



RESTORING VALUES

NEWSLETTER OF THE
FOUNDATION FOR RESTORATION OF NATIONAL VALUES

“Do not blame the Government at all. The people alone constitute the Government. Government’s lapses are our own insufficiencies. Parliament is elected by us. Its failure is our failure itself...”

Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha



Elections to the Lok Sabha are scheduled to take place in April-May 2014. In whichever way we view it, this is going to be a crucial election. The country has been ravaged by charges of corruption of those in power, and the alleged complicity of business houses and bureaucrats, leading to disillusionment of the voter public of the efficacy of democracy. This does not augur well for the nation.

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(Source: *Towards the De-Criminalization of Politics*, by Sri Trilochan Sastry)

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Pictures Source: Google Images

My Vote: From Right to Responsibility

Political Parties have been openly offering freebies to woo voters though such acts are prohibited under the Representation of Peoples Act. Each and every incident has been politicized. Reservations to various communities/groups have been decided upon just before the Code of Conduct kicks into place. The political parties have been guilty of improper language. Huge advertisements are appearing in newspapers and other electronic media, obviously with the intention of improving the prospects of particular political parties. Many such advertisements are being borne by governments, whether at the Centre or the States, and this, therefore, means that the hard earned money of people are being squandered.

Politics is driven by two things – POWER & MONEY

Politics is driven by two things – **power and money**. Money wins elections, and the winners enjoy power. Power in turn needs to make money to ensure the next victory in an increasingly high stakes, high risk, competitive political environment.

1. In this era of coalition politics, the **role of money will become even more important to retain a hold on power**. In today's environment, major deals, real estate, infrastructure, PPP projects and natural resources are opportunities for creating wealth. All of them have links with elections and politics today.
2. There was a time when ideologies played a role and influenced people to join politics. Today there seems to be a digression and politics often merely uses the camouflage of ideology to garner votes and come to power. **The difference between adhering to an ideology and using it for other purposes has become clear.**
3. The major impact of all this is on the **quality of governance**. Any candidate who spends lavishly in elections will focus on recouping his investment or returning favours to those who funded him after winning.
4. The same is true of political parties and of ruling coalitions. Given that the next election may be more expensive, the tendency is to make money once in power. **When making money becomes an imperative, corruption will go up, public services degenerate, and the quality of governance is bound to suffer.**
5. A **clean election process is important to ensure good governance**, even if it has no impact on the final outcome.
6. The problem of misuse of funds in elections in many ways goes to the heart of the matter. A former Chief Minister of a major state told one of our election watch partners **that to fight corruption, the problem of money in elections needs to be tackled.**
7. Since we are discussing **de-criminalization of politics**, we need to note that the nature of crime has been shifting from violent ones to white collar ones involving financial dealings.
8. The Election Process and the lack of transparency in Political Parties is an obvious manifestation of the increasing corruption. While it will be simplistic to say that cleaner Elections can help fight all ills of corruption, it will be fair to

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say that electing a representative backed by knowledge not hyperbole will go a long way towards the cleanse that India requires.

9. There is a lack of will from Political Parties to bring about reforms that will make their functioning more transparent and open. The only pressure that works on Political Parties is the fear of losing votes. Perhaps a small yet meaningful example of this was seen in the Delhi elections where AAP's clean image forced other Political Parties to put up 'cleaner' candidates.

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10. If the political parties are dragging their feet on change or paying lip service to it, as voters the onus is on us to force the change.
11. But when it gets quiet we should ask ourselves – how much do we really know about the Right we have been given for no good reason – the Right to Vote? What have we done to deserve this? Or are we meant to do something? This year ask yourself what you need to give back to this Right that you are an unwilling heir to?
12. Let us consider this scenario, if we were hiring for an organization – you would expect the following – transparent credentials and valid experience. You would hire only when you are sure that the individual will carry out the work with the highest level of commitment and responsibility. He/she will be expected to present themselves in a dignified and honest manner while at work and anything that goes against the laws of the company will put their position in jeopardy. Then is it too much for us to expect the same from our Representatives.
13. Why shouldn't selecting a Representative follow the rules of any other selection process that we have experienced? We must consider the credentials of each of the candidate and pick the one who is suited for the job.
14. The right to vote is not a right; truly it is a responsibility that has been given to us by the founding fathers of our nation. They believed that we are mature enough to handle it and make the right decision for our Nation and ourselves.
15. The time has come to own this Right, make it our mission to make a considered choice and in the off chance that we find no one who is fit for the job, we must force the Parties to present better candidates through NOTA.
16. Ask yourself, is the Election Day just a holiday or the day when you can change your destiny, engineer your future? Think about the value you place in knowledge and knowing? Are you sure that the person who you choose will be beyond the greed of money and headiness of power? Introspect on who you are and what your choice reflects on your children, your family? When you walk out of the booth and fail to feel a surge of patriotic pride then be sure you have wasted your vote.
17. It is time that as responsible voters we let our politicians know that we can see through the false promises and chest thumping. It is time that we prevent the noise of politics from drowning out the voice of our conscience. We have been given a responsibility to vote for not only what is best for us but also best for our country. It is time we changed it from 'Right to Vote' to 'Responsibility to Vote'. Let us not sell ourselves short by getting carried away by tall claims or cynicism, because it is the easy way out. Neither should we as responsible citizens be influenced by freebies and other inducements on offer.
18. The time has come for every citizen to not only register himself as a voter, if he has not already done so, and go and cast his vote on the polling day. Every vote is crucial to the future of this country
19. Vote because you see yourself responsible for your future, because you have to give back to your Country what you expect from it.

Source: Towards the De-Criminalization of Politics, by Sri Trilochan Sastry

NATIONAL VALUES – EXPLAINED

Interested keenly in the welfare of all others:

Sarvabhoota-hite rataah

This is another acclaimed value dictum. This is enjoined even on ascetics and renunciates. In the name of ascetic life given solely to spiritual enlightenment and dispassion, one is not allowed to be indifferent to the welfare of those living around him. The society needs multiple contributions from a variety of sources. Every one should earnestly strive to fulfil one or more of these.

Food, shelter and clothing are but physical needs, of the body and senses. But the human personality is far deeper, hosting the mind, intelligence and ego. Each of these has its own needs, relevant to its content and structure. Like physical needs, the needs of mind, heart and intelligence, should also receive due attention.

Be a channel to fulfil any or some of these. **The principle also takes us to think of the integral character of our earth. We should not impair the earth in anyway; instead preserve its greenery and contents, so that it will be left as the same benevolent planet, as it is before us. Only then the planet will remain a veritable treasure for countless generations.**

This means that we have to be very rational, scientific and far-sighted about employing, utilizing and harnessing Natural Resources. Let us not do anything to deplete the earth indiscreetly on any front. We should not lack sensibility on this grave front.

None has a right to be driven by selfish possessiveness, so as to adversely affect others' needs and welfare. Criminal law forbids one from raising his hand, if that will hit another. Value enunciation also sternly disallows any selfish move, which interferes with the other's needs and welfare.

If those lending themselves to corruption and misconduct, will think every time about the evil consequences of what they propose to do, their conscience would be aroused and the whole picture is bound to change.

Can an individual's selfish gain, which robs others of their due benefit, be permissible to any one's conscience? Our planet hosts many alike, and none can breed a motivation, which results in an affront to another like him. No individual can live alone. **Collectivity is at the back of any one's life. No one should ignore the obligations this brings.**

Such value thoughts and responses cannot but bring a greater, loftier dimension to the heart.

All cultural National Values aim at such an expansion and benevolence.

Source: www.valuefoundation.in

Mother and Motherland are greater than even heaven.

Jananee janmabhoomischa sargaadapi gareeyasee

So do not entertain or allow any thought, word, or deed harmful to the Nation.

This is a paramount value, which places Nationalism and patriotism in a pedestal, that excels even the best religious rewards. Let religious thoughts remain where they are.

In loving the Motherland, and striving to make any adjustments, self-denials and sacrifices, no Indian should lag behind and plead guilty.

Every one has to be in the forefront. Motherland and the other Nationals are the first to count. Do not court dilution or disregard in this simple, but great value.

Source: www.valuefoundation.in

Shocker: Corruption endemic in Indian govt, judiciary, says US report unveiled by John Kerry

There is widespread corruption in India in all levels of the government including judiciary, said a US Congress-mandated report. "Corruption was widespread," said the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013 released yesterday by US Secretary of State John Kerry.

According to the report, though the law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, **the Indian government did not implement the law effectively, and officials frequently engaged in corrupt practices with impunity.** "Corruption was present at all levels of government. The CBI registered 583 cases of corruption between the months of January and November.

"The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) received 7,224 cases in 2012. Of those, 5,528 were received in 2012 and an additional 1,696 remained from 2011. The commission recommended action on 5,720 cases," the report said.

"The CVC operated a toll-free hotline to lodge complaints and a web portal to share information. NGOs noted that bribes typically were paid to expedite **services, such as police protection, school admission, water supply, or government assistance,**" it said.

The State Department said the law provides for an independent judiciary, and the government generally respected judicial independence, although "judicial corruption" was widespread.

"The judicial system remained seriously overburdened and lacked modern case management systems, often delaying or denying justice. (for details log on to <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/corruption-present-at-all-levels-of-govt-judiciary-us-report/1230062/0>) (Source: [financialexpress.com](http://www.financialexpress.com))

OTHER NEWS



Election dates Announced

Elections for the 16th Lok Sabha will be held from April 7 to May 12 spread over nine days in the highest number of polling days so far involving an electorate of 81.4 crore, the Election Commission announced on Wednesday.

Counting of votes in all the 543 Lok Sabha constituencies will be held on a single day on May 16

Friends of FRNV and Membership Drive

Commitment. Participation. Action.

FRNV is grateful to all of you - our Members, our Friends and our Supporters - for having continually extended your whole-hearted encouragement and guidance to this society over its formative years.

We have collectively made a commitment to create a Value-based and Ethical society, because we know that this alone assures that all can live together with dignity, even as we enjoy prosperity, fulfillment and happiness.

The time is ripe to involve yourself in FRNV further - as a citizen with a heightened consciousness - thereby participating in the process of beneficial transformation at the individual, institutional and the national levels.

New comers could start by registering themselves as a Member/Friend of FRNV. Send an email to frnv@outlook.com with a short message indicating why you would like to join FRNV. We will then send you some formats for you to complete, with FAQs, so that you too become a co-creator in the Foundation's mission towards a New Society.

If you are already a Member or a Friend of FRNV, you'll hear from us shortly on additional ways to get involved. You are, of course, free to write to the above email address giving us your views on what you might wish to do in the cities/localities you live in, and continue to make a positive impact.

EVENTS AND PROCEEDINGS

1. **National Value Based Education System (NVBES)** was presented to 25 teachers from Primary and Middle school from across the country at a workshop organized by All India Primary Teachers Federation (AITPF) in Feb 2014. The spirited interaction and exchange of ideas with the teachers was encouraging, all present renewed their resolve to help inculcate a value based living. FRNV NVBES will be establishing a long-term association with AITPF to help to create a Value based society and continue work with educators
2. **Administrative Reforms:** The Supreme Court's directives on assured minimum tenure for Civil Servants and refrain from acting on verbal orders given by politicians will serve public interest by improving governance and bringing greater accountability in the system.
3. The review application by FRNV for **PIL on Wasteful Expenditure by Govt.** that was dismissed by the Supreme Court earlier has been accepted. The open court will hear the application shortly.
4. **FRNV Website:** www.valuefoundation.in has been a repository of knowledge since 2008, in light of new developments in the web world and the increasing role of social media, we are in the process of revamping our website. The re-launch will be announced soon.