



## **PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND MORAL ETHICS: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Indian polity over the last decade have taken a paradigm shift in the context of various issues related to governance. The concept of good governance has its roots in ancient India. It was since then the maxim of social welfare was conceptualized. People centric governance and utmost welfare of the last man in the queue through equitable distribution of nation's wealth came to the fore during an era of Kautilya who was an ancient economist and an adviser to the King Ashoka. As we transcended an ancient era, plethora of issues are coming to the surface and renewed demand is cropping up from all the sections of the society regarding bringing back the lost glory of good governance. This paper succinctly elucidates some of the cornerstones of good governance so as to create a justified world order.*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

On the threshold of 21<sup>st</sup> century the information gap is diminishing and the degree of awareness and expectations of citizens for good governance is rising. The word good is emanated from the word god. The philosophy of good governance revolves around “be good and do good”. As democracy became the most common and popular currency for ruling the state naturally with the passage of time ethics in governance and moral values in governance have come to the fore.

The cardinal maxim which is the principles of general code of conduct applies equally to the personal and professional life. The incidences of moral decadence which took place in the last decade have fluttered the dovescotes. Now the citizens are vociferously asking for good governance in every realm of governance. Naturally the onus is on the politicians and bureaucrats to amend the ways and to cling once and for all to the cardinal maxim of good governance.

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Kautilya in his Magnus opus Arthashastra exhorted the rulers to be compassionate to their subjects. Plato expected from the statesman to be the men of wisdom and empathy. Good governance has multifaceted connotations. The most important is the credibility, credentials and integrity which must be tested true against all odds and temptations. The indomitable faith in the spirit of justice and service is waning fast from public life. Nepotism, favoritism and quid pro quo have very unfortunately become established norms in the recent times which are marring the productivity of the nation.

Ethics have three dominant sources of germination. The first is parental culture and values which are imbibed, teachers' role in grooming the young generation and religion which teaches us indispensable role of ethics in our life. The second source is the value system of the society. This is an important many a times we heard the common expressions that the people are not corrupt but they are the victims of societal values and trend.

The governance is about how the institutions and organizations structured themselves to service the pious interest of the people without sacrificing the ethical and moral connotations. Autonomy and an arm's length distance from the ruling party are essential for institutions to be transparent and impartial in their overall functioning. Unfortunately we have seen how the institutions become puppets in the hands of ruling government.

Regardless of all the perceptible affluence, wealth, assets and seeming prosperity in India, one cannot overrule colossal problems of the poor living in abject poverty. The governing political bodies that come and go seem to have one major agenda in their placards; the poor. Decades later their condition has deteriorated more ameliorated less. The ostentatious display of ethical practices of the government has to be seen to be believed.

Although India has been under the scanner for the numerous and humongous corruption, law and regulation violations, and criminal issues, there have been many examples where a single person or organization, or a government official have brought about positive winds of change. This question aims to compile those positive models so that they can act as both base and catalysts for future change.

The present government is following its 'less government, more governance' mantra. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a web portal titled MyGov where citizens can post their suggestions to the government. The initiative is a step ahead to digitize the government.

At the launch of the web portal the Prime Minister said "technology is key to development. I am hopeful people will welcome government's step and associate themselves with this platform. I am open to suggestions on this platform." The prime motive of the government is to pursue the citizens to contribute towards nation-building and devote their time and energy towards this new idea of e-governance. The Prime Minister is hopeful that a technology-

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driven medium will provide citizens an opportunity to contribute towards good governance. "The platform would bridge gap gulf between people and government. Democracy cannot succeed without people's participation in government and this participation should not be limited only during elections," the Prime Minister said.

Only time will tell if the country's ethical issues will be tidied up in involving peoples participation in the governance of the nation. A technology-driven medium that will surely provide citizens an opportunity to contribute towards good governance but what stays to be seen is whether the good governors will govern the country transparently and ethically. Because ethical behaviour emanates from a pure and kind heart, and therefore, those who are in the business of serving people should train their heart to be sensitive and compassionate.

The issue of governance and Ethics encompass major realms of administration. Various maxims, rules and regularities govern the integrity of the administrative system. The maxim of Legality and Rationality is one such aspect that needs contemplation. According to **Max Weber** "Rational-legal authority is a form of leadership in which the authority of an organization or a ruling regime is largely tied to legal rationality, legal legitimacy, and bureaucracy". It is the second of **Max Weber's** tripartite classification of authority.

A logical and systematic approach to leadership and all fair practices while executing the well designed plans can partially remove the errors of professional and moral ethical values. Law makers must ensure its feasibility in execution.

Another major Issue in governance may be Policy Paralysis and Effectiveness: Our institutions generally suffer from indecisive leaders whose attitude is cleverly replete with chicanery practices. Because of such indifferent and abrasive attitude Policies are either not formed or if formed are not implemented properly. Unethical Bureaucratic issues signify yet another type of misgovernance. Though they are very general in appearance these issues act like white ants for a governing body. The bridge between bureaucrats and the common masses need to be carefully built with unbreakable material of ethics. High-quality Governance is the most important Solution to every problem that the Country is facing. Govt. by all means should try to work on the issues and think of solutions to address these in order to achieve Goodness of Both nation and its citizens. Issue of irresponsibility and unaccountability has been the core problem area with politicians who feather their nests as soon as they are elevated to power. Work commitment stays put in their cards as they shift priorities too often and intermingle in wanton controversies. Unethical practices in the lower levels of management can be attributed to the resilient attitude of the top level managers of an administration. Therefore the weightiness given to transparency and Integrity in the execution of duties should come under scanner on a regular basis.

Corporate and business houses are the engines of economic growth. In recent times we have observed growing tendency on the part of corporate houses to make a desperate attempt to establish crony capital relationship with the ruling government. The issue of electoral funding and the role of corporate houses is conspicuously suspicious in the minds of the people of India. The role of Controller and Auditor of India is of utmost importance in bringing about financial discipline and transparency in public account.

The issue of corporate governance and corporate social responsibility is of paramount importance in setting up the standard of ethical and professional value in public life. In recent times big business houses have willfully defaulted their financial obligations to the banks and fled the country in a clandestine manner which is not only tragic but a prominent examples of speedy decadence in moral and ethical values in various realms of human life.

*First, we believe that “Leadership is Key”*

*A second broad principle is to “Anticipate Change and Stay Relevant”.*

*The third principle is “Reward for Work, and Work for Reward”.*

*Our fourth principle is to create “A Stake for Everyone, and Opportunities for All”.*

#### **Suggestions for good governance.**

1. Scrupulous adherence to the maims of Ethics.
2. Stringent enactment and implementation of rules and regulations.
3. Autonomy to Judiciary and Law enforcement agencies.
4. 360 degree frontal attack on corrupt practices.
5. Electoral reforms
6. Reform in public representation act
7. Culture of performance and accountability in governance.
8. Ensuring absence of crony capitalism.
9. Break down of parallel economy.
10. Social reengineering.
11. Education reengineering.
12. Stopping the practice of personality glorification.
13. Autonomy to Media with strict code of conduct.
14. Balanced growth.
15. Mitigating rural – Urban divide.
16. Eliminating the gap between haves and haves not.
17. Balance score card.
18. Corporate governance.
19. Social economic and political reforms
20. Change Management.



### **Conclusion.**

Principles are also not panacea for issues of governance. You have principles but you still need to analyse problems, understand them and figure out in each case, what is the right thing to do. Our principles reflect Singapore's unique history and circumstances. They have served us well but we also have had our share of mistakes and misses. We have to continue to seek answers to difficult issues, like all other countries. But these principles have helped by creating a common basis from which we can tackle and solve the many complex problems which arise in governing a country.

Good governance is a complex issue and long drawn exercise which undertakes each and every aspect of human life. Yet there are some countries which are having high Human Index Value have demonstrated to the world the actual working of good governance on a perpetual basis. There are lot many takeaways such nations offer for others to emulate. In this regard step by step beginning is a welcome move which has potential to herald a golden era of good governance which will create justified human world order.

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