

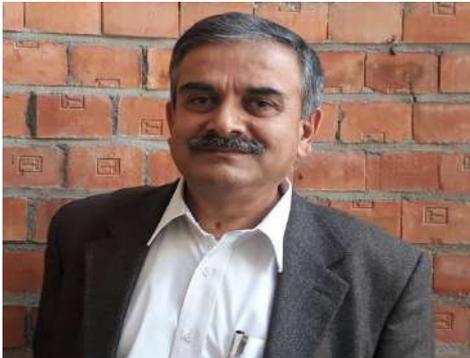


Public Eye

A Quarterly Newsletter

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Director's Cut



G Gurucharan,
Director, Public Affairs Centre

Public Affairs Centre (PAC) is a not-for-profit Civil Society Organisation (CSO) established in 1994 to help improve the quality of public governance in India. In the last 22 years, PAC has worked in a wide array of sectors: women and child development, education, health, water and sanitation, and livelihoods. Our strength is in engaging the community and strengthening capacities at the 'last mile'. A network of partners gives us the reach and depth to work across India. PAC works with international organisations like - the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Department for International Development (DFID) - and with Governments - central and state - in India. PAC is one of the nine distinguished think tanks in India to be part of the 'Think Tank Initiative' consortium led by IDRC, Canada and one of the twenty-four prestigious think tanks of South Asia to be represented on the Think Tank Map of the Initiative of Climate Change policy and Governance (ICCG), Italy. PAC is a founding member of the Global Platform for Social Accountability (GPSA) established by the World Bank and a member of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

PAC undertakes action research informed by the val-

ue of advancing the common good; innovative interventions on the ground; and the commitment to community participation. Our focus is on: innovation in service delivery; advocacy with and for the disadvantaged population; and better use of evidence in development praxis. We strive to understand the problems women face because of gender, to advance gender equality. We believe, If India is to successfully undergo transition to an equitable and just society that enables human development for all, there is a need to prioritise equity and inclusion as key governance objectives in India's development strategy. We must recognise and understand the patterns of exclusion if the opportunities for development have to reach those being left behind. We also need to recognise that poverty and gender inequality coalesce resulting in women bearing a disproportionate burden – malnutrition, morbidity, illiteracy, and exploitation. Team PAC is committed to help transform the lives of people who are most in need of help. We are determined to influence development 'praxis' and be part of this transformation.

As PAC moves forward, the triumvirate – the state-market-community – will have to work in tandem to ensure the greater good of the vast mass of poor, marginalised and vulnerable population. There is a need to marshal data and evidence in greater measure to fulfil policy intent and achieve targeted outcomes. In India, as elsewhere in South Asia, governments and civil society are only now beginning to appreciate the importance of data applications in social development. PAC, in its work as a civil society organisation, will play its role in advancing a scientific, empirical and evidence based approach to India's development and help strengthen both participation and accountability in the governance process. This will ensure that PAC's commitment to good governance is achieved.

Greetings



I wish all the staff at PAC a bright and active 2018 under the able leadership of Gurucharan. I am confident that they will be able to fulfil all the objectives set forth by them and also grow as a meaningful and active organisation and contribute to, and actively participate in the public policy making processes, both at the Central and State level. - **Dr. K Kasturirangan, Chairman, PAC**

Interview



Justice Venkatachaliah,
former Chairman,
Public Affairs Centre

According to you what has been the most significant achievement made by PAC during your tenure as past Chairman of PAC?

The founder of PAC, Dr Samuel Paul is a great man, patriotic and a man with a clear vision to improve the quality of governance in the country. He thought very deeply of the country and its future. Some of the substantive achievements that I have seen PAC achieve is that of pioneering the social accountability tool called the Citizen Report Card (CRC) which took feedback from citizens on issues that affect them that in turn helped the government understand the needs of the people. Second was the building of an association known as the Coalition Against Corruption (CAC) that brought in likeminded people together to help tackle the menace of corruption. The third was the starting of a children's movement for democracy which was a wonderful initiative. It educated children from a very young age, the values of democracy and making them understand that the strengthening of democracy can only be achieved by more democracy. Another very significant achievement was addressing the issue of inequities in development regionally, particularly the North-South Divide. The book with the same name shows how the North and South have proceeded in economic and social development and the contributing factors for the north to lack behind and the south to progress forward. Most importantly, I am very impressed with the fact that PAC does not necessarily rely on primary data; they have creatively interpreted secondary data that is not just cost-effective by using the existing materials but also helps give a shape to policies. I'm very happy that Dr Kasturirangan is now the Chairman of PAC. I'm also very happy that a centre for higher learning is going to be given shape bearing the founder's name.

What are the top 3 governance roadblocks that PAC needs to counter and how?

The pattern of mal-governance is changing and the degree of political interference is also changing this in turn is creating a good deal of problems and affects development. Another problem for a developing country like India is to understand the model of development that needs to be adopted. One is the Western model where you focus on high growth and hope that it will trickle down to the masses and the

“The world is going to be a very different place 5 years from now with Artificial Intelligence and Robotics taking centre stage.”

other is by focusing on social development which will directly lead to economic progress which can be seen in Kerala. This is of utmost importance because the social and economic divide among classes in India is very high. Look at Cuba for example, the Human Development Index (HDI) ranks the country at 47 whereas India is at 132, therefore the choice or roadmap for social and economic change, the policies that need to be adopted to change this scenario is a very important area for PAC to focus on.

Where do you want to see PAC 5 years from now?

The world is going to be a very different place 5 years from now with Artificial Intelligence and Robotics taking centre stage. How we gear up for this change is a challenge. I'm sure with the present mindset of the executive leadership in the name of Gurucharan will prepare PAC for that change. You have to adapt according to the times and I'm positive that his guidance will prepare the institution for that change.

Projects

The state of *Swachhata* in Tamil Nadu



The 2012 Tamil Nadu government's baseline survey revealed that only 38.7% of the households had a toilet. Of these, 79.4% of the households had a functional toilet. In the implementation of the then Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) scheme, preference was given to Below Poverty Line (BPL) card holders. Although a target based approach does not yield optimal results, this is the practice in most districts. This approach has not been successful in creating and sustaining the current Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) or in enabling functional toilets.

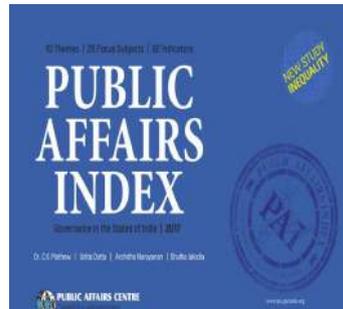
PAC undertook a two Citizen Report Card (CRC) exercise in six districts of Tamil Nadu including Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Trichy, Perambalur, Thirunelveli and Kanyakumari to gather citizen feedback. The [first CRC](#) was carried out in 2014 and the [second CRC](#) was done in 2016. Both CRCs reveal the status of the project and the requirements of the communities in focus at that point of time.

"An amazingly thought-out and breakthrough think tank!"

- Mr Sahil Deo
CEO, Collaborative Analytics Private Ltd

Publications

Public Affairs Index 2017



The Public Affairs Index (PAI) – is a data-based framework that measures the quality of Governance in the States of India. The report is an honest attempt to depict the quality and standard

of governance through an analysis of objective data and empirical evidence with ten 10 broad themes, 26 focus subjects and 82 variables that focus on Essential Infrastructure, Support to Human Development, Social Protection, Women and Children, Crime, Law & Order, Delivery of Justice, Environment, Transparency & Accountability, Fiscal Management and Economic Freedom. Read the PAI 2017 report [here](#).

In the Rear View Mirror: Reflections of Chief Secretaries



In the Rear-View Mirror is an exciting collection of essays written by top civil servants - the Chief Secretaries who have held the reins of state administration. This volume represents the distillation of their practical experiences

and reflective wisdom, and will be of interest to any informed citizen, academician and practitioner of administration. The book is available on [Amazon](#).

"I like the institute as it has worked on major issues relating to Bangalore and Karnataka. I look forward to have more visits to the Centre."

- Dr Ashwini Roy A.S
Assistant Prof., Bangalore University

Engagements



Justice M N Venkatachaliah and Mr Subhash Khuntia, Chief Secretary of Karnataka released the book “In the Rear View Mirror: Reflections of Chief Secretaries”, March 17, 2017



Justice Venkatachaliah and Justice Santosh Hegde released the Public Affairs Index 2017, May 12, 2017



Roundtable Conference to discuss the impact of the latest tax reforms on Indian economy, July 22, 2017

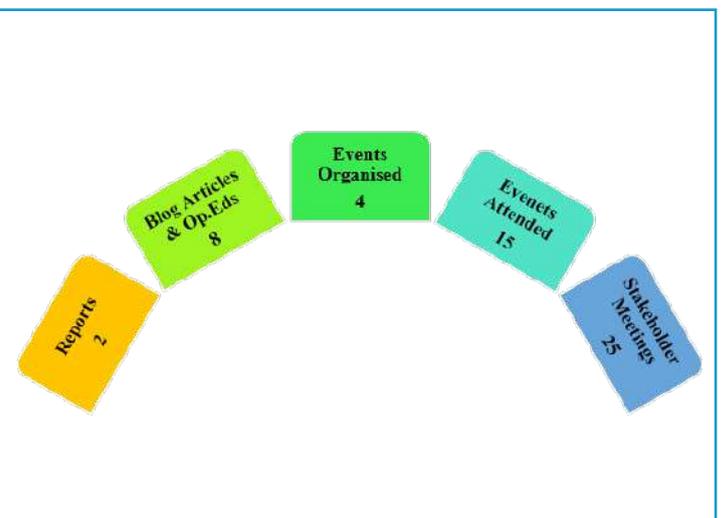


Co-organised a seminar on “Smart Urban Planning for the 21st century” with Smart Cities India Foundation (SCIF), December 14, 2017

Internship@PAC

“PAC has unique facilities such as a wealth of resources and people who have been in government and carry experiences along with them that guides us when needed.”

- Siddarth Shah
Brandeis University, USA



Wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year. Public Affairs Centre has resumed the publication of the Public Eye after a brief hiatus. We will be bringing out thematic issues every quarter and would like to engage with you through this newsletter. Do send us your comments/feedback to pec@pacindia.org. If you wish to unsubscribe please click [here](#).

