approach with a local community – led approach. Rather it is a view point that simultaneously stresses the need for the government led approach in terms of national level economic planning and coordination of development planning and the demerits of widening disparities and worsening poverty inherent in that approach when used alone. Participatory development attempts to introduce

a bottom – up style of development in order to remedy the government – led approach's shortcoming, specifically by focusing on qualitative improvements in local society's participation.

This participation must not be transient; it must entail the sustainable upgrading of participation quality. For this to happen, the underlying conditions must be met to facilitate the long term process of participation and its self – reliant sustainability. The long term process of participation is raising the awareness of local people, forming community groups, upgrading their requisite resource management abilities, to strengthen Gram Sabha and Gram Sansad, providing full autonomy to local governments, creating norms or internalizing their mechanisms and improving capabilities for external negotiations. The shaping and planning of this participatory process requires both a long term vision and willingness to selectively improve and bolster traditional community systems as tools of development.

Conceptual Framework of Good Governance

- The philosophy of good governance has its origin dated back to the early days of human civilization. The description of Indus Valley and Vedic civilizations bear the details of the concept. Today the term 'Governance' has come to occupy a central place in the development discourse. Among the several development strategies governance is considered as an important element. There are many means of achieving good result in governance. Traditional texts such as Upanishads and in later period Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' delineate many methods of achieving the

good results with has gained new momentum after the collapse of the totalitarian states in East European countries and the cry for democracy in several developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The term government and governance appear synonymous in dictionary. Government refers to formal and institutional processes which operate at the level of nation state to maintain public order and facilitate collective action. It is a formal institution of the state with their monopoly of legitimacy, coercive power. It refers to various forms of political system or the manner in which state exercises its power in utilizing socio- economic resources. Governance signifies new process of governing or changed condition of ordered rule of new method by which society is governed. Rhodes defined governance in eight ways. They are minimal state, governance according to private enterprise model, new public management, good governance, a social cybernetic system and a series of self organized social network. The Commission on Global Governance defines governance as “governance is the sum of many ways individuals and institutions, public and private manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting and diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action taken. Governance is the creation of structure or an order, which cannot be extremely imposed but is the result of the interaction of multiplicity of governing and each others influencing actors.” The Human Development Report, 2002 has given a new perspective to governance by terming it as

democratic governances, which is essential for better human development.

Now a days the term ‘good governance’ is very much in vogue. Three major International bodies focus on different aspects. As the World Bank defined in 1994: ‘good governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlighten policy making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; on executive arm of government accountable for its actions and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law’. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) takes a broader view of good governance as comprising mechanism processes and institution through which citizens and groups articulate there interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their legal obligations, and mediate their differences. The Economic and Social council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) similarly considers governance good only if genuine steps to minimize corruption are taken; if the views of the minorities and the voices of the most vulnerable sections of society in decision making is ensured, and if it is responsive to the present and future needs of a society. It has identified eight salient features of good governance: i) participatory in nature, ii) consensual in orientation iii) accountable iv) transparent v) responsive vi) effective and efficient vii) equitable and inclusive viii) rule of law.

i) Participation - Participation of the people either direct or indirect in the development and decision making process is one of the corner stone of good governance. The availability

of people to participate in social decisions is a valuable characteristic feature of good society. It is intimately connected with demands of equity. It also plays a crucial role in the recognition of societal values and in generating public understanding. The participation in order to be effective needs to be informed and organized and therefore depends upon the availability to the subjects, freedom of association and expression on one hand and existence of an organized civil society on the other.

ii) Consensual in orientation - Good governance must ensure that there a regular and dynamic process of consensus making. That is first of all there should be consultation between the government functionaries, NGOs and the public; second stage should be consideration of different views; third stage should be taking their consent on a broad area; and finally consensus should be attempted after conflict resolution.

iii) Accountability - Third feature of good governance is accountability – that is from policy – makers to implementers all should be held responsible for their omissions and commissions. Every body at the helm of affairs should be answerable for allocation, use and control of public fund and other assets.

iv) Transparency - The attribute of transparency requires that information is freely available and the decisions are taken or enforced in a manner that adheres to the rules and

regulations. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media.

- v) **Responsiveness** - The attribute of responsiveness for good governance necessitates that all public institutions and their processes strive to serve all stakeholders within a responsible time frame.
- vi) **Effective and efficient** - Sixth feature of good governance is efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency means doing works at a first speed and effectiveness means doing things effectively focusing on results. Thus both timelines and result orientation are to be ensured.
- vii) **Equitable and inclusive** - A society's well being depends mostly on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being.
- viii) **Rule of law** - The last feature of good governance is the rule of law, i.e. every body is equal before the law, on the one hand, and there should be justice system through due process of law for all, on the other hand. It means that all rules and regulations should be similar to all the citizens in similar circumstances.

Relationship between Participatory Development and Good Governance - Participatory development and good governance are related in the following way: participatory development, with its

central focus on raising the quality of participation by local societies and thus better achieving self – reliant and sustainable development and social justice, is one important form of people oriented development. Good governance is the foundation of participatory development in as much as it provides the government functions needed to promote participation and create the environment in which participatory processes take place.

Good governance as a function of government does not refer solely to support for participatory development; as participatory processes evolve, good governance develops into such functioning that supports wider and more mature people's participation. In this sense, participatory development promotes good governance in its turn. The projection of the concept of good governance onto the national system an orientation of a state – then progressively boosts people's trust in their government, inasmuch as, through good governance, government services improve in effectiveness and efficiency. Thus in the long run, good governance evolves into stronger aspirations for further democratization. The strength of a state's desire for democracy also influences the process of formation of political and administrative structures and government's capability to translate this national stance into action. In turn, this, too, influences the evolution of participatory development. Participatory development and good governance are consequently interrelated, as are the two component elements of good governance, the ideal orientation of the state and the ideal functioning of government.

Corruption is a challenge to Participatory development and good governance - India is a world's largest democracy. The survival of Indian democracy for well over six decades despite the country's diversities is in many ways a remarkable achievement. However, no one can deny that the country's contemporary socio-economic and political problems are complex. There are a number of serious problems that need to be met in the years ahead. These main problems are: i) divisive tendencies, ii) extremism, iii) unemployment, iv) regionalism, v) illiteracy, vi) corruption and nepotism. Out of these problems, corruption and nepotism are the major problem of our country today. Many of us have simply accepted it as a sad reality. But unless we are able to fight corruption, the benefits of development can never be sheared equitably and democratically.

The starting point of corruption in public offices seems to be in the political arena beginning with electoral corruption. The general election decide who rules over more than 120 crores Indians. The political parties in their quest for power spend more than thousand crores of rupees on the Lok Sabha election yet nobody accounts for the bulk of the money so spent and there is no accountability anywhere. Nobody discloses the sources of the money. There are no proper accounts and no audit. From where does the money come nobody know. Electoral corruption in India seems to have increased in recent years primarily because of high cost of campaigning and questionable practices indulged in by the political parties. The absence of proper regulation and monitoring

of the expenses both by candidates and the parties has given rise to a widespread criticism that electoral corruption has been increasing over the years without any effective monitoring. Report highlights that the cost of conducting the Lok Sabha election has been estimated to be close to Rs. 1100 crores. The figure for similar estimated expenditure for conducting election to the Lok Sabha in 2004 has approximately Rs. 1093.06 crores. Out of this government money every general election spent more and more money by the political parties, which is not accountable. 70 percent of the populations live in the rural India. Rural India continues to suffer from resource deficits in such basic spheres as health, education, drinking water, sanitation, housing and infrastructure. There are corruption within the NREGS and the Indira Awas Yojana. Mr. Mohit Sen, a member of the Planning Commission, has remarked that the Rural Employment Guarantee scheme suffers from low potential. The fanfare with which no fewer than 100 centrally sponsored schemes with in allocation of Rs. 137000 crores (2010 -2011) were announced had raised hopes of accelerated rural development, conversion of liabilities into assets and reduction of social and economic dispirits between the rural and urban population. The programme were focused on poverty alleviation, universal education, employment, healthcare, infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, social security, rural electrification, urban renewal mission, housing and rural connectivity. The benefits of these flagship schemes have not trickled down to the targeted beneficiaries due to of corruption.

Panchayati Raj Institution is a backbone of the rural development in India. Panchayati Raj Institution is an institution which empowered rural people and increased mass participation in development process. All centrally sponsored and state schemes are implemented by the Panchayati Raj Institution in rural India. But due to corruption in Panchayats functionaries, benefits of all programmes do not reach actual beneficiaries in rural India and people are not interested to participate in development works. Similarly people who live in urban areas are not interested to participate in development works.

Anti – Corruption measures in India - Indian democracy has taken various measures for anti – corruption in public life. Government of India set up Special Police Establishment (SPE) in 1941, to investigate cases of bribery and corruption. On April, 1963, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was set up. The CBI plays a supplementary rule to the states police forces. The cases which essentially and substantially involve central government employees or their officers, or certain state government employees are referred to the CBI. CBI can also take up cases against employees of statutory bodies or public undertakings established and financed by the government in India.

Two types of vigilance organizations at the department level exist: a) the Administrative Vigilance Division of Home Affairs and b) the Vigilance Units in the respective ministers and department and their counterparts in the public sector undertakings.

The Administrative Vigilance Division was established in 1955. It assumed the overall responsibility and provided the necessary drive, direction and coordination to ensure sustained and vigorous action by individual ministers and departments. The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) consists of three directorates, viz, Directorate of general compliant and redness, the Central Police organization and the Directorate of Vigilance. It undertake an enquiry into any transaction in which a public servant is suspected or alleged to have acted for an improper purpose or in a corrupt manner. It also investigates into any complaint against a public servant who has exercised or refrained from exercising his powers for improper or corrupt purposes. Apart from this Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) there is a State Vigilance Commission (SVC) in each state. The state vigilance commission deals with matters within executive powers of the state concerned. At the Divisional level, a Divisional Vigilance Board has been set up. At the District level, District vigilance Officer heads the vigilance organizations.

The Administrative Reforms Commission recommended in 1966 the adaption of the Ombudsman type of institution in India. The Congress government under Mrs. Indira Gandhi proposed to set up the institution of ‘Lokpal ‘at the central level, but the bill lapsed in 1971. This bill introduced in Parliament in many times in 1977, 1985, 1989, 1998, 2001 and in a strong form in 2011. Government of India drafted the bill and tabled in Lok Sabha in 2011. But this bill even today is

hung due to the unwillingness of our parliamentarians.

The government of India introduced Public Procurement Bill in Lok Sabha to check corruption and ensure transparency in public procurement. The bill seeks to regulate award of government contracts of over Rs. 50 lakh with the object of ensuring 'transparency, accountability and probity'. The bill of objects and reasons will codify the basic norms to regulate public procurement and provide for deferring bidders found engaged in corrupt practices. The bill also provide for Jail term ranging from six month to five years for public servants found guilty of demanding and accepting bribes from bidders of government contracts.

Conclusion and suggestions for combating corruption - Corruption is not something that a government on its own can eradicate. In any case political leaders simply use it as a quick, easy way to win votes, making catchy slogans for suits their political interests. Prime ministers from the late Gulzari Lal Nanda to Dr. Manmohan Singh declared a war on corruption but achieved absolutely nothing. The first condition of combating the corruption in public life is to educate all people of India. Right to Education Act (2009) is a landmark initiative of the government to strengthen the education system in India. It provides free and compulsory education to all children between 6 to 14 age groups. This act made it mandatory to guardian of a child to send their child to nearby school for education. So, Right to Education is able to educate everyone who is able to combat corruption. Value education is needed for

combating corruption. India is a land of tremendous contrasts, not least in the way she cherishes such values as sacrifice and spirituality points proudly to their prominent place in her past and boasts of her rich cultural heritage of honesty and purity. Today in the era of globalization it is very necessary to cultivate this type of value added education which makes honest mind of people; those are able to combat corruption.

The Right to Information Act is a strong measure to combat corruption in public life. It explains in information as any material in any form, including records, documents means, emails, opinions, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, log books, contracts, reports, papers, samples, modules, data material held in any electronic form and information relating to any private body which can be assessed by a public authority under any other law for the time being in force. So it is able to combat public officers from corruption.

Monopoly power of the bureaucrats is required to be reduced. Mass participation in development process is able to control the bad works of the bureaucrats. It is not desirable to give a full authority to an individual official. Officials should be given competing jurisdiction. It may so happen that a client is not well served by an official. He may go to another competitor which will tend to drive the levels of bribes to zero.

Another effective way to reduce corruption is to generate an incentive and appropriate pay structure for public officials. To give them Dearness allowances

(D.A) at time in parity with current market. On the other hand it is also necessary to give appropriate incentives and pay structure to elected representatives of central, State and local level governments. At present, Parliamentarians and Legislators of some states have taken handsome incentive and pay. But Local government representatives do not receive this type of incentive or pay. It is necessary to give them this type of remuneration as same as Parliamentarian and state Legislators are received.

Corruption is a syndrome that affects modern societies and governments. It is an obstacle to development. In this area the media has been solely responsible for curbing adventurous officials and politicians from dipping into the till which is intended to meet development needs. Investigative Journalism is responsible for nipping in the bud many a corrupted person.

It is very necessary to take initiative of civil society for combating corruption from public life. Anna Hazare's movement against corruption makes a new dimension among civilians in India. Government is also today trying to takes same initiative by passing a strong law for combating corruption.

It is very necessary to introduce social auditing in all public related works, which is one important measure of combating corruption from public life. Free and frank people participation in local institutions able to reduce corruption will from people life by the process of social auditing. □

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