💬 EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Centre for Open Data Research (CODR) is a first of its kind advancing a government-wide approach to Data Analytics, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence.

This pioneering effort for PAC to make a paradigm shift to developing data science use-case applications for public governance is the brainchild of Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah, former Chairman, PAC who planted this idea in the minds of the PAC team. The interview that is carried in this issue gives more insights on this initiative, and his contribution in conceptualizing CODR.

The role of Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Chairman, Public Affairs Centre, to take the initiative forward and operationalise the CODR as a knowledge partner of the Government of Karnataka was important. The application of data science is today an essential part of all the action research that PAC undertakes. This is enabling evidence-based decision making to enhance human development outcomes in the state.

🔍 INTERVIEW

Justice M. N. Venkatachaliah

Former Chief Justice of India and Former Chairman
Public Affairs Centre

Q. In your view what should be the next steps for CODR to move forward with reference to activities?

A: *The Centre for Open Data Research is a timely and thoughtful response by the Public Affairs Centre in the quest for solutions to many serious social, economic and technological issues seemingly going beyond ordinary human grasp. It is euphemistically said that 'those who own Data, own the Future'.*
Long ago experts in the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Centre met to discuss how Big Data is the potential resource for positive social change in the low and middle income countries. 'Big Data' they said, "is an analytical process, an approach to a question or even a way of finding the best question rather than an object in itself".

Q: Is there any specific area of public governance that we need to address?
A: *There are many, many areas of public governance that can be influenced by and can benefit from the rigorous and refreshing insights that Data Science can provide. Many social welfare programmes with specific targets are themselves over-lapping. Data Analytics can provide synergy and avoid duplication and promote equitable and optimal deployment of resources.*

Q: What is the importance of organisations like PAC to move forward keeping in mind COVID-19 and data science?
A: *The relevance and utility of "Think-Tanks" get enhanced with shared research. It all depends on how meaningfully 'Think –Tanks' engage with each other to enhance their utility and relevance. Governments can benefit from meaningful engagements with these research-institutions.*

CODR Bits & Bytes

PUBLICATION REVIEW

Tanks on June 19, 2020. The Opinion piece excerpted in brief below, was written by Dr. Annapoorna Ravichander, Executive Director, Public Affairs Foundation (PAF):

"COVID-19 has changed the world, transforming the way we look at ourselves, and the ways in which we relate to our work An Opinion piece titled, Responding to COVID-19 and its spill over effects was published in On Think, communities and societies. In sum, it has also compelled us to reassess organisational priorities. Those that are nimble footed will recalibrate their strategies and cope better with stress, others will find the new normal daunting. Simply put, these are times when organisations need to re-strategise rapidly. And so that's what we did at Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Bangalore".

*For more details read **here.***

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NEWS

A consultation meeting on the approach to data integration was held on Friday, August 12, 2020 with Mr. Rajeev Chawla ACS, E-Governance, GoK and his team. The CODR team benefited from the insights shared and the partnership opportunities that resulted from the meeting. In brief, these included:

- The e-governance cell would be the focal point to provide (non-transactional) data to the CODR for its data analytics work.
- The Government is in the process of creating a Master Data Management (MDM) system
- Data officers will be important points of contact for access to disaggregated data available at each department's disposal.

CODR has developed comprehensive Data Processing and Data Engineering Life Cycle Documents to enable standardised processes to be followed throughout the data life cycle and implemented across CODR.

This process document details the steps to be followed when any data is received by CODR/PAC and is used in conjunction with the Process checklist and Terms of Reference or Term Sheet. The data processing standards defined will serve to standardise the data process flow, identify the scope of analytical work involved at every stage, and earmark equitable timelines.