

GROOTS

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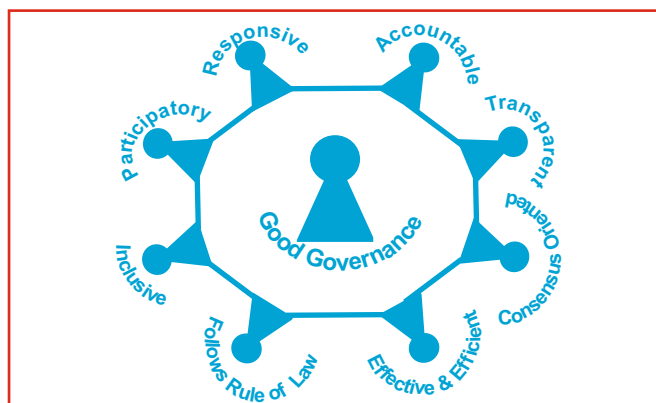
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Editorial

Inclusive Growth Vs Governance

A country's progress, be it economic, social, cultural, always depend on its government and governance. A government elected by its people in a country is expected to deliver administrative and other connected benefits to the electorate of the country. There can't be a more disastrous situation for its nation and citizens, than, when the elected representatives fail to govern. The angry populace demonstrates their anger once again through the ballot demonstrating their non-confidence. When non-functionalism, corruption and failure to deliver benefits to people, becomes the order of the day, it's a shameful defeat for the government. Currently some of our governments' too are facing a disastrous situation and the following incidents of reflections show how it has failed.

The Indian Parliament has enacted the Food Security Bill: The initiators of Food Security Bill have not revealed how this Bill will reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty. In some of the northern parts of India, particularly in the tribal areas, this is reflected in many going to bed in hunger and children suffering in malnutrition. The initiators of this bill have also failed to visualize that the mundane schemes provided through this bill are already provided at the very door steps of the poor i.e., from food surplus to entrepreneurial loan in some of the southern states of India. Therefore it's a waste of the Parliament's time to sit for hours, days and weeks to pass this Bill.



The National Credit Fund for Women (Rastriya Mahila Khosh): Established way back in 1995 as national machinery to facilitate credit assistance for women. This was an innovative initiative, when large scale credit programs were still in the nascent stages. In case the institution failed to evolve with time, instead of revamping its functioning to extend credit for poor where is the need to start a new venture such as 'Women's Bank' as initiated in the current budget? This can't be the solution. Such repetitive ventures will not only be a waste of resources but will only add to the non-performing assets of the nationalized banks. When the banks are already burdened with willful defaulters who are mostly business tycoons, is it necessary to issue licenses to many groups of business tycoons to start new private banks? This will only encourage the private bankers to lend multiple loans particularly to the poor and the needy that will end up in another Micro Finance crisis such as that of Andhra Pradesh in 2009-10. These businessmen would lend at exorbitant rates of interest to the poor borrowers who will ultimately become poorer while the rich will become richer in this venture.

The National Commission for Women: Established after the fourth UN Women's Conference at Beijing, China, has been a special national machinery to deal with gender issues. Unfortunately this institution has not only failed to act, but has become a status symbol



for selective women representatives that are politically connected to consider the position of chair of the commission as a prestigious status symbol. The commission expected to be effective on gender issues, keeps away from such grave issues and sometimes fails to act. If this institution has acted as a commission for women rights, can the ghastly incident such as Nirbaya rape case ever have happened? Can the criminals connected to this incident have escaped so easily without punishment? Even now a year after the brutal incident of Nirbaya rape case and even after massive protest by the civil societies, rallies, nothing has changed in the country in terms of women's safety and freedom. The sex related crimes and harassment in public and private places continues unabatedly. Has the Ministry of Women and Child Development planned anything concrete to fight such sexual harassment nuisance at workplace or in public areas? Instead, is it necessary to create 'token' such as 'Nirbaya Fund' in the name of the victim of the barbaric rape in December 2012? Therefore what purpose will it serve to waste tax payer's money to establish such institutional bodies that don't mean business? Would it not be more relevant instead to pass Women's Reservation Bill that is pending in the Parliament for years? This would certainly empower, enable/facilitate women to assert themselves to stand up for their own rights in any eventuality. What is the reason behind the delay to pass this bill alone while many other bills have been passed overlooking objectives?

The Indian Railways: The largest among the worlds' railway system. The selection procedures are elaborate even for recruiting junior level personnel. This is controlled under one management which is the main reason that they have no time to supervise/inspect and ensure public safety. The poor maintenance of train services are yet another cause for accidents like fire, derailment, lack of security, etc., causing great concern. The victims' families wait for unending days after the death of loved ones, to receive compensation. Why not use the resources for maintenance and supervision (that are almost non-existent) for the safety of the passengers? Yet another government's failure, demonstrated in its malfunction to take care of vital functions.

The Healthcare: Health care, now available for the poor is non-affordable. In case of middle class

families, it results in indebtedness for the rest of their lives. Besides, Govt. hospitals not only lack cleanliness and have now become a breeding place for serious diseases. Shortage of nurses and doctors add to the woes. Sometimes in the rural areas there are no medicines and same medicines are given for various diseases. This is not the fault of the doctors and it's inhuman to find fault with them for everything, as they are overloaded due to shortage of staff. Isn't this a reflection of bad governance?

Constitutional Procedures: India has the largest written constitutional procedures and is considered as one of the most progressive legal system in the world. One always talks of political and economic reforms but where is the time to follow rule of law? If rule of the law and good governance go hand-in-hand, everything will be in place. This will facilitate the government to control inflation, curb corruption, and provide security for women.

The electorate of any country will judge the government by the way of its day-to-day performance such as functioning of municipal corporation, water supply, electric supply, public transport, sewage system, educational institutions, hospitals, etc. Therefore in order to gain the confidence of the masses, the only way is accepting the failures and going forward to speak to the people directly on the failures and promises to place everything in order in future.

An **inclusive growth is** where the government and governance mean business. This would ensure conditions for **permanent employment guarantee, the growth of rural economy and industrial progress that** address the needs of the people creating self-confidence in them rather than throwing freebies at large.