

# HARMONY

## Connecting the IAS Community

! Monthly Newsletter of the IAS Officers' Association, Maharashtra Branch ! February 2005 !

### Mid-career men-o-pause

If you have already read *Mid-life Blues: How Bureaucrats Drift Towards Negativism, Mediocrity* by Power Trading Corporation CMD Tantra Narayan Thakur, which appeared in The Times of India last month, you may skip this. But if you have missed it and believe, like Oscar Wilde, that the only thing in the world worse than being talked about is not being talked about, you may read on, though you may be weary of the spate of articles, mostly critical and caustic, about the IAS and its members.

Mr Thakur, firstly, states that a mid-career bureaucrat would rather just follow the rules and procedures than take a risk that might boomerang but might really help the state's development, because his idealism has eroded over the years. Secondly, he avers that today's civil servant cannot be expected to work with a sense of freedom, impartiality and without fear of reprisal for opinions freely expressed to the minister and to use diligently the discretionary powers, without any sense of discomfort, for his mindset has changed. Thirdly, dismissing most bureaucrats as *floaters, drop-outs or self-righteous*, the writer says that there are a few true professionals among them, who take it upon themselves to address the woes of others, mobilize the local community in achieving a concordance of views on public matters, choose assignments in rural development over those that offer interface with industrial houses, do not worry about earning the displeasure of some people or feel bitter about decisions not going their way, and thus make all-out efforts to effect improvements in the system from within, yet not adopting a confrontation-at-every-step mode. Lastly, prescribing a cure, Mr Thakur advocates that if the diligence and perseverance shown by civil servants in entering the service is made to reflect in their later work as well, there will be no dearth of true professionals. For once, we must thank the critic for hitting the nail on its head.!

Rameshchandra Kanade

### Charity that began at home

Charity, they say, begins at home, though that is not often true in practice. But the IC&AS Officers' Wives' Association has proved the dictum by showcasing prompt initiative to reach out to the survivors of the Tsunami disaster. And therefore, though we do not wear hats, we are tempted to say, "Hats off!" to laud this achievement. The Association, which has been consistently doing yeomen service, has surpassed its all previous achievements. Working through its social-welfare committee *WeCare*, the Association collected a sum of Rs 2 lakh and medicines worth Rs 51,000 for the survivors. So, hats off and three cheers to the Wives' Association. Clearly, that day is not far when, impressed with such burgeoning activities and achievements, the IAS officers would make a demand for merging their Association with the Wives' Association.!



By VS GOPALAKRISHNAN

"Government expenditure on foreign trips of officials needs to be curtailed. Let's go abroad and find out how other countries do it."!

[Our inimitable cartoonist VS Gopalakrishnan (1962), Director General World Trade Centre, Mumbai, can be contacted on: 022-22182879; 24936429; vsgopal2000@yahoo.com].!

### WeCare 'cause We Care

By TILAKA JOSEPH



Nature is proving that she can't be beaten by the likes of us. She is taking the world away from intellectuals and giving it back to the apes. So said, Robert E Sherwood.

Nature furnishes us with no reason for her acts. There is no negotiation when the earth moves. She looks indifferent, makes no distinction between the good and the evil. Truly, only in the eye of nature, every one is equal.

For the *WeCare* subcommittee of the IC&AS Officers' Wives' Association this was the second fund raising event. But this time there was no joy but sadness and shock, uncertainty and helplessness and urgency. It was, however, reassuring that people have large hearts. Everyone cares in her or his own way; everyone comes forward to give a helping hand when the need arises.

Compared to the magnitude of the devastation, what we have given is undisputedly a tiny amount. But it is only through such little acts of kindness that we can form a foundation on which we shall be able to build a structure of fellowship and brotherhood.

By collecting the donations and handing over the cheque to the Chief Minister, our duty has not ended; it has just begun. When we send the collection through other agencies it takes away the personal touch and the satisfaction of helping someone. Therefore, *WeCare's* next step will be to visit these affected places and give psychological and emotional succor to the people there.!

[That is Tilaka Joseph, wife of Secretary (Shipping), Govt of India. It was mainly because of the public spirited people like her and Mrs Sneha Premkumar that the Wives' Association could achieve this. Affable and unassuming, Mrs Joseph, chief librarian in Mumbai University, can be contacted on 022-26592718; 9820040043].!

## Wives' Association thanks

By IYRA NALINAKSHAN

The IC & AS Officers' Wives' Association acknowledges the efforts of the following persons and their friends and families and sincerely thanks them for their overwhelmingly generous contribution towards the welfare of the Tsunami victims. The Association also thanks the building coordinators without whose quick and efficient response the collection would not have been possible. Our 156 contributions are:

‡ *Buena Vista*: Collection Rs 19,503. Jyotsna Afzulpurkar (Coordinator) (Rs 5,000), Manisha Parthasarathy (Rs 5,001), Geeta Srinivasan (Rs 2,001), Prabha Kakodkar (Rs 2,000), Maushmi Batabyal (Rs 2,000), Jaquie Verma (Rs 2,000), Bharati Srinivasan (Rs 1,001), Meenakshi Jayaraman (Rs 500).

‡ *Shalaka*: Collection Rs 15,500; Nalini Pinto (Coordinator) (Rs 2,500), Meena Kasbekar (Rs 2,000), Manjiri Purandare (Rs 1,000), Pratima Doshi (Rs 1,000), PD Mehta (Rs 500), Shanta Saptarshi (Rs 500), Rani Jadhav (Rs 500), Beena Baroi (Rs 500), Shanta Uppal (Rs 500), Mrs S Chattejee (Rs 500), Asha Upasani (Rs 500), Mrs Mahadevan (Rs 500), Nirja Modi (Rs 500), Sunidhi Kale (Rs 500), BD Ghogale (Rs 500), R Krishnan (Rs 500), Pushpa Jadhav (Rs 500), Rahul Chitnis (Rs 500), Shweta Patil (Rs 500), Pramila Srivastava (Rs 500), KB Rao (Rs 300), Smt KR Salvi (Rs 300), Sunita Ubale (Rs 200), NG Ahire (Rs 200).

‡ *Dilwara*: Collection Rs 10,502. Seema Katre (Rs 5,000), Madhuchchanda Mukhopadhyaya (Coordinator) (Rs 2,500), Mrs AB Wagle (Rs 1,001), Amruta Varadarajan (Rs 1,000), Mrs P Dembla (Rs 501), Pal Sidhu (Rs 500).

‡ *Yashodhan*: Collection Rs 17,952. Maria Khan (Rs 5,000), Anita Lal (Rs 5,000), Vasudharini Vasudavan (Rs 1,500), Mintu Sinha (Rs 1,000), Priya Ubale (Coordinator) (Rs 1,000), Mandakini Megh (Rs 500), Sunita Saharia (Coordinator) (Rs 500), Seema Seth (Rs 500), Sunanda Swarup (Rs 500), Sheetal Gagrani (Rs 500), Satish Gavai (Rs 300), Fatima Hussain (Rs 300), Dr Mrs Rasal (Rs 250), Sushmita Khobragade (Rs 250), Jayashree Ramesh Kumar (Rs 251), Ramita Sahni (Rs 250), Mrs Bhargale (Rs 201), Amer & Zaara Ahmed (Rs 150).

*Praneet, Priya, Aseem*: Collection Rs 17,100. Shubhada Sukthankar (Rs 5,001), Lata Navinkumar (Coordinator) (Rs 1,500), Meena Bhagwat (Rs 1,000), Sanjeeta Joshi (Rs 1,000), Kirti Arjun (Rs 1,000),

Manju Rama Rao (Rs 1,000), Mr Jayant Daithankar (Rs 1,000), S Daithankar (Rs 600), Sneha Premkumar (Rs 500), Manju Agarwal (Rs 500), Usha Tambe (Rs 500), Thanksy Thekkeker (Rs 500), Milan Bahadur (Rs 500), Nalini Gehrotra (Rs 500), Revathy Gopalkrishnan (Rs 500), Harpreet Arora (Rs 500), Manimala Sinha (Rs 250), Mrs Khatua (Rs 250), Mrs Baldev Chand (Rs 250), Smita Warty (Rs 250), Mrs Khot (Rs 250), Leena Gokhale (Rs 250).

‡ *Charville*: Collection Rs 4,600. Swati Bhawe (Rs 600), Mrs Kolshe-Patil (Rs 500), Smita Ubale (Rs 500), Madhavi Karandikar (Rs 500), Vandana S Kumar (Rs 500), Jayashree Basak (Rs 500), Lata Sagane (Rs 500), Iyra Nalinakshan (Coordinator) (Rs 500), Mrs Palode (Rs 500).

‡ *Ambar / Avanti*: Collection Rs 3,100. Vineeta Porwal (Rs 1,000), Promila Sachdeva (Rs 1,000), Rita Agarwal (Coordinator) (Rs 300), Mrs Mathankar (Rs 200), Kamal Pasricha (Rs 200), Madhu Pandey (Rs 200), DR Potwar (Rs 200).

‡ *Asawari, Vibhavari*: Collection Rs 1,950. Mrs Vikas Deshmukh (Rs 500), Mrs BR Gane (Rs 500), Mrs AM Khulsange (Rs 250), Seema Vyas (Coordinator along with Sunita Saharia) (Rs 250), Mrs Nitin Gadre (Rs 250), Mrs KV Kurundkar (Rs 200).

‡ *Nilambari*: Collection Rs 1300. Rajee Gill (Coordinator) (Rs 500), Sujata Chahande (Rs 500), Neena Singh (Rs 300).

‡ *Kedar / Mandar*: Collection Rs 500; Pushpa Nahata (Coordinator) (Rs 250), Mrs Jawale (Rs 250).

‡ *Miscellaneous*: Collection Rs 71,251. Coordinator: Priya Ubale, Prema Nimbalkar (Rs 500), Reena Joseph (Rs 500), Meera Joshi (Rs 500), Sujata Asthana (Rs 500), Vatsala Jambunathan (Rs 251), Neela Borwankar (Rs 2,500), RP Deshpande (Rs 2,500), Shantilal Amarchand Jhaveri Charitable Trust (Rs 5,000).

‡ Special thanks are due to: Khalid Shafique Vora (Rs 15,000), Sai Maritime & Management Pvt Ltd (Rs 15,000), Pegasus Finance Co. Pvt Ltd (Rs 10,000), Sai Shipping Company Pvt Ltd (Rs 20,000). Priya Ubale for overall coordination. ‡



Association President-Designate Sneha Premkumar handed over a donation cheque to CM Vilasrao Deshmukh on 7 January 2005. Also seen here are: Iyra Nalinakshan, Prema Nimbalkar, Tilaka Joseph, Chief Secretary RM Premkumar, Lata Navin Kumar, Reena Joseph, and Rajee Gill ‡

‡ *Bel Haven*: Collection Rs 7,421. Lakshmi Giriraj (Rs 750), Kamala Lalla (Coordinator) (Rs 550), Bela Jain (Rs 550), Kavita Gupta (Rs 520), Shashi Srivastava (Rs 500), Mrs KU Chandiwala (Rs 500), Mrs SS Momin (Rs 500), Mrs JH Bhatia (Rs 400), Mrs UD Salvi (Rs 300), Mrs SR Mehra (Rs 300), Mrs PD Vishwasrao (Rs 300), Mrs PD Kode (Rs 250), Mrs CD Taware (Rs 250), Mrs Subhash Salunke (Rs 250), Mrs SJ Shah (Rs 251), Mrs DM Meshram (Rs 250), Mrs RS Dave (Rs 200), Mrs RB Mullick (Rs 200), Mrs SP Daware (Rs 200), Mrs CM Dhople (Rs 200), Mrs MS Kene (Rs 200).

‡ *Suniti / Suruchi*: Collection Rs 7,201. Rizwana Kashyap (Rs 1,000), Ranjana Sinha (Rs 501), Mrs Khilare (Rs 500), Kanan Tripathi (Rs 500), Suman Mahajan (Coordinator) (Rs 500), Saroj Sahay (Rs 500), Mrs Ramakrishna (Rs 500), Sushma Dhumal (Rs 500), Sunanda Kawale (Rs 500), Pooja Lakhina (Rs 200), Neena Dodd (Rs 100), Poonam Srivastava (Rs 300), R Gopal (Rs 300), Nandita Joshi (Rs 300), Mrs Deshpande (Rs 250), Meenakshi Soni (Rs 250), Maya Tripathi (Rs 250), Sheila Tiwari (Rs 250).

### Kindly help us!

It is becoming increasingly difficult to run this newsletter for want of funds for its publication and postage. While about 80 officers, serving or retired, have sent their subscription for various activities of the Association, many others have yet to respond. Will they kindly send their subscription for 2005 (Rs 200 only) to Hon. Gen. Secretary and Principal Secretary (F, CS & CP) Satish Tripathi, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mantralaya (Annexe) immediately? ‡

## 'We can meet the Tsunami challenge systematically'



The Tsunami disaster at once brings to mind the horrors of the massive earthquake that took place in Latur and Osmanabad in 1993. Creditably however, the post-disaster recovery operation

was handled most promptly and systematically by the Government. The person who was in the thick of this and headed the World Bank Rehabilitation Project Implementation was **KULJIT SINGH SIDHU** (1965). Little surprise, therefore, that he is our Page 3 person this month.

Generally reticent and believing in action, this ex-Army officer provided the necessary leadership in the unprecedented earthquake calamity. His experience will be very valuable. Hence, *Harmony* Editor Rameshchandra Kanade interviewed him. Here are excerpts from the lively dialogue:

**RK:** *You were Principal Secretary (Revenue & Rehabilitation) when the earthquake struck. Please tell me how the Government swung into action.*

**KSS:** It was the morning of 30 September 1993. The same morning we four secretaries flew to Latur. Mr Sharad Pawar, who was Chief Minister then, was already there. We saw villages razed to the ground, heaps of rubble, piles of dead bodies, and heard cries of the survivors. We reviewed the situation. Mr Pawar said, "Friends, the devastation is much beyond our worst fears. People may have lost everything, but they have their dignity and self-esteem intact. They are traumatized and disoriented. But we must keep our cool and divert all our energies to launch an effective and efficient rescue and relief operation. Let the best of you be seen by them." His words had an electrifying effect. It was a change from despair to hope to vision of challenge to opportunity. We camped in the affected areas for three weeks continuously, coordinated the relief and rescue efforts, received, stored, documented and distributed the aid material in an orderly man-

ner, arranged for potable water, cooked food, put up temporary shelters, made sure that no epidemic occurred. We did not sleep first three nights. Our day would end with a meeting to review and plan the operation and a briefing to the press.

**RK:** *How did the rehabilitation project get started?*

**KSS:** Since the toll taken by the calamity was unprecedented and involved rehabilitation on a massive scale, the World Bank agreed to fund a rehabilitation project. I was put in charge of the project. We established a project management unit, gave it full administrative and financial powers and made it an effective instrument to implement the challenging project. We conceived a new model, which was lean, flexible, unencumbered by procedures and allowed wider consultation and insulated from political interference. It was also transparent and had a solid monitoring mechanism.

**RK:** *Would you recommend this model for dealing with the Tsunami disaster?*

**KSS:** Yes. I would strongly recommend it. The authorities dealing with the Tsunami disaster have been largely successful in meeting the immediate need of the survivors. The aid coming from all directions has to be managed, deployed and shared properly. That requires a mechanism to coordinate efforts. Since neighbouring countries are involved, I would also recommend a regional approach to jointly plan and organize the operation. India can provide the leadership, expertise and resources.

**RK:** *What steps need to be taken for successful project implementation?*

**KSS:** First it is imperative to make a realistic assessment of the extent of the damage in order to develop a long term sustainable strategy of comprehensive rehabilitation. We must involve experts outside of Government in the field of architecture, engineering, economics, social sciences, etc to facilitate the process. Next, we have to assess the needs. This task is rather difficult and sensitive. It has to be realistic and transparent. We have to involve com-

munities, NGOs and experts to eliminate likely pitfalls and subsequent hurdles. The data and reports of the assessment should be made available to the affected communities and the planners so that policies and proposals are formed properly. But this has to be done without delay. Detailed deliberations with the affected communities, NGOs, social and political bodies are required for the project formulation. Meticulous planning, imaginative approach and realistic assessment help develop a strategy. Local realities, strengths, sensibilities of people have to be consciously considered and incorporated. The strategy so worked out would provide a framework and a road map. Often, simple solutions emerge from the rural folks and they are far more effective than the sophisticated solutions imposed on them. Replacement of the lost assets involves a high degree of upgradation of infrastructure and brings about long term socio-economic impact in the region.

**RK:** *What is your solution to the Tsunami disaster?*

**KSS:** Tsunami disaster is unprecedented. It covers many diverse regions and countries with varying degrees of resources and manpower. Each affected country would devise its own implementation plan and administrative organization. I think we can meet the Tsunami challenge systematically. A model on the lines of Maharashtra Earthquake Project Management Unit would be a useful solution. It would also be necessary to set up a South-Asia rehabilitation division for better coordination and management of resources coming from donors all over the world. Lastly, we must immediately set up an early warning and communication system so that the damage could be reduced to the minimum. This would include construction of shelters and other infrastructure in safer areas to shift the population in the event of a warning. Well, I think it is not difficult to meet the challenge. What is required is a systematic approach to it. †

[Mr KS Sidhu (1965) lives at 13-N, Dilwara, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai 400021 and can be contacted on 022-22021137; 9882765441; kuljitsidhu@yahoo.com]. †

## Turning Tables

By PB RAJGOPALAN

When I was just a little boy I asked my mother, “What will I be? Will I be able and get a table of my own?” Years later my children asked their mother, “Will I get a table for my cable TV?” In both cases, the answer was surprisingly the same: “If you waste your time dreaming, no table or cable. You learn to study and work hard. Work is sacred like God or worship”. I said, “baah” in both cases.



But I have a number of friends for whom work is always like God. They have not seen or done any form of work but heard about it as some other's work. The fact is, in my generation, tables still have a significance and influence which is much more than a cable for this generation.

In school, for kids like me who were educated in an environment of ‘non-urban’ living, tables basically meant multiplication tables, narrated in a singsong voice. A mastery of them meant one could pass comfortably the arithmetic exams. Years later, while working in Africa, often trying to work out the mundane exchange value of currencies during meetings, I came to be recognized as a great wizard in Maths, who could reel out the exchange rates and figures at the “drop of a hat”. It impressed all the consultants of developed countries who belonged to a ‘calculator’ generation.

There is nothing like knowing the multiplication tables of 13, 15, 17, 18, and 19. For example, we can calculate quite fast: the Valentine day in February and Children's day in November are nine months apart, though it is not for us to reason why. These days such calculations remain as instruments to impress our grandchildren.

Then one always yearned for a table since a bench or a desk is what one gets in schools. Later maybe, if you reach college level, you may expect a table for study or to drop off to sleep. Surprisingly, such distinctions exist

even in service or in office. A desk is allotted to the clerical staff; an officer gets a multipurpose table for his work, lunch, gossip around table, etc. The same table served different purposes depending on what the various owners intended. *Manners maketh a man; uses maketh a table* could be the saying.

A clean table is one of the various forms of table. A clean table means that ‘all files are kept in a cupboard like the proverbial skeletons’. It was said that a tiger found his way to the Secretariat, ate a person a day and got off merrily. While being interviewed on the TV someone asked the tiger as to how he hid the bones. Pat came the reply, “In the cupboards along with the skeletons, where the chance of discovery is practically nil”. His reply was overshadowed by another tiger that looked so fearsome that he was made the captain of Pak cricket team and said, “I may look frightening but I know no cricket”. The Pak Cricket Board Chairman is reported to have retorted, “So what? Even the Indian captain knows no cricket”.

A clean table is also feasible by stacking all files along the wall of the room as one gets more space to do so. One HWSNBN (*He Who Shall Not Be Named*) officer always had a memory loss as soon as the file was stacked near the wall. His memory loss was so acute that it helped him to have a clear conscience as well. After some time he moved his table to the centre of the room because he needed all the four walls to stack his files. After a while, the ‘record room’ peon was assigned to dust the files daily. The files were taken out after the retirement of the officer. Most of them were shifted to the record room as by then there was no need for the files, the issues having sorted out themselves by the efflux of time. Luckily, the government could not realize that many files and many officers likewise were redundant and the job market continued as before.

A good table is one in which a host entertained guests and fellow workers. The table becomes good because of its entertainment value, which often is free sumptuous food. While some of them had good food, a number of them had bad food but good table manners. This meant that the table was used to enter-

tain bosom friends, the participants having good narration of tales on the private lives of public celebrities over booze. Everyone was free to manipulate the others in the process. It is here often that “the dish ran away with the spoon” during the table talk. I am sure that some of the participants turned the table itself if it suited them. These wise men of such tables would miss the source of all useful rumour or humour when they retire and grow old and realize that their descendants outnumber their friends.

It is important to be on the correct side of a table on all occasions, in any meeting. ‘On the wrong side’ means you are not presiding over the meeting and hence must read your files and know either the full details of the case or the full preferences of the presiding deities. ‘On the correct side’ means one can hit out on all subjects and expect that the fielders would or should drop all catches in the process. One can also declare that the meeting is closed when one feels sleepy or hungry. I know only one case (and I think it is an exception) when a person on the wrong side hit out turning the tables. This HWSNBN went to meet his senior officer to complain that he was being shifted frequently from one assignment to another. The senior officer heard him, was sympathetic, and went on to narrate his own experiences in frequent transfers. Said the HWSNBN, “Sir, I have come to discuss my transfer and not your transfers”. I believe the sides of the table remained in the turned up position till this officer retired.

Tables are best used by doctors. On the operating table with his scalpel in visibility, a doctor can shut up any one, even if he is a living God or demon. It is unfair though as he has an edge over all other professions because of the fact that in future he meets only his surviving patients. All the others may meet the losers of cases or clients whom they have antagonized. It is embarrassing and often they have to guard themselves against attacks of all forms.

In spite of all ‘steel frame’ officers in government, the poor table remained wooden for generations. Maybe, because a large number of the users were wooden headed. Later, it gave way to its steel version. **Continued on p.6**

## Loss of Value System

### PART I

By TF THEKKEKARA

The single most pressing problem facing the country today and impeding our development is the loss of a value system in our society. In fact, integrity is regarded as an outdated notion in India, as also in Africa and South America - all poor countries facing economic shortages and having largely illiterate or poorly educated populations with few employment prospects. The accent is on succeeding at any cost. A discussion on a NDTV talk show, as to whether the issue of corruption should tax the attention of parliament, had most participants, even young people, shrugging off the issue as 'not so important'; there are so many other issues of 'greater urgency' facing the country.

However, it is not the poor and marginalized who are corrupt, but those who in an economy plagued by growing unemployment have access to some of the good things of life, a permanent job wielding 'power', three meals a day, a *pucca* house, a TV, a telephone, even a car. Thus, a number of those who started their political / administrative careers in one room-kitchen tenements, now have plush penthouses in metros, bungalows in various cities, farm houses and fancy cars, their net worth running into crores of rupees.

In the survey by Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2003, India ranked 83<sup>rd</sup> out of 133 countries. Commenting some time ago in a national daily on the deregulation of the economy and India's aspiration to join the comity of nations, as a new economic force to reckon with, Gurcharan Das, former CEO of Procter and Gamble, said that Indian businessmen have to learn to be honest, as in the international arena it is only honesty that pays, the reliability of one's contract and word of honour that counts.

But Indian business has been sucked into a morass of dishonesty that

seemingly no power can extricate it from. The Hong Kong based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy in their study of January-February 2005 places India as the second most corrupt country among twelve Asian countries.

It started with the Nehruvian permit raj and control system, spawned by the then dalliance with socialism, coupled with the hangover of age old caste based prejudices that regarded the *Bania* (and by extension all businessmen) as venal and in need of policing. Significantly, many Hindi films of the era inevitably had, cast in the villain's role a wicked local bania, or sethi who made illegal money by crushing the poor, the orphan and the widow. Today, we have 'graduated' to the stage where it is the goon and the mafia dons who are the anti heroes in popular cinema.

Major policy shifts brought about in the Rajiv-Rao-Manmohan era, took the first steps to curb the Licence-Permit Raj. India's emerging role as a major international player in the software industry and the spread of the communications revolution in the country was, in fact, the consequence of the decision of the Rajiv Gandhi government to open India to imports and investment in computers and software and to open the telecom sector, despite protests from the Opposition parties.

However, we still have a long way to go in getting the economy out of the clutches of the Inspectors. The dishonesty in the country today is still linked to the unavoidable reliance of Indian business to various government permits and orders for its very survival. A businessman running a factory and applying for a sales tax number has to bribe the officer *allotting* the number! The ITO and Sales Tax personnel then demand their pound of flesh periodically. An NOC from a government industrial estate for applying for a bank loan attracts a bribe, depending on the quantum of the loan being sanctioned. And of course, the senior officers in the bank sanctioning the loan have to be paid a percentage of the loan being sanctioned. Clearly deregulation needs to move to the cutting edge level in the country, since businessmen cannot compete internationally with such shackles tied to their feet.

Under the Licence-Inspector Raj, huge illegal payments had to be made by businessmen to Ministers and bureaucrats in order to obtain much sought after and scarce industrial licences. Then there are the continuing monthly and seasonal haftas to be paid by every industry, to as many as twenty agencies who control and supervise Indian industry such as Municipal authorities for property tax, revenue authorities for NA tax, local self government authorities, water supply departments, pollution control and industrial estate offices, electricity departments, sales tax, and excise duty offices, Income Tax, octroi, agriculture directorates, factory inspectors, labour inspectors, police, export and import control authorities, to name a few.

Faced with the burden of making unaccounted for payments, most businesses in the country buy and sell some percentage of their material without bills. In the earlier era of high taxation there was also the huge temptation to make unaccounted tax-free income and this has continued as a negative behavioural pattern, emboldened by the slack implementation of tax laws. This is why we still have such a large underground black money market.

The money made illegally by corrupt politicians and officials contributes largely to the black money in circulation in the country today. That money finances much of the film industry, the real estate business, the hotel industry, and also other ventures of a speculative nature. Some of it goes into funding clearly criminal activities: prostitution rackets, narcotics, smuggling, terrorism, extortion, gambling and other crime. †

### To be concluded

[Thanksy Thekkekara (1978), Managing Director, MAVIM (in the grade of Principal Secretary), firmly believes that we need to reinvent ourselves if we have to continue to be relevant. This piece is part of the paper which she recently submitted to the IIT Bombay as part of her PhD course work]. †

**Peace comes not from the absence of conflict in life but from the ability to cope with it. †**

## Who's gone where?

† *Joyce Sankaran (1972)*: Principal Secretary, Higher & Technical Education. † *VS Dhumal (1973)*: Principal Secretary, Water Supply & Sanitation. † *Sharvaree Gokhale (1974)*: Development Commissioner of Industries. † *Baldeo Chand (1974)*: MD, MAFCO (Addl charge). † *BC Khatua (1976)*: Sales Tax Commissioner. † *UC Sarangi (1977)*: Principal Secretary to Chief Minister. † *JK Banthia (1977)*: MD, Maharashtra Petrochemicals Corporation. † *VK Jairath (1982)*: Secretary, Industries & MD, SICOM (Addl charge). † *SK Shrivastava (1983)*: Member Secretary, Third Maharash-

tra Finance Commission, Mantralaya. † *K Shivaji (1986)*: CMD, Maharashtra State Finance Corporation. † *SD Shinde (1991)*: Transport Commissioner. † *Apurva Chandra (1988)*: Commissioner, Co-operation & Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Pune (Addl charge). † *Sanjay Kumar (1984)*: MD, Maharashtra Warehousing Corporation, Pune. † *Sanjay Chahande (1988)*: Project Commissioner, MHSDP, Mumbai. † *Dr Bhagwan Sahay (1984)*: Secretary, Labour. † *Sanjeevane Kutty (1983)*: Secretary, Tourism (Addl charge). † *V Ramani (1980)*: Secretary, Women & Child

Development. † *IS Chahal (1989)*: Joint Secretary, Environment. † *SR Daund (1998)*: Deputy Secretary, Public Health. † *BD Sanap (1998)*: Commissioner, Labour and Commissioner, Unorganized Labour. † *SO Sonwane (1996)*: Chief Officer, Mumbai Board, MHADA. † *VV Thakur (1996)*: MD, Maharashtra State Co-operative Tribal Development Corporation, Nasik. † *AK Zade (1996)*: CEO, Bhandara Zilla Parishad. † *PN Bhapkar (1997)*: CEO, Dhule Zilla Parishad. † *Nidhi Pandey (2001)*: CEO, Ratnagiri Zilla Parishad. † *MH Sawant (1998)*: CEO, Sindhudurg Zilla Parishad. †

## Turning Tables

Continued from p 4

Then the owners continued to have a wooden head but with a difference; they had executive steel furniture. They lost the opportunity to thump the table to assert themselves while they could lay on the table all information and continue the table talk as well. As technology changed, the table also had to undergo changes. The desktop computers emerged but still were found perched on tables of all sizes. In turn, laptop computers came.

Laptops were no great shakes in South India which had the technology even ages ago. It is like this: at the time of *kanyadaan* in a marriage ceremony, the bride has to sit on the lap of her father or any elder relative and the marriage goes through. In short, the marriage is a *laptop affair*. Later, this too has undergone changes owing to political influences. Whatever be the input the output was either a DMK or an AIADMK. Even laptops find it difficult to displace tables in many departments of government, because the paunches of the users would not let the laptops to be used without tables.

This is an irrelevant observation. It is terrible to think that advanced technologies are wiping out the survival of the poor. These days, one cannot even take to crime without learning IT (both Income Tax and Information Technology). Even a prisoner has to plead his case by video conferencing. There are no more vegetarians but vegans. Only, vegetables are still labelled so. It may be because of the table in them. Even with all changes, tables are *inevitable* because they can be used for all movement of files, above the table, by the side of the table and below the table as well.

Then there was this HWSNBN who always held the view that Gandhi is the leading spirit of India. He spoke in several large gatherings in public places on the 'Gandhi spirit' that governs Indians in all forms of development, social and economi-

cal. In private meetings, he often said that Gandhi moves everything in life including files. It took me quite sometime to realize that the view referred to the picture of Gandhi on 100 or 500 rupee notes. He was very helpful to all in need and helped colleagues and public by his moves above and below the table. It was rumoured that he could play table tennis under the table deftly. He could use his table as a 'lazy Susan', as a portable one, as an able table or a disabled table. Many benefited by his benevolence and table talks. As far as I know, no one played chess or roulette with him.

Then there are many who are nostalgic about the table talks even after their retirement from service. Their conversation is studded with references about the tables of government in some form or other. For example, one HWSNBN, who had expensive tastes with reference to himself always prided on it. He would often say, as many do to justify their aristocratic living, that his father-in-law was very rich (maybe, it would have been 'is' rich, if he had not got this son-in-law) and hence he had to live well. On retirement, he settled down abroad and took to playing golf. It could be because it is one game where he can talk freely (he is never known to have been silent as he even ate noisily and snored as well) in an open ground far away from others. His wife or his colleagues would not be around to contradict him. It is reported that he often says that golf is a clean game; the course is as clean as his table in office. The humble table is remembered even by the rich son-in-law. His table was clean as he gave all his files away (hit them out as it were) to the desks to write on them, all files were out of his sight. Now, he hits his golf balls all over, even out of the golf course. In the process, the golf course remains clean except for the presence of the players themselves.

Technologies may come and go but tables roll on for ever, especially dining tables. Amen and Awomen. †

[*Mr PB Rajgopalan (1961)* is an established columnist. Gifted with a delightful sense of humour, he wields a mightier pen even on inane things. He resides in Chennai and can be contacted on: 044-52084836; rajlak@touchtelindia.net]. †

## Congrats on promotion

† The following officers of 1992 batch have been promoted, *in situ*, to the Selection Grade with effect from 1 January 2005: *Vimalendra Sharan; OP Gupta; Manisha Patankar-Mhiskar; Milind Mhiskar; Sanjay Sethi; Bipin Shrimali.; Rajgopal Devara; Seema Vyas; and RR Bhaware.* †

† The following officers of 1996 batch have been appointed to the Junior Administrative Grade with effect from 1 January 2005: *Dr SA Mukherjee; Rupindra Singh; S Chokalingam; SJ Khandare; Sanjeev Jaiswal; Parag Jain; Idzes Kundan; Vinita Ved; UG Dangat; VR Banginwar; SO Sonavane; RJ Jadhav; RN Shingare; RD Shinde; VV Thakur; VS Bute; PT Nalawade; BR Pokharkar; LV Deshmukh; DR Bansod; BR Jadhav; NK Deshmukh; AK Zade; EZ Khobragade; VM Patil; MB Gaikwad; SM Sarkunde; RD Devkar; US Rathod; PD Karvande; RK Gaikwad; VV Poreddiwar; and MN BHagat.* †

† The following officers have been promoted, *in situ*, to the grade of Principal Secretary with effect from 1 February 2005. *RG Bansod (1976); Dr Jairaj Phatak; JS Saharia; Rameshchandra Kanade; and Thanksy Thekkekara,* the last four belonging to the 1978 batch. †

## The CS I remember most

By NS KULKARNI

It is very rarely that one comes across a kind and understanding superior. I shall always remember with profound gratitude the warmth and the help the then Chief Secretary Mr BB Paymaster gave me in my career in the service.



I passed my MA with advanced economics standing first in Pune University. Owing to personal problems, I could not appear for the civil service examination. The Bombay Public Service Commission was the next alternative for me. The Commission had advertised for four posts in the Bombay Cooperative Service. I topped the list of successful candidates and joined the first batch of Bombay Cooperative Service officers in 1952. I did very well in my career and received accolades from one and all.

Like today, the civil service then had a quota of four per cent for non-civil service officers from departments like agriculture, education, cooperative, etc. The State Government would recommend double the number of vacancies every year. The officers recommended by the State were 'selected' for civil service. I expected that I would be nominated at least after 10 years of ser-

vice in the State. But that did not materialize.

The State Government went on informing the UPSC that no officer was suitable for selection. I requested Chief Secretary BB Paymaster to evaluate my work and take a decision himself. Mr Paymaster asked for one month's time. After a month he informed me that the concerned secretaries had reported that there was no officer suitable for selection. The Chief Secretary said that it was routine for the State Government to report to the UPSC. I submitted that I had letters of appreciation from various secretaries. The Chief Secretary told me that many officers in the higher echelons did not like the idea of their subordinates being their equal.

I pleaded that the cadre of cooperative service officers, as a whole, was left high and dry only because somebody did not apply his mind to the subject. The quota meant for non-civil service officers was diverted to the civil service officers as their record and names were easily available.

Mr Paymaster took considerable interest in my case. He noted down my details in his diary and asked me to contact him after a month.

Soon, I was placed in the selection grade of the BCS superseding about 12

officers. Mr Paymaster also directed that I should be confirmed in the selection grade on the day of appointment itself. The officer handling my case re-submitted the file to Mr Paymaster asking whether he wanted me to be confirmed on the day of appointment itself. The Chief Secretary wrote back saying that his orders were clear and no amendment whatsoever was necessary.

After a few days I was asked to appear before the UPSC, which had recommended my name for 'selection' to the IAS. My selection paved the way for many cooperative service officers to enter the IAS. But I must admit that it was entirely because of the just and sympathetic attitude of Mr Paymaster who ensured that justice was done. I was touched when he said, "Don't thank me. You should have been in the IAS five years earlier. You suffered because of us."

I shall always cherish happy memories of my association with Mr BB Paymaster. †

[NS Kulkarni (1963) was Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Cotton Corporation of India, Ministry of Textiles, New Delhi, from 1970 to 1985. A consultant in Management and Cooperation, he has settled down in Navi Mumbai at B-208, Kusum Apartments, Plot No. 70, Sector 17, Vashi, PIN 400703. You may like to talk to him on 022-27661711]. †

## Think again!

Many years ago in a small Indian village, a farmer had the misfortune of owing a large sum of money to a village moneylender.

The moneylender, who was old and ugly, fancied the farmer's beautiful daughter. So he proposed a bargain. He said he would forego the farmer's debt if he could marry his daughter. Both the farmer and his daughter were horrified by the proposal. So the cunning moneylender suggested that they let providence decide the matter.

He told them that he would put a black pebble and a white pebble into an empty money bag. Then the girl would have to pick one pebble from the bag. If she picked the black pebble, she would become his wife and her father's debt would be forgiven. If she picked the white pebble she need not marry him and her father's debt would still be forgiven. But if she refused to pick a pebble, her father would be thrown into jail.

They were standing on a pebble-strewn path in the farmer's field. As they talked, the moneylender bent over to pick up two pebbles. As he picked them up, the sharp-eyed girl noticed that he had picked up two black pebbles and put them into the bag. He asked the girl to pick a pebble from the bag.

Now, imagine that you were standing in the field. What would you have done if you were the girl? If you had to advise her, what would you have told her?

Careful analysis would produce three possibilities: The girl should refuse to take a pebble, or the girl should show that there were two black pebbles in the bag and expose the moneylender as a cheat, or the girl should pick a black pebble and sacrifice herself in order to save her father from his debt and imprisonment.

What would you recommend to the girl to do? Well, the girl put her hand into the moneybag and drew out a pebble. Without looking at it, she fumbled and let it fall

onto the pebble-strewn path where it immediately became lost among all the other pebbles. "Oh, how clumsy of me," she said. "But never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked."

Since the remaining pebble is black, it must be assumed that she had picked the white one. And since the moneylender dared not admit his dishonesty, the girl changed what seemed an impossible situation into an extremely advantageous one.

Moral of the story: All simple and complex problems do have a solution. It is only that we don't attempt to calm down and think. †

**Congrats:** Ravindra Dange and Nirupama Dange, son and daughter, respectively, of Principal Secretary JP Dange (1973) have made it to the Indian Customs & Central Excise Service, and the Indian Postal Service, respectively. †

## CIDCO scales new heights

By SONIA SETHI

It all began in 2002 when a study was commissioned to prepare an IT road map for CIDCO. The experts recommended that CIDCO should go in for an Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) - Geographical Information System (GIS) combination for backend business solution, Web/CRM as front-end business solution and BIW for MIS and decision support. The products recommended were Systems Application Products (SAP) for ERP application and ArcInfo for GIS application. The die was cast and SAP in data processing became the ladder to take CIDCO to new heights in IT in its journey towards greater professionalism, success and client servicing.

Soon RFI and RFP were issued to SAP implementation partners, and after a series of deliberations, WIPRO was selected as the implementation agency for project INTELLIGENCITY started on 3 December 2002. The project was to be executed in a phased manner with Phase-I including ERP, GIS and Website and Phase-II incorporating Real Estate, Data warehousing, CRM, HR, and employee self service.

SAP is a premier ERP product having a global and Indian market share of 65 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively. It is a web-enabled, seamless integrated suite with Global 24 x 7 support and has the Big 5's endorsement. Users of SAP vouch for its speed, integration, security, auditable nature and vote for it as the platform for the future.

**Where have we reached**  
**CIDCO Website:** You can reach us at [www.cidcoindia.com](http://www.cidcoindia.com) and access all information pertaining to marketing, transfers, GDCR, tenders, press releases, future plans along with details of infrastructure, local HRD, IT and our ambitious projects SEZ and Airport.

**SAP update:** Our major departments: Marketing and Engineering along with Accounts have gone live. Within the first nine months over 437 Engineering

Projects have been processed and 1,629 work orders issued and Rs 220 crore worth vendor payments have been made through SAP. Over 2500 allotments have been made by Marketing Department. Around 200 officers and staff have been successfully trained in SAP. Phase-I of GIS has also been completed by creating the cleaned digitized base map.

Today, there is 24 x 7 SAP support at CIDCO Bhawan with integrated database reporting at a single location covering all its business processes. Data is available on real time basis. Real Time Integrated Reports can be generated as and when required. There is reduction in errors and paper work in the payment process. The Marketing Department has centralized cash counter covering all receipts through SAP. This has resulted in tremendous improvement in customer service.

### How it was achieved

This Herculean task was achieved Thanks to the vision of the then top management, a creative and analytical, action plan, a motivated team and the zeal of the subsequent top brass to steer the project through its maze of knots and tangles. I remember that having joined as Collector of Sundhudurg, I was confronted with the stupendous task of setting up the District and Tahsil *Setus*, a project that was defying solution for the preceding two years. Tender documents had to be reworked, dilapidated office spaces had to be spruced up to cut costs and funds pooled in through very limited avenues in a far flung district to put together a system of citizen facilitation. The parallel campaign of computerization of land records in the form of VII-XII extracts (1.6 million) in two months and a half was another challenging experience, but dwelling on that would be a digression. Coming back to SAP and CIDCO, the modus operandi was to work through a core team of officers from all departments who acted as catalysts of change. Under the consultative services of WIPRO and the motivated Nodal Officer, the Systems Manager, this brilliant and dedicated team of soldiers scaled peak after peak to take CIDCO to newer heights of excellence. Kudos to them all!

### The road ahead

With the successful completion of Phase-I, we embarked on Phase-II which incorporates the Real Estate Department, HR & BIW and the integration of SAP and GIS. Two months ago, we launched two simultaneous drives in the Lands Department relating to the 40686 Project affected persons (PAPs) who are yet to get the benefit of the 12.5 per cent scheme, a compensation for their land that was acquired to create the 344 sq km of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City of Navi Mumbai. The first drive is the computerization of all the land records involving more than 6100 individual files in fourteen nodes and allotment through computerized drawal of lots as against individual allotments. The other is to set up a CFC for the PAPs that will act as an information kiosk, helpdesk and facilitation centre to equip the PAPs to effectively exercise their claim to this scheme. The aim is to achieve transparency and speed in allotment. Subsequently, this would be integrated with SAP.

All in all, the need for process orientation and accountability in a traditional organization like CIDCO is being met. In CIDCO's march towards modernity we are achieving customer satisfaction, process improvement, greater productivity and enhancement of skills of our HR reserve.

While our mandate is to make cities, it is our endeavor to ensure that the journey is one of continuous skill upgradation to deliver a quality product. †

[Mrs Sonia Sethi (1994), Joint Managing Director of CIDCO & Project Director, SAP Project, is an enthusiastic officer who likes to do something new and take on challenges. She can be contacted on 022-22873961; 22856779; 9870495805]. †

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