

Public Concern



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

January 2019

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.

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Voice of Youth



PUBLIC CONCERN FOR
GOVERNANCE TRUST

Annual Event on 'Voice of Youth'

Save The Date
8th Feb, 2019

Venue:
Birla Matushri Hall
New Marine Lines.

Timing
04 p.m.

CHIEF GUESTS

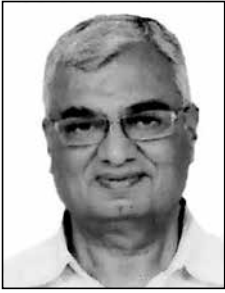
**Dr. Prakash &
Dr. Mandakini Amte**

GUEST OF HONOUR

Mr. Afroz Shah

EDITORIAL

Not speaking, not listening



As per available statistics, India has more than 113 crore users of mobile telephones and 40% of them use smart phones and can access internet. This

comes to a whopping 44 crores, much larger than the population of any other country in the world, barring China. While this certainly represents progress in connectivity, it does not come without a flip side.

WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are some of the popular social media applications which are almost a must for every smart phone. An estimated 4 hours are spent by an average adult on a mobile phone. Children, however, use the mobile phone and these apps in particular far more. This usage of mobile phones has had unique fall outs.

In a school function featuring young children, the parents are found to be busy live-streaming the performances

of their children rather than sitting back and enjoying the same. In a room full of people, noise levels are down because people are busy on their mobile phones than talking to the next person nearby. In fact almost all public places are full of people thumbing their phones rather than engaging in conversations. "Group Discussions" are far more fruitful on a whatsapp group rather than in a conference room.

The verbal contact or a written contact is under assault, make no mistake about that. Instead of expressing your feelings or sentiments verbally or through a written communication, a short crisp "emoji" or a combination of them suffices. Words and sentences when written are so shortened by use of abbreviations that a Thomas Hardy would even flee from his grave. Evolution of a new vocabulary has commenced. A normally shy individual does not think twice before sharing photographs on social media about his family and himself. Interactions are becoming less and less about "we and us" and more about "I, me, myself."

While the penetration of the mobiles has made communication and transfer of knowledge, thought and data easier and quicker, it has brought within

access of young and immature minds, perverted thoughts and expressions which could have a very negative influence on the social mores and ethos in the Society. Indeed social conduct as accepted by Society and codified into laws would be under severe stress. Crime statistics would show the impact the internet content has on the minds and the influence it exerts on the conduct of delinquents. Newer perversions and crimes provoked and incited by such content are coming to light.

While "parental control" gave way to "parental guidance" and now is moving to "occasional parental interventions" we need to be aware of the dangers lurking ahead and remain prepared and ready to ensure that the values necessary to bind the Society as such and to guide young adults on to the straight path that shall assist them in becoming responsible citizens of the morrow are inculcated at an early stage and nurtured and cherished through the formative stages. PCGT through its Kuchh Aur and Youth For Governance programmes is engaged in this task. Come let us lend our hand to it.

JAI HIND.

— Sanjeev Dayal

Internship Experience

I first learnt about PCGT through the Annual B. G. Deshmukh Memorial Lecture which is organised at my institute, in the name of the late Founder Trustee of the organisation. I interned at PCGT from 27th November 2018 to 3rd January 2019. I primarily worked in the RTI Cell, wherein I was guided by Mr. Ranga Rao, RTI Advisor to PCGT, whose knowledge and dedication to the improvement of governance is unparalleled. I also got an opportunity to interact with esteemed personalities such as Mr. Shailesh Gandhi, RTI Activist and a former Central Information Commissioner. His guidance enabled me to draft several RTI applications and First and Second Appeals on issues of public importance like the receipt of pension by retired BMC employees, and the outbreak of Japanese Encephalitis in Uttar Pradesh. I also learnt to deal with the issue of the conflict between RTI and the right to privacy. Through this organisation, I also met the Maharashtra State Information Commissioner Mr. Sumit Mullick and the other State Information Commissioners, to discuss issues such as judicial review powers in RTI cases and the implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act.

I also worked on a child sexual abuse campaign, an initiative of PCGT to assist the Mumbai Police in dealing with this issue and spreading awareness about it in the community. As part of Kuchh Aur project, I visited and interacted with students from BMC Schools across Mumbai on moral issues such as honesty and inner peace, and here I must credit Yashasweeta Ma'am who has an excellent ability to engage with children.

PCGT takes great care of its interns with Email and Whatsapp groups in place, where all work is shared and discussed without any level of hierarchies, and even the opinion of an intern is respectfully taken. Lastly, the opportunity to meet with and gain the insight of living legends such as Mr. Julio Ribeiro is truly an awe-inspiring experience. My experience of working at PCGT has solidified my desire to assist in public service and deliver social justice, along with enabling me to improve my legal, professional and inter-personal skills. I have realised that "Mera Bharat mahan nahi hai, par iska dosh mera hai", and therefore, I must fulfil my individual responsibility to contribute towards the betterment of our society. I am extremely grateful to PCGT for the same.

— Rohit Bhattacharya, Symbiosis Law School, Pune

TOGETHER AS ONE – WE REMEMBER 26/11



Since 2009, every year, Public Concern for Governance Trust has been striving to spread the message of unity amongst all by organizing a gathering at the National Centre For The Performing Arts (NCPA) to commemorate the 2008 terror attacks on Mumbai and to pay tribute to the brave souls who lost their lives.

This year the theme was “Together as One – We Remember 26/11” which signified the importance of Unity. The program began with a performance by the very talented theatre actor Ajitesh Gupta who sang songs composed by Kabir and the 18th century poet Nazeer Akbarabadi - “Aadmi Nama”.

Ajitesh gave a powerful message of ‘All are humans’ by pointing out that humans attacking other humans only succeed in attacking humanity. His performance had a profound meaning which impressed all.

The Chief Guest of the evening was the actor and social activist, Rahul Bose. His poised personality reflected throughout his speech which gained the attention of all, mostly the youth present there. Mr. Rahul Bose’s speech encapsulated the message of religious and gender sensitivities, how the people who witnessed the attacks did not think of gender or religion while saving lives of others and helping each other during the time of crises.

He clearly conveyed that our country can face such tough times by uniting despite various diversities. He ended his speech by paying tribute to the victims of the attacks.

Mr. Rahul Bose’s speech was followed by Mr. Julio Ribeiro’s address wherein he expressed his solidarity with all citizens of India. Mr. Ribeiro expressed his gratitude to the security forces and service men for staking lives to defend and protect the honor of our country. He paid tribute to the bereaved families and friends of the victims and exhorted all to come together as one to prevent terrorist atrocities.



The evening then witnessed a mesmerizing performance by Symphony Orchestra of India which is India’s first and only professional symphony orchestra. The Orchestra paid their homage to the victims through music, touching the hearts of all present.

Shakti Awakening - The Arts Quotient, led by Swati Apte

and Sangheetha Rajan beautifully performed an Odissi Dance which depicted the message of Good over Evil through their alluring Indian dance form. The premier of a 17-minute short film ‘Rogan Josh’ starring Nasseruddin Shah, a work of fiction inspired by 26/11 attacks, was shown to the audience, which was brilliantly directed and picturized. The actor himself was present amongst the audience.

Founder Trustee of PCGT, Dr. R. K. Anand then won hearts by sharing his life experiences which led him to strive towards imbuing in all, a sense of responsibility and unity.

The entire audience felt emotionally connected with each other at that moment. Dr. Anand ended his speech by singing his favorite Raj Kapoor’s Song ‘Jeena Isi Ka Naam Hai’ where the audience sang along with him.

Mr. Dara Gandhi, Trustee of PCGT, in his vote of thanks appreciated all the performers and also thanked the sponsors of the program. He requested all to stand for the National Anthem and there the evening of remembrance

came to an end.



YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE

YFG DIALOGUES

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



The Tribute Run

Sea Hawks Foundation in collaboration with PCGT organized The Tribute Run on Sunday 25th November 2018 to commemorate the martyrs and brave hearts of 26/11 & to remember the undying spirit of Mumbai ten years later. The run was successful with the participation of eight thousand citizens across Mumbai.

Cyber Security Dialogue at Jai Hind College

Dot Com Club of Jai Hind College in collaboration with PCGT organised Tech fest called "Cyberstrike" for the students of IT department. Mr. Brijesh Singh, Spl IG, Cyber Crime, Maharashtra Police was



the chief speaker for the event. Mr. Singh spoke about how youth from IT field can be a helping hand for the government and he also motivated the youth to come up with new innovative ideas which could curb cyber crime. The fest was successful with participation of one thousand youth from different colleges across the city.

Some glimpses of the event

KUCHH AUR

Kuchh Aur moves forward....



Orange Activity

Our journey with the students of BMC, Aided and Private schools continued with inculcating in them values of Sensitivity & Honesty.

Activities pertaining to these values were performed with them. Students were asked to jot down the time when they were dishonest with themselves and others. Being the season of oranges, we shared a slice of orange with each student in the classroom where the students enjoyed the sweet tangy taste in silence, reflecting, introspecting and sharing gratitude to the farmer, vendor and to the facilitator who had brought the orange to the classroom. The objective of this activity was to make the students realise the value of Vitamin C, eating seasonal fruits, appreciating the farmer who toils daily, their parents who earn and get fruits at home and also relishing the fruit in silence. The students shared that though they had eaten oranges in the past, they had never relished it so much. The power of silence not only calms them but also helps them to introspect and maintain discipline in the long run.

Outreach to Rajgurunagar

We collaborated with the Children of World Trust (Vishwa Balak Kendra) and visited their Rajgurunagar Centre. The project executive Ms. Yashasweeta with few of the interns took the group to Rajgurunagar to

expose the youth and give them practical knowledge of the small things in our society. Visiting the village gave them an insight of the rural life and the poverty ridden condition of the people. They observed the society from a different angle.

CMCA

In collaboration with Children's Movement for Civic Awareness (CMCA), stories through their book Magic Cap were shared with the students of the



Rajgurunagar Visit

Municipal schools and community. Magic Cap is a story book, with each book having a value to inculcate in students.

Workshop for Teachers

A workshop for the staff of The Kandivli Education Society's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Vividhlaxi Vidyalaya & Shri Tikamdas Purshotam Bhatia College of Science was held on 'The Role of Discipline'. Issues faced by many schools today is late coming of the students, foul language used, class management, peer

pressure, stress and above all large number of students per classroom. Trustee Mrs. Rekha Shahani spoke to the teachers about gender discrimination, the power of silence, teachers being a great role model, work discipline, cultural discipline, posture discipline, dress discipline, time discipline and many other issues that would help teachers to be role models for the students and parents at large.

A session on 'Power of Touching Lives' was held at Podar International School (SSC) for the students of Std. IX. 40 students participated in an Interactive session of Touching Lives by being excellent role models. The session was conducted by our

Trustee Ms. Rekha Shahani and was also attended by our staff members Mr. Renzdon Rodrigues & Mr. Kunal Kumar. Issues of day to day life were discussed including citizens not following the rules of law. The role of youth in today's society was highlighted and the students shared that after such discussion & dialogue they felt confident & empowered to take & make decisions. They were also informed about the

theme of PCGT for the next calendar year 'Voice of Youth' and asked to participate in it fully.



Magic Cap

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

The following RTI sessions were held between October and December 2018

DATE	VENUE	RESOURCE PERSON	ATTENDEES
Oct. 6, 2018	Nalanda College of Law, Borivali	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi, RTI Activist & ex CIC	Law Students
Oct. 8, 2018	University of Mumbai, Law Academy, Fort Campus	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi	Law Students and College Faculty
Oct. 24, 2018	Desai Foundation for Change, Somaiya Centre for Lifelong Learning, Fort	Mr. Arjun Kadam, ex intern of PCGT	People from all walks of society
Dec. 6, 2018	TISS, Mumbai	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi	Students of LLM specialised in Access To Justice from School of Law, Rights and Constitutional Governance

All the above sessions were very effective and students were asked to draft mock RTI applications.



Question-Answer Session at University of Mumbai Law Academy, Fort



Mr. Shailesh Gandhi being felicitated during RTI Session at Nalanda College of Law, Borivali.



Mr. Shailesh Gandhi addressing the students at TISS

RTI SUCCESS STORY



Vikas Udyan, Cuffe Parade, now open

PCGT was approached by Mr. Tushar Gupta, a law student and a concerned citizen, to help him to draft an RTI to know the current status of the Vikas Udyan (Garden), Cuffe Parade, which was shut for more than 7 years. After filing the RTI, it was finally opened.

RTI Act, 2005 and Effectiveness of Government Resolution (GR) for Inspection of Documents : Experience at various Public Offices and Discussion with State Chief Information Commissioner

To maintain transparency and reduce the number of RTI applications, General Administrative Department (GAD) of Govt. of Maharashtra issued a GR on 26/11/2018. It states that in all Maharashtra Government Offices (except Mantralaya) inspection of file is allowed on every Monday between 3 to 5 pm. It is estimated that over 70% of RTI applications are filed by citizens to get specific information. Most of the people would be able to get the information they are seeking by inspecting specific files. It is a welcome step and would reduce the burden of RTI applications on the govt. staff and the public too.

Those offices which lag behind in responding to the GR for various reasons would soon fall in line. To monitor the compliance of the GR and to ensure its smooth operation, team members of PCGT went to two departments. The PIO at one office allowed the team to inspect the file but refused to let them take any photos or xerox copy of the files, while the PIO at the other office completely refused citing reason that she has not received any GR even after she was shown a copy of the GR. Further, she stated if the information is available on the website then hardcopies are not given. At the window pane of each counter in that office it

was mentioned "Hard Copies not entertained".

To discuss various issues concerning effective implementation of GR and RTI Act, 2005, PCGT organized a meeting with new Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) of Maharashtra State Information Commission, Mr. Sumit Mullick on 11/12/2018 in his office. Mr. Ranga Rao urged the CIC to ensure the implementation of Sec. 4 of the RTI Act, 2005, in order to obviate the need for filing RTI applications. The three Law Interns shared their experiences in filing various RTI applications during their internship with PCGT.

RTI CLINIC IN MUMBAI**PCGT :**

Every Tuesday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

For appointments and details :

Call : 022-2352 6426 / 2352 6452

Address : B/2, Mahalaxmi Chambers
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,
Mumbai-400 026

E-mail : publicconcern@gmail.com

RTI CLINIC IN PUNE**Pune Municipal Corporation**

Every Friday between 11 a.m. & 2 p.m

For appointments and details :

Call : Mr. Marutirao Sail

Tel : 020-6400 5613

Address : Nagrik Suvidha Kendra
Pune Municipal Corporation
Shivaji Nagar, Pune-411 005

E-mail : pcgt@rediffmail.com

Visit us at : www.pcgt.org

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.

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BOOK POST**PUBLIC CONCERN**

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Mumbai-400 026.



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

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