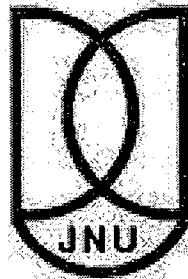


TRANSPARENCY AND CORRUPTION CONTROL
IMPACT OF PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN (MKSS) IN FACILITATING
ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Dissertation submitted to The CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE
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Date: 29/7/2009

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "Transparency and Corruption Control: Impact of People's Campaign (MKSS) in facilitating Administrative Reforms" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Centre for the Study of Law and Governance is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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INTRODUCTION

'Of every one rupee sent by the government, only seventeen paise reached the intended beneficiary'¹

Transparency has become an indispensable and survival requirement for governance in present times. The word has been prescribed as the panacea for corruption and a failing state services to the poor as well as the need for the rising globalization of markets. The significance of the word has brought many social scientists from wide range of discipline at a common platform. It has been used to understand 'power for people, achieving efficiency and effectiveness, democratization, increased in trust, resolving international crisis, legitimacy of government, heart of different dimensions of accountability etc'.² The general understanding in all these studies assumed the positive element of transparency. But, some economist has raised the question of transparency is good for solving all problems.³ In the same vein, sociologist pointed out that certain level of secrecy is good for society.⁴ However, these constructions of varied forms of transparency did not undermine the value laden rhetoric of transparency that is often used in governance discourse.

The normative doctrine of transparency changes its appearance from developed to developing countries. Though, the path and understanding of transparency may differ, the form of transparency understand in governance is bureaucratic transparency. Because, bureaucracy is the most important instrument of modern state through which the 'enabling, nurturing, and sustaining'⁵ functions of the state are implemented. In developed countries transparency is all about increasing legitimacy and participation by use of information and communication technologies, however, the underlining intention

¹ Rajiv Gandhi's observation on the level of corruption in development related funds spend by the government, 1985

² see A. Florini, (2007); R. Klitgaard, (1998); Koppell, (2005); B. Finel, (1999); F. Zakaria, (1997)

³ A. Part (2003) The Wrong Kind of Transparency

⁴ Moore & Tumin (1949) Some Social Functions of Ignorance, American Sociological Review, 14:6, p. 787-795

⁵ Foucault argues, the power of sovereign over life and death has transformed from body to population in modern times.

is to check abuse and discretion of bureaucracy in policy formulation and implementation through constant interaction via ICT. Similarly, in European countries it's about having a transparent electoral system, through that a transparent budgets and audits shall be given to citizens. Emphasis on transparent budget and audit is for clear procedure in procurement process of public services. In developing countries, maladministration is an issue and bureaucratic corruption is very high. So, in these countries transparency is synonymous to eliminating bureaucratic corruption.⁶

Christopher Hood (2007:196) explained, 'bureaucratic transparency laid emphasis on spelling out institutional process and procedural rules that has to be followed in the functioning of the organisation that would be otherwise considered as implicit.' He further elucidates, 'in this bureaucratic transparency the one who is able to understand and observed [the one that is familiar with the nuances of the bureaucratic process] is expert or agents... the emphasis of this form of transparency is on verification of written rules, protocols and procedures.'⁷ The limitations of such form of transparency are:

- 1) Shifting of venue or the institutional status to avoid public disclosure requirements.
- 2) Exploitation of the ambiguity over lines of demarcation in managerial contracts.
- 3) Avoidance of careful record keeping.
- 4) Stage management of outcomes in performance reporting.
- 5) Centralization of information may and withdrawal of services.
- 6) Routinization of all information.⁸

The above mentioned short comings point to the direction that the bureaucratic transparency may be well intended; there is a tendency within the institutions not to embrace the cultural change of more open conduct of state affairs. Factors prevent bureaucracy from embracing an open culture of conducting are cultural and structural.

⁶ Otenyo & Lind (2004) Faces and Phases of Transparency Reform in Local Government, International Journal of Public administration, 27:5, p. 287-307

⁷C. Hood (2007) What happens when transparency meets blame avoidance, Public Management Review, 9:2, p-196

⁸ Ibid:203

One of the impediments in achieving transparency in a bureaucratic set up is the institutional culture of sense of superiority. Bureaucracy as an institution is concentrated with personnels of technical or higher knowledge. This superiority in knowledge tends to keep their intentions and knowledge secret. As they have to compete with other institutions that deliver the same form of services that they engaged. To maintain the edge over others and to retain the sense of institutional 'can do' image, bureaucracy always try to protect the knowledge or information that is within their domain. This functional intention of maintaining secrets 'excludes the public, and to hide its knowledge and action from criticism as well as it can.'⁹ 'The concept of official secret is the specific invention of bureaucracy, and few things it defends so fanatically as this attitude'¹⁰ Due to conservativeness towards transparency, as this shall not harm their interest, bureaucracy prefers a poorly informed legislature or public. Concealing of information or knowledge from others makes bureaucracy a necessary and power center in the execution of policies.

Since information is the core for maintaining ones power, it becomes a closely guarded property of the state. In the name of providing public good, state devise a form of administrative power for person management by enacting coercive laws and establishing new institutions. Given that, prison¹¹ is one form of manifestation to maintain state's power. The information on the activities of the prisoner is collected and observed by the prison guard (state). On the other side the prisoner does not have any information of the guard. Information thus gathered is used to develop new means and methods to reinforce state's power and legitimacy of its actions. Through this asymmetrical information, power of dominance by the state is exercised over its people. If the information on the activities of the state (guard) is known to the people, the legitimacy of state action can be questioned. So to continue the dominance, it is desirable on the part of the state not to reveal information of its activities to the people.

⁹ Weber, Max (2006) Bureaucracy in Aradhana Sharam and Akhil Gupta ed. The anthropology of state: a reader (uk, usa and australia:Blackwell publisher) p. 64

¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ Foucault pointed out that in modern time prison is the place where the exercise of power by the sovereign (state) is on the mind of its subjects, the behavior of the people are controlled and thus the body is discipline according to the desired of the state.

The administrative institution of the state (bureaucracy) functions on a set of organizational rules – hierarchy, unitary chain of command, distribution of work, impersonal character and written rules. So, ‘the theory of modern public administration, assumes that the authority to order certain matters by decree does not entitle the bureau to regulate the matter by commands given for each case, but only to regulate the matters by abstractly’¹² Functioning on specific rules provides bureaucracy with discretionary power to decide on issues that are refer to them. The power of discretion grants them to fend off conflicting directives that is not in coherence with their interest. If there is transparency, the actions and decisions can be argued in the court of law if it deviate or meet the interest of the public.

In a constitutional democracy, judicial review is a constitutional provision given to the Judiciary to check the misuse of power by the legislature and executives. Under this provision, the aggrieved citizens can approach the judiciary to redress their grievances. To avail this constitutional guarantee, citizens required comprehensive, understandable, relevant and timely information on the activities of the legislature and the executives. When the information that reaches the citizens do not meet the above mentioned criteria, the opportunity of approaching the judiciary to seek justice is minimized. As mentioned above, state and executive institutions have an inherent tendency not to reveal information pertaining to its activities. This lack of transparency on the part of state and executives leads to dual outcomes. On one side the power of the state and executives over its citizens is consolidate and on the other, the function of the guardian of constitution to deliver justice is undermined. This is to say that the justice delivery system is paralyzed by the lack of transparency.¹³

At the same time, state requires finance to fund all the programmes that are being initiated for the welfare of the society. Because of this, proper financial management is of primary importance. State prepares a budget for every financial year. The financial requirement is estimated on the estimates send by different departments or ministries that are done by the bureaucrats. If there is no transparency in the financial statements made

¹² Weber (2006) Bureaucracy, op. cit. p. 50

¹³ Drewry et al. (1990) Judicial rerview: Quite enough for a fairly good thing? Public Policy and Administration, 5:1, p. 20-32,

by the bureaucrats, there is probability of over estimation leading to wastage of funds and bleeds the exchequer of the state. Transparency in financial management shall lead to proper use of money and with good intentions.

As the above discussion illustrated the institutional culture and structure does not encourage transparency. As a consequence a tension is created between the normative understanding of transparency, the model that is being employed and the institutional culture. To chilled the tension people are forced to campaign for the introduction and implementation of transparency laws. The initiatives by the people forced governments to initiate administrative reform. In Japan campaign for 'information disclosure law' was launched in 1980 by citizen's movement (an umbrella group of civil societies) and the legislation – Joho Kokai ho – came into effect in 2001. With regard to Thailand, the movement for political reform started in 1980's by two groups – radical, an offshoot of the student movement against military dictatorship and enlightened conservative, they came together in 1991 and push for constitutional reform. The movement forced the parliament to initiate major reform, one major reform was the re-writing of constitution in 1997 which mention 'right to know' under article 59, and this was retained in the constitution of 2007 under article 11.

Ombudsmen as an institution

Corruption has been part of an organized society. To prevent corruption and bring transparency one of the earliest institution envisages was ombudsman. Ombudsmen were public officers that have the authority to investigate on the complaint from people on executive actions which are not supported by law. The institution appeared in Sweden in 1809 during authoritarian monarchy as an internal authority within the executive power. The intention was to make administrators respect and implement their laws. With change in regime its function and role also changes. Establishment of parliamentary form of government turns ombudsman a mechanism for political control over the executive. However, by the second half of twentieth century, it acquires some autonomy and becomes a tool for citizens to control over the executives. Though developed in Sweden,

due to the efficacy of the institution, it has been transplanted to other countries – Finland (1919), Denmark (1955), Norway (1963), New Zealand (1962), England (1967), and other commonwealth countries in the beginning of 1960's – and has shown remarkable adaptability.¹⁴

The idea of ombudsman was also discussed in India. In 1964 a committee on prevention of corruption had recommended for the establishment of Central Vigilance Commission.¹⁵ A comprehensive scheme for ombudsman type of institution was proposed in 1966 by the first administrative reforms commission. Under this proposal, there shall be a super ombudsman (the lokpal) and lower ombudsman (lokayukta). The former shall have jurisdiction to both central and state ministers and secretaries and the later for each state, it shall have jurisdiction over the secretaries below the central and state secretaries. The institution of lokpal has not been enacted till today. However, some states have established lokayukta. In the last quarter of twentieth century, transplantation of ombudsman to bring transparency in the functioning of government is followed by reforms that are influence by managerial concept. The reforms based on managerial concepts were initiated due to large scale discontentment among the people over the wastage of tax payer money by the state. Broadly, the reform can see from two perspectives. One is the Westminster model – followed in U. K. and other commonwealth countries – and the other is Reinvention in United States of America.

Westminster model of reform: New Public Management

The reform that underwent in United Kingdom and other commonwealth countries is known as 'New Public Management (NPM).'¹⁶ The reform initiative was christened as 'Next Steps.' The core of the initiative was to shrink the size of the government. It envisaged separating the 'function into clear responsibility units,

¹⁴ see Saxena (1996), Magnette (2003)

¹⁵ the commission was to be headed by a single commissioner and composed of three directors: vigilance, central police, and general complaints and redress. The government accepted the establishment of vigilance and rejected the other two. Later government established a commissioner for public grievances redressal under Ministry of Home Affairs in 1966

¹⁶ Christopher Hood, (1991) Management for all Seasons, Public Administration,

identifying the cost (on accrual accounting) associated with producing outputs in each center and holding managers strictly accountable for results.¹⁷ This shall 'allowed ministers to assert greater control over senior civil service involve in policy making.'¹⁸ Because of this, wide range of agencies was established with accountable chief executives. And 'the agencies had contracts specifying their goals and the performance standards by which they will be judge.'¹⁹

In a similar vein, New Zealand reorganized the government into different corporations. The reorganization changes the tenure of chief executives from permanent to five years contract. Chief executives were given the authority of hiring, firing and payment of the employees. And the contract for the delivery of service (out puts measurement) is between the officials of the governments and the chief executives.

Though, the accountability mechanism is determined by the contractual framework, to bring transparency in Westminster form of reform, the focus of budgeting process was change from input to outcome. And the cost of the programme is determined through accrual accounting. This form of accounting made the executive fully meets head on the cost of their decisions and prevents them from passing the decision of raising cost to future years and prevents short term accounting. Accrual accounting combining with contract of out puts measurement transformed the whole process executing programmes into performance management. In this way, holding managers responsible for the decisions taken by them brings about transparency.²⁰

The election of John Major as the prime minister in 1991, reform in UK changes radically with the introduction of citizen charter. The charter visualized citizens into customers and the argument was that utmost care needs to be taken of the customers. It sets and sustained the 'agenda of focusing on the procedural values of fair, accurate,

¹⁷ Donal F.Kettl (2005) *The Global Public Management Revolution*, (Washington, D.C:Brookings Institution Press) p.16

¹⁸ David Marsh *et al*, 2001:53

¹⁹ Donal F. Kettl (1997) *The Global Revolution in Public Management: Driving Themes, Missing Links*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 16:3, p.448

²⁰ Donal F. Kettl, (1997&2005) *op. cit.*

speedy and transparent (i.e. open and comprehensible) administration.²¹ The second principle of citizen charter for public service proclaim, 'Information and openness: Full accurate information, readily available in plain language about how public services are run, what they cost, how will they perform and who is in charge [shall be provided to the citizens].'²² The idea of information and openness was consolidate with the passing of Codes of Practice on Access to Government Information and Openness in National Health Scheme. Under the code public can seek information from government departments and public bodies that are under the jurisdiction of Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (PCA) to:

- Give them the facts and reasons behind important policy decisions
- Show them their guidelines for dealing with matters affecting the public
- Give reasons for decisions that affect them and
- Provide information or provide a reason if they cannot.²³

Reinvention in America

Margaret Thatcher focused upon the need to make visible all government transactions through some slimming and streamlining of the 'overloaded government' which continues to function through centralization and opaque procedures, Regan initiated a reform process for America. The reform was confined to privatization of public sectors and most of the government functions were transferred to private sectors through contracting out. Emphasis of the reform process was to reduce the size of the government and passing of government programmes to private sectors. The initiative meets little success as the federal government spending change very little through programmes were contracted out substantially. A new phase of reform was initiated under Bill Clinton and Al Gore inspired by the book 'Reinventing Government' by David Osborne and Ted

²¹ David Clark (1999) Managerialism, Administrative Justice and Public Service Reform in Britain, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 65 p.477

²² David Clark (1999) Managerialism, Administrative Justice and Public Service Reform in Britain, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 65 p.478

²³ David Clark (1999) *op. cit* p.487, see the end note No. 6,

Gaebler. Clinton's reinventing government was initiated with the publication of Report of the National Performance Review (NPR) in 1993. Under 'work better and costless' initiative the government size was downsize and federal employee were given flexibility in performing their functions so that the cost is reduced. To provide impetus to the reform, procurement process was simplified through 'Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act' that empowered managers to buy goods from the shelf. Further, customer service plan was developed, through this a mental change was brought as managers started thinking of the citizen needs rather than thinking of agency need and meeting the broader policy objective. The reform was taken to another level in 1998 when information technology was introduced to improve efficiency in delivery of service. Introduction of information technology in delivery was done to reform the process of delivery so, that the goal of best manage government objective was achieved. Simultaneously, the federal responsibilities relating to policy making and administrative functions were devolving to the states. The passing of responsibility was done as the federal government struggle to reinvent its operation.²⁴ Devolution initiative was launched to increased responsiveness of administrators to citizens. The understanding of the initiative was that, rent seeking behavior of administrators shall be reduced if more attention is given to the needs of the citizens.

Demand for Reforms in International Financial Institutions

Apart from citizens demanding for transparency in the functioning of their respective countries, people across the world are asking for openness in the functioning of international financial institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc) since they are the major lenders for development programmes. These financial institutions realized in the 90s that the financial assistance that they provide for social welfare activities to various countries across the globe – poverty alleviations, development funds – are not producing the desired result. Corruption was found out to be a major factor and to remove corruption they started asking for transparency in the utilization of funds and

²⁴ Donal F.Kettel (2005) *op. cit*

reforms in administrative machinery. Simultaneously, they started demanding for reforms in government as a precondition for availing future loans. In spite of reforms in many countries the condition of people does not improve and worse of all the debt of the poor countries keeps on mounting. In response to these development people started demanding transparency in these organizations for development funding and lending guidelines for all the welfare or development initiatives. As an outcome from 1996 the World Bank and IMF has initiated institutional reforms to bring transparency and control rent seeking behavior.

People's concerned was seen in full force at the Seattle Group 8 leaders meeting (it's a body of leading donor countries and lending institutions) in 1999. Large people from across the world gathered in front of the conference venue demanding transparency; change in lending policy and to give more concerned to the poor. The 'Global Call for Against Poverty' a civil society organization organizes protest rallies, street plays in demand for the reforms in International Financial Institutions coinciding the IFI Annual meeting. Labour unions like 'Global Unions Group' and the 'World Confederation of Labour' produce reasons and factors for reforms in IFI by releasing joint statement – "Reform of the IFIs to Create Effective Instruments against Global Inequity and Financial Instability" – demanding a more consultative approach.

Transparency International

Transparency is a Berlin based nongovernmental organization. Its main objective is to struggle for transparency in the process of governance in the world. The engagement of the organisation expands from country specific to international organizations. To bring awareness among the people the organization publishes 'Global Corruption Report (GCR)' annually. The organization has a chapter in every country. Country chapter of TI raised issues to curbed corruption and bring transparency in their respective countries. Transparency International's chapters in Africa, urge all parties currently involved in talks that will determine the future of Zimbabwe to guarantee full transparency of the political process. The Korean chapter fights for corruption free transparent society in

society- public, private, political and civil society. In this continuing wave of demand for transparency, India also has its own share of movement.

Movement and Judicial Activism for the ‘Right to Information’

The move to make the process of governance more transparent started with popular activism in a remote Rajasthan village which finally reached the alter of the Supreme Court. The role of Aruna Roy’s MKSS is laudable and this becomes the focus of this dissertation. Judicial pronouncements and judgments suggest that *openness in the functioning of government is a desired quality and secrecy should be an exception not the norm*. The judicial recognition on the importance of ‘Right to Information’ can be felt from the following judgements. In Bennet Coleman vs Union of India, (AIR 1973 SC 60)²⁵, right to information was held to be included within the ambit of right to freedom of speech and expression, guarantee by the constitution under Art. 19 (1) (a).

Justice Mathew in State of U.P. vs Raj Narain, (1975, 4 SCC 428)²⁶ had observed, ‘to cover within a veil of secrecy the common routine business is not in the interest of the public. Such secrecy can seldom be legitimately desired.’ He further explained, ‘It is desired for the purpose of parties and politics of personal self interest or bureaucratic routine. The responsibility of officials to explain and to justify their acts is the chief safeguard against oppression and corruption.’

‘The concept of an open government is the direct emanation from the right to know which seems to be implicit in the right of free speech and expression guaranteed under article 19 (1) (a)’, observed Justice Bhagwati, and ‘open Government is the new democratic culture of an open society towards which every liberal democracy is moving and our country should be no exception.’ These were the observations made in S. P. Gupta v. Union of India, (AIR 1982 SC 149).²⁷

²⁵ Bennet Coleman vs Union of India, (AIR 1973 SC 60)

²⁶ State of U.P. vs Raj Narain, (1975, 4 SCC 428)

²⁷ S. P. Gupta v. Union of India, (AIR 1982 SC 149)

In *Secretary of Information and Broadcasting vs Cricket Association of Bengal*, (1995 (2) SCC 161),²⁸ Supreme Court pointed out, airwaves is a public property, since, freedom of speech includes the right to impart and received information from electronic media. So, distribution of airwaves has to be equitable between the government and private channels.

The people's Union for Civil Liberties vs Union of India, (2004 (2) SCC 476),²⁹ the court elevated the status of right to information to that of human rights and pointed out it is necessary to make governance transparent, accountable and participatory.

The judgements had shown that judiciary interprets the law and fixed the problems of governance, but did not provide a lasting solution to the issues. This being the reason, denial of information to people is used as a tool to serve the interest of a few. There exist a gap between the intentions of public and the outcomes from the formal institutions of governance, people are force to demand for a constitutional guarantee that shall provide a change in the process of service delivery. Because, corruption is a part of live in the rural India and the institutional mechanism did not address the issue, leaving the peoples at the mercy of few. Peoples demand for information began in Rasamand district of Rajasthan in 1991. The movement was initiated by Mazdoor Kishan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and the movement emphasized on exposing corruption in public works especially in drought relief programmes.

The government initiated drought relief work in the drought prone region of Rajasthan. In these works, the issues payment of wages below the prescribe level was a common feature. To tackle the menace MKSS demanded for the information on entry of quanta of work in the muster roll. The demand was denied on the ground of Official secrecy Act. However, the organisation muster to gather some rudimentary data on the allocation of works – construction of roads, buildings, ponds, canal dams – and wage payment. From the data, it was found out; government officials were billing more for the works than the actual payment being given to the workers. Exposing the corrupt practices

²⁸ *Secretary of Information and Broadcasting vs Cricket Association of Bengal*, (1995 (2) SCC 161)

²⁹ *People's Union for Civil Liberties vs Union of India*, (2004 (2) SCC 476)

requires actual information and cross checking with the work and payment at the ground level.

The movement faces resistance at different levels. Villagers that got benefit from the programme resisted it at the village level threatening the other villagers, the official's stick to the Official Secrecy Act. The obstacle did not deter the organization or the people in continuing the demand. Initial success of the movement came in the form of getting the right to have photocopy of the records from panchayat. Since, this does not address the larger issue the movement did not stop there. The bigger success came when Rajasthan government pass the 'right to information bill' in 2000. At the same time, the importance of the movement reached other parts of the country. The Press council of India call a meeting on in New Delhi in July 31 and August 1, 1996 on the issue and in the meeting it was decided to launched for a 'National Campaign for Right to Information'. The movement turns into a national level campaign. Finally the demand for a national level law was accepted by the government when it enacted the 'Right to Information Act.' in 2005. Right to Information helps to:

- Promotes openness, transparency and accountability in public administration;
- Empower people to combat state corruption;
- Prevent administrative arbitrariness;
- Bridge the gap between provider and recipient of public services;
- Make citizens part of the decision making process in the government;
- Provide responsive administrative;
- Strengthen the foundation of grassroots democracy through peoples participation in local governance and development activities; and
- Empower people to have access to other rights.

In the long struggle for right to information the tool used by MKSS to exposed corruption was *jan sunwai* (public hearing). *Jan sunwai* is an open forum that is accessible to public and is organized in large public space. Here, the activist of MKSS act as a facilitator or moderator and read out the developmental works that were taken up under the drought relief programme. Cross checking of the information entered in the muster roll is done with firsthand knowledge of the people. People those who have engaged in the works are allowed to come and share their information vis-à-vis the entered records. From the testimony of the people, fraud and corruption were able to find out and exposed in front of officials and the public. The event has transformed the model of accountability in governance. The traditional model of vertical accountability, which is confined within the realms of institutions, is change into horizontal accountability. Under horizontal accountability, people could take part in the process and the rule of governance is not confined in the domain of few.

The emerging debate on the need for involvement of people in the governance to control corruption through transparency can be gauged from the above discussion. Various forms of reform initiated were taken up keeping the interest of people at the core. However, the discussion brings out the fault line that exists between the institutional reorganization and the administrative practices prevalent at the ground. To achieve the goal of a dignified and an equitable society people's movement to prevail on administration becomes a necessity. This necessity is brings out by the MKSS lead movement.

Chapter – 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

*'Just as it is impossible not to taste the honey or poison that finds itself at the tip of the tongue, so it is impossible for a government employee not to eat up a part of government revenue. Just as it is not possible to find whether the fish moving under water is drinking water or not, similarly it is not possible to find out how much money the government employees have embezzled.'*³⁰

Corruption has been part of an organised society. Even in the ancient times thief of public revenue was a cause of concern. It was recognized that it affects not only the state exchequer but also the lives of common people. To control the problem mechanism like on the spot checking, constant shifting of personnel and provision for reward and punishment were in place. Moreover, in last quarter of twentieth century corruption became an impediment for better allocation of services. 'Corruption is caused due to the combination of monopoly and discretion and the absence of transparency in matters of service delivery.'³¹ 'Transparency is the central to contemporary discussion of both democratic governance and public service reform.'³² There are different meanings of transparency, within this 'there are at least two streams of through on transparency. One comes from jurisprudential and political theory doctrine and the other institutional economics ideas.'³³

Capturing the primacy of transparency, David Held (2006) explored the different directions of transparency based on their interaction with the habitat, i) Transparency upward – based on principal agent relationship, ii) Transparency downward – when the ruled can observed the ruler, iii) Transparency outward – when the event outside the organization is observable to the inside and iv) Transparency inward – when the outside can observe the events inside the organization. He further said at an abstract level the

³⁰ Kautilya, (350 B.C. – 150 A.D.)The Arthashastra

³¹ Kaufmann, D. (1997) Corruption: the fact, Foreign Policy, 107, Summer, p. 114-131

³² Hood, C. (2001)Transparency in Paul Barry Clarke and Joe Foweraker (ed) Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought

(London and New York: Routledge)p.863

³³ Ibid, p. 863

directions of transparency can be analyzed through varieties of transparency: a) Event transparency – input, output and outcomes information, they are measurable. b) Process transparency – it can be classified into procedural and operational transparency. Procedural transparency is the rule and regulations adopted by the organization whereas application of these rules and regulation is the operational transparency. These form of transparency can only be described, c) Retrospect transparency – it's the form of transparency where the information is released after the work is done by the organization in periodic interval, d) Real time transparency – the information of the internal organization process is released continuously, e) Nominal transparency – transparency indexes developed by organizations and information based on them and f) Effective transparency – information that is capable of processing, digesting and usable.³⁴

When these varieties of transparency are valued instrumentally it is 'generally perceived to be positive – limiting corruption and malfunctioning of markets, whether financial or product markets.'³⁵ And further there is a 'notion that transparency is positively connected to *efficient* performance , primarily because exposure to public view is presumed to act as a stimulus,'³⁶

New Institutional Economics

New Institutional Economics (NIE) studies the institutions and its relationship with the organizations. 'Institutions consist of formal rules, informal constraints (norms of behavior, conventions and self imposed codes of conduct) and the enforcement characteristics of both'³⁷ writes Douglas North (1996). NIE rejects the neo classical assumption that individual have perfect information and transaction cost is zero. Rather it assumes that individuals have imperfect information and bounded rationality – do not

³⁴ Held, David (2006) Varieties of Transparency, *Proceedings of British Academy*, 135, p. 25-43

³⁵ Vickers, (2002) in David Held (2006) Transparency as an Instrumental Value, *Proceedings of British Academy*,

135, p. 61

³⁶ Ibid, p. 61

³⁷ North, D (1996) Institutional Change: A Framework of Analysis, lecture deliver to workshop on economic history

have the ability to process all the information instantly even if provided. Due to these two factors all the transactions are taking under imperfect information, resulting in positive transaction cost. To reduce the positive transaction cost, for efficient transactions, institutions are required.

Douglas North (1996) looking from the perspective of choice theory said 'institutions and organisation changes over a period of time and the agent of change is the entrepreneur, the decision maker(s) in the organization and the choice is determined by the mental model of the entrepreneurs.'³⁸ If the choice is determined by the mental model of the entrepreneurs, the outcome is dependent on the environment where it is located. Then for a transaction to be transparent the environment has to provide the set up where there is symmetry of information. In North's (1993) understanding institutions provides the mechanism for transparency in a transaction. For him 'institutions form the incentive structure of a society, and the political and economic institutions, in consequences, are the determinants of economic performance'³⁹

Oliver Williamson (2008) argues that 'whenever there is form of make or buy decision, the contractual structure is easily recognised'⁴⁰ From his contract perspective the incentive structure is ex ante i.e mechanism design, agency theory, the formal property rights. Any uncertainty in the contract is minimized by giving incentives in the contract. However, there can be problems in contract implementation. Because, human have the ability to 'look ahead, uncover contractual hazard and work out the contractual ramification'⁴¹ and when it is combined with uncertainty, then the problem arises in contract implementation. To bring efficiency in the contract, uncertainty has to combine with high 'asset specificity'⁴² that will develop a dependency between them under a firm and shall produce an ideal transaction.

³⁸ North, D. (1996) Institutional Change: A Framework of Analysis, lecture deliver to workshop on economic history

³⁹ North, D. (1993) Nobel Prize lecture, Stockholm

⁴⁰ Williamson, O (2008) Transaction Cost in Claude Menard & Mary M. Shirley (ed) Handbook of institutional

Economics, (Verlag Berlin Heidelberg: Springer) p. 46

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 46

⁴² Asset specificity is the investment that may give positive return.

The arguments coming from choice perspective of Douglas North and contract perspective of O. Williamson position that through incentives or the of firm shall reduced the uncertainty in a contract and efficiency shall be achieved. These propositions have influence the present form of reforms that are being taken place in the world. In whatever way we look both argues that institutions has to create for efficiency. This understanding has driven the reform doctrines of New Public Management.

Reform initiated under the influence of New Institutional Economics has been criticized by the new institutional perspectives. Because, 'in an organization an individual does not change as a consequence of being in the organization rather waited for some time, try to understand the functioning mechanism of the organization and act according to his understanding of rightfulness, expected behavior and legitimate action. This is driven by being part of a political community, identity and expectation of its institutions (logic of appropriateness).' (March: 1994) Similarly, 'ideas and culture are central features and can be located within organizations and administrative systems or in the environment. A cultural approach implies that *reform* and changes in *reform* are a product of cultural traditions and path dependency, but also symbols, organizational rituals, cultural constructions, taken for granted , interpretation and rhetoric.'⁴³ 'The present form of reforms to achieve effectiveness by encouraging growth of multiple institutions does serve the objective. Mushrooming of institutions with the same features actually does not provide effective and efficient organization rather they are all an imitation of one of the successful origination leading to the isomorphism of organization.'⁴⁴ 'Moreover, reform depends on context, environment and situation. Spread or dominance of particular for of reform is influence by the fact that government look to other government and they initiated reform to hide the real substantive issues from public and raised their legitimacy.'⁴⁵

⁴³ Hood et al. (1999) in Tom Christenesen and Per Laegrid (2005) Agencification and Regulatory reforms.

⁴⁴ DiMaggio and Powell (1983) The Iron Cage revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and collective Rationality in

Organisational Field, American Sociological Review, 48, p. 147-160

⁴⁵ Meyer and Rowan (1997) *World Society and the Nation State*, American Journal of Sociology, 83:2,p. 340-363

The reform models under NPM are much narrower, heavily emphasized on individual rights and choices and purposive in intention. This atomization of human behavior raised multiple issues on nature of human being because human is political, cultural and moral being apart from economic being. Question of access and equity are general goals. Moreover, 'people are not sufficiently informed about the direction of change and empowered to contribute to the change.'⁴⁶ And above all, contract is a divisive mechanism. The language of contract is a legal language and very few had knowledge of this language. So, collection of information contained in the contract becomes a laborious task, showing that there is an element of uncertainty, information asymmetry and opportunism in a contract. This led to the division of people among the known and unknown. This exclusion of human being and their understandings from the reform process that aims to bring transparency through reduced transaction cost, in turn creates positive transaction cost.

The above discussion elaborated that the concept of incentives and contracts under NIE reduces the uncertainty in the transaction and new institutionalism critic its reform measures. Putting high value on institutions creation denies the ideal concept of citizenship in a democracy. It is perceived that citizen shall be a part of the policy formulation and implementation, not a consumer in a democracy. In fact 'consumer perspective is nonpolitical, or even antipolitical, focusing primarily on the furthering of individual self interest.'⁴⁷ With the notion of people as consumer, the notion of democracy has been reduced to the question of process. To reclaim the substantive part of democracy, people campaign for 'democratization of the public services and individual empowerment ... [with claim] for access to power and democratic accountability'⁴⁸ Through democratic participation different stages of opaque decision making shall be eliminated and laws and rights for citizen participation shall be codetermined on issues that affect their lives. In this direction people initiated right based

⁴⁶ Derry ormond p.9

⁴⁷ Frederickson 1996 in aberbach, Christensen, models of reform

⁴⁸ Wise, R. Lois (2002) Public Management Reform: Competing Drivers of Change, *Public Administration Review*,

62:5, p. 554

movement to change the model or structure that exclude them and assert for political participation not in term of election, but in policy formulation and implementation.

Democratization to achieve transparency

‘Democracy is the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people’s vote.’⁴⁹ And rights based people’s movement has to be located within the larger domain of democratization. This implies that people have a normative understanding of procedural and substantive part of being a citizen as democracy involves contestation and participation and they also ‘belief that *they* should have more say in how things are decided at work, and that work organizations and other institutions should be made more humane.’⁵⁰ This normative understanding guides people to demand for democratization implying the ‘existence of civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble and organized that are necessary to political debate and election campaign’⁵¹ That is to say democratization is the ‘expansion of access to power, influence and decision making, democratic accountability, citizen and employee empowerment’⁵²

The world has seen different phases of democratization, starting from 1820s to 1926 where around 29⁵³ countries opted for democratic form of government. This phase is known as first wave of democratization. After a short break, after the Second World War (1945) to 1962 approximately 36⁵⁴ countries opted for democratic form of government. The period is known as second wave of democratization. For a short spell of 15 years, the process was in a lull stage. Then the third wave of democratization began from 1970s and 80s. During this period many countries became democracies. However,

⁴⁹ Schumpeter (1993) in Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: University of Oklahoma)p. 6

⁵⁰ Wise, R. Lois (2002) *Public Management Reform: Competing Drivers of Change*, *Public Administration Review*, 62:5, p. 556

⁵¹ Opt. cit, 22 p. 7

⁵² Wise, R. Lois (2002) *Public Management Reform: Competing Drivers of Change*, *Public Administration Review*, 62:5, p. 558

⁵³ Huntington, P. (1992) *Democracy’s Third Wave*, *Journal of Democracy*, 2:2, Spring, p. 12-24

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 13

Zakira (1997) pointed out; 'there has been a rise in the number of illiberal democracies in the world. Though most of the countries in the world are conducting free and fair election, constitutional democracy is producing democracy of centralized regimes, the erosion of liberty, ethnic competition, conflict, and war.'⁵⁵ To avoid this breakdown in democracy, reducing the number of people who harbor the feeling of anti democratic motives, consolidation of democracy has to be initiated. The concerned is not with the rapid death rather the slow death of democracy, i.e. erosion of democracy, which is the 'intermittent or gradual weakening of democracy by those elected to lead it.'⁵⁶

In consolidation of democracy 'democratic forms are transformed into democratic substance through the reform of state institutions, the regularization of elections, the strengthening of civil society, and the overall habituation of the society to the new democratic "rules of the game".'⁵⁷ This process can be a success only when the consolidation is deepens into the level of masses.

'At the level of masses public consolidation is indicated when the overwhelming majority of citizens believe that democracy is the best form of government in principle and that it is also the most suitable form of government for their country at their times'⁵⁸

Beyond deepening regime performance and political institutionalization is also very important. The legitimacy of a democratic regime is directly correlated with the performance. Most successful democratic regimes are those that provide what the people's want. In this direction economic performance and political performance are important component. This does not mean that good economic performance shall transform into democratic political culture. However, if the economic performance leads to development and sustained over a long period of time, there is probability that there shall be change in political culture. Political performance is about giving 'political freedom, accountability, and constitutionalism' and 'faithfulness to the spirit of

⁵⁵ Zakaria, F. (1997) The Rise of Illiberal Democracy, *Foreign Affairs*, November/ December, 76(6), p.22-43

⁵⁶ Huntington, P. (1996) Democracy for the Long Haul in Andreas Schedler (1998) What is Democratic Consolidation? *Journal of Democracy*, 9:2, p. 97

⁵⁷ Carothers, T. (2002) The End of the Transition Paradigm, *Journal of Democracy*, 13:1, p. 7

⁵⁸ Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracies: Towards Consolidation*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press) p. 68

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democratic process *and providing order in the society* are the important factor for consolidating democracy.’⁵⁹

A major element that can undermine the consolidation of democracy is corruption – both political and bureaucratic. The avenue for raise of corruption is lack of order in the society and this can damage the democracy thereby undermining its legitimacy. To control the menace of corruption strengthening of political institutions is very important. Institutions that need to be strengthened are ‘state administrative machinery, the institutions of democratic representation and governance and the structures that ensure horizontal accountability, constitutionalism and the rule of law.’⁶⁰ One of the mechanisms to strengthen the institutions to control corruption is when the institutions are within the reach of the people. In such a scenario, people shall have direct access to the people that are occupying the responsible positions in the institutions. It shall also provide for the people to take part in decision making processes that have a direct relation to their daily lives.

Decentralization

At the very beginning it is pertinent to make a distinction between the concept of decentralization that is being pursued under NPM reform model and the concept that is being used here. Decentralization under NPM is about delegation, here the emphasis on handing over some authority to the lower rung of administration so that they have some autonomy in taking decisions. On the other hand, the one that is being used in the context of the present work is devolution – when the power is transferred from central, regional to local government. Accordingly, decentralization is a process of taking the decision making institutions near the people. The issue of decentralization becomes important as the power of nation state has been confined within a territory, the responsibility of deciding the faith of the citizen have been in the hand of few and are locate at the centre or regional level. People living at the far off places do not have a sense of belongingness

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 89

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 93

to the decisions that are being taken at the upper level on their behalf. At the same time those decisions makers shall not be able to understand the needs and requirements of these people. This distance between the policy framers and the people results in transparency gape and implementation failure.

Judith Tendler⁶¹ (1997) in her work 'Good Government in the Tropics' has shown that policy can be successfully framed and implemented when people are actually part of the whole exercise. In the implantation of irrigation programme in Taiwan, the involvements of the authority were till the village level. At the village level, all the decisions of starting from the construction of canal, direction of the canal, control of supply of water are all in hands of the particular area. This promotes trust, understanding, transparency and accountability in the implementation of the policy. Her work has shown the positive elements of taking the decision making process to the level of people.

Larry Diamond (1999) explained the benefits of a decentralized government. They are: i) citizen development – the sense of collectiveness shall be developed through constant participation in the decision making process, ii) Accountability and Responsiveness – the member of the local government shall become more accountable for their actions and decisions since they are under the constant vigil of the local people, iii) Representativeness – representation of people from different social back grounds shall be possible since the local government provides an opportunity to be part of the decision making body which is not possible for higher democratic institutions, iv) Checks and Balances – local government can act against the majority decisions at the upper level, v) Contingent Consent – it provides a window for the loser at the national level election to occupy some power at the local level, providing a places of being part of the governance process and acting as a counterbalance all the time.⁶² In hind side all these positive elements of local government present a path to control corruption from people minting vested interest. So, the reform driven by the normative idea of democracy and consolidation of it (though laborers and time consuming) shall result in the empowerment

⁶¹ Tendler, J. (1997) Good Government in the Tropics, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press)

⁶² Diamond, L. (1999) Developing Democracies: Towards Consolidation, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press) p. 117-160

of people through access to power and information. An outcome of it shall be increased in transparency and reduction in corruption.

Research Methodology

The present work is based on the data collected through participant observation. The tools used for data collection were open ended interview, informal group discussion, and formal group discussions. Through these tools information on the working of MKSS as an organisation is collected. The discussions brought out the various methods the organization had used in their struggle. Interaction also brought to light the difficulties that the organisation had faced in their long struggle.

Moving away from the organization, I meet the villagers of Devdoonghri, Kamlighat, Vijaypura proper, Narainji ka Bela and asked them about the movement, their understanding of the notion of transparency, their views, involvement in the struggles etc. leaving behind the villagers I also meet the Vijaypura Gram Panchayat Sarpanch and have a close look of it. It is very important from the point of transparency because it has inscribed the information on the walls of the panchayat.

An experience of attending a youth congress organised by MKSS at Bhilwara brought out many issues which concern ordinary people under an authoritative system. There, an interaction with other people working on the issues of transparency and corruption control allowed me to get a glimpse of the passion for the cause. Later on another meeting was attended at a Jan Sunwai at Chilashore. There I learn how the whole process of jan sunwai is conducted and the politics that came out during the hearing are recorded.

One of the biggest limitations on the collection of data/information was the mobile nature of the MKSS activist. They are always on the move, so all the data and information has to collect while walking together. Apart from this the field study was a pleasant experience. Total duration spend in the field is approximately one month.

Conclusion

Democratization for improving the quality of governance produce by democratic polity and people's movement against corruption leads to the direction that to bring transparency and involve people in the decision making process, democracy needs to be consolidated. Consolidation of democracy can be done at various levels – elite, organization and masses, and it can be achieved when democracy is deepened up to the level of masses.

Decentralization is a form of reform that can bring about transparency in the governance process through local involvement. This does not mean to say that decentralization does not have any defects. There are probabilities of 'elite capture, discrimination and intolerance, waste, redundancy and confusion, exacerbation of geography inequality.'⁶³ However, these can be controlled if the consolidation of democracy once reaches the level of masses. If once the democratic values are engrained on the mind of the masses rights and duties shall be properly observed. At that level, it shall be difficult to engage in any form of activities in opaque. Information shall be available in an understandable, digestible and timely that shall lead to enhancement of transparency and reduction of corruption.

However, insistence on the assumption that through contract and incentives, information asymmetry can be minimized and the cost of transaction can be lowered. There by transparency shall be achieved is too much because in a human being there are both tangible and intangible information. To calculate the cost of transaction for intangible values or information shall be a high task. So, reform should be based on the ideas produced by the combination of different thoughts from the local people, people in the administration and elected representatives.

⁶³ Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracies: Towards Consolidation*, (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press) p. 117-160

Chapter 3

Impact of the Campaign on Transparency and Corruption Control

*'Right to live, right to know'*⁶⁴

*'The whole struggle is about the right to live because, without transparency of a government and right to know of a people, we cannot access any rights, whether that be development rights, political rights or human rights, all of them are beyond our control. So, it is important for us for survival and is a movement which has been understood by the common people and defined by them.'*⁶⁵

The above quoted words have reverberated in the Parliamentary debates many times during the debates upon the right to information bill. As the words in the quotes reflects, the campaign is not directed to any particular individual or party rather to the system that does not provide people an opportunity to know what is being done by the system for them. Lack of information inevitably leads to exploitation, loss of opportunities and rule of the powerful and the privileged.

The campaign for transparency was taken up at different levels, against the law that allows official secrecy, market exploitation, disparity in the payment of wages to labors in developmental works, corruption in election and secret working of panchayats. This engagement has been able to bring transparency and controlled corruption in the following areas:

Right to Information Act

The highest point of the campaign in terms of achieving has been the enactment of 'Right to Information Act' in 2005. The act provides a constitutional guarantee to the people to demand for information from the government officials, except for certain areas like defense, or information that threaten national security. The act helps to

⁶⁴ Campaign slogan for Right to Information

⁶⁵ Statement of Aruna Roy, Activist of MKSS

- Promotes openness, transparency and accountability in public administration;
- Empower people to combat state corruption;
- Prevent administrative arbitrariness;
- Bridge the gap between provider and recipient of public services;
- Make citizens part of the decision making process in the government;
- Provide responsive administrative;
- Strengthen the foundation of grassroots democracy through peoples participation in local governance and development activities; and
- Empower people to have access to other rights.

The importance of the act can be understood from the words of Lal Singh (an activist of MKSS)

*'We have the power like an elected member of knowing what has been done in our name. Moreover, we became a part of the democratic process beyond voting.'*⁶⁶

The words of Lal Singh signify that the act provides the people to become a part of the democratic process beyond electoral participation. Through this act, people can have information on issues that affects their lives. If people have access to information, the level of misuse of funds, power shall be detected thereby it reduces the chances of corruption. It also inferred that the opportunity of being part of the democratic process consolidates democracy. Because of the consolidation of democracy, people will support democracy as an idea, respect the rule of law and support the democratic institutions for checks and balances. At the same time there will be political activism, political involvement, political efficacy and political participation.

⁶⁶ Interviewed on 16th Feb, 2009

Openness in the functioning of Panchayat

The lowest tier of governance in India is panchayat, an institution that is very close to the people and most of the welfare programmes that the state initiate are implemented through it. So, it is very important for this institution to be transparent in its functioning. The campaign has been able to realize people that they can demand the panchayat to be open in its functioning. The word of Bhim Grampanchayat Pradhan reveals:

*'You are troubling me to conduct social audit. So, after my term is over, I shall see how smoothly you function'*⁶⁷

On the other side, openness in the function of Vijayapura grampanchayat portrays a different picture. Kalu Ram the sarpanch confesses proudly that:

*'In my present tenure as sarpanch for more than three years nobody has raised the issue of conducting social audit. The reason behind is that I kept all the information open to the people, bill and voucher are put up in the office notice board for people to look. Information on the works that are being taken up in the panchayat is written on the walls of panchayat, and work place.'*⁶⁸

Social audit is a mechanism through which people can raise question on the functioning of panchayat. In social audit the panchayat has to open all its accounts, purchase vouchers and programme strategies undertaken in the village to the people. If there is any miss match between the accounts and the works undertaken or any event that is not visible to the villagers, the sarpanch has to give an explanation for the action. An incident in Janawat gram panchayat brings out the power of this mechanism of controlling corruption. Raj Kumar recalls the incident in the following:

'Ramlal Gujjar, sarpanch of Janawat Grampanchayat, constructed a check dam. He received money for the construction from different government departments – irrigation department,

⁶⁷ Observation made by Lal Sing, 16th Feb, 2009

⁶⁸ Interviewed on 18th Feb, 2009

*panchayatiraj department, water supply department and forest department. The fraud came to light during the jan sunwai*⁶⁹

In this way, through social audit and jan sunwai corruption is controlled and brings openness in the functioning of panchayat. It is interesting to look into some policies which have shown a substantial impact of the coming of the right to information act.

Openness in the Public Distribution System

Public Distribution System (PDS) is one of the largest programme taken up by the government to distribute food grains to the poor. Here the food grains are sold to the public at a subsidize rate and it provides a means of sustaining the lives to the poor. This being the reason, transparency on the part of the dealers of PDS is very important. However, PDS has a record of not distributing the food grains to the eligible peoples and siphoning of the food grains and selling it in open market. But, such action has been control to a large extent due to the campaign and the RTI act. The words of Raju bring out the mechanism of control:

*'A lady did not get her share of ration from the public distribution system when inquired for the reason behind it from the distributor, she was denied to share with the information. Offended she approached me to write an application mentioning the issue of non availability of the ration. When she gave it to the proprietor of the shop the information was reveal to her the next day. Though she did not get her ration but she was satisfied with the reply and get the full information of the ration distributed.'*⁷⁰

This is made possible by the passing of RTI and awareness bring about by the campaign.

⁶⁹ Observation made by Raj Kumar 16th Feb, 2009

⁷⁰ Raju is a sympathizer of MKSS and presently work on contract in vijayapura gram panchayat under National Gyan Kendra Programme. Interviewed on 16th Feb, 2009

The Devdoongri PDS dealer is an MKSS activist Ram Singh⁷¹. Setting an example to others he opens the PDS store in the afternoon every day. Here, people came without doubt or fear of not getting the ration as he kept the ration in open to all in the store. At the same time he followed all the rules and regulation that is required for the issuance of the ration such as maintaining of records of distributed ration, name and address of the people who have collected ration and constant available stock in the store. The news is passed on to the people who came to collect the ration so that no person is left out of their share. Openness in the working of Ram Singh is narrated by Pushpa Bai as:

*'I do not have to worry of not getting ration because I have the latest information of stock availability on a daily basis. So, when I have the money to get my share I can come and collect it. There is complete openness in the delivery system and dissemination of information relating to the ration. Even if I did not get my share due to exhaust of the stock I can see the details since he kept it open to all'*⁷²

In this way, openness in the functioning of PDS is achieved through proper dissemination of information.

Election expenditure

In a parliamentary democracy election is the process through which people choose their representatives for a certain period to the highest decision making body. The election is regulated by the election commission of India and assisted by the state election commissions. For the smooth, free and fair conduct of election, the commission set certain rules like limit in the duration of campaign, cap on the expenditure limits etc. However, during the election time story of distributing alcohol, distribution of cloths, money to buy votes, ferrying of voters to the election booth by the supporters of candidates and organization of feast comes up quite often. These incidents happened inspite of a limit on expenditure and it marked as a precursor to future corruption.

⁷¹ PDS under Ram Singh is near the head office of MKSS, visited the on 23rd Feb, 2009 afternoon

⁷² Interviewed on 23rd Feb, 2009

Expenditure limit for panchayat election in Rajasthan is Rs. 5000. But, candidates like Narayan⁷³ Singh, Teja Singh⁷⁴ and Kalu Ram⁷⁵, who is supported by MKSS, fights the election with minimum expenditure and the expenditure promising to bring transparency and control corruption in the functioning of panchayat. These are reflected in the words of Teja Singh:

*'When I fight the panchayat election, I tell the people that I shall not call you for a dinner nor there any big promise. I can say this much that I will work with full dedication with your cooperation and you shall be informed of the works that are being taken up in the village. Moreover, to reduce the election expenditure I shall not be putting up big banners nor there shall be campaign by using large vehicles, I shall campaigned by walking the nooks and corners in the village'*⁷⁶

Narayan Singh, Teja Singh won their panchayat election in 2000 with expenditure less than Rs. 1600. Their campaign model and less expenditure became a benchmark in future election in other villages. This is reflected in the case of Kalu Ram when he was elected as sarpanch of Vijayapura gram panchayat with full support from the poor people. His story of the victory day reflects the impact of the campaign and belief in the goals of the campaign. Kalu Ram narrates:

*'On the day of victory my father had arranged for a huge victory possession. He had hired vehicles, but I refused it saying that this is not required I shall walk and thank the villagers. My father was disappointed with my reply but he eventually accepts my point.'*⁷⁷

Old age and widow pension scheme

Government of India provides monetary assistance to citizens of above 65 years, who are living below poverty line through the 'old age pension scheme' and for 'widows above

⁷³ Interviewed Narayan on 24th Feb, 2009

⁷⁴ Interviewed on 20th Feb, 2009 on the journey to attend 2nd Youth Congress

⁷⁵ Interviewed on 18th Feb, 2009

⁷⁶ Interviewed on 20th Feb, 2009 on the journey to attend 2nd Youth Congress

⁷⁷ Interviewed on 18th Feb, 2009

the age of 18.⁷⁸ The pension is distributed on a 3 month basis through state welfare department or through post office. The monetary assistance is of Rs. 200 from the central government and an equal amount is expected to be contributed by the state government. There have been cases of people not getting the pension after a certain period of time. This has an impact on the lives of the poor and illiterates people living in the village. First their means of livelihood is curtailed leaving them with no other proper source of income. Second, because of illiteracy they do not have any idea of the mechanisms that are in place – ombudsman – to redress their grievances.

The case of Sita⁷⁹ and Anshi Devi⁸⁰ is an example of existence corruption in the distribution of pension. Initially, they were availing the benefit of the government old age and widow pension scheme. Suddenly the pension did not reach them. Whenever they approached the panchayat for a solution to their problem, the panchayat either informed her that the process is going on or finds the panchayat not opening. Left with no other option they reign to their own faith. However, things change after the Kamlighat jan sunwai. They recalled the day in the following:

'During the jan sunwai, the issue was raised by activist of MKSS to the District Collector which was present on that day. The collector informed that the scheme is still in place and the pension is being disbursed on a regular basis. Since, there is case of people not getting the pension I shall look in to the matter...'

After the jan sunwai the collector initiated an enquiry and found out that the post man who was handling the charge of distribution has siphon off the money. As an outcome of that inquiry the post man was taken off the duty and the money was recovered. In the following months Sita, Anshi Devi and many other are getting their pension regularly. In this way corruption was detected in the distribution of old age pension.

⁷⁸ The Hindu, 27 November, 2007

⁷⁹ & 80

Sita and Anshi Devi were interviewed on 17th Feb, 2009

Commodity pricing

Essential commodities are an important ingredient for the sustenance and leading of a proper and decent live. The prices of the commodity are determined by the whole sale dealers and individual shop owners. In a village which is far away from the competitive market, the prices of commodity are at the mercy of the local shop owners. High price of commodity affects the people at large especially the poor. Moreover, there is no transparency in the selling of products to the general public. Bills for the purchased items were not given to the buyers. Autonomy in determining the prices and absence of issuing bills legitimized corruption in the market place. This has a profound impact on the lives of the people in a place like central Rajasthan where the main occupation is labor. Due to the nature of economic activity the income of the people is very low. This can be ascertained for the fact that the rate of minimum wage determined by the government is Rs. 11 during the 90's and later it reached Rs. 100⁸¹ per day in 2009. To control the menace of corruption existing in the pricing of commodity MKSS opened kerana store by taking loan from the villagers at the rate of Rs. 10 per individual.

The kerana store sells commodity to the public by taking 1% as profit and bills are given to every customer for the commodity they buy. This brought a drastic change in the market and people. The alternative option made available, provides the people with an opportunity to compare the prices and at the same time people started demanding bills for any product they buy from other stores. Insistence of bills by the customers forced store owners to sell the product at the prescribe rate as mentioned on the product. At another level the culture of demanding bills empowered the customers to question the owner when the prices are not compatible to the price mention in the product or is deviated from the prevailing rate in other store. In this way corruption existing in the market is controlled by bringing transparency through bills.

⁸¹ As informed by Lal Singh, an activist of MKSS on 16th Feb, 2009

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme⁸²

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed by the government of India in 2005. Under this Act every individual is entitled to 100 days of work. The implementing agency of the programmes undertaken under NREGS is gram panchayat. It is important to mention here that MKSS is one of the organizations that campaign for a legislation that provides guarantees certain period of work to the poor. So, when the act was enacted many transparency safe guards were incorporated in the area of work measurement, wage payment and work distribution.

The act mentions that within 15 days of demand of work by an individual in the gram panchayat it is the responsibility of the gram panchayat to provide work to the individual. If the panchayat fails to provide work, the panchayat is responsible to pay to the individual as unemployment allowance as prescribed in the Act notified in respective Act.

In matters of work measurement, the measurement is done both by the work supervisor and the labor. Only when both agreed on the measurement of the quanta of work done, the record is entered on the record book. Involvement of the labor in the measurement of work reduces the opportunity of manipulating the measurement by the work manager. Apart from it, the work supervisor has to undergo training for three days and should be a class 8 pass.

Under schedule 17 (1) of the act the gram panchayat is responsible to conduct social audit on a regular basis or it can be held on demand of the people. In the social audit the panchayat has to table all the records that are related to works taken up. Like the details of issuance of job card, work given to individuals, number of people that demand work etc.

Most importantly the payment of wage has to be done through a bank account of post office. The payment is done within a fortnight after the entry of record is completed at the Panchayat Samiti level. Thus through the incorporation of transparency safe guard in the

⁸² NERGA 2005, www.rural.nic.in

act and use of bank and post office account corruption is controlled and involvement of people in every stage of the work brings transparency in the implementation of NREGS.

Conclusion

The success of the MKSS campaign is overtly and substantially visible in the way they have influenced the transactions of the government as well as day to day providers of services to ordinary people. The turning point in their lives has been the 'Right to Information' Act without which they would have been ruthlessly crushed as trouble makers. It has reduced corruption to a minimal level in the government and other institutions working in the region but statistical studies on that have yet to emerge. The campaign has promoted a transparent form of governance, well functioning institutions and an alert village republic. It has been able to generate open discussion about issues and the need for transparency in the functioning of government and private organizations including common daily need shops and charitable non-governmental organizations (NGO).

The above mentioned achievements are modest if the ramification of corruption is taken account. There is a tendency even on the part of administration not to reveal information to the public. The debate on the question of revealing 'file noting' was a case. After the one year of RTI implementation a debate was generated by the administrators that file noting is not under the preview of RTI. A new battle was fought to prevent this tactic of administration not to reveal information. The reluctance on the part of administration can be explained by the stories that came up during the youth congress. In one of the session an elderly man said when he applied RTI to one of the government department; a reply came from the administration that the information you are seeking contains one thousand pages, so come with one thousand rupees and collect your information.

Due to the above reasons the battle for transparency has to go a long way. Awareness on the part of people for transparency needs to be rise considerably. There has to be complete mental change on the side of administrators and the masses. Transparency has to be ingrain as a part of daily activity. This led to the direction that campaign for transparency has to go on and it needs to be expanded in other places also.

Chapter 4

STRATEGIES OF THE CAMPAIGN

*'My dream has a right to know; why for ages it has suffered?
My hand has a right to know; why it has been left empty for ages? Till
today it has no work.
My legs have a right to know; why it has to travel from village to
village...?
My village has a right to know; why there is no electricity, road and
public distribution system?
My vote has a right to know; why big promise on one day and no work
for the rest of the five years?
My life has a right to live. Is life without rights a life? It is not worth
living.'*⁸³

The above quotation is one of songs used in the campaign of Right to Information. The song reminds us that how life is meaningless in the absence of work, proper food, insensitivity of the political society and so on. Song is use as a tool for spreading the importance and primacy of information for leading a dignified life. As the larger numbers of people in the village are illiterate, it is necessary for the campaign to developed different methods that convey the message and mechanisms of exposing corruption. Moreover, most of the villagers cannot use the established institutions like the court, ombudsman to fight against corruption due to non availability of information on the activities that the state is engaging. It was interesting to see the similarity between this Campaign of the right to information activists and the 150 year old campaign of the Central India Bastar tribals against the authoritative British Governor of the region who unilaterally increased the price of paddy during times of a severe drought and famine

Campaign deploys different tools and mediums to reach out to the institutions and to the larger society to bring policy change. Mahatma Gandhi use non-violence as a tool in the struggle for freedom against British oppression. In a similar vein, MKSS uses different processes to expose corruption and bring transparency in the functioning of

⁸³ Campaign song for second convention on People's Right to information , taken from 'En hathongko Janne ka hak hai' by Vinney Kumar

administration. The objective was to bring a mental change and also an institutional policy change that shall benefit the society.

Jan Sunwai

Jan Sunwai is an open public hearing innovation. It is conducted in an open spacious ground cover with colourful tent. Generally, it is a convenient place for people of the village to come so that there is a larger participation. The hearing is conducted in the presence of people of known-repute in their field of work, government officials and the sarpanch. The process of hearing is facilitated by MKSS. Activists of MKSS read out the details of the works that have been taken up in the village. Along with it, the finance allocated by the government, the officials who authorize it, those people who got the sanction with the amount are also read out. This is cross examined with the firsthand account of the people who have knowledge of the mentioned work. After the cross examination, those people whose names have been mentioned in the list as workers, contractors or helpers are allowed to present their experiences. It is followed by a discussion of the villagers whether the said work had actually taken place or not. In this way people get to know the distributed amount, the actual spending, the concrete individuals engaged in the work and most importantly the nexus of corruption in the developmental works.

Expose of corruption during jan sunwai can be observed in the following cases⁸⁴:

'In the construction of Bagariya Talab, the official record shows the used of 316 cement bags. However, Madan Singh, who worked in the said construction as a labourer informed the gathering that to his knowledge only 4 or 5 cement bags were used. To this disclosure, supporters of the sarpanch got up and tried to wrap up the leak of information.'

'In the construction of an approach road under NREGA, the official record shows a used of 200 to 250 trolleys. Against this official information Ram Lal Gujjar, a villager, disclosed to the gathering that only 4 tractors were used in the said construction'

⁸⁴ The cases are from the Chelesore jan sunwai, 5th March, 2009

'Water is a scarce property in this part of the world. So, issue of water invokes emotional response from the people. In connection to the supply of water, the official record mention that 4 water tanker was dispatched to every village during the draught period. This information invites a huge protest from the women that are gathered during the jan sunwai. An elderly woman furiously shouted through the loudspeaker that for the last 4 years not a single water tanker had arrived in her village leave alone the question of 4 tankers, she had been walking far off places to fetch water. She was supported by the other women present there.'

In this way, corruption in developmental works that were undertaken for Mid-Day Meal Programme, Aganwadi Programme, Assistance for Pregnant Women, Anti-drought Relief Programme is thrown up. Through jan sunwai there has been a shift in accountability direction. As Rob Jenkins (2007) said 'by participating in popular audits of government spending, people were able to assume new roles as citizen-auditors, blurring the conventional distinction between vertical and horizontal channels of accountability.'⁸⁵

Development of Model Panchayat

Panchayat is the closest form of government to the people. Development of panchayat into a transparent and corruption free functioning unit was one of the innovative thinking developed by MKSS. In this direction activist or supporters of MKSS started contesting election from 2000. In 2000, Narayan became sarpanch of Kushalpura gram panchayat and Teja Singh for Todgarh gram panchayat.

During the Narayan's tenure in 2002, the provision of ward sabha was implemented in ward no. 9. This is the first ward sabha implementation in his panchayat. Not only this, he also kept all the information relating to Mid-day Meal, Assistant to Pregnant Women, Labour List of Akal Rat Relief Work open in the panchayat office. Individual having an interest to know the details of the budget were also welcome. Before social audit became a part of the NREGA, he organised social audit for the works that were undertaken during his leadership.

⁸⁵ Jenkins, R (2007) civil society versus corruption, Journal of Democracy, 18:2, p. 60

Vijaypura gram panchayat is also another model panchayat developed by MKSS. Working closely in tandem with MKSS, the sarpanch has painted the boundary wall of the panchayat with yellow paint. The painted wall is inscribed with information related to works, programmes or government schemes that takes place in the gram panchayat. At the same time, in the work sites information board, the day of commencement of the work, amount that is invested in the work, expected date of completion and their contractor or the in charge of the work is put up. The panchayat also initiates National Knowledge Centre in collaboration with National Knowledge Commission. Under this programme, the village youths are imparted with computer knowledge.

In this way model panchayats are being developed so that it helps in spreading awareness on transparency and corruption control among the masses. These panchayats try to convey the message to all policy framers and implementers, that transparency of an institution brings progress in the society. Simultaneously, it also tries to change the discourse of organisational functioning from rule bound secrecy to rule bound openness.

Scam Chariot

Rath yatra is a common form of political tool used by politician to spread the ideas they intent to follow and work for it. It is a powerful medium of communication because rath provides an alternative to the modern means of communication and information technology. This advantage was exploited to the fullest by MKSS in spreading the evils of corruption.

The first Ghotala Rath (Scam chariot) was taken out during the RTI protest at Jaipur. The yatra was organised deliberately to coincide with the yatra of a prominent leader. Ghotala rath yatra was thronged by people who listened to the speech of the leader. The speech goes like, 'this country is full of scam. Fodder scams, Bofors scam, Securities scam..... scam are actually helping me. If I am your leader I have to be happy, if I am happy you all shall be happy. So it is the duty of the people to make me happy. And never forget corruption is the life line of this nation. So, do not try to stop corruption.'

The interactive level of the rath with the people came to the front more in a village. The villagers came out in large number assuming that the leader on the Ghotala rath is a real political leader. Leader on the rath asked villagers to act in a manner that benefit him. To this, the villagers replied saying that they are also poor. The leader wraps up the conversation by saying that they should better understand it.

Use of rath as a medium to express the pros and cons of transparency and corruption is a new method in the anti corruption campaigns. Through these raths, MKSS tries to reach out the poor people in a medium that is mythically embedded in their memory. Later, the rath was taken out in Delhi and held an interactive session at the lawn of Krishi Bhawan. Thus, Ghotala Rath plays a crucial role in spreading the idea of transparency and harms of corruption.

Protest Songs

*Coca cola, we do not want.
Gold spot, we do not want.
Bisleri bottle, we do not want.
Mercedes car, we do not want
Right to Information, definitely we want.⁸⁶*

Songs are a powerful medium for expressing ideas. It has been used as a tool of protest or propaganda. It has a powerful impact on the poor people as singing folk songs are parts of the rural culture. Ideas coming in the form of songs establish an instant chord with the issue. Instant connection with the ideas led to the spreading of awareness on the need for transparency.

Songs are the soul of the movement and a medium of subversion. Individuals are in the gathering singing songs build a strong bond of solidarity and community belongings. When things did not favour the campaigners, they lift their spirit by singing. When they march towards their destination, synchronic singing of songs brings

⁸⁶ A campaign song, first heard during the 2nd youth congress opening session.

collectiveness and on the way spread the message of corruption and inspires participators the need to have a 'right to know'.

Help the Design of Work Plan

Under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, the planning of the work has to be initiated at various ward sabha. The recommendation has to be approved by the panchayat. Approved work plan is implemented under the NREGS. It is clear that proper planning is required, because any sign of denial or exclusivist plan that favour some at the expense of others shall not get clearance.

MKSS activists help the ward sabha on the design of work plan. For example, if the village decides to construct a road, the road has to reach every household in the village as a principle. A person residing at the end of the village cannot be denied connection. In such cases, they interact with the villagers and discuss how to construct the road. Along with this, they are also provided with the rationale for the design so that any objection can be given a proper justification. Dhanna Singh, an MKSS activist, elaborated as:

'First of all we find out the needs of the village that can be fulfilled through NREGS. If there is a shortage of fodder in the village, we advise them to go for forestation. The design for forestation is laid out through drawing. One design is trees in combination with trench; the rationale behind it is that ground water shall be raise if the rain water is collected through the trench. Also the branches of the trees can be used for domestic consumption and as fodder. In this way women shall not go long distances to collect fire woods and water'⁸⁷

The relation of this form of activities with the campaign is that peoples are taught to think in a collective manner. Once the notion of collectiveness is imbibed, explaining issues that affect their lives becomes easier. When they are informed of corruptions that exist in their village and the need for transparency, they came out strongly to speak against the people involving in the corrupt practices.

⁸⁷ Interviewed on 23rd Feb, 2009

Impart training

Social audit, work site supervisor are some of the transparency safeguards that have found their way in NREGA. These safeguard were incorporated on the advice of MKSS. Their importance in achieving transparency and control of corruption was known from its application in the MKSS developed model panchayats. So, strengthening these safeguards is a move toward the goal of achieving transparency. Weakening of these safeguards shall destroy the gains made from the struggle. Hence, to strengthen the safeguard, MKSS activists engaged in providing training to other people.

MKSS activist like Lal Singh, Khema Ram and others went to different places to organised work shop on Social audit and work site supervisor training. The importance of work site supervisor in bringing transparency is explained by Raj Kumar, a work site supervisor trainer and Mota Ram a social audit member of Vijayapura gram panchayat commets:

*'Work supervisor is the one that gives work to the labourer. The works are given after measuring areas beforehand. And after the completion of the work it is the work supervisor who is again going to measure it, though in the presence of the labour. Entry of the measured quanta of work into the record book is also done by work supervisor. If the supervisor made any mistakes in the process of measurement both in assigning the task and in the completed task, there shall be loss to someone. If the assigned work is less than the prescribed work there is loss to the state, if given task more, it is a loss to the individual. Both the cases may legitimize corruption in the long run.'*⁸⁸

*'I was part of the active struggle. But, age has taken over me. However, good things have to be maintained. With this objective I have undergone social audit training. Aim is to help my village and people in having a transparent panchayat.'*⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Interviewed on 16th Feb, 2009

⁸⁹ Interviewed on 18th Feb, 2009

Women empowerment

Empowerment refers to the instilling of belief in the individual so that they can decide their future and take decisions on their own. This is crucial in a highly conservative place like Rajasthan. Most of the women get married at an early age becoming dependent on the male members for every decision. The issue is compounded by the level of literacy. Finally, the economic activities they undertake are laborer. To change the dynamics, MKSS encouraged women to come forward and take active participation in the activities that benefit them.

In this direction, MKSS provides training for construction of buildings. The aim of the initiative is twofold. First is to increase the income level. Women are professionally labourers at the work site. They engaged in the collection and distribution of the construction materials. The hard labor translates into low wage. To increase the income they are trained to become constructor, as the wage of constructor is higher than the labor.

Secondly, constructors are generally male. If women could enter the male dominated area, it shall have a profound impact on the outlook of women in the society. Traditionally women are not allowed to go without the company of a male. When women started working in a work place which is traditionally male dominated area, they will be force to change their assumption of women, their capability and ability.

Political Engagement

Political parties and political leaders play an important role in the process of policy initiative. The consent of political leaders is crucial for mustering the numbers in the house in the time of voting. From the early period, MKSS opens channels of communication with both the major political parties - Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party.

As a part of the campaign, MKSS approached both the party to include the issue of 'right to know' in their manifesto for the 2000 election. BJP declined, whereas Congress accepted the idea and included in their manifesto. After the election, congress came to power and legislates right to information for Rajasthan. At the central political party level, the congress and communist Party of Marxist, leaders were approached to include RTI in their manifesto. Issue of RTI was included in the manifesto of both the parties. The following election was won by them. They formed the Common Minimum Programme and included RTI in it. And finally it came out as a central act in 2005.

Opening of Fair Price Shop

Trading of goods is an important part of the human existence. For a more competitive environment, the country liberalized the economy in the 90's. This brought a change in the market mechanism. The prices of commodities were fluctuating. To stabilize the prices of market MKSS open kerana store. Now the number has risen to 6 stores.

The kerana store performed the task of challenging the forces of market. Opening of the store brings down the prices of commodity. Reason for the fall in the prices is the low profit margin (i.e. 1%). Keeping the profit margin low reflects the value laden approach. The kerana store is not only for making profit but, a clear indication for social concern for collective existence.

Apart from the concern for collective existence, the store has a political meaning. When the market is forced to close by political or communal violence, the kerana make it a point to remain open on those days. It tries to take the notion of collective existence beyond the arguments of religion, caste or colour.

Self as model

The organisation is working in and with some of the poorest people in the country. The reason is both natural and manmade. Natural because of the mountainous region growing

food crops is extremely difficult. Man made because some people are holding to the power centre – panchayats, caste or class – so that the developmental funds are utilized by this small group of people.

Since, the movements main concern is the poor, the activist lead a simple life. Foods are prepared collectively and have together in a place. Washing and cleaning are all self service. There is no distinction between big, small or senior or junior. Everybody has rights to express their opinion. Salaries of the activist of the organization are compatible to the minimum wage as determined by the government. Most importantly, the organization kept all its account in the public domain, whenever someone wants to have a look they are free to do so. Through these mechanisms, the organization sets itself as a model for those coming to the organization or those who are supporting the cause.

School for Democracy⁹⁰

Democracy is a space where everyone can come and occupied it. The methods used to occupy the space contain an element of exchange of ideas and contestations. Democracy also demands the respect of others. However, in a place where the hold of traditional norms is strong, there arises a strong need to make the people aware what really democracy is. Also, it is only in a democratic form of government where people enjoy rights and guarantee. Instilling these ideas of democracy is very important from the perspective of MKSS because the campaign for transparency is a rights based movement.

To achieve the larger goal of the campaign MKSS establish School of Democracy. The school is located at Bhim which is 8 km away from the main office. As its goal is to spread the ideas of democracy, it is presently engaging in workshops and youth congresses. In collaboration with other sister organizations the school organises 2nd National Youth Congress, at Bhilwara from 2st to 22nd February, 2009.

⁹⁰ The building of the school is under construction at Bhim when the researcher went to collect the information/data.

At the congress all the participants stay together under a big hall. This was done to make the participants aware that human being is same and equal. There is no difference in caste, community, gender or in class. One positive element of staying together was that the activities that were to be done in the hall like folding of matters, cleaning of the hall was done in a collective way. This develops a bond between the people presents out there.

As part of the Congress, people were divided into different groups under different coordinators. Each group was given topic like 'youth power', 'terrorism', 'politics in the country' and 'media and society' and asked them to deliberate over it. The points that the groups discussed were informed to the gathering by the coordinators. One incident reflects the spirits of democracy in the Congress. When a group coordinator of 'youth power' informed the gathering that 'the group feel that there is a divide between the city and rural life so, we think there a lack of potential among the people from rural India, especially the women.' To this statement, a group of young ladies, who were part of the group rose and objected to the coordinators observation. They claimed that there is no difference in potential rather it's the lack of opportunity. They also declared that if the organizer makes the arrangement they are ready to station girls for village in their homes during the vacation and vice versa. The point here is not of the potential or acceptance of the proposal; it's about the spirit of democracy. The dissenting voices of the young girl were heard by everyone. The respect for dissent was uphold, which is one of the ideals of democracy. Through such small incidents, though important, ideas of a democratic society are instilled on the young minds.

In one more event, participates were divided into groups and asked them to share information with expert. One such group was RTI, and people who have gained experience in extracting information from government by using were present as experts. They were Khema Ram, he has applied more than 200 RTI application and activists from Parivarthan – an NGO working for RTI in urban area. They clear doubts of the participants, their difficulty in getting information and most importantly they taught the art of filling RTI application – including the question models – so that, government did not suspect their intentions.

Kisan Mela

Spreading of awareness of transparency to control corruption is very important for the success of the campaign. This objective can be fulfilled when they got the opportunity to interact with many people. In this direction MKSS organised Kisan Mela on 1st of May every year. The Mela is special in its own way because the products that are being sold are made by the villagers. In the Mela, MKSS activists interact with visiting villagers and share ideas on transparency and issues relating to corruption. They distribute pamphlets, posters and educate them of the threats coming from the politicians, local elites, the initiatives taken by the government and about rights of the citizens.

Conclusion

The campaign has brought out many innovative styles of governance. It may at one corner match the city states of old Athens in Greece but on the other have strong concerns which match a successful governance model in this neo-liberal state. It tries to bring a change in the lives of poor villagers by making them a part of the decision making process. This can be achieved by making the functioning of the decision making institutions transparent, making people aware of their rights, increasing the bargaining power of the people and making them understand the issues and its ramifications. The campaign is an ongoing process as 'the awareness level is very low among the masses' said Lal Singh. Further he comments 'Vjayapura is the fruit of 20 years of struggle.'

The biggest lesson which the campaigners have learnt is that there is no easy path to get the targeted goal. Different forms of tools and techniques are required to achieve the goal. The tools and techniques help in achieving the short term goals. The tools and techniques are also of little use until the campaign issue is raised to the level of politics. This work suggests that no campaign can turn issues into policies unless they have the capacity to influence politics.

CONCLUSION

It is an evident fact that corruption exist in every organised form of society. It is also an undeniable fact that corruption affects the lives of people in terms of allocation of resources. In modern state, the function of distribution of resources is done through the instruments of the state and its administrative apparatus. Corruption has such deep roots into the Indian state system that any effort to root it out ought to begin from the bottom. and also be capable of rejuvenating every aspect of public life. Even the most well intentioned government would fail at the altar of corruption in the administrative hierarchy.

There is a long history of people expressing concern about the administrative apparatus to concentrate power in their hand. To check this ability, people had pointed out the need of having proper mechanism for checks and balance. One of the mechanisms devised to control the concentration power in administrative apparatus is the legislative oversight or political accountability. Under this mechanism, the executive has to report to the legislators on the activities that being engaged by them. It was expected that through this constant watch on the functioning shall prevent the concentration of power. Apart from this, an independent judiciary was also established to adjudicate on matters that deviate from the prescribe norms and regulation. However, the heart of these mechanisms is transparent. Only through transparency the established mechanisms shall be able to have proper control over the executives.

The irony is that with the growth of population functions of the state have increased without shedding the old ones. Expansion on the functions of the state has led to the involvement of bureaucracy in term of policy formulation and implementation. Change in the role of bureaucracy from an implementer to that of formulator in policy has undermined the accountability mechanisms that were put in place. Undermining of accountability has led to the reorganisation or reform in government from time to time.

In recent time, the world has been experiencing a reform movement under the generic name New Public Management. For example, the Reinvention of government in America was initiated by President Bill Clinton under the name of National Performance Review. However, the reform was in fact taken up in response to the frustration expressed by the people against the state bureaucracy. Since the reform was initiated by the state – top down approach – it failed to incorporate the wishes of people, even though the initiatives are being taken up in their name. This has created a gap between the process undertaken and aspiration of people. The existence of disjuncture between the understanding of people and those initiating the reform process has led to the intervention from people in the reform process. This is the reason why the world has seen people's campaign for reforms, expanding from Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia.

In fact, reform needs to take into account the wishes and aspiration of people. It has to be in harmony with the local environment and perception of the people. People's understanding of the resources and their methods of using them needs to be carefully understood. Since, successful implementation of the reform process depends on people participation. It is only through the participation of people that a strong bond is developed between the state and the ideals the state stands for. By producing a synergy between the state and the people only development for all in every sphere can be achieved.

India remained a mixed economy and also outside the sphere of cold war politics. This being the reason both the forms – traditional and modern – institutions coexist together. The coexistence is visible prominently in rural part of the country. Where, the local government institutions – panchayats – are still dominated by the upper cast people of the society. The sarpanch of a panchayat is still elected from a dominant upper caste family, which has been traditionally exercising dominance over that particular area. The dominance of a particular group of people over the seat of power leads to the development of an unholy alliance with the administrators. This alliance helps in the diversion of developmental funds from the intended targeted people.

The problem becomes compounded for poor people as they do not have proper land holding to engage in cultivation work. So, their life becomes completely dependent

on the works that are initiated by the state. This issue of corruption due to dominance of particular group of people and lack of alternative means of livelihood other than the government initiated works has threaten the very existence of vast majority of people. This exactly happened in Central Rajasthan.

In Central Rajasthan, government initiated works are the only means of earning livelihood. Being a mountainous region cultivable land is very limited, private investment is low and even for the small cultivatable land, cultivation is a seasonal exercise. So, people are forced to move to other places in search of livelihood. To provide some relief in extreme conditions, government use to initiate short term measures to tide over the crises. These initiatives become victims of the unholy alliance. The beneficiary of the initiatives goes to those people who are close to the leader or are within the loop.

The mechanism becomes so chronic that life becomes threatening for the poor people. Since, reforms from initiated by the state was not able to allocate the resources people were force to campaign with the issue of rights guarantee by the constitution. The movement provides a sense of belongingness to the issues that is being raised so, people came out in large number and supported the cause.

This does not mean to say that the movement does not face any difficulty, during the initial period of the movement no body take them serious and in a way corruption was legitimised by the society. However, slow and steady the movement spread by using different mediums and intervening in other areas that affects the lives of the people. Realisation of people from different sectors – market, public hearing and message from songs, push the movement forward. The movement was also helped by some benevolent officers in the initial phase.

However success came when the issue was taken up by the political parties and the issue of RTI became a topic of discussion within the political arena. The first came the passing of right to information act in Rajasthan than followed by the central government initiative. Indirectly the movement and passing of the legislation has contributed in the consolidation of democracy in the country. People started feeling a sense of participation in the whole process of governance, as the act not only helps in

bringing transparency in the functioning of institutions and control corruption but, it also started feeling that democracy is the form of government where everyone has a space to lead a better life.

MKSS has been able to make a bold attempt to achieve a focussed policy change in Indian governance, but more than that it has convinced that campaigns can be an effective means to influence democratization of administrative reforms.

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