

GOOD GOVERNANCE

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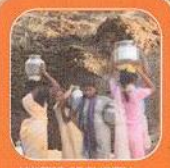


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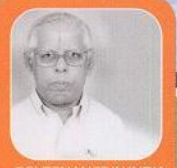
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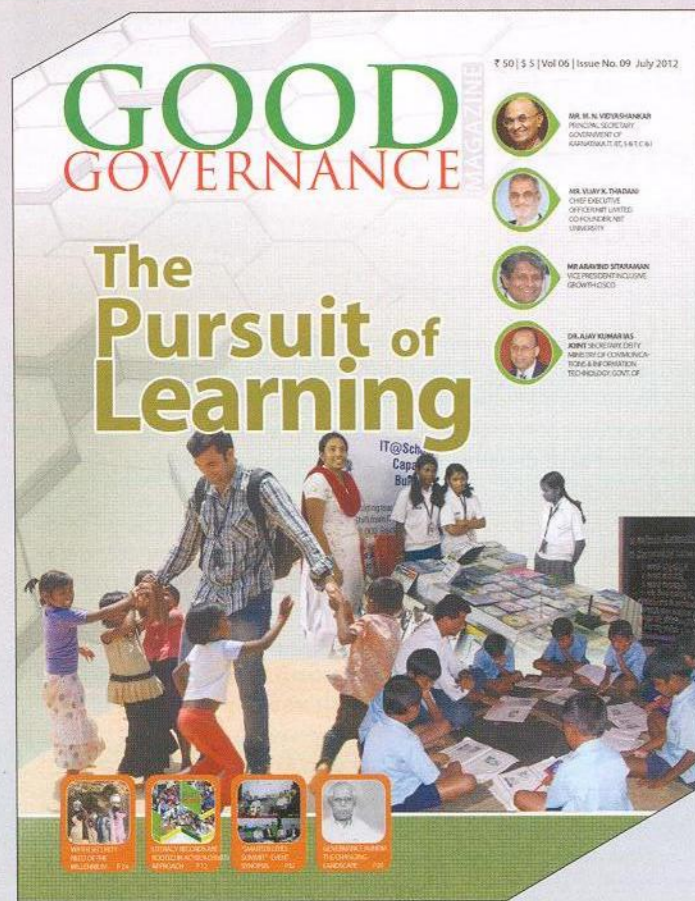
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COVER STORY | Anand Sudarshan

Good governance in higher education institutions OXYMORON or opportunity | 6

We are a nation with Limitless potential and daunting challenges.....befits a nation that celebrates diversity,the answer is in letting a thousand flowers bloom; we should do so with each institution – private or public – fully recognising and submitting entirely to its responsibility for good governance, says Mr. Anand Sudarshan with deep interest in advocacy on education.



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Government is almost always seen as some large monolith with the result that when one sees poor or ineffective governance, one blames the system and expects that cleansing and improvement will somehow happen with some sweeps of a magic broom.

Literacy records are rooted in a cyber-driven approach to school education | 12

Though Kerala's high 'literacy' level is a story quoted often internationally, its venture in using technology to popularize school education is a new dimension.

TECHNOLOGY

Plugging the skills gap – needs innovation at every level | 16

Most of us are familiar with the paradoxes in employability skill gaps. While one side India is producing one of the largest talent pools in under graduate engineers year on year, most industry members keep sharing challenges in getting the right talent.



Mobile e-classrooms for Digital Literacy | 17

Promoting digital literacy is one of the priorities in Nagaland, one of the farthest states of India tucked in North East.

M-GOVERNANCE

India can set an example in M-Governance | 30

Mobility has emerged as an effective tool to connect the world at large. Having stepped away from traditional roles in terms of communication, new age mobility has brought in the capabilities that empower and enable enterprises and organizations to dispense, utilize and process information on the go

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Mr. Srinivasan says that Significant improvements in governance brought out by technologies, e-governance and various citizen-centric measures, political landscape has been marked by not so welcome changed affecting quality of governance and delivery benefits to public. Mr.Srinivasan presently the Vice Chairman of the Indian Institute of Economics, Hyderabad.

Water Security need of the millennium | 28

Water is appropriately described as our lifeline. And yet, that very means is under stress today. Not because of the immediate concerns regarding its availability, but the manner in which it is being managed.

e-GOVERNANCE



e-Government Infrastructure.....we are at an Inflection Point | 31

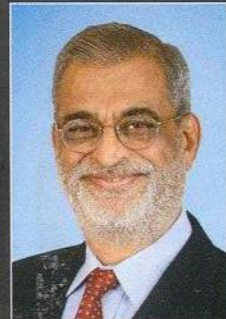
Mr. . Ashis Sanyal says the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), being implemented by the Government of India since 2006, has 31 Mission Mode Projects and 8 Core Components. The core components are those elements in the NeGP which are required, by and large, by each and every MMP. Mr. Ashis Sanyal is the Consulting Editor and Formerly Senior Director, DeitY, Gol

INTERVIEWS



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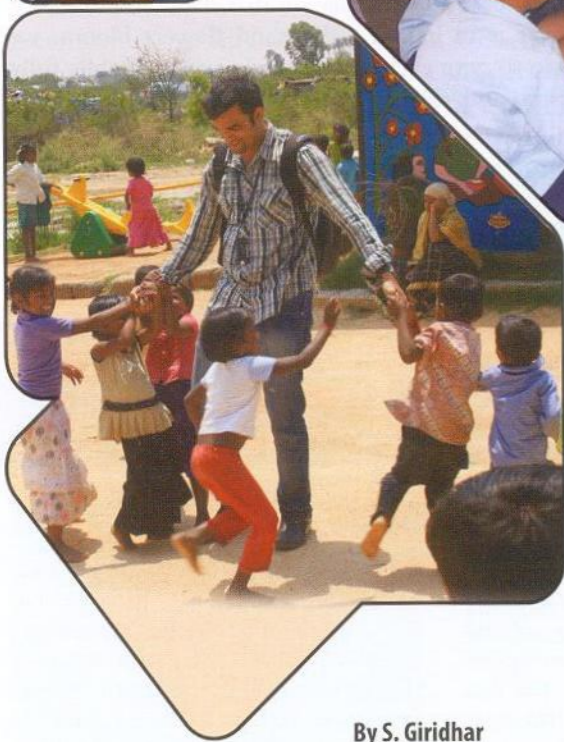
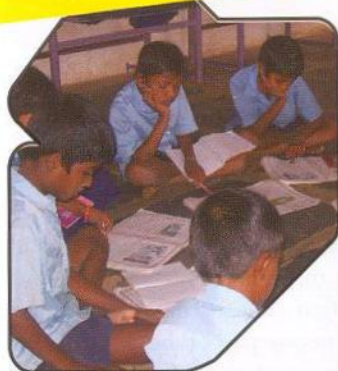
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Mr Aravind Sitaraman Vice President Inclusive Growth CISCO

Governance in education: View from the Ground



By S. Giridhar

Government is almost always seen as some large monolith with the result that when one sees poor or ineffective governance, one blames the system and expects that cleansing and improvement will somehow happen with some sweeps of a magic broom. However the truth is that the government like all organizations, is made up of people, some terrific and some terrible, each linked in such complicated structures that we only see one composite indistinct ogre. If we accept this, it enables us to appreciate that opportunities exist at multiple levels of the

system for sustainable institutional change and improved governance. I will attempt to explain this from our experiences with India's education system.

India's education system definitely needs path breaking shift in policy – and these can be in areas of performance management or examinations or teacher education and so on. At the same time, there is enormous potential for a number of smaller steps at varying levels of the system. Why are these smaller steps important? Simply because, even as we advocate and create pressure for the major changes required for good governance, critical and effective steps can simultaneously move the needle forward. Here are some illustrations from our work with government education system in various states.

➤ At the State level:

In the Indian education system, the district education officer's post is the one coveted by functionaries. An equivalent position in terms of seniority and rank is that of the Principal of the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). The DIET is responsible for the pre and in service education and training of teachers. Everyone agrees that the quality of pre- service and in – service teacher education is critical to the quality of education our children receive in schools.

And yet nobody seems keen to be the Principal of the DIET as this role is not treated with the same seriousness as the administrative head. Two years ago, when the Principal Secretary, School Education in a North Indian state requested us to work with them to revamp and establish the primacy of the DIETs in her state, we asked her one question: "Do you personally interview and ratify the appointment of the DIET Principal?" The answer was 'No'. So we suggested that if DIETs are so crucial, then the Principal Secretary must participate in the selection of the DIET Principal. This is a signal that the state means business and that only the best can become the head of

DIET. There will be greater chances that only competent candidates will be put forward, nipping nepotism and favouritism. And the odds will be brighter for a more effective DIET. Already at Ministry of Human Resource Development MHRD(MHRD), work has begun apace to seriously revamp teacher education (both pre and in-service). That kind of macro level systemic change may take a few years, but a Principal Secretary of a state can right away introduce a process whereby, the Principal Secretary will personally participate in the final interview for selection of DIET principals.

➤ At the Block level:

Debate on good governance often comes to a grinding halt with the argument that functionaries in the education system operate in very constricting "circle of control" and "circle of influence" and therefore can only execute instructions handed down from the top. But we have seen this argument blown to bits and here are examples, from Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. When we introduced in a limited manner, the concept of competency based tests to replace rote based tests – both as classroom process and as the usual exams, the Block Education officers of more than a few blocks, took the initiative to spread this among all schools. They invested personal time and energy but also got their system machinery to pull its weight behind this initiative. These officers defined their circle of control and influence differently. That's why they were able to introduce into the system, what they believed was a new good practice.

➤ At the Head Teacher level:

Something that often finds its way to newspapers is that schools have not received their text books and free uniforms for children in time for the beginning of the new academic year. Immediately one conjures up inefficiency and poor governance. We ran a program some years ago where we were able to identify outstanding government schools. Admittedly they were a small minority while the others in their region were either ordinary or downright bad. We did a research into factors that differentiate these outstanding schools. One of the very interesting nuggets, our study threw up was the fact that 100 percent of outstanding schools 'reported' that they got their books and uniforms in time while more than 70% of the other schools 'complained' that they had not received these in time. It required little probing to understand that the head teachers of 'outstanding schools' had ensured that their representative went well in time to the Block headquarters to pick up their quota while the others waited for the block education office to arrange its dispatch to their schools.

➤ Motivation, clarity and governance

There is a connection between high motivation, a clear line of sight to outcomes and good governance. In

Uttarakhand, where we work closely with the district education department in two districts, an initiative called "School Progress Plan" took root because the district administrators and the academic functionaries were able to come together and train and motivate schools to track their own progress against certain goals. Unlike the usual 'top down' policy this was through painstaking workshops with teachers and head teachers to share with them the rationale and the benefit of such an initiative. I have written about this in more detail elsewhere, but I mention it here because this is an example of a good practice being institutionalized at a district without any need for sweeping policy. Parents, children and community at large – they know when something good is happening; they know when the teachers are putting in their best. They develop respect and affection for their school and set in motion a virtuous process.

➤ The power of praise:

Even within the limitations of the current system (read governance) it is possible to institute a fair and visible reward and recognition system. In our work on the ground so far, we have been able to identify numerous head teachers, teachers and education functionaries doing outstanding work. They have been recognized and feted by their government but it stops at that. Therefore an outstanding math teacher never becomes a resource person for her district or even her block but continues teaching in her school. The loss is not hers but that of the state. If reward and recognition systems can also become a source for identifying the best people for greater roles and responsibilities, one would have another lever for good governance.

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