India Reforms

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Abstract

Our country gained independence in 1947 and since then only our constitution was revised however, the laws, bills, acts, rules, regulations were retained as earlier and only amendments were made on as required basis. The only area where some liberalization happened was in economic reforms and other areas continue to suffer since changing these documents is not easy and requires institutional support. The holistic approach is required to establish true Indian governance in the country and today the same can be achieved through public participation in policy making and governance using the powerful medium of internet and associated technologies.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Country, CSR, Future, Governance, Government, Holistic approach, Ideas, India, Initiative, Institution, Internet, Policy, Reforms, Technology, World

1. Introduction (Why we need India Reforms?)

Economic Reforms started 44 years after independence in 1991. It is 23 years already and the reforms are not complete. Then what about reforms in other sectors such as education, healthcare, administration, police, infrastructure and so on. How many centuries would be required before we can complete these reforms?

We have over 2 million Non Government Organisations (NGOs), who are fighting everyday and a lot of money from India and abroad is being spent on fighting for the cause, but have our past efforts made any difference to the way we live. Despite their countable victories we continue to live the same way.

What about interdependence between various policies, say how economic reforms affect education, healthcare, infrastructure, politics, governance and so on? Is anyone looking at that? So we have a whole lot of confusion around us and someone is required to look at the whole holistic picture, correct all policies and define their interdependence once and for all.

2. What is the basic problem?

The basic problem according to me is that when we obtained independence in 1947, we took over the entire system from British without really customizing it to our needs. That time our predecessors believed that the British system actually united India, and feared that if we tinkered with it, it might lead to breaking of the country, or lead to a civil war. So we had peaceful transition at the cost of our happy future.

Probably it was true in those days, but the times have changed now. Today most Indians are connected through Internet, mobile and telephone. We should now dispel with any unfounded fears and pave way for a modern India.

When I was studying at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, I came across Sir Mark Tully, erstwhile British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) correspondent. I asked him a question that had always bothered me. I asked him that he has seen government in Britain, he has seen government in India and he has also seen India pre-independence, so was the system in Britain different from the system set up by them in India? To which he answered that it was indeed different, since the system in Britain was set up to govern Britain while the system in India was set up to colonise India. This answered a lot of my doubts.

At this point I would like to quote a **printed clip of Lord Maculay's** address to the British Parliament on 2nd Feb 1835, which reads "I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage and therefore,

I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation".

Today instead of a British, now an Indian is sitting in the same chair, who is following the same policies/regulations set up by them years ago. Indian government servant in his individual capacity neither has the knowledge nor institutional support to re-write or modify the policies and he is too apprehensive to touch it. That is to say, '**why trouble trouble until trouble troubles you**'.

Policies are made on as required basis by initiative taken by government at the highest level. Passing the hierarchy itself takes huge time and effort on any change. So few things of imminent priority do change like economic policy or industry policy but other things like administration, police, defence, healthcare etc continue to suffer. Hence in reality nothing changes, and we continue to live the way we do.

We have accepted stress as a normal way of life, we have accepted that some people have to be poor, because we need labors, we have accepted that sickness is due to one's karma and not due to adulteration in food, which we have come to consider as normal. We teach our children to learn to struggle because that is the only way to live, that we know.

3. What is the solution?

I think that the piecemeal solution to problems has not worked for us in last 67 years and a reformed India would only be a dream until we change everything in one go. We need to change the entire national framework and define it, and customize it, to our specific needs of contemporary India.

There are conventional ways of doing this, like have civil war, or go to street and fight for the causes, or give a dharna.

Take 'Janlokpal' for example. I really doubt if the people who were fighting for it also knew what was written in it. How many people would have thought over what could be Janlokpal, may be few and if parliament passed the bill, it would become law.

Do what the masses believe to be right, who use their right of voting, and give up their right of thinking and deliberation. So result is an adhoc democratic decision, which is to be accepted and thrust upon all, since those who raised their hands for 'ayes' were more than 'nays'.

Then again the cycle of protest, demonstration and fight for the cause starts because it was not holistic and did not address certain critical aspects. So we are all trapped in a catch 22 situation.

Therefore, any solution has to be holistic, which would reform, define and look at the entire framework all inclusive.

So, my solution is to use the power of internet and redefine or indigenize all policies and also define their interdependence.

4. Let's take education policy for example and understand how this would work

We will open it up for discussion on the internet where large number of users would come (or be invited). The 'case study method' would be digitized to make the online discussions more meaningful for drafting the new policy.

So the users will have to identify themselves, take positions as initiator, challenger, builder, integrator or summarizer prior to commenting on the policy or a part of it.

Then we will conclude the discussion, make a draft document and give it to a selected eminent professional/or an institute to carry out an independent research, to re-draft/correct/modify/add etc and then make a final document. The final document would then be given to the government for final acceptance.

Then, either the government may accept and implement the policy without any changes, or it may make some changes as per their requirements prior to implementing, or they may just reject it, or they may sit over it. But in any case since this is a document created by public and carries the voice of the masses, so inaction will be difficult for the government. Then whatever action is taken from their end, they will be bound to provide a suitable reasoning.

Also, for revising the policy in future no-one will have to go to streets for fighting or staging a dharna, because revision of policy can be initiated well in advance just like a new version of Microsoft windows is released every few years.

5. Generating funds for sustenance and growth of this objective

Presently corporates try to influence politicians and government unethically to seek favorable changes in policies. However, I propose to make the process transparent and ethically acceptable. Corporates/Industry associations could be invited for online bidding (may be through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives) for the changes that they seek in the policies of their interest, which will remain in open domain for anyone to see and comment.

Bidding for the changes they seek, would ensure that their requirement is deliberated upon by the eminent professional while drafting the policy. A part of these funds would be used to fund the eminent professional to carry out his research etc,

and a part of funds would be given to the institute, which would provide resources for such activity in its premises.

Funds could also be generated through holding workshops on policies across country and also selling merchandise for promoting policies.

6. Conclusion

Revising all old documents of governance of the country is an imminent need that requires holistic approach for achieving true Indian governance in the country. Due to available powerful medium of internet and available technologies, now country-wide debates can be initiated and concluded intelligently to write the most modern documents of governance for India that will carve way not only for the future India but also be a leading light to the future world.

8. References

1. Sir Macauly's address in British Parliament on 02 Feb 1835.
2. Pre-independence acts, rules and regulations that are still in force and not changed.
3. Interaction with Sir Mark Tully, an erstwhile British correspondent.