

# Public Concern

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

July 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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**A**arnav Mavinkurve, 11 years old, has been learning to play the guitar ever since he was six, when he was gifted with a junior guitar at a Christmas party. He instantly connected with it and took a liking to learning music. His passion for music grew as he started to take formal guitar lessons and that encouraged him to play other instruments as well, such as the drums, keyboard and the cajon.

Aarnav (or Arnie, as he is lovingly called) came across a story on Instagram where a 3 year old child had (with the help of his mother) made sandwiches and sold them to raise funds for donating to the Mumbai police.

He was so impressed and inspired that a young child had so much drive to help, that he set upon himself a significant task to collect ₹ 1 lakh for the Mumbai Police by writing, composing and performing a song for thanking them for all their efforts in keeping us safe during this pandemic.

With the help of his music coach, he spent hours coming up with the right tune and appropriate lyrics that conveyed how much we owe it to our forces.

It took him about 5 days to complete the practice, post which he recorded the song called "Ode to Mumbai Police".

His parents sent the recorded video and contribution request to their family and friends on whatsapp, across many groups, and across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

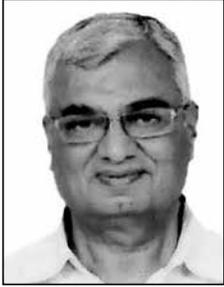
Aarnav was overwhelmed to see the response he got for his initiative. Within just a few days, he was able to collect ₹ 1,52,500. He was thrilled!!

With the help of Mr. Sanjeev Dayal, Aarnav got an opportunity to meet DCP Abhishek Trimukhe and hand over the contribution towards the Mumbai Police Welfare Fund.

His parents shared that this entire experience has helped him to realise that every small initiative counts and it is always possible to make a difference with one's efforts. It also helped him experience the happiness and satisfaction of giving back to the society.

## EDITORIAL

### Reforming The Police



The scenes were horrendous. The act was despicable. Video clips of a cop kneeling on the neck of a coloured person in Minneapolis,

America, accused of using a forged currency bill, that led to his death, have revolted people world wide. While America is in the throes of riots and looting, race protests have gripped Europe too. Questions on police reforms are naturally being raised in India also.

Many models of the reforms are being spoken about including the one being attempted in Minneapolis, USA, that of defunding and disbanding the police. It may not be completely possible in India. One recalls what had happened in Mumbai, when Police had kept away from duties following disbanding of Police Union in Maharashtra in 1982 and anti-social elements and criminals had a field day. However, reforms are necessary and reform Police must if it is not to loose the respect it has earned by the stellar service that the police of all States rendered during the ongoing lockdown.

Whenever police reforms are spoken about, discussions centre around the seven directives of the Supreme Court, issued in the Writ filed by Shri Prakash Singh, a former DGP and a distinguished IPS officer. These directives basically aimed at isolating police hierarchy from political interference and also provided for setting up of a police complaints authority to check misuse of power by Police. Governments used the directives of the Court to amend their Acts by bringing in new Acts which made the position of the Government even stronger than before ignoring totally the directions issued by the Supreme Court. Attempts to get Supreme Court to issue contempt notices have failed with the Hon.

Justices themselves questioning the urgency whenever the matter was sought to be mentioned. The public generally has been disinterested in the directives as they have no stake in them. The reforms also need to address the ills that beset the Police. A few thoughts on what is needed are penned.

In order for reforms to succeed, it is first and foremost imperative for police leadership at all levels to reform themselves. They must discover the steel in them. Interference in operational police matters can be and should be resisted. Police is a service, which must ensure rule of law and uphold their oath to the Constitution. If police leadership is by and large disciplined and does not go behind the backs of their seniors for petty gains and remain role models for their subordinates to emulate, police as an institution will be respected and trusted. The respect police gained during the lockdown period was for the service it rendered beyond their call of duty and this should always be remembered. Corruption and brutality, for whatever reasons, must neither be encouraged nor tolerated and again top leadership must lead by example. Leaders must speedily bring full force of law and departmental rules whenever any deviant behaviour comes to their notice.

Having said this, Governments must provide necessary money and wherewithal to Police to be able to discharge their duties. After denying police their required budget any demand for increase is negated by finance departments with the specious plea that hitherto police has been able to do with what is provided. Such attitudes must end if we expect police to reform.

Over time, departments who fail to perform take the easier route of making the laws they have to implement cognisable and non bailable offences, thus shifting the onus of implementation on to the shoulders of an overburdened police without providing additional resources. Time

has come to set up a committee of experts from diverse fields to examine what laws should the police implement and what should be left to respective departments considering that criminalising every act is not serving any purpose. Having determined the duties to be performed by the police, the same committee should also fix the resources needed for the implementation of such duties not only in terms of manpower, but also type, periodicity and quality of training, technical, financial and communication resources. The periodicity with which adequacy of resources should be reviewed, must also be fixed. However, recommendations of such committee will remain on paper unless they have a force of law or the society at large is interested in it.

Police not only implements laws but also faces the fall out of old defective laws. The antisocial elements in Society gain strength when civil laws take forever to deliver justice e.g. in recovery of dues and loans or evicting tenants who are in possession of property beyond contract period. Desperate parties find it economical to pay criminals to recover dues or vacate property. There are laws who have no backing of society for example prohibition and gambling laws. Laws need to be aligned with aspirations and expectations of the Society.

Performance of police has become a prisoner of statistics and time that it is freed from it for that alone will encourage free registration of crime. Rising crime is no indicator of poor police performance nor is the falling crime a barometer of good policing. It is time while recording of cases must be compulsory, investigation of each and every case should not be compulsory.

Communities whom police are meant to serve must have a stake and a say in the evaluation of the performance of the Police. They should be asked to rate the quality of service of the police and the feeling of safety and security they provide. A methodology for this rating taking care of the population

*(Contd. on Page No. 3)*

## RTI / RTS

### PCGT STANDS FOR #TIMELYJUSTICEDELIVERY



Screenshot of Mr. J. F. Ribeiro's endorsement for #TimelyJusticeDelivery on YouTube

**"Justice delayed is justice denied"** is an old saying and a reality of the Indian judicial system. A proposal by Mr. Shailesh Gandhi (Former Central Information Commissioner) to ensure

that judicial backlogs become history has been trending on social media as #TimelyJusticeDelivery.

In the said proposal, Mr. Gandhi has analysed the data available on the website of the Supreme Court of India and has suggested a simple solution to curb judicial backlogs – that all sanctioned judicial vacancies in the country be filled.

PCGT has extended its support to Mr. Gandhi's proposal for #TimelyJusticeDelivery. The Chairman as well as the other Trustees of PCGT have endorsed Mr. Gandhi's proposal

by uploading videos with the Hashtag #TimelyJusticeDelivery. Students associated with PCGT presently and in the past (Interns, Campus Ambassadors and Volunteers) have similarly endorsed the proposal on their social media accounts.

In order to endorse the proposal, one has to record a video (20 to 80 seconds only) and upload the same on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram with the Hashtag #TimelyJusticeDelivery. On Twitter, the uploader should tag @PMOIndia and @rsprasad (Official accounts of the Prime Minister and the Law Minister).

### WEBINARS ORGANIZED BY PCGT

The following webinars / virtual sessions were organized by PCGT from April to June 2020, witnessing participation from students across the country:

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS	Date and Time of the Webinar	Name of the Speaker
Indian Polity (Instagram Live)	April 10, 2020 - 8.30 to 9.30 pm	Mr. Aditya Lele
The Importance of Youth Parliaments (Instagram Live)	April 12, 2020 - 8 to 9 pm	Mr. Miheer Jain
Indian Parliamentary Procedure (Instagram Live)	April 14, 2020 - 8 to 9 pm	Mr. Ishaan Joshi
WEBINARS		
Right to Information (Google Meet)	May 16, 2020 - 5 to 7 pm	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi
Indian Parliamentary Procedure (Google Meet)	May 22, 2020 – 7 to 9 pm	Mr. Ishaan Joshi
Judicial backlogs can become history (Google Meet)	May 23, 2020 – 5 to 6 pm	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi
Improving Interpersonal Relations (Google Meet)	June 5, 2020 – 6 to 7.30 pm	Mr. V. P. Raja
Health of Democracy and Economy in the Pre-COVID World (Google Meet and Facebook Live)	June 7, 2020 – 4 to 5 pm	Mr. Mahesh Zagade
#TimelyJusticeDelivery can happen in India (Google Meet)	June 20, 2020 – 5 to 6 pm	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi
Why Police does not file FIRs: Burking (Google Meet)	June 21, 2020 – 5 to 6 pm	Mr. Shailesh Gandhi
Introduction to the Online Edition of PCGT National Youth Parliament (Instagram Live)	June 23, 2020 – 8 to 9 pm	Ms. Shreya Yadav and Ms. Nandini Shenai
Police Reforms in India (Zoom and YouTube Live)	June 29, 2020 – 5.30 to 6.30 pm	Mr. J. F. Ribeiro

## EDITORIAL

(Contd. from Page No. 2)

mix in the area could be worked out. The rating should be done randomly by surprise by interviewing cross section of the Society by an independent agency. The rating should become an integral part of the annual reports.

Finally, we must remember that Police and Policemen are a part of the

Society and mirror what is good and what is bad in the society. While the Police can be a little better than the average society man, it is fruitless to expect police to be an island of virtues while the rest of the society is at the other extreme. Society must also realise that they will get the type

of police they deserve and if they wish for a better police they shall have to have a stake in its improvement. They shall have to stand up and insist on a better equipped, better staffed and better trained police.

JAI HIND

— Sanjeev Dayal

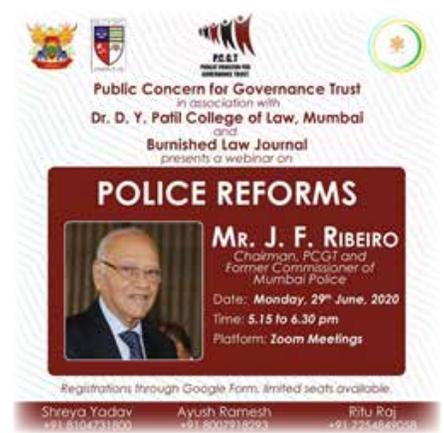
## RTI / RTS



Webinar on Improving Interpersonal Relations by Mr. V. P. Raja (June 5, 2020, Google Meet)



Webinar on Health of Democracy and Economy in the Pre-COVID World (June 7, 2020, Facebook Live)



Poster for the Webinar on Police Reforms in India dated June 29, 2020

## PREVENTION OF CHILD SEXUAL OFFENCES (POCSO)

**T**aking awareness online: April was observed as Sexual Assault Awareness Month by the POCSO Team to raise public awareness about sexual harassment, assault, and abuse in the communities with an ultimate goal of prevention, this time the programme was taken online. In light of the increased number of calls for help in cases such as domestic violence and abuse, discussions related to Domestic Violence Act, mental health, etc. were initiated among group of young women who further discussed and circulated the learnings in their circles. Issues such as understanding consent, ways to stop sexual assault before it happens and methods of identifying problems were also discussed.

Anti-Street Harassment Week, 19th April - 25th April: Anti-Street Harassment Week was observed with Stop Street Harassment Organisation, many women shared their stories of experiences and standing up against eve teasing.

Pledges against sexual harassment: Online pledges to recognise and stand up against sexual harassment were taken through google forms online, the form is still circulating online with more pledges being taken.

The POCSO team, in order to help people stranded in the lockdown, arranged daily meals and ration kits for about 3,000 out of jobs daily wage earners and migrant workers. The team was able to assist facilitators of Mohalla Committee Movement Trust

(MCMT), Ashley and Fatima Pereira of Janvi Foundation, members Aangan Trust and TISS Prayas in the process. A total contribution of ₹ 35,000 was raised by the team to provide ration to requests that came from MCMT to help Janvi Foundation provide dry rations to families of their students in Saki Naka, Andheri and Jogeshwari.

The work of drafting contents for POCSO booklet was undertaken by the team with assistance from student interns of TISS. The team is currently helping Janvi Foundation in making arrangements for migrant workers stuck in Mumbai with the assistance of Saadhan, a collective of GLC students. The team is doing research victim rights, specifically the provisions and suggestions for victims in the criminal justice system of India.

## KUCHH AUR

**T**he COVID-19 has resulted in schools shut all across the world. Globally over 1.2 billion children are out of the class-room. As a result, education has changed from class-room teaching learning to e-learning whereby teaching has to be done remotely and on digital platforms.

Kuchh Aur programme had also to shift from class-room learning to the digital platform. The schools welcomed

our decision to conduct these classes online. Parents welcomed us not only in their childrens' learning process but also into their homes and personal spaces so that the lessons in responsible citizens could be taught to the children and now would benefit the entire family.

The theme we chose for the academic year 2020-2021 was 'The Joy of Living'. Various components under this

theme were taken into consideration for the months of April to July. Some of them were happiness, diversity, cleanliness, time management, role models, respect, service, simplicity, dignity of labour and from self to society.

The session in July started with the Doctors' Day celebration on July 1st. The students and teachers were exposed to the life of Dr. Bidhan

## KUCHH AUR



*Mrs. Rekha Shahani conducting a session at SVPVV School*

Chandra Roy, the 2nd Chief Minister of West Bengal who was born on July 1, 1882 and passed on in 1962 on July 1st. Born in Bankepur Patna in Bihar, he founded five cities in Bengal of Durgapur, Kalyani, Bidhan Nagar, Ashok Nagar and Habra. Being the youngest of five children, he was influenced by his father's teaching of service. 1st July is celebrated as Doctors' Day in his memory as he was a renowned physician, educationist, social reformer, leading freedom fighter and one of the makers of modern India. He was an able administrator and an icon of morality and ethics in public life. The students were taken down memory lane of his life and learnt :

- ❖ Dr. B. C. Roy was impressed by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Arbindo Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal and Mahatma Gandhi. He became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council



in 1925 and took active part in the Civil Disobedience Movement and Quit India Movement with Mahatma Gandhi. He joined the Brahma Samaj in 1909. He went to England with ₹ 1,200/- and came back in 1911 with MRCP and FRCS degrees. From 14 January 1948 to July 1962 he was the Chief Minister of Bengal.

- ❖ He was the first Indian to become Chairman of the Medical Council of India.
- ❖ He established institutions like Jadhavpur T.B. Hospital, R. G. Kar Medical College, Kamla Nehru Hospital and many more.
- ❖ He was honoured the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour in 1961. The students shared that they learnt the value of patriotism, service, dignity of labour, honesty, trust, simplicity, discipline and many more through this short story of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy.

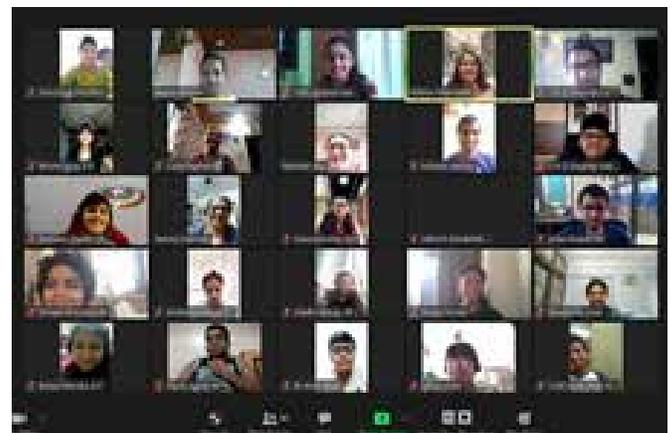
Sessions with parents were taken on life during covid and after covid.



*Some participants of online sessions*

More than 100 parents attended the same. This year we have started sessions with the Anjuman I Islam's Dr. M.I.J. Girls High School, Bandra, Sardar Vallabhai Patel Vividhalakshi Vidyalaya, Kandivali, Pragnya Bodhini High School, Goregaon and S. M. Shetty High School, Powai.

We have touched the lives of more than 700 students in various schools in the last two months and hope the effect of these sessions online will touch the lives of their families too.



## YOUTH FOR GOVERNANCE

### Human Chain by college students

In an effort to encourage youth to make a difference from home during lockdown, the Youth For Governance team (YFG) enrolled college students in March to create awareness in their communities about their ability to be in action despite lockdown and inspire people to follow the pressing need of social distancing. Mrs. Saldanha started with a motive to create awareness within buildings and colonies to follow safety measures. The target was to reach communities, friends, family, neighbours, and colleagues through phone calls and make them aware of the issues and this way form a human chain of determination.

Specific targeted results achieved by the end of the one month programme:

- Each student spoke to 15 people daily
- Each student took a promise from them to speak to 15 others
- Students were able to spread the right information among family and friends
- Students got an opportunity to work on their leadership skills and communication, experience the power and satisfaction of what difference one can make despite circumstances
- Students collected and circulated data of nearby social working groups and clubs

#### Student Participants:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mrunal Dattatray Gavankar - V.K. Krishna Menon College</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Raj Barchha - HR College</li> <li>3. Pardnya Shinde - Government Law College</li> <li>4. Vaishnavi Ahire - R. A. Poddar College of Commerce</li> <li>5. Ali Sharafally - Jai Hind College</li> <li>6. Shweta Saroj - Guru Nanak College</li> <li>7. Jash Shah - HR College</li> <li>8. Shivani Lotankar - Jai Hind College</li> <li>9. Sharif Marziya - Valia College</li> <li>10. Vaishnovi Patil - KBP Hinduja, College</li> <li>11. Yukta Bartakke - KBP Hinduja, College</li> </ol> |
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### RTI CLINIC IN MUMBAI

#### PCGT :

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

For appointments and details :

**Call** : 022-2352 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)**



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