

INDIAN DEMOCRACY: SOME INTERNAL CHALLENGES

Dr. Rajbis Singh Dalal*

India is the largest democracy in the world and most successful and progressive among the 3rd world. It has successfully conducted so far the elections for 16 Lok Sabha and many legislative Assemblies, whereas most of its contemporary democracies in the world, failed to sustain due a host of factors. The political stability provided by Pt. Nehru at initial phase (1947-64) paved way for development in all walks of life including the survival and development of democracy. However, the socialist model could not fulfill the expectations of people and counter the pressure of capitalism; hence Indian economy was opened to the LPG process in nineties. It attained the 2nd highest GDP rate after China and has become the 3rd largest economy in Asia. The numbers of millionaires in India have also multiplied many time during 1991-2012. As per Forbes Magazine's World Rich List of 2015, " Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Group, Dilip Shanghvi of Sun Pharma Group and Azim Premji of Wipro Group are the Indians ranked 39th, 44th and 48th respectively among the world richest persons. The trio hold 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions among Indians." ¹The Indian economy has shown a growth rate of 8.1% in 11th plan (2007-12) as against 3.5% in Ist plan (1951-56) which is expected to 11 % during the 12th plan (2012-17) The per capita income in India has grown upto Rs. 55,331 per annum and the size of economy at current prices rose to Rs. 71,57,412 crore (2010-11) which reflects India's growing prosperity. ² India's GDP in 2012-13 was projected Rs. 102 lakh crore. ³ According to William Heg, the Foreign Minister of UK, India will draw the outline of 21th century due to its significant contribution in world economy, hence advocated for comprehensive and deep relations with India well in time. India is the third largest market for UK outside the European Union. ⁴ Not only UK, even countries like the USA, the USSR, China, Japan and France do understand the significance of Indian economy, hence are taking keen interest in Indian Market. Three crore Indians are living abroad and their contribution to national development is significant one. The GOI has amended the People Representation Act, 2010 for their right to vote in elections for which the postal voting, proxy voting or internet voting techniques can be applied. The Supreme Court also directed the Union Government to expedite the process to provide e-voting right to NRIs.

* Chairperson, Deptt. of Public Admn., CDLU, Sirsa

Still 60% of Indian population is dependent on primary sector for its livelihood. The country is not only self sufficient in food production but also has surplus food stock due to the Green and Yellow Revolutions as well as Operation Flood. The annual foodgrain production and its reserve stocks are 26 crore and 6.5 crore tones respectively. Thus on one hand the country has made a stride on food front on the other the farmers are in a pitiable situation. It is pertinent to mention here that as per NCRB data 16,263 farmers commit suicide every year in the country. Similarly as per information given in Rajya Sabha by Harish Salve, Agriculture Minister of UPA Government, “2,90,740 farmers committed suicide in the country during 1995-2011”. The GOI constituted National Commission on Farmers in 2004 and Dr. M. S. Swaminathan was appointed its chairman. The commission submitted 5 Reports to government during 2004-06 and in its 5th Report, it pointed out the miseries of farmers and factors responsible for the rising number of suicides by farmers. Accordingly the commission recommended that the government should fix the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of crops including 50% profit in total input cost of every crop besides crop insurance, crop loan to farmers on 4% interest, adequate compensation if the crops damaged in natural calamities, pension for farmers etc.. However the government is reluctant to implement these recommendation even after expiry of 8 years.⁵

Justice Markandey Katju warned against the serious problem of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, high rate of inflation, poor health and malnutrition imbuing over 80% of the India population. He added that 48 farmers are committing suicide per day and 47% children are suffering from malnutrition which is far away from over national goals of health, education and nutrition to all. Food, cloth and shelter are the basic necessities recognized at global for a required to all human being.⁶ The food security is essential not only for the survival of human beings but also for their integrity and dignity. Though the GOI has enacted many laws and introduced various schemes for development, health and hygiene including democratic decentralization to accomplece the constitutional goals, yet the result on ground are far from satisfaction. As the socio economic security and justice are the variables to determine the success of Indian democracy, hence a modest attempt has bee made through the present paper to assess the impact of economic growth on it and to highlight its main constraints particularly from inside and to give suitable suggestions for its betterment.

Concept and Ideals for Democracy: Democracy has been viewed differently by the scholars on the subject. It is a government of the people for the people and by the people for classical thinkers where liberty, equality, fraternity, human rights, rule of law etc. are paramount values and sovereignty resides in the masses. For Elite and Marxist thinkers, it is a minority rule and the ultimate power lies with a small section of the society owning specific virtues or control over economy. Duo believes in inequality and is the critic of the former. However, a wider acceptance is that it is the form of government where rule of

law and public opinion prevail and people are the ultimate source of power. Fair and free elections at regular intervals are essential for a sound and healthy democracy. Free and impartial media to take up public issues and to create public opinion for creating vigilant and responsible citizenry is another ingredient. Rule of law, healthy and sound political party system, independent and impartial judiciary are other essentials for a healthy democracy. Human rights, equity, optimum participation of citizens, ethics and norms in public life, rational and scientific temperament of the society as well as statesmanship quality in leadership will further strengthen the democratic setup.

Challenges: Indeed, Indian democracy is the most viable in the developing countries, yet it is not infallible. The challenges to Indian democracy on internal front are becoming more fatal than the external. The following are main challenges to Indian democracy on internal front:

- 1. Criminalization of Politics:** Politics today has not remained for sincere and upright persons rather it has been criminalized to such an extent that some times it appears that it is only the game of crooks. Moreover, the money, muscle and mafia are playing decisive role during elections, in spite of strict vigilance and stern legislation on the subject. The Parliament and Legislative Assemblies are becoming lesser representative bodies over the years due to : (i) Fragmentation of polity continues to cause frequent uncertainties in the functioning of legislative bodies ; (ii) The representative character of the electoral process has remained static i.e the winners of election hardly represent $\frac{1}{4}$ th of total voters; (iii) one or the other political party continues to come to and operate in power more or less on party-lines rather than representing all sections and regions. As a result, inclusiveness of elected governments, credibility of elected leaders and efficiency of their performance for greater good of the greater number is at stake.⁷ In 1977 only, 6 candidates won and reached to Lok sabha with less than 40% votes of total polled votes and their no. increased to 109 in 2004 general elections. The situation in Legislative Assembly is not far blooming. In the 15th Lok Sabha, 199 MPs and 25% of the total MLAs at the moment were indulged in criminal cases like murder, rape, booth capturing and extortion etc. then how we can expect that they will take up the issues of public interest and formulate legislation in the interest of the layman. Huge crèche of liquor and narcotics were seized in Punjab Assembly Election (2012) and more than Rs. 34 crore were captured by the election machinery appointed in UP Assembly Election 2012.⁸ Thus these factors are not

only confined to the elections for Parliament and State Assemblies but also domination in the elections of local bodies which is a matter of serious concern.

2. **Decline of Ethics in Public Life and Lack of Statesmanship:** The ethics and values have eroded to such an extent from the public life that none of the political party or leader has any reservation to go to any extent to capture power. Politicians and political parties barking and abusing one another before elections are found together enjoying power after the elections. The examples of such unfamiliar and opportunist coalitions like BJP BSP in UP, SP-Congress in UP and in national politics, AIDMK and DMK coalitions with both Congress and BJP as per the time and situations are before us. The NDA coalition of 1999-2004 and the UPA coalitions of 2004-2009 and 2009-14 comprised of over 1.5 dozen political parties having heterogeneity in their character and even sometimes hostile to one another. The BJP –PDP alliance in J&K (2015) post election is a miracle in itself. It has created mess regarding the basic principles of Parliament democracy like uniformity and collective responsibility of Minister in Council. Many a times, the Prime Minister (PM) has also expressed his helplessness to take appropriate decisions in opportunist coalition e.g. in case of A Raja, Telecom Minister, charged in 2G spectrum scam, Dr. Manmohan Singh. the PM, publicly admitted that he could not drop Mr. A Raja under the compulsion of coalition government. Similarly, the role of Mamta Banerjee, the supermo of Trinmool Congress (TMC) a coalition partner of ruling UPA and CM of West Bengal is before us who not only forced the central government to retreat from its Railway Budget (2012-13) and changed the Railway Minister Dineesh Trivedi but also took it on toe on the issues of NCTC and extension in the repayment of central loans by her government.” The ruling Congress Party and opposition (INLD and BJP) conflicted to such an extent in the Haryana Assembly on the Jat reservation movement that the Speaker has to call the marshals to shunt out the opposition MLAs (16 from INLD and 1 from the BJP). All of them were rusticated from the House for the remaining period of the session on the ground of violating the rulings of the Speaker. It is pertinent to mention here that Anil Vij, the BJP MLA had given notice to the Speaker for call attention motion on the Jat movement, but the later did not allow him and Mr. Vij resisted for it. Then the Speaker indicted him and directed to leave the House immediately but when he did not comply the dictate, then the Speaker called the marshals to push out Vij from the House.

As they approached to Vij, then Abhey Chautala and Rampal Majra both from INLD objected it. Ultimately, the Speaker shunted them all out with the help of marshals. The Assembly passed 16 Bills on the last day (09.03.2012) of the Budget session amid chaos and noise in spite of this fact that majority of the opposition MLAs were debarred. Similarly, the reports of various committees were passed on the same day.⁹ Similarly on 2G Spectrum issue the entire session of Parliament passed in hooglins without transacting any work. Thus the rising mess in functioning of legislative bodies has erosion the faith of public in these temples of democracy. Deriding India's democratic system, and defending Chinese Communist Party's monopoly on power, China stated that if it had opted for democracy, it would have become another India, "Where around 20% of the world's poorest live. China's feat of becoming the first developing country to halve its population living in poverty would have never been accomplished."¹⁰

- 3. Nexus of Politicians, Bureaucrats and Mafia:** This rising Nexus is a serious challenge to the national unity and integrity which has thwarted progress of Indian democracy. The Vohra Committee (1999) in its report has categorically admitted the existence of this nexus and emphasized on the need to eradicate it to save the democracy. It makes the mockery of rule of law and the law enforcing agencies become their handmaid. What to speak of civil administration, even the defense installations are not beyond its clutches? After the most debated Bofors Scam (1988); Coffin Scam (2000), Stamp Scam (2001), the Adarsh Society Scam (2011), 2G spectrum Scam (2010), Coal Scam (2011), Agusta Westland VVIP Chopper Scam (2012) and Tatra Truck Scam (2012) are before us which not only poked serious threat to national security and integrity but also brought a bad name to the nation in international arena. All the scams exposed in the last four decades, endorsed the presence of such nexus in the background. That's why it becomes just impossible to book the culprit until the superior courts monitored its investigation. The public sector undertaking (PSU) are proving white elephant all over the country due to prevailing corruption and maladministration. In Haryana alone the accumulated losses on 9 corporations pegged at Rs. 24,328 crore against an aggregate investment of Rs. 4,951 crore, putting strain on financial resources. What is more worrying for the state government is the fact that 98% of the accumulated losses (Rs. 23,770 crore) are accounted for by the three power generation and distribution companies

(UHBVN, DHBVN and HPGC). Despite recommendations of 13th Finance Commission for disinvestment, privatization and restructuring of the 'non-working PSUs', the state government has not taken concrete steps in this regard.¹¹ Similarly the non-performing assets (NPA) of public sector banks in the country is over Rs. 2 lakh crore due to faulty and poor recoveries.

4. **Corruption and increasing size of Black Money:** Corruption is rampant in the rank and file of India politics and administration. It is deep rooted in Indian society and has been socially recognized. According to J. Markande Katju more than 80% Indians are corrupt irrespective of the amount of graft or value of individual to be purchased. That's why the size of black money is also increasing in Indian economy. As per BJP observation in the Parliament black money of worth Rs. 25 lakh crore has been stashed by Indians in foreign banks. This black money is most frequently used in terrorist and anti national activities. The Finance Ministry accepted that the size of black money in India is almost two times to that of its white money. An accountant of DRDA and Zila Parishad, Kaithal (Haryana) drew Rs. 2.50 crore from the Treasury by forged cheques. Four years rigorous jail term and a fine of Rs. 1 lakh was sentenced to Bangaru Laxman, former President of BJP for taking a bribe of as 1 lakh from a fake arms dealers 11 years ago. The court observed, "Sab chalta hai syndrome had led the nation to the present situation where nothing moves without an illegal consideration. People are forced to pay for getting even the right things done at the right time. It was time to shun such an attitude. The problem of large scale and rampant corruption particularly the political corruption, is weakening the political body and damaging the supreme importance of the law going the society."¹² Not only the political and bureaucrats but also the layman is not behind in this race.
5. **Misuse of Power and Rising Opportunism:** The attitude and approach of the leadership of the day is casual, myopic and opportunist having no future perspectives and concrete program. The populist policies and programmes of state governments led to these in financial crisis. Every political party or politician wants to win the election by hook or crook. Violation of model code of conduct (MCC) even by high profile politicians has become the order of the day. The cases of Salman Khurshid (the then Union Minister of Law) and Beni Parshad Verma (the then Union Minister of Steel) in UP Assembly elections, 2012 and B.C. Khanduri, Chief Minister of Utrakhand during its Assembly

Elections, 2012 are before us whereby their conduct was highly objectionable. Taking a serious view of it, in case of Salamm Khurshid, the Election Commission had not only issued him the show cause notice but also made a complaint to the President of India to take appropriate action against him for his unconstitutional and unwarranted behavior during the election which is unprecedented in Indian polity. The Election Commission even issued show cause notice to Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of UPA and her son Rahul Gandhi for violation of Model Code Conduct, what to speak of the regional stalwarts and leaders from opposition parties ? But the good thing on the part of the duo was that they did not defy its order and sanctity. Thus the rising opportunism and misuse of power is a serious threat to fair and free elections.

6. **Doubtful Public Recruitments :** Most of the State Public Service Commissions (PSU) and Recruitment Boards in the country are not fair and transparent in their functioning. That's why the selection and appointments made by these are challenged in the courts and many times these are quashed. A faulty recruitment process always damage the nation as incompetent and unsuitable candidates are pitted in and competent and suitable one are kept outside which ultimately resulted into poor public service delivery. The efficiency, economy and effectiveness (3Es) gradually disappeared from the public administration when appointments on public posts are made on extraneous considerations, despite the rising pyramid of bureaucracy.

The Supreme Court (SC) on 15.02.2013 upheld the Punjab & Haryana High Court decision of 17.08.2011 regarding quashing of appointment of Harish Rai Dhanda as chairman of Punjab Public Service Commission. He had no experience in administration and recruitments. The SC also asked the Punjab government to frame guidelines to avoid arbitrary appointments on Constitutional posts. The Bench also cautioned the High Court not to entertain petitions by 'trigger-happy litigants' in such matters. The High Court had quashed the appointment of Dhanda, holding that the decision making process was not transparent and objective and no effort had been made to choose the best possible talent to discharge the constitutional, functions and this verdict came on a PIL. However, the SC up-held the Haryana government appeal against the High Court's guidelines for the appointment of HPSC chairman whereby the High Court suggested for formation of a committee comprising the CM, the leader of opposition and the Speaker among others. The executive should be given "Sufficient elbow room" in such appointments", the SC

held. Education has converted into a green industry where investment is not only secure but the return is also very high. Accordingly a number of educational Institutes have been established in the country in the last 2 decades in private sector which are exploiting the situations to the optimum level and similar is the situation of their regulating bodies like BCI, MCI, DCI, NCERT, NCTE etc. After making a strict-observation on role of Ministry of Health, GOI by the SC, the government formed 4 expert panels to draft permission guidelines to streamline approvals and evolve standards operating procedures for marketing of drugs in India which are discovered abroad. The unregulated clinical trial sector played havoc with the people resulting in more than 2200 deaths in last 5 years.¹³

7. **Glaring Inequality among Citizens:** Though inequalities prevailed in Indian society for ages but under the impact of LPG process these have widened beyond imagination whereby a few people are owning huge resources and enjoying royal life style and majority of the population even deprived of basic amenities. The Forbes Magazine revealed that the number of billionaires in India has multiplied rapidly to such an extent that every 25th person among the list of 1226, is Indian (48) constituting 4% names. The list comprises of persons having more than 1 billion \$ (Rs. 50 billion) of the total and Mukesh Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industry, is the richest Indian. The total property of these Indians is 194.6 billion US \$.¹⁴ Whereas on the contrd 36 crore people are BPL in the country. A survey conducted by HUNGAMA (Hunger and Malnutrition) an NGO for the cause of downtrodden, on more than 1 lakh children of age group above five years in the country, pointed out that every third children in the world suffering from malnutrition, is Indian. About 42% children in the age group below 5 years are not only weak but 59 % of them also under-height; hence the level of malnutrition in India is more than double to that of poor Saharan countries. While releasing this statistics, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister called this situation as shameful and un-acceptable, and declared to launch an intensive program to combat the menace in 200 worst affected districts in the country. He admitted that the ICDS, a renowned scheme of GOI in this regard, is not adequate alone to cope the problem. The children from SC and ST segments are the more adversely affected and situation in girls is worse than boys. The percentage of the children suffering form malnutrition (45%) and

underheight (63%) is higher in case of illiterate mothers as compared to those whose mothers are educated up to 10th and above.¹⁵The glaring inequalities are serious threat to Indian democracy.

8. **Rising Tension and Terrorism:** The Naxalism, Maoism and terrorism have become a serious threat to the national security, unity and integrity. Whereby still 3/4th of India or more than 18 states are suffering from it. The so called left wing extremism (LWE) is a strong force of 50000-70000 cadre fully trained, dedicated and equipped with the latest arsenals mostly smuggled from China with an exorbitant budget of Rs. 1500 crore per annum based on extortion economy. In the Red Corridor, there are some liberated zones where the control of government machinery is negligible; hence the dictate of nexalites or militants prevails not only on the general public but also on the civil and police administration. The incident of Dantewara in Chattisgarh (2010) is before us in which the naxalists killed 76 para-military troops in an ambush attack and it is the largest in independent Indian history from the casualty point of view. Similarly, the abduction of Jhina Hikaka, the ruling BJD MLA from Odisha on 24.03.2012 and Alex Paul Menon, the Collector of Sukma District in Chattisgarh on 20.04.2012, Latehar in Jharkhand where the Maoist implanted bombs in belly of a soldier after his murder in January 2013, by the Maoists spoke the gravity of the matter.¹⁶ Similarly, the brutal murder of op brass Congress leadership of Chhattisgarh including its Chief Ministerial candidate Sh. Mahender Karma during Assembly Elections (2013) by the Maosists is unprecedented where more than 100 leaders and police personnel were eliminated in ambush attack. The total casualties and loss of property caused by these nexalite activities has remained far more than the war of India with Pakistan and China. India is a country of festivals and melas. Un-controlled mass gathering take place in such socio-religious occasions which sometimes leads to disasters, if proper management is not made. Over 3 crore devotees took holy dip in Sangam (Allahabad) on occasion of Mauni Amavashya (on 10.02.2013) in Kumbh. During the stampede caused falling of overfoot bridge on Allahabad Railway Station over 36 people died and many more injured and all this happened due to overcrowd on station and inadequate arrangement.¹⁷ The entire Mela area was divided into 7 zones having 68 water towers and 66 CCTV Cameras to look into any unexpected incidence. The rising awareness regarding human rights and judicial activism have made

the situation more challenging to the law enforcing agencies in the disturbed areas. Bands, strikes, blockade of roads and railways, demonstrations etc. have become the order of the days

9. **Political Turbulence:** The lack of charismatic leadership in national parties, the state politics has slipped to the regional stalwarts. The petty and parochial issues are culminating the scene causing fractured mandate in Parliament and State Assemblies not only in the Lok Sabha, even in smaller states like Goa, Tripura and Manipur single party rule is phasing out. No political party got majority in the Lok Sabha since 1989 to 2014 resulting into coalition governments which are both weak and unstable. In 16th UP Assembly elections (2012), the Congress Party could not perform satisfactory in spite of playing Rahul triumph and could win only 28, a little more than the out going Assembly whereas it contested on 350 seats and remained second only on 30 seats, on 260 seats it was at No. 3 which reflects the worst situation of the oldest and largest party in the country. Over 125 seats, the Congress candidates could not save their security deposit.¹⁸ The fall of Congress in 16th Lok Sabha Elections (2014) was unprecedented where it could get only 44 seats and could not get the recognition of leader of opposition. The situation of this oldest party in country was worst in Delhi Assembly Elections (2015) where it could not open its account despite this fact that it was ruling in the state for the last 15 years and at centre for 10 years. It is also noteworthy that Congress contested both elections under leadership of Rahul Gandhi, the Vice President of the Party. Whereas the AAP won 67 out of 70 seats in Delhi Assembly elections (2015) and formed its government there under dynamic leadership of Sh. Arvind Kejriwal. Thus the political parties need to come out of the culture of sycophancy and dynasty rule. The rising domination of parochial outlook and outfit like caste, creed, region, religion etc. role of 3 Ms, politics of Vote Bank and policy of Appeasement have damaged the Indian democracy beyond imagination which even the members of Constituent Assembly could not foresee. Not only the State Governments and politicizes fueling these issues for their instant political goals, but also the central government is not far behind in this race.
10. **Filthy Grievances Redressal Mechanism:** Despite comprehensive mechanism and processes, the service delivery system and grievances Redressal machinery are by and

large insensitive to the public forcing the latter to take the law in their hands frequently. Hardly any day passes without the band, strike, violence, demonstration or even murder to settle petty and personal issues. The increasing sphere of social welfare administration has added the fuel in the fire on the other, the government machinery is not responding properly which motivates the exploiter and prevailing nexus. That's why the incompetent or victim has to suffer and many innocent people are forced to eat the humble pie. It also promotes the trend of road justice in the country.

11. **Over-burdened Judiciary:** The extensive and well knitted judicial setup could not disburse justice efficiently and effectively resulting into the rising trend of road justice among the layman. About 3 crore cases are pending before the courts in the country and generally it took 15 years in finally disposing of a case. Moreover, the fees charged by the advocates are also so high that it is too difficult for a layman to pay and the decisions are badly interpreted by the enforcing agencies. In most of the case, the court passed a vague judgment regarding the consequential benefits and the implementing agencies hardly give the benefit to the petitioner which resulted into further litigation. That's why in more than 75% cases or litigations lying in various courts one of the parties is the state; hence a comprehensive policy on litigations is required, besides prompt and judicious execution of courts orders. The deplorable situation of justice of rape victims can be assessed from his fact that out of total 68,000 cases registered only 16,000 have been convicted during 2009-11. According to NCRB data, 24,206 cases of rape were registered in the country in 2011 of which 5724 had been convicted and the number was 22,172 and 21,397 cases in 2010 and 2009 respectively of which 5632 and 5336 had been convicted in respective period.¹⁹ Thus on one hand the offence against women is on the rise, on the other hand the conviction rate is decreasing which is less than one fourth of the total cases registered.
12. **Fading feelings of Nationalism:** With the passage of time, people are becoming more aware regarding their rights but lagging on the front of duties and they have no hesitation to extract benefit from public exchequer but hardly want to contribute in it. As per the revelation (2012) by the Finance Minister, only 3.5 crore people out of 125 crore are income tax assesses of which only 1.5 crore have declared their income of Rs. 10 lakh

and above which fall in 30% income tax range. A number of well to do persons are gobbling up the vital resources meant for social welfare and development of the deprived sections. The Union Food Minister, pointed out that 2.21 crore bogus ration cards (of the total 10 crore) were identified and deleted in the country during digitization of PDS during July,2006 to December,2011. It indicates the existence of a strong nexus flourishing on Public Exchequer. The maximum number of such Bogus cases hailed from West Bengal (59.67 lakh) followed by Maharashtra (42.20 lakh) and Andhra Pradesh (27.27 lakh). Haryana has comparatively lesser number of such cases (3,000) followed by Punjab (7,900) and Chandigarh (8,000). Therefore, the government has decided to direct disbursement of food subsidy in cash to beneficiaries.²⁰ The Digitization will tone up the PDS and will prove vital to keep a check on corruption. It will save over Rs. 70,000 crore per annum as per observation of Sh. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, GOI.²¹

Conclusion and Suggestions: No doubt, India has made a stride in all walks of life and it is one of the most powerful and vibrant democratic nation in the 3rd world. However, the challenges to Indian democracy on internal front cannot be overlooked and if immediate steps are not taken to address these, then the very security and integrity of the country will be endangered. According to Pranay Sahay, the Director General of CRPF, the LWE is the biggest threat to the nation's integrity at present and called the young officers to own a big responsibility and set high personal examples of dedication and commitment to the nation.²² Restoration of Ethics and values in Public Life must be ascertained without any delay and it can be done by top down bottom method. Persons at the helm of affairs need to establish examples. The recent anti corruption Anna movement proved that the general masses in the country have a strong passion for a transparent, open and corruption free society. Similarly, statesmanship qualities in leadership are direly required. All the political parties and persons at the helm of affairs should honors and adhere to the model code of conduct so that fair and free elections can be ascertained. Election Commission has attained new heights in the past 2 decades and its role has remained appreciable in conducting fair and free elections as well as in upholding democratic values and norms. Tainted and criminal background persons should be kept away from the law making bodies like Manipur (2012) and Delhi Legislative Assembly (2015) where not even a single MLA has criminal background. Whereas the number of MLAs with criminal background in UP, Bihar, Jharkhand Assemblies and even in Parliament is far high. Manipur and Delhi needs to be followed for a healthy and sound democracy and to make public life more fair and transparent. The quality of leadership will not

only contribute in making good legislation but also in reposing public faith in democracy. Voters need to be more vigilant and aware and they must appreciate the honest, sincere and dedicated candidates as their representatives.

India's fiscal deficit for 2015-16 has been set 3.9% of GDP and the Finance Minister proposed to lower it to 3% by 2017-18 whereas the revenue deficit will be 2.8% of GDP in current fiscal. The Non-plan expenditure is of Rs. 13.12 lakh crore and the Planned is to be Rs. 4.65 lakh crore. Thus the Non-plan expenditure is almost three times to that of Planned. The total expenditure has been estimated Rs. 17.77 lakh crore. The Gross Tax Receipts are estimated to be Rs. 14.19 lakh crore and non-Tax Revenues including divestment (Rs. 68,000 crore) for the next fiscal are estimated to be Rs. 2.21 lakh crore. Devolution to the states is estimated (on recommendation of 14th Finance Commission) to be Rs. 5.23 lakh crore and the share of central government will be Rs. 9.19 lakh crore. The estimated GDP growth for 2014-15 is 7.4% is expected to be 8-8.5% in 2015-16. Thus one fourth of the Budget will come from market borrowing and one fifth of it will go on payment of interests in 2015-16. There is a substantial cut of Rs. 1.07 lakh crore in budgeted plan expenditure of Rs. 5.75 lakh crore for the current fiscal due to a burgeoning fiscal deficit. The expenditure on health and education is lesser than 2014-15 and devolution of funds to states is 42 % as compared to 32% earlier. The sphere of planned expenditure is narrowing down and government priority on borrowing and disinvestment is increasing.²³ It is the situation of the government which has come to power on the promise of good governance. Thus fiscal management needs to be toned up and planned expenditure should be increased.

The miseries of the farmers should be addressed immediately. The UPA government made provisions for Kissan Credit Card (KCC) and the farmers have been availing crop loans upto Rs. 3 lakh @ 7% interest and the effective rate is 4% in case of farmers who repay it on time. For the Agriculture sector, the biggest take away from the Union Budget (2015-16) is the increase in credit limits for farmers by Rs. 50,000 crore to Rs. 8.5 lakh crore. Rs 25,000 crore have been allocated for the corpus of the Rural Infra Structure Development Fund set under NABARD, Rs 15000 crore for long term Rural credit fund; Rs. 45,000 for short term Cooperative Rural Credit Refinance Fund and Rs. 15,000 crore for short term RRB Refinance Fund.²⁴ It is required to ensure that this money should be properly and honestly utilized. To eradicate threats of Red Corridor, the socio-economic disparities should be minimized. While presenting Union Budget (2015-16), the Union Finance Minister said an estimated 20,000 tonnes

of gold stocks in India were neither traded nor monetized and added that government plans to introduce a gold monetization scheme, which will replace both the present gold deposit and gold metal loan schemes. India is one of the largest consumers of gold in the world and imports 800-1000 tones metal every year.²⁵ Whereas on the other hand still 40 crore of Indians are living BPL and cannot meet their basic needs properly. Therefore, the national resources should be utilized for optimum benefits of entire population and the social sector needs to be strengthened further. The Food Security Act (2013) covered 67% of Indian's population, needs to be implemented whole heartedly. Shanta Kumar Committee appointed by the present NDA Government has recommended to reduce the coverage of beneficiaries under the Act upto 40% and save over as 30,000 crore annually as food subsidy.²⁶

Media should act more fairly and accountably so that it can play a vital role in the society. Appropriate mechanism should be developed to regulate its functioning in the national interest. The Hon'ble Apex Court issued detailed guide lines in this regard while disposing of a PIL (2014). Corruption and parochial outlooks needs to be eliminated. The Union government in its budgets (2012-16) has also emphasized on more transparency and accountability in public life to curb the menace of black money. The punishment of Chautalas and 2 IAS officers including many DEO/BEDs in 2013 in forgery and criminal conspiracy case while making JBT recruitment in 2000 of 3206 teachers by the CBI designate court is a landmark decision to curb the politico-administration nexus prevailing in public appointments and will help in rooting out this/such problems. The Delhi High Court upheld this judgment and observed, the man (O P Chautala) was CM of Haryana, capable of much hope and an inspiration to the youth of the state. Cheating them of their future deserves punishment of the highest kind. The common thread between the 5 accused is the flagrant disregard towards the system. Each one of them played a role in disrupting the establishment process to achieve their objective.²⁷ Hardly any of the appointment made by the HPSC and the HSSC in the state has remained unchallenged in the court and a number of such appointments have been quashed by the high court and Supreme Court. It is not the first case of corruption in public life but certainly the first one so far the punishment to political leadership in appointment is concerned. Not only is Haryana, even in Punjab, U.P., Bihar, Jharkhand etc. the public appointments have remained disputed most of the time, hence came under scanner of Court. The conviction of Lalu Prasad Yadav in fodder scam, A Roja and Kanimari in 2G spectrum Scam, Subarato Roy in unlawful collection of money from

investors by his Sahara Group, Bapu Asha Ram in rape case, Rampal in sedition etc. has realized and restored the faith of the layman in existence of Rule of law in the country. If the supremacy of law prevails in the country then the trend of road justice will curb automatically.

Healthy Customs and traditions like Britain should be developed and catered which are vital for smooth functioning of democratic institutions. Personal score and ego should not clash and prevail over public cause and issues. The political and economic agenda of Political Parties should be loud and clear. Needs to develop and retain work culture in public sector is utterly required, failing which most of the development and welfare programmes are becoming a white elephant on public exchequer, without any outcome. Public Grievances Redressal and service delivery mechanism need to be toned up and it should be quick and economic. The RTI Act, citizen charters, e-governance, Right to Service Act etc. can prove instrumental in this regard. Law and Order should be maintained at all cost and tendency of Road justice must be curbed for which the vacancies in all public services particularly in the Police and Para-Military troops should be filled up well in time and the existing one should be toned up. Transparency and accountability in public functioning should be ensured. The Haryana Lokayukta sought report from the State Government within 45 days in Rs. 5 crore MNREGS scam in Ambala District, where 9 forest officials were booked by the State Vigilance Bureau.²⁸

Social welfare agenda should carry on but the funds allocated for such schemes should be utilized properly. Similarly the allocation for health is also decreased from 37,334 crore in 2013-14 budget to Rs. 33,152 crore in 2015-16 and a lion share of it goes to National Health Mission. The programmes like MNREGS, NRHM, SSA, RMSA, Nirmal Bharat, Midday meal etc. are imbued with corruption and their actual output is nominal. Therefore, what is required is to strengthen and activate the existing mechanism rather creating parallel one. Moreover, until their sincere and fair execution is ensured, the target group will not be benefited. The leadership should be fair and proactive in performing its duties. Democratic practices and values should be upheld. All public functionaries should perform their duties honestly and sincerely. The fruits of development should percolate to all.

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