

Public Concern



The Quarterly Newsletter of Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT)

April 2023

Profile

Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT), a registered trust, founded by concerned citizens, mobilises public opinion, increases public participation and activism towards promoting honesty, transparency and accountability in governance.

Vision

To strive for good governance, contain corruption, uphold and inculcate values and enhance Sadbhavna in the citizens.

Board of Trustees

CHAIRMAN

Mr. V. P. Raja

CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

Mr. J. F. Ribeiro

TRUSTEES

Dr. R. K. Anand

Mr. Gulam A. Vahanvaty

Mr. Prasad Chandran

Mrs. Rekha Shahani

Mrs. Ana Saldanha

Mr. D. Sivanandhan

Mr. Rajesh Desai

Mrs. Abha Singh

PCGT ANNUAL EVENT



The PCGT Annual Event was held, after a gap of two years, at Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium on February 8, 2023. The theme of the event was 'Youth For Ethical Governance'. The Chief Guest was Mr. Bittu Sahgal, Founder of Sanctuary Nature Foundation, Editor of Sanctuary Asia, India's first and largest circulating wildlife and ecology magazine (1981) and Founder-Editor of Sanctuary Cub (1984). He believes that India's ecological foundation is the bedrock on which the nation's economic foundation sits. He also believes that climate change poses the greatest ever threat to the stability of the Indian nation.

A detailed report about the programme is given on page 3.

EDITORIAL



In this Quarter PCGT has hit the ground running! After two years of the Covid pandemic PCGT has reverted to the classroom method of interacting with its Interns. Meeting and greeting in person, visiting schools for Kuchh Aur sessions, holding seminars and lectures in colleges and contacting government officers in their offices to learn how India is really governed has motivated both, our staff and our students, to share and learn.

From the text of our activities listed below this Editorial, one can discern that the Kuchh Aur and the YFG have been really enthusiastic and busy. Kuchh Aur's enthusiasm has rubbed off on the Interns. Many of them have spelt out in detail their experiences of participating in the sessions. Some of them took the classes themselves and shared their personal notions of the values being discussed with the school students on that day.

It made for a very fascinating account of the efforts being made by our Trustee, Rekha Shahani, and her programme Executives, first Sayali Kadam and then Hemangi Sawant, in

inculcating good values in young minds at the correct age. The general findings of the Interns who attended these sessions were extremely positive and consequently encouraging.

From the account of the activities of the Youth For Governance (YFG) cell it has to be conceded that the Campus Ambassador project is paying off. The Campus Ambassadors in St. Xavier's College and the M.N.L.U.-M (Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai) organized very successful discussions on topics that interested students. PCGT's chairman, V. P. Raja, I.A.S. (Retd.) presided at both events and addressed the students.

Domain experts were invited to participate in these live events, which were extremely well attended. The Colloquium on "Same Sex Marriage" at the M.N.L.U.-M premises was a two-day affair. From the attendance on the second day it could be divined that the attention and interest of the participants had not waned in the slightest at any moment of time.

Our interns were exposed to lectures on the R.T.I. by our Consultant, Ranga Rao and also by ex-Information Commissioner, Shailesh Gandhi. The utility and the value of explaining in detail the provisions of the R.T.I. Act

and how and when it should be used was proved when one of our dedicated star interns, Ms. Shreevidya Nargolkar of the Apte College of Law, Dadar, filed a 'pro bono' Writ Petition in the High Court on behalf of an old widow who had been wrongly deprived of her entitled 300 sq.ft. flat by M.H.A.D.A. officials. Shreevidya had recently graduated in Law and acquired her "sanad" to practice, but her father and her brother, both practicing advocates, appeared with her before the Hon'ble judges who admitted the W.P. The PCGT places on record its appreciation of and its thanks to Shreevidya who is not an Intern any more but an esteemed colleague.

The PCGT is also happy to announce that the Chairman of its Pune Chapter, Mahesh Zagade, I.A.S. (Redt.) has been inducted as Trustee in the Main Branch at Mumbai. The appointment on an ex-officio basis had been approved by PCGT's Board of Trustees.

Ms. Hemangi Sawant, a graduate in Social Work from Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work, has been appointed as Project Executive for Kuchh Aur from 1st March 2023. She will report to our Trustee, Rekha Shahani. We welcome her to the PCGT family.

– Julio Ribeiro

PCGT ANNUAL EVENT

Annual Event – Youth For Ethical Governance



Host Aman Desai introducing PCGT

Youth for Ethical Governance' was designed to reach all high school and college students. It centered on music, dance and a dialogue on current environmental issues. The evening began with the documentary on PCGT followed by a short film on 'Hum Sab Ek Hain'. The host of the evening, Mr. Aman Desai, gave a brief introduction of PCGT and its verticals - Youth For Governance (YFG), Kuchh Aur and RTI.

The cultural part of the event started with an Invocation of 'Tera Mangal Hoyal' by students of Purshottam High School, followed by choir performances on 'Make God Your Guru' by Universal High School and 'People of the World' by Podar International School. Pragnya Bodhini High School students enacted a skit on 'Kaun Dekh Raha Hai!' to convey the message of self-correction and doing the right thing when no one is watching.



Invocation by Purshottam High School



'People of the World' by Podar International School



'Make God Your Guru' sung by Universal High School



Skit by Pragnya Bodhini High School

Ms. Shreya Rao enthralled the audience with her lively songs



Ms. Shreya Rao

This was followed by an energetic dance by a group of 5 young women known as 'Boundless'. The piece was titled 'Youth Wield Your Power'.



'Youth Wield Your Power' performed by 'Boundless'

Anjuman Islam's - Dr. M.I.J Girls High School performed 'Theythaka' a popular dance form in Kerala that is often performed during the harvest festival of Onam.



The 'Theythaka' dance by Anjuman Islam School

The cultural phase of the event concluded with a power-packed performance by students of Sardar Vallabhai Patel Vividhalakshi Vidhyalaya (SVPVV) on 'Salaam India'.



In the second segment, PCGT's Founding Trustee Mr. Julio Ribeiro introduced the Chief Guest Mr. Bittu Sahgal. A short video on environmental protection was screened followed by Mr. Sahgal's talk on the theme of 'Youth for Ethical Governance' and Environment. He further shared the role of youth in protecting the environment. He urged the audience to bring back the wetlands, grasslands, mangroves, seagrass and kelp to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. After the talk, Mr. Sahgal answered all the questions from our young audience. The questions were focused on how youth can play a vital role in society to protect nature and stop man-made disasters.



Mr. Ribeiro introducing Mr. Bittu Sahgal



Mr. Bittu Sahgal talking to the audience

Mr. V. P. Raja felicitated Mr. Bittu Sahgal and thanked Mr. V. Shankar and the Management of Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Auditorium, and all those who contributed in making the programme a grand success. The event ended with the National Anthem.



Mr. Raja felicitating Mr. Bittu Sahgal

KUCHH AUR

“Values are like lighthouses; they are signals giving us direction, meaning, and purpose.”

Kuchh Aur is a co-curricular education programme provided by Public Concern for Governance Trust in schools and communities for children in grades VII through X. PCGT interns from KES' Shri Jayantilal H. Patel Law College and LLM students of Tata Institute of Social Science presented several values to students of Std. VII and VIII at Purshottam High School and Anjuman-I-Islam's Dr. MIJ Girl's High School. Ms. Sayali Kadam introduced Ms. Hemangi Sawant, the new Programme Executive of Kuchh Aur, in all the schools that they visited.

For the month of March, we focused on the values of Helping Others, Honesty, Punctuality, Respect, Patience & Consistency, Humbleness, Importance of Love, Time Management, Relationship.

“He Who Wishes to save TIME Will Never Do A Single Unnecessary Thing” – Mahatma Gandhi

Time Management – The process of organizing, planning and dividing their time between different activities was explained to students. The concept of Time Management was expressed with a short story on “The rocks, pebbles and sand” and how the process of

time management can help manage their goals and prioritize them in order to manage work, social life and sleep.



Post session on Time Management at Anjuman Islam Girls' High School

Patience and Consistency were explained with a tale of “The hare and the tortoise”. Consistency is the ability to stay on track in pursuit of their goals and patience is the ability to wait for results that aren't going to come to them immediately.



Session on Patience and Consistency by Ms. Sayali Kadam

Mrs. Rekha Shahani, our Trustee, conducted a session on the Joy of Living. Interns from TISS, Mumbai

and KES Law College attended this session which began with a discussion of the significance of values in our lives. She talked about writing down the values we learn on a daily basis and why they are important for young minds and elaborated on how to take advantage of various opportunities in life. Chits with quotes from various authors written on them were handed out to the Interns. The interns then explained what they understood from these quotes. She shared the mantra that “we should accept ourselves as we are, with all our flaws and strengths.” "DEAR - Drop Everything And Read" is the formula to help us learn more about ourselves and our surroundings. The session ended with the activity of a sweet being given to each student and they were asked to give their experience of what they felt as the sweet melted.



PCGT interns with Mrs. Rekha Shahani after the session on 'Joy of Living'

Sessions By Interns

Ms. Poorva Gurav, spoke about how respecting her elders has benefited her in her personal life. The kids shared their life experiences and how they honored their elders. At the end of the session the children were asked about the lessons they learned regarding the importance of ‘Respect’.



Session on Respect by Ms. Poorva Gurav

The session on ‘Consistency’ began with the introduction of PCGT and

Kuchh Aur. The speaker Ms. Dipanshi Bajaj asked the students what they understood by ‘Value’ and ‘Consistency’. She then explained the meaning of ‘Consistency’ by narrating the story of the Hare and the Tortoise. She encouraged the students to never give up on their dreams.



Session on Consistency by Ms. Dipanshi Bajaj

A session on ‘Punctuality’ conducted by Ms. Krisha Shah, began with a powerful question: ‘Do you value time?’ Students immediately answered that they appreciate time and make good use of it. She discussed the significance of punctuality and the benefits of this value in their lives.

Ms. Jill Shah conducted a session on ‘Honesty’ and its importance. Honesty implies a refusal to lie, steal, or deceive in any way. It helps in developing good attributes like kindness, discipline, truthfulness, moral integrity and more. Lying, cheating, lack of trust, stealing, greed, and other

KUCHH AUR

immoral attributes have no part in honesty. Honest people are sincere, trustworthy and loyal throughout their life. One must nurture honesty and start with oneself. The intern shared her experience of how honesty helped her in her personal life. The session ended with a Mark Twain quote: "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."



Session on Honesty by Ms. Jill Shah

The goal of the session on 'Relationship' for school children was to inform them about healthy relationships and provide them with the tools they need to recognize and stay away from dysfunctional or abusive people. A power-point presentation containing interactive activities, real-world examples and group discussions was shown to the students who had a greater understanding of what it takes to create and maintain healthy relationships by the end of the session.



Session on Relationship by Ms. Astha Patel

Ms. Archie Bhosale took a session on 'Helping Others'. She told the children how helping others with acts of sharing knowledge, opportunity, giving them transparent feedback helped in spreading happiness around, which in turn would make them happy. A tale of the Honest Woodcutter whose gesture showed his humanity and kindness, was an example given to the students.



Session on Helping Others by Ms. Archie Bhosale

Ms. Poorva Gurav explained the importance of 'Humbleness'. The students defined humbleness as being polite, respectful, kind and helping others. The interns emphasized the importance of treating others the way you want to be treated and being considerate of others' feelings. Interns also shared their life experiences of showing respect to the helping staff of their school. Overall, it was a fruitful session.

The session on the importance of 'Love' in life was conducted by Ms. Sarita Tiwari. She started by telling a story about Gautam Buddha, emphasizing that everyone has a different value in life. She also discussed the importance of believing in oneself and not comparing oneself with others.

Ms. Saloni Parulekar introduced PCGT and KUCHH AUR before explaining the value of 'Patience'. She defined patience as the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset. She explained the importance of being calm, tolerant, understanding, mindful, hopeful. To engage the students, Saloni told two stories about the consequences of impatience. She also listed some benefits of patience, including better decision-making, accomplishing larger goals, and being happier. The session ended with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: "To lose patience is to lose the battle."



Session on Patience by Ms. Saloni Parulekar

A session on the theme "Never Give Up" was conducted by TISS intern Mr. Gaurav Dhakulkar, with a discussion of values and their significance. Never giving up is having faith in your abilities and persevering when you want to give up. It involves a lot of effort, setbacks, suffering and barriers. He shared the inspiring tale of former Indian cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who never gave up on his dream of representing his nation, never lost hope and persevered despite all the challenges he faced. Another example of perseverance was a true story about a girl who, ten days before her final exams, was involved in an accident that fractured her main hand, but managed to write with her other hand and pass the exams, proving that nothing is impossible to overcome.



Session on Never Give Up by Ms. Hemangi Sawant & Mr. Gaurav Dhakulkar

Two stories were shared with the students to emphasize the benefits of being kind and sharing. The students were then given the opportunity to speak about their experiences of sharing and their learning. The session ended with a quote.

"Three keys to more abundant living: caring about others, daring for others, sharing with others."

– William Arthur Ward

KUCHH AUR



Session on Sharing is Caring by Ms. Hemangi Sawant

On 29th March 2023, Ms. Sawant, visited the Rabale community of Children of the World India Trust. She conducted a session on the Importance of Values in our life. The session was interactive and engaging, using activities and exercises to help the children understand the importance of values. The children participated actively and showed a keen interest in the topic.

Interns Share

As an intern at PCGT and after attending Kuchh Aur sessions in different schools, I learnt one of the essential things that will help in my future and career building. We are taught moral values in our childhood, but we forget them later in life. Those sessions taught me to reconsider the values we need to implement in life and stick to those values.

- Manish Kumar Pal – TISS

Kuchh Aur, a programme conducted by the Public Concern for Governance Trust means something different from studies, where they teach school students moral values that help them to become a better person and a better citizen. Along with students we as an Intern also learnt the importance of values in our life. The offline sessions at office were conducted by Rekha Ma'am and the school sessions were conducted by Ms. Sayali and Ms. Hemangi. The schools which we visited for Kuchh Aur programme were Anjuman-I-Islam's Girls School and Purshottam High School. Ms. Sayali took the sessions at both the schools and explained the value of time management to the students through short moral stories. Students were very excited and interactive. There we learnt that it is easier

and more effective to deliver the message and provide the information in the form of story for the better understanding of the students. The offline sessions of Kuchh Aur which were conducted by Rekha ma'am were really amazing and indefinable. Ma'am covered almost every value and taught us basic important things which one should always follow such as correct sitting posture, being positive, expressing gratitude, being focused, humanity, being observant and very importantly, grabbing the opportunity and saying 'Yes'. She told us to write at least one thing that we have learnt that day and to make a habit of it. We got an opportunity to make presentation on the value which is important for us and I chose 'Trust'. We then presented it also in front of the school students. It was a great experience as it helped us to build the confidence and interact with the students spontaneously. I got the responsibility of writing a report and observing my fellow interns helped me as well to be confident. Every intern chose different values like consistency, relationship, honesty, patience, etc. which is why it was really a fruitful session. As a teenager we don't really focus on the values that are important. Growing up, we don't give time to ourselves for Introspection. These Kuchh Aur sessions taught me to give myself

some time, introspect and find what really matters to me and what values I should imbibe to be a better person.

**- Moulik Chhadwa
- KES Law College**

It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are ".- Roy Disney

"Kuchh Aur " an initiative which is been taken by Public Concern for Governance Trust, a trust which believes that apart from studies students also need Kuchh Aur - a break in their life, with some values, some joy, some happiness and apart from their studies some things which can change their life. Kuchh Aur teaches some core values which we know from our childhood by our parents but after some time we forget. That's why our teachers Rekha Ma'am, Ms. Sayali and Ms. Hemangi teach values to the students of Anjuman Islam School and Purshottam High School. The students were so enthusiastic when these teachers try to teach them through stories and real life lessons. Some students get so involved in the session that they get influenced and share what they have been through or what they are going through. Some are really good life changing stories. Some students shared

KUCHH AUR

their thoughts and it was a good interactive session.

The interns also took a session. This time they were given a project on values. The interns had their sessions on Friendship, Gratitude and Happiness. Students shared how their views had changed through these sessions. They also shared what qualities they look out from these values.

Most of the children said feeling loved and having positive, supportive relationships, particularly with friends and family, including having someone to talk to and rely on, gave them the feeling of how values can change their lives in each and every situation.

- Jill Shah – KES Law College

The vertical Kuchh Aur is initiated by Public Concern For Governance Trust which is an extension of education beyond the school curriculum and text books. The idea of this vertical

is to inculcate values amongst the students and youth so they become better citizens of the country.

As an intern, I've worked with them for 1 month. We conducted several sessions in schools to teach students the importance of values and how they can implement it in their daily life. The students were always excited for such sessions as these things are not specifically taught them in schools. By conducting these sessions, we ourselves learned all of it again and got to experience the school life all over again. It is always said that "A teachers profession is the toughest one" and we often forget how difficult and hectic it gets for the teachers to handle a class and make certain work done by the students. All the sacrifice they do in their personal life should be appreciated by all of us.

This Trust taught us problems that are in the society from grass root level. From taking sessions to understanding the problems faced by a teacher and students is a

completely new experience. As a fresher everyone should know how they can bring a change in society by using their career path and PCGT and all the Trustees as well the Head of each vertical taught it to us.

It was constantly written in all our emails that "A bad attitude is like a flat tyre. You cannot go anywhere till you change it" and I completely believe this saying because we cannot achieve big and valuable things by having a bad attitude and ego. PCGT offered us a healthy friendly environment where we could say that we ourselves as a person have grown into a better human being, who now has the capability to see all the wrong work that is being done in the society and can stand against it.

It was a beautiful one month journey working with them and bringing back home tons and tons of learnings by experts who are serving the society in a humane manner.

- Shweta Shah – KES Law College

MAGNANIMITY OF AN INTERN

The most vexatious and long pending case of denial of justice by MHADA to Mrs. Parvati Shinde, a septuagenarian widow, who approached PCGT in 2020 for help, has at last reached the Bombay High Court, thanks to the magnanimity of Adv. Shreevidya Nargolkar, one of the most active and brilliant ex-interns of PCGT, who readily and willingly took up the case pro-bono and filed it on March 20, 2023. She, along with her father, a senior counsel and her brother, also an advocate, mentioned the case in brief as it came up before a BHC judge.

Given below is her response to the congratulatory letter sent to her by Mr. Julio Ribeiro :

Respected Sirs,

Thank you very much for your kind words. Reading your mails reminds me of my late grandfather, a former professor, who joined the legal profession to further his endeavors of social work. I hope I have made him proud today.

Doing social work is my passion. As aptly mentioned by Mr. Shailesh Gandhi, I am thankful to PCGT for giving wings to my dreams.

Thank you very much Ribeiro Sir for your blessings. I am in turn grateful to be given an opportunity to do what I love and extend my

gratitude. Thank you Rao Sir for the brief and kind-worded report. Thank you Gandhi Sir for making me realize the power which the tool of RTI holds. Lastly, thank you to PCGT and also all its members for placing their trust in me and allowing me to take up the case.

I shall always strive to help PCGT in its good work. With your blessings, this case shall be marked as a milestone in our joint endeavors. Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Shreevidya Nargolkar

YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE

A discussion on youth and nation-building was held on January 14, 2023, hosted by PCGT in collaboration with the Hindi Department of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai. PCGT Chairman, Mr. V. P. Raja, addressed the students about the importance of youth in fostering a nation.



Mr. V. P. Raja addressing students



PCGT Trustees and staff with the organizing committee of St. Xavier's College

In this quarter, PCGT in their month-long internship had 19 LLB students from KES' Shri Jayantilal H. Patel Law College and 3 LLM students from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The interns participated in several activities under the Youth For Governance vertical.

Mr. D. Sivanandhan (Retd. IPS), Trustee, PCGT, conducted lectures on Leadership, Cyber Safety, and Safety of Women in Modern Society. He focused on the crimes that are currently committed against women and the rapidly growing cyber crimes. He advised the interns on how to stay safe and prevent such atrocities. He quoted George Bernard Shaw "Life isn't about finding yourself, life is about creating yourself". He shared his life journey and leadership instances during his posting as Commissioner of Mumbai Police and Director General of Police, Maharashtra.



Mr. D. Sivanandhan with Staff and some of the Interns

Former Central Information Commissioner Mr. Shailesh Gandhi took a session on the Right to Information (RTI) and Judicial Time Bound Delivery. He concentrated on the Preamble, significant sections of the RTI Act and the drafting of RTI applications.

During the session on Judicial Time Bound Delivery, Mr. Gandhi discussed the issues that India's judicial system faces, including the pendency of cases, judicial vacancies, inadequate judicial infrastructure, and prisoners under trial. He made several recommendations to dispose of the pending judicial cases on time in the courts of India.



TISS Interns and Sayali with Mr. Shailesh Gandhi

In order to make interns understand the problem of hunger in India, PCGT planned a visit to the Mumbai Roti Bank Foundation, a non-profit organization that strives to end hunger and malnourishment. Mr. D. Sivanandhan founded the organization in 2017. Interns visited Roti Bank's kitchen and observed the food preparation process and also had a chance to serve food to Pratiksha Nagar BMC School students.



Intern serving food to school children



PCGT staff and interns with the Team of Roti Bank

Ms. Sayali Kadam, Programme Manager, Youth For Governance (YFG), spoke with interns about Human Rights and Tribal Rights. She focused on the legal and constitutional provisions made for the protection and advancement of the tribal people in India. During the session on Introduction to Human Rights, she discussed the background of human rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and constitutional provisions.

One of the founder trustees of PCGT, Dr. R. K. Anand, spoke to the interns about how they could lead a successful, happy and healthy life. He encouraged them to remain positive and to keep learning & smiling throughout their lives. Dr. Anand's enthusiastic singing brought the talk to a joyful end.

Adv. Shivam Jain Kakadia, Consultant, Youth For Governance, conducted sessions on Democracy & Rule of Law, Centre-State Relations: Constitutional Perspective, PIL Drafting, Importance of Role Models for Youth and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO).



Dr. Duara in conversation with the interns

Dr. Ms. Navashikha Duara, Principal of Pravin Gandhi College of Law,

YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE

visited the PCGT office and gave a very informative talk on 'India in the emerging new world - International Relations'. The conversation focused on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and India's stance therein as well as those of other UN members.

PCGT's interns got an opportunity to visit the 'Crime Against Women' Unit at Lower Parel and Mumbai Traffic Police Head Quarters at Worli. They gained insight about the functioning of these offices and its related Acts.



PCGT interns at the Office of Crime Against Women Unit at Lower Parel

Mr. Devesh Srivastava launched the Money Life Foundation's report on Public Liability Insurance in India. The event at the Indian Merchants' Chamber was attended by PCGT interns. The Foundation advocates for safe and ethical market practices while promoting financial literacy and consumer awareness through research workshops and petitions.



Launch of report on Public Liability Insurance in India

Mr. Julio Ribeiro (Retd. IPS), Chairman Emeritus of PCGT, interacted with interns on the topic of 'Terrorism' and the ongoing issue of Khalistan. He shared his personal experience about his role in curbing terrorism in Punjab when he was the Director General of Punjab Police.



Mr. Ribeiro with PCGT interns

In a virtual session with the interns, Mr. Suraj Mandhare (IAS) discussed the Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015 and how the Maharashtra State Government is implementing the Act and fighting corruption. He even focused on its history and salient

features, followed by his personal experience of implementing the Act.



Virtual session of Mr. Suraj Mandhare

Dr. R. K. Anand and Trustee Mr. Gulam A. Vahanvaty, conducted a virtual session on Communal Harmony. Dr. Anand stated that communal harmony is achieved when all the nation's communities come together and coexist in harmony and equality, regardless of religion, caste or creed. Mr. Vahanvaty shared a brief history of communal harmony and rioting since India's partition. They both encouraged the youngsters to make friends from other religious backgrounds and to learn about different cultures.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

As an entity, PCGT showcases a highly hospitable attitude towards interns, while remaining acutely cognizant of human inclinations and requirements. Through its influence on the younger generation, PCGT addresses issues relating to governmental corruption alongside citizen rights. Leveraging communication channels that are well-received by youth, the organization provides ample space for them to exchange ideas and delve into societal matters. Furthermore, PCGT allows the youth to interact with professionals and develop outlooks that foster ethical behavior within various career paths.

During my 2 Months internship at PCGT, I had the opportunity to attend sessions with members of the Board of Trustees. The discourse enabled me to gain insight on issues of Good Governance, Transparency, Accountability and Communal Harmony from the established stalwarts of the organization. This, in turn, inspired me to reflect and evaluate our contributions to the community.

I underwent RTI division training under PCGT, learning the intricate aspects of the controversial RTI Act. The issues brought to me highlighted the

unfortunate circumstances faced by numerous citizens, driving to seek comprehensive solutions using the RTI Act. PCGT talks helped shape my governance perspectives, as I sought to correct injustices faced by individuals.

The field visits and lecture with Mr. D. Sivanandhan made me understand that the criminal justice system is failing to meet expectations, which is causing widespread frustration and dissatisfaction among members of society. Ordinary people are excluded from participating in the criminal justice process. Once a criminal case

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

is registered, it becomes a matter between the State and the accused, prosecutors extensive power results in abuses of power and wrongful convictions, with the victim playing a secondary role in the investigative,

prosecutorial, and punishment phases. Prison focuses more on punishment than rehabilitation and does not prioritize victimology.

PCGT has shown great courage and elegance in its efforts to improve lives

and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this noble cause.

**- Vishal Singh,
Tata Institute of Social Sciences**

COLLOQUIUM ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE

Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai (MNLU-M) in association with Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT) and Vahura, organized India's first colloquium on "Gender Justice and Human Rights: Deciphering the Social and Legal Implications of Same-Sex Marriage in India", on Saturday, March 18, 2023 in hybrid mode, at MNLU-M campus in Powai, Mumbai. The colloquium was organized with the objective of creating an atmosphere of understanding and critical analysis of the issue, which would be imperative in creating an apt policy in alignment with the Constitution of India. It also created a forum where people would feel comfortable bringing forward issues pertaining to the LGBTQIA+, which has been a topic often ignored in public discourse.

The inaugural session began with a warm welcome from PCGT Campus Ambassador at MNLU-M, Mr. Vedant Mainkar. Our esteemed Chief Guest, Senior Advocate Saurabh Kirpal, commenced his address virtually by mentioning the importance of having such a colloquium to discuss such matters pertaining to gender justice and human rights. He emphasized that with the resources we have today and the ambition and desire to bring recognition of same sex marriage in India, it will be a step towards achieving the constitutional goal of equality. Mr. V. P. Raja, the Chairman of PCGT, then joined the dias in person and described the work done by PCGT in fighting corruption, ensuring transparency and accountability in governance and promoting constitutional values.

For the first session on "Social Implications of Same Sex Marriage in India" we were honoured to have Adv. Audrey D'mello (Director, Majlis) as the moderator, and Ankit Bhuptani (UN Delegate and LGBTQIA+ Rights Activist), Bindumadhav Khire (Founder of Samapathik Trust), Anwesh Kumar Sahoo (Mr. Gay World India 2016), Abhay Dang and Supriyo Chakrabarty (Telangana's First Gay Married Couple), as panellists. The session began with a discussion about what marriage means to each of the panellists. The moderator pointed out the double-edged nature of marriage, i.e., its deeply patriarchal characteristics and conversely the beauty and glory of the institution. Supriyo Chakrabarty and Abhay Dang, India's first gay couple to get married, explained



Opening Ceremony of the Colloquium



Panel Discussion on Social Implications of Same Sex Marriage in India



Address by the Chief Guest Sr. Adv. Saurabh Kirpal



Address by Mr. V. P. Raja

COLLOQUIUM ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE

the touching story of how they met and got to know each other. Bindumadhav Khire, Founder of Sampathik Trust, spoke about how families are formed by blood, adoption or marriage. One has no control over family formed by blood or adoption, so marriage is the only way one can knowingly, consensually and voluntarily exercise their freedom as an adult. Ankit Bhuptani, UN Delegate and LGBTQIA+ Rights Activist, recounted the story of how he came to become an activist, boldly fighting for LGBTQIA+ rights in the public. Anwesh Kumar Sahoo, Mr. Gay World India 2016, spoke about the importance of legal recognition of marriage and the rights that come along with it. He emphasised how marriage between two people does not harm anyone else.

For the second session on “Legal Implications of Same Sex Marriage in India”, we were honoured to have Prof. (Dr.) Abhijit Rohi (Assistant Professor, MNLU-M) as the moderator and Senior Advocate Jayna Kothari (Founder CLPR - Centre for Law & Policy Research), Adv. J. Sai Deepak (Advocate, Supreme Court of India), Prof. Kishu Daswani (Adjunct Professor, Government Law College, Mumbai), Onir (Film and TV Director), as panellists. Onir questioned whether India’s culture is meant to be completely static. Prof. Daswani mentioned that while procreation is a purpose of marriage, it is not the only purpose. Sr. Adv. Jayna Kothari pointed out that the NALSA judgement shattered the binary understanding of gender, and so

we must proceed in that direction to grant people the right to marry which stems from right to equality and non-discrimination. Adv. J. Sai Deepak spoke on the importance of analysing not just whether same-sex marriage must be given legal recognition but how it should be carried out. He pointed that it is more apt for the legislature to create laws on this matter rather than the judiciary, especially since this change will have ramifications on other laws as well.

The colloquium concluded with a vote of thanks by MNLU-M Registrar Dr. Anil Variath and it turned out to be informative, enriching and captivating. The Colloquium was organized in hybrid mode, giving more than 50 attendees from across India an option to join in person or virtually.

RTI WORKSHOP

A workshop on the Right to Information Act was organized by PCGT in association with Pravin Gandhi College of Law, Mumbai (PGCL) on Friday, March 10, 2023 from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Moot Court Hall, PGCL. The workshop was delivered by Mr. Shailesh Gandhi (Former Central Information Commissioner), who explained the theoretical and practical aspects of the RTI Act 2005, including drafting of RTI Applications. Around 50 students of PGCL participated in the workshop and it was successfully executed with the assistance of PCGT Campus Ambassadors at PGCL, Ms. Pooja Nayak, Ms. Mansi Saraiya, Ms. Teesha Sharma and Mr. Dhruva Brahamania.



Mr. Gandhi delivering the RTI Workshop at PGCL

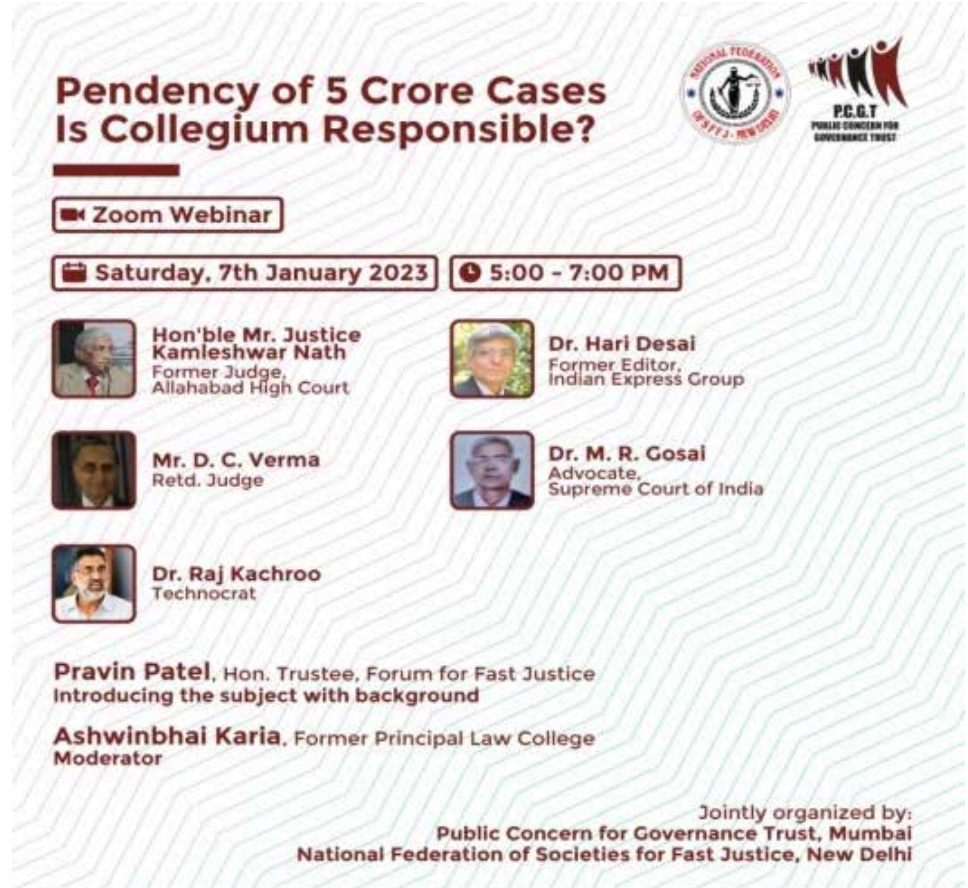


Mr. Gandhi explaining the RTI Act

PANEL DISCUSSION ON JUDICIAL PENDENCY OF CASES

An online panel discussion was jointly organized by the PCGT and National Federation of Societies for Fast Justice (NFSFJ) on the topic "Pendency of 5 Crore Cases - Is Collegium Responsible?" on Saturday, January 7, 2023 from 5 pm to 7 pm.

The panel comprised of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Kamleshwar Nath (Former Judge, Allahabad High Court), Dr. Hari Desai (Former Editor, Indian Express Group), Dr. M. R. Gosai (Advocate, Supreme Court of India), Hon'ble Mr. D. C. Verma (Retd. Judge) and Mr. Raj Kachroo (Technocrat). They discussed the constitutional jurisprudence governing the appointment of judges in India as well as the current pendency of cases across all courts in India. They suggested that filling up of judicial vacancies and use of technology and virtual courts will reduce pendency of cases and will ensure that justice reaches the doorstep of the marginalized sections.



Pendency of 5 Crore Cases Is Collegium Responsible?

Zoom Webinar

Saturday, 7th January 2023 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Kamleshwar Nath
Former Judge, Allahabad High Court

Dr. Hari Desai
Former Editor, Indian Express Group

Mr. D. C. Verma
Retd. Judge

Dr. M. R. Gosai
Advocate, Supreme Court of India

Dr. Raj Kachroo
Technocrat

Pravin Patel, Hon. Trustee, Forum for Fast Justice
Introducing the subject with background

Ashwinbhai Karia, Former Principal Law College
Moderator

Jointly organized by:
Public Concern for Governance Trust, Mumbai
National Federation of Societies for Fast Justice, New Delhi

DONATIONS TO PCGT

All activities of PCGT are undertaken from the funds received from the donors. People who want to donate any amount of ₹ 1,000/- and above may please issue cheques in favour of 'Public Concern For Governance Trust'.

Donations to PCGT qualify for deduction u/s. 80G(5)(VI) of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

Visit us at : www.pcgt.org

☎ 022-2352 6426 / 2352 6452



PUBLIC CONCERN
C/o. Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT)
B/2, Mahalaxmi Chambers,
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,
Mumbai-400 026.

Registration No. E-20164 (Mumbai)
(THE BOMBAY PUBLIC TRUST ACT, 1950)