

# Public Concern



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

April 2020

## 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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## YOUTH - MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Mr. J. F. Ribeiro welcoming the audience



Dr. Prashant Narnaware



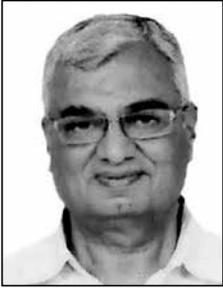
Mr. Suhail Sharma

PCGT Annual Event was held at Sri Shanmukhananda Saraswati Auditorium on February 4, 2020. This time the theme was "Youth : Making a difference". The Chief guests were Dr. Prashant Narnaware, I.A.S. and Mr. Suhail Sharma, I.P.S. Dr. Narnaware, a 2009 batch Indian Administrative Services (IAS) Officer is currently posted as the Joint Managing Director in City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO), Navi Mumbai. He has a strong inclination for social work and also has an equally strong interest for research and teaching. He is known for bringing about administrative innovations in health and agriculture in the tribal areas of Palghar District in Maharashtra.

Sangli's Superintendent of Police, Suhail Sharma, scaled Everest in the second attempt only to fulfill his father's dream. He is the first IPS officer in Maharashtra to head Everest. He intends to encourage college youth in the district to engage in adventure sports.

(More pictures and report on page 3)

## EDITORIAL



### **The State Of War**

When the Pakistan aircrafts hit several airfields on the night of 3rd December 1971, "The Statesman"

a daily, had carried a simple headline. "It's War". As young civil defence volunteers, we undertook patrolling of the railway tracks carrying troops and war material to the North and enforcement of Blackouts. However, no previous War, not even the two World Wars were as fierce as the one we are faced with now. No war ever forced nations to isolate themselves as this War has done. No War required nations to shut themselves down completely, cutting off citizens from the roads and transports, depriving them of their livelihoods and requiring them indoors for prolonged periods as this War against Corona has done. Societies and communities, World over, have been baffled as the scourge enveloped them, respecting no boundaries or geographical frontiers. It has hit rich and poor, old and young all alike. The war is asymmetrical, as the enemy is unseen and yet very powerful and potent. It challenges the very existence of the mankind.

While the medical fraternity fights bravely and tirelessly to identify and treat the victims, it is important for each and every citizen to fight at their own levels this war so that Society, the nation, the world as we know them, survive and we live to rebuild and rejuvenate. What can we, as private citizens do in this war?

First and the foremost is the need to maintain social distancing. Much effort, governmental and private has gone into sensitising us to the need for this as it is the only way at present to remain free of the scourge and to break the cycle of spread. We have to remember that it is the only shield we have. We have no weapons with which to beat the Virus. So in our own interests it is necessary to follow the guidelines about social distancing.

It is necessary to maintain our equanimity and remain resilient in face of the crisis that has enveloped us all. This may be a long drawn battle. It will challenge us and require us to draw deep into our reserves of patience, ability to remain calm and above all our will power. We have not only to be calm and collected ourselves but help others in our surroundings to be so. Know that many many health workers, sanitation workers, supply chain managers and policemen and several others are putting in very hard work at the front lines of this battle to ensure our safety and health. Our duty is to help in instinctively complying with directions that may be issued by the authorities in this regard. The way we followed the call for "Janta Curfew" was very heartening but the way clapping, beating drums, ringing bells etc. were done at some places by breaking rules on distancing was improper. We must remember that saluting those at frontline is a sombre occasion and not one to rejoice and make merry.

While there is no doubt that life has to go on in these difficult times and for that essential food is necessary, but please do not be tempted to

hoard more than is necessary for your own needs. The supply chains that have been affected will be restored but hoarding places an additional burden on the system and deprives others of the essentials. Help each other by buying only what is essential.

The forced stay at home has given us time to ponder on several issues. We now need to think on the fragility of human life. Have we invested enough in understanding microorganisms and threat they pose to human race? Have we enough capacity to ramp up medical care facilities and production of essential medical supplies in times of need. The prolonged lockdown is likely to be extremely difficult for the poor and daily wage earners. Do we, as a society, respond to the needs of the poor and those living in sub normal conditions in the cities and villages? Are we a compassionate, charitable lot with empathy responding to calls of helping society with a missionary zeal? Have we built a culture for keeping ourselves clean? Have we built a system of community leaders, not elected leaders, to interface with community and government in times of crises?

Finally we have to think of relation of mankind with nature and environs. Can we permit wanton destruction of nature without nature hitting back? Do we have to ingest everything that moves just to titillate our palates? This virus is nature's answer to that craving. The answers to such questions are very disturbing and difficult to accept.

Think! Stay Safe! Stay Healthy!

— Sanjeev Dayal

# YOUTH – MAKING A DIFFERENCE (contd. From page 1)

The annual day was witnessed by more than 2500 guests including students from different schools and colleges. The programme was divided into two segments, cultural – with performances by school students, followed by dialogues with the chief guests.

The programme started with a short video of 5 youths who were past interns / volunteers of PCGT. It showed what they were doing to make

a difference in the society and what making a difference did to them. They were later brought to the stage where they spoke about the message they wanted to give to their friends. The video was followed by 13 year old Shreya Rao enthralling the audience with her singing. She uses her talent to raise awareness for social causes. A stunning dance and drama item by students of Sardar Vallabhbai Patel Vividhalakshi Vidyalaya,

Kandivali; Podar International SSC Section; Universal School, Tardeo and Anjuman I Islam's Dr. M.I.J. Girls High School, Bandra, focussing on the life of Gandhiji and how his values and principles are applicable even today, followed Shreya's performance.

After the entertainment, the two guest speakers empowered the youth with the work they were doing and encouraged them to work for society and the downtrodden.

## ANNUAL DAY NITE



Shreya Rao

Performance by school students

The young change makers

Performers with Dr. Prashant Narnaware & Mrs. Rekha Shahani

PCGT staff with Mrs. Rekha Shahani

Audience standing for the National Anthem

## YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE

### Dialogue on National Security

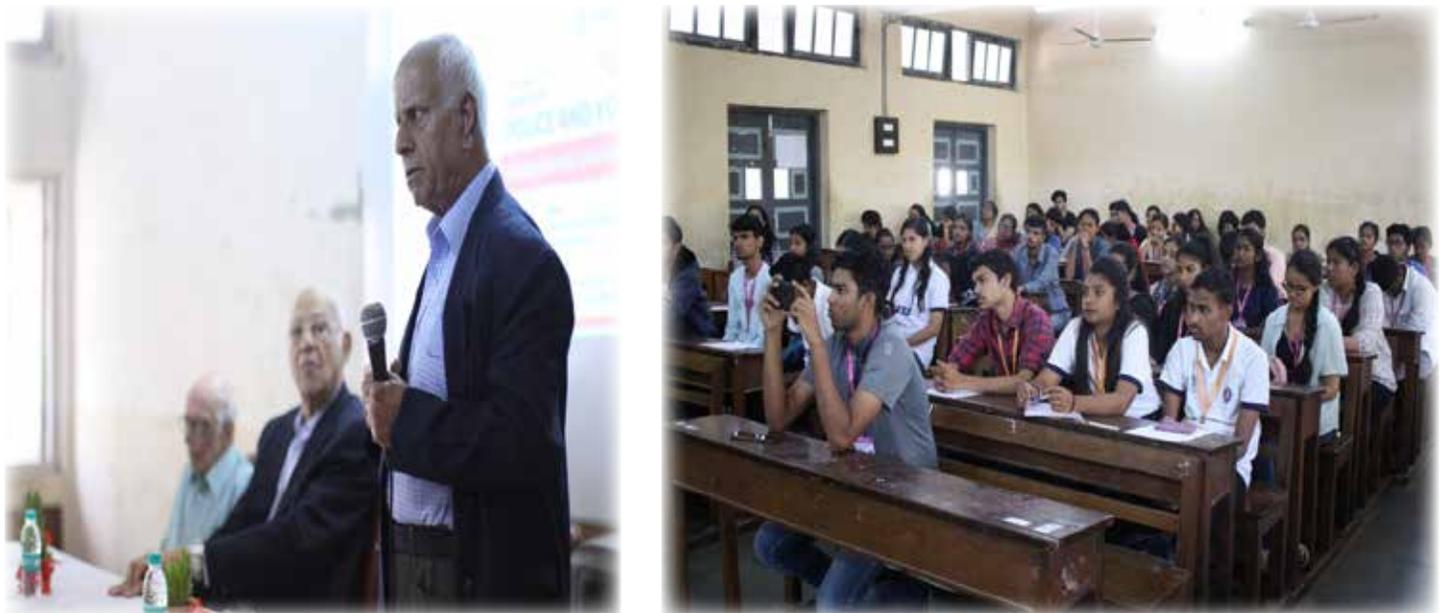


*Mr. Chaman Lal addressing the gathering on National Security*

PCGT in collaboration with St. Xavier's Institute of Management Studies organised a dialogue on **National Security** on 31st January 2020, for the students of Public Policy and Management. The speaker for the dialogue was Mr. Chaman Lal, Ex – IPS and DG (Retd.) of Nagaland. Many students attended the programme. He spoke on internal and external security and how youth can contribute to peace and harmony in the country by being law-abiding citizens.

\* \* \*

### Dialogue on Police and Youth



*Mr. Chaman Lal addressing the students*

PCGT, in collaboration with NSS Unit of St. Andrew's College, organised a dialogue with students on **Police and Youth** on 6th February, 2020 for the students of Arts and Commerce streams, with Mr. Chaman Lal as the speaker. Many students attended the programme. He spoke to students on the concerns of Police department and gave an insight on the history of police from the colonial days. He inspired the youth to join civil service by stating it as a service and a calling from one's within. He concluded by saying that the youth need to be tough minded and kind hearted in order to serve the common people at large.

## KUCHH AUR

As we come to the end of the academic year 2019-2020 for the schools of Mumbai, we extended our Kuchh Aur programme to 25 schools which included BMC, State Board Aided and Un-aided schools.



*Mrs. Hansa Lalvani taking a session*

The journey was indeed wonderful as it gave us the opportunity to touch more than 1500 lives of students every month. As the number of schools increased this year we had

Mrs. Asha Varma take sessions in Purshottam High School, Bandra, and Mrs. Hansa Lalwani take sessions in Sardar Vallabhbai Patel Vividhalakshi Vidyalaya (SVPVV), Kandivali.

We also extended the number of classes from Std. V to X, as in the past we used to focus on Std. VII to IX.,

The topics that we covered were goal setting, study skills, honesty, cleanliness, friendship, compassion, love, from self to society, dignity of labour, unity as the citizens of the world, kindness, environment and the joy of living.

We also ensured on getting to know the students better so that we could understand their emotions and they could share freely with us.

The objectives of our sessions were to make students more compassionate towards self, their families, peer group, society and the nation at large. By using role play

and interacting with them through discussions, the idea was to build up their confidence in front of not only their class mates but adults too. Lot of team work was encouraged and the students worked in pairs and groups and became more confident to interact with each other. Videos, power-point presentation and songs related to the topics were also used and implemented. We are sure that these sessions have given the students confidence to be better citizens in



*Mrs. Asha Varma with the students after taking a session*

the society. We are indeed thankful to the school principals and staff for supporting our programme.

## COMMUNITY WORK

Like in the past, this year too the Kuchh Aur programme extended to the communities in Nerul, Rabale and Jui Nagar. Every week the children were exposed to different sessions on being responsible citizens.



*Mrs. Yashasweeta Kokate, Programme Manager, PCGT, taking a session on 'Compassion' with children of Nerul Community.*

We also took sessions at Panvel with the students of the NSS Unit of St. Andrew's College. This was part of their annual retreat.



*PCGT staff and interns with NSS students at Panvel*

## RTI / RTS

### Certified Training on RTI and RTS

The Annual Campus Ambassador (CA) Event: Certified Training programme on the Right to Information (RTI) and the Right to Service (RTS) was organized by PCGT on February 22, at the Kilachand Conference Room, Indian Merchants' Chamber (IMC), Churchgate, Mumbai.

The event witnessed participation of 21 students across the country. The Opening Address was delivered by Mr. J. F. Ribeiro, who shared the vision and mission of PCGT and highlighted the importance of youth in ensuring that the government is transparent and accountable. This was followed by a session titled "Demystifying Governance" delivered by Mr. V. P. Raja, which helped the students better understand their rights and duties vis a vis good governance.

The session on RTS was delivered by Mr. D. S. Ranga Rao, who gave

practical insights to the participants about this important legislation. The last two sessions were delivered by Mr. Shailesh Gandhi, who briefed the participants about the RTI Act, its recent amendment, judicial backlogs, the issue of privacy as well as Act 21 of 2006. He then focused on the drafting and filing of RTI Applications and guided each participant in drafting RTI Applications and framing their queries better.

The aforesaid training program therefore served as an ideal platform for students and PCGT CAs to understand the importance of good governance as well as legislations such as RTI and RTS to ensure accountability in governance. The

CAs also got exposed to the nuances of organizing an event, thus building their leadership skills and strengthening the CA program as a whole. To obtain certificates for the training program, each participant was asked to file an RTI Application through PCGT on or before April 21, 2020. This would ensure that they had not only understood the law, but also put the training to use by actually filing an RTI Application.



*Mr. Gandhi's session*

### Dialogues and Workshops conducted from January to March 2020

The following dialogues and workshops were conducted in the months from January to March 2020:

Name of the Institution	Description of the Event	Date	Speaker / Chief Guest
NMIMS - Jyoti Dalal School of Liberal Arts, Mumbai	Dialogue - Countering Fake News	January 23, 2020	Ms. Kavitha Iyer
St. Meera's College, Pune	RTI Workshop	February 10, 2020	Mr. Satish Khot and Mr. Shardul Deshpande
NMIMS – Kirit P. Mehta School of Law, Mumbai	Dialogue - Demystifying Governance	February 18, 2020	Mr. V. P. Raja
Government Law College, Mumbai	Workshop on Ethics in Legal Profession	February 18, 2020	Mr. Mihir Desai
Thakur College of Engineering & Technology, Mumbai	Workshop on Indian Parliamentary Procedure	February 27, 2020	Mr. Shivam Jain Kakadia
Firodia Law College, Ferguson College Campus, Pune	Dialogue - Transparency in Indian Elections	March 6, 2020	Mr. V. S. Sampath
Dr. D. Y. Patil Law College, Pune	Dialogue - Democracy and the Rule of Law	March 13, 2020	Mr. Mahesh Zagde and Mr. Shivam Jain Kakadia



*Mr. Mahesh Zagde addressing the students*



*Dialogue by Ms. Iyer*



*Workshop by Mr. Desai*



*Dialogue by Mr. Raja*

# Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO)

The POCSO team of PCGT, in its constant efforts to make the city a safer place for women and children, has surveyed areas vulnerable to sexual harassment along with Aangan Trust, an NGO working for the safety of children. The team has submitted reports to Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), and was able to successfully put 151 light points on the streets of 7 areas (out of 15). Having

received sanctioned plans from the MCGM for more, our team now plans on executing and lighting over 10 locations in Mazagaon and Colaba.

Very keen on doing groundwork, our team also visits schools in underprivileged areas to speak to the students about issues such as child sexual abuse and teach them ways to seek help. On 27th February, 2020, our team was invited by the NSS committee

of the Government Law College to the Winter Residential Camp at the Tembha Village in Shahapur, where the team taught the students of the Ashram School identifying signs of child sexual abuse, consent, their right to deny company, etc.

The team will also be starting awareness sessions on the subject of women and child safety in association with Mohalla Committee.

## COMPASSIONATE POLICING

**Compassionate Policing**, an initiative of Maharashtra Police and PCGT, completed two sessions for the police constables and other ranks at Marol, Mumbai, in the months of February and March 2020. In all 415 of them from more than 46 units went through the training. PCGT conducted the training for four days of their in-service training programme. The course director for the same was Mrs. Rekha Shahani. The sessions were held from 6.30 in the morning to 5.30 in the evening. The early morning session focussed on being with nature, learning from nature,

observing silence, reflecting, sharing and finally celebrating the religious diversity of our spiritual oneness. Some of the other sessions were on Perspective and Role of Police, Community Policing, Communication, Use of Theatre and Street Plays, Sensitization of Gender, Children, Senior Citizens, My Purpose in Life, Being with Self – We, the Change Makers and the Power of Pause. March being the month for the festival of Holi, we enjoyed with colours made from flowers, sweets and danced to the music of Holi songs. The colours were gifted by LIFE Foundation.

PCGT is indeed thankful to Mr. Arun Wakhlu, Dr. Harish Shetty, Prabhakar Vartak, Kusum Kanwar, Seema Shaikh, Sudhir Gogate, Dr. Naina Athale, Chaman Lal, Vikas Mohla, Dr. Sangeeta Srivastava, Hansa Lalvani, Pathik Vats, Vimita Balani and the team of Rang Bhoomi for conducting sessions and being a support to them. We are also thankful to the Principal, staff and students of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Vividhalakshi Vidyalaya (SVPVV) and Purshottam High School for their live performance during this training.





### 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

### 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](http://www.pcgt.org)



#### PUBLIC CONCERN

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