Elections are the very lifeblood of a democracy. Honest and capable citizens freely chosen as their representatives and servants by their voters in a fair election process constitute the essence of good governance. An election is therefore about 'who' get elected, 'how' the election is held and what they do after the election. India is singularly fortunate in being able to fulfill the four essential conditions for being categorised as a liberal democracy, as outlined by Myron Weiner:

1. Government leaders are chosen in competitive elections in which there are opposition political parties.

2. Political parties, including opponents of government, have the right to openly seek public support. They have access to press, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom from arbitrary arrest.

3. Governments defeated in elections step down; losers are not punished by winners; defeated leaders are not punished unless in the act of governance they have broken the law; their punishment is based on due process.

4. Elected governments are not figureheads, they exercise power and make policies and are accountable to the electors - not to the military, the monarchy, the bureaucracy or an oligarchy.

Judged by these standards only a few nations - largely belonging to North America and Western Europe - can be classified as functioning democracies without interruption over the past fifty years. India belongs to this select group, and one can be justly proud of that achievement.

However, there is much that is wrong with our elections. Flawed electoral rolls have become a menace. About 40% errors are noticed in electoral rolls in many urban areas, and bogus voting in towns exceeds 20% making our elections a mockery. Purchase of votes through money and liquor, preventing poorer sections from voting, large scale impersonation and bogus voting, purchase of agents of opponents, threatening and forcing agents and polling personnel to allow false voting, booth capturing and large scale rigging, bribing polling staff and police personnel to get favours and to harass opponents, large scale violence and use of criminal gangs, stealing ballot boxes or tampering with ballot papers, inducing or forcing voters to reveal their voting preferences through various techniques, illegally entering the polling stations and controlling the polling process - all these have become an integral part of our electoral landscape.

Many scholars wonder how, despite such massive irregularities the electoral verdicts still seem to largely reflect public opinion, and how parties in power lose elections. The answers are simple. Happily for us, though parties in power are prone
to abusing authority for electoral gains, there has
never been any serious state-sponsored rigging in
most of India. The irregularities are largely limited
to the polling process alone, and most of the pre-
polling activity including printing and distribution of
ballot papers and post-polling activity including
transport and storage of ballot boxes and counting
of ballots are free from any political interference or
organised manipulation. That is why parties in power
have no decisive advantage in manipulating the polls,
and electoral verdicts broadly reflect shifts in public
opinion. However, the massive irregularities in polling
process make sure that candidates who deploy
abnormal money and muscle power have a distinct
advantage. Sensing this, most major parties have
come to nominate 'winnable' candidates without
reference to their ability and integrity. Criminals have
a decisive or dominant influence on the outcome of
elections in many parts of India and have often
become party candidates and won on a large scale.

Active monitoring and campaigning by non-partisan
citizens' initiatives is critical to check the
malpractices and bring in simple, but effective
reforms. Public Affairs Centre initiated the
successful 'Know Your Candidate' programme
during the municipal elections in Bangalore. People's
movements like Lok Satta in Andhra Pradesh have
made Election Watch into an effective state-wide
movement challenging the legitimacy of the electoral
process and forcing parties on the defensive. Praja
and Agni in Mumbai have been mobilising public
opinion for better elections. Catalyst Trust in Chennai
launched an impressive media campaign to
courage people to vote. Happily, movements like
Lok Satta have developed practical tools to citizen's
participation in Election Watch a reality. All these
and many more disparate initiatives should come
together, share their experiences, forge links, and
give a direction to the future of elections in our
country. Parties and legislators have failed to
respond to the challenge of electoral reform for over
three decades. People's initiative and collective and
informed assertion of our sovereignty as citizens
alone can make our democracy real and meaningful.
Cleansing our elections and engineering practical,
but far reaching electoral reforms are the first vital
steps in our quest for rejuvenation of our republic
and better governance. The time for action is now.
- Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan, Lok Satta,
Hyderabad.

STATE OF THE ART AS ART OF THE
STATE: PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON
e-governance

The idea that Information Technology (IT) can be
an enabling force, not only for business and trade
but also for government, has now been widely
accepted. However, a cursory glance at the existing
initiatives in India seems to suggest a mixed picture.
With the exception of the Railways Reservation
System, IT applications seem to have had no
remarkable effect on the manner in which citizens
benefit from the services of the government.
Against this backdrop, the efforts of the State
Government of Andhra Pradesh to harness
Information Technology seem like a major initiative
to deliver an improved administration.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has
introduced a series of Information Technology
based interventions to improve the performance of
select departments. The foundation of this effort
was in the attempt to connect all District
Headquarters and the State Government's offices
in Hyderabad through APSWAN (AP State Wide
Area Network). While there has been extensive
discussions on the scope of introducing IT and the
projected benefits, the two major departments with
large citizen interface where IT has been actually
introduced are:
a. Registrars offices
b. Commercial Taxes

The third department where this process is in
progress, are the Mandal Revenue Offices.

Given the potential of what was being attempted,
Public Affairs Centre (PAC) felt that a careful study
of the situation in Andhra Pradesh would yield rich
insights on whether and how computerisation had
affected the life of the common person.
PAC adopted its standard user-feedback approach
in assessing this issue: a survey of the citizens who
have actually used those particular services that have
been IT-enabled. This survey was supplemented
with fieldwork, to gain insights into the changes in
functioning of the specific departments, and the
process by which computerisation was implemented.
The surveys addressed users of two major
government departments where IT was introduced
at the user interface:

\(\text{\checkmark} \) Computer Aided Registration Department
(CARD), and
\(\text{\checkmark} \) Commercial Tax Office (CTO).
For CARD, the interviews were conducted in the CARD offices, while the CTO respondents were interviewed at a location of convenience based on a request for appointment. The surveys were carried out with samples in urban and rural areas. Control Groups were identified for each of the services; for CARD, the control group was from Andhra Pradesh itself, while for the Commercial Tax Office, the control group was from Karnataka, since all CT operations had been computerised in AP.

Major findings from the study are discussed below:

**Computer Aided Registration Department**
The survey sought to generate information on:
- Dimensions of service delivery such as time taken, steps involved, number of officials involved, etc. in getting the job done
- Facilities available at the Registration Office
- Quality of behaviour of officials
- Level of satisfaction with services
  Comparison with previous visits, prior to computerisation

Level of Overall Satisfaction, the most important indicator of impact, suggests that CARD is a major success. While 47% of respondents indicated extremely high level of satisfaction, 46% of the respondents said that they were somewhat satisfied (only 7% indicated some form of dissatisfaction). In addition, 82% of those respondents who had visited the Registration Office prior to computerisation reported that they now had a better experience after CARD.

Among respondents from the control group, just 28% indicated an extremely high level of overall satisfaction.

**Faster service** to the citizens was a prime objective of CARD. Survey results indicate that the average time taken to get the job done was 1.5 days. This compares very well with the time taken in a non-computerised office - of 3.8 days, which more than twice the time taken at CARD offices.

**Staff behaviour** and interaction with users seem to be significantly good with CARD. Over 30% of the respondents were "extremely satisfied" with the quality of their interaction with the officials (politeness/helpfulness etc.), in the CARD office. This was substantially better than satisfaction expressed with behaviour in non-computerised offices.

**Commercial Tax Office**
Since the CT department dealt with firms and not individuals, the process followed here was slightly different, and the sample size also somewhat smaller than that for the CARD survey. Care was taken to ensure that adequate representation was given to a range of commercial establishments, from corporate houses and industrial establishments to small shops in markets. The annual sales of these establishments ranged from less than Indian Rupees Ten million (55% of the companies surveyed) to over Fifty million (17.5% of the companies). The control group, as mentioned earlier, consisted of 10 corporate houses in Bangalore, which interacted with a non-computerised CTO.

Once again, the most important indicator of impact - Level of Overall Satisfaction - suggests that computerised CTO is a major success. While 43% indicated extremely high level of satisfaction, another 32% of the respondents said that they were somewhat satisfied (only 15% indicated some form of dissatisfaction). This compares well with 40% of the sample which expressed dissatisfaction at non-computerised offices.

Most respondents were given a formal acknowledgement of the receipt of the application or letter. On another set of issues - timing of next visit, or total number of visits required - the respondents said that they were not clearly informed. 90% of the respondents said that they could get their job done within a day. A large majority (65%) of the visitors had to meet more than one official at the CTO, and had to wait for an average time of 20 minutes to meet such additional officials.

**The Road Ahead...**
More than the statistics, insights abound from this study. Among the critical lessons that the key members of the IT-enabling administration have learned is the importance of developing constituencies outside the political/administrative system, i.e. with the citizens themselves.

Another interesting insight is how the administration has secured the support of the staff at the lower rungs of the hierarchy in collecting the data, and in using the systems to deliver the services. There has been no fear of layoffs - in CARD for example, there is staff excess after computerisation, but these people are being deployed as customer service agents at man kiosks at the CARD Offices. Further, training on the new systems were given to all levels of employees, and those among them who demonstrated greater aptitude were given special training to become department-level trouble-shooters. This not only created a sense of accomplishment and ownership among the staff for the systems, but also shortened the response time to address any problems.

*Public Eye* Vol. 4 No.4 Oct - Dec 1999
WANTED! An Enabling Industrial Environment in Karnataka

Do a flurry of investment proposals augur well for a state? Not necessarily so, finds our study on the industrial environment in Karnataka. The study highlights a yawning gap between proposals and field results. Read on...

It is not surprising that in this era of market-oriented reforms, a great deal of emphasis is being placed on the state's role in creating an enabling environment for business and industry. While there is a need for the government to directly invest and manage certain strategic enterprises, it is clear that the unique role that only a government can play is the creation and maintenance of an environment, which supports and facilitates investments by entrepreneurs.

In 1996 Government of Karnataka announced its new industrial policy and package of incentives for the period 1996-2001. The primary objective of the new policy is to accelerate industrial development of Karnataka and to take the state to a prominent position in the industrial map of the country. According to Government reports, Karnataka leads other states as an investment destination in recent years. It is the premier centre of software industry in the country and home to a large number of important public enterprises.

It is against this background that PAC has examined the recent record (1991-98) of Karnataka in the matter of investment intentions and actual investments in the industry sector. Apart from analysing available data, an attempt has also been made to draw upon the experience of investors in Karnataka with regard to the strengths and weaknesses of the state in attracting and supporting industry. The study does not go into the problems faced by different industries or investors in great detail. Instead, it focuses on the significant problems and barriers highlighted through this feedback process, so that the State Government might take corrective action as early as possible.

Salient findings from the study are discussed below:

- Out of over 1100 large and medium scale industrial project proposals that have come to Karnataka over the said period, only 11.5% (in terms of the value of investment) have been fully implemented. Only 5% of the large-scale projects (in terms of investment proposed) and 38% of the medium-scale projects have been completed during this period.

- Surprisingly, the value of completed investment in the large-scale sector is about the same as that in the medium-scale sector (i.e., Rs. 3400 crores). Almost one out of five large projects and one out of eight medium projects have dropped out or are untraceable. Over half the projects are in various stages of implementation (see Table 1). The impact of new investment on the State's output and employment will remain small when project implementation moves so slowly. This finding contradicts much that is said in the press about Karnataka's status as a favoured investment destination.

- Over half of the completed projects (by way of actual investment) were located in Bangalore region, though they consisted of only 15% of the large scale and 50% of the medium scale investment proposals. One implication of this phenomenon is that projects nearer to the capital are able to move ahead faster than others. Lopsided industrial development would result if this trend continues.

- Though the State Government had announced a package of industrial policies and incentives, it is clear from available data that the progress of large projects in Karnataka in the post-reform period (91-98) is extremely slow. Medium-scale projects are only marginally better. It is important for the Government to ascertain the underlying factors and isolate those caused by the Government itself. It is clear that merely policies and incentives are not enough to step up industrial investment in the State.

- Businessmen with project experience in Karnataka have identified several disabling factors that limit industrial progress. Topping the list is corruption, which most large-scale investors identify as a major barrier. Medium-scale investors have also put corruption on top beside power problems (see Table 2). Corruption causes delays and adds to the transaction costs of doing business in the State. This is followed by other factors, such as bad infrastructure and taxation, in that
order. The only industries that have managed to escape corruption are those that need little assistance from government or can easily exit, e.g. the software industry.

Among the medium-scale investors who had to deal with the major promotional and regulatory agencies, a majority has rated the Karnataka Udyog Mitra as more responsive than the rest. In terms of corruption, KEB and KSPCB lead other agencies. Paperwork has been most cumbersome in SFIs and KIADB. Processing delays marred KEB and KIADB more than others. Heavy paperwork, demand for bribes and delayed processing were the critical problems of the public agencies highlighted by a majority. These findings warn that the reforms achieved at the Central level can be nullified by the barriers created at the State level. The benefits of liberalisation will not accrue to the country unless state governments too embrace systemic reforms.

Many businessmen seem to think that the bureaucracy at the top level is generally accessible and helpful. But this is not matched by efficient and responsive action at middle and lower levels. The bureaucracy is poorly trained and lacks motivation. Outmoded regulatory systems are used as means of extortion. The case-by-case approval of the incentives to be given to large projects and the frequent visits investors are required to pay to the agencies for various sanctions and clearances are fertile grounds for corruption. Its time to make approvals uniform and contingent on the fulfilment of specific and transparent conditions. Negative lists in terms of products, locations, etc., could be used to keep out unwanted industries.

Instead of competing with other states on the taxation and incentives front, the Government of Karnataka needs to improve its efficiency and transparency in working with investors, reduce the scope of case by case approach and upgrade the quality and motivation of bureaucracy. Such measures will also limit the opportunities and scope for official corruption. A forward looking, rule-based and accountable government is a sounder basis for attracting investment than short-term competitive incentives that can be easily undercut by others.

These long-term reforms, however, need the support of the political leadership, without which the State would soon exhaust the goodwill it has built up over many years.

### TABLE 2

**RANKING OF DISABLING FACTORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback from Large-Scale Investors</th>
<th>Proportion of respondents expressing dissatisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>58 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>41 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>33 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface with Government</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback from Medium-Scale Investors</th>
<th>Intensity of dissatisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>50.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>44 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>68 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>29.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxation</td>
<td>49.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface with Government</td>
<td>53.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>65.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manpower Availability</td>
<td>21.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 1

**PROGRESS OF PROJECTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of project</th>
<th>No. of Projects</th>
<th>Value of Investment</th>
<th>Investment as a Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dropped</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>1030.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implemented</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>3335.2</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Implementation</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>5257</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>9623.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Public Eye * Vol. 4 No.4  Oct - Dec 1999
CITIZEN ACTION

CIVIL SOCIETY INTERVENTIONS IN THE ELECTORAL ARENA: PROCEEDINGS OF A WORKSHOP HELD AT BANGALORE

There was a time when elections and electoral processes were strictly looked upon as businesses of the state. It was left to the government to define and protect the fair and just use of the franchise. However, the barometer of electoral morality has been consistently recording very low readings since the last two decades in India. Electoral politics is today seen as too serious a business to be left to the state. Interestingly over the last few years, civil society institutions in India have shown tremendous responsiveness to bring back the resilience and vibrancy of the democratic system. These efforts range from constituting watchdog committees for monitoring the fair conduct of elections to fielding candidates. Though such initiatives have been emerging in various parts of the country, very little is known in terms of their work, action strategies and capacity to scale up. What is readily known are key characteristics like political neutrality, high involvement of volunteers, non-dependence on government funds and increasing emphasis on networking.

Over the past five years, PAC has been in touch with many such voluntary groups working on the electoral arena in India. Realising the potential of a national network to strongly advocate for electoral reforms and to facilitate exchange of ideas and information, a two-day workshop was held at Bangalore during November 15-16, 1999. The workshop had three core concerns in perspective:

- Enable invited groups to exchange experiences and concerns related to interventions in the electoral arena.
- Share insights on approaches, strategies for action, lessons of experiences and concerns; and
- Identify areas of mutual interest to stimulate research, advocacy and action.

The workshop was attended by 16 participants from seven civil society organisations from Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Apart from sharing strategic perspectives and experiences, the workshop also mooted a series of follow up sequences including the need to network strongly with a wide variety of stakeholders like media, community organisations and industry. The participants also agreed to share information on a broad spectrum of issues like criminalisation of politics, electoral rolls, countering bogus votes and pertinent themes in the legal framework.

(For more information, please contact Suresh Balakrishnan / Smriti Bidurkar at PAC)

Rally Bangalore 2000!!

Pedalling for a clean, green and safe millennium

"Imagine a Bangalore that's clean
Safe and green all year 'round
No more potholes to be seen
Or, dirty litter surround
Imagine such a world in 2000
Created by you and me... We could..."

(With sincere apologies to John Lennon and the Beatles!)

On the penultimate Sunday of the last millennium, (December 19, 1999), about 3000 students representing 43 educational institutions in the city enthusiastically pedalled their bicycles on the roads of Bangalore for a clean, green and safe future. The Rally was organised by Swabhimaana, a citywide forum of all those concerned and interested in the well-being of the city and the Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation (KUIDFC) to promote civic sense amongst the residents of the city. And what better way to do this than tapping on to the children and their wonderful riding machines - the pollution free bicycles! The Rally was flagged off by the Governor of Karnataka, V.S. Rama Devi; other chief dignitaries included Mr. B. K. Chandrasekhar, Minister for Information and Publicity; Mr. Lukose Velathurai, Labour Commissioner and, Mr. Ashr Dalawai, Joint Commissioner, Bangalore City Corporation.

The school children also took an oath at the flagging off ceremony to keep the streets and public places of the city litter free; to adhere to the traffic rules and; to reduce vehicular emission. Each child also pledged to get five copies of the oath statement signed by parents and neighbours. Swabhimaana plans to carry forward the positive tidings from this endeavour by organising a series of programmes like city wise zonal events with the people who have signed up the pledge, conducting 'tree censuses' in different areas with the help of school children etc.

A certificate of participation and a sapling were handed over to each institution which participated...
in the rally. Given the excellent response the event evoked and the upbeat enthusiasm of the children, this advocacy intervention seems to have hit the right nerve.

For further information and to know more about Swabhimana, Contact: Ms. Josephine, Co-ordinator - Swabhimana, Office of the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, II Floor Annex, N.R. Square, Bangalore 560 002.

**WIDE ANGLE**

**ONLINE PROCEDURES ENHANCEMENT FOR CIVIL APPLICATIONS (OPEN)**

Here's an interesting innovation from the Seoul Metropolitan Government in South Korea. Launched in April, 1999 OPEN attempts to make corruption prone sectors in city administration more transparent. Riding on the exploding reach and power of the Internet, this web-based system allows citizens to monitor applications for permits or approvals where corruption is most likely to occur and to raise questions in the event any irregularities are detected.

**What are the main features of OPEN?**

*Easy Access:* without making telephone calls or visits, citizens can monitor procedures of handling civil applications through the Internet whenever they want and wherever they are!

*Transparency:* Access to real-time information on the details of handling civil applications, procedure of approval, document review, schedule for process ahead etc.

*Increasing Credibility:* Offering access to information to all citizens, fairness and objectivity is secured in city administration, thereby removing public distrust.

**How was OPEN initiated?**

On February 1, 1999 a review team was set up to finalise which cases must be made open to the public. Through a series of discussions with the relevant city departments, the team analysed the entire civil applications for permits or approvals by title, processing procedures, corruption-prone factors, and types of irregularities. The 27 fields for civil applications finally selected to be published on the Web are those reporting frequent irregularities, causes inconvenience to the citizens due to the complexity of the processing procedure and those whose publication is expected to block requests for concessions.

**How does OPEN function?**

As soon as a citizen files an application for a building permit, for example, government staff in charge will post the details of the received application on the OPEN site. Any citizen can then log on to the site and track the progress of his/her application including aspects like whether the application has been received properly, who is handling and reviewing the case and the approximate time when the permit will be granted, and if the same is returned, then the reasons for that.

**Visit Seoul focus http://www.metro.seoul.kr**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Click the OPEN icon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select one among 27 application fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a case from application list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View the application status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The OPEN Development Team consists of 3 persons in charge of analysing the cases and 9 program developers. Standardised data entry formats were designed for the city staff to easily process the data. While protecting the individual's privacy, the system focuses on meeting citizens' needs for information by providing a specification of each case to be published, which includes handling procedures, required paperwork, and related documents, and search function.

A total of 1,360 employees across 485 city departments dealing with applications were trained to operate the system. Subsequent to this, ID's and passwords were assigned to allow each individual trainee to make entries at his or her department.

In order for citizens to easily confirm through the Internet the current status of the civil applications for permits or approvals filed is listed for each stage of handling the applications.
How popular has been OPEN?
Since its inception on April 15, 1999, more than 200,000 visitors have registered at the OPEN site; the general public’s interest in the site is increasing with some 1500 visits a day. Findings from a random survey show that 86.4% find OPEN enhancing transparency and 82.5% expressing satisfaction with its operation. OPEN has been rated by Netscape as one of the top-ten sites in Korea.

For further information on OPEN, visit http://www.metro.seoul.kr or E-mail: audit@metro.seoul.kr or write to: Audits & Inspections Division Seoul Metropolitan Government, 31, Taepyeongno 1-ga, Chung-gu, Seoul 100-744.

PROFILES

CONCERN FOR CALCUTTA (CC)
Until recently a victim of neglect and public indifference, Calcutta is now experiencing an exciting resurgence. However, the city is still far from clean, civic infrastructure leaves a lot to be desired and environmental pollution has emerged as a new concern. Among those spearheading a movement for a better Calcutta is Concern For Calcutta (CC), a non-profit society committed to the city’s civic welfare and well being.

Founded in March 1984, members of CC comprise a mix of people from diverse fields ranging from management to administration, from academia to journalism. All share the belief that their combined skills and common will can make Calcutta a better place to live and work in. CC performs 3 basic roles - as an action group, as a catalyst for action and as a pressure group.

Its main objectives are:

- To move the people of Calcutta from apathy to awareness to action, and make the city a better place to live and work in.
- To promote understanding of the city’s problems and ensure implementation of solutions.
- To channelise complaints to concerned authorities and help them communicate with the public.
- To improve public health standards and establish such infrastructure that would benefit the public.
- To provide the know-how and play the role of catalyst in efforts to improve the quality of life in the city.
- To take the help of the media in achieving its goals.

Focus areas

- Cleaner Calcutta Campaign: The environmental conditions of Metropolitan Calcutta have led CC to single out Calcutta’s cleanliness as being the issue of topmost priority.
- Traffic Management
- Watchdog Role
- Preparation of a Survival Kit for Calcutta Telephone Subscribers
- Protection of Calcutta’s Wetlands

Encouraged by its past successes, CC plans to extend its activities to the construction of public toilets, nature study parks and street gardens. The contribution of ideas and voluntary manpower for action, making available professional skills for communication and management of projects, and sponsorship of projects are among the various options open for involvement.

For more information about CC and its activities, get in touch with them at:
The Secretariat, Concern For Calcutta, C/o Infar (India) Ltd, 7, Wood Street, Calcutta - 700 016.
INDEV: A GATEWAY TO DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION ON INDIA

About indev

Indev, an initiative by The British Council, is a portal site with links to over 1000 leading development organisations in India. The first of its kind in India, indev holds and disseminates information that is crucial for decision makers, researchers, academics and development managers and act as a gateway to development information on India. Indev actively collaborates with bilateral agencies, government departments and leading NGOs.

Databases

Indev holds, four major databases. These databases are available for public access on a public domain internet site: www.indev.nic.in

Organisations directory - a directory of organisations of good standing working in India for the use of professionals in the development field who wish to build partnerships, share experience, find work and facilitate the grant making process.

Projects database - a database of current development projects in India for the use of professionals who wish to learn from the experience of others, avoid duplication, provide case studies for reports or provide funding or sponsorship.

Key documents - a database of key documents for professional in the development field to consult, with an emphasis on papers that are topical, authoritative and difficult to obtain from other sources.

Statistics database - a database of current statistical indicators for analytical research, policy making or taking decisions.

Information services

Indev disseminates its information content in various ways in order to reach various groups in the target audience. These include indev website, development newspaper on the web, E-mail digests, printed reports and discussion forums.

Indev training programmes

With the help of key NGOs as active partners, indev imparts training to NGOs on the use of the internet and web publishing and help over 1000 NGOs who do not have a web site to construct their own web pages.

Web space to indev members

Indev provides web space on its server to its members who do not yet have a web site on their own. Indev web server space will help NGOs to launch their own web sites and publish information about their activities and programmes on the web. Indev provides a unique web site address as well as an e-mail address for NGOs for further links and contacts within and outside India.

Indev information terminals

Indev information terminals installed at all 12 British Council Libraries are available for indev members to access information from the indev site and the internet. Skilled professionals at each of these libraries help indev members use this dedicated facility. Indev also encourages other voluntary agencies to put up indev terminals at different cities where there is no British library.

Indev staff can be contacted at any of The British Council Libraries or the indev team can be contacted at: The British Council, 17, Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110 001

Email: indev@in.britishcouncil.org
web address: http://www.indev.org

Public Eye wishes all its readers a Happy Y2K!
GIVERS & TAKERS: THE 1999 CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX AND THE BRIBE PAYERS INDEX

The 1999 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and the new companion tool the Bribe Payers Index (BPI) were published by Transparency International in October 1999. While the CPI ranked 99 countries, BPI ranked 19 leading exporting countries in terms of the degree to which their firms are perceived to be paying bribes abroad. The CPI score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people, risk analysts and the general public and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt). Denmark emerges as the least corrupt country with a perfect score of 10! Cameroon has the dubious distinction of being the most corrupt with a score of 1.5. 17 surveys were used to assess a country's performance and at least 3 surveys were required for a country to be included into the 1999 CPI.

Score card on the Bribery Payers Index reveal that Sweden with a score of 8.3 shows the least propensity to pay bribes. China (including Hong Kong) recorded a score of 3.1 and comes across as the country having the greatest willingness to pay bribes abroad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1999 Bribe Payers Index (Edited list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>China (including Hong Kong)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Transparency International, 1999
Extensive information on the full rankings and methodology of the two indices is available on the following websites: http://www.transparency.de and http://www.gwdg.de/~uwvw/.

BIBLIO

CAPITALISM IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: THE MANAGEMENT OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Samir Amin. Madhyam Books, New Delhi. Price Rs. 175.00

The book is noteworthy for two reasons: first, the author’s vehement approval of the socialist perspective and an equally bold criticism of liberalisation in an age marked by a serious crisis of legitimacy of the socialist thought and an ever-increasing fascination with the pro-liberalization growth models; and second, his brilliant explanation of the fresh resurgence of ethnic movements and religious fundamentalism from an economic standpoint.

According to Amin, contemporary world capitalism is facing the crisis of finding enough investment outlets for the excess floating capital. At national level, governments have resorted to neo-liberal, anti-statist policies to manage this crisis, while at global level, the World Bank-IMF combine has taken up Structural Adjustment Programs to do the same. Amin criticises these policies, saying that they “ensnare the economy into deflationary spirals of stagnation, unmanageable at the international level, multiplying conflicts that cannot be mediated, against the empty promise of future ‘healthy’ development.”

He also objects to the tendency of projecting economic liberalisation as synonymous with political democracy and discarding all critiques of these policies as ‘democratically inadmissible’. The author doesn’t spare the media too, blaming it for an incessant repetition of the pro-liberalization ideas as if they were based on established evidence.

The author reiterates Karl Polanyi’s assertion that “liberalisation carries the seeds of fascism”, saying that ethnic cleansing and terrorist dictatorships are forms taken by local powers unable to resist the submission of their societies to the globalised economy. These fascist tendencies grow strong as the state becomes weak and the market emerges as the sole manager of society.

However, while opposing the neo-liberalism, Amin
is cautious enough not to advocate bringing back the post-war welfare state model of economic expansion in which the central position was occupied by the auto-centric nation-state in all affairs. Firmly believing that turning the clock back would spell disaster, Amin proposes the construction of a polycentric world in which regional political and economic organisations, superseding the individual nation-states, would engage in negotiations with each other. These groups would replace the World Bank-IMF duo, which, in practice, has been slave to the G-7 agenda of protecting the profitability of surplus capital, and the regional bodies like NAFTA and ASEAN, which are ‘neo-imperialist concepts inadequate for the purpose of reducing the development gap’. He also wants WTO to be reconceived as an institution charged with regulating raw material prices and planning access to the use of major natural resources of the globe, and the United Nations system to be replaced by a world parliament that would represent social interests on a global scale.

While proposing this, though, Amin is aware to the major obstacles that face this project, namely, the weakening of the Left as compared to the Rightist forces now busy promoting ‘an unrestrained, wildcat capitalism’ in post-Soviet Europe and similar crises in other regions marginalised by the collapse of old world order (sub-Saharan Africa and Arab Islamic areas) and the former republics of USSR that are the new members of the Third World.

Prasann Thatte, PAC

THE LAST AID KIT

Death in police custody is a common phenomenon in many developing countries. A practical problem that many doctors highlight in the course of investigations is the lack of basic equipments to conduct effective investigative autopsies. In this context, two forensic experts, Dr. Gert van Ingen of the Forensic Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands and Djordje Alempjevic of the Belgrade Institute of Forensic Medicine, have developed a ‘Last Aid Kit’ to assist doctors performing autopsies. The kit has 21 instruments and a set of instructions. It comes in a sturdy weather-proof box and contains all necessary instruments needed to conduct a proper autopsy. The total kit costs less than Indian Rupees 2500 or approximately US$60. The development of the kit demonstrates that it is possible to make up a very inexpensive, yet effective set of basic tools out of locally available instruments and materials, making it both affordable for resource-strapped hospitals and a n d a l l post-mortem facilities and easy to use by doctors who work in constrained environments.

For more information, contact: The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), New Delhi at chriall@nda.vsnI.net.in

CYBERSIGHTINGS

www.pos.org

Public Opinion Strategies is a political and public affairs survey research company. They have fifty years of experience in survey research, completing studies that range in scope from public affairs realm of crisis management and litigation research to political campaigns from city council to the Presidential level.

www.id21.org

Information for Development in the 21st century is a fast track research reporting service backed by the UK Department for International Development. The site offers hundreds of summaries of problem solving work on critical development issues around the world. It also lists e-mail addresses, other direct contact details, hotlinks, and printed sources.

www.knowledgebroker.org

This site connects three other internet sites which offer one-stop access to knowledge, practical solutions and best practices in the field of education, health, environmental protection, gender issues, human rights and poverty alleviation.
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Public Affairs Centre (PAC) is a non-profit non-governmental organisation committed to improving the quality of Governance in India. Towards this end, PAC undertakes research studies, provides citizen action support and advisory services, and facilitates networking for the creation of sustainable fora.

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