PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNANCE :
(A Study on Governance Reform at Grassroots)

R. Thandavan

The present paper discusses the relationship between public policy and governance with a veiw to understand the effects of globalization on the process of decentralization at grassroof level.

INTERROGATING 'END OF HISTORY' THEORY :
Liberal Democracy in the Contemporary World

V. Bijukumar

The euphoria created by the West over the 'unabashed victory' of liberalism is fastily vanishing. Liberal democracy failed to meet the material needs of the people all over the world. The new avatars of economic liberalism – Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation – in fact, generated discontent among the people and pushing the world into the direction of anarchy. Recently, Political Islam emerged as a potent political ideology to challenge liberal democracy elsewhere. Following a short period of setback, communist and socialist forces are regrouping in the world, especially in the Latin America. While the ruling classes of Europe is haunted once again by the 'Spectre of Communism'. Communism, on its part, re-emerged as the ideology of human emancipation.

E-GOVERNANCE- A WAY TO GOOD GOVERNANCE

Preeti Garg

E-governance is a way to good governance. Some of the basic elements of good governance are rule of law, accountability, transparency, participation and people's control. By harnessing ICT for internal as well as external operations, by better managing its resources and developing an appropriate organizational culture the objectives of good governance can be attained much more effectively. Through a case study of 'Bhoomi'- an e-governance initiative of Department of Revenue, State of Karnataka, the paper highlights how this is possible.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD-
The Indian Experiences

V. N. Viswanathan

There is close link between issues of human rights and economic globalization both negative and positive. The challenges to State sovereignty mainly come from non-state actors like multi-national corporations and through trans-national business development. Recent events in India such creation of Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Government gestures for red carpet welcome of Foreign Direct Investment and World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policy directions and guidelines really put human rights protections to wind. Several international human rights instruments were created in order to face such challenges posed by non-state actors. Institutional arrangement such as National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is becoming mere ornamental in protecting the interests of the most vulnerable section of the society. The recent establishment of Human Rights Council has cautioned that there is growing marginalization of the vulnerable population in the enjoying the economic benefits of globalization and their right to protest against such lopsided economic development is met with state violence. The shift in sovereignty accompanying globalization has meant that non-state actors are more involved than ever in issues relating to human rights. This development poses challenges to

international human rights law, because for the most part that law has been designed to restrain abuses by powerful states and state agents. While globalization has enhanced the ability of civil society to function across borders and promote human rights, other actors have gained the power to violate human rights in unforeseen ways. This paper looks at the legal frameworks for globalization and for human rights, then asks to what extent globalization is good for human rights and to what extent human rights are good for globalization. It then considers several legal responses to globalization as they relate to the promotion and protection of human rights. This paper concludes that responses to globalization are significantly changing international law and institutions in order to protect persons from violations of human rights committed by non-state actors. The paper concludes by the following observation : 1. Accountability for human rights violations and prevention of future ones must today and in the future take into account these non-state actors: the media, corporations, and international organizations such as the WTO and the World Bank 2. International agencies are evolving appropriate legal instruments to protect human rights violations perpetuated mainly by non-state actors.

THE EMERGENCE OF COMPETITIVE MULTI PARTY COALITIONS

Pratap Chandra Swain

The nature and dynamics of the party system in India are unique. Indian politics represents the spectacle of a multiparty system on the surface; but for long periods of modern India's electoral history, it has been characterized by " one dominant party system" with congress occupying the center stage. Since 1970s Indian party system has become highly competitive both at the center as well as in the states. This competitiveness has significantly made the political parties to move from the stage of " fluidity" during the early years to that of a structural consolidation. The bewildering pluralities of political formations and interests have been developed into full-fledged political parties, with unique models of social engineering. A notable feature of the electoral outcomes since 1989 has been the fractured mandate leading to the emergence of hung parliament as well as multi-party coalitions. After analysing the changing profile of the Indian party system, this article makes a prognosis reflecting the end of the era of single party governments in the wake of the formation of multi-party coalitions at the national level and also in several states.

GOVERNANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL:
THE CASE OF PANCHAYATS IN WEST BENGAL

Dilip K. Ghosh

Governance at local level becomes a critical issue with increasing process of decentralisation at different tiers. With the passage of the Constitution (Seventh third Amendment) Act, 1992, the panchayats in rural areas are conceived as institutions for local governance. Twenty nine subjects listed under the Eleventh Schedule are earmarked by the Constitution for their activities. The present study considers some of them. The experiences in West Bengal in this respect are mixed. Though many subjects are thrusted upon the panchayats, commensurate devolution of functionaries and funds are not made by the State Government. As a consequence, adequate services cannot be extended to the common people by the panchayats at different levels. This is a governance crisis. Coupled with this, the State Government is constituting several committees at the district, block and gram panchayat level for delivery of services like primary education, public health etc. This step is in contravention to the statutory powers and responsibilities given to the panchayats. In fact, existence of many actors erodes the accountability of them to the people. Again, people's participation in the affairs of the panchayats is also very low in West Bengal. It is just the bare minimum fixed as quorum by law. The panchayats have been given the responsibility to implement various rural development programmes. The utilisation of fund and generation of employment for the poor is not up to the very high level (case of EAS and SGRY cited in the article). Thus governance needs to be revamped at local level through the panchayats by means of building their capacities, both in terms of financial resources and human resources.

AUTONOMY VIS-À-VIS ACCOUNTABILITY:
'Are the Scales of Justice really balanced?'

Sumantra Sinha

The paper discusses various aspects of judicial administrative in the perspective of accountability and autonomy.

RELIGIOUS BANDITRY

Jai Narain Sharma

The paper discusses various aspects of the problem of converstion in India with an emphasis on Gandhian perspective.

JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

M. M. Semwal

Sunil Khosla

Judges must be sometimes cautious and sometimes bold. Judges must respect both the traditions of the past and the convenience of the present. Judges must reconcile liberty and authority; the whole and its parts. Impartial, independent and positive justice is the foundation of the efficiency of the government. Governance is the prerogative of the legislature being a popularly elected body of the people. The executive is responsible for the proper enforcement of the laws made by the legislature. But when the legislature does not bother about the rights and liberties of the individuals and the executive becomes apathetic in the matters of implementation of the laws, the judiciary is the only way out to act as the engine of social welfare to secure justice for every citizen in the various spheres of life whether it is child labour or environment or human rights. Judicial activism is nothing but an expanded role of the judiciary as it encompasses an area of the legislative vacuum. It is an effort to revitalize the system through the provision of simplest, fastest and inexpensive access to individual. This paper attempts to deal with questions such as what is judicial activism? How does Indian Constitution provide judicial activism? How does the concept of judicial activism come into existence in the Indian polity? To what extent the judicial activism has improved the quality of governance in India?

THE GANDHIAN METHOD OF CONFRONTATION

A. N. Panda

Mahatma Gandhi played a very crucial role in the freedom movement of India. He guided the nation in its hour of crisis and led the country towards its independence. But at the same time he also evolved a new method to confront an adversary. He believed that a violence means never brought a good end. His methods of Non-cooperation and Satyagraha were the answers to deal peacefully with a powerful opponent. His means of Satyagraha is a substitute for war and the concept of Non-co-operation is an alternative method to resolve a conflict. He showed a way in which people can live peacefully and work together on the basis of co-operation and harmony.

GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Ashutosh Pandey

This article gives an insight about Gandhian views on Rural Development. Gandhi holds the view of the maximization of social welfare and for this he gives prime importance to the welfare of the individuals by reducing inequalities in income and wealth. According to Gandhi every person should be provided with bare minimum necessaries i.e. food, shelter, and clothing. Concentration of wealth to a few groups of people certainly will shatter the dream of a society which will be socialist in nature. Gandhi is in favor of the self-sufficient village economy where the villages will be the independent economic units. In this paper an attempt has been made to analysis the Gandhian perspective of Rural Development in this age of globalization.

GOVERNMENTAL THREATS FOR MEDIA FREEDOM :
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ASIAN COUNTRIES

Naveen K. Mishra

In Asian Countries media freedom is a controversial issue, on one side right to information and freedom of expression is provided on other side media regulations and Press laws are ready to curb the media freedom. In China the party and government are attempting to act as a media watch dog in fast changing world of open communication. Advertisements of India Shining, spiritualistic image making of political leaders are very common practice over Indian media. Pakistani military government uses a range of legal and constitutional powers to curb press freedom. The protesters urged the government to remove what they said was a curb on media freedom. "BBc News Show the condition of press in Nepal where after royal highjack. Media structure of Malaysia was changed since independence in 1957, official control over the media has gradually tightened through ownership of media by political parties and connected business individuals. The military also banned all electronic media in Indonesia from broadcasting the rallies. The media and the public managed to get news from international radio broadcast gathering at the Indonesia Democratic Party (PDI) at Jakarta. The majority of Cambodian media are not completely independent relying on source of funding from powerful people, including political parties politicians and rich. In Cambodia the term media is as widely used and understood as the term "press" there is press law in Cambodia but no media law.

SELF HELP GROUPS IN TAMIL NADU :
AN IDENTITY FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

M. Deivam

Women Empowerment is a comprehensive and much debated issue, and it is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process, which intends to enable women to realize their all powers and potential in all spheres of life. All over the world there is a realization that the best way to tackle poverty and enable the community to improve its quality of life is through social mobilization of poor, especially women into self help groups. Ever since independence a number of innovative schemes have been launched for the upliftment of women in our country. Indian government has taken lot of initiatives to strengthen the institutional rural credit system and development programmes. The Indian government adopted the approach of Self Help Groups (SHGs) to uplift the rural poor women. The empowerment of women through Self Help Groups (SHGs) would lead to benefits not only to the individual woman and women groups but also the families and community as a whole through collective action for development. The present article tries to analyse the efforts of Tamilnadu in making the Self Help Groups as an identity of women empowerment.

FRONTIER LEGACY OF AMERICA

Jyotirmaya Tripathy

The idea of the frontier is the most pervasive metaphor of Americanism, nation building and identity formation. The present paper argues for an idea of the frontier as a process of linear expansion rather than an event in history. Using the term as a trope that universalizes expansion and conquest as an absolute, the paper traces the evolution of the frontier myth from early seventeenth century till Iraq invasion. While assuming that the frontier is a hyper sensitive line of control that divides us from them or pits one against the other, the paper tries to locate recent international political developments in the frontier framework.

ARE THE GOVERNORS AGENT OF THE CENTRE?

Rajbans Gill

On Critical analysis of the role of the Governor one finds that the Governors are acting on the directions of the political party in power at the centre. Does Indian politics has to stoop so low to meet their vested interests? Although they are the constitutional heads of the state, but their behaviour depends upon the loyalty of the state government towards the federal

government. This paper analyses the role of the state head in the similar political situations and how they by pass the accepted constitutional norms but also developed the even new-fangled norms of political behaviour.

MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE INDIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM

T.M. Joseph

The present paper looks into the unrepresentative character of the existing 'first-past-the-post' (FPTP) system in India and suggests an alternative model so that our democracy can be made more representative and meaningful. The FPTP system of election results in the victory of a candidate with a minority (less than 50% of votes polled) of votes which enables the candidate who gets the most votes (need not be a majority of total votes polled) to win an election in a multi-cornered contest. This implies that only a minority of voters who have voted for the victorious candidate get any representation at all. The voters (often a majority) who voted for the defeated candidates go unrepresented. It means that they have wasted their votes. At the national level, this phenomenon leads to a disproportionality between the percentage of votes polled by political parties and the number of seats won by parties. In order to correct this drawback in the present Indian system, the Mixed Member Proportional system is suggested in the paper.

PUBLIC POLICY MAKING IN INDIA AND THE SCHEDULED CASTES

Manas Chakrabarty

Aleya Mousami Sultana

Public policy decision is one of the most important functions of the government. For a proper administration in the society, a perfect public policy is absolutely essential. If the track of public policy is wrong, it leaves a far reaching consequence on the society at large. Hence, there is no denying the fact that public policy is of utmost importance. For a developing country like India, public policy has its own importance. It is more so because the Scheduled castes comprise a large chunk in the society. It is known that the Scheduled castes are backward in all respects. If they are to be brought in the mainstream of the society, a proper development is sine qua non and naturally, public policy has its own importance. If there is a good public policy, the development of the society will no doubt be better and impressive which should be the motto the government.

NEHRU AS A PROPHET OF WORLD PEACE

Dr. Navtej Kaur

Jawahar Lal Nehru represented the best traits of an Indian which were tolerance, sagacity and love for peace. Nehru was an internationalist in his outlook. He developed his international outlook by keeping himself interested in the international problems. In his ideas he always cherished to have a world free of wars and nuclear threats, a world of oneness, of growth and development to better the lot of masses or humanity. The views of Nehru regarding world peace are important to the contemporary world because no country can be said to be really independent today. If there is any disaster in one country it may affect other countries in one way or the other. Similarly, the desire for peace is not confined to any one particular country; it is an aspiration of the entire world. The paper presents some of the views of Nehru in detail.