GOOD GOVERNANCE

CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD
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WHAT IS GOOD GOVERNANCE?

Governance in simple terms means the process of decision-making and its implementation in collective problem situations. The term 'governance' had become popular especially since 1990s with the usage of the term by international donor agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) etc.

The developing countries including India, as we all know, are dependent on the developed countries for technical and financial assistance. The international institutions, for the first time in the beginning of 1990s, drew attention to certain crucial deficiencies in the governance system of the developing countries. These included, non-availability of information to the people, lack of accountability, poor management of the public sector and lack of appropriate legal framework.

Governance emphasises not just routine implementation of policies and programmes but making the entire activity accountable, democratic, participative and responsive to people's needs.
WHAT IS GOOD GOVERNANCE?

The Delhi government recently expressed its intention to increase the power tariff. There were strong protests from the people as they were unhappy with the distribution of power supply. They resorted to road blockades, agitations and ultimately the decision to hike the tariff was withdrawn. This is just to indicate the functioning of governance process with citizens as active participants.

Governance involves opening up of the arena of 'government' to multiple actors mobilizing the collective efforts of government, private sector and the community. For example, you are familiar with the Pulse Polio Programme, which aims to vaccinate every child against polio. Though it is a government programme, it is implemented at all levels by both public agencies and private clinics and hospitals in urban and rural areas and, at many places with direct citizens' involvement. The aim of governance is to secure maximum good of the maximum number of people through not just government efforts, but also the efforts of private organisations and the community.
ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

1. Accountability

Governance lays emphasis on making all the organs of government accountable for the performance of functions. In present times, we find instances of police being held accountable in cases where they fail in discharging their duty of nabbing the culprits. People question, and through demonstrations, and mass protests demand justice. Also during elections, the electorates if they are not satisfied with the performance of elected representatives in their constituencies, vote them out of power. All these indicate the significance given to accountability in the governance process.

2. Participation.

It means people are the key to good governance. They are not only the beneficiaries of good governance but also are the agents of it. They act not only through formal bodies like the executive, the legislature and the judiciary and formal means, such as the right to vote, but also various groups and associations like trade union, political parties, NGOs, business groups etc.
ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Governance aims at seeking the participation of people in various developmental activities. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PHs) and the municipal bodies in India are locally elected representative bodies looking after the management of local affairs. For more people’s participation, the 73rd and 74th situational Amendments have provided for 'ward' committees in every municipality, and 'gram sabha' in every panchayat.

3. Transparency

Administration in the traditional sense functioned on the principle of secrecy and it was quite secretive in letting out information to the people whom they serve. Now there is a change in the scenario. People, being participants in the governance process, are desirous of accessing information from the administration regarding matters that concern them. For example, if a farmer in the village would like to know about the amount being spent by the local administration on a development scheme, it has to be furnished. This is true not only with public or government organizations, but also with private sector organisations. They are supposed to provide the necessary information solicited by the person who is securing the services from it.
ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

4. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Governance is characterized by effective and efficient service delivery from any organisation. For instance, you visit the electricity office for payment of bill. The service, in most of the places, being computerised facilitates effective and efficient delivery. There is a concern, which is gradually being imbibed by organizations to provide services to the satisfaction of citizens.
ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

5. Rule of law

The concept of good governance is undoubtedly linked with the citizens’ right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. This could be secured in a democracy only through the rule of law. The rule of law is expressed through the axiom that no one is above the law. One has to clearly understand that the rule ‘of’ law is different from the rule ‘by’ law. Under the rule ‘by’ law, law is an instrument of the government and the government is above the law while under the rule ‘of’ law no one is above the law not even the government. It is under this framework that rule of law not only guarantees the liberty of the citizens but it also limits the arbitrariness of the government and thereby it makes government more articulate in decision-making. The rule of law as Dicey postulated is equality before law. This is secured through formal and procedural justice which makes independent judiciary a very vital instrument of governance. It is widely appreciated that human factors i.e. the quality of political leadership, the executive and judicial officials play important roles not only in upholding supremacy of rule of law and in efficient delivery of service but also in shaping traditions, customs and institutional cultures that are integral part of the liberal democratic machinery.
5. Rule of law

In our constitutional system, every person is entitled to equality before law and equal protection under the law. No person can be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law. Thus the state is bound to protect the life and liberty of every human being. In the majority opinion in Keshvananda Bharti vs State of Kerala that “rule of law” and “democracy” were declared as the basic structures of the Indian constitution not amenable to the amendment process under article 368 of the constitution. It flows therefrom that the courts have the final authority to test any administrative action on the standard of legality. The administrative or executive action that does not meet the standard of legality will be set aside if the aggrieved person brings an appropriate petition in the competent court.
GOOD GOVERNANCE  CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

CITIZEN’S CHARTERS

The government or public agencies such as railways, hospitals, dispensaries, electricity and water department etc., provide services of varied nature to the citizens. Generally people are unaware of the various types of services, procedures, mechanisms of lodging complaints and grievances if they are not satisfied with the services and so on. To facilitate this, the government has introduced the concept of citizens' charters. These are statements that provide information to the public on various aspects useful to them pertaining to the concerned such as the objectives, its functions and the procedures of accessing the services etc. This exercise enables citizens make use of services provided by these agencies with ease and convenience. Next time, you visit any government agency, have a look at their citizens charters.
GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

a) Improvements in delivery of essential services to the citizens
b) Empowerment of people through the dissemination of information
c) Ensuring transparency in government business and transactions and right to information in governmental activities
d) Elimination of undesirable practices such as touts, speed money, deliberate delays, harassment, bogus document and corruption
e) Encouraging broad based public awareness and participation in key areas of developmental efforts
f) Maintaining due control over assets, revenues and expenditures
g) Establishing better information base for decision making process including forecasting critical phenomenon
h) Enhancing productivity and efficiency of the administrative functions through the promotion of knowledge network
i) Making administration responsive, citizen friendly and ensuring accountability
GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

j) Establishing legitimacy and credibility of institutions

k) Interests of citizens in general and specific beneficiaries in particular

should be safe guarded;

I) Improvement in critical, contemporary measures of performance such as cost, quality, service, and speed of an institution.
MAJOR ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

A) Strengthening the institutions of governance. Parliament is the supreme representative institution in India. The political representative represents the electorate. Many a times concerns are expressed on various fronts about the falling standards in the quality of participation, conduct of proceedings and so on. Hence there is need to develop good practices and procedures of parliamentary functioning and make Parliament a dynamic institution in tune with the changing times.

B) Improving the functioning of civil service and bureaucracy. Ultimately it is the permanent executive that is responsible for policy implementation. It is necessary to develop a responsive civil service that is professional, energetic and caters to people's needs.

C) Reassuring the citizens with establishing an independent and accountable judiciary. The judiciary is to be seen as an effective instrument of maintenance of rule of law and upholding of social justice.

D) Making the private sector accountable through adopting sound business practices, adhering to rules and regulations and protecting the interests of consumers.
MAJOR ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

E) Educating the citizens about their rights and obligations, and making them partners in all development activities.

F) The issues and challenges that confront governance require effective functioning of three wings of government namely executive, legislature and judiciary and building appropriate linkages amongst the organs. Governance has to strike a suitable balance between parliamentary supremacy and judicial independence. As the state, private sector and civil society have an important role in governance process, there is a need to assign clear cut roles and responsibilities to these components to enable them to work towards genuine people-oriented development activities.
Andhra Pradesh is the state of India. As of now, there are still numerous issues plaguing Andhra Pradesh. viz. electricity issues, sewerage problems, road transportation, school fee regulation by Government. Sewerage and garbage disposal is one of the major issues that the state faces, apart from bad roads and high transportation charges. Non regulation of the school fee by the state government, regarding which there is a discontent amongst the public.

**Whom should the RTI Andhra Pradesh be addressed to?**

Under the RTI Act 2005, every department ought to sign up a Public Information Officer who is answerable to get and respond to RTI applications filed with that department. Therefore, all the RTI AP applications should be tackled to the Public Information Officer of that Department. The list is provided by the AP Information Commission on their administrator website. The PIO has to make sure that requests from persons looking for information are dealt with quickly and in cases where the request cannot be made in the script, the officer is also responsible for giving help to the person to change their problems to a lawful written form.
RIGHT INFORMATION ACT (RTI) IN ANDHRA PRADESH

When will the response be offered to your RTI Andhra Pradesh Application?

In according to the RTI Act, the reply to the RTI application in Andhra Pradesh or any other state must be given by the PIO in under 30 days from the receipt of the identical. This contains applications through online or offline. If the information appealed in the RTI relates to another section, then the PIO is ordered to transfer the same within 5 days from the acceptance of the RTI to that department who has the information. AP Information Commission sorts out Second appeals and Complaints from the applications. A second appeal can be filed when there is no reply or unacceptable response is obtained from the First Appeal.
GOOD GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

WAY FORWARD

A) State-sponsored development programmes must aim at reduction in poverty and improvement in productivity levels of workers. Towards these, poor people need to be directly involved.

B) Public Expenditure Review meets should be organized periodically at village, sub-district and district levels to ensure proper utilization of funds and ownership of development programmes by the people.

C) Civil service should be given clear responsibility for delivery of services in respect of approved schemes and held accountable.

D) One third of seats in Assemblies and Parliament should be reserved for women.

E) Persons charge sheeted by a competent court for heinous offences and corrupt practices should be debarred from contesting elections.

F) Partial State funding of elections should be commenced urgently.

G) MPLADS and MLALADS schemes should be abolished.
CONCLUSION

- Good Governance may be a rhetoric, but good government, responsive administration and a just legal system are eternal requirements.

- External drive to policy change to be replaced by local commitment and ownership of reform

- Ingenuous ideas for improving governance, ownership of initiative and commitment to reform extremely important.
Thank You