



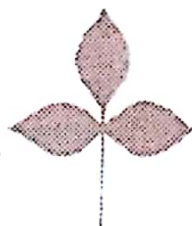
BULLETIN

OF THE

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

(SANKAR FOUNDATION)

Vol. 2 No. 4
April 2, 1998



ELECTORAL REFORMS....

Political uncertainty stares at the nation even though a new coalition government has assumed office promising stability and good governance. Under the first past the post (called the FPP) system a party or coalition coming to power in spite of not being able to get a clear majority of the votes polled is understandable. But our polity is so badly fractured that no national party has, during the last two general elections, been able to secure more than 30% of popular vote resulting in weak coalitions coming to power at the centre. Over-dependence on small and regional parties for survival does not augur well for the future. Nor is it right to blame the voters for the emergence of coalition government as the voters cannot know what kind of coalition would be formed after the elections. The absence of consensus and absence of responsible leadership in coalition politics is a serious problem of Indian democracy. Lord Asquith long ago described such a situation in coalition politics as "football of contending factions." Such factional feuds and personal whims should not be allowed to dominate coalition politics of today.

The 1998 elections have not taken us any closer to the cherished goal of free and fair elections. Money, muscle and malpractice continued to exert their vicious hold on the electorate in many parts of the country. Even the promise of providing identity cards to all the voters has not been kept and the Election Commission could not do much in checking electoral malpractices. The ceiling of Rs. 15 lakhs towards election expenses for a candidate ended up as a big practical joke on the nation. Probably this has been a highly expensive, if not the costliest, electoral exercise we have had in the history of Indian elections.

Still, the optimists might draw solace from the increase in voter turnout in the 1998 elections. If it was 56.7% in 1991 and 57.9% in 1996, it is 62% in 1998. Some have even claimed that the 1998 election is "a vote for coalition, for federalism, a vote against centralism and against corruption." The fact that regional parties which had won

65 seats in 1996, have now bagged over 100, seems to have enthused the protagonists of 'true federalism.' There are some who take a long-term view about the emergence of a two-constellation, if a two-party system cannot come into being, system, with one, left of the centre, led by the Congress party and the other, right of the centre, led by the BJP. Whatever silver lining one might find to the dark cloud it is necessary to admit that the present situation is most disturbing. No party or leader, national or regional, has emerged from the 1998 election with a clean image or clear vision of the future. The situation is depressing and the prospect gloomy.

The time has come for a serious national debate and firm action to stem the rot. Should India go in for major structural changes? Does the Constitution need an overhaul? How can we make our representatives more accountable to the people? How can we fight the frightening growth of corruption? Should all parties and leaders not come together in fighting poverty, unemployment, corruption and caste and communal tensions? We need leaders who can think clearly and act boldly. Referring to the problem of institutional insufficiency in tackling the complex problems of western democracies, a leading political scientist suggested 'innovative methods' instead of 'radical surgery,' as a remedy for the ills of the advanced democracies. Does India need today innovative surgery for healing the many wounds of its ailing polity? Reform or perish is the refrain heard everywhere. Will the new government make at least a beginning in effecting the much needed electoral reforms?

—The Editor

No superannuation !

"Politics is the profession without any superannuation scheme. Till you are fifty you are a young man of promise; in the sixties you are in your noon-day prime; in your seventies you begin to be an elder statesman and at eighty or thereafter, if you live long, they come and carry you in a bath chair to the exercise of the highest responsibilities of state."

—Winston Churchill

SEMINAR ON 'ELECTORAL REFORMS'

(Organised by the Centre for Policy Studies on March 25, 1998 with Sri M. Ramakoti, Advocate, Prof. D. Suran Naidu and Prof. R. Venkata Rao as the main speakers)

Sri M. Ramakoti :

Purity in public life in a democratic setup depends on the purity of the process of elections by which a party or a group governing the public is elected. On March 6, 1975 Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan presented a charter of demands to the Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of Rajya Sabha that elections must not be allowed to be influenced by the use of official machinery, money-power and recourse to force. In an article in 'Everyman's' J.P. wrote that 'collection of party funds, especially for elections, is perhaps the largest source of political and other fields of corruption. These funds are used for managing party members, buying up defectors and toppling not only opposition party ministries but also Congress ministries in the course of party infighting.' What J.P. said of the Congress party then applies to all political parties since the ethical fibre is the same.

The committee set up by "Citizens for Democracy" submitted a report making eleven specific suggestions which can be summarised as follows.

The objectives of the intended changes in law are spell out (by J.P. in the charter)

1. Play of money power in the elections ultimately resulting in corruption in public life needs to be curbed.
2. The working of political parties, so far as is relevant with the elections needs to be strictly regularised.
3. Procedure for appointment of election commission and its powers are to be redefined.
4. Measures to have speedier disposal of election disputes will have to be introduced.
5. Events on which a candidate has no control should not be made a ground for setting aside an election which would unseat a duly elected candidate for no fault of his. For instance rejection of a nomination paper by the returning Officer.
6. Stricter penalties for electoral offences should be prescribed.
7. There shall be a model code of conduct, and a better respect for the same should be given by supporting it with penal consequences.

In seventies electoral reforms was one of the planks that united the entire opposition.

Root cause of corruption: Money power - expenditure in Election campaigns. Ways and means:

1. Power to give licences - Export import permits - to levy taxes - often misused for the benefit of particular company, or business or a group of companies or business concerns.

"Democracy is not the solution to the world's problems. But it is a better solution than the alternatives."

—Robert Kagan

2. It may be by direct promise or actual payment of money -but it may even spring from policies.

For example - (a) If a political party is against introduction of prohibition - the liquor lobby is likely to spend and fund the campaign of a particular party - (sugar lobby).

(b) If a party is against levying income tax on agricultural income, then the big land lords, passing off as farmers will spend money and fund its election.

(c) Suppose - Industrial establishments - export and import licensing policy - Modvals etc - Then they will fund them.

3. Suppose - state bans export of a commodity to another state generally - if individual or groups or companies are permitted -under exceptional claim or residuary clauses those groups in turn fund the election campaign as a quid pro quo.

Remedy suggested:

If political parties are compelled on penalty of derecognition and debarring from participation in election, to maintain accounts truthfully, subject them to regular public audit - then at least unveil the relationship of that party with the (1) business interests (2) antinational elements (3) agents saboteurs (Dawood Ibrahim - East West Airlines) Ahluwalia - from Kashmir.

It would help in moulding public opinion.

Political parties - Derecognition:

They raise slogans of democracy. Internally - they do not have any respect for the principles of democracies. As per their constitution they never hold elections - only nomination of office bearers. Those who have competence to raise funds by hook or crook, will be nominated. They alone keep books. Democratic functioning if partywise is restored and people from grass roots or having clout among grassroots will become office bearers they will not be under the thumb of anybody. They may even question the party high command without yielding to their dictates so the political parties shall.

- (a) Hold elections to elect office bearers within time as per their constitutions regularly - before seeking recognition.
- (b) After recognition if they constitute default in holding regular election and with notifying the election commissioner of the fact of election and the number of new office bearers and the chief executive, the political party concerned shall forfeit recognition and the recognition shall stand ceased by operation of law and the election commission shall only place on records of the commission only striking of the recognition only. He shall have no discretion to condone.

So derecognition of a political party and debarring it from constitution elections for a period of 5 years by operation of law.

(a) If it has not completed its organisational elections - or nor held at least before dissolution of the legislations.

(b) If it has not submitted its audited accounts for the last financial year to the commission with copies made available for inspection showing all collections made beyond Rs. 1000/- and other sources of advertisements - sale of publicity materials like flags.

State funding the elections:

It may reduce corruption in public life, but is it pragmatic? can we afford with our state of economy? - is it acceptable?

If state funding is permitted - state sponsoring candidature would come in vogue - would be legitimised - ultimately leads to the election process of totalitarian state.

To avoid this - To minimise state funding

(a) Supply electoral rolls free of cost - (posters - hand fills - advertising mens papers etc.).

(b) Allot time slots in electronic media of the union of India free of cost.

(c) Provide adequate protection for the candidates during electioneering.

(d) Arranging public meetings - presided over by organisations such as Sarvodaya - common platform for the various contesting candidate - (Goddam Sanyasi Rao - Tuni - Congress congress later Sarvodaya - 5th or 6th General Election - Vizag).

(e) Make - voting - going to booths and casting vote compulsory make it a penal offence entailing for future of ration cards.

(f) Provide a separate column in the ballot to cast a negative vote - expressing displeasure.

Stringent punishment and severe penalties including disqualification and imprisonment should be imposed on those who violate the law.

Prof. D. Suran Naidu :

Social scientists are inclined to emphasise the importance of elections in the Indian context not merely because elections highlight many of the major aspects of our polity but also provide valuable insights into State society interaction. Elections indeed, are considered central to the understanding of Indian politics. For an evolving and a functioning democracy like that of India elections are the chief mechanisms facilitating political recruitment, mass mobilisations and democratisation of an otherwise traditional society. That was why while Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad has referred to "the immense transformational impact of our electoral system," other writers like Rajani Kothari, Gopal Krishna and Samuel J. Eldersveld have referred to elections in India as creative and integrative processes which in turn provide the much needed legitimacy and stability to the governments of the day.

tem," other writers like Rajani Kothari, Gopal Krishna and Samuel J. Eldersveld have referred to elections in India as creative and integrative processes which in turn provide the much needed legitimacy and stability to the governments of the day.

Despite serious constraints of a plural and backward society and many kinds of social, economic and political pressures, our electoral system has generally performed well during the past four and half decades or so. Some negative traits are however noticed and quite a few distortions have crept into the system especially since 1977 which became quite manifest in the nineteen eighties and nineties so much so that the very credibility and efficacy of the system is in jeopardy. Hence the concern and urgent need for electoral reforms in the country. The present paper makes an attempt to highlight some of the problems connected with the holding of free and fair elections and make some suggestions in the light of those perceived problems. For the purpose, a threefold perspective involving the electorate, the political party system and parties and finally the electoral system itself, is employed.

An important theoretical assumption behind a democratic system based on popular voting is that the individual is an independent thinking-being capable and ready to make his own decision. However, in a large traditional and kinship organised society like India, primordial factors—family, kinship, ties caste, faction, communalism, etc., are some important determinants of voting behaviour here. The problem is further compounded by lack of education and political awareness on the part of the voters. There is no better way than to raise the political competence levels of the electorate. Sensitising the voter through the use of mass media, formation of citizen or voter councils, etc., may help provide a better understanding to the electorate. Competent and responsible voter alone can ensure success of democracy in any country.

While the increased voter turnout from about 46.6 per cent in the First General Elections held in 1951-52 to over 62 per cent in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls is a positive and a welcome development, the

Right to recall

"Under a new law enacted in British Columbia, Canada, citizens are allowed to recall elected officials by petition, provided there is the required number of signatures. Paul Ramsey will be the first politician in Canada to be recalled from office for breaking a campaign promise. The immediate impact of the recall drive has been to give a holy fright to Canadian politicians. Don't we need a similar law permitting recall of candidates who have betrayed the electorate?"

—Soli J. Sorabjee
(Times of India, February 2, 1998)

degree of political awareness among the voter has not correspondingly increased. Added to this is the paradox where the rate of voter participation of the intelligentsia and well-educated sections is awfully low and if anything, it is the poor and illiterate electorate who faithfully exercise their franchise.

One of the preconditions for the successful operation of a democratic form of government is the existence of a healthy polarized or differentiated party system on the basis of certain clearly identifiable policies. As there is virtually nothing that really distinguishes one party from the other in India, the voter is provided with no choice at all. Personalised parties, concentration of power and lack of internal democracy in the party organisations further make it extremely difficult the selection of right candidates to contest in the elections. Genuine and not spurious enrollment of party members, and scrutiny of the same, regular election of office bearers at least once every two years, selection of party nominees after widest possible consultations at various levels may go a long way to serve as correctives to the above mentioned maladies. Notwithstanding the passing of the Anti-Defections Act, the undemocratic and widely prevalent practice of political defections of elected representatives continue to plague Indian democracy. The Act therefore, may be suitably amended making it incumbent on the part of the elected representative to vacate his/her seat in the event of defection to another party and seek a fresh mandate from the same electoral constituency. Further, such a person/persons after getting reelected should be made to wait at least for a year before they are inducted into the council of ministries.

The Relative or Simple Majority System adopted by our country has introduced a serious aberration in the system casting doubts over the very legitimacy and representative character of the elective governments. Under the present system, a person who secures even 20 per cent or less gets himself elected to the legislature provided his opponents share among themselves the rest of the votes but no one getting more than the winner himself. As a consequence, there was no correspondence between the votes secured and seats won by a party in an election. Earlier it was the Congress party which was the chief beneficiary under this system. Now it is the BJP and some Regional Parties that seemed to have benefited by this method. As for instance both in the 1996 and 1998 Lok Sabha Elections these parties secured seats disproportionate to their vote shares. Converse was true in the case of Congress(I) Party. This calls for the introduction of either proportional method via the list system or a run off or second ballot system involving the two top candidates. Of the two methods proposed above the second ballot method appears to be more appropriate to the conditions obtaining in India.

A major malady in the operation of elections in India has been the use of money in large quantity. If money is

allowed to be spent lavishly, not only an unfair advantage is acquired by the rich candidate and the party/parties possessing larger campaign fund at their disposal but it would also dissuade worthy candidates of character and integrity from contesting in the elections. Strict implementation of ceiling on expenditure incurred by the candidate/party and a provision of a system of State Funding on some rational eligibility criteria would help mitigate this evil.

The corrupt and unethical practice of misuse of power and official machinery by candidates holding Ministerial office can be neutralised by making it mandatory on the part of the Party/Parties both at the Centre and States to relinquish power at least 3 months prior to the conduct of elections. Finally, it is said that if Presidential government is the American contribution to the theory and practice of governing, India, has become the home of several innovative electoral malpractices like rigging, booth capturing, cycling, tampering of ballot boxes, etc. Such malpractices can be curbed to some extent by the introduction of Photo-Identity Cards, electronic voting machines, public vigilance and above all some degree of self-imposed discipline on the part of the contestants and political parties themselves.

Prof. R. Venkata Rao :

Enabling people to effectively participate in the working of democracy is essential for the success of democracy. People's crucial voice is essential in the governance of the country. It is in this context that Electoral reforms require the urgent attention of all the well meaning people in our country. Notwithstanding the conduct of 13 General Elections, certain grey areas still remain in the Electoral arena.

1. The process of preparation of the voters list needs reexamination. For example, in the 1996 General Elections, the total number of people falling under the voting age was 52.53 crores, but the actual voters list showed a number of 59.25 crores, the excess of 6.72 crores was obviously fake.

2. Selection of candidates should not be made from the above, but from the grass roots. At present, the voters have very little or no say in the selection of candidates and candidates are normally 'air dropped'. Possibility of making a law that the contesting candidates should have minimum level of grass roots experience should be studied. For example as in France, a law can be made that those filing nominations should get the endorsement of at least 200 members of local bodies.

3. Attention should also be focused on expeditious disposal of election petitions by the Courts. At the moment, there is no time fixed for disposal of the election petitions and sometimes the election petitions are adjudicated long after the term is over.

4. To make the elected representatives more accountable and more responsible, measures for introduc-

ing right of recall can also be initiated. This right of recall as existing in Switzerland and a number of cities and States in the United States, enables 25 per cent of the voting population to submit a petition, after observing the elected representative for at least six months, on the grounds of non-performance, mismanagement, corruption and lack of personal integrity. Thereafter, a special election can be held to decide whether the representative should be recalled or not.

5. Contesting candidates and contesting parties make all sorts of promises before elections which are honoured more in breach than in observance. Possibility of extending the Doctrine of Promissory Estoppel can also be examined so that the parties and candidates do not get away with promises.

6. In order to avoid frequency of elections and prevent midterm elections, German model of constructive vote of confidence can be introduced. In the constructive vote of confidence a two part resolution is put forth whereby the name of the alternative candidate as the Prime Minister is also proposed. This experiment which has been successfully working in Germany minimises the role of the President in the appointment of the Prime Minister.

REPORT ON HEALTH PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS OF SANKAR FOUNDATION

—Dr. G. Prabhakar

Co-ordinator, Health Programmes & Projects

6th February 1988, Sankar Foundation Hospital for Woman & Child

Sankar Foundation's Hospital for Woman and Child was inaugurated by Sadguru Shri K. Sivanand Murthy garu at Srinivasanagar, Simhachalam, Sri C. Sivasankaram, Trustee of the Foundation presided over the function. The Hospital for Woman and Child is equipped with a bed strength of 30 beds, Clinical Laboratory and Ultrasound scanning facilities. Dr. Ramana Murthy, Retd. Prof. of Paediatrics, Andhra Medical College heads the Paediatric department. The hospital provides round the clock services for all patients, for Antenatal, Postnatal, Family Planning and Child care.

9th February, 1988: Eye Camp :

Screening Camp for Cataract was conducted at Haripalem with help of Katteempudi Charitable Organisation, local NGO. 110 patients were screened and 24 were selected for Surgery.

12th February 1998: Inauguration of Nodal Centre for TB at Vaddadi :

Sankar Foundation is establishing Nodal Centres in rural areas for TB Programme. A Nodal Centre was started

"Building on our existing institutions and technology for public enlightenment, we need to develop a process that would reduce the influence of political rhetoric and obfuscation and increase the opportunities available to citizens and elected politicians for reflecting, deliberating and making hard choices about the basic alternatives and their consequences for widely shared goals and values."

—Robert Dahl

at Vaddadi by the Foundation. The Centre will function under the supervision of Organisation for Rural Reconstruction (ORRC) Yellamanchili. TB detection camp will be conducted on 12th of every month at Vaddadi and the patients will receive medicines every month at the Nodal Centre. 160 patients were examined and 24 sputum positive patients have been selected for treatment at the first Camp.

16th February 1998: Education Programme :

Sankar Foundation donated Rs. 5,000/- towards development of library facilities at the Vidyasagara Public School at Bheemunipatnam. The amount was handed over through the hands of Sadguru Sri K. Sivanand Murthy garu to Smt. Santa Subrahmanyam, Principal of the School. The Foundation will be donating Rs. 5,000/- towards development of Sports activities in the School shortly.

20th February:

Inauguration of Nodal Centre at Narsipatnam. The Nodal Centre for TB was started at Narsipatnam at the premises of Visakha Jilla Nava Nirmana Samithi, local NGO. TB detection camp will be conducted and medicines will be distributed to patients on 20th of every month at Narsipatnam, covering the patients from tribal areas.

TB camp was conducted on the same day at Anakapalle and medicines were distributed to patients on regular treatment.

27th February: Nodal Centre at Narasannapeta:

Sankar Foundation's Nodal TB Centre was inaugurated at Narasannapeta. The Centre will run with the help of Swamy Babu and Vajramma Charitable Trust, Narasannapeta under the guidance of Shri T. Babji, Director of the Trust. The Centre will cater to the needs of TB patients at Narasannapeta and Srikakulam. TB detection camp will be conducted and medicines will be distributed on 27th of every month at Narasannapeta.

2nd March 1998: Eye Camp :

Screening camp for Cataract was conducted at Rajam, an interior village near Anakapalle with the help of Organisation of Rural Reconstruction Yellamanchili. 87 persons were screened and 24 patients were selected for surgery.

"Because laws and political limits can be disobeyed or ignored, something beyond laws is necessary to prevent violations. To survive, the rule of law requires that limits on political officials be self-enforcing. Self-enforcement of limits depends on the complementary combinations of attitudes and reactions of citizens as well as institutional restrictions."

—Barry Weingast

5th March 1998: Visit by DM & HO :

Dr. Surya Rao District Medical and Health Officer visited Foundation's Eye Hospital and Hospital for Woman and Child. Dr. Surya Rao lauded the free services being rendered by Sankar Foundation at the Hospital and assured all help and cooperation from his department for the hospitals.

Special Incentives for Family Planning :

Sankar Foundation is sponsoring 250 Family Planning Operations this month, being conducted at the Primary Health Centres at Anandapuram, Pendurthy, Revidi and Madhuravada. The Foundation is providing Stainless Steel Vessels as Special Incentives.

6th March 1998 :

The core group from the Viswa Samakhya, Federation of Voluntary Organisations visited Foundation's eye Hospital and Hospital for Woman and Child. The Viswa Samakhya will be referring patients to the hospitals, from rural areas through their network.

12th March 1998: TB Camp :

TB detection camp was conducted at Vaddadi Nodal Centre, 47 patients received medicines at the camp.

17th March 1998: C M E Programme :

SANKAR FOUNDATION VISAKHAPATNAM arranged a Continuing Medical Education programmes (CME) for private medical practitioners and Doctors working in the peripheral areas. The CME programme was conducted at Sankar Foundation's Hospital for Woman and Child Simhachalam. Dr. Mohan Rao Consultant Paediatrician in Community Medicine Lyola explained in detail about the medical emergencies with several informative slides. Prof. A. Prasanna Kumar Executive Trustee of the Foundation presided over the programme and inaugurated the CME programme. Dr. N.V. Ramana Murthy, Retd. Prof. of Paediatrics, Andhra Medical College and Consultant Paediatrician, Sankar Foundation explained about the purpose of conducting the CME programme. Dr. Ramana Murthy announced that Sankar Foundation will be conducting CME programmes every month for the benefit of Doctors working in rural areas and peripheral areas.

18th March 1998 : Viswa Samakhya Meeting :

Dr. Prabhakar, Coordinator for Health and Projects attended the review meeting of the Federation of Voluntary Organisation at Anakapalle. Dr. K. Venkateswarlu, Professor of Neurology, Andhra Medical College and President Indian Epilepsy Association, Vizag Chapter attended the meeting. Dr. Venkateswarlu explained in detail about Epilepsy and briefed about the services available at the Epilepsy Clinic being run jointly by Sankar Foundation and Indian Epilepsy Association. He appealed to them to refer Epilepsy patients from rural areas to the Clinic and to conduct Awareness programmes on Epilepsy to dispel myths and fears about Epilepsy.

Dr. A. Sugandhi, Director, A.S. Raja Blood Bank and Dr. Vidya from A.S. Raja Blood Bank also attended the meeting. Dr. Sugandhi explained to the gathering about the blood transfusions, problems of the donors and the recipients, and the methods of safe blood transfusion. Dr. Sugandhi briefed them about the facilities available at the Voluntary Blood Bank and appealed to the Voluntary Organisations to motivate youth from rural areas to come forward to donate blood and save the lives of those who are in need of blood transfusions.

26th March 1998: Exhibition on Health and AIDS Awareness programme :

Sankar Foundation is participating at the health exhibition being organised at the venue of Nookalamma Jathra at Anakapalle on 26th March 1998. The Foundation is conducting Awareness programme on AIDS followed by a Street Play on AIDS at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. on 26th March. The programme is being conducted jointly with the local NGO, Anakapalle Community Welfare Association.

Environment Programme :

The Foundation under the able guidance of Prof. M.V. Venkata Rao is taking up Household Solid Waste Management on a small scale as a Pilot Project at Sector 8, MVP Colony. The questionnaire was designed and circulated with 200 houses at MVP Colony. After studying the response of the Citizens, the project will be commenced at MVP Colony.

DFID - UCD Meeting on CBR Programme :

Dr. Prabhakar was invited to participate at the meeting conducted by Dept. for International Development, British High commission and UCD Project Municipal Corporation Visakhapatnam, to finalise the Draft Plan and Recommendations for the CBR Project for the disabled. DFID has selected Calcutta, Bangalore and Visakhapatnam to launch the CBR Programmes. The meeting was attended by representatives from DFID (U.K.), representatives from Child In Need Institute, Calcutta, and few Doctors, social workers and Officers from Government.

BIN IN GARBAGE

—Prof. M.V. Venkata Rao

Head, Environmental Division, Centre for Policy Studies

1. Mounting Problem :

After substantial progress, civilisation has reached the age of garbage. Exponential growth of garbage generation rates cannot be matched by the growth rates of municipal infrastructures. Bins drowned in garbage, drains choked with garbage, public places littered with garbage, legal disputes against dumping grounds of garbage and ever growing hillocks of industrial garbage characterise the age of garbage. The development of a nation can be measured in terms of the per capita generation of garbage. The figure ranges from 0.5 kg per head per day in developing countries to 2.5 kg in advanced countries. India will soon catch up in per capita garbage generation if not in population control. The consequences on land morphology are not difficult to guess.

2. Impacts :

Among the impacts of garbage piles on mankind's well being, the primary concern should be the prospect of ill health. Insects and rodents that proliferate in garbage dumps can transmit plague, typhoid, cholera, skin diseases and even malaria and filaria with the breeding of mosquitoes in rainwater stagnations in garbage dumps and waste water stagnations in choked up drains. Garbage dumps contribute to the seepage of toxic metals and other chemicals to ground water and surface water. Such contaminations have been linked up with increases in cancer incidences. Garbages add up to air pollution that gains easy entry into lungs and the blood stream. Damages also include fire hazards, foul smells, unsightliness, additional dredging costs of water ways, silting up of reservoirs, decrease in plant productivity, corrosion of structures and structural foundations and depreciation of land value.

3. Civilised Wastes :

Industries take the major blame for waste piles. Choice of the resources, and manufacturing processes is often constrained by the profit considerations for the industrialists, while solid waste magnitude with its environmental costs is seldom a parameter. A 1000 mega watt thermal power station piles up 3 meter deep ash on 20 hectares area in its life period of 40 years. Metal industries dump 50 per cent of the ore volume they process as solid waste.

Consumerism with its snobbery for elegant packing of utility goods, foolish use of paper from elementary school to governmental correspondence practices, short-lived consumer goods of use and throw type and junk discarded due to obsolescence add up to the municipal garbage. Construction debris and frequent demolition of structures to be replaced by more commercially profitable ones also add up to the municipal

solid wastes. Imaginary extrapolation of the present trends indicates that the biggest heritage we leave to our progeny is garbage and its contamination.

4. Solution :

An analysis of the origin of the problem usually can suggest a solution, once the impact of the problem is strong enough to disturb complacency. If the 'Polluter should pay' principle gains momentum the industry will awake to reduce its solid waste. Recycling is often voiced as the antidote to solid waste problem. Though sound in principle, unpropped by subsidy, recycling is scarcely viable. Subsidy props are short lived under economic pressures. Hence recycling of wastes can only be a supplement to the more effective method of reducing solid waste generation to the maximum possible extent. In respect of municipal garbage, the citizen needs to be more aware of the local and global seriousness of the problem. Use and throw culture of short life gadgets, for novelty or snobbery, is one vulgar aspect of modernisation, responsible for junk proliferation.

Profuse wrappings and packings with colourful designs to lure the customers come and go with the plethora of consumer goods of doubtful utility. The glamour associated with their patronage enhances the volume of garbage. Every citizen can contribute to the solution of garbage muddles by imposing a bit of self discipline on the following lines.

- Do not patronise redundant and luxurious packings.
- Reject non-biodegradable packings.
- Segregate different types of solid wastes to enable reuse, collection by rag pickers and easier disposal.
- Store solid wastes in lumps and avoid scattering, since collection of scattered garbage is a difficult task.
- Take pride in minimising the solid waste going out from your house, by trying reuse, incineration, burial and handing over to rag pickers.
- Avoid numerous small packings (for example supari).
- Use your own marketing bag and avoid purchases in plastic bags supplied by the vendor.

These measures may look trivial or silly, but the issue is serious in terms of the quality of life for your next generation.

A living museum !

"India is an ethnographic and historical museum. But it is a living museum, one in which the most modern modernity coexists with archaisms that have survived for millennia.... The first thing that surprised me was the diversity created by extreme contrast: modernity and antiquity, luxury and poverty, sensuality and asceticism, carelessness and efficiency, gentleness and violence...."

—Octavio Paz - *In Light of India*

THINK A WHILE PLEASE !

SYNTHESIS

—Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar

International President, World Teacher Trust

Humanity can be divided into those who accept synthesis and those who do not. Those who deny the benefit of synthesis do not recognise the history of the human race. The epochs of upliftment are also the epochs of understanding of synthesis. Synthesis enables broadening of consciousness and the consequent knowledge.

People refuse to accept even the logical explanations that are given to broaden their knowledge. They diminish the very meaning of existence to personal de-

sire. The most useful works will be destined for destruction if the foundation of synthesis is not understood. People arbitrarily categorise and draw distinction between the subtle and the gross. They are inseparable - One's (own?) existence too is subtle and gross, only the proportions vary in a cyclical order.

Narrow specialisations do not make the glory of an era. Only benevolent, all embracing synthesis can give impetus to the new progress of the consciousness. Categorisation prevents proper understanding. Correlative factors are often taken as being contrary such as East & West, Day & Night, new moon & full moon, etc., while they are complementary.

Know the significance of synthesis!

Complexity in public policy is not only here to stay, it will probably increase. Complex questions of public policy are not going to go away. Our democratic political institutions don't currently serve us well but they also don't need radical surgery. With innovations we can make them serve us better."

—Robert Dahl

"The Bulletin has an annexure containing information on environmental care prepared by Prof. M.V. Venkata Rao, Director, Environmental Division of the Centre for Policy Studies, assisted by Ms Jyotismathi."

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

(Soudamini, 10-50-19, Siripuram, Visakhapatnam 530 003)

Patrons :

Shri Abid Hussain
Shri K. Sivananda Murty
Dr. M. Gopalakrishna Reddy
Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao
Prof. R.V.R. Chandrasekhara Rao

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Shri D.V. Subba Rao
Dr. A. Prasanna Kumar (Director)
Shri C. Sivasankaram

Shri M. Ramdas
Shri A. Sankara Rao
Smt. A. Yesoda
Shri A. Krishna Kumar
Ms A. Uma Rao
Shri A. Ravi Kumar

Advisory Board :

Dr. B. Swamy
Shri T. Vedantam
Prof. T. Shivaji Rao
Dr. (Mrs.) B. Swarajya Lakshmi
Mrs. D. Saraswati Devi

Prof M.V. Venkata Rao
Shri A.S. Raja
Shri C. Hanumantha Rao
Shri P.V. Ramanaih Raja
Shri V. Seetaramaiah
Prof. K.V. Ramana
Prof. K.C. Reddy
Shri D.Ch. Tirupathi Raju
Shri Kasim Mehdi
Shri K. Sridharan
Shri M. Varahalu Chetty
Shri K.S. Sastry