

# HARMONY

## Connecting the IAS Community

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Harmony 110

June 2011

## Right-sizing Bureaucracy

Italy has 559 police officers for every 100,000 citizens. Bihar has 60, Orissa 97, Chattisgarh 128 and Jharkhand 136. The United States has one soldier for every 186 citizens; India has one for every 866. The US has 6,314 state and local employees for every 100,000 citizens. India's Union government has 295. If one excludes the railway employees this peters down to 171 for every 100,000 citizens. Chattisgarh has 1,067 employees per 100,000 population; Bihar has 472. (Source: "For a review of counterinsurgency doctrine" by Praveen Swami, The Hindu dated April 13, 2010; Institute for Conflict Management, Ajai Sahni).

Yet critics harp on the government being over-sized, and the international agencies call for down-sizing the bureaucracy. The United States is a developed country with stabilized economic programmes. It does not have to contend with a burgeoning population, a considerable proportion of which lives below the poverty line and is consequently highly dependent on government.

The denizens look to government for relief through poverty alleviation programmes, health and education interventions, and even stimulation of economic growth. Such circumstances do not call for reduction of government but

definitely for an increase in efficiency and efficacy of its agencies.■

(Editorial Team)

## JP Dange and Uttam Khobragade Retire

Mr. JP Dange, IAS 1973, Chairman, Fourth State Finance



Commission and Mr. Uttam Khobragade, IAS 1984, Principal Secretary, Tribal Development Department superannuated on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011. Mr. Dange, however, has been reappointed on the same post.

## Book Release by Thekekara

A book of Case studies on Self Help Groups in Maharashtra entitled "Women's Self Help Groups: Restructuring Socio-Economic Development"



edited by Ms. TF Thekkekara, Additional Chief Secretary, Minorities Development Department, Prof. D Parthasarathy of IIT Powai and Dr. Veena Poonacha, Director SNTD University's Research Centre for Women's Studies, was released  
Continued on Page 8

## Go Ahead And Fly

Once there was a king who received a gift of two magnificent falcons from Arabia. They were peregrine falcons, the most beautiful birds he had ever seen. He gave the precious birds to his head falconer to be trained.

Months passed and one day the head falconer informed the king that though one of the falcons was flying majestically, soaring high in the sky, the other bird had not moved from its perch since the day it had arrived.

The king summoned healers and sorcerers from all the land to tend to the falcon, but no one could make the bird fly. He presented the task to the members of his court, but the next day, the king saw through the palace window that the bird had still not moved from its perch. Having tried everything else, the king thought to himself, "May be I need someone more familiar with the countryside to understand the nature of this problem." So he cried out to his court, "Go and get a farmer."

In the morning, the king was thrilled to see the falcon soaring high above the palace gardens. He said to his court, "Bring me the doer of this miracle."

The court quickly located the farmer, who came and stood before the king. The king asked him, "How did you make the falcon fly?"

With his head bowed, the  
Continued on Page 7

## Dust Buster

By Meena Kasbekar

I must admit that dusting my house myself is an activity close to my heart. Come what may, I have to dust my house everyday and one thing I can never approve of is dusting being done by the maid. Over the years I have found the many advantages dusting offers.



While dusting, I can do a variety of useful things. Many a times while dusting I plan my day's schedule or plan what is to be cooked for lunch and dinner, plan about my other outings like bank work, visiting my friends or which movie I should see etc. Apart from

this, it gives me peace of mind and satisfaction.

Since I enjoy doing this work, it allows me to go into meditative mode and I have found out that for meditation it is not absolutely necessary to sit in one place. As Bhagavad Gita says if you really enjoy what you are doing you can be totally focussed so I find it easier to concentrate and chant any mantra which acts as soothing balm to my sometimes agitated mind, while dusting my house.

I always remember an incident. When two of my friends heard the news of the untimely death of their close relative, they couldn't stop crying for a long time resulting in a headache. They took a duster and started cleaning the house thinking in their mind, "let this

moment pass", and they could absorb the sad news. Dusting here acted as a shock absorber.

On the other hand, one of my friends and her sister are very allergic to the idea of dusting and they say we will do anything but dusting. I must tell them they are really depriving themselves of some good things in life since dusting acts as a stress buster and relaxes the mind. It also allows you to rearrange things in the house which in turn gives a completely new look to the existing arrangement.

Those who have not tried dusting may try it sometime to derive some wonderful benefits.

*(Ms. Meena Kasbekar is the wife of late Mr. GK Kasbekar, IAS 1958 and can be contacted on Phone 22020938.)*



'Close Up' in charcoal - another painting of Mr. Nawin Sona, IAS 2000. Contact on his Cell 9422595959.

**Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action**

## Harnessing Experience and Competence at Half the Price

By Navin Kumar

**I**t gave me great happiness to know about the appointment of Dr. Suresh Joshi, who completed his tenure as the State Chief Information



Commissioner in October 2010, as the Electricity Ombudsman for Maharashtra under the Electricity Act 2003 by Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission. His term will be three years, extendable upto five. The main job of the Electricity Ombudsman is to resolve disputes between consumers and distribution licensee of electricity. MERC has, wisely, kept the eligibility criteria for this post to be a Retired Secretary to the Government, Retired Judge or a Retired CEO of an Electricity Sector Utility. And the upper age limit to work on this post is 70 years.

This shows a good way of pooling in the experience and competence of the retired IAS officers for jobs that they can do dexterously and that too at half the price because the salary is given on the principle of pay minus pension. It is to be noted that there are quite a few postings now for IAS officers when they retire like MAT, CAT, Human Rights Commission, State Election Commission, Uplokayukta, State Information Commission etc. where generally the IAS officers continue upto the age of 65. After the age of 65 and upto 70 most of them are in excellent health but their rich

experience / capabilities remain untapped.

Our Cadre has about 300 (as per the latest Civil List booklet) officers and this number is woefully short for the requirements of a State like Maharashtra, where the need of IAS officers within the State is enhanced because of the high urbanization and high industrial and commercial development. Many ex-cadre posts like MDs of State Corporations and Commissioners of Municipal Corporations have to be filled by IAS officers. This has resulted in a severe and chronic shortage of officers for Central Deputation and Maharashtra is poorly represented in Government of India. The latest Civil List shows that the number of officers on central deputation is 29 i.e. just about 10 %. Despite this, many posts where IAS officers of adequate seniority are needed remain vacant for long periods (CIDCO is a case in point).

In view of the above analysis it may be worthwhile for Government to examine if they can fill up some of those posts at senior levels where ministerial guidance is not needed, where the ultimate decision still rests with the Government and where Government's financial powers are not used, by senior retired officers from the IAS upto the age of 70 as for the Electricity Ombudsman. Two posts, which flash to my mind, for this category could probably be the Special Enquiry Officers I and II where a senior retired IAS officer would be more suitable as working officers sometimes find it embarrassing to conduct D.E.s against working colleagues. Some of the D.E.s have actually been conducted by senior retired officers in the recent past. And the latest

Commission of Enquiry into the Adarsh Episode includes a very senior retired officer.

There are many areas where important works can be attended to with the pool of retired officers, which are at present unattended and may lead to serious embarrassment later. Some months back I had read in the papers that important records concerning the formation of Maharashtra State were not traceable. These areas could be numerous - Declassification of Cabinet Papers after 30 years and their safe custody, Reexamination of class A papers in various departments, Updating of State and District Gazetteers, Inspections of the State Archives, Availability and timely printing of Village Maps, Inspection of Governmental Institutions/NGOs where large funds have been invested etc.

I would like to throw this idea for the consideration of the Chief Secretary and the Think Tank which (I learn from papers) is being set up by him, through the pages of Harmony. ■

*(Mr. Navin Kumar, IAS 1969, Retd. is State Information Commissioner, Konkan Region and can be contacted on his Cell 9819334333.)*

### Laugh It Off!

I asked my girlfriend what sort of books she's interested in. She said: Cheque books. ■

Boss: We are keen on cleanliness. Did you wipe your feet on the mat as you came in?  
New employee: Yes, sir.  
Boss: We are also keen on truthfulness. There is no mat. ■

## On Election Trail

By Dr. Suresh Joshi

In the career of an IAS officer, conducting elections or working as Observer of the Election Commission of India is almost inevitable.



As Assistant Collector, one begins with working as a Returning Officer of a Legislative Assembly constituency. In Maharashtra, there are a large number of specified cooperative societies, election of the office bearers of which is as important as Legislative Assembly elections. Moreover, there are Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti elections, of which the responsibility of conducting falls on the Assistant Collector.

The Collector is a District Election Officer as well as Returning Officer of a Parliamentary Constituency and after the Collector's assignment is over, he is generally involved in a long term responsibility as an Election Observer in a 'God forsaken' or a 'God gifted' constituency depending upon his luck. I was no exception to this.

In January 1980, I was appointed as the Returning Officer of Akola and Washim Parliamentary constituency. Immediately thereafter, in June 1980, there were Assembly elections. Subsequently, two of the MLAs in the district died (though I survived as the Collector). Therefore, two bye elections were required to be conducted. Before that, as an Assistant Collector, I had conducted elections of Rahul Sahakari Sakhar

Karkhana in 1973 and during these elections in addition to the standard rules, we had to take into consideration the bye laws adopted by that particular cooperative society. The adopted bye laws were quite complicated particularly in respect of invalid votes. Because of the money power, sugar factory elections are very important. I still recall it as one of the toughest elections conducted. Then came the role of Observer within the state for MLC elections from local authorities' constituency or teachers' constituency, and Assembly and Parliamentary elections.

But the most diverse observer's work came during my



tenure as Joint Secretary in Ministry of Rural Development in Government of India in 1990-95. The Election Commission, particularly, during this period was very fond of sending me to Calcutta, West Bengal where I went on three occasions and had to spend a large number of days in the state owned, very old and stinking Great Eastern Hotel. In the 1991 parliamentary elections there, I found a 'dependable' Collector who was the

Returning Officer for three parliamentary constituencies. As if this was not enough, he was also Assistant Returning Officer of one of the assembly segments of fourth parliamentary constituency in another district. This was Mr. Seshan's first year. Later, he purged election system of most of its ills.

At the time of Chowrangee bye election, Ms. Mamta Banerjee complained to the Election Commission that men were voting in the women's name and women were voting in men's name. On enquiry, it was found that the person called Gaurishankar Chatterjee (name changed) voted against the name of Mrs. Gauri Shankar Chatterjee and

when Mrs. Gauri Chatterjee went for voting, she was told that she had already voted. This was not a willful impersonation but a mistake on the part of the polling officer (both Gauri, wife of Shankar, and Gaurishankar, were voters in the same polling station). On realizing the mistake, Gauri was allowed to cast her vote as per the procedure prescribed in the manual of Election Law.

Karim Nagar experience (in 1993) was memorable because of

***It's not the voting that's democracy; it's the counting***

the naxalite threat where polling personnel preferred to go for duty without the police escort, lest they be targeted. There was always a lurking fear of vehicle being blown off by mine blasting. Another noteworthy experience was when I was observer of an otherwise obscure Akbarpur parliamentary constituency in Uttar Pradesh but soon it became very prominent when Mayawati decided to contest the elections from there and won handsomely.

But the most unforgettable experience was conducting elections in Punjab in 1992. Because of the militancy, elections had not been conducted in Punjab for many years and when these were to take place in 1991, they were abruptly cancelled with only two days to go for actual polling. These elections were then conducted in 1992. Akali Dal boycotted the elections and militants threatened the public, candidates and election machinery with dire consequence if they participated in election. Threat given to the candidates was very serious. In such circumstances, there were not many willing contestants. I was in Ludhiana looking after Jagraon and Quila Raipur area (famous for rural Olympics) and one more constituency. Jagraon was fearful because train massacre had taken place on two occasions. No sooner than the candidate filed the nomination, they were given massive protection.

The army played a very useful role during this election. Their presence in the village inculcated confidence in the minds of the people and in spite of the threat that their fingers will be chopped off if black ink spot is found on their fingers, people voted. About 15-20%

rural people and about 40% urban people voted. Taking into consideration the tense atmosphere at that time, these figures were very impressive. As an observer, we were provided utmost security. I was provided with a bullet-proof Ambassador car, where I was seated sandwiched between two armed personnel. In the front seat was another armed police. There was a



pilot car and security car with a total of 7 to 8 armed police personnel and then to protect this paraphernalia, a half truck on which a small artillery gun was mounted and a person whose face was half covered with black cloth to man this gun was moving closely behind the car.

All the troubles and risks were worth taking because these elections and the subsequent formation of the Beant Singh government brought peace, harmony and well being to Punjab again. Unfortunately, Beant Singh was assassinated by the militants, but the peace and confidence process continued in Punjab.

We were three observers for Ludhiana district. Because of the

crisis situation, we became very good friends. Each one of us was worried. The situation used to become tense sometimes and on one such occasion, I vowed that if I go back from this place safely, I will take darshan of Vithoba deity at Pandharpur on *Ashadi Ekadashi* day like an ordinary devotee. I fulfilled my vow in 1994 by standing in the queue for darshan for 21 hours.

When I put my forehead, on the 'charan' of deity, it became the most memorable moment of my life. ■

*(Dr. Suresh Joshi, IAS 1970, Retd. is former Chief Information Commissioner of Maharashtra and is now Electricity Ombudsman with the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission. He can be contacted on his Cell 9821525427.)*

**Members are requested to send articles, anecdotes, poems, official or personal achievements to us. We will be happy to publish such contributions in Harmony. ET**

**Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote**

## Retirement Blues...

By S Shankar Menon

Ophthalmologists, doctors, lawyers, tinkers, tailors can carry on until they can't cure their own cataracts, torts and writs lose their bites and pots and pans become ifs and ands. For the likes of me, all bureau-cats are grey in the light. We pass the imagined rigours of a Union Public Service Commission exam, we sign slavery to the President of India on day one and we know that day the date we are put to pasture. It was 58 in my time, it is 60 years now and after the rigours of trying to walk the straight and narrow between colours strictly black and white, it is in retirement that the blues hit you.

Strong men in the IAS who have guided the destinies of our nation, have been known to shriek and pull out what little hair they have left, the day they rise from the final chair. Used to being served tea in silver service during interval at the cinema from owners fearing cancelling of their licences, the thought of actually waiting in a queue to get a ticket can cause instant paralysis. As it did a venerable dodo I replaced in Maharashtra Tourism, who had a stroke the day after his farewell speech. No more red lights on the car, the possibility of taking a bus or two, or even revving up a comatose Maruti 800, does not do much for the blood sugar. Having to confront a wife full time because you have not piled in with the likes in the Adarsh scenario, makes possible an early retreat into religious texts or going the NGO route to keep the spirit of public service going... and get away from domestic friction that constant reading of all the newspapers in town cannot still

subdue.

Many of us old lags who have done our time, meet on the first Monday of every month at the YB Chavan auditorium. We constantly discuss the Central Government Health scheme and its callousness in letting us die early and penniless. Lately we are exercised about Adarsh and whether we can teach the present callow lot about higher moral values So Prevalent In Our Time. Of course we made the odd STD call in the glories of the coming tech age for strictly private purposes at taxpayer cost. Or fiddled the car register when the *Mem* wanted to visit her mother. Overall, all of us can still look each other in the eye. We have not hit the headlines, in our parliamentary system, the elected



rather than the selected have to take the credit and the blame. Most of us have not been kidnapped, like our colleague in Orissa recently was, but we have had our share of tribal neuroses, earthquakes and floods... and at all times dealing with the whims of political masters without our spines exceeding the permissible curvature.

One favourite story we don't tell when the *samosas* and hot tea comes in on the Monday early evening at 5.30 pm, is about our buddy who retired as Home Secretary to the Government of India and went off to grow roses in snooty Ooty. His neighbours were surprised to see that the boy who delivered the morning newspaper, would knock on the door and go in for a few moments instead of leaving the day's news outside. He was asked after a long time why he did this. He said his instructions were clear. He was asked to knock and enter and then announce, 'Sir, the Prime Minister wants to see you at once'. To which the answer would come every morning, muffled from under the thick quilt, 'Tell the Prime Minister to *F---Off*. The boy would then gently close the door and go.

Some of us in our salad years have plans to still leave the world a better place before we push up the daisies. A distinguished Professor of Sociology from St. Xavier's College at a recent public discussion berated me for now trying to get religion out of politics. What did you do when you were in Service? she asked. 'Madam', I replied, 'You have taught Sociology for 35 years and still there are sociological problems'.

We will all go screaming into the good night, we may be blue now away from the power and the glory, but it is nice to rage against the dying of the light. Maybe about some of us it will be said, he had the gift of laughter and the sense that the world was mad.

(Mr. S Shankar Menon, IAS 1963 Retd., can be contacted by email: [sshankarmenon@hotmail.com](mailto:sshankarmenon@hotmail.com))

**Retirement takes all the meaning out of weekends**

**Answer to Crossword No. 38**

E	S	S	E	N	F	I	L	L	E	T	I	N	G
F	I	H	R	S	L	M	R						
F	I	N	E	S	E	E	L	U	S	I	V	E	
E	G		A		D		T						
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**Go Ahead...**

**Continued from Page 1**

farmer said to the king, " It was very easy, your highness. I simply cut the branch where the bird was sitting."

We are all made to fly -- to realize our incredible potential as human beings. But instead of doing that, we sit on our branches, clinging to the things that are familiar to us. The possibilities are endless, but for most of us, they remain undiscovered. We conform to the familiar, the comfortable, the mundane. So for the most part, our lives are mediocre instead of exciting, thrilling and fulfilling.

So let us learn to destroy the branch of fear we cling to and free ourselves to the glory of flight.

SO ARE YOU THINKING OF FLYING? THEN GO AHEAD & FLY..... ■

*"Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad. "*

**CROSSWORD NO. 39**

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
8								9					
10					11								
12					13		14		15		16		
17					18						19		20
21	22										23		
24			25		26		27				28		
29										30			

**Compiled by Mr. Mohan Chunkath, IAS (Tamil Nadu-1978), Principal Secretary / Vice Chairman & CEO Tamil Nadu Maritime Board.**

**Across**

- 8 Child with no parents (6)
- 9 Make thin (8)
- 10 Art movement (4)
- 11 Imploring (10)
- 12 Carry (4)
- 13 Endangered (10)
- 17 Pertaining to the ear (4)
- 18 Come next (5)
- 19 As well (4)
- 21 Artistically carved (10)
- 23 Animal fat (4)
- 24 Famous automobile brand (5-5)
- 28 Aftertaste (4)
- 29 Indulging in a sumptuous meal (8)
- 30 Swarmed (6)

**Down**

- 1 Bauble (8)
- 2 Affected, stagy (10)
- 3 Financial speculation (10)
- 4 Defeat (4)
- 5 Cause of misery (4)
- 6 Control calorie intake (4)
- 7 Attitude (6)
- 14 Part of a stair (5)
- 15 Corrections (10)
- 16 Shoulder insignias (10)
- 20 More odd (8)
- 22 Strangled (6)
- 25 Whip (4)
- 26 Demolish (4)
- 27 Hindu discipline to promote control of the body and mind (4)

*If you have nine dumb friends, you're bound to be the tenth one*

## Who Goes Where

*Mr. Sumit Mullick (1982):* Principal Secretary, School Education and Sports Department ■ *Dr. Bhagwan Sahai (1984):* Principal Secretary, Food & Civil Supplies Department ■ *Mr. Sanjay Kumar (1984):* Principal Secretary, Higher and Technical Education Department ■ *Mr. Arvind Kumar (1985):* Member Secretary, Fourth State Finance Commission ■ *Mr. Nand Kumar (1988):* Director General, Rajmata Jijau Mother-Child Care Mission ■ *Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal (1989):* Secretary (Information Technology), General Administration Department ■ *Mr. SK Biswas (1990):* Member Secretary (Administration), Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran ■ *Mr. Mahesh Pathak (1991):* Commissioner, Pune Municipal Corporation ■ *Mr. SD Shinde (1991):* Chief Executive Officer, Maharashtra Maritime Board ■ *Mr. Rajagopal Devara (1992):* Secretary, Cooperation ■ *Mr. Sanjay Sawant (1993):* Managing Director, Maharashtra Petro-chemicals Corporation Ltd. ■ *Ms. Radhika Rastogi (1995):* Managing Director, Maharashtra State Small Industries Development Corporation ■ *Dr. SB Patil (1995):* Managing Director, Western Maharashtra Development Corporation ■ *Mr. MS Chaudhari (1995):* Commissioner, Cooperation & Registrar Cooperative Societies, Pune ■ *Mr. SO Sonwane (1996):* Director, Disaster Management Cell, Revenue & Forest Department ■ *Mr. Pravin Darade (1998):* Chairman, Nagpur Improvement Trust ■ *Mr. HK Jawale (1998):* Collector, Raigad ■ *Mr. PD Gabriel (1998):* Joint Managing Director, Maharashtra

State Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation ■ *Mr. Sanjay Deshmukh (1998):* Labour Commissioner ■ *Mr. VV Vaidya (1999):* Additional Divisional Commissioner, Pune ■ *Mr. SJ Koche (2000):* Collector, Beed ■ *Ms. Prajakta Lavangare (2001):* Deputy Secretary to Chief Secretary ■ *Mr. Anbalagan P (2001):* Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation ■ *Mr. RR Mane (2001):* Chief Executive Officer, Beed ■ *Mr. Anup Kumar Yadav (2002):* Additional Commissioner, Pune Municipal Corporation ■ *Mr. Saurabh Rao (2003):* Collector, Nagpur ■ *Dr. Sanjeev Kumar (2003):* Collector, Ahmednagar ■ *Ms. Jayashree Bhoj (2003):* Collector, Wardha ■ *Mr. N Ramaswami (2004):* Collector, Satara ■ *Mr. Shravan Hardikar (2005):* Collector, Yavatmal ■ *Dr. Vipin Sharma (2005):* Collector, Hingoli ■ *Mr. Abhishek Krishna (2006):* Collector, Gadchiroli ■ *Mr. Deependra Singh Kushwah (2006):* Chief Executive Officer, Nanded ■

## Book Release

Continued from Page 1

by Chief Minister of Maharashtra Mr. Prithviraj Chavan on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at a function in Mantralaya. Mr. Patangrao Kadam, Minister for Forests and Rehabilitation; Mr. Mohd. Arif Naseem Khan, Minister for Textiles and Minorities Development; Mr. RY Gaikwad, Chief Secretary; as well as several secretaries to government were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion the Chief Minister stated that Self Help Groups needed to be

supported, especially in terms of their training and marketing of the products made by the women. He complimented the authors on bringing out the book and said that the compilation of the case studies was important to have cross learning of successful initiatives and that more such studies needed to be brought out. He also suggested that the book should also be translated into Marathi for wider dissemination.

Ms. Thekkekara said that the case studies brought out the stories of the SHGs promoted by MAVIM. They ranged from instances of how villages became free of money lenders in Bhandara, to how women set up grain banks in Dhule, achieved village sanitation in Sangli and how MAVIM's fieldworkers even worked in the jungles of Gadchiroli to promote empowerment among the tribal women.

She thanked the Chief Minister for his interest and support, as well as all those present. ■

**About the Book**  
This book explores the impact of microfinance through the self-help movement in bringing about socio-economic and political changes among poor and marginalized women. Organizing women into SHGs and enabling them to take charge of their lives, transforms the process of development from the welfare approach to a people centred approach, forging vital links between vulnerable women, financial institutions and NGOs. Set in the villages of Maharashtra, the case studies presented document the changes happening in the lives of poor women when they undergo a process of training and capacity building through the Mahila Arthik Vidyut Mahasamandal (MAVIM) to form SHGs. Critically assessing the self employment, political awakening and community mobilization triggered by Self Help Groups, this collection of case studies is bound to be of interest to policy makers, academicians, as well as bankers, MFIs and others involved in the microfinance sector.

**D. Parthasarathy**  
is Professor of Sociology at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

**Thankyou F. Thekketara**  
is a senior civil servant in Maharashtra and former Managing Director MAVIM. She is presently Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Minorities Development, Government of Maharashtra.

**Veena Poonacha**  
is the Director of the Research Centre for Women's Studies, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai.

**Dominant Publishers & Distributors Pvt Ltd**  
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**Women's Self Help Groups**  
Restructuring Socio-Economic Development

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**Whatever is chased runs away**