

Why India's Rising Corruption Could Not Be Curbed by Dr. Devendra S. Bhargava

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THE VARIOUS NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA REPORTS indicate that corruption in India has been increasing exponentially after the country's independence. It is only recently that the public has manifested its disapproval to the said state of affairs. No change in the situation is possible unless the government is willing to curb corruption.

In India, to get a preferential treatment anywhere and in any situation, one has to pay a bribe. Corruption is everywhere. Media reports suggest that corruption does not spare a single office, organization, or system.

To curb or control any evil, there are two approaches, viz. the preventive (the defensive) or the curative (the proactive or offensive). The preventive approach would mean a system where no one needs to give or take bribe, but the curative approach would require the framing of legislation and its appropriate implementation. The latter approach is the one which most countries and governments follow, only to face problems related to the degree of implementation of the framed laws.

Control over the implementation of the laws requires other tools, such as the right to information. But in India we are still struggling to make legislation to curb corruption, vide the recent Anna Hazare movement manifesting the sincerity level of the government.

The effectiveness of the preventive or curative approaches depends on the country, its people, and its culture. For India, the preventive approach would be a more suitable option.

Corruption comes into the picture whenever a selection decision made, like a decision to award a contract, is based on human judgment. This problem can be prevented through a system in which the stated selection would be based on a quantitative number, therefore eliminating problems relating to judgment factor. In other words, for every candidate for a certain position, an index would be evaluated which will manifest the integrated effect of all the specified requirements of the said position. The selection will thus be done by a programmed computer, which will calculate the said *index* of every candidate from the candidate's bio data and give a print out of the order of merit list of all the candidates. This method will eliminate the manipulative human factor.

India is often out performed by smaller countries with lesser resources and manpower, and lower literacy. This is because those smaller countries are merit minded. If a system of merit is adopted, corruption will be reduced and performance increased.

The problem of political will to make laws for abating corruption shall require political reforms. The most significant reform needed is to make a direct election of the Prime Minister and State Chief Ministers by the entire appropriate electorate. This will eliminate the problems of instability of the top ruler who in the present form of Indian democracy is dependent on the majority support and remains busy only to keep his chair intact and save himself from possible blackmails through the withdrawal of support. The problems related to money power, regionalism, and casteism can be eliminated through a concept of weighted votes, wherein every voter will have different equivalent votes depending on his credentials.

Unless the above stated reforms are made, the menacing problem of corruption in India will continue to increase.



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