



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

Virtual Newsletter
ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸುದ್ದಿಪತ್ರ

Vol. 5, No. 45, April 2024
(For Private Circulation Only)



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- Chief Editor

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A Note from the Chief Editor



T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.)

Former Chief Secretary, Government of
Karnataka
Former Chairman, Karnataka Administrative
Reforms Commission-II
Chairman, Indian Institute of Public
Administration – Karnataka Regional Branch

I am happy to place before our readers the **April 2024** issue of our **Virtual Newsletter**. This is our **45th** issue, since we began this initiative.

Our **Lead Feature** highlights the major recommendations of the report of the **5th State Finance Commission of Karnataka** for the year 2024-25.

Our **Lead Article** is an abridged version of the **Convocation Address** delivered by **Mr. T.R. Raghunandan** at the **Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag** last month.

We carry the **2nd Prize-Winning entry of Mr. Joshua Verghese** in the **Essay Writing Competition** jointly organized by us and **Jain University** on the theme, **“Citizen-Centric Governance in Karnataka”**.

In our section on **Administrative and Governance Reforms in Karnataka**, we carry the recent compilation of **Mr. Nayakara Veerasha** on the subject.

In our **Gender Matters** column, we carry the contribution of **Ms. Sedde Yashaswini** on the theme, **The Indispensable Role of Gender in Public Administration**. Ms. Yashaswini is an MA Sem4 student in Public Policy and Administration at CeRSSE, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Bengaluru. Her contribution deserves appreciation.

In our section on **Branch Events**, we report on (1) Signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding** with **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University**; and (2) A **Guest Lecture** delivered by **Mr. R. Gokul**, IFoS on **“Challenges in Implementing Environmental Policy”**.

In our section on **Branch Members’ Writings in the Popular Media**, we carry the links to two thought-provoking articles penned by **Mr. Gurucharan Gollerkeri** in the media last month.

We are proud that **Mr. V. Balasubramanian, IAS (Retd.)**, he has been appointed as **Advisor** to the **Oversight Authority** to supervise the work of the Special Purpose Vehicle - the **Karnataka Mining Environment Corporation (KMERC)**.

We end the issue with a column on **Miscellany** and our regular column, **Food for Thought**,

I wish to add a disclaimer here that the views expressed by the contributors in this issue of the Virtual Newsletter are personal and **do not represent the views or position of the Editorial Board or the Executive Committee of the Branch**. Do write in, with your responses, views and ideas for improvement of the Newsletter.



Lead Feature

KARNATAKA STATE 5th State Finance Commission Report for the year 2024-25

Preamble

The 5th State Finance Commission was constituted by the Governor of Karnataka on 11th October 2023 under Article 243-I and Article 243-Y of the Constitution of India, read with Section 267 of Karnataka Grama Swaraj and Panchayat Raj Act, 1993 (Karnataka Act 14 of 1993). The 5th State Finance Commission consists of the following Members:

Sri C. Narayanaswamy, Ex-MP
Chairman

Sri Mohamed Sanaulla, IAS (Retd)
Member

Sri R. S. Phonde
Controller, Karnataka State Audit and
Accounts Dept (Retd)
Member

The 5th State Finance Commission was mandated to furnish its **First Report** before 28th February, 2024. As per the directive, the Commission submitted its **First Report** in February 2024. The same was placed before the State Legislature which enabled the release of Grants as per recommendations of 15th Finance Commission.

Summary of Recommendations



Nayakara Veerasha
Research Officer
Fifth State Finance Commission, Bengaluru

Financial Devolution

- The Commission has adopted the same criterion as that of 4th SFC and used Non-Loan Net Own Revenue Receipts (NLNORR) concept for Fiscal Devolution to arrive at divisible pool.
- The sharing pattern between the State and Local Bodies should be in the ratio of 51:49 respectively; and out of the 49% for Local Bodies, 35% to PRIs and 13% to all ULBs with an additional 1% to BBMP with the ratio of Untied to Tied Grants should be 50:50 respectively.
- An additional annual 1% of the overall allocation of funds should be made available to the PRIs and ULBs of Coastal and Malnad districts for infrastructural and maintenance facilities.
- Ward-wise allocations have to be made for the BBMP, City Municipal Corporations and other ULBs.
- Development or statutory grants, untied grants and establishment grants for the newly created PRIs and ULBs should be continued.
- Rules of the Karnataka Local Fund Authorities Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2003 relevant to the PRIs should be framed at the earliest.
- The funds recommended by 4th SFC to the ULBs was based on four parameters (1) Population 40% (2) Area 20% (3) Level of illiteracy 20% and (4) SC/ST Population 20%. The same criterion of Horizontal Devolution the ULBs for the year 2024-25 should be followed.
- There should be suitable delegation of financial powers to all the ULBs. The budget link documents for the TPs and

the GPs should also be prepared on the same lines as is prepared for the ZPs. Publication of Budget Link Document for GPs should be done as a part of State Budget Document.

- State Government should include requirements of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Municipalities (ULBs) as recommended by this Commission in its memorandum to the 16th Central Finance Commission, so that their requirements are taken into account by the Central Finance Commission while determining the financial needs of Local Self-Governments under Proviso (3) (bb) and 41 (c) of Article 280 of the Constitution of India.

Strengthening Measures specific to PRIs

- Important administrative and technical vacancies such as Engineers, Health Workers etc. should be filled up at the earliest.
- All Schemes implemented by the State sector/parastatal agencies with regard to Schedule XI & XII need to be restored to the respective PRIs. Responsibility Mapping of Activities of PRIs should be implemented as prescribed in the Act and the Rules.
- All the electrical installations of GPs should be metered and the present arrears of power consumption charges be settled with ESCOMs through intervention of the Government so that huge amount of interest/ penalty could be avoided and the same could be utilized for developmental works.
- The Energy Department suggests streamlining the electrical systems in the GPs. The Commission accepts the above suggestion and also proposes that all the unused electrical installations including defunct bore

wells of the GPs should be disconnected to save energy and payment of minimum charges

- Government should consider extension of Gram Thana areas in all the villages of GPs and also take steps to regularise house constructions and other developmental activities that have come up in non-Gram Thana areas of the villages.
- There is a need to maintain the same tempo in collecting outstanding amount of Own Source Revenue (OSR) which is Rs. 1,696 crores during 2022-23 including arrears.
- Government may provide financial support to the Panchayat Parishad for Training Programmes of Members/Officials of PRIs and for other activities.

Strengthening Measures specific to ULBs

- All ULBs should levy, revise and collect Property Tax based on the guidance value revised periodically, to improve their Own Source Revenue.
- Devolution of Tied and Untied funds to all ULBs should be in the ratio of 50:50.
- Many infrastructural projects are executed by Parastatal Agencies for the ULBs. Huge amounts are spent for completion of the projects, and these projects are handed over to the concerned ULBs for maintenance. Therefore, the Commission recommends to provide 46 earmarked funds for maintenance of all such assets for their optimum utilization.
- To improve the capacity of elected representatives and employees, the Commission recommends to the Government to formulate a specific 'Training Policy' for their periodic training and provide sufficient funds.

Measures specific to BBMP

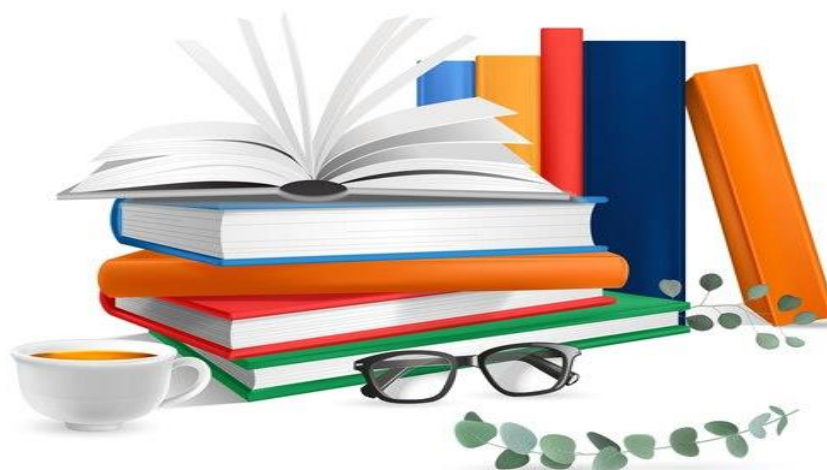
- BBMP should prepare MTFP every year along with the Budget. It should comply with the guidelines of Government of India to obtain due share of 15th CFC Funds.
- BBMP should adopt latest guidance value-based assessment of Property Tax at the earliest and enhance the efforts of the agencies for collection of intended non-tax revenue and in case, it needs up-dation of existing laws, necessary action should be taken by the Government.
- There is a need for the revising the Karnataka Municipalities (Powers of Expenditure) Rules, 1986 have been amended in 2004.

Recommendations common to PRIs and ULBs

- Karnataka State Decentralised Planning and Development Committee, Taluk Planning and Development Committees (TPDCs) and District Planning Committees

should be made functional and effective.

- A separate Link Document relating to budget allocations in respect of all State Sector Schemes implemented by the State Line Departments should be included as a part of the State Budget Document
- High Level Committee (HLC), headed by the Chief Secretary with the Secretaries of Finance, Planning, RD&PR, Urban Development (including BBMP) and Health and Family Welfare Departments, should be constituted to periodically review the action taken to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the CFCs and SFCs.
- Necessary action should be taken to duly constitute Local Bodies without delay in conducting the elections for the same.
- Early approval of the draft bill of Karnataka State Audit Act should be given.





Convocation Address

**Delivered by Shri T.R. Raghunandan
at Karnataka State Rural
Development & Panchayat Raj
University, Gadag on 6th March 2024**

(Editor's Note: *This is a condensed version of the Convocation Address. Emphasis is added.*)



T.R. Raghunandan

(Raghunandan is a consultant in decentralization, anti-corruption and heritage conservation. Formerly in the Indian Administrative Service, he quit the IAS in 2010 after twenty-seven years in order to concentrate on his pet passions of strengthening local democracy and local governments and working on anti-corruption.)

It is my privilege today to be here to congratulate all those who are graduating with honors and distinction in today's Convocation. Every one of you is an agent of change and there are great expectations from you, not only for the state of Karnataka but also for the country at large. Karnataka State must be congratulated for establishing this unique university, which concentrates on nurturing and developing talent in a critical area of development, namely, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

In today's social and political situation, when the rural economy, particularly agriculture is stagnating, we need to prioritize meaningful rural development. However, meaningful rural or urban development cannot be achieved in the absence of a meaningful and effective system of democratic decentralization.

It is often said that Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar was not in favour of the Panchayat system. But that is wrong. He was in favour of decentralization, but wanted local governments to be inclusive of all social classes.

It is well known that Mahatma Gandhi was fully in favour of a decentralized form of government and strong Panchayats, which would be instruments of village level swaraj.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly wrote to Dr. Ambedkar on 10 May 1948 saying that the words '*Panchayati Raj*' on which Mahatma Gandhi had rested the foundations of Indian democracy, was not mentioned in the initial draft of the Constitution. On 25 November 1948, Constituent Assembly member, Mr. K. Santhanam proposed the inclusion of Article 40 in the Directive Principles. This Article states as follows:

'Organization of Village Panchayats: The State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.'

Dr. Ambedkar readily accepted this amendment.

Another wrong impression about Panchayati Raj comes from Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's observation that only 20 percent of government expenditure actually reaches the people. This statement is often misunderstood to mean that 80 percent of Government expenditure is wasted through corruption. That is not what Rajiv Gandhi said. In fact, he was quoting from a Government report which stated that 80 percent of Government expenditure was in the form of administrative costs.

Apart from political empowerment, Rajiv Gandhi also saw Panchayats as a way to reduce the administrative burden of the government. He believed that by decentralizing the administration and placing it under the control and supervision of locally elected governments, efficiency will be improved and administrative costs will be reduced.

Though it is thirty years since local governments in rural and urban areas have been given constitutional status through the Seventy Third and Seventy Fourth Constitutional Amendments, the implementation of Panchayati Raj has been half-hearted in all States. In no state has Panchayati Raj been meaningfully implemented.

Let us take Karnataka as an example.

Karnataka is considered as a Champion in Panchayati Raj. In 1987, under the leadership of Ramakrishna Hegde, the then CM and the then RDPR Minister Abdul Nazeer Saab, not only powers and responsibilities were given to the Panchayats, but also the State budget was divided and a separate budget of 24% of the total allocation was given to them. Every department was asked to examine its programmes and select those programmes that were better implemented at the Panchayat level. These programmes, along with the staff and the funding resources, was transferred to the Zilla Parishad. In order to establish the primacy of the ZP in Development, the Chairperson of the Zilla Parishad was given a five-year term and an officer senior to the Deputy Commissioner was posted as the Chief Secretary of the Zilla Parishad. He was placed under the control and superintendence of the Zilla Parishad

However, neither did the bureaucracy nor MLAs like this arrangement. Ministers also felt that they had lost power. So within 5 years, all these

progressive policies were withdrawn. Since then, departments have continued to exercise control and implement programmes, bypassing the Panchayat system. That trend has continued till today.

In 2014-15, I led a research project where we studied how much of the government's expenditure in rural areas is undertaken by the Panchayats. We studied the financial arrangement from the District to the Taluk and GP levels in Kolar District, Mulbagal Taluk. Our findings were as follows:

The overall proportion of the State budget given to the Panchayats had declined to 17 percent, as compared to 24 percent in 1987. The bulk of this money is in the form of salary payments to departmental staff, who continue to be on the Zilla and Taluk Panchayat rolls, even though in reality, departments directly control them through postings and transfers. More than 75 percent of Zilla Panchayat budget and 85% of Taluk Panchayat budgets are in the form of salaries. There is hardly any developmental expenditure being undertaken by the Panchayats.

At the Gram Panchayat level, while the expenditure of the government in total is between Rs. 5-7 crore, only about Rs. 20 lakh, excluding NREGA is actually implemented by the Gram Panchayat directly.

All departments have slowly taken away their departmental funds from the Panchayat sector by creating separate Heads of Accounts in the State budget, and implementing them directly. Consequently, no individual can actually find out how much money is spent overall by the government, within a Gram Panchayat area.

We discovered the same trend in urban areas as well. In a research project undertaken in Tumkur Corporation, where the 'Smart City' project is being

implemented, the Corporation was not involved in implementation of most developmental projects. Departments were undertaking projects directly or through various parallel bodies, such as societies or even Private Limited Companies. For example, the Smart City Project is itself implemented by a Private Company, as per the Government of India instructions. This system bypasses the State and the local municipality.

Another disturbing trend is now being seen. **Elections to Panchayats and Municipalities are being postponed regularly, in many States.** Under the Constitution, the term of a local government shall be 5 years and no more. That means that the next elected body must be ready to take over when the five-year term of a local government ends. Unfortunately, courts have become powerless to prevent such open violation of constitutional provisions.

I could continue to list our other violations of the letter and spirit of democratic decentralization. But I will stop here. **I have a duty to speak some words of encouragement to students who have toiled hard to achieve success.** So let me attempt to give you some simple words of advice, which I hope you will remember when you leave the university and take up various careers.

The main question is, what will be your foundational values? Who or what will guide you in the performance of your duties?

We come from different social, economic, religious, regional and linguistic backgrounds. We can use these to promote divisiveness, or promote unity. There is a simple way to ensure that your diversity does not come in the way of unity, compassion and patriotism.

My advice to all of you is, when in doubt, just implement the

Constitution of India. Our founding fathers and founding mothers, in the Constituent Assembly deliberated and put together a brilliant document that contains all the detail in how the country should run and how citizens should behave with respect to other citizens. You may say that the Constitution is a long document with nearly 400 Articles. How can one memorize everything? There is no need to memorize it, because the entire Constitution can be summarized in five Gandhian Principles.: **Satya, Ahimsa, Swaraj, Sarvodaya and Antyodaya.**

Satya. Always speak the truth and take the path of integrity. Do not be corrupt, because everybody else is corrupt.

Ahimsa. Today you see a lot of glorification of violence on the media, social media and so on. Do not take that path. Only cowards are violent, or suggest violence as a way to progress.

Swaraj. Try to be independent within the powers given to you. To give an example, Panchayats in Karnataka have been given plenty of powers to take the initiative and raise local taxes to achieve their local priorities. However, they still want the government to give money, and do not do simple things like keeping a village clean. Of course, some Panchayats are outstanding, but many do not take initiative. **Sarvodaya** means compassion towards all. This means not only human beings, but also animals, Nature and the environment. **Antyodaya** means special compassion to the poorest of the poor. Unless India is rid of poverty, unhappiness and injustice, we cannot rest.

To follow these principles, you need two important attributes, which **Gandhi, Ambedkar** and many other freedom fighters showed. These are, **Courage** and **Patience**. Success will take time, but eventually, **Satyameva Jayate**. Following these principles in your daily life is the most patriotic thing to do.



CITIZEN-CENTRIC GOVERNANCE IN KARNATAKA –

An Agenda for Reform

Second Prize-Winning Entry in IIPA-KRB and Jain University Annual Essay Competition 2023



Joshua Verghese

3rd Semester

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Introduction

In today's global landscape, a profound shift is underway, a shift marked by rapid technological advancements, globalisation and societal dynamics. The world is shifting towards a more 'people-centric' paradigm. This shift towards a people-centric approach resonates strongly with the concept of *Citizen-Centric Governance*. It recognizes that the core of effective governance lies in acknowledging that *"It's the people that make the country, for they are the heart and soul of its progress and identity,"* as aptly stated by Nickle Hert. This sentiment underscores the idea that governance should revolve around the well-being and aspirations of citizens.

What is Citizen-Centric Governance?

Citizen-centric governance is an approach that prioritizes the needs, preferences, and rights of citizens at the forefront of decision-making processes. It represents a fundamental shift in

modern public administration, with the aim of placing citizens at the centre of governance. This approach involves not only a mindset but also a set of principles geared toward enhancing the well-being and satisfaction of the people that the government serves.

To realize this vision, government administration at all levels should be taking steps to address the immediate concerns of citizens, such as transparency, efficiency, stability, and continuity in governance systems. One critical aspect of achieving citizen-centric governance is the establishment of a robust legal framework, which forms the foundation for a more inclusive and responsive government.

The Need for Citizen-Centric Governance in Karnataka

Citizen-centric governance is indispensable for Karnataka, as it plays a pivotal role in addressing a myriad of challenges and harnessing opportunities for the betterment of its populace. This form of governance places citizens at the centre of policy-making and service delivery, and its relevance in Karnataka is multifaceted.

Firstly, citizen-centric governance in Karnataka is essential to improve the delivery of public services. Programs such as Aadhaar and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana exemplify the Government of India's commitment to delivering services that directly benefit citizens. In Karnataka, initiatives like the Seva Sindhu portal have streamlined access to a wide array of government services, making them more accessible and user-friendly.

Secondly, citizen-centric governance promotes transparency and accountability. The Right to Information Act is a testament to this commitment to openness. By allowing citizens to access government records and information, it empowers them to hold government officials accountable for their actions. Moreover, the Whistle Blowers Protection Act encourages citizens to come forward and report wrongdoing, further bolstering accountability. In Karnataka, the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act mandates the online publication of procurement tenders and contracts, allowing citizens to challenge any irregularities, thereby reinforcing transparency.

Thirdly, building trust between citizens and the government is paramount, and citizen-centric governance plays a pivotal role in achieving this objective. Karnataka's emphasis on delivering services efficiently and transparently, as seen in the Seva Sindhu initiative, significantly contributes to building this essential trust between the government and its citizens.

Lastly, citizen-centric governance contributes to economic growth. Karnataka, with its burgeoning economy and dynamic entrepreneurial spirit, stands to gain significantly from such an approach. In a global context, citizen-centric governance is gaining prominence as governments worldwide recognize its importance.

Citizen-Centric Policies in Karnataka

Karnataka, home to vibrant cities like Bangalore and Mysore, has long been a trailblazer in the realm of citizen-centric policies. The journey traces back to the time of **Maharaja Krishna Raja Wadiyar IV**, whose visionary rule was nothing short of remarkable. Even in

1911, an era far removed from the digital age, Karnataka was setting the stage for modern-day think tanks through pioneering economic conferences. These gatherings brought together experts from diverse fields to deliberate on ground breaking ideas, a concept ahead of its time. While India as a nation introduced mandatory education in 2009 via the 'Right to Education Act 2009,' Karnataka had already made primary education obligatory back in 1913. Karnataka's historical track record stands as a testament to its exceptional legacy in governance.

Keeping in line with this track record the Karnataka government had taken several initiatives. These initiatives have been implemented to enhance citizen engagement and improve service delivery. One notable example is the '**Seva Sindhu**' initiative, spearheaded by the Karnataka government. This integrated platform brings together various service delivery channels, including *Grama One*, *Janasevaka*, *Karnataka One*, and *Bangalore One*, under a unified digital umbrella.

Moreover, Karnataka has embraced the concept of **Participatory Budgeting** (PB) as another means to empower citizens and align public spending with community needs. Since its inception in Karnataka in 2015, mandated by an amendment to the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, PB has played a pivotal role in shaping the state's governance framework.

The impact of PB in Karnataka is far-reaching. Beyond empowering citizens to influence resource allocation, PB has been instrumental in ensuring that public funds are directed towards projects that genuinely address the community's needs. For instance, in the village of Hosahalli in Hassan district, PB funds were channelled to construct a

new school building and a drinking water supply system, directly benefiting the local populace. This participatory approach has not only enhanced the democratic fabric of Karnataka's governance but also propelled it toward a more citizen-centric model of public administration.

To further fortify transparency and accountability, the Government of Karnataka has launched initiatives such as the **Open Data Karnataka** platform, making government data accessible in machine-readable formats. This empowers citizens to develop applications and services for public benefit. Additionally, the **Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act** ensures transparency by mandating the online publication of procurement tenders and contracts. The **Karnataka Lokayukta Act** establishes an independent anti-corruption ombudsman, addressing allegations against government officials. The **Karnataka Right to Service Act** guarantees citizens timely government services and offers a grievance redressal mechanism.

Challenges in Implementing Citizen-Centric Governance Best Practices

The pursuit of international best practices in citizen-centric governance is undoubtedly a noble endeavour, but it is not without its share of challenges, particularly for a region like Karnataka.

Unified Online Portal: *The Technological Dilemma*

Creating a unified online portal akin to Estonia's presents a formidable technological challenge. While Estonia's success in this realm is commendable, replicating it in Karnataka would require substantial investments in technology infrastructure. Ensuring the portal's

cybersecurity is another critical aspect, considering the increasing threats in the digital landscape. Moreover, Karnataka must ensure that the portal is accessible to all citizens, including those residing in remote areas with limited internet connectivity.

Digital Signatures: *Bridging the Awareness Gap*

Expanding and simplifying the Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) system faces a significant challenge in the form of awareness and education. Many citizens and businesses may not fully comprehend the advantages of electronic signatures, leading to reluctance in adopting them. Karnataka must embark on comprehensive awareness campaigns to educate the public about the benefits of DSCs. Additionally, ensuring the security and integrity of electronic transactions is paramount for building trust in the system.

Enhancing the Aadhaar System: *The Trust Factor*

Enhancing the Aadhaar card system, inspired by Estonia's national ID card and its multifunctionality, brings its own set of challenges. Privacy concerns have haunted the Aadhaar system since its inception, and any expansion must carefully address these apprehensions.

Long-Term Care Insurance: *Balancing Affordability and Accessibility*

Implementing a long-term care insurance system poses unique challenges for Karnataka. India's vast and diverse population adds complexity to ensuring equitable access to such services. Affordability becomes a concern, as the financial sustainability of the system must be balanced with the diverse needs of citizens. Karnataka

must find a way to ensure that services reach those in need, particularly the elderly and individuals with disabilities, without imposing an undue financial burden on the government or individuals.

Navigating these Challenges

In conclusion, Karnataka's journey toward adopting international best practices in Citizen-Centric Governance is indeed fraught with challenges

The global shift towards Citizen-Centric Governance is an essential response to the evolving needs and expectations of individuals in an interconnected world. Karnataka, with its rich history of governance innovation and its commitment to adopting international best practices, stands at the cusp of a transformative journey. By drawing inspiration from Estonia's digital prowess, Japan's citizen-centric models,

and its own historical legacy of citizen-centric initiatives, Karnataka has the potential to create a governance framework that places citizens at the forefront. However, this journey is not without its challenges, including technological complexities, awareness gaps, privacy concerns, and financial sustainability. To succeed, Karnataka must navigate these obstacles with determination and innovative solutions, keeping transparency, accountability, and citizen empowerment at the core of its governance reforms. By doing so, Karnataka can become a trailblazer in the realm of Citizen-Centric Governance, fostering trust, economic growth, and an improved quality of life for its diverse populace.



Administrative and Governance Reforms in Karnataka

This feature encapsulates some of the important recent Administrative and Governance Reforms initiated in Karnataka

Courtesy: *Deccan Herald*



Nayakara Veerasha

Research Officer, Fifth State Finance Commission,
Bengaluru

- The **Fifth State Finance Commission** has recommended **increase in the financial devolution to local**

governments. It recommends a total of 49 per cent of Non-Loan net own revenue receipts out of which 35 per cent may go to the PRIs, 13 per cent to the Urban Local Governments and 1 per cent for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

- A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** was signed between the Higher Education Department and British Council and Wadhvani Foundation. It aims to provide **skill training for students in government degree,**

engineering colleges and polytechnics, and also to strengthen communication skills among the teachers.

- **Koosina Mane** (Creches), a project of Panchayat Raj Department serving the purpose of taking care of the children of Women MGNREGA workers, gets funding. Under this, each district gets a fund of Rs. 1.9 crore to establish and maintain the same. In the long run, it also enables the asset-building component under the MGNREGA scheme which is one of the objectives of the scheme.
- The **Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department** has launched **Panchamitra** portal (panchamitra.karnataka.gov.in) and WhatsApp number (available on 8277506000) chatbot service to enable citizens to access various services and register their grievances about the same. The portal provides information on elected representatives, staff and proceedings of the Grama Sabha meetings and revenue generation.
- The **Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 (KARC-2)** has recommended the legalisation of leasing of agricultural plots in its seventh report. It also drafted the Karnataka Crop Production and Land Rejuvenation Bill. These recommendations are aimed to facilitate more investment in agriculture and improve productivity.
- **Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu** have resolved to have a **joint**

mechanism to check human-animal conflict and protect wildlife habitats through proactive cooperation and knowledge sharing. The aim is to pursue long term conservation measures which go beyond state borders.

- The State Government will be rolling out **automatic mutation for records of Rights, Tenancy and Crops (RTC)**. The process to record change in land ownership will be made automatic. Under the new system, the thumb impression of the Revenue Inspector will not be required and everything will be done online.
- The government has notified the formation of a High-Powered **Karnataka Regional Imbalance and Backwardness Commission** with **Prof. M Govinda Rao** as its Chairman. It mandated the Commission to identify the imbalances and backwardness on the basis of a **Comprehensive Composite Development Index**.
- The **Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB)** has issued a '**Green Star**' challenge for hotels to install better water management systems. This is in the wake of water crisis in Bengaluru.
- All **Police Stations** in Bengaluru will go into **e-Office** mode, thereby making paperless administration possible. The Police Commissioner informed that this includes law and order, traffic, City Armed Reserve and Commissioner's office.



The Indispensable Role of Gender in Public Administration

Towards More Equitable and Effective Governance



Sedde Yashaswini

MA Sem4 Student in Public Policy and Administration
CeRSSE, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Bengaluru

Public Administration, the backbone of government operations, plays a critical role in shaping societies and ensuring the well-being of citizens. Traditionally viewed as a gender-neutral domain, the field is gradually recognizing the importance of gender in understanding policy formulation, implementation, and overall effectiveness. This article argues that **integrating a gender perspective into Public Administration is not merely about achieving numerical equality; it's about creating a more representative, responsive, and ultimately, successful system of governance.**

One of the most glaring problems is the under-representation of women in leadership positions within Public Administration. As per a 2022 report by PRS India, women constitute only 11.8% of Members of Parliament, a stark contrast to the global average of 25.4%. Similarly, women hold a mere 14.3% of ministerial positions in the Indian government (PRS India, 2022). **The leadership of India's administrative services remains heavily skewed towards men.** As of December 3, 2021, only two women held Chief Secretary positions across 36 States and Union Territories. The country has yet to see a

woman appointed as Cabinet Secretary (Bhatia et al., 2022). This under-representation translates to a lack of diverse perspectives and experiences in policy-making, hindering effective solutions that cater to the needs of all citizens, when half the population of the nation is women.

A growing body of evidence demonstrates that women's equal participation in leadership positions strengthens societies as a whole. **When women have a seat at the policymaking table, a wider range of critical gender equality issues receive the attention they deserve.** These issues impact families, communities, economies, and nations. From legislation combating gender-based violence to advocating for equitable healthcare and education access for women, female Public Administrators drive positive global change.

Public services like healthcare, education, and social welfare are often utilized disproportionately by women in India. **A gender-sensitive approach in Public Administration leads to better targeted and effective delivery of these crucial services.** This necessitates understanding the specific needs of women users – for instance, ensuring accessible healthcare services for women in rural areas or providing childcare facilities for working mothers to access education opportunities (Mehta & Narayan, 2017).

Studies suggest that female leadership in Public Administration often correlates with a stronger focus on social welfare and ethical conduct within government institutions (UNDP, 2019). When women are actively involved in the public service sector in India, it can enhance

accountability and transparency. This contributes to a more trustworthy and legitimate public service sector, fostering greater public trust in the government and its initiatives.

The following strategies can be considered to promote gender integration in Public Administration:

Implementing quotas for women in leadership positions within public administration. This pushes institutions to actively recruit and promote women, ensuring their voices and perspectives are represented at decision-making tables (Mammen, 2019). While quotas may face some criticism, research suggests they can be effective in breaking down existing barriers and encouraging a shift towards a more balanced leadership structure (UNDP, 2019).

Creating formal and informal mentorship and networking opportunities for women in Public Administration fosters their professional development and career advancement (Chaturvedi & Srinivasan, 2017). Connecting women with experienced leaders can provide valuable guidance, role models, and support within the often-complex public service sector. These programs can also facilitate peer learning and create a strong network of women leaders who can advocate for each other's growth.

Investing in targeted training programs for women in Public Administration is essential. These programs should equip women with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their careers. Training could focus on leadership skills, policy analysis, public communication, and negotiation techniques (Deshpande & Sharma, 2016). By providing women with the necessary skill sets, they become more confident in pursuing leadership

positions and effectively contributing to policy decisions.

Gender Budgeting ensures that public resources are allocated in a way that addresses the specific needs of both men and women (Mehta & Narayan, 2017). This involves analyzing budgets through a gender lens to identify areas where spending may be skewed. By allocating resources towards programs and services that benefit women disproportionately, such as healthcare services for women in rural areas or childcare facilities, gender budgeting promotes a more equitable distribution of public resources.

The demanding nature of public service can pose significant work-life balance challenges, particularly for women who often shoulder a greater domestic workload (World Bank, 2018). ***Implementing policies that promote work-life balance can help address this concern and create a more supportive environment for women in Public Administration.*** Examples include flexible work arrangements, on-site childcare facilities, and parental leave policies that are inclusive of both mothers and fathers.

Unconscious biases against women can significantly hinder their opportunities in Public Administration (Bhatt, 2015). These biases can manifest during selection processes, performance evaluations, and leadership opportunities. ***Training programs that raise awareness of unconscious bias and strategies to mitigate its impact can create a more inclusive work environment.*** By equipping leaders and employees with these tools, opportunities for women can be increased.

Regularly collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated data is crucial for monitoring progress toward

gender equality in Public Administration. This data can reveal areas where further intervention is needed and allows for a more targeted approach to achieving gender parity

throughout the system. Data analysis can also be used to track the impact of implemented strategies and measure their effectiveness.

Integrating a gender perspective into Public Administration is not just a moral imperative; it's a strategic necessity. By promoting gender equality within the public service sector, governments can create a more representative, responsive, and ultimately, more effective system of governance. This, in turn, leads to improved policy outcomes, enhanced public trust, and a society where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. As we move forward, advocating for a gender-inclusive Public Administration is essential for building a more just and equitable society.



Reports of Branch Events

Memorandum of Understanding with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University



A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** for academic, research and training purposes between the **Karnataka Regional Branch of the IIPA** and **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University** was signed on 20th April 2024. IIPA-KRB represented by its Chairman, **Mr. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar** and BASEU, represented by its Vice-Chancellor, **Dr. N.R. Bhanumurthy** affixed their signatures on the document.

This MoU seeks to explore the following exchanges and cooperative activities:

1. Facilitating educational and collaborative research projects in the areas of economics, public policy, governance, administration and other allied fields.
2. Providing internships, when available, at the IIPA-KRB for students of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University.
3. Jointly organizing workshops, guest lectures, guest talks, seminars, and training programmes, and publication of their proceedings.
4. Establishing a channel for resource sharing including access to databases, research facilities and other necessary resources.

5. Upskilling government officers and staff with relevant training and mentoring programmes.

This is the 11th MoU entered into by the Branch with leading educational and research institutions.

Report of Special Lecture by Mr. R. Gokul, IFoS

on *Challenges in Implementing Environmental Policy*



Richard Johny
Consultant

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University, Bengaluru



The **Indian Institute of Public Administration - Karnataka Regional Branch (IIPA-KRB)**, in association with **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University (BASEU)**, Bengaluru organized a **Guest Lecture** by **Mr. R. Gokul**, IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Director (Technical Cell), Forest, Ecology and Environment Department, Government of Karnataka on the theme "**Challenges in Implementing Environmental Policy**" at **Dr. B.R.**

Ambedkar School of Economics University on 20th April 2024.

The event was graced by the esteemed presence of **Mr. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar**, IAS (Retd.), former Chief Secretary of Karnataka and current Chairman of IIPA-KRB, alongside **Dr. N.R. Bhanumurthy**, Vice-Chancellor of BASEU. Mr. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar presided over the programme. Attendees included students, faculty and non-academic staff of BASEU and delegates from IIPA-KRB. The student representatives of **Prakruti**, The

Environment Club of BASEU coordinated and organized the event.

The Student Coordinator of **Prakruti** delivered the welcome address followed by the inaugural address of **Dr. N.R. Bhanumurthy**. He provided a comprehensive overview of the University, highlighting its history, academic programmes, faculty, internships and placements. Further, he emphasized on the importance of preserving the environment and the role played by citizens and the government.

Mr. R. Gokul, IFS began the lecture by providing the definition of environment as mentioned in the Environment Protection Act, 1986. He underscored the staggering economic impact of heat loss, equating it to India's GDP growth. Highlighting the tremendous impact of climate change on our daily lives, he delineated the various laws enacted by the Government of India to mitigate climate change and protect the environment. He also mentioned the various government bodies in India responsible for preserving the environment.

Mr. Gokul elaborated on the various **challenges in the effective implementation of environmental policies including population growth, lifestyle changes, rapid urbanization**

and industrialization. He emphasized the casualness among citizens, the lack of education and awareness as significant hurdles and the necessity for research and development in managing household solid and liquid waste. Furthermore, he attributed the water crisis in Bengaluru to rapid urbanization and the neglect of preserving lakes and trees. To combat environmental pollution, he advocated for initiatives such as waste-to-wealth conversion, shift from consumption culture to conservation culture and widespread adoption of solar energy and rainwater harvesting practices. He also showcased a few sustainable products such as items manufactured from plastic waste, and organic manure produced from wet waste. He concluded the lecture by emphasizing the shared responsibility of the government and each and every citizen in environment preservation. The lecture was followed by an engaging Q&A session, involving students and faculty.

Mr. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar delivered the **Presidential Address** where he notably shared his insights on a question raised by a student to Mr. Gokul, regarding the role of incentives and disincentives in environment preservation.

Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar, Secretary, IIPA-KRB proposed a vote of thanks.



EC Members Writings in the Popular Media



Gurucharan Gollerkeri

How We, the Citizens, must see this Election

Deccan Herald dt. 23 March 2024

In discussions about democracy—whether our democratic practice is merely representative and not participatory—or whether our democracy has a sedentary bias towards authoritarianism, particularly when the ruling party holds a dominant majority in Parliament, India remains an enigma. What has defied political commentators and the theoretical perspectives on the working of India's democracy is simply that it is really a democracy—it has shown resilience and longevity—and is a *sui generis*, a case of Indian *jugaad*, if you will, that raises more questions than it provides answers.

Read more at: <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/how-we-the-citizens-must-see-this-election-2949221>

Revisiting the Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy

Empire of the Mind

Deccan Herald dt. 31 March 2024

Fifty-eight years after its first publication, Barrington Moore Jr's classic work on the sociology of politics, ***Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*** (henceforth, ***Social Origins***) remains a touchstone in the comparative study of democracies. Read ***Social Origins***. It tell us why, as citizens individually and society collectively, we must inculcate a scientific and secular outlook, and confront theories and conjectures with empirical evidence. That is the only least-cost path to our collective future as a modern society. After all, as responsible citizens we must grapple, as best we can, with the ethical issues of consequence in our own times.

Read more at: <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/revisiting-the-social-origins-of-dictatorship-and-democracy-2958923>

Yet another Challenging Assignment for Mr. V. Balasubramanian, IAS (Retd.)



The Hon'ble Supreme Court passed orders in 2022 in a public interest petition by the Samaja Parivarthana Samudaya, Dharwad, creating an **Oversight Authority** to supervise the work of the Special Purpose Vehicle - the **Karnataka Mining Environment Corporation** (KMERC), which was established on its orders, to restore the unprecedented environmental damage caused by illegal mining in mainly Bellary district and also in parts of Chitradurga and Tumkur districts from 2002 to 2011 by many mine lease-holders with the connivance of public servants including elected representatives, as revealed in the reports of the then Lok Ayukata, Justice Santosh Hegde.

In April 2022, the Supreme Court appointed the retired Supreme Court Judge, Justice Sudershan Reddy as the Oversight Authority to ensure the proper implementation of environment restoration work by KMERC with the large fund of Rs.25,000 crores at its disposal, collected through the 10% levy on the sale of iron ore in Karnataka.

To assist the Oversight Authority, the OA has recently appointed **Shri V. Balasubramanian, IAS (Retired)**, as **Adviser to the Oversight Authority**. Shri V. Balasubramanian had retired as Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Karnataka and was then appointed as Adviser to the Joint Legislature Committee to identify and recommend measures to recover public lands encroached upon in Bangalore District and later was the Chairman of the Task Force to identify and recover public lands encroached by land sharks in all the districts of Karnataka.

Shri V. Balasubramanian has joined duty as Adviser to the Oversight Authority in March 2024. Citizens having interest in restoration of environment in the affected areas in the districts of Bellary, Vijayanagar, Chitradurga and Tumkur, may kindly contact him on phone 98459 70092 or on email vbalu41@gmail.com or write to him at KMERC, II Floor, Southern Wing, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru 560 001.



Miscellany

28 candidates from Karnataka clear civil services exams of 2023

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As many as 28 candidates from Karnataka managed to clear Civil Services (Mains) Examination-2023 and Soubhagya S. Beelagimath has emerged the State topper with 101 All India Rank (AIR). The Union Public Service Commission announced the 2023 results on Tuesday. A total of 1,016 candidates have been recommended for appointment by the UPSC.

An agriculture science graduate, Ms. Soubhagya from Davangere studied at Agriculture University, Dharwad. She cleared CSE in her second attempt without going to coaching classes. Her father runs a plants nursery in Davangere, while her mother is a homemaker. "In the first attempt, I was not able to pass the preliminary exam. However, with more effort in the second attempt, I managed to get this rank. For this rank, I may get an



Soubhagya S. Beelagimath has emerged as the State topper.

IPS posting. But my dream is to become an IAS officer. At the same time, I have cleared the Indian Forest Service mains. I plan to take CSE again to improve my ranking," she said.

Nagendra Babu Kumar has got AIR 160. Senior IAS officer from the State's cadre Rakesh Singh's daughter Sanskriti Singh has secured an AIR of 366. Yashwini R., daughter of Pramila who is a section officer of Rural Development Department, has secured an AIR of 379. Visually challenged K.T. Meghna, already working as an Indian Information Service officer, has secured AIR of 721.

Police sub-inspector clears UPSC exam in Kannada

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Shantappa Kurubara, a police sub-inspector (PSI) of Srirampura police station in the city, wrote the Civil Service (Mains) Examination-2023 in Kannada, and got an All India Rank of 644 in the CSE -2023. From failing II PU twice, Mr. Shantappa has come this far to achieve this feat.

A B.Sc graduate, Mr. Shantappa has achieved this rank in his eighth attempt. However, unsatisfied with this rank, he has decided to take the civil service exam next year as well. "I have succeeded in clearing the CSE exam in the eighth attempt. I am not satisfied with this rank. I will take the exam again next year. My dream is to become an IAS officer," he said.

Hailing from Ballari district, Mr. Shantappa lost his father early. "My uncle was working in Bengaluru as a migrant daily wage labourer and I joined him



Shantappa Kurubara, PSI, Srirampura police station, in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

during school holidays. I went back to Ballari and completed school. I failed II PU twice but later completed my graduation and became a sub-inspector," he said, attributing his success to the insults he faced when he failed PU.

While serving as a sub-inspector, Mr. Shantappa engaged in various social service activities. While posted at Annapoorneshwari Nagar police station, he taught children at a slum in the area and helped families with groceries during the pandemic. He also launched a social media campaign and installed a mobile toilet at Goraguntepalya junction.



Quotable Quotes of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



- *“Life should be great rather than long.”*
- *“Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence.”*
- *“If you believe in living a respectable life, you believe in self-help which is the best help.”*
- *“A great man is different from an eminent one in that he is ready to be the servant of the society.”*
- *“Men are mortal. So are ideas. An idea needs propagation as much as a plant needs watering. Otherwise, both will wither and die.”*
- *“Indifferentism is the worst kind of disease that can affect people.”*
- *“Freedom of mind is the real freedom. A person whose mind is not free though he may not be in chains, is a slave, not a free man. One whose mind is not free, though he may not be in prison, is a prisoner and not a free man. One whose mind is not free though alive, is no better than dead. Freedom of mind is the proof of one's existence.”*
- *“Slavery does not merely mean a legalised form of subjection. It means a state of society in which some men are forced to accept from others the purposes which control their conduct.”*
- *“They cannot make history who forget history”.*
- *“I like the religion that teaches liberty, equality and fraternity”*
- *“I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.”*
- *“Every man who repeats the dogma of Mill that one country is not fit to rule another country must admit that one class is not fit to rule another class.”*
- *“Political tyranny is nothing compared to social tyranny and a reformer who defies society is a more courageous man than a politician who defies government.”*
- *“Law and order are the medicine of the body politic and when the body politic gets sick, medicine must be administered.”*



IIPA-KRB Virtual Newsletter

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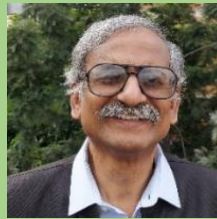
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