

## **NEW PATTERN OF DEMOCRACY THROUGH ELECTORAL REFORMS**

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### **A New Approach to Democracy**

Over 60 years have elapsed after the British have left, and India was proclaimed independent. If one is able to traverse across the length and breadth of this great country today (the chances are that he may not return in one piece), it will be well nigh impossible to find a single Indian. No, you can't find an Indian, not even a human being for that matter. You may find Malayalees, Tamilians, Kannadigas, Maharashtrians, Kashmerees, Congress, Communists, Muslim Leaguers, Shiv Senites, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, *Dalits* and so on, and all of them quarreling among themselves. Every right thinking Indian shall introspect, and may wonder as to what is wrong with our people, or shall I say peoples! It is ridiculous to claim that our democracy is 63 years old, when we don't show the maturity of a 6 year old child. One wonders as to what has happened to our patriotic fervor, which was so vehement during the struggle for independence. Patriots may still be seen but they are largely disillusioned, unorganized and unable to stand up and assert themselves to fight against the evils prevailing in the society. I reckon that this type may not number more than 10% or 20% of the entire population. Another 10% or 20% are the ruling and opposition elites, who are blinded by the power they wield over the hapless masses, and who consider themselves as licensed to act according to their own whims and fancies, without giving much consideration for the future of this great country.

We proudly proclaim that India i.e., Bharath is the largest democracy of the world, with a vast population of over a 113 *crores* of people, and almost equal number of political parties on the scene, willing to grab the power with no holds barred. However, it is a sad thing to note that most of these parties do not share the vision that national interests should prevail over all parochial, sectarian considerations. The politics has degenerated into a mere profession

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with no consideration of patriotic feelings. People are reduced to the status of voting instruments, and any political party which is capable of garnering around 40% of votes is automatically catapulted into controlling positions. They are able to hold sway over the vast resources of this great country with impunity and without any questions of accountability. Whatever promises were made to the electorate during the elections are conveniently forgotten. People are unable to see any difference between the ruling or opposition parties. They are just two sides of the same coin.

We may speak of lofty ideals such as *Panchayathi Raj*, planning at grass roots level, decentralization of power and so on; but in effect, these local bodies are coerced into following the dictates of the state governments. Many of the state governments act as if they are sovereign governments without paying any heed to national policies, and whereas some of the state governments are over turned by the centre to suit the interests of the ruling parties.

Until recently we were led to believe that our judiciary is above all temptations. The recent incidents point out that this belief is slowly being eroded to a point of no return, and some drastic initiatives are necessary to restore the ventilating status of the judicial system. No! It is not democracy. It is nothing but a rule by of the organized minority. We are therefore left with no alternative but to appeal to, and call upon the patriotic public including those working in the areas of arts, literary, and cultural avocations to rise to the occasion and come forward to provide the necessary leadership to usher in a new era of peace and harmony between the various sections of society.

### **Avoidable Expenditure**

If we ever venture to work out the expenditure that is forced upon the nation for the sake of implementing the so called democracy, we would be wonder-struck to realize an unbelievable truth. The huge sums that we have already spent would have been sufficient to convert the whole of India into a shining example for the world community. We are witnessing a scenario where scores of ministers, hundreds of parliamentarians, tens of thousands of Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs), hundreds of thousands of state and district political leaders, and *crores* of high officials are engaged in a never ending race to exploit and plunder the wealth of our mother land. The ruling class, in collusion with hundreds of thousands of contractors and businessmen are amassing wealth with hardly any hindrance from the accounting authorities. For the majority of the

downtrodden, helpless and hapless poor people who even today find it difficult to make their both ends meet, the so called development that we have achieved is nothing but superficial. The governments are spending large sums of money, but it doesn't reach its beneficiaries. That is the fault of the system of implementation. Had they bothered to deposit the amount ear-marked for the benefit of the *adivasis* alone in a bank, each *adivasi* living in India would have become a rich individual, and entitled to a respectable amount of interest every month.

Let us consider the expenditure involved in the working procedures of our great (funny) democracy, right from preparation of voters' lists, elections, counting of votes, and declaration of results, constitution of various houses such as panchayaths, municipalities, corporations, district councils, state assemblies, parliament etc., and right up to the formation and installation of ministries. Let us not forget that separate electoral rolls are often necessary for elections at different levels. Any right thinking person will feel exasperated when he realizes that *crores* and *crores* of rupees-our taxpayers' precious money—are spent on such preliminary exercises, and this has to be repeated every 5 years or at the whims of those who are in power when interim elections are conducted to perpetuate their sectarian interests. Leave alone the expenditure incurred by the administration by way of allowances to officials, transportation expenses etc., the total expenditure incurred by the contestants, well wishers, and their parties are beyond any one's imagination. To top it all, the general public is not left alone; they are pressurized, intimidated, and fleeced in to giving donations to the parties involved. Besides all these dramatic acts, the actual headache to the public and to the administration lies in the tension generated on the rallies, street fights, and the loss of precious lives of innocent citizens by way of avoidable violence. After the declaration of results we normally witness intense lobbying, blackmailing, threats and counter threats to complete the formation of ministries.

Thus new governments are formed at various levels right from panchayath to the parliament, to start a reign of corruption, malpractices, favouritism, nepotism, and pure wasteful expenditure of precious revenue funds, which should otherwise be useful for developmental processes. Billions of rupees are spent on the maintenance of ministers, Members of Parliament (MPs), MLAs, and officials at various levels are left to any one's imagination. Shri. Varkala Radhakrishnan, a former MP is quoted to have said that the expenditure involved in the working of parliament works out to Rs. 3,60,00,000/- per day. Now we may imagine the total expenditure

involved in the working of all legislatures, panchayaths, municipalities etc.

Once a person is elected and declared to be a people's representative, and after completion of a minimum term in the house, he is entitled for pension for life, no matter how young he is. Those with huge income from other professions/sources are also entitled for pension if they once become a people's representative. However, those officials who are the real back bone of the administration have to wait for the attainment of superannuation to earn their pension.

Can we call it democracy which was once defined as “rule of the people, by the people, for the people”? We can't really term it as the rule by the majority. We are really in a vicious circle, where our society is intimidated by unscrupulous people (hoodlums) aided and abetted by politicians (both ruling as well as opposition) and senior officials alike. In a nutshell we may sum up that the milk produced by our democratic cow-if we may term it so-is virtually consumed by its keepers or those who control the institutions at panchayath, block panchayath, municipality, municipal corporation, district panchayath, state legislature, and parliament levels. The common people at large are left high and dry to fend for themselves.

The point is that our democracy has failed to provide succor to the toiling masses. Is it then necessary to continue with this sort of democracy, or is it possible for us to devise a system in which the exploitation is completely avoided? Let us appeal to all good people who have not surrendered their own brain and spine to the controlling centers of political parties, and are willing to stand up bravely, to ponder over the subject, to organize, prepare for a final fight to establish a new democracy where the will of the vast majority of the people shall prevail over the might of the organized, pressuring, and intimidating sections of society.

### **A New Constitution**

At this juncture, let us put in a suggestion to usher in a new and equitable form of democracy where the will of the common masses shall be respected. Let us also hope that it will be possible to usher in a new India where public life is clean, and corruption is completely eradicated.

### **Salient Features of the New Constitution**

We must begin with a fundamental change. The Constitution recognizes only one religion, i.e., human religion, and only 2 castes, i.e., males and females. All other man-made divisions may exist and people may or may not follow their respective faiths, but the constitution shall not recognize or give any consideration to such divisions. Government, offices, university, college or school records shall not indicate or differentiate between any divisions on the basis of religion or caste. Neither will there be any division on the basis of political affiliations. No political party will be recognized. The entire population of the country should be encouraged to live like members of a single family, i.e., children of mother India.

Ward sabha, grama panchayath sabha, special grade (municipal) panchayath sabha, super grade (corporation) panchayath sabha, jila panchayath sabha, prantheeya panchayath sabha, and deseeya panchayath sabha shall be the new constitutional establishments. These houses shall have powers to enact and implement laws according to their respective jurisdictions, and in conformity with national policies. The block panchayath, and rajya sabha will be abolished as these do not serve any useful purpose other than increasing the burden on the exchequer. The basic constitutional establishment will henceforth be the ward sabha. Instead of the prevailing inactive wards, we will have hundreds of thousands of lively wards where laws are enacted and implemented without fear or favour.

### **Procedure of Elections**

Elections to the new panchayaths shall be held well in time to facilitate a smooth change over on the very next day after completion of the 5 year term of the outgoing sabhas. In any case the 5 year term shall not be reduced to suit the convenience of a few self serving leaders. All the adult voters who have attained the minimum age of 18 gathers at a hall, school, open ground or such other places as convenient, bringing with them the necessary identification documents as stipulated in advance. Without a customary voters' list, spirited campaigns based on political parties, huge processions, and without the usual displays of flags, cut outs and various forms of advertisement, the elections would be conducted in a peaceful manner in all the five hundred thousand wards on the same day. All those who are able to walk without the help of others will be eligible to caste cast their votes. On arrival at the appointed place, every voter affixes his/her signature in a ledger kept for the purpose. One senior

official assisted by 2 senior citizens of the ward shall over see the procedure. Since the procedure is in an agreed format, it will not be necessary to seek assistance from the police force. If it is however felt necessary, the police assistance may be sought.

Ten members shall be elected from each ward. The name of each candidate shall be proposed and seconded by different voters present. If there are more than 10 candidates, the election is conducted immediately by raising of hands by the voters present or by any other agreed procedure. Votes received by each candidate are counted and written down in the ledger. The 10 candidates who have secured maximum number of votes are declared elected. Once the ledger is signed by the senior official who over saw the election, the election procedure is concluded. A candidate should be less than 75 years of age as on the date of election. The government employees shall not be permitted to contest, whereas those employed in private sector may be permitted. No member shall be permitted to continue in office for more than 4 consecutive terms. Those who fail to cast their votes shall be fined a sum as decided at the first meeting of the ward sabha. However the sabha may exercise their discretion and wave the fine if there is sufficient and convincing reason for the absence.

Soon after the ward level election is completed, the 10 elected members sit down together, and elect 2 members to represent the ward in the grama panchatyath sabha. The most deserved out of the remaining 8 members shall be elected president and another as vice president of the ward. The remaining 6 members shall constitute the ward ministry, which shall handle the affairs of the ward governance for the next 5 years.

The ward sabha is empowered to enact and implement laws affecting subjects indicated in the ward list. Only the elected members are permitted to present any bill for the consideration of the sabha. It shall be mandatory to obtain a two-third majority out of those present and voting to get any bill as declared passed by the sabha. A minimum presence of 75% of the total voters is also mandatory for the ward sabha to conduct any business. If it is considered necessary to remove the president or the vice president from office, such proposal should receive the assent of at least two third majority of the total number of voters. The new incumbent should be selected from the remaining elected members, and fresh election can be held only on completion of the 5 year term.

It is the constitutional responsibility of the ward ministry to work for the solution of any problems faced by the people of the ward.

Whenever the ward sabha is convened, the decisions and actions taken by the ministry are reviewed, approved, altered, or cancelled, as is decided by the collective wisdom of the house. Though the approval is carried by a simple majority, alterations or cancellations should receive the assent of at least two third of the members present and voting. The ward sabha has to ensure that the cleanliness of the ward—every square inch of it—and daily removal of waste materials, including solid, liquid, or air pollutants, is enforced on priority basis, and the process should be continuously monitored and reviewed. It is also to be ensured that any damages to the roads are to be rectified within 24 hours.

In case of natural calamities, the ward ministry should play the leading role to ensure timely assistance to the affected families. It is also necessary to prevent thefts within the ward premises. In case of thefts, action should be taken immediately to provide justice to the aggrieved.

### **Voluntary Service**

In order to ensure smooth implementation of the aforesaid responsibilities, citizens' committees may be set up to assist the administration on a voluntary basis. Each elected member is required to identify at least 10 citizens for such voluntary service. Thus the total number of volunteers would work out to be 80.

If the task at hand is beyond the capacity of the voluntary force, the matter should be brought to the notice of the ward sabha, and assistance from sources outside the ward can be arranged. This ensures proper security for the entire population of the country. When such a system is enforced in all the wards in the country, the whole of India will be acknowledged as the most beautiful and healthy place to live in.

If there is waste land available within the ward, this voluntary force can be used to cultivate such land with the consent of the owner. Income derived from such cultivation shall be divided on 50:50 basis between the voluntary force and the land owner. The owner is then required to contribute two-fifth of his share to the ward development fund. This arrangement ensures huge revenue to the exchequer.

### **Complaint/Suggestion Book**

This is a register which is required to be maintained in every ward. Any citizen of the ward may write down his complaint/suggestion

indicating the date. It should be mandatory to find a solution to such complaint within 7 days. If it is not possible to solve the problem, the ward president should enter the same in the complaint register at the concerned panchayath office, and the panchayath president is hence required to find a solution to the problem within the next 7 days.

### **Financial Sources**

The ward sabha is entitled for the entertainment tax which is to be collected from the ward. Cinema houses, theatres, television sets or such other entertainment sources may be taxed as necessary. Agriculture or land tax at a minimum rate may be collected from the land owners. Those who own land holdings up to 25% may be exempted from the land tax. Other revenue sources have to be identified within the ward itself. Sand deposits available in the river bed may be auctioned by the ward sabha. Private chit funds may be banned, and the ward sabha may run chit funds on its own. Small scale industries or other suitable business ventures may be started by the ward sabha for the purpose of augmenting its income. The services of the voluntary force can be utilized for operating such ventures. Besides the above, each ward will receive allocation of funds from the concerned panchayath sabha, and the state government.

The income received should be deposited in the treasury and the same may be withdrawn as and when required. It is to be stipulated that a minimum balance of 2% of the revenues is to be ear marked as contingency fund to meet any unforeseen eventualities. This ensures that no deficit budget will ever be introduced in the ward sabha.

### **Ward Relief Fund**

Each ward should institute a relief fund. Without giving undue hardship to the people and with the help of the voluntary force, this relief fund has to be built up and maintained so as to enable the sabha to meet challenges that may be thrown up by unforeseen natural calamities etc.

### **Arts and Sports Club and Reading Room and Library**

It shall be a constitutional requirement to institute a single, common club and library for the use of the entire ward population. Even if there are many clubs already in existence, these should be combined into one single club, so that the entire population can take part in all the sports and cultural programmes organized by the ward sabha,



without giving any consideration for the different socio-religious or caste equations. Inter-ward competitions may be held periodically to encourage healthy and creative interactions between different ward sabhas. There shall be no room for terrorism, thefts, looting or deceit, and every member of the ward is duty-bound to work for the progress of the entire nation. With the abolition of sectarian politicking, this can be accomplished easily.

### **Educational and Employment Concessions**

Since there is no consideration on the basis of religion or caste, it is necessary to identify those families who are really in need of concessions in the local area. The most suitable institution to identify such needy families is obviously the ward sabha. The ward sabha meets, discusses the various aspects of backwardness, economic status and any other aspect that requires consideration and identifies the needy families and makes a report to the president of the concerned grama panchayath. The panchayath president is empowered to issue the necessary certificate after conducting necessary evaluations. This procedure ensures the most efficient method of solving all socio-religious or financial backwardness among various sections of people within the entire country.

### **Grama Panchayath Sabha**

This sabha is composed of the members elected from various wards within the panchayath. E.g., if there are 10 wards in a panchayath, the total numbers of members elected to the panchayath are 20 (10+2). All the members so elected, sit down together the very next day or as soon as the sabha is constituted, and elects a leader, to represent the grama panchayath in the jila (district) panchayath sabha. Out of the remaining members, the president, the vice president, members of various standing committees etc., are elected. The ward presidents are required to attend the grama panchayath sabha whenever it is convened. In order to pass any legislation, it is mandatory to obtain a two-thirds majority of the total members of the grama panchayath plus the ward presidents. In the example, it is  $19+10=29$ . In case it is felt necessary to remove an incumbent president or vice president, it is mandatory that at least 50% of the total members should be present, and 80% should support the resolution. This sabha is empowered to enact laws applicable within the panchayath, but it is mandatory that the laws made should conform to the national policies, and guide lines.

The professional tax and building tax, along with allocations from the state government form the main source of revenue for the grama panchayath sabha. Grama panchayath sabha may take suitable actions to augment the panchayath revenues. In order to augment the revenue sources, the panchayath sabha may go in for setting up of small scale industries or any suitable business. However, it is necessary to ensure that no loss is incurred from such ventures. In cases where the loss is reported, the loss has to be recovered from the persons who are responsible for the job or from the members of the panchayath ministry. This should be a constitutional requirement, and will serve as a severe deterrent against squandering away of the resources. The panchayath sabha may avail the services of the voluntary forces functioning within the wards. The funds received should be deposited in the treasury and a minimum balance of 2% is required to be maintained. A complaint book is another requirement in the panchayath sabha, and the complaints are registered by the ward presidents. These complaints are to be sorted out and solutions found within 7 days.

### **Grama Relief Fund**

Grama relief fund is to be maintained at the grama panchayath level. All official documents are to be transparent and any information as required must be made available to the citizens as and when it is requested for. Activities both developmental and administrative in the wards are required to be constantly monitored by the grama panchayath sabha, and if required, suitable actions may be initiated at the grama panchayath level. Only those matters which cannot be sorted out at the level of the grama panchayath sabha may be reported to the jila panchayath sabha, police or courts.

### **Jila Panchayath Sabha**

This sabha is constituted at each district level, and the membership is composed of one leader elected from each grama panchayath within the district. For example if there are 80 panchayaths in the district, the jila panchayath sabha will be composed of 80 members. As soon as the sabha is constituted, the members sit down together, and elect 12 members from the sabha, and these 12 leaders shall represent the district in the state legislature. The election may be conducted by raising of hands or such other simple procedure, and the voting pattern has to be recorded by the district collector or any other official designated for the purpose. The remaining members shall form the jila panchayath sabha. The president and members of the jila cabinet be elected from the members of the sabha. All the

grama panchayath presidents from the district shall also attend and take part in all the business conducted in the sabha, and take part in voting.

The jila panchayath sabha has jurisdiction over matters pertaining to subjects indicated in the district list. A minimum presence of 50% of the total members should be present to transact any business in the house, and if a bill is to be passed by the sabha, it should receive the assent of at least two-third of the members present and voting. A complaint register is to be maintained and any complaints registered by the pachayath presidents, shall be resolved within 1 week. The state government shall allocate certain funds to meet administrative expenditure to be incurred by the jila sabha. However the sabha has to find means of augmenting the funds. The most ideal method is to start a suitable, profitable industrial unit sponsored by the sabha which should be run efficiently. This provides employment to the people of the state and further it will generate funds for the business of the jila sabha. In case of losses, such loss should be recovered from the persons responsible for the loss. This stipulation should serve as a deterrent for the members against shirking away their responsibilities.

### **Prantheeya Panchayath Sabha**

This is the state legislature, and it is composed of the members elected from the district panchayath sabha. Two members per each district in the state shall be elected to represent the state in the deseeya panchayath sabha. (E.g., in Kerala state there are 14 districts, and the total number of members works out to be 168. Out of the 168 members, 28 members are elected to represent the state in the deseeya panchayath sabha.) The election may be conducted by raising of hands or such other simple procedure, and the voting pattern has to be recorded by the chief secretary in the ledger provided for the purpose. The remaining members (140 in the case of Kerala) shall form the The prantheeya panchayath sabha. The speaker, the chief minister and ministers shall be elected from the members of the sabha. The strength of the ministry shall be pegged at 10% of the strength of the sabha. The jila panchayath presidents shall also attend and take part in all the businesses conducted in the sabha including voting. (In the case of Kerala, this arrangement raises the strength of the sabha to 154 or 140+14).

The prantheeya panchayath sabha has jurisdiction over matters pertaining to subjects indicated in the state list. Legislation over the subjects indicated in the state list and levy of taxes as authorized by

the law are the responsibility of the state administration. A minimum number of 50% of the total strength should be present to transact any business in the sabha, and if a bill is to be passed by the sabha, it should receive the assent of at least two-third of the members present and voting.

A complaint register is to be maintained and any complaints registered by any jila pachayath president, shall be resolved within one week. If there are serious allegations and it is deemed necessary to make changes in the composition of the ministry or an incumbent minister may be removed or changed, such a resolution should receive the assent of a majority of 80% of the total strength of the sabha.

To augment the funds allocated by the central government, the state government has to generate sufficient funds to run the state administration. It is to be ensured that the funds allocated by the centre should be properly utilized. In case the fund is unutilized or lapsed, the minister concerned should be asked to resign. At least 1% of the funds generated by the state government shall be deposited in a contingency fund to meet any unforeseen eventualities. A prantheeya relief fund is to be maintained at the state level to meet any emergencies due to natural calamities etc. In order to augment the fund, donations may be accepted from people and voluntary organizations even outside the state. All official documents are required to be transparent and any information as required must be made available to the citizens as and when it is requested for. Activities both developmental and administrative in the state jurisdiction are required to be constantly monitored by the prantheeya panchayath sabha, and if required, suitable actions may be initiated to streamline the same.

### **Deseeya Panchayath Sabha/Parliament**

Deseeya panchayath sabha replaces the present lok sabha. The rajya sabha is abolished as it is considered a back door entry to the highest policy making body of the country. The deseeya sabha is composed of members elected (2 members representing each district) from all prantheeya panchayath sabhas across the country. These members along with all chief ministers of states form the total strength of the sabha that is empowered to transact business to govern the Republic of the Union of Bharatha Desam that is India. The president, the vice president, the prime minister, the speaker, the deputy speaker, and ministers are elected from the members of the house. The new incumbents shall wield powers for a full 5 year term. The president

shall not abrogate the Constitution or dissolve any of the elected sabhas before the completion of the 5 year term. The deseeya panchayath sabha, presided over by the speaker or the deputy speaker of the house shall exercise powers to remove the president, the vice president, the prime minister or any of the incumbents of the house, provided that the resolution proposing such action receives assent from a minimum of 80% members of the total strength of the house.

A complaint register shall be placed in the sabha, and suggestions or complaints are recorded by the chief ministers of states. Any complaints recorded shall be resolved within a time frame of 30 days. A national relief fund is instituted under the control of the president to meet national emergencies or natural calamities. Donations to this fund may be received from all people and institutions across the globe.

### **Recalling of Elected Representatives**

In case of serious allegations of any nature, it may become necessary to consider the recalling of an elected member of any of the sabhas before the completion of the full 5 year term. In such cases, the following procedure shall be adopted. If a member is required to be recalled, the grama panchayath in which his/her parent ward is situated is required to act. All the ward sabhas in the particular grama panchayath meets separately. In each meeting, at least 95% of the total voters should be present, and 80% of those present should endorse the recalling resolution. If this stipulation is fulfilled, any elected member shall be recalled and a new member elected in his/her place.

### **Amendment to the Constitution**

In cases when changes are required to be made in the constitution, it is necessary to obtain the assent of a minimum of 75% members present and voting out of a minimum attendance of 80% of the total strength of the sabha. If the proposed changes are on the fundamental features of the Constitution, such resolutions are to be further ratified by at least 50% of the pranttheya panchayath sabhas.

The post of governor shall be abolished. The chief secretaries of states, appointed by the president, shall shoulder all responsibilities currently discharged by the governor.

## **Judges**

Appointments of judges up to the jila level shall be entrusted to the Public Service Commission. Applications for appointments of judges to High Courts and Supreme Court are scrutinized by the president's secretariat, and submitted to the deseeya panchayath sabha for consideration. When the matter is considered, at least 75% of the total strength of the sabha, is required to be present, and the resolution has to be approved by a three-fourth majority of the sabha. Appointment is made by the president, after the names are duly approved by the sabha. The judges shall retire from service on completion of 70 years of age. The judges of Supreme Court or High Courts may be ousted after they are impeached by the deseeya panchayath sabha with the assent of 80% of the total strength of the sabha.

## **Union Public Service Commission**

A high power committee consisting of the president, the vice president, the chief justice of India, the prime minister and the speaker of deseeya panchayath shall be constituted to decide appointments to the Union Public Service commission. Senior officers who are highly qualified and accomplished in different subjects and aged between 50 to 65 years are appointed. The members retire on completion of 70 years of age.

## **Prantheeya Public Service Commission**

A high power committee consisting of the chief secretary, chief minister, speaker of prantheeya panchayath sabha, and chief justice of the concerned High Court shall be constituted to decide appointments to the prantheeya Public Service Commission. Senior officers who are highly qualified and accomplished in different subjects and aged between 50 to 65 years are appointed. The members retire on completion of 70 years of age.

## **Action against President, Vice President, Chief Justice of India etc.**

Any high ranking functionary of the union or state governments can be removed and if necessary punished in the light of sufficient evidence of corruption, malpractice, favouritism, nepotism etc. Such an action is taken on the basis of a clear complaint submitted to the ward president, and forwarded through proper channel to the speaker of the deseeya sabha, with due endorsement of concerned sabhas

from ward level. If the complaint is upheld by 80% of the total strength of the deseeya panchayath sabha; then the motion is considered passed, and the concerned functionary is punished accordingly.

Supreme Court judges, chief justices of High Courts, judges, senior civil service officials etc., can also be punished on similar grounds. In this case the action is to be taken by the central high power committee. Complaint in this case is to be submitted to the president by any elected representative at any level, but it should be supported by concrete evidence.

### **Remunerations and Perquisites for the People's Representatives at All Levels**

Ward members and panchayath members are required to produce itemized expenditure vouchers to claim refund of the expenditure that they have incurred in connection with public service. A member will be compensated with the amount that is actually spent plus an additional sum as approved per month. Similarly, the panchayath president and vice-president shall also be given an additional sum as approved per month. In addition to the above, these members shall be entitled for free passage in buses plying through the panchayath area. Any citizen of the panchayath has the right to verify the vouchers submitted by the members. In case of disputes the matter may be brought up for discussion in the concerned sabha.

In addition to the actual expenditure, the additional sums payable to the jila panchayath president, the vice-president, and the members shall be as per the guide lines duly approved or in accordance with the national policy. In addition, these members are entitled for free passage in buses plying in the district. A common vehicle shall also be provided for the official use of the members. The vouchers submitted by the members shall be available for verification by any citizen of the district.

In addition to the actual expenditure, the additional sums payable per month in the case of prantheeya panchayath members, ministers, and chief minister shall be as per the guide lines duly approved or in accordance with the national policy.

### **Minister's Privileges and Perquisites**

The members and ministers of prantheeya panchayath shall enjoy free hostel accommodation as long as they remain in office. There

shall be a common canteen facility to provide food as per individual's choice. Each minister may not be provided separate cars. They shall be provided with a common A class vehicle and a few number of cars, which may be used in turn and as per requirement. In case of emergency requirements, hired vehicles may also be provided. When vouchers are produced for re-imbusement, the purpose of travel should also be indicated. The information regarding ministerial travels shall be available to any citizen of the state on demand. Free travel facility may be provided by buses or by trains within the state or outside as per the requirement. Chief ministers may be given the facility of free air travel as per requirement. Expenditure incurred on maintenance of ministers' hostel should be pegged to a bare minimum amount which should be stipulated on yearly basis. There shall be no additional payments to the ministers as TA/DA etc. Security and police escorts are either avoided or kept to the barest minimum.

### **Central Ministers and Deseeya Panchayath Members**

In addition to the actual expenditure, the additional sums payable per month in the case of deseeya panchayath members, and ministers shall be as per the guide lines duly approved or in accordance with the national policy.

Members and ministers may travel freely by train anywhere in India. Ministers may be allowed air travel as well. A minimum number of A class vehicles may be made available for common use of ministers. Those who prefer to use private personal vehicles may be refunded the actual cost of fuel consumed. All these vouchers are to be audited according to rules laid down. Members and ministers from ward sabha to deseeya sabha, are duty bound to write diaries detailing the tour schedule on a daily basis, and these diaries may be verified by the auditors if required.

### **Pensionary Benefits**

Political activity cannot be considered as a profession, and therefore the idea of giving pension to members of prantheya panchayaths/deseeya panchayaths cannot be accepted as a matter of right. However a person who had been a people's representative for a full term of 5 years, and if he or she is not entitled for any other benefits from state funds, such needy members may be granted a suitable sum as pension after he/she has attained the age of 60 years. The idea is to give them a chance to lead a decent life, and not to pamper them by utilizing state funds.



In case it is felt necessary to revise the payment rates to the members of legislatures, the proposal should be submitted for consideration by the central cabinet. After the proposal is approved by the central legislature, the same has to be ratified by at least 75% of the total number of ward sabhas by a margin of 75% of the total membership of the respective sabha. If the proposal has to become law, the entire process has to be completed in 3 months.

### **Meetings of Various Sabhas**

A strict time frame has to be worked out and put in operation to convene meetings of various legislative sabhas. This is necessary to enable the presidents of lower formation sabhas to participate in the upper formation sabhas as and when these are in session.

The new government shall start on a clean slate after effecting necessary changes in the constitution. As per the present Constitution, we are aware that it is virtually an impossible task to conduct free and fair elections even to a co-operative body or a legislature. If we are to achieve the possibility of free and fair elections, and that too with the bare minimum expenditure, then we may say that we are approaching our goal. The above mentioned changes may become possible if the present members of parliament are willing to forget their sectarian or party-based ideologies for the sake of ushering in a new and equitable form of democracy which we feel is the most suited one for our impoverished masses to attain greater heights of equality through equal opportunities. This message and expectations for a mutually beneficial transformation of minds of our masses to pave the way for a prosperous future for our great nation should be brought to the notice of the common man through various seminars and media publicity throughout the length and breadth of India. Let us wait for that unenviable occasion when our efforts become fruitful and a new and equitable social order is realized in our great country.

### **Special Features at a Glance**

1. The Constitution recognizes only one religion, i.e., the human religion, and just two castes, i.e., males and females. However unofficially every citizen shall be free to carry on with the faith of his/her choice.
2. Party-less elections will be held in all the wards (total number being approximately 500,000) throughout the country, on the basis of adult franchise. There is no need to have a voters' list. Every voter will have to produce a suitable document as proof of

age and residence, such as ration card, school certificate, bank pass book, or birth certificate as stipulated.

- 3.** Ten members shall be elected from each ward. Out of these 10, 2 members shall be elected to the grama panchayath sabha, and from each grama panchayath, 1 member shall be elected to the jila panchayath sabha. From each of the jila panchayath sabha, 10 members are elected to the state legislative assembly or prantheeya panchayath sabha, and additionally 2 members are elected to the parliament or deseeya panchayath sabha.
- 4.** There shall be a council of ministers at the ward, village panchayath, district panchayath, state legislature, and parliament. The block panchayath and rajya sabha shall be abolished. Municipality may be re-christened as special grade panchayath, municipal corporation as super grade panchayath, state legislature as prantheeya panchayath, and parliament as national or deseeya panchayath.
- 5.** Each house shall have powers to enact laws (pertaining to subjects allocated to it) within its jurisdiction, and implement the same. This applies to developmental projects as well.
- 6.** Sources of income shall be clearly demarcated. Each ward, grama panchayath, jila panchayath, prantheeya panchayath, and deseeya panchayath shall collect taxes allocated to each of these, and funds shall be distributed as per suitable formula to be worked out and implemented. Tendency to spend more than the resources available shall be discouraged.
- 7.** The state shall institute a mechanism to assess the losses suffered due to natural calamities, diseases and prompt and proper compensation to the victims shall be ensured without waiting for a public outcry on the subject.
- 8.** Constitution shall guarantee free education and suitable employment to all those who are below the poverty line.
- 9.** There shall be provision to recall the people's representatives irrespective of their position.
- 10.** There shall be a suitable mechanism to ensure dismissal or punishment of an employee if he/she is found incompetent or guilty.
- 11.** Constitutional guarantees are to be ensured for a continuous process of activities to ensure road safety, health care, and clean surroundings.
- 12.** In order to ensure the proper and efficient functioning of various activities, it is necessary to set up an 80 strong voluntary force in each of the five hundred thousand wards.
- 13.** There shall be constitutional guarantees for setting up of clubs in each ward to oversee arts, sports, and cultural activities.

14. If it is felt necessary to increase the salaries, perquisites, or other amenities to the people's representatives at all levels, such proposals should be approved by at least 75% of the ward councils. Pensions should be granted to people's representatives only after attaining the age of 60 years.
15. Complaint books shall be kept in all wards, panchayaths, state legislatures, and parliament. There shall be a mechanism to probe the complaints received from people in a time bound manner and find solutions within a matter of days, i.e., an ideal time frame being 7 days to 1 month.
16. Whenever meetings are held at the panchayath level, all presidents of wards within the panchayath shall attend and take part in confabulations in the house. Similarly the panchayath presidents shall attend district panchayath meetings, district presidents shall attend state legislatures, and state chief ministers shall attend parliament meetings. They shall also be permitted to introduce bills and take part in voting.
17. The uncultivated or unutilized land in each ward shall be identified and the same shall be used (with the consent of the owner) for cultivation by a land army set up for the purpose or by voluntary organizations. The ward sabha shall arrange funds for cultivation, and the same can be recovered from the harvested produces. One half of the income so earned may be distributed within the voluntary organization, and remaining half given to owner of the land after deducting a fixed portion (say two-fifth) for developmental work within the ward.
18. Let us see what will be the expenditure involved for conducting the entire election process which in effect is finalized at each ward level. If a paltry sum of say Rs. 500/- is spend at ward level, this process can be completed. It works out to approximately (500\*500,000) Rs. 25,00,00,000/- (Rs. 25 crores only).
19. With the implementation of the foregoing points, it is envisaged that all problems relating to unnecessary expenditure, disruptive activities such as strikes, terrorism etc., shall become irrelevant, and peace and harmony shall prevail in the society. The billions of rupees saved by avoiding unnecessary expenditure can be utilized for constructive nation building purposes.