

Public Concern

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

VOL. 8, ISSUE 2, October 2017

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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The 2nd Narayan Varma Memorial Lecture



Seated from left : Mr. J. F. Ribeiro (PCGT), Mr. Paramjeet Singh (DBM),
Dr. Shashikala Gurbur, Mr. Narayan Pasari (BCAS Foundation)

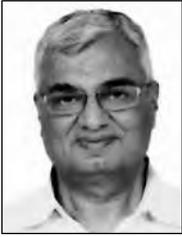
The 2nd Narayan Varma Memorial Lecture & the Narayan Varma Memorial Awards were organised jointly by Public Concern for Governance Trust, The Bombay Chartered Accountants Society and Dharma Bharathi Mission in memory of late Narayanbhai who had been closely associated with and had held various posts & mentored & nurtured these organisations with his values, ideology & hard work. The programme was held to salute him, remember him and to pay tribute to his spirit of giving, his professionalism and his commitment towards service to humanity, his relentless quest for truth & justice, his wit & wisdom, his vision & planning and determination to make a difference day-after-day. The greatness of one's life depends not on the number of years lived but rather on the effect one leaves on the minds of one's generation. Narayanbhai inspired us with his simplicity and humility by setting an example.

The speaker for the evening was Dr. Shashikala Gurbur, a distinguished academician and orator who has given more than 200 lectures, workshops and seminars across India, Thailand, US, UK, Ireland, Germany, Australia, Canada and UAE. She has an outstanding career with a wide range of experience in teaching, research and industry and is continuing with Symbiosis Law School since 2007.

Three distinguished persons were awarded for their humanitarian service and their contribution to the Society. They were Shri Pankaj Udhas by Dharma Bharathi Mission, Shri Pradeep Shah by Bombay Chartered Accountants' Society and Shri Anand Bhandare by PCGT.

VOICES

EDITORIAL



Where Will The Children Go?

Children are the most prized creations in the Universe and it is they who carry the civilisation and its progress forward. Many nations such as Japan, celebrate the childhood by encouraging children in different ways. In West, children are treated as special citizens with many programmes dedicated for their benefit. Ancient texts state that children in India were treated as special citizens and future assets who were educated in Gurukuls as per their abilities. Why is it then that children of today have lost their pride of place in the minds of the policy makers. That they have lost their relevance becomes amply clear from the deaths that occurred in the hospital at Gorakhpur.

Statistics in media tell us that 50,000 children have died due to Japanese Encephalitis (JE) in the last three decades in that area. 3,000 children have died in the last five years. These are huge numbers and reflective of the lack of sensitivity towards the health needs of the children who are the hope of the future. This nation prides itself of the fact that the demographic mix of the country will keep getting younger for next twenty years but does little for the young citizens of today. Besides the deaths reported from the hospital in Gorakhpur, it is not a rare sight to see young children running around with stomachs bloated from

malnourishment very close to the big metros. News also came in of deaths of children at Nashik.

In the case of Gorakhpur, the question of alleged turning off the supply of Oxygen to the hospital by the supplier is not the prime question. Though indeed a very important question and one that merits deep probe as to why hospital bills were not paid and who delayed processing, the real question, however, is why are children in the hospital for the same disease year after year. Does it not merit some effort to strike at the root cause of the disease and to clear it out. If year after year the same disease strikes children in the same area it shows a criminal lack of concern and insensitivity to the children in the extreme. In the debates that followed the tragedy, however, unfortunately the focus went to the Oxygen supply and not to this vital aspect.

There must be something seriously wrong with us when we ignore such tragedy befalling our young citizens who we expect to be the leaders of tomorrow. God knows how much talent, how many geniuses and intellectuals have been lost in the 50,000 deaths in last three decades and many more continue to be stymied and denied their due opportunities by malnourishment and by being underfed. Even one should be too many. Yet no serious effort, no programme no thought seems to be going in the direction of securing our youngest citizens a safe, secure and healthy passage through the life.

Under the Indian law, a child is treated as a person from the time he is born and is entitled to all rights and protections under it. Article 21 of the Constitution of India, ensures security of life to all its citizens. We have a National Commission of Children. Unfortunately, however, instead of focusing on vital issues affecting the welfare of Children the attentions get trained only on criminal matters. There is enough reason for an application to the Honourable Supreme Court for issuing directions in a writ of mandamus to the State and Central Governments to take serious view of the situation and to provide better deal to the young citizens and directing concrete steps to be taken.

We need a declared policy, a programme, which will speak of the rights of Children and how Governments shall secure them, how they shall be accountable and what will be done to ensure that not one child dies of epidemics or roam undernourished. So many programmes are being declared and implemented for the economically weaker sections, but the children among them need special attention. It is not a question of additional budgets as budgets are there, it is a question of will, a determination of securing to children a safe future and to hold implementing authorities accountable and responsible.

Jai Hind.

— Sanjeev Dayal

PCGT PUNE

6th Late Shri B. G. Deshmukh Memorial Lecture



Lighting of lamp by the dignitaries

Symbiosis Law School, Pune, a constituent of Symbiosis International University, and Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT), Pune Chapter, jointly organized the 6th Late Shri B. G. Deshmukh Memorial Lecture, 2017, on the topic – “Citizens’ Concerns and Right to Services Act, 2015” at SVC Auditorium, Viman Nagar, Pune on 29th August, 2017. This Annual Public Lecture Series has been instituted in honour of Late Shri B. G. Deshmukh, former Cabinet Secretary, Government of India and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. The basic objective behind this Annual Public Lecture Series is to explore and enlighten the youth and public to the challenges in governance in India.

The program began with lighting of lamp by the dignitaries followed by garlanding of Shri B. G. Deshmukh’s portrait. Dr. Shashikala Gurple, *Fulbright Scholar*, Director, Symbiosis Law School, Pune, Dean, Faculty of Law, SIU, spoke highly of the recent developments in the Indian legal system, namely the landmark judgment on the *Right to Privacy* and other important judicial interventions relating to exploitation of women in the name of religion. Dr. Gurple observed that the perspective regarding citizen-government relationship has changed from that of master-servant to that of public servant and citizen and this change has been effected by popular movements such as consumer rights and Right to Information (RTI) campaigns. “The machinery of law has to be lubricated with the ideals of

humanity in order to bring about good governance”, she concluded.

Air Marshal Anil Trika, (Retd.), Member, PCGT, Pune chapter, gave an overview of PCGT’s inception, aims and objectives. He expressed his belief in empowerment of citizens, and in need for a transparent & accountable Government. Mr. Satish Khot, Member, PCGT, elucidated the achievements of Shri B. G. Deshmukh. He encouraged the students to be as committed to the nation as Mr. Deshmukh, whose apolitical stance, sincerity and meticulous dedication to his work made him a visionary. Mr. S. C. Nagpal, Chairman, PCGT, Pune Chapter, delivered the presidential address and also introduced the theme of the memorial lecture. He said, “whenever there is injustice, it is the duty and responsibility of citizens to raise their voice in order to protect their dignity and rights, as dignity is non-negotiable”.

Mr. Satyabir S. Dodd, Member, PCGT, Pune Chapter, welcomed and gave introduction of the keynote speaker and chief guest, Mr. Swadheen Kshatriya, Ex. Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra and presently State Chief Commissioner for Right to Service, Government of Maharashtra. He spoke highly of Mr. Kshatriya’s dedication and sincerity to work.

The keynote speaker in his address provided insight into the Citizens’ Charter, a predecessor to the Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015. He stated that the main drawback of the Citizens’ Charter was its weak implementation, especially at the grassroot level. He reminded the audience that delivery of public service is a statutory obligation and not a State generosity. The Speaker opined that the eligible citizens of Maharashtra must have access to transparent, accountable, efficient and timely public

services. He pointed out that the Act includes within its ambit Government departments at all levels thereby empowering all sections of the society. The Speaker also listed the salient features of the Act. The Act defines the word ‘eligible persons’ and ‘public authorities’ for the easy understanding of the citizens. It also stresses on harnessing IT to avail public services. This Act gives an online access to basic Government services through its portal ‘**Aaple Sarkar**’ (<https://aaplesarkar.mahaonline.gov.in/en>) and a mobile app available in both Marathi and English. However, offline complaints are also not discouraged, thereby bridging the gap between urban and rural. The Maharashtra State Commission was established under the Act, which has been empowered to take *suo motu* cognizance for non-performance of services. He concluded his speech by enumerating the challenges faced in the implementation of the Act, such as intricate procedures, lack of awareness, access to IT services amongst Indians and sensitisation of the bureaucracy.

Thereafter, Mr. Satish Khot, Member, PCGT, Pune Chapter, conducted the question-answer session. Mr. Kshatriya answered all the queries satisfactorily. Dr. Bindu Ronald, Deputy Director, SLS, Pune, delivered the vote of thanks. The programme came to a close with the National Anthem.



Interaction with the audience

YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE



A Dialogue on Environment and its effect in our day to day life was arranged by PCGT for numerous college students at the Balasaheb Apte College of Law, Prabhadevi, Mumbai. The Guest Speaker for the dialogue was Mr. Bittu Sahgal an environmental activist and writer, and the founding editor of Sanctuary Asia, a wildlife and ecology magazine based in India. A member of the National Board for Wildlife and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Mr. Sahgal explained that today's generation is living at a momentous time when the decisions taken today will determine the happiness and safety of tomorrow.

An Awareness lecture on Substance Abuse was organised at Lala Lajpatrai College, Haji Ali, for students from different colleges and streams. Fr. Joe Pereira, the Founder and Managing Trustee of Kripa Foundation, which is devoted to the care, support and rehabilitation of those affected by Chemical Dependency, spoke about the growing trend of drug and alcohol abuse especially among school and college students. He spoke on how abuse of drugs is harmful physically and results in destructive effects of the social order. He spoke about preventive measures and how to recognise drug addiction.

A dialogue on India/Pakistan/China Dosti was organised at St. Xavier's College. Mr. Sudheendra Kulkarni, a senior journalist, columnist and a political commentator, who served as an aide to India's former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, delivered the lecture. He spoke about how India/Pakistan/China could be a very strong team in Asia region. How peace can be attained by these three countries and peace has to be attained in order to gain importance in South Asia

Awareness on Sexual Harassment under Citizen Policing Programme

A Session was organized by PCGT at Esplanade College, Borivali, to spread awareness about the Sexual Harassment Act, 2013 (Eve Teasing) and the importance of the Internal Complaints Committee. 110 Students attended this session.



Dr. Bhumika explaining about Sexual Harassment Act, 2013

RTI Session at Khar Education Society

An RTI session was organized by PCGT to make students aware about the Right To Information Act, 2005. The history of RTI, when can one file an RTI application, what kind of information can be obtained through RTI, where can one appeal if he/she is not satisfied by the information given, the fee structure in accordance to the Act, were explained during the session. Eighty students attended the session



Teaching students on how to file an RTI

Road Safety Awareness at Duruelo High School, Bandra

A joint session on Road Safety was conducted by PCGT & Mumbai Traffic Police at Duruelo High School, Bandra, for children of Std. IX and X. The session consisted of road safety rules and information about the traffic police department and urged the students to request their parents to help in the progress of the nation by following traffic rules and becoming responsible citizens of the country.



Seen in the picture (from left) Sr. Zarina, Police Inspector M. N. Bodke, Mrs. Rekha Shahani and staff

KUCHH AUR

Lessons in Responsible Citizenship



Our focus for the coming year is to establish 'Lessons in Responsible Citizenship'. One value will be taught each month to the students throughout the year. In the month of June, we made the students think about different 'Relationships' in their lives and their importance. Thereafter we introduced the topic of 'Environment' and its relevance in today's life, followed by 'Unity in Diversity and Patriotism'.



In the talk on 'Environment', we laid stress on using existing resources carefully; for example, reusing and recycling old books, newspapers, plastic bottles, cans and chalk boxes.

When we introduced 'Unity in Diversity', we discussed diverse cultures, religions, food and clothing habits in different States and their languages, customs and beliefs.



As mentioned we bring out a connection between each value and work in tandem.

We sow seeds of thoughts that lead to a lot of thinking and questioning in the minds of the students. Such topics were introduced to them in the form of stories, songs, films, role plays, drawings and interactions.

we talked to 10th standard students about their Career, Time management, discipline, democracy and lot more.

PCGT Trustees, interns and volunteers from Initiatives Of Change (IofC) came together to organise sessions at Purshottam High School, Bandra where



Community Sessions

We conduct more activity based sessions in communities in collaboration with 'Children of the World' at Rabale and Nerul. Here we share a close bond with some children, which leads to having heart to heart conversations. We elaborate our topics very vividly. Recently there was a food fest and a fashion show exchanging different cultures organized with fun filled games too. Such activities make a child want to come to our sessions and enjoy and learn at the same time.



RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Dependent Gets Job Promptly Through RTI :

On receiving a complaint from one Mrs. Nirmala Naresh Baria that her application for Dependent's Job (Preferential Treatment Case) in the BMC following the death of her husband, a BMC employee, in May 2015, was not responded to till June, 2017, PCGT filed an RTI application before the D-Ward BMC Office, seeking to know the status of the said P.T. Case and the timelines prescribed for disposal of such cases in general. A similar RTI application was also filed seeking the follow-up action on another application of the aforesaid widow about the pending leave salary of her husband.

Responding to the said RTI applications the ward office promptly processed the cases and appointed the widow in a suitable post under 'Dependents' Category' in August 2017 and also assured her of the prompt payment of her husband's leave salary.



Mrs. Nirmala Baria and her children

Transparency in Port Trust Offices at the Instance of PCGT



On coming to know that there are no transparent procedures in place at Mumbai Port Trust offices for issue/renewal of various licences, permits, etc to check corruption and undue delays, Mr. Ribeiro, Chairman PCGT, wrote (July, 2017) to Mr. Sanjay Bhatia, Chairman Mumbai Port Trust, urging him to immediately implement transparency measures as per section 4 of the RTI ACT, 2005, for the benefit of all those needy people.

In response to the same the Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust, ordered (end July, 2017) open and prominent display of all the prescribed forms, procedures, timeline, fees payable for issue/renewal of licences, permits etc. in various Port Trust Offices for the benefit of all. The prompt response of the Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust is commendable.



MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD, VASHI

Mr. Abhinav Singh, a volunteer of PCGT, visited our office on September 22, 2017. The name of his sister Miss Ruchica Singh, and her gender, in the SSC mark-sheet were wrongly mentioned as RUCHIKA instead of RUCHICA and MALE instead of FEMALE. She applied for corrections on August 10, 2017. Even after a lapse of one and a half months, the corrected certificate was not issued to her. Mr. Abhinav Singh approached PCGT with his complaint. PCGT sent an RTI application to the MAHARASHTRA STATE BOARD, Vashi, asking for the Timeline to issue the corrected duplicate mark sheet for SSC and the very next day Abhinav received call from Maharashtra State Board, Vashi, asking him to collect the corrected mark- sheet.

PUBLIC CONCERN FOR GOVERNANCE TRUST
Promoting honesty, transparency and accountability in governance.

Trustees:
J.F. Ribeiro
Dina Gandhi
Dr. R.K. Anand
Prasad Chandani
Sanjay Doyal
S.S. Puri
H.R. Roddy
Ms. Rakha Shahani
Gulam A. Vahanwala

September 13, 2017

Shri Devendra Fadnis
Chief Minister
Government of Maharashtra
Mantralaya
MUMBAI - 400 032

Sub: Ready-To-Use-Therapeutic Foods (RUTF)

Dear Shri Fadnis,

The Trustees of the Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT) request you to reconsider your government's decision to purchase Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) for management of severe, acute malnutrition (SAM) in children.

We understand that in a recent letter the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) has written to all states and Union Territories that there isn't enough evidence to support the use of RUTF for management of SAM and that use of RUTF may replace nutritional best practices and family foods that children should normally be eating. The WCD letter also referred to Ministry of Health and Welfare's 2009 letter that stated that the use of RUTF for management of malnutrition is not an accepted policy of the Government of India and that the instructions in this respect should be strictly complied with.

With regards,

Julio Ribeiro
Julio Ribeiro
Chairman

S/O, Maharashtra Chambers, 22, Shahid Bhau Dadasaheb Road, Breach Candy, Mumbai - 400 026.
Tel: (022) 2352 6426. Telefax: (022) 2352 6452. e-mail: publicconcern@gmail.com. Website: www.pcgtr.org
Registered under Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950
Exempted from Income Tax under Section 80-G (5) (VI) of the Income Tax Act, 1961

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S.S. Puri
H.R. Roddy
Ms. Rakha Shahani
Gulam A. Vahanwala

July 13, 2017

To
Shri Sanjay Bhatia, IAS Chairman, IPA
CHAIRMAN MUMBAI PORT TRUST,
Port House, Shoorji Vallabhdas Marg,
Mumbai - 400 001

Dear Shri Bhatia,

Of late, we the trustees of Public Concern for Governance Trust(PCGT) are in receipt of some disturbing news about the lack of transparency and non-adherence to the stipulated timelines in issue and renewals of various types of licenses, permits, etc., by some of the Port Trust officials. The hapless applicants, being semi-educated or even illiterate and non-computer savvy, are unaware of the procedures and timelines for various licenses that they are dependent upon for their livelihood.

It is therefore requested that the procedures, scheduled timeframes, amounts of fees, the mode of payment, including the copies of prescribed proformas, if any, for issue and renewal of various licenses may please be prominently displayed in the languages, English/Hindi and Marathi along with the names, designations and contact details of the dealing officials concerned in all the Port Trust offices for the sake of transparency and also in compliance with the Sec. 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 for the benefit of all those needy applicants.

The particulars of the Vigilance officials also may please be got displayed so as to deter any deliberative omissions and commissions and undue delays by the officials.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Julio Ribeiro
Julio Ribeiro

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Gulam A. Vahanwala

August 23, 2017

Lt. Governor Kiran Bedi
Puducherry

Dear Kiran,

The Trustees of Public Concern For Governance Trust (PCGT) drew my attention to the picture which is enclosed. I recognized your face behind the dupatta. To me you were not 'incognito'. You should have worn a helmet as required by law. It would have helped to mask your identity. The lady who was driving the scooter has broken the law by not wearing a helmet. As Lt. Governor, you should order her prosecution.

Regards,
Julio Ribeiro
Julio Ribeiro

Out of Great Respect for you Sir, I shall follow your ORDERS
Julio Ribeiro
24.8.2017

*Dr. Anand
for info
24/8/17*

S/O, Maharashtra Chambers, 22, Shahid Bhau Dadasaheb Road, Breach Candy, Mumbai - 400 026.
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mid-day Sunday, August 20, 2017 | www.mid-day.com | twitter.com/mid-day | epaper.mid-day.com

BEDI GOES INCOGNITO

Riding pillion on a two-wheeler with her dupatta covering her face, Puducherry Lt Governor Kiran Bedi travelled incognito to assess safety of women in the Union Territory after dusk. In a WhatsApp message to the media on Saturday after a 'night round' of the city, Bedi said, Felt that Puducherry is safe for women even at night.
PIC/TWITTER

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RTI CLINIC IN MUMBAI

PCGT :

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

For appointments and details :

Call : 022-23526426 / 23526452

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

Email : 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 : 020-64005613

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

Email : 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 Rs. 5,000/- and above may please issue cheques in favour of 'Public Concern For Governance Trust'.

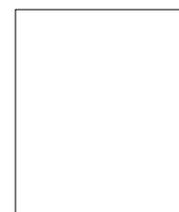
Donations to PCGT qualify for deduction u/s 80G(5) (VI) of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

VOLUNTEERS

People who believe in the Vision & Mission of PCGT are welcome to work as volunteers and contribute to various programmes under- taken by PCGT. They can contact us at our Office at the address given below or call on 022-23526426 / /

✂ tear along this line

BOOK POST



PUBLIC CONCERN

C/o. Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT)
B/2, Mahalaxmi Chambers,
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Registration No. E-20164 (Mumbai)
(THE BOMBAY PUBLIC TRUST ACT, 1950)

To _____

