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Quote of the Month

Success is never final.
Failure is never fatal.
Courage is what counts.

- Sir Winston Churchill

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Editorial

Lesson of 2009 General Election: The new India rises

The outcome of the General Elections 2009 has turned out to be most unexpected and surprising. The print and electronic media, the psephologists and the astrologers have all been proved wrong. Conclusion is that people of this country have become more mature over the years, as the country progresses on the path of democratic journey. Most of the people nevertheless had a sigh of relief, since a relatively stable government should emerge out of the mandate.

The younger electorate, which today number more than 250 million (below the age of 35 years) seems to have voted decisively. The future belongs to them and they want to create a new India, where the old agenda of 'Mandal' and 'Commandal' (based on caste and religion) becomes irrelevant. They want to create a modern India, which can stand internationally and recoup its lost place of pre-eminence.

But what has really won in the recent elections? The clear winner is the 'development plank'. 2009 General Elections would be known as largely an outcome of efforts put in by some of the state level leaders in their states in concentrating on development work and implementing schemes for general public, particularly those from the disadvantage sections of the society.

The second common feature of these elections is the element of surprise for all the national and regional parties including the Congress (and the UPA), the BJP (and the NDA) and most importantly for the left in West Bengal and in Kerala. People seem to have had the final word and kept the command in their own hands.

Yet there are a couple of trends, which may not auger well for the future of Indian democracy. There is a wide split in the mandate from state to state, where different parties have emerged victorious. This means that next time around, verdict would not be any different, since there would be incumbency against each of the parties. While Congress swept the polls in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan, the opposite happened in Bihar, Orissa and Karnataka. Further, there seems to be no clean sweep for any single party or any combination of parties, as it used to happen till 1984, even though Congress this time as a whole did better than expected at the national level. Second disturbing trend is the rise of 'Son and Daughter' brigade of the second, third and fourth generation politicians, who have an unfair advantage in the poorly designed democratic electoral system and against the principles of equality and equity.

We will discuss in detail the various dimensions of General Elections 2009 in this issue.

**Yours Sincerely,
Editor, IRRO**

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Political Reforms

Mantra of success in Indian elections

The Congress party is jubilant, since it far exceeded its own expectations. While Soniaji expected to get about 150 seats, Congress got 206 winning candidates. BJP and other losing parties seem to have been in bereavement, as if they lost the fourth battle of Panipat.

However, the game of politics is the most uncertain, unpredictable and highly flexible. Those who were the losers yesterday could be the winners tomorrow and who knows what will happen in the next elections.

So, what is the winning formula? While in some states, some leaders have consistently delivered on longer term basis, in some other states, the electorate seems to be changing their masters after every election. General Elections 2009 has thrown up a wide split verdict from state to state, even though Congress prominently gained. Yet there seems to be a clear set of parameters, which could be packaged as a winning formula in the elections. If certain policies and programmes are implemented honestly and sincerely, the parties can expect to reap rich dividends at the time of elections.

First of all, now it is clear that the development mantra has come on top. Those heads of states who undertook development work honestly and sincerely and where the benefits reached the masses have been rewarded handsomely. The image, reputation and honesty of the top leadership coupled with an aggressive agenda for implementation of the development work have worked wonders in states like Bihar and Orissa. Chief minister of Andhra and Mody in Gujarat too has been rewarded for his development agenda, (though his Hindutva/ (Commandal brand of politics failed to click outside the state). On the contrary, Mayawati has been rightly punished for the monuments she is building, and also for poor maintenance of law and order and a sham development plank. So was the case with Khandoori in Uttrakhand, where the only development seems to be in piling up files on the table of the chief minister.

The second factor in success is the unity of command and leadership, which also demands absence of factionalism, absence of multiple centers of power and absence of backstabbing among different leaders in the states. A unity by way of unquestioned leadership and absence of factionalism paid handsome dividends for the parties in Rajasthan, Karnataka and Bihar for the respective parties. On the other hand, Congress has not been able to gain much in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh due to their own factionalism.

The third factor is focus on the development agenda for last man in the country. Gandhiji's Talisman in this regard is worth quoting

“Recall the face of the poorest or weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving million?”

Leaders like Sh. Nitish Kumar in Bihar pushed an aggressive agenda for uplifting the bottommost sections of society, besides providing good governance and it paid rich dividends in elections. He asked for his 'mehnatana or majdoori' in his election speeches, and people gave it handsomely.

The fourth element in the success mantra is the establishment of law and order and a secure environment for day-to-day life for the citizens. People are fed up with the politician criminal nexus. While the people of Bihar rewarded Nitish for restoring law and order, Mayawati had to face the music for the poor law and order in U.P.

The next element is the role of youth and particularly the role of the new voters. Congress which was working for getting support of the youth for a long time, benefited, whereas BJP which largely ignored the young Turks failed to elicit the support of as many young voters.

Honesty seems to have played its part, but honesty is a necessary condition but not sufficient one. Chief Minister of Uttarakhand did seem to have a clean image, but in absence of the development work to his credit and because of poor decision making, he seems to have paid the price.

The decline of the regional and smaller parties also augurs well for the future of two-three party system in India, one of the basic objectives of this NGO, whose main focus is on creating a two or three national parties, as is the case in the mature democracies in the West.

There are a number of other factors as well, which has played its role. Not everything is hunky dory. The factors of Caste, Community and religion can not be wished away, though their role is not always supreme. Secondly, some governments (like in Uttarakhand) may commit blunders, thus providing opportunity for their opponents. The positive and not-so positive factors together play a role depending upon the circumstances.

It is for the parties concerned now to concentrate on the winning formula to win the next elections. Let us also hope that the agenda set in 2009 elections is only the beginning of the new role of democracy for India in becoming a developed country. The task is very onerous. But, people have now tasted power; they have realized now the virtues of good governance; and they appreciate leaders who take a proactive approach in tackling their day-to-day problems.

Three Cheers for Election Commission of India

The world's largest democracy has more than 710 million voters on its roll (out of which 417 million voted in 2009 general elections). The total number of Indian voters is almost equivalent to the total number of voters in Europe and America combined. It is not an easy task to conduct elections with such a gigantic number of electorate.

Election Commission of India deserves a huge credit for conducting 2009 general elections, broadly a free and fair manner without much loss of life. There were times in the early 70's to mid 90's, when the number of people losing their lives in elections ran in to hundreds across the country. Rigging was also not uncommon in the cow belt. However, in the last 2 to 3 general elections, the overall atmosphere has improved and the Election Commission has been able to control the process of conducting elections in a free and fair manner and mostly to the satisfaction of all the stake holders concerned.

Election Commission of India has also introduced technology and with the aid of e-governance, it has been able to achieve many milestones. The electronic voting machine, which replaced the paper based voting system, has also been an effort towards safeguarding our climate inasmuch as with the saving in paper, we have saved trees by thousands. Further electronic voting machine has led to fast counting of votes and faster declaration of results.

ECI has also huge information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure available in the country, which has paid rich dividends in the process of conducting elections.

Shri T.N. Sheshan perhaps initiated the first set of bold majors for conducting free and fair elections and his successors have continued the his efforts.

Let us hope ECI will find some means to cut down on the time limit of spreading out voting over a month.

Three cheers for the Election Commission of India.

Why the idea of Third Front failed

The idea of third front in the run up in General Elections of 2009 was a failed idea from the word 'go'. Previously in 1996, the third front was led by a major constituent, the then 'Janta Dal', which had in its wings, leaders from Sh. Om Prakash Chautala in Haryana, to Sh. Mulayam Singh Yadav, Sh. Ajit Singh in U.P., Sh. Lalu Prasad Yadav, Sh. Nitish Kumar and Ram Vilas Paswan in Bihar and Biju Patnaik in Orissa and late Sh. Ram Krishna Hegdge in Karnataka. Janta Dal was the fulcrum around which other smaller parties like TDP, DMK, the left and others joined in to give it a strong support base. Yet, the Government formation in 1996 by the third front would not have been possible without the support of the Congress Party.

Now, the old Janta Dal of 1996 is no more and has split into virtually one dozen segments. The left parties having left the Dr. Manmohan Singh government on the issue of Nuclear deal wanted to grab a new space, which was virtual and not real. They tried to bring in such disparate elements as BSP, AIADMK and TDP etc, the only common ground among them being that these parties had an exclusive jurisdiction not adversely affecting the other regional parties.

People could not be fooled by watching half a dozen leaders at the stage together, after which each one spoke and behaved differently. Moreover, there was no ideology behind the entire exercise. All the parties in the third front had in fact danced with Congress or the BJP at one time or another, so it was difficult convincing the electorate about their purity in becoming a viable 'non-Congress or non-BJP' combine.

But what happened to the Left parties themselves. We are reminded of a serial by Jaspal Bhatti relayed in sometime 1992-93, where Jaspal Bhatti as a tough ruffian had specialized in evicting the tenants. While he was on the job of evicting a particular tenant and was throwing out the belongings of the tenant, he receives a call that his own house was being forcibly vacated and his belongings were being thrown out on the road. Jaspal Bhatti rushed to his house leaving his own operation in the middle.

Perhaps this is the best comparison of the left's highly ambitious role that they were seeking to play at the national stage, leaving their own backyard insecure and unsafe.

In hind sight, the left though deserves some credit for providing stable governments to the country. Firstly, they were part of UPA for nearly 4½ years providing anchor to Dr. Manmohan Singh's government. And now by ceding their own territory in West Bengal and Kerala to the Congress Party, left has indirectly become the prime mover for providing a stable government at the center by the Congress Party and their allies.

The idea of a third front under the Left Front should be given a deep burial for ever, if India has to emerge as a strong country at the International level. There is no option to a two party system in the long run, as is prevalent in the mature democracies of the west: in USA, UK, Germany, France, and so forth. Party system should be designed on the principles of equity and fair play. It should offer ample opportunities for every sections of society, so that ordinary citizens of this country can occupy the highest positions within the party and the government.

Left parties have a role to play in this country. They are the ones, who have assiduously raised the issues for the common man and influenced the policies of the national parties, who otherwise shy away for taking radical measures for the benefit of bottom most strata of people. In their absence, there can be a danger of national parties working totally under the influence of a small, powerful and influential section of people.

Welcome the good governance agenda of the new Government

Hindustan Times, in an article dated 20 May 2009 reported that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at the first Congress Parliamentary Party meeting held on 19th May 2009 promised to improve governance, give top most priority to internal security, better implementation of welfare schemes, in maintaining communal harmony, reviving economic growth and creating new employment opportunities. Dr. Manmohan Singh also stated that the new Government would be a catalyst of change. Chairperson of UPA Mrs. Sonia Gandhi while addressing the Congress

Parliamentary Party meeting also stated that performance of delivery would be the buzzwords to meet the onerous responsibilities associated with the mandate.

Such bold statements if seriously implemented would do well to the future of this country. The Indian electorate has demonstrated a maturity in giving mandate to a national party for a stable government, discarding the idea of a hotchpotch combination of smaller parties, and so it is now turn for the Congress to respond favourably.

Another report dated May 21, 2009 in May 22nd edition of Hindustan Times states that in the battle for cornering maximum number of ministerial berths by DMK and its Supremo Mr. Karunanidhi, the Congress Party is inclined to insist on keeping Mr. T.R. Ballu and Mr. A. Raja out of new Cabinet on account of the fact that both faced adverse reports in their ministerial responsibilities in the report submitted by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). The CVC report submitted to the government commented adversely on the allotment of licenses and spectrum and questioned the manner in which the then IT & Communication Minister Mr. Raja had issued new telecom licenses and spectrum at throw away prices. The CVC similarly alleged corruption charges against the Department of Shipping under Mr. T.R. Ballu in the working of Sethu Samudram Bridge Construction Corporation and interference by Mr. Ballu in the working of National Highway Authority of India, leading to delays in several projects on account of corruption. To what extent the government can keep its eye on integrity is yet to be seen.

The new government's agenda on "Good Governance" should be a matter of huge welcome by ordinary citizens of this country. We would like to highlight the fact that this NGO has good governance and business reforms (keeping in mind the international benchmark) as its main agenda for pushing India into the league of advanced countries.

We would like to mention that in World Bank Policy Research Paper (Governance Matters VI: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2000, by Daniel Kaufmann and Massimo Mastruzzi, July 2007), India scores poorly and negative in four out of six dimensions as follows:-

- (a) Political stability(-0.84)
- (b) Governments effectiveness(-0.04)
- (c) Regulatory quality(-0.15)
- (d) Control of corruption(-0.21)
- (e) Voice and accountability(0.35)
- (f) Rule of law(0.17)

Overall score of India by average is (-0.12) way behind developed countries like Australia (1.62), Singapore (1.57), Germany (1.46), USA (1.23) and Japan (1.22).

Similarly, India scores poorly in each of other international reports on business, competitiveness and corruption. It ranks 104th out of 161 countries in economic freedom index, 120th out of 178 countries in the World Bank report of doing business in 2008 and ranks 74th out of 163 countries in the report by Transparency International. On the other hand, India's rank in global hunger index is 94 against Pakistan's 88, China's 44.

In view of our poor governance, the economic growth is directly affected since funds earmarked for development are pocketed by the middlemen and does not reach the actual beneficiaries. There are also delays in projects implementation and a general apathy towards the governing institutions in the mind of the people.

What is 'Good governance' after all? It implies a host of things, including good performance of the basic and fundamental institutions of governance; namely the political institution, bureaucratic institution and finally the judicial institution. It is not a secret that all the three institutions are at sub-par, which is an opportunity for reforming them radically and in an innovative manner to bring them at the world's best. It calls for a major revamp. Benchmark for reform should be international. There is no time for reinventing the wheel as the best models and best practices are available at the global stage. India as the latecomer has the advantage of choosing the best and rather improving on those existing models. As the saying goes in management, the second comers have the advantage, as they do not have to clear the land which the first comer had to trudge.

Good governance may mean among other things the following:

Some of the paradigms of Good Governance	
<p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work for the benefit of the largest number of people and avoid benefiting a coterie of people • To provide a clean and honest administration • 'Customer-first' philosophy in policy making and implementation • Provide basic necessities of life-food, shelter, education and health to all 	<p>Bureaucratic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain law and order • Treat citizens equally without discrimination • Provide a clean, honest, transparent and accountable administration • Expedite implementation of all the schemes undertaken • Provide a grievance-redressal machinery
<p>Judicial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up fast track courts • Liquidate all pendencies in a time bound manner • Organise Criminal justice system for the cases to be investigated and decided finally by courts of law within a 3-year time frame • Provide a clean, efficient and effective system of redressal of disputes 	<p>Business Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and reform the outdated laws, rules, regulations and systems • Set the stage for an entrepreneurial society for wealth creation • Deterrent action against tax evaders and manipulators • Making the entire system internationally competitive

The Time Magazine in an article dated August 13, 2007 projected the total GDP of India at 30 trillion dollars by 2050, just behind USA at \$ 35 trillion and China at US\$ 45 trillion. Let us hope that the honest commitment of the new Government led by Dr. Manmohan Singh would make it possible to realize the great ambitions of our country, which was always in the forefront of global economic power in the last two millenia.

The people of this country have done their exercise wisely by opting for a stable government and placing a huge faith on the oldest political party namely the Congress Party of the country. We only look forward to the realization of the promises made by the Prime Minister and Chairman of the UPA.

Some disturbing trends of 2009 Elections

While there are a number of positive results emerging from the final verdict of 2009 general elections, there are a few disturbing trends appearing as well. It is for the present and future generation to make a conscious effort to bring about improvements in those disturbing outcomes. Some of them are listed here.

Increase in the number of MPs with criminal records

A newspaper report suggests that between 2004 and 2009, number of MPs with criminal records has jumped from 128 to 153 (from 23.57% of the total strength to 28.60%). The number of MPs with serious criminals charges like the murder and abduction has also risen from 55 (10.1% of the total strength) to 74 (13.83% of the total strength). The party wise position of MPs are - Congress 12, BJP -19, SP-8, BSP-6, JD (U)-3, BJD-1 and CPI (M)-1.

Such rising trend of the tainted elements occupying the August house of Parliament is indeed a serious matter and some serious must be taken to arrest the trend. Setting up 'Fast Track Courts' would be a good beginning, where serious crimes should be tried on a day-to-day basis. Those convicted must lose their membership of the house, till the higher court exonerates them. For this purpose, necessary changes in the relevant laws must be introduced at the earliest.

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Why the BJP lost

'Nothing succeeds like success' is an old saying. All the reasons including those which did not contribute will now be counted as reasons for success of Congress party in the General Elections and all the reasons that may not have played any role will be counted as the reasons why BJP failed. But people need to beware of such a perverted analysis.

It is a common thing to expect that the vanquished BJP will find excuses for its failures. Daggers are out to kill each other. There are a number of factors (already highlighted in the media), which played their role in the non-performance of BJP in the general elections. But some of those factors, which perhaps may not be raised are highlighted below.

The first reason is the role of the octogenarian leader of respected Shri L K Advani ji. It was about a month before the general elections that some committed BJP voters were discussing about the prospect of BJP in the general elections. Surprisingly, a doubt confirmed by all that emerged was the quality of 82-year old Advaniji to lead the nation. Sure enough, he has a huge service background under his belt, but at 82 (notwithstanding the energy and euphoria which was projected), he is an old horse. He was always very tense in his speeches, did hardly smile or laugh or joked. It was in sharp contrast to the hallmark of his elder stalwart Shri Atal Bihari Vajpai ji. Even the most difficult situations were humorously dealt with by Vajpaiji. He had the knack of putting the audience to bursts of laughter. People travelled far and wide in the good old days to listen to Atal ji. But Advani ji could not repeat Atal ji's magic.

Further, age was against Advani ji. At 82, he seems to be totally cut off from the dreams and aspirations of the younger generation. Between the age of 18 to 35, there are over 30 crore voters. Those voters felt no connection with a leader born three generations before them.

The second point was about the 'majboot neta'. Unfortunately, there is not a single achievement credited specially in the name of Sh. L.K. Advani for which people can remember him as the messiah, even though Sh. L.K. Advani has remained in power between 1977-79 and from 1998 to 2004. This is in contrast with even State Chief Ministers like Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Nitish Kumar, Late Sh. Biju Pattanaik or even late Sh. Chiman Bhai Patel, who was the head of Gujarat in the mid 1980s and was credited for getting major investments in the state. Then how could electorate consider Advani ji as a majboot neta.

The winning formulae seem to be obvious: development plans, good law and order machinery and taking care of the under-privileged plus absence of factionalism. BJP had clear early warnings in the last assembly elections in Rajasthan, Delhi and Uttarakhand (where a marginal victory came). Yet it ignored the early warning signals emerging from the last assembly elections.

The next factor responsible for the defeat is the grip of the party in the hands of older elements and absence of a mechanism for promotion of younger breed within the party's power structure. Some of the younger leaders have been around for a while, but when will they get a chance, unless the older leaders retire? Can BJP as a national party claim that it offers a chance for a 'Barrack Obama' at 44 or 'Tony Blair' at 43 to emerge within the party to lead in a general election? Even now, some of the older stalwarts are brandishing their swords for occupying the vacant slot that may likely emerge at the top.

Now the BJP is looking for a change for future. The existence of BJP as a national party is in the interest of India's democracy.

We suggest that BJP carry out reforms in a radical and innovative manner, if it wishes to recoup the lost ground and establish itself at center stage. For this, a benchmark model is already available- the way the party conduct their affairs in the Westminster model or in the US model. Their best practices should be adopted in reforming and revamping the party and power structure within the BJP. If this is adopted as a mechanism, the confusion and the uncertainties prevailing can be eliminated.

Electronic media turns no power light

With the opening of airwaves, numerous private channels have come up in the last over decade and a half. However, there seems to be a shortage of content for such huge number of channels which are excessively concentrated on repeat programmes, bollywood type masala and their TRP's.

With the kind of programmes being displayed on numerous TV channels, the average viewer does not seem to be happy. But what the electronic media did at the election time demonstrates total failure of the media to behave responsibly for the benefit of the common man.

Electronic media is a good business. They are always the gainer whether the news is good, bad or ugly; be it an earthquake or flood disaster or swearing in ceremony of US President or an interview of a celebrity like Prince Charles or Amitabh Bachhan, the electronic media is always the gainer.

Conducting exit polls has been the favorite past time of the media and as bad luck would have it, they have always been proved wrong. For a full day this time, TV channels were telecasting first results of the exit polls with lot of enthusiasm and then for the next two days, they went on debating all sorts of combinations that could be feasible in the formation of the next government at the Centre, in the event of a hung parliament, which of course, according to them, was a foregone conclusion. All sorts of permutations and combinations were discussed in the government formation. No electronic channel in their wildest dreams could predict 262 seats for the UPA and a near rout for BJP and NDA. Some channels brought even some famous astrologers to predict the results and fate of eminent political leaders and nearly all of them were proved to be wrong.

A deep moral question arises about the responsibility of the electronic media in selling out lies and untruths, whatever be their source of collection and then continuously debating for days together hypothetical situations and possibilities.

The least the viewers deserve is an apology from all the channels individually and jointly to the people apologizing for sheer wastage of their time and in turn nations' collective time.

It is high time that government took notice of the wastage of time, money and other resources in spreading and indulging in reckless behavior by the electronic media. Time has come for a code of conduct for regulating the behaviour of the electronic media. This would be safeguard for the media, otherwise who knows tomorrow Courts may recognize the possibility of a 'Class action suit' as in USA for doing the damage to the general public.

Good that the Bihar model of development catches attention

The print and electronic media discovered the virtues of Bihar administration quite late. Only till a few months back, the media did not lag behind in criticizing the Bihar administration for not providing relief to the flood victims in the Kosi region. Sitting in air-conditioned chambers in Delhi, the media men grossly underestimated the virtue of the new Bihar administration. Even a casual visitor to Bihar could see the rapid progress in Bihar taking place on a number of fronts simultaneously.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the new Bihar model of development under the leadership of the Chief Minister Sh. Nitish Kumar seems to be the best model available as of now in the entire country. The following are some of the highlights of the administrative measures taken by him in the last four years.

First of all the law and order machinery which had reached its nadir in the last two decades was drastically improved in order to provide a safe and secure atmosphere for the people of Bihar. Before Nitish emerged victorious in 2005, each district had virtually slipped into the hands of goons and criminals who ruled the roost. Bihar government set up fast track Courts almost in each District and the major criminals elements including some of top goons were convicted by the fast track courts. In the last over three years, more than 32,000 cases have been disposed off by the fast track Courts and now all the Districts have been freed of criminals and criminal gangs. Most of these elements stand convicted and are serving their sentence and even others are cooling their heels in jails. Some of them have even absconded to the neighboring state of Jharkhand to hide themselves from the clutches of law.

While in earlier times, there were standard instructions for the people to get back home before sunset, now people are freely moving around, celebrating marriages and attending public functions even at late nights. This of course is not to say that there will be no crime in the state, but the result of a systematic action against the criminals elements has been to minimize the level of crime prevalent in society and such measures have allowed people to carry on with their day to day life.

Major revamp of the health system

The health system in pre-Nitish Kumar era was in total shambles. A large majority of people in the State belong to the poor class and they are not able to afford private health care facilities. The State hospitals, Primary health centres and their dispensaries were lying defunct for a long time, so much so that most of the primary health centres were locked and Doctors posted at those centres were practicing in their home towns. These absconding doctors were getting fully paid by the Government, by bribing only Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1000/- per month in the office of the Civil Surgeons.

The new Bihar Government has taken radical measures to revamp the health machinery. First of all, orders for the Doctors to attend the patients in the Government hospitals were issued. Raids were conducted by the District Collectors on receipt of any complaint (a mobile complaint number through a call centre was provided for the people to make complaints). In case, the Doctor was not found in the hospital, he was taken to task. Such raids were widely publicized in the newspapers, which forced the guilty Doctors who were drawing salaries sitting at home, to get back to their places of posting in the hospitals.

The next step taken by the Government was highly innovative in order to stabilize the system of providing better health care. The unemployed MBBS graduates were hired on a contract basis, initially at a fixed salary of Rs. 12000/- p.m. which was later raised to Rs. 18,000/- p.m. and each primary health centre was equipped with two additional MBBS Doctors. The PHCs were now required to run in three shifts. The medicines were now regularly supplied and other materials required to run the hospitals were also genuinely supplied without any cut given to the middlemen in the Government. The specialist Doctors with MD and MS qualifications were similarly hired on contract basis, initially at a salary of Rs. 18,000/- p.m. (raised to Rs. 24,000/- p.m. later) and were posted in the District Hospitals for performing their work in their own area of specialization (except for major surgeries relating to heart kidney and brain). The District Hospitals were equipped with all the necessary equipments to perform all types of surgeries and render services of specialists.

The important aspect was that apart from putting manpower in the hospitals, medicines and all other equipments were provided on regular basis and all the necessary tests were conducted for patients visiting hospitals. With such newly equipped infrastructure, the number of patients dramatically increased from say 10-12 per day in a major hospital to about 500--550 per day. For a large majority of poor people of Bihar, this was a turn around never witnessed in the last 3 to 4 decades. Another measure in health scheme was to provide cash support to the pregnant women at the time of delivery and this was without any cut or commission paid to the medical staff.

A major revamp of the health infrastructure in Bihar on a non discriminatory basis particularly catering to the lower strata of people has provided a big boost to the people of Bihar.

Reforms in the Education Sector

In the last over two decades, the education sector in Bihar was languishing and there were major problems with

the teaching and student communities together. Teachers hardly attended to classes and students were forced to either prepare on their own or shell out money for private tuitions. A chaotic situation prevailed with one or the other section going on strike.

The new Bihar administration however has taken steps which has put the education sector on rails. Two lakh teachers in two lots were recruited. Initially there were no school buildings and as was the old habit in Lalu days, teachers ran away on the pretext of there being no buildings and readymade infrastructure for teaching. However, the administrative authorities forced them to stay at their places of postings and carry out teaching work in the open fields till such time school buildings came up. Funds were properly provided for constructing school buildings, which came up and the teachers with their students moved into the class rooms.

Special schemes have been provided through mid day meals and other schemes for the children of under privileged classes.

The massive road building network

Bihar was known for labour migration to states like Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, states in the North east and even upto Gujarat and Maharashtra. But thanks to the development work having been undertaken in Bihar on a massive scale, labour migration has come to a halt. These days industrialists in Rajasthan, Delhi and Haryana are crying about labour shortages, on account of cessation of labour migration from Bihar.

Even a casual visitor can see the massive road building work going on in nearly all parts of the state, which has created huge demand for local labour. They are ready to work at relatively lower wages in their home state rather than emigrate to other states which otherwise causes lot of inconvenience to their families.

Reservation for women in Panchayats etc

The new Bihar administration has done social engineering in favour of women, by legislating on reservation for women by 50% at Panchayat level. This has brought about some change in the power structure at the village level.

There has also been some change in the reservation for jobs in the state government in favour of more backward among the backward classes.

Absence of casteism and honesty of the leadership

When Sh. Nitish Kumar took over as the Chief Minister of Bihar, people were reconciled to the fact that since he belonged to Kurmi caste, and nobody would mind if like his predecessors, he too favoured his own caste men.

But the biggest surprising element of a highly qualified Chief Minister has been that he has acted fairly impartially, has been honest in his intentions, has a good communication with his people and placed his agenda in the open. For example, Bihar is still reeling under power shortages. But he placed his options: either to buy power from NTPC at Rs. 7/- per unit (which will be a big burden on the consumers) or wait for three to four years, when the new power generating units would come up to meet the power demand. This honest explanation went down very well with the people of Bihar, who are weathering the power shortages without much gambling.

Conclusion

The new Bihar administration is now led by one of the better educated politicians in the country, who innovates 'out of box' solutions to the common problems. He has created a new faith in governance, with his honest and sincere efforts. A big bang approach has worked rather well in Bihar, particularly in the light of the fact that the state was languishing in all areas for the last two to three decades with deteriorating law and order, criminalized gangs ruling the roost, non existence of general facilities for the people and migration of all sections of people, including labour to other states.

The Chief Minister has created a new sense of euphoria and a new faith among the people that Bihar was still not a lost case. If the present trends continue, it may not be an exaggeration to say that the state of Bihar can regain its top ranking which it had in 1949, as per the then Appleby commission report.

A new exciting life for Advaniji through Philanthro-Capitalism

At the ripe age of 82, Sh. L.K. Advaniji, the ex-Prime Minister designated of NDA is at a cross road. After a decisive defeat of BJP and the NDA, he offered to resign, but was apparently persuaded to stay (as usual) as the leader of the opposition, which he may become soon.

There are a number of serious anomalies in the working of Indian democracy vis-à-vis the democracies prevailing in the western world. Age is one such factor. While Obamas, Carters, Blairs, Clintons, Merklers in the west rise in their party hierarchy quite fast and became heads of states in their 40s to mid 50s, genuine Indian politicians (unless he belongs to one of the royal families) cannot even expect to be in limelight before mid 50s). Leaders who rose on their own merit without any family background are mostly in their late 40s. For example, Sh. Nitish Kumar, the new darling of the media as a champion of development could find his feet only after 55. If he was born in a western country, probably he would have risen at least a decade earlier. Indian politicians never retire and thus block the path for the youngsters in their parties.

Shri L.K. Advaniji can bring about a radical reform in the Indian Polity by embracing the true philosophy of the western democracy. Leaders after the age of 70 do play a role in the western democracies, but most of them have undertaken charity work or some other social cause. Being in power should not be the first and such resort of politicians.

If Shri L.K. Advaniji quits politics and entirely devotes himself to the cause of charity and for the development of the under privileged classes in India, he would stand on the same footing as Nelson Mandela of South Africa, who after facing jail for more than two decades remained in power only for one term and then quit politics to devote himself totally to the cause of charity for the under privileged classes. There are a number of politicians in the west who faced by forcible retirement on account of term limit are committed to charity work. Jimmy Carter (who was

the President from 1976-80) and Bill Clinton (who was President between 1994- 2000) are two good examples.

If Shri L.K. Advaniji quits politics to devote for a social cause he could be a source of inspiration for a number of other aged politicians, like Karunakaran, Bhajan Lal and more than four to five dozen politicians over the age of 75, who refuse to retire. Further, indulgence in charity work can bring about social revolution in this country, which is otherwise facing deep problems of morality and integrity. The pace at which social differentiation, crime, robberies are increasing is a bad indicator for the future of Indian society. The grip of commercialism and greed is over taking the entire society at the cost of a harmonious order in society, which used to prevail till two to three decades back. It is a great opportunity for Shri L.K. Advaniji to fill in the void and a lead revolution for changing the society, outside the traditional power structure.

As goes the saying in management, to find innovative solutions, we must think laterally. We must get out of the current paradigm, the current thinking, play a new game instead of banging on the closed wall. If Advaniji devotes himself to the cause of charity, with his wide influence, he may be able to raise a fund say Rs. 100 crore, which may be especially devoted for the upliftment of the most under privileged classes.

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Management Section

The Seven Cs of Success

Brian Tracy after having studied top achievers and peak performers over the past 25 years, concludes that there are unique men and women have mastered the seven C's of success and these are:

1. **Clarity** - Eighty percent of success comes from being clear on who you are, what you believe in and what you want.
2. **Competence** - You can't climb to the next rung on the ladder until you are excellent at what you do now.
3. **Constraints** - Eighty percent of all obstacles to success come from within. Find out what is constraining in you or your company and deal with it.
4. **Concentration** - The ability to focus on one thing single-mindedly and see it through until it's done takes more character than anything else.
5. **Creativity** - Flood your life with ideas from many sources. Creativity needs to be exercised like a muscle, if you don't use it you'll lose it
6. **Courage** - Most in demand and least in supply, courage is the willingness to do the things you know are right
7. **Continuous learning** - Read, at least, one book a week on business to keep you miles ahead of the competition. And just as you eat and bathe, organize your time so you spend 30 minutes a day exploring e-mail, sending messages, going through web sites, because like exercise, it's the only way you can keep on top of technology. If you get away from it, you'll lose your edge.

Quote of the month

Success is never final. Failure is never fatal.

Courage is what counts.

- Sir Winston Churchill

One man has enthusiasm for 30 minutes, another for 30 days,
but it is the man who has it for 30 years who makes a success of his life.

- Edward B. Butler

It takes as much stress to be a success as it does to be a failure.

- Emilio James Trujillo

"The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes."

- Benjamin Disraeli

"The elevator to success is out of order.

You'll have to use the stairs... one step at a time."

- Joe Girard

"Ninety percent of the success of any product or service is its promotion and marketing."

- Mark Victor Hansen

Aims and Objectives of IRRO

"Think incrementally and improve incrementally. Think radically and improve exponentially"

"It is not just the individuals, but the Systems and Institutions that make the greatest difference in delivery of results. World-class countries and communities have world-class systems, run by the best and the brightest people."

The Indian nation today stands at an inflection point. While history of India is replete with examples of missed opportunities, we are determined that this time around, we would make the best of the new-age opportunities that have come our way. The expectations of people of India are quite high. The outside world too looks at India and the Indians differently. Some of our leaders have a new found vision for India to see the country joining the league of the developed nations. The big question is whether we will make it this time around.

Objectives: Innovative Radical Reforms Organisation (IRRO), an NGO sets out the following objectives:

1. Making India a First-World country with First-World Systems
2. The First-world country must be run by the world's best and the brightest people/Indians (a sine qua non for Objective 1)
3. Benefits of economic progress must percolate to the largest number of people of the country
4. Basic Institutions of Governance, namely the Political institution, Bureaucracy, Judiciary and finally the Business Institution must all be reformed in a comprehensive and holistic manner in order to achieve the above objectives.

Governance Reforms + Business Reforms ~ India as a first world country by 2050

Member of IRRO

Become a member of IRRO and contribute financially

Become a member of our NGO. We specially welcome the educated and literate people, who have taken a back seat in the last over two decades. They should now 'take the command of the ship on a voyage of reforms'.

Please visit our web site www.irro.org for a look at the micro details of how to build a strong nation with strong institutions and systems. An interesting Power Point Presentation gives a broad overview of how we want to achieve our objectives.

We also seek financial assistance from all our readers and others who are interested in meeting this NGO's objectives. Donations are exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Please send your contributions (in Indian Rupee only) directly in our account number 0538/CBCA/01/001087, RTGS Code: CORP0000538, Beneficiary's name: Innovative Radical Reforms Organisation maintained with Corporation Bank, (Branch 538) Sector B, Pocket B 8 &9, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi 110070.

You could also send a cheque drawn in the name of 'Innovative Radical Reforms Organisation' at the following address:

Office Address:

'Innovative Radical Reforms Organisation'
B-51 (Basement), Sarvodaya Enclave
(Near Mother International School)
New Delhi 110017
Phone: 011-26536052

Inviting feedback and articles for the electronic newsletter 'IRRO News'

Feedback and contribution of articles for the electronic newsletter may be sent at the following mail IDs.

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Articles may be sent at editor@irro.org