The Ides of March has a familiar ring in Indian politics. Often, it brings in unexpected twists and turns to the flow of events. Upsetting political arithmetics and defying logic. This time it was the turn of the electorate to confound the poll-pundits. In spite of all advance warnings about the dangers of a fragmented and loose-knit coalition at the Centre (with most opinion polls vindicating the statement), the Indian voter did the unexpected: deliver a fractured mandate. On closer scrutiny, this seemingly confusing mandate reflects a couple of home-bred truths: One, a growing awareness and sensitivity to local realities in contrast to political ideologies, and two, a strong belief that it is easier to bring about changes by applying pressure at local and regional levels rather than by looking up to DD (distant Delhi). Forget economics, it seems politics has been considerably decentralised.

For PAC, the past three months were quite exciting and encouraging. Our initiatives to bring in electoral transparency and participation in the 1996 Lok Sabha elections in Karnataka and also during elections to the Bangalore City Corporation, found pleasant echoes this time. Efforts by concerned NGOs and individuals in Chennai, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad on similar lines, reinforce the growing involvement of civil society in cleansing the political arena of dangerous portents like increasing influx of criminals and history sheeters. Closer home, PAC in association with other city-based NGOs launched the 'Know your Candidate' programme (see page 2). These efforts once again reinforced the ability of citizens to reinvigorate the democratic spirit by behaving more as partners and participants in the democratic process, rather than as mere users or clients.

More good news on the 'Report Card' front. PAC's efforts at sharpening the impact of report card studies took on a new dimension with the release of the Report Card on Mumbai (see page 4). The Report Card study was prepared in partnership with over 40 voluntary organisations in the city. At a well-attended workshop organised in Mumbai on 21 March, 1998 to discuss the findings, officials of the city municipal corporation and representatives of various voluntary groups agreed upon several follow-up actions. The experience in Mumbai amply demonstrates the potency of this approach in catalysing and empowering various stakeholders to work together on a common platform to bring about qualitative changes in the mode of governance. The Report Card on public services in Delhi will be released at a function on April 30, 1998. Government officials, NGOs, and civic groups are expected to participate in the day-long workshop.

1998 promises to be as unpredictable as the year by gone, in a rapidly shrinking global village. Ripples in one corner end up as tidal waves in another. In this information age, the market place of ideas is brimming with an exhilarating array of experiments, initiatives and innovations. And coming through these myriad collages of images, is the powerful awakening of a civil society that is shaking off the filaments of a somnolent existence and slowly but surely getting a grip on the reins of government.

Public Eye completes two years with this issue. During this period, Public Eye has evolved from a newsletter to a more wide forum to disseminate, debate and share ideas, experiences and opinions. We thank you for your support, encouragement and opinions.
Parliament Elections in Bangalore
A Collective Voice for Informed votes

The 12th Lok Sabha elections in Bangalore witnessed a unique, innovative and collective effort by citizens to cast informed votes. For PAC, the elections provided yet another opportunity to further strengthen its efforts to improve the quality of governance in India. The rationale for transparency, accountability and proactive participation in the electoral process is now common knowledge and has been field-tested successfully in Bangalore by PAC during elections to the 11th Lok Sabha and the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (city corporation) in 1996. Hence PAC’s efforts this time was backed with confidence and a new sense of direction.

The city of Bangalore is divided into two Lok Sabha Constituencies, North and South, covering about 3 million voters; the effort covered both the constituencies. Out of a total of 27 candidates, only 11 were from national political parties and the rest were all independents.

Strategy

This exercise was a collaborative venture. Taking the lead along with PAC were CIVIC, Bangalore Environment Trust and a host of other city based NGOs and residents welfare associations. The scale of the city’s population and size was a very important consideration in planning the strategy. The Bangalore Citizens Joint Action Committee (BCJAC) was constituted as an exclusive body to conduct and co-ordinate the campaign. The BCJAC comprised of 16 organisations as members representing city based NGOs and residents welfare associations. All the activities were undertaken under the banner of BCJAC using a separate letter head which carried names of all the members. This was done to portray an image of neutrality and also to convey to the candidates that the programme was supported by organisations representing different segments of the city. Bangalore Times, a Friday weekly supplement of the Bangalore edition of the popular daily, The Times of India, was roped in as a partner for city wide dissemination of information on candidates.

Conduct

A core group comprising of CIVIC, PAC, BET, Malleswaram Swabhiman Initiative and Domlur II Stage Welfare Association , all members of BCJAC conducted the interviews and also co-ordinated the dissemination. The questionnaire covered a wide range of relevant issues such as - educational background, occupation, whether residents of the constituency, criminal record, details of tax payment, public service record, frequency of changing party affiliations, plans and priorities for the constituency. Information on how the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Fund of Rs. 1 crore would be utilised etc.

The candidates of the major political parties were personally interviewed, while the independents were mailed a copy of the questionnaire. Only two independents responded. Out of the 11 party candidates, 9 responded to the interview and two others refused to appear for the interview, despite concerted efforts. By and large all those who responded in the affirmative were also co-operative and supportive of the campaign, though getting to meet some of them proved to be a herculean task. BCJAC’s collaboration with The Times of India was an important factor in speeding up the process of interviews.

Confessions of a born-again Voter!

The small initiative in Bangalore did have an impact in enthusing citizens to shake off their indifference and actively participate in the electoral process. Here, in own words, is a confession statement from a neo convert who happens to be the Editor of Bangalore Times of the Times of India!

"Earlier this week, when I went to avail my constitutional right to cast a vote for the government of my choice, I was doing it practically for the first time in my life. Two organisations were responsible for changing my attitude. The Bangalore Citizens Joint Action Committee which comprises of equally occupied professionals who make the time to provide the people of Bangalore with information about aspiring candidates so that citizens can make informed choices when they vote. The second influencing body that got me to vote was the church...During the Sunday Service on the eve of the election, the priest suddenly spoke forth on how vital it was for everyone present and eligible to do so, to cast a vote...He did not advocate any party; simply suggested that we should take the ‘KNOW YOUR CANDIDATES’ Information handbills that were being distributed outside the church, then pray for divine wisdom and vote accordingly".

(Source: "I confess it was wrong", Heartline - Ingrid Albuquerque, Times of India, February 20, 1998. The writer is the Editor of Bangalore Times, Times of India.)
Dissemination of Information

Many newspapers carried articles on the campaign preparing the citizens to expect background information on the candidates. The *Bangalore Times*, published information from both the constituencies three days prior to the polls in an attractive format which provided the reader a cross comparison of the different candidates across various issues. Efforts to rope in vernacular newspapers didn’t succeed as most of them have state wide readership and devoting so much space for just Bangalore would not have been feasible. Leaflets in Kannada and English were printed on the same format numbering 5000 each for Bangalore North and South and distributed widely through the network of Residents Associations who were also members of BCJAC. Though fewer in number the distribution of leaflets was an interesting experience for the residents associations and was certainly a crucial component in the process of their empowerment. Publication of this information in the *Times of Indiranagar*, a neighbourhood weekly was a surprise bonus.

We Made a Difference!

Most respondents in a study conducted by PAC in association with Gallup-MBA to assess the impact of the campaign agreed that the information published was both credible and useful. As much as 77 per cent of them felt that it helped in making a choice while voting. Over half the respondents revealed that their choice of the candidates was on the basis of the credentials of the candidates and not that of the party which is a clear endorsement of the rationale of such information campaign. It is PAC’s fond hope that such campaigns will encourage more people to participate in the polling process, discourage criminals and the corrupt from contesting to a public office, while fostering elections of persons of integrity to become leaders.

*S. Manjunath*

The Hubli Initiative

The ‘Choose the Right Candidate Programme’ was tried out in the city of Hubli in Northern Karnataka. This initiative was planned and carried out by PAC and the Citizens Forum, an NGO based at Hubli. Questionnaires were distributed to seven candidates in the Dharward (North) constituency. Four candidates responded; the compiled information was then widely disseminated through leaflets. Conversation with one candidate who refused to disclose information was duly reproduced in the information sheet! A public meeting with the candidates was also arranged.

(The initiative at Hubli was coordinated by Dr. Anant Huigol of the Citizen’s Forum.)

VOTES FOR VALUES : An Appeal to Political Parties and the Electorate

PAC in association with seven other NGOs—Common Cause, New Delhi, Consumer Education and Research Centre, Ahmedabad; Federation of Consumer Organizations Tamil Nadu, Chennai; People United for Better Living in Calcutta, Calcutta; Transparency International India, New Delhi; Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, Mumbai, and Centre for Democratic Reform, Hyderabad, issued a public appeal in the context of the 12th Lok Sabha elections in India. Here is the text of the statement:

“We hereby appeal to all political parties to make a special effort in the forthcoming parliamentary elections to ensure that their candidates meet certain minimum standards. In order to regain people’s confidence, they should provide adequate evidence that certain tests of integrity and probity in public life have been applied while selecting their candidates. We, therefore request all political parties to take the following steps:

1. Assess the backgrounds of prospective candidates, reject those with convictions on account of criminality, corruption and tax related offences, and avoid those who have arrears and due to the government and those with doubtful credentials in the public perception.

2. Announce publicly that their approved candidates have passed the test specified above. Similar announcements may be made by approved candidates in their respective constituencies.

3. Ask candidates standing for re-election to publicly disclose how they utilised the MP’s local area development scheme fund of Rs. One Crore in 1996-97. The total amount used, and projects and locations on which costs were incurred, must be disclosed. This may seem like a minor matter, but is, in fact, a good test of the competence and integrity of an MP based on a programme under his/her control. This test will also shift public attention from dubious promises to the record of the candidates. First time contestants should specify their priorities and criteria for allocations if they receive such funds.

We call upon the electorate to organise meetings with candidates and seek a public statement of priorities for action, if elected. Needless to say, much more needs to be done to cleanse our national politics. These steps provide a “minimum test” of the integrity and ability of candidates, and can easily be acted upon if political parties stand for these values and wish to reverse the disillusionment and cynicism of the public towards politics.”

The appeal was widely published in major newspapers.
Mumbai Report Card Release

The Report Card Study on Mumbai was designed in the context of PAC’s experience with similar studies in five cities, and follow-up work that has emanated during the last four years. This study builds on the conceptual clarity and methodological rigour evolved from past experiences and seeks to strengthen the impact through well-planned partnership efforts with local organisations. The initiative taken by Apanalaya, a well-established NGO in Mumbai, to explore the use of the Report Card Approach for studying the public distribution system from the point of view of the slum dwellers provided the impetus for this partnership. Apanalaya is one of the 50 NGOs working together as the Rationing Kruti Samiti (RKS), a forum active since the last seven years in the slums of Mumbai and Thane on issues related to the Public Distribution System. The Report Card Study was designed and conducted with inputs from RKS, based on their field experiences.

This joint effort culminated in the release of the Report Card and a one-day workshop titled ‘Developing Partnerships for Action Towards a Better Mumbai’, organised by PAC and RKS at the Y.B. Chavan Hall, Bombay, on 21 March, 1998. Over 60 participants, including concerned officials from the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, the Dept. of Civil Supplies and the Police Dept., and representatives of NGOs and the Press participated. Dr. P.S. A. Sundaram, Additional Secretary, Administrative Reform and Training, Government of India, was the Chief Guest.

A notable feature of this exercise was the responsive and active exploration of possibilities by the government officials present. Deliberations led to some concrete decisions for immediate action which could pave the way for long-term partnerships:

1. The Assistant Controller of Rationing and other officials present gave a commitment that they would attend monthly meetings of RKS and work in partnership with them towards problem-solving and monitoring on a continuing basis.

2. BMC officials shared information on some activities initiated by them:
   - Prerna, a platform for collaborative action between BMC, NGOs and the corporate sector for improving cleanliness in the city, an initiative similar to the Swabhimaana Initiative in Bangalore.
   - The Advanced Locality Management Programme in Ghatkopar which actively involved residents in solid waste management and neighbourhood cleanliness.

3. RKS would attempt developing two selected wards - M(East) and K(East) - as model wards by bringing local officials related to service delivery in contact with citizens on a regular basis at ward committee meetings towards joint management of the wards.

4. RKS members and other NGOs are already consulted by BMC in the Slum Sanitation Project. BMC and concerned NGOs would utilise the information and partnerships generated by this workshop towards participation of citizens in developing uniform norms, construction and maintenance of toilets in slums, and monitoring the project.

PAC is very heartened that its efforts in working jointly with local stakeholders from initial stages of the study have produced such promising results. We nurture a strong hope that these initiatives provoke sustainable and positive impact and result in marked improvement in public service delivery.

(The follow-up initiatives to the study and the Workshop were co-ordinated by Ms. Anuradha Rao, PAC)

SWABHIMAANA: An Update

(Swabhimaana, the people’s movement for a cleaner, greener and safer Bangalore has now completed two and a half years. The movement, which drew in a rich synergy from creative government-citizen forums, has made its presence felt in many areas of civic governance. PAC plays a major facilitatory role in sustaining this forum. We present below some of the recent initiatives of Swabhimaana.

Public-Private Partnerships
From ideas to practice

A major initiative towards fostering meaningful public-private partnerships has been the partnership with the Karnataka Ownership Apartments Promoters Association (KOAPA). The Association is an active forum of about 100 Builders and Property Developers who work on projects all over Karnataka. KOAPA, in association with Swabhimaana, has involved with beautification and improvements in infrastructure in Bangalore. Apart from carrying out activities like constructing and maintaining traffic islands, installing traffic signals, constructing public pay and use toilets etc., the Association has also stated that 25 per cent of their investment will be channelled towards development activities like construction of
classrooms, community toilets in slums etc., for which there will not be any publicity or commercial mileage for them. Members of the Swabhiman core group attend the bi-monthly KOAPA meetings to review the progress of ongoing projects, suggest new projects, and facilitate interaction with the government authorities.

**Reaching out to elected representatives**

In order to broaden the scope of Swabhiman and to make it more participatory, a meeting was arranged on March 25, 1998 with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, Opposition leaders and members of standing committees. The object of this meet was twofold: Sensitise the invitees to the mission and functions of Swabhiman and, enlist the support and co-operation of the invitees to strengthen the movement. The meeting was received very favourably, with the Mayor assuring the movement of his support and co-operation. It is also a matter of great encouragement that the City Corporation has given Swabhiman an office within its premises.

For more information on Swabhiman, please contact

The Co-ordinator, Swabhiman,
Office of the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike,
II Floor, Annexe,
N.R. Square, Bangalore 560 002.
Tel: 080-2233568.

(Reports contributed by S.Manjunath and Lalitha Kama, PAC)

---

**'Anomalies in the Electoral Rolls in Bangalore' - An Open House**

The Right to exercise one's franchise is one of the most fundamental democratic rights bestowed upon the citizens by the Indian Constitution. In the recently concluded Lok Sabha Elections, thousands of citizens in the city of Bangalore couldn't exercise their franchise as they found their names missing from the electoral rolls! In this context, Public Affairs Centre and the Bangalore Citizens Joint Action Committee organised an Open House meeting on this theme. Three key themes provided the paradigms for discussions:

- To inform the public about the causes for anomalies in the electoral roll
- To discuss strategies and evolve an action plan to address these anomalies through active participation from resident groups and other organised citizen forums
- To understand the relationship between the Election Commission and the City Corporation in the conduct of elections and preparation of the electoral roll

The State Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Kshetrapal and the Deputy Commissioner (Administration) of Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, Mr. Patanashetty addressed the gathering and answered queries from the public. There was fair representation from all segments of the citizenry and the meet provided for a focused and highly interactive discussion.

The forum succeeded in dispelling many myths regarding the anomalies in the electoral rolls and more important, highlighted the role of resident groups and NGOs in ensuring that the electoral process is made more participatory.

In urban areas, as it is, there is a growing trend, especially among the educated middle class to abstain from voting. And if such anomalies persist, it would further alienate people from the electoral process and thereby pose a serious threat to the sustenance of a healthy democracy. There is a need to mobilise public opinion and put pressure on the concerned to rectify the anomalies in the electoral roll and create awareness about those rules and regulations which the public are deliberately kept in darkness about. Since this phenomenon has been reported from many other centres as well, we do definitely hope that such interactive sessions will provide an impetus to tackle this issue on a participatory and consensual basis.

(For further information on this, please contact S. Manjunath or Lalitha Kama, PAC)
This section introduces creative and innovative experiments that reflect proactive efforts of administrators, citizens and NGOs in producing models that need to be disseminated and shared. The initiatives covered in this would attempt to highlight the need for creating mechanisms for people's participation that hinges around replicability and adaptability.

Civic Journalism
Media as community partners

Can local newspapers and broadcasters (both visual and audio) break out of the negative mould characterised by a major focus on conflict and violence and an apparent disinterest in constructive solutions? Can we visualise a major cultural shift - from press negativism to community debates that illuminate public problems from horse race election coverage to a focus on citizen views and concerns? A group of progressive newspapers and broadcasting agencies are attempting to provide a positive response to the above questions by trying out a new concept called 'public' or 'civic' journalism.

This new approach was pioneered by two American Newspapers - The Wichita Eagle and Charlotte Observer, in 1992. The Wichita Eagle in 1992 launched a 'People Project' of much broader import than sensitised election coverage alone. Through surveys and extensive interviews, citizens focused on problems local government seemed unable to solve - faltering schools, crime and the lure of gangs, family and neighbourhood tensions, and health care. The paper examined differences in people's core values on each topic and printed pages of community forum announcements, listing organisations and agencies looking for solutions. The effort, according to the Eagle's editor Davis Merritt, Jr., was to provide "a huge and accessible market place where ideas can be formed and exchanged - not simply ideas about what could be wrong, but ideas about solutions".

Yet another instance of civic journalism is the Minneapolis Star-Tribune's 'Minnesota's Talking' roundtable series. After selecting an issue on people's minds (health care reform, violent crimes, drugs, racism) the paper sends out a small army of trained volunteer facilitators to help groups of citizens debate the problem. Over 1,000 citizens take part, meeting in groups of a dozen or so in living rooms, schools, libraries, and church basements. The paper then reports on the results.

A major resource centre that provides both conceptual and practical inputs to this growing initiative is the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, based at Washington. The Centre partners several major print and broadcast news organisations, helping them reconnect to their communities so they can engage their citizens in dialogues that lead to problem solving.

The Pew Center also works closely with news organisations in developing civic journalism initiatives, in evaluating these projects and in training journalists in the techniques of civic journalism. To know more about the Centre and also about civic journalism, please contact

The Pew Center for Civic Journalism
1101 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 420
Washington, DC 20036-4303
email: news@pccj.org
This column introduces organisations and forums involved in promoting good governance. The objective here is to augment and strengthen the process of networking among individuals and institutions sharing similar views and perceptions and also to facilitate a process of adaptability and replicability of good initiatives.

International Foundation for Election Systems

The International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) is a private, non-profit organisation established in 1987 to support electoral and other democratic institutions in emerging, evolving and experienced democracies. Since inception, IFES has been active in more than 90 countries in Central and South America, the Caribbean, North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Asia.

IFES utilises survey and focus group research projects in meeting its mission to provide effective technical, electoral and other related assistance and also serves as an international clearing house for information on election and political processes. Information generated by the various research projects are used for:

- providing key indicators signalling the growth or deterioration of democratic practices;
- assisting in developing programmes and communication strategies;
- offering quantified information to develop yardsticks to measure the effectiveness of existing programmes; and
- indicating areas of activity for future programmes geared toward participatory development.

Research outputs are broadly disseminated through briefings of government officials and journalists, at conferences with national and local community leaders, and to the public via domestic and international media. The overarching objective of the IFES sponsored research is to project a citizen's perspective of the countries under study. Data generated through open research projects is both qualitative and quantitative, providing empirical evidence regarding a country's opinion environment and documentation on the changes a society is undergoing.

All aspects of research, from design through analysis, are guided by the needs of IFES managers, field offices, development partners and clients requesting information. The content of a project - the issues measured and analysed - is defined separately for each project. Initially, issues are outlined in a project proposal and then operationalised through a questionnaire and sample design or an agenda and a profile of participants.

Six broad themes have been explored by IFES through various research projects:

- Elections;
- Communications;
- Civil Society;
- Democracy;
- Economic System and
- Overall Mood.

The Spin-offs....

IFES has had some remarkable success with its surveys and research. Two examples:

**Ukraine**

IFES' research into the people's attitude towards a new constitution was instrumental in advancing the adoption of the constitution by the Supreme RADA. Through its survey results, IFES documented that key reform-oriented constituencies of the public supported the adoption of a new constitution for Ukraine. The findings were presented to the President and members of the Supreme RADA who then expressed the public's will and passed the new constitution, marking the dawn of a new era for Ukrainian democracy.

**Kazakhstan**

Data from an IFES survey in 1995 revealed that NGOs in Kazakhstan had to do a better job in publicising their activities and using outreach strategies to form linkages with other NGOs and the public at large. In response to this, IFES organised a series of seminars for NGOs across Kazakhstan to stress outreach activities and to discuss the role of NGOs in a democratic society. Representatives of the NGOs, media, and local governments learned valuable lessons in organisation and forming strategic partnerships, a development conducive to the fostering of civil society in Kazakhstan.
Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), New Delhi

PRIA is an independent, non-profit, non-government organisation based at New Delhi, India. Since its inception in 1982, the main thrust of the organisation has been to promote people-centred development initiatives within the perspective of participatory research. The central mission and mandate of PRIA is to promote people-centered, holistic and comprehensive evolution of society, characterised by Freedom, Justice, Equity and Sustainability, by:

a. Creating opportunities for sharing, analysing and learning among formations of the civil society
b. Engaging in independent and critical analysis of societal trends and issues, development policies and programmes
c. Enabling dialogue across diverse perspectives, sectors and institutions.

The programmatic work of PRIA is organised around four distinct yet interrelated Centres:
- Centre for Participation and Governance;
- Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health;
- Centre for Institutional Development; and
- Centre for Global Alliance.

The nature of activities within each Centre broadly falls under three themes:
- Studies, research, monitoring, evaluation and documentation
- Educational events, workshops, training, consultations, seminars
- Preparation and publication of educational materials.

The primary constituency for the work of PRIA continues to be grassroots voluntary development organisations and NGOs, People’s Organisations, their networks and other support organisations. However, PRIA also actively interacts with a vibrant spectrum of actors like Trade Unions, Co-operatives, Consumer Groups, Institutions of Local Self Governance, National and State Governments, Ministries and Departments, private sector enterprises, International agencies, Media and other socio-cultural formations.

An innovative forum that actively participates in the conduct of many capacity building programmes of PRIA is the Network of Collaborating Regional Support Organisations (NCRSO); these are regional organisations which collaborate with PRIA based on a set of mutually agreed principles.

For more details on PRIA and the Calendar of Educational Events, 1998, please contact:

Society for Participatory Research in Asia
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area
New Delhi - 110 062, India
Fax: 91-11-6980183
Email: pria@sdalt.ernet.in
Web Site: http://www.pria.org

Public Administration reform in Vietnam: A Study Tour from Quang Binh Province

The Quang Binh Pilot Project was conceived by the UNDP under the National Public Administration Reform Programme for Vietnam. PAC is assisting the project through the monitoring component with a major emphasis on a comprehensive inception activity built around baseline surveys modelled on Report Cards’ so as to ensure that the prioritisation of problems and selection of action areas reflect the felt needs of the citizens of the province.

As part of the partnership, a eight-member delegation from the project visited India to gain inputs on tools such as baseline surveys and other innovations in citizen participation in government, that have been used for strengthening public service delivery.

Catch us on the Web....

To know more about Public Affairs Centre, please pull in for a brief stop over while you cruise along the internet highway at http://www.his.com/~holycow/pac.
WORKSHOPS


This Workshop, the third in a series, was designed to sensitisie the participants to the Report Card Methodology and enhance their conceptual and analytical skills in generating and using systematic public feedback. The specific objectives of the Workshop were:

- Acquaint participants to concepts and methodologies related to the theme;
- Help participants to define problems and interpret results with this approach;
- Illustrate with cases, pro-active and creative citizen-agency forums; and
- Highlight advocacy strategies to sustain citizens involvement and ensure enhanced accountability and responsiveness of public service providers.

The Workshop was highly interactive and provided for an effective mix of pedagogy including conceptual sessions, case analysis, group work and simulation exercises.

The Workshop was attended by 18 participants selected from senior and middle level functionaries nominated by citizen groups, public interest organisations and advocacy units, consumer organisations, policy and advisory support groups and other non governmental agencies. This also included one international participant from Transparency International (Bangladesh).

The proceedings were inaugurated by Dr. A. Ravindra, Commissioner, Bangalore Mahanagara Palike. Ms. Lakshmi Venkatchalam, Commissioner, Bangalore Development Authority gave the valedictory Address.

(For copies of the Workshop Proceedings, please contact K. Gopakumar, PAC)

Workshop on Community-Based Indicators, 11-13 February, 1998.

Community based indicators are not an altogether new concept. Many NGO's have been using them in their projects to gauge the user perspectives to monitor progress. In this workshop however, for the first time, a working framework was set down emphasising the steps to be taken in evolving community based indicators. They are:

- Identifying stakeholders
- Agreeing on issues
- Selection of indicators
- Gathering data
- Communication
- Action

The overarching premise is that community based indicators should lead to action, increased accountability and greater capacity building within the community. The emphasis here is on the community working together to identify stakeholders and indicators.

The workshop was organised by the New Economics Foundation based in London, to disseminate how community based indicators work, as well as to discover whether this process is replicable in regional settings. The participants, representing different NGO's from Karnataka, wished to examine in detail community based indicators as a tool for advocacy, better governance and social auditing.

(For more information on the Workshop, please contact Lalitha Kumar, PAC)

We have moved..........

From January 1, 1998, PAC has started functioning from a new premises.

Please note the change in address:

Public Affairs Centre
578, 16th B Main, 3rd Cross
Block 3, Koramangala
Bangalore 560 034.
Telefax: +91-80-5537260.
Telephone: +91-80-5520246
Internet mail: pacblr@blr.vsnl.net.in

* Public Eye * Vol. 3 No.1 Jan.-Mar. 1998
Cities in the Developing World: Issues, Theory, and Policy
Edited by Joseph Gugler

Even by conservative estimates, two-thirds of the world's population live in the developing world. The sheer magnitude of this transformation is likely to challenge all notions of urban development as most of these cities have their own peculiar and diverse ethics. This collection of studies provide an authoritative and in-depth overview of the urban experience in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The authors are leading experts on various facets of the urban experience and range across the social sciences: sociologists, anthropologists, architects, economists, geographers, planners, political scientists and a psychologist. Six key themes are addressed in this volume:

- Development theory and policy as they pertain to urbanisation;
- Rural - urban migration;
- Urban employment structures;
- Forms of social integration and control;
- The housing question; and
- The local and national politics played out in the urban arena.

The wide range of issues explored and a good representation of cases analysed will be of interest to all those who are concerned with the myriad issues presented by the cities of the South.

The Changing Nature of Local Government in Developing Countries
Patricia L. McCarney (editor), 1996, 312 pages.
Published by and available from the Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, 455 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2G8, Canada.

This book is a collection of case studies from ten countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, describing the structure and functions of their local governments. Working within a common framework, the authors give country and government profiles and explore the issues of decentralisation, democratic development and challenges to local government. The book starts with a chapter on the growing importance of local government. The changes at global, national and local levels that are leading countries in the South to decentralise state structures and functions, reform public institutions and promote democracy are examined. The ideas emerging from international agencies, the academic community, governments and professionals are also discussed.

Zimbabwe is the first case study presented. The author argues that the real success of decentralisation should be measured by factors such as people's participation in decision-making and the availability of financial resources at local level. For Burkina Faso, the development of state, province and commune government structures is traced, with remaining challenges including the development of transparency and financial autonomy at the local level. The decentralisation process in Uganda is revealed to be less advanced, with state and local governments being unable to cope with the demands of the urban population. In response, a decentralisation programme was finally launched in 1994. The final African case study is Côte d'Ivoire where, despite a long history of decentralisation, local structures still lack financial and political autonomy.

In Thailand, government administration is described as centralised and local government remains weak. It is argued that local governments must co-operate more among themselves, deliver services more efficiently and encourage the participation of the local populations. In Vietnam, institutional capacity and human resources are weak at a local level but as the country undergoes a transition from centrally planned to market economy, decentralisation and democratisation processes are accelerating. In the Philippines, local government has historically been very reliant on the central state but, since 1991, local governments have assumed the role of service providers and popular participation in decision-making and service delivery has increased.

The final section presents three Latin American case studies. The chapter on Mexico shows that the municipalities still face challenges of political and financial dependence, and their institutional resources remain an obstacle to progress. In Ecuador, the powers of local authorities have been diminishing since the 1970s as central government has assumed more decision-making powers. There are currently plans for municipal reform, but local governments remain weak. Finally, from Chile, the municipal reform process is traced from its beginnings in the 1970s to more recent progress which has significantly modified the Chilean municipal framework.
   Samuel Paul  Rs 30 or US$ 10

2. A Report Card on Public Services in Indian Cities: A View from Below
   Samuel Paul  Rs 30 or US$ 10

   Stephanie Upp  Rs 50 or US$15

4. Public Services and the Urban Poor: A Comparative Assessment Based on Citizen Feedback from Five Indian Cities
   Sita Shekhar  Rs 50 or US$ 15

5. Bringing Transparency into Elections: A Field Experiment
   Suresh Balakrishnan  Rs 30 or US$ 10

   Suresh Balakrishnan & Anjana Iyer  Rs 30 or US$10

7. Bangalore Municipal Budgets: A Critical Assessment
   Samuel Paul & Sita Shekhar  Rs 30 or US$ 15

8. Elections to Bangalore Municipal Corporation: An Experiment to Stimulate Informed Choice
   S. Manjunath  Rs. 30 or US $10

9. Corruption: Who will bell the cat?
   Vikram Sarabhai Memorial Lecture 1997
   Samuel Paul  Rs 30 or US$10

    K. Gopakumar  Rs 50 or US$ 15

11. CITY NET: A Study of Neighbourhood Newspapers in Bangalore
    M.M. Srinath, S. Manjunath & K. Gopakumar  Rs 30 or US$10

12. A Report Card on Public Services in Calcutta
    Samuel Paul & Anjana Iyer  Rs 30 or US$ 10

13. A Report Card on Public Services in Madras
    Samuel Paul & Anjana Iyer  Rs 30 or US$10

    Suresh Balakrishnan & Sita Sekhar  Rs 30 or US$10

* Please include S2 towards processing charges, for all foreign orders.

CORRUPTION IN INDIA: AGENDA FOR ACTION
Edited by S. Guhan and Samuel Paul
ISBN 81-7094-277-2; 312 Pages, Hardcover, Price Rs. 280 or $25

This book is the outcome of a project on tackling corruption in India undertaken by Public Affairs Centre, a non-profit national organisation based in Bangalore. The volume draws on actionable proposals drafted by an eminent group of scholars, lawyers, civil servants and activists. The proposals on Lok Pal and Prevention of Corruption Act are timely, given the ongoing national debates on these subjects.

- 'The book is a tour de force...The agenda resulting from this stance is a set of preconditions for an uncorrupt society, the arsenal for a war on corruption. All in all, this a terrific, demanding and stimulating book.'

- Barbara Harriss-White, Frontline

- 'An outstanding contribution in the present atmosphere'.

- H.D. Shourie, Common Cause

- 'A valuable and timely contribution to a subject that has not received the serious scholarly attention that it deserves..... a must read for all those who are concerned about the problem'.

- Indian Review of Books

For ordering copies, contact:
Vision Books Pvt. Ltd.,
24, Feroze Gandhi Road
Lajpat Nagar III,
New Delhi 110 024
Tel: (91 11) 6836470, 6836480
Fax: (91 11) 6836490
TRIBUTE

We deeply mourn the demise of Mr. S. Guhan (1934 - 1998), former IAS officer and Professor Emeritus, Madras Institute of Development Studies. An erudite scholar and an able administrator, Mr. Guhan left many indelible footprints in the wide spectrum of activities he was involved with. We, at PAC have many fond memories of interacting with him for the project on Tackling Corruption in India, which culminated in the publication of the book 'Corruption in India: Agenda for Action' (Vision Books Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1997), jointly edited by him and Dr. Samuel Paul.

In a message of condolence, Dr. Samuel Paul noted "It was a great privilege to have worked with Guhan in our project on ’Tackling Corruption in India’. Guhan took the initiative in arranging the contributors who together with us brought out the book. We will surely miss him. For all of us at PAC, Guhan was a friend, guide and a great source of support and one whose contributions will forever be remembered".

Editor: K. Gopakumar, PAC

This publication has been made possible by a grant from the National Foundation for India (NFI), New Delhi.

Public Eye

A quarterly publication from Public Affairs Centre

Vol. 3 No. 1
January - March 1998

For private circulation only

Designed and produced by Communication for Development and Learning, Bangalore
Phone: 341 0583, 341 7684 Fax: 341 7684

Public Eye • Vol. 3 No. 1 Jan.-Mar. 1998