

CORRUPTION IN INDIA
OR
THE CHALLENGE OF CORRUPTION IN THE COUNTRY
TODAY
OR
ARE ALL POLITICIANS CORRUPT?

Essay No. 01

“Corruption is a tree; whose branches are of an immeasurable length; they spread everywhere.”

–Beaumont and Fletcher

Corruption, in one form or another, is a worldwide phenomenon. But everyone admits that corruption is something ugly, immoral and detestable. Unfortunately, in our country, corruption has become a part of life. It has entered the very roots of the Indian society. Corruption, nepotism and dishonesty have tarnished every fabric of our social life. Our ministers are corrupt; our officers are corrupt; our people are corrupt. Every politician, without exception, is corrupt. Even our anti-corruption departments fall an easy prey to the viles of the corrupt persons and they let them go scot free after minor punishment. The law of a land is too weak to deal with the corrupt elements with an iron hand. The vested interests rule the roost. Everybody feels helpless in such a state of affairs. Some people have even started talking of the nationalization of corruption in the country. They argue that we should frankly admit that we are a corrupt nation and that we cannot do without it. It is a matter of shame and regret for all thee who care to hear the call of their conscience. One feels like crying out with Shakespeare.

“O that estate degrees and offices were not derived corruptly.

And that clear honour were purchased by the merit of the wearer!”

Corruption is prevailing at all levels – economic, social, administrative, moral and spiritual. During the past few years, the images of the country has been defaced

beyond redemption. A large number of scams, involving top politicians, administrators and VVIPs have come to light. These scams, most of them unearthed by the Central Bureau of Investigation, involve huge sums running into thousands of crores. They have shaken the entire conscience of the country to the bones. The law enforcing agencies are seeking the help of the judicial process to bring the culprits to book. The judicial system however, is full of flaws and the culprits do not find it very difficult to cleverly escape the legal net. The skeletons in a large number of cup-boards are however, coming out and many nightly ministers, politicians and bureaucrats are being exposed. Law might take decades to assert but it has been fully established that we are a nation full of corrupt elements.

Strongholds of corruption are the departments like the P.W.D., Railways, Tele-communication, Banks, department dealing with exports and imports, taxes, quota-permits and licences. Documents and office files do not move unless we grease the palm of the concerned officials. One cannot get the official copy of court judgement from the copying agency in a court unless one pays a fat sum to the agency typist in addition to the official court fee. One can get one's seat in a train booked easily if one is prepared to pay an extra tip to the booking clerk. An honest man's application is subjected to delay by red-tapism. Corruption in administrative offices has reached the saturation point. Banks, too, are not free from corruption. People are beginning to take corruption for granted. The root cause of corruption is red tape or delay. Persons found guilty should be punished severely. Exemplary punishments should be given to corrupt officials, national character should be improved. Smugglers, black marketeers and hoarders should be severely dealt with.

Social and spiritual organizations can give a good healthy education to the public. Strong boards like the U.P.S.C. should be organized to deal with anti-social elements. Persons of strong character should be employed. The Government employees must be told to withstand any temptation while discharging their duties. Such officials as lay down noble standards of honesty and efficiency, should be encouraged and honoured at public functions. Dishonest public servants should not only be dismissed, but should also be publicly flogged and put behind the bars. The education system of the country should be re-oriented to inculcate a spirit of honesty amongst the people.

All ministers and public servants should be made to declare their assets. The vigilance department should keep a constant eye on the corrupt officers and other public servants. Ministers and senior officials must set noble examples of an honest living free from corruption, bribery, nepotism and immorality. The law of the land should be provided with more teeth to deal with the corrupt elements. Corruption, at any level, is bad. The Government should

launch a vigorous campaign against this social evil. Charity, however, must begin at home.

Evils, it is said, percolate in any society from the top. The topmost people in the country must present model examples of conduct and behavior. They should be completely above board in their dealings and should be honest to a fault. One must not only be honest but one must also be above doubt. Once we are able to curb. Corruption nepotism and bribery in high places, we shall be soon able to root out the evil of corruption from the entire society. May God help us in our object!

Essay No. 02

Corruption

To day at least for India corruption is the password, an oft-heard subject of discussions and conversations on all kinds of forums and platforms. The simple layman's definition of corruption is to get a job done in a wrong and unethical way.

The first thing that we should analyse is that why do we do any work in a wrong way? The answer to this is quite simple and obvious. We do a job in a wrong way because firstly the right way to do it is very cumbersome, elaborate and time consuming, and even then, the chance is that the job may still not be done. Besides getting it done in the right way is not possible as, people are so used to wrong doing that, the person trying out the way to do it correctly will appear foolish. Moreover, doing a task in the right way has no advantages attached to it. For these simple reasons, the right and honest method of doing work is long forgotten and corrupt practices have become the way of life. When this is the simple reason for us to do wrong, why should anyone even try to do anything in the right way? When we work honestly, the result is that, either the work is not done or it gets delayed. Besides there is no bonus or incentive for the honest. This, is why, when we study right versus wrong the latter always prevails, then why not all do the wrong and reap a harvest? This is exactly what has happened in India.

It is not that, there is no corruption elsewhere in the world, this is a worldwide phenomenon and even to some extent human, but in India it flourishes more than anywhere else. This is because since the wrong doers and corrupt people are never punished, they never seen to suffer, they are encouraged all the more to be more and more corrupt. Seeing them enjoying the fruits of corrupt practices, the others honest or not so corrupt are also encouraged to take the path of success corruption. In this way even the one-time honest people join the bandwagon of the corrupt because they find greener pastures on the corrupt side

of the fence. In this way the process of corruption continues to flourish and increase, with more and more people joining the joy ride. With this process continuing for decades, today, the ratio between the corrupt and honest keeps varying in large proportions the sight of honest being minimal and the graph of the corrupt continuously on the rise. The result of this simple process working through the last few decades, the result is what we see to-day, that, it is almost impossible to find or locate an honest man, an honest organization as, we are all involved in different proportions, contributing to the trend.

A simple solution to this magnum problem as I see it is, giving stringent punishment to the wrong doers and equally important is to reward lavishly the good and the honest if of course any such individual is found.

If the honest are rewarded, I am sure that more people would like to remain honest, and if the corrupt are punished severely it is certain the number of corrupt would be on the wane. This simple solution I suggest because even to-day, when we stand on the thresh-old of seemingly total corruption, I feel that human beings are still basically good, and no one would like to be bad or corrupt. We are, most of us tend to do the wrong because either it pays dividends or, because we just can't help it. If work and working system becomes more efficient why will anyone like to pay even a paisa to get work done? It is when work just cannot be done in the correct procedure that most people tend to become corrupt just to get their work done, together with the reward and punishment system the working system should be made more efficient then, I presume there will be less and even negligible corruption.

Thus, as we all know corruption is rampant everywhere, and, unless we deal with it with an iron hand here can be very little or no headway in improving the crumbling situation.

Essay No. 03

Corruption

Even though corruption is considered a major ill of modern society, it is not something that has taken shape in recent times. Corruption in one form or another has been a part of human interaction since maybe, the beginning of civilization. In fact, it has its origins in a basic feature of human nature: the desire to favour others and in turn to be favoured by others. Corruption is also related to such aspects of human nature as greed, laziness, selfishness and jealousy, and its elimination depends on the extent to which these characteristics can be controlled. But, since self-control cannot be exercised by everyone at all times, eliminating corruption entirely is practically impossible.

Nevertheless, owing to its numerous drawbacks it has to be kept at least in check. Corruption nowadays is more worrisome because of its volume and prevalence in almost all aspects of human activity; and what makes it dangerous, is its tendency to unjustly favour some at the expense of others. The unfair advantage that, those who adopt corrupt practices enjoy, creates all-round bitterness and hatred in the society.

Based on the belief that checking or minimizing corruption is more practicable than eliminating it altogether, it is being effectively contained with the help of certain methods. By adopting an arrangement of 'checks and balances', many modern democratic societies have reduced the volumes of corruption in them, and brought a sense of order in their governance. In such an arrangement, power is so well-distributed within their governments, that no individual or group is able to decide and influence policy, without the knowledge and approval of the others. Corruptor unfair practices rarely succeed in such cases because the openness of the system ensures that nothing can be effectively hidden for long. However, such an approach will show result only in a system in which the forces against corruption are strong enough to detect and subdue it. The approach is unlikely to succeed in India, where corruption is strong and widespread, and the forces against it almost non-existent.

In India, the main reason for the failure in controlling corruption is that the ruling class, consisting of politicians and bureaucrats, irrespective of party affiliations and social backgrounds, is generally corrupt. Those that are not are so few in number that their strength cannot win the fight against corruption. In such cases, therefore, the concept of 'checks and balances' will not play any useful role because, those responsible in ensuring the 'checks and balances' may themselves be corrupt. In order to be effective, the fight against corruption, instead of being individual and isolated crusades by sincere and responsible citizens, should be a united effort, with the cooperation of a majority of the people, if not all of them.

But even with the cooperation of the people, it may not be easy to move ahead against the issue of corruption because the people themselves, owing to the fraudulent system in which they live, may be knowingly or unknowingly adopting corrupt practices. Though none might individually be corrupt or none might support corruption, yet there would be a feeling of helplessness towards corruption because of its inevitability in getting things done. In such cases, corruption may even achieve the respectability of a necessary instrument for survival. Thus, we realise that even a people's movement against corruption has the risk of failure.

The best basis for the fight against corruption is the premise that no one is born corrupt, and that it is the situation that one finds oneself in, which makes one corrupt. It follows from this premise that corruption can be reduced if the situation

or system is altered. Since the top levels of the leadership are empowered to control the system, it is there that the fight against corruption should start. The leadership, by being free of corruption, can set an example for the people to follow. Corruption will start losing ground the moment the scales are tipped against it.

India's freedom struggle is a case in point. The absence of any serious instances of corruption, in a mass movement that involved almost the entire native population of the country, was due to the sincerity and morality of the top leadership. The relatively corruption-free activities of the time were not the result of the people's virtue. They were so because the people's vices were kept in check by the influence of the leaders. The vices, as are evident now, raised their heads when the leadership's influence over the people started diminishing; just as darkness follows the setting sun.

The present fight against corruption should also follow a similar path. In India, with its widespread poverty and backwardness, corruption can scarcely be tolerated. Unlike in Japan, Korea or the U.S., where enough may be stolen without affecting the welfare of the society, there is not enough wealth in India for society to tolerate the luxury of pilferage.