This is the inaugural issue of PUBLIC EYE, the newsletter of Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Bangalore. Naming a new-born baby is always a difficult and demanding task. After considering various choices, we decided on 'PUBLIC EYE', which we thought was appropriate to the mission of the Centre. And, the moving finger having writ, moves on...

On this occasion, a few words about PAC are in order, given the infancy of the organisation and its rather unusual mission.

PAC was registered as a non-profit society in Bangalore in June 1994. Its basic mission is to influence and improve the quality of governance in India. Free and fair elections are often held up as the hallmark of democratic governance. But what happens in a country between elections is as important as the election itself. Responsive public agencies, efficient services and effective implementation of agreed upon policies on a day-to-day basis are the media through which citizens experience good governance.

Improving the quality of governance is thus a complex, long term and continuing task that calls for collaborative and sustained efforts by many organisations and groups of people in our society. It entails not only the restructuring of our public institutions, but also the strengthening and revitalisation of the institutions of civil society.

In a small way, PAC has already initiated work in all these areas. Report cards on public services in the cities of Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, Calcutta and Madras have been prepared and some published. Some of these studies have been undertaken by PAC jointly with public interest groups in other cities. In Bangalore, PAC is actively involved, along with various citizen groups and NGOs, in improving the public and civic services. Its advisory work with government covers a range of public agencies. In June 1995, PAC held its first workshop in which citizen groups from several cities participated.

While its current focus is on urban services, PAC's long term strategy will be to identify and respond to major issues of governance as they unfold over time. PAC's current activities and plans are highlighted in some detail in this issue. We are grateful to the National Foundation for India and the Ford Foundation for the financial support provided to PAC to launch its research and action programmes.

It is not easy for a small and independent non-profit organisation to establish itself and expand its activities in a short period of time. PAC's start-up was greatly facilitated by the active guidance and support provided by its Board of Directors and the dedicated work of its small staff. PAC has adopted a strategy of networking with other organisations and expert groups so that it can remain small, resilient and cost-effective. The report card studies, for example, have been jointly designed and conducted by PAC with the Marketing and Business Associates Ltd., Bangalore, a partnership that has made it unnecessary for PAC to develop in-house capacities for detailed field work and market research. Its collaborative work with citizen groups and NGOs in Bangalore on the civic front also reflects the same approach and testifies to the power of networking.

Although this inaugural issue will primarily focus on PAC's programmes and plans for the future, we hope that PUBLIC EYE will evolve in time as a forum for other like-minded public interest and citizen groups to share information on their work, innovations and achievements. There are many organisations that share common concerns in this area of work, but without the benefit of a convenient forum for exchange of ideas and experiences, efforts remain isolated. PUBLIC EYE will try and bridge this gap to the extent its resources and capabilities permit.

Samuel Paul
Chairman of the Board, PAC
RESEARCH

The Writing on the Wall

Accountability in Public Services

What should citizens do to improve transparency in government activities? What should citizens do to reinforce and enhance accountability? Can recognition of innovations be used as a tool to achieve this?

These issues are being debated at length in India. One of the first attempts by Public Affairs Centre to garner public opinion on the quality of governance in India was through a Workshop on “Accountability in Public Services”. The Workshop was held in November 1994 under the joint auspices of the National Foundation for India (NFI). Thirty participants comprising several prominent persons from government, industry, citizen action groups, media and academia took part in the Workshop.

The Workshop focussed its discussions on the urban context, bearing in mind that urban governance will be a major task for the country as it enters the 21st century. The Workshop aimed at:

- Developing a shared understanding of the problem of accountability in public services in the context of urban governance; and
- Identifying and developing a range of options, directional changes and actions that governments, citizens groups and other public interest groups might consider for strengthening public accountability.

After the inauguration by Mr. C. Subramaniam, Chairman, NFI, the Workshop proceeded into the sessions. These sessions debated on the themes related to “Promoting Accountability in Government” (chaired by Mr. Rohinton D. Aga, Chairman, Thermax Ltd. Pune), “A Political Perspective on Accountability” (chaired by Mr. C. Subramaniam), and “The Role of Citizen Groups in Ensuring Accountability from the Government” (chaired by Kamla Chowdhry, Member NFI). The last session also included a discussion on the feasibility of awards for innovative work in the government.

In conclusion, the participants were of the opinion that:

- Government must take steps to increase the transparency of the working of its public utilities and related agencies and to increase access to information. The government’s proposal to set up a public utilities regulatory commission to monitor monopolies must be implemented at the earliest, if the benefits of liberalisation are to be visible.
- There are a number of public services for which a price or a fee is not paid. There are no mechanisms to ensure a certain acceptable quality of service. Legislation to correct this anomaly is urgently required.
- Citizen audit of essential public services must be introduced wherever monopoly conditions exist.
- Wherever appropriate and feasible, competition should be created in the production and delivery of public services. When a service cannot be fully privatised, subcontracting parts of services must be explored.
- Participants were dissatisfied with the manner in which state governments were enacting legislation on the 74th Constitutional amendment. Ward committees should include members of the public and NGOs and public hearings should be an essential feature of the functioning of local and state governments.
- People should shed apathy and work to decrease corruption. Citizens groups should demand that issues of infrastructure and civic problems become part of election manifests.
- Innovations that merit dissemination are those that are significant, replicable and sustainable. One way to encourage and disseminate innovations is through an independent awards programme based on citizen feedback and an assessment of its contribution to improved performance.

Making the Grade

How do public service providers in your city measure up?

“The art of politics has overtaken the commitment to public service... In order to strengthen ailing local governance, it has become evident that some kind of external intervention is necessary.”

The test of real democracy is not just in holding elections, but what happens between them.

It is an unmistakable fact that external intervention has become necessary to “induce” government to provide better service to its citizens. It was out of a strong need to make the government more responsive to the needs of the public that the report card methodology was conceived. The initial exercise that began in Bangalore has now spread to five other cities. Most
of these studies have now been completed. The question that now arises is, how do we initiate and activate the learnings that emerged from these studies?

In order to constantly update the findings or detect any changes in the quality of services, it is necessary that local citizen groups develop and use this methodology on a continuous basis.

PAC has attempted to bring this methodology closer to action groups in two ways. The first was a two-day Workshop organised with the support of the National Foundation for India (NFI). It was specifically designed to help community based organisations to appreciate the need for identifying action based on information secured from systematic surveys on various public utility services provided by the government.

Participants came from Ahmedabad, Baroda, Bombay, Calcutta, Dharwad, Madras, Mysore, Pune and South Canara. Members of civic groups from Bangalore, the media, and representatives from the Ford Foundation and NFI were also present. The workshop was inaugurated by Dr M. S. Swaminathan, Chairman, NFI.

Dr Samuel Paul, Chairman, PAC, in his welcome address, stressed the need for networking and collaboration between various agencies across the country to strengthen efforts to improve local governance.

Marketing and Business Associates Ltd. (MBA) and Gallup India have been partners with the PAC for a long time, and have evolved techniques to evaluate customer satisfaction using survey methods. Report card studies in Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune and Calcutta were conducted by PAC in association with MBA, who made the opening day’s presentations. C.K. Sharma, Managing Director of MBA and with the processes of the methodology.

The three groups made their presentations on the following day, which were interesting in terms of new ideas and in understanding how people in social action perceive these studies. The overall finding was that civic groups hardly used survey methods to guide action, and it was collectively felt that survey methods contribute greatly in selecting better alternatives.

The concluding session chaired by Dr. Samuel Paul identified future action strategies. The outcome of this session indicated that:

- Most groups wanted to try out these studies/hold similar workshops at home.
- It was also felt that government agencies should not be involved in studies to retain independence, but could be kept informed about such exercises.
- The group revisited some of the conventional forms of protest and debate, like open house sessions, public hearings and litigation before the consumer courts. It was generally felt that greater measure of success came from collaborative modes of action, although some examples of effective redressal by consumer courts were cited.
- It was suggested that a public hearing of report card studies could enhance the impact of the information gathered by this effort.
- The need for a commonly accepted “standards for performance” was felt to enable citizens to build up expectations and benchmark the quality of service. A workshop on definition of terms, which qualify the services, such as, responsiveness, accountability and so on, was suggested.

The discussion was concluded with a very satisfying note from several groups wanting to network with this Centre, to help them conduct such studies and also in finding new ways to redefine their present action-strategies.

**The report card methodology is eminently adaptable to specific settings and circumstances and can provide for variations in scope and size to suit different budgets.**

Mathew Paul, Director, Gallup India, explained the various applications of this methodology and the stages and steps involved in carrying out such studies. These sessions provided the primary inputs for the workshop.

This was followed by an exercise on actual data collected in Calcutta (on households and slums) and Baroda, which was given to the participants who were divided into three groups, to deliberate on the information and come up with their own solutions. This was done more as an exercise in familiarising them.

**The second effort in disseminating the report card methodology was a manual for its implementation.** This manual has been developed by Stephanie Upp, from the LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, who was an intern at Public Affairs Centre. The manual has been written keeping in mind that there are many organisations who need to use the “report card” findings as a base for action.
They are however, constrained by small budgets and limited personnel. As a methodology the report card is eminently suitable as it is adaptable to individual settings and circumstances and can provide for variations in scope and size to suit different budgets. For instance, it economises time and costs by collecting comments on multiple agencies, or on multiple concerns within an agency during a single interview. The manual, therefore, can serve as a useful guide to organisations wanting to conduct surveys from time to time, and is especially useful as a tool for action-based research.

Beginning with an overview of the methodology, the manual goes on to explain strategies, survey design and data collection, statistical interpretation, and finally, the logical steps for action based on the research.

**Marketing and Business Associates Ltd.,** better known by its acròynm MBA, has been the first Indian research agency to systematically monitor customer satisfaction. Over a period of 20 years, the MBA have developed the image of a leading market research agency using sophisticated high-tech mathematical methods to resolve complex marketing issues. With its recent tie-up with US based Gallup QSA (famous for its election opinion polls), the company will offer the entire range of market research studies - consumer, industrial, social and agricultural research with a quality of service audit.

MBA are active partners with PAC in the report card studies.

**FACT BOX**

Assessing Public Services-
A report card on three cities

How satisfactory are the public services that matter most to the citizens of Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, Madras and other similar cities? What specific aspects of their working are satisfactory or unsatisfactory? What does it cost the users to get the services or to solve the problems associated with getting the services?

In the process of answering these questions, the public has also shed useful light on the prevailing patterns of service related problems, their concerns about the weaknesses of the service agencies, their attitude towards corruption in these agencies and their views on the possible remedies. Upon analysing the feedback, it is possible to rank the agencies involved, in terms of their service performance.

An interesting by-product of this exercise is the “report card” on public services. So far, Public Affairs Centre has produced “report cards” on public services in Pune, Ahmedabad, and Bangalore. Many interesting findings emerged from these studies. On the average, views from about 800 households and 300 slum dwellers were taken for the purpose of the study. The important services covered, to name a few, were water supply and sanitation, electricity, telephones, police services, as well as services provided by public hospitals, public sector banks, development authorities and municipal corporations.

Some interesting patterns emerged across the three cities. For instance, the single most frequent reason for citizen-agency interactions in all the cities surveyed was wrong billing. This was predominantly with the Telephones, Electricity and Water Supply Departments. Three out of four people visited agencies to sort out routine problems and more than 85 per cent of users had to visit the agency personally to resolve their queries or problems. What is worse, most users had to visit these agencies more than three or four times to speed up processing (in some cases, the problems remained unresolved even after persistent attempts).

The amount of time and energy being wasted in such unproductive exercises is startling. These findings are symptomatic of the underlying problems - poor supervision, utter callousness on the part of the staff, corruption and wide tolerance from users. Evidently, it is a mixture of all these factors, as the study clearly indicates.

Perhaps one of the largest problems facing the citizens is that of corruption or “speed money” in service agencies. For a routine transaction, bribes have to be paid so as to avoid standard responses of “come back tomorrow”, or “your file is with so-and-so”, or
some such statement. This practice of paying speed money has become so ingrained into the fabric of our society that many respondents even felt that it had to be paid to get work done. Case studies of persons who had built houses in the past in Bangalore have revealed that all without exception had paid speed money. This invariably adds to the transaction costs (or total costs) for availing a service.

Thus, when the three components of service costs, namely actual cost, speed money and costs involved in investing in assets to make up for the unreliability in the services, are taken together, the estimates for the city of Bangalore are quite staggering. Nearly 10 crore rupees are paid by households and industry in the form of speed money. About 995 crore rupees (estimates at 1993 prices) is the investment in assets such as generators, voltage stabilizers, sumps, overhead tanks and so on. The unproductive investments show that the people are paying a heavy price for the inefficiency of the provider agencies.

The report card studies also make it possible to draw comparisons between cities. There may be some redeeming features in a particular city that could be replicated in others. For example, it appears that the phenomenon of speed money is less widespread in the city of Pune. The city also leads in the availability and use of important services such as water, electricity, garbage collection and so on by slum dwellers, and in the degree of slum dweller satisfaction.

What then, are the policy implications from the findings of these report cards?

Consider the following:

- There are several ways by which the government and its public service providers can improve service delivery and public satisfaction at a negligible cost. For instance, wrong billing can be rectified without major capital investments. Public information and guidelines to help customers can be skill intensive, which greatly increase efficiency but do not require much investment. Streamlining of internal systems and training of staff are also not capital intensive endeavours. These efforts, however, demand for commitment at the top and some continuity in agency leadership and control - which also have to be addressed.
- Imaginative approaches to the pricing of services has to be given special attention in the light of the study findings which showed that citizens are willing to officially pay more for better and reliable service.

- Traditionally, the government has been entrusted with the role of devising mechanisms for and enforcing public accountability. In today’s context, it has become more and more difficult to do so. The system of legislative and audit reviews is neither fool-proof nor sufficient. Under these circumstances, the public must play an active role in monitoring the services. Such actions are more effective when carried out collectively through citizens groups.

- The monopolistic nature of most of the services discussed here is at the heart of the problem. An obvious remedy is to seek alternatives to existing service delivery modes and creative ways to instill competition. Indeed, there are examples of this in Calcutta where a private company has taken over the distribution of electricity. There are other instances too, and there is great scope for this concept to become more popular and gain wider acceptance.

Adapted from the paper "A Report Card on Public Services in Indian Cities" and from "Public Services for the Urban Poor" by Dr. Samuel Paul, PAC.
One of the objectives of PAC lies in supporting
the action of citizen groups in various programmes.
Through these programmes, it attempts to play a
catalytic role in bringing together citizen groups,
government agencies, the media and industry. The
underlying objective is to establish processes by which
good governance can result.

In initiating these programmes, important
principles such as decentralisation and participation
by citizens are applied. Two such programmes initiated
by PAC are outlined below. Subsequent issues of
PUBLIC EYE will give details on the others (Police
Department, Bangalore Transport Services and so
on). Hopefully, these experiments will be replicated
in other places as well.

Swabhimana
For and by citizens

The city of Bangalore has registered tremendous
growth over the last few years. The infrastructure,
however, has not kept pace with the growth of the
city, and service providers have failed to deliver the
goods. What is even more obvious is that our civic
consciousness has not kept pace with our civic
requirements.

Both these factors have combined to result in a
situation that has affected the quality of our lives
adversely. Pot holes on roads, overflowing sewage,
littered roads, unusable pavements and poorly
functioning civic amenities are ubiquitous. The list
could go on, but it would only be pointless. For these
problems are typical of most crowded Indian cities.
Instead, if we could focus on positive and collective
action by citizens to tackle these urban problems, we
could well be on the road to recovery. We must do
our bit for this once beautiful garden city.

This, then is the essence of Swabhimana, a
programme launched by the Bangalore Development
Authority and the Bangalore Mahanagara Palika in
which PAC has played a catalytic role.

The underlying belief of Swabhimana is that
community and self-help along with decreasing the
dependence on government machinery are the first
steps to bring about change. Thus, Swabhimana
believes in the potential and capacities of people in
developing and beautifying their own neighbour-
hoods. In short, it aims to teach people to be
“House Proud”.

What are the programme’s objectives? Swabhimana
is a partnership between Government
and the people in planning and developing the city.
The mechanisms for this are

- Decentralisation of Government services
- Coordination of diverse activities of local voluntary groups

- Creating a channel of communication to coordinate
  activities of all local service agencies such as BDA, BCC, BWSSB, KEB, BMRC and so on.
Swabhimana is composed of a core team comprising
representatives from the Bangalore Environment
Trust, Centre for Environment Education, Exnora,
Karnataka Forum for the Promotion of Consumer
Action (KFPCA), Public Affairs Centre, Waste-Wise
and Water Front. This core team provides workable
solutions for civic problems that have evolved from
the experiences of NGOs who have been working on
various aspects of urban management. The core group
has also divided itself into four committees - these
are on planning, decentralisation of routine services,
improvement of systems and procedures and garbage
clearance. While all these initiatives can succeed only
with the cooperation of the citizenry, the two areas
that need the involvement of people most are
decentralisation of civic services and garbage
clearance.

The task ahead of us is daunting, as success is
dependent upon leadership qualities, initiative, team
work, motivation and participation. Any organised
group such as a residents’ welfare association, a
neighbourhood committee or a voluntary agency can
become a part of this programme.
All that you need to do is to:

- Form yourselves into a working group in your
  area.
- Identify and prioritise your problems
- Distinguish problems that need the intervention
  of the civic authority from those that you can solve
  yourselves.

Thereafter, the core group will guide you. Swabhimana
will constitute a ward working committee which will comprise of both residents of the area
and local officials of the BCC, BDA, BWSSB and
KEB. This committee will monitor civic services in the
locality.
Swabhiman is gaining momentum in several parts of Bangalore. Till December 1995, groups have been formed in BDA layouts at BTM and Lingarajapuram, Malleswaram, Church Street, R.T. Nagar and Lavelle Road. Ongoing efforts are directed at setting up systems for segregating and collecting garbage, composting waste and keeping pavements clean and usable by pedestrians.

Post Forum

Postal services in India is perhaps one area in which, given the volumes and the large network involved, efficiency has been relatively high. Perhaps this is lay person's perspective, but probably not untrue. Nevertheless, it is the constant endeavour of the postal department to improve its service.

The Post Forum is a programme of the Department of Posts and is concerned with forming citizen-official committees in Post Offices. It is essentially an experiment in service improvement through citizen participation. The underlying message is that government services should be customer oriented. The programme has been in progress since January 1993 and has been initiated in five Post Offices each in Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, and Bombay. One of the objectives of these fora is to improve mail delivery and counter services.

The Directorate of Posts, New Delhi, has issued guidelines based on the recommendations and experiments. The consultancy also extends to designing training modules for the staff of the postal department.

For more information on these two programmes, please contact Anant Nadkarni, PAC.

AN OPEN HOUSE

PAC had an Open House Program at its office during the first week of August 1995. The intention was to meet government officials, associates and friends who had worked with PAC and participated in its programmes.

Three research papers authored by Dr. Samuel Paul, Chairman, PAC, were released at the programme by Dr. A.Ravindra, Chairman, Bangalore Development Authority. Titled "Accountability in Public Services", "A Report Card on Public Services in Indian Cities" and "Public Services for the Urban Poor", these reports are now available at the Centre.

The Open House provided an excellent opportunity for our associates to get an idea of PAC's programmes and to explore the possibility of devoting time and attention to them. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ravindra made a reference to the report card study findings and said that it was time for the BDA to dispel its notorious reputation of rendering poor service and leading in the list of agencies that took bribes from the public. It also gave Dr. Ravindra an occasion to speak on the new programme called Swabhiman (See article on this), launched in collaboration with citizens groups and coordinated by PAC.

UPDATE

Ongoing studies of the Centre

◆ An assessment of public services in Ahmedabad by the members of SEWA. The "Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)" of Ahmedabad has about 75,000 women in three categories of members - home based workers, labour service providers and vendors and hawkers. The members belong to the economically weaker sections of society, and this survey will be a pointer to the manner in which SEWA's women are treated by government agencies. In addition, it will also assess the effectiveness of SEWA in tackling the problems of its members.

What differentiates this survey from the other report cards published by the Centre is the objective - it aims to equip the members to carry out the survey themselves in later years. The objective is to eventually aim for a continuous assessment of Ahmedabad's public services.

◆ A study commissioned by the BDA to get feedback from four layouts on the quality of services given. The survey seeks information on formation of layouts, allotment of sites and maintenance of layouts till such time the Corporation takes
over the facilities. Apart from information on these issues, one of the main objectives of this study is to understand how BDA is perceived by residents. This includes feedback on the courtesy and behaviour of the BDA staff:

◆ **A comparative study of the budget of the Bangalore City Corporation over the last six years.** This study will analyse trends in revenues and expenditure, the underlying reasons for the gap between estimates and actual figures, and trends in major heads of revenue and expenditure.

Some important questions that we hope would be answered by this study are - Is the budget of the BCC designed on some scientific basis? Is there a systematic approach to the design of the budget? Does the presentation enable a common citizen to get an understanding of the components? How much access to information does it facilitate? The budget study also seeks to analyse the trends in property tax collection and compare this with the growth and expansion of Bangalore City.

◆ **A report card study of Bombay city along the same lines as the report card studies on Pune, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Madras and Calcutta.**

Apart from these studies, PAC is also in the process of publishing a comparative study of service agencies across the cities of Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, Calcutta and Madras.

For more information on the above mentioned studies, please contact Sita Shekhar, PAC.

◆ **An assessment of the quality of health care provided by major government hospitals in Bangalore.** This will be done through in-depth interviews with patients who have undergone treatment at the hospitals. Some comparison with mission hospitals are also being sought in an attempt to find good models. This study is being carried out in partnership with Citizens Action Group, Bangalore.

For more information on the hospital study, please contact Anjana Iyer, PAC.

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**NEWSBRIEFS**

Save Bangalore!

This is a mass movement targeted at young people to create civic awareness and support initiative of young people engaged in citizens action. It has been started by Young India in collaboration with some NGOs such as Waste Wise, Mythri, PAC and others. Sushmita Sen, Miss Universe, 1994, participated in a function to inaugurate this function. We sincerely hope that the analogy of beauty translates into this movement and sustains it!
PAC’s long-term strategy will be to identify and respond to major issues pertinent to governance from time to time in collaboration with other groups that share similar concerns.

PAC PUBLICATIONS

The PAC Research Paper Series has been initiated to present the findings of its research studies, surveys and other investigations. The titles presently available are:

1. A Report Card on Public Services in Indian Cities: A View from Below
   Rs. 30 or US$ 7*

2. Public Services For the Urban Poor: A Report Card on Three Indian Cities
   Rs.25 or US$ 5*

   Rs. 25 or US$ 5*

   Rs. 20 or US$ 4*

* Foreign orders only. Please include US$2 as processing charges.

Please send payment through bank draft/postal order/cheque (include Rs 5 for outstation cheques) drawn in favour of Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, to:

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS CENTRE

Public Affairs Centre (PAC) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the cause of improving the quality of governance in India. While recognising that many factors influence governance, PAC will focus attention initially on areas in which the public can play a useful role in improving governance. Towards this end, it will undertake and support research on public findings and assist citizen groups and public organisations concerned with improving governance. The current focus of PAC on urban public service reflects the urgency and timeliness of the problems.

PAC’s role in this challenging endeavour will be:

- to assist in enhancing the quality of public policies, programmes and services of concern to citizens through research and advisory services to both citizen groups and the government;
- to use the findings of research to inform the public and stimulate collective action by citizen groups; and
- to network with other organisations, both public and private, in furtherance of its goals.
Initial Support Group

The Bangalore Report Card Project was supported by a local advisory group comprising Dr. P.C. Alexander, Governor of Maharashtra (but resident in Bangalore at that time), Dr. Raja Ramanna, eminent scientist and former minister, Mr. T.R. Satish Chandran, former Chief Secretary, Karnataka, Ms. Kathyayini Chamara, journalist, Ms. Jyotsana Bangara, entrepreneur, Mr. P.P. Madappa, former Managing Director, Karnataka Antibiotics, Prof. K.R.S. Murthy, Director, IIM, Bangalore, Ms. Nandana Reddy, Executive Director, Concerned for Working Children and Mr. Salil Shetty, Executive Director, ActionAid. This group met three times in the course of the project and provided support and advice to Dr. Samuel Paul, author of the study. Several members of the advisory group subsequently worked with Dr. Paul for the establishment of Public Affairs Centre.

Standards of Public Service

Lack of standards of service is an important reason for the low levels of public accountability. Public agencies seldom clearly state the standards of service that citizens can expect of them. Even in cases where standards are specified, this information is not made available to the public.

In many countries, not only are the standards of service specified and this made known, but the citizens are also informed of the action that they can take if the declared standards are not met or adhered to.

PAC will shortly set up a National Task Force to examine the issue of “Standards of Public Services” and to initiate a debate on the desirable reforms that are feasible in this important area.

Readers with expertise on this subject or willing to raise pertinent issues are invited to write in to:

The Editor
PUBLIC EYE
Board of Directors

**Dr. Samuel Paul** (Chairman) is former Director of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He has also been an advisor to the United Nations, International Labour Organisation and the World Bank.

**Mr. Rohinton D. Aga** is Chairman, Thermax Ltd., Pune. He is also Chairman, Energy Committee of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII).

**Mr. T.R. Satish Chandran** was Chief Secretary, Karnataka State, and Secretary, Energy, Government of India.

**Dr. Kamla Chowdhry** is a Former Chairperson of the National Wastelands Development Board, New Delhi, and Trustee of the National Foundation for India.

**Mr. P.P. Madappa** is Chief Executive of J.K. Pharma and a former Managing Director of Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Bangalore.

**Dr. K.R.S. Murthy** is Director, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, and formerly Professor at IIM, Ahmedabad.

**Mr. Manubhai Shah** is the Founder and Managing Trustee of the Consumer Education & Research Centre, Ahmedabad and Visiting Professor, IIM, Ahmedabad.
PUBLIC EYE and you

PUBLIC EYE has been conceived as a forum to reflect both the state of governance in various sectors as well as the response of the concerned citizen. Besides presenting information about the activities of the Centre, we would like to include relevant news and information about other public interest groups working with similar concerns.

We would like to build up this forum as a 'working house of thought', with searching and constructively critical information, designed to stimulate the skeptical and to shake the complacent - ever so gently. PUBLIC EYE fully recognises the right of policy makers and government functionaries to demur, dissent and even to deny.

This, then, is PUBLIC EYE for you. Your forum. We look forward to receiving your critical comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter. Please write to us at:

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