

SAFE GUARDING LIFE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND **DIGNITY**

Quality of mercy is twice blessed, it blesses the giver and the one who takes is the Shakespearian dictum. Ironically corruption also benefits the bribe giver and the one who takes, which explains the efficiency of this well oiled machine. Next only to the oldest profession malaise of corruption has held its tentacles from time immemorial. Corruption in administration is fatal to economic growth and its spread in enforcement agencies particularly Police promotes crime and erodes rule of law. Kautilya in his famous treaty Arthashastra has very succinctly stated that “just as it is difficult to say when the fish moving in water is drinking it in the same way it is impossible to find out when the government servant entrusted with responsibility is misusing it and misappropriating government money”.

The Central Vigilance Commission is the apex vigilance institution established by the government in February 1964 on the recommendation of the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption. The Central Vigilance Commission Act was passed by the Parliament in 2003 giving CVC a legal status. Every year Central Vigilance Commission gives direction for observance of Vigilance Week and since 2000 this is observed from 31st October to coincide with the birthday of Iron Man of India Sardar Vallabhai Patel.

Police plays an important role in maintaining order in society. Impartiality and strict adherence to law, established laid down procedures should guide its action. Corruption in Police service can well be considered a violation of Human rights as it definitely

impinges on the four pillars of Human rights namely Life, Liberty, Equality and Dignity.

Mutually harmful

In any corrupt dealing there is the bribe giver and the bribe taker. The bribe giver who wants to get round the system with his money power is equally responsible for the corrupt conduct of the public servant.

There are three categories of public servants. The first consists of the honest officers, the second those who are inclined to corruption but restrain themselves for fear of consequences and the third rashly corrupt. Unfortunately the second and third categories are getting amalgamated into one category.

When there is transgression from accepted and expected norms of conduct on the part of public servant the system gets irreversibly damaged. Policing has become complex given the present socio economic scenario where every powerful group in society is vying with each other to get a foothold. In view of this it is all the more necessary that policemen perform their duties with impeccable honesty. Government has given direction that prominent board should be displayed in government offices encouraging public to give information about corruption. It is important that such 'whistle blowers', persons who furnish information are duly protected and their identity is not divulged. This is exactly what is envisaged in Government of India 'Resolution on public interest disclosure and protection of informer' issued in April 2004.

Anti-corruption models

People who lament about corruption are only too happy to jump the system for their own personal gain. Civil Society should play an important role in weeding out corruption. The Hong Kong model of fighting corruption where a partnership approach was adopted to mobilise all sectors in society namely Government departments, Business community, Professional bodies, Educational institutions, Mass media, and community organization, is worthy of adoption for a unified fight against corruption.

In the fight against Corruption it is important that senior officials conduct themselves beyond reproach as otherwise they will have no moral courage to deal with deviant subordinates. There is unhealthy nexus between corrupt subordinates and unscrupulous seniors and this has to be broken. This can be achieved only if officers of unimpeachable integrity are posted in sensitive positions. There are innumerable instances where one honest officer has made all the difference and the message goes right across.

“For evil to triumph it is enough if good people do nothing”. The magnitude of the problem should not lead to helplessness. We cannot resign ourselves that the phenomenon is inevitable. *The inevitable becomes intolerable the moment it is perceived as no longer inevitable.* Ethics in the conduct of day to day dealings should be given high priority.

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