

PR SENSE

Communicate the communication

India's First Corporate ezine

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Theme of this Issue
UnSung Heroes

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PR-e-FACE: From the desk of Editor-in-Chief Saluting the UnSung Heroes



'It looks as though, our ezine was started just recently. Time has flown fast. Now we are touching the Golden Jubilee Edition of our ezine. In spite of many challenges, we were able to produce and release all the 50 ezines on time every month, covering one unique theme that could help communication and corporate professionals. We have also carried the views of experts on every theme. We are also bringing out a CD containing all the past issues and some of the important podcasts. This CD will be the combination of both ebook and audio book.

In this edition, we are featuring three National pride organisations and a few UnSung Heroes, including two Parliamentarians, who have shown top performance in Lok Sabha through participation.

On this happy occasion of releasing this 50th Edition, we thank all our readers and sponsors for their continued patronage and encouragement and assure our continued quality of contents.

K. Srinivasan

All the past ezines and podcasts released in CD

Prime Point Foundation has published a CD for the benefit of Communication and Corporate students, professionals and researchers. This CD contains the following:

- ü All the past 50 issues of ezine PR-e-Sense on different themes;
- ü Important podcasts published under the name PodUniversal and integrated with this ezine;
- ü All the PRince cartoons published in the ezine up to April 2010.



For more information on this CD, please write to
editor@corpezine.com

Exclusive interview with Dr A P J Abdul Kalam (Former President of India)



In an exclusive interview with K. Srinivasan, Editor-in-Chief, Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, former President of India speaks on the various contemporary issues faced by the youngsters. Excerpts:

Q: In this technology-driven global village, everything is looked at from RoI (return on investment) angle. Packaging is the name of the game. We see the consistent degeneration in value system. The present education system produces only graduates and not human beings. What, according to you, should be done to bring the values back and live for pride?

A: Parents and teachers have to set an example of value system. The schools can conduct moral science classes atleast once in a week to talk about great personalities who have demonstrated value system to the society. The school curriculum should include selfless societal work such as teaching the needy, planting trees, caring for the old, orphans and differently abled. These actions will promote values in the minds of the young.

Q: Talking on unsung heroes - the media - across the canvass - has become a product. Ipso facto, the thrust is on selling only. This being the case, the `unsung heroes' will for ever be confined to oblivion. How do we remedy the situation?

A: Organisations like yours should initiate action to remedy this situation.

Interview with Dr Abdul Kalam – continued

Q: We do not have the type of political leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Rajaji, Nehru, Kamaraj and Sardar Patel. Youngsters get easily frustrated with the political system and many do not even participate in the election process. What do you think should be done to make the youngsters participate in the political process and to bring about a transformation in the current situation?

A: The major parties should recruit educated youth with passion for societal work in the party structure. These members must be put through special training on developing unity of minds and development politics. They will be leaders who will make India a land of prosperity with value system.

Q: After graduation, many want to go to jobs. They are more driven by the immediate money and charm provided by companies. They do not want to become entrepreneurs. How can they be inspired to become 'employment generators' rather than just be 'employment seekers'?

A: It is not true. While I addressed the participants of Confluence seminar at IIM Ahmedabad, I asked the question, "how many of you would like to become an entrepreneur?". Almost 75% of the audience responded in a loud affirmative. The trend is changing. We have to make system and procedures simple and user friendly for an entrepreneur to flourish.

Q: A personal question. Politics and bureaucracy are generally perceived as the most corrupt fields in our country. You were working in this system very closely for many decades. In spite of your proximity to the system, you have remained 'above board' and many youngsters consider you as a 'role model' . What makes people like you - straight forward and honest ones at that - survive and come out unscathed?

A: Maintained the principle "work with integrity and succeed with integrity". Do not be worried about others. You follow, what your conscience says.

PRince

BY - TRIAMBAK SHARMA

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Triambak

Mr Hansraj Gangaram Ahir tops in the first year of 15th Lok Sabha – ‘Favourite MP’ of Speaker of 14th Lok Sabha



Mr Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, a BJP Member of Parliament has topped in the 15th Lok Sabha for raising questions and in participation of debates, etc. (up to 31st March 2010). He has raised 255 Questions; introduced 9 private member bills; and participated 31 times in the debates. He has also made 3 special mentions.

He has been elected from Chandrapur (Maharashtra) constituency and he has served 11th and 14th Lok Sabha earlier.

He participated in the 14th Lok Sabha also significantly by raising 927 questions. Further he has participated 137 times in debates; made 54 special mentions and introduced 21 private bills. Mr Somanath Chatterjee, then Speaker of Lok Sabha praised him several times for his exemplary behaviour and participation in the proceedings. He has even mentioned him as his ‘favourite MP’ in the House.

Earlier, he has served Maharashtra Assembly as a Member. PR-e-Sense congratulates him for his effective participation and wishes him to maintain the lead position.

Mr Ramasubbu is another top performer in the first year of 15th Lok Sabha

Mr S S Ramasubbu, Congress Member of Parliament has raised 224 Questions and participated in 20 debates in the 15th Lok Sabha. (up to 31st March 2010).



He has been elected from Tirunelveli (Tamilnadu) Constituency. He has served Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly two times. This is the first time, he enters Lok Sabha as member. During the first of his term in Lok Sabha itself, he has shown good performance.

He is one of the persons inspired by Dr Abdul Kalam from whom, who has set an agenda for his constituency. He is a banker turned politician. He wants to show more performance in the coming sessions and to reach No 1 position.

PR-eSense congratulates him for his performance and wishes him more participation in the coming sessions.

Indian Election Commission – Guarding the root of democracy



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India

The Election Commission of India (ECI), a body created by Indian Constitution, came into existence on 25th Jan 1950, one day before the Constitution came into force. Presently, ECI manages the world's largest election management event. In a cycle of five years, they conduct elections to elect around 5000 legislators to Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha of Parliament and Assemblies / Councils of 35 State / UT, involving more than 1400 million electors. In addition, they also manage the elections of President and Vice President of India.

India's first General Election was held by the first Chief Election Commissioner Mr Sukumar Sen between Oct 51 and March 52. At that time, being the first General Election in India, the Election Commission had to enumerate 176 million voters and set the procedure from scratch. ECI took 7 months to complete the process.

Presently, with hundreds of registered ambitious political parties and constant movement of voters, ECI faces challenging task in election management. ECI conducted 2009 General Elections involving 714 million voters through 8.4 lakh polling stations, using around 13.6 lakh Electronic Voting machines. During General elections, they use around 50 million Government officials for managing booths and another 50 million persons for supporting duties including security. The entire process is completed within 5 to 6 weeks smoothly and more transparently before the media and political representatives.

Amazingly, though, the Election Commission extensively uses technology in their operations, training for entire 50 million persons are being done 'face to face' in a systematic manner, that too in smaller groups. That ensures the highest efficiency of the election management.

They set up polling booths even in remote areas, including deserts and high altitude places. The officials travel even through forests on elephants and camel back to reach the places and for some locations go walking by foot for 2 days. In the 2009 General Elections to the 15th Parliament there was one booth in Ladakh at an altitude of 15300 Ft and one booth in the Gir forest in Gujarat that had only one registered voter!

ECI has constantly looked at methods and means of improving the system. Use of EVMs in all constituencies, inclusion of photos in the electoral rolls and making rolls available on the net, distribution of photo identity cards, introduction of model code of ethics are some of the significant improvements.

Indian Railways is the only Government organisation having a Fan's Club



Indian Railways, presently with 16 Zones divided into 67 Divisions started its journey on 16th April 1853 by operating the first passenger train between Bori Bunder and Thane at Mumbai covering 34 KM. Interestingly, the first railway line was laid at Chintdripet (Chennai) in 1836. Indian Railway Act was passed in 1890 to establish a railway system in India and the first Railway Board assumed office in 1905.

42 railway systems functioning after Independence were nationalized in 1951 as one Unit under Indian Railways. Indian Railways operates 10673 passenger trains and transports 20 million passengers every day throughout India. Also, they operate 6500 freight trains to move 2.3 million tonnes of freight. 90 percent of the freight is essential commodities like coal, steel, oil, etc. Every day, Indian Railways consume 40 million KWH of electricity and 6.5 million litres of HSD oil.

Indian Railways owns 4.3 lakh Hectares of open land throughout India. The total track length is 1.2 lakh kilo metres, of which 0.64 lakh is the route operated by them. 30 percent of the route length is now electrified.

Indian Railway owns around 8600 locomotives, 63000 passenger coaches and 2.12 lakh wagons. They have 7000 Railway stations. Indian Railways is the largest employer in India with 14 lakh employees.

Presently, India Railways earns a revenue of Rs.80,000 crores, of which 70% comes from freight only. They lose a revenue of around 11500 crores due to their 'Social obligations' by offering reduced passenger charges, reduced charges for essential goods, operating loss making routes, etc. In spite of this, they have earned a surplus of Rs.4500 crores last year.

They have also prepared a Vision document for 2020 and moving towards their Goals. Interestingly, only Railway Department has a separate budget in the Lok Sabha for their operations.

Indian Railways is the earliest organisation in India to computerize their major operations, which has now helped the general public at a great level. They also provide consultancy at International level on railway systems.

We have seen 'Fan Club' for celebrities. The only Government Department in India, which has a fan club for several years is Indian Railways.

Website www.indianrailway.gov.in

India Post – A blend of modernity with antiquity



Indian Postal Service, now branded as India Post has started showing their competency in different fields, posing challenge to private sector. They have extended their operations, beyond mail management, their core strength.

India Post with a network of 1.55 lakh post offices (of which 1.40 lakh in rural areas) divided into 22 circles handles around 40 million mails every day, collected from 6 lakh post boxes and counters. 'Speed post' is one of the most popular premium brands of India. They have a 'separate Base Circle' to serve the Armed Services too.

Informal postal system was started in India in 14th century through 'horse post' and 'foot post'. British East India Company started formal post offices in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta during 1764 to 1766 to serve the respective presidencies. The first postal stamp was released in 1852 in Sindh and later extended to whole India in 1854. The Post Office Act was enacted in 1854. Now India Post is managed by Indian Postal Services Board.

Presently India Post has extended its arms beyond mail and gone into Insurance, Banking, Mutual Fund, Retailing, micro banking, logistics and even in software development and exports.

Postal Life Insurance (PLI) Policy is issued on behalf of President of India and they do not come under IRDA. India Post services around 10 million insurance policies (including rural insurance), covering Rs.75,000 crores. On the banking side, they have around 17 crore accounts with outstanding deposit of Rs.3.5 lakh crores. They give tough competition silently to Insurance and banking companies.

The postal Finance mart started by them recently is a one stop shop for all financial services and they operate through more than 300 post offices. They also operate in stock market through investment of PLI funds. They undertake retailing business on behalf of various public and private sector companies. Their large network gives them all the comfort.

Presently, they earn revenue of around Rs. 5500 crores and incur a net deficit of around 1,500 crores. Many of their mail products are offered at low cost to suit common man. India Post incurs expenditure of Rs.7/- on every post card, which is sold at Rs.0.50.

Their website www.indiapost.gov.in



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India Sudar – Supporting education in 8 states



Many rural youth suffer to get proper education and to get employment due to various factors. A group of youngsters Udhay and his colleagues Sargunan, Parthiban, Suresh, Seetharaman and Karuppuswamy working in a software company, hail from different remote villages and struggled hard to complete their engineering education.

They all believed that only education was a permanent solution for the development of the nation. These passionate youth, one day in 2004, decided to start a formal organisation India Sudar to give their small support to deserving poor students to get proper education. Thus India Sudar Educational and charitable trust was born with Uday as Managing trustee.

Slowly, like-minded software professionals across the globe joined the team and started doing their service silently. Presently, they have around 1000 members across the globe connected through internet. They are all working professionals, who might not have seen each other personally.

They mainly focus on providing support to primary and secondary education in rural areas. Presently, they give their support in 8 states and UTs, by partnering with 23 like-minded organisations. For this purpose, they have set up 15 teams internally to look after each aspect.

Now, they are involved with 94 educational institutions. They have set up 10 computer centres and 22 libraries in Govt. schools. So far, they have deployed nearly 200 teachers in various Government schools. More than 100 poor students have availed scholarships. So far, they have executed around 450 projects benefitting nearly 27000 students. Periodically, they also conduct training for teachers to update their skills.

They do not get any funding support either from the Government or from any international agencies. They collect the required money from their own members. So far, they have deployed around 34 lakhs in all their projects. 100% of the amount is deployed for projects and there is no administrative cost. They post their monthly accounts in their website transparently.

They want to extend their support to north east and also to backward districts in future, enlarging their partnership with like-minded organisations.

Website www.indiasudar.org and <http://indiasudar.wordpress.com>

E-mail ID : admin@indiasudar.org

Dream India – Taking Dr Kalam’s dreams forward



“This is the story of a leader supported by a large team of brilliant and dedicated professionals. This story will end with me. For I have no belonging in the worldly sense. I have acquired nothing, built nothing; possess nothing – no family, sons, and daughters”.

Thus Dr Abdul Kalam concludes his autobiography “Wings of Fire”. Moved by his words after shedding tears, Natarajan, an engineering student in 2003 decided not to end the story with Dr Kalam and to take it forward. Fortunately, he had the opportunity of seeing Dr Kalam in a school at Jaipur. That ignited his mind to crystallise his ideas.

After getting employment at Mumbai, Natarajan along with his like minded friends Varun and Eswaramurthy started visiting the slums in Andheri and conducted classes to the poor children, during weekends. Thus Dream India came into existence in 2004.

Slowly, many young professionals inspired by Dr Abdul Kalam, started joining Dream India and started teaching poor slum children during weekends. Presently, Dream India has more than 500 young professionals across the globe, contributing in one way or other.

Now, their volunteers conduct study classes to poor children in slums and Government schools in various centres including Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. They support children home at different places and have deployed teachers in some of the village schools. Presently more than 50 meritorious poor children are pursuing their higher education with the help of Dream India.

They collect money from their members based on the projects and every single rupee is used in the project, without any administrative expenditure. They publish their monthly accounts in their website.

“If we want to see a developed India, as an individual we need to keep our eyes open and look around. Just 2 hours of our time during weekends can make a huge difference to a child near to us” confidently say this young team after tasting the hands-on experience for nearly 6 years.

Website : www.dreamindia2020.org and <http://di2020.blogspot.com/>
Email : admin@dreamindia2020.org

Helping Minds – Helping rural students for higher education



“Muppithathi, a poor student from a remote village after securing 93% mark in his plus two examination, got admitted in the prestigious Anna University in 1996. Unfortunately, he could not mobilize funds to pay the required fees. Being a brilliant boy from the village, 150 families of the village supported him to pursue the education by contributing a small amount annually to meet the college and hostel fees.

Having experienced the pain of poverty, Muppithathi and two of his hostel mates Sankaranarayanan (who also underwent such experience) and Subramanian started thinking of supporting the brilliant poor students. They got impressed with the model of ‘community support’ as it was being done to Muppithathi. These three students started collecting money from other college mates to support another poor boy Murugesan. Besides, they also started teaching the junior students in the hostel. On seeing this, few more like minded students joined this team. Thus ‘Helping Minds’ got started informally with eight members informally in 2001 and formally in 2002. Presently, they have more than 250 members, mostly software professionals across the globe. 15 members look after the administration.

They have been supporting brilliant poor students for their higher education, by collecting money from their members and other sources. So far, they have supported 55 such students. They select the beneficiaries after a process of screening, so that the amount reaches right persons. Many of their beneficiaries got good ranks and got placed well. In turn they also join this group to support other students. Helping Minds also provides infrastructure support to rural schools with toilet, drainage, library and drinking water facilities. They provide teachers in some of the Govt. schools. Till now, they have completed 80 projects benefiting more than 100 families involving more than Rs.8 lakhs, out of their own funds.

In future, they want to add more professionals and increase the support to develop infrastructure in rural schools.

Website : <http://www.helpingminds.org/>
E Mail : hm_admin@helpingminds.org

Consumers Association of India – shielding consumers from harassment



South Madras News, a popular Weekly tabloid in 1980s, initiated a consumer awareness movement jointly with Rotary Clubs. After the Consumers Protection Act was enacted in 1986, the South Madras News (SMN) helped to form a Society 'known as SMNCPC, to take up the cases of consumer harassment.

That led to the formation of Federation of Consumers Organisations of Tamilnadu (FEDCOT) with 15 such consumer organisations as constituents. The Founders of SMNCPC were focusing more on the development of FEDCOT by bringing together more than 260 consumer organisations. Meanwhile, SMNCPC became inactive.

After stabilising FEDCOT and learning the lessons from the failed SMNCPC, a new organisation 'Consumers Association of India' (CAI) was established as a non-profit public trust in 1991 by three consumer activists Mr Yegnaraman, Mr R Desikan and Mr R Krishnakumar to continue the movement more aggressively. Presently many eminent persons are associated with CAI as trustees.

CAI has taken up aggressively various serious issues like adulterations in petroleum products, selling of spurious drugs in medical stores, adulteration of food products, problems faced by customers of Insurance and banking and many more. The calculation of interest on SB accounts on a daily product basis, being implemented from 1st April, 2010, is because of the initiative taken by CAI only. They hold seminars frequently and also train consumer activists. They publish bi-monthly 'Consumers Digest' to create awareness. CAI has set up a research lab through their sister organisation CONCERT to identify the adulterations in consumer products.

Presently, they have around 8000 registered members across India. They help aggrieved consumers to fight against the injustice. CAI is also part of 'Consumers International', a worldwide federation of consumer organizations. CAI is represented in several BIS Committees, TRAI, FSSAI, State Consumer Protection Council.

"By 2020, we should have a minimum of 1 lakh trained members and for this purpose, we plan to start a regular institute to train various activities on consumer education. This will be the first of its kind in India", says Mr R Desikan, one of the Founders of CAI. CAI's website is www.cai-india.org/ and they may be contacted at cai.india1@gmail.com

Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya – Carrying the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi



Mahatma initiated opening of many institutions throughout India, to uplift the Harijans during 1932 to 1939. As per the wishes of Mahatma, 'Harijan Industrial School' was started at Kodambakkam (Chennai) in 1933 to provide skill based trainings to poor harijans to uplift their economic level and to eradicate untouchability.

He himself visited the school twice and stayed with the students.

In 1946, the school was shifted to the present premises at T Nagar, where Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation. He himself re-named this School as "Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya". Thakkar Bapa (left in the photo) was a Gujarati Engineer who dedicated his life for the welfare of Harijans. Many National leaders like Babu Rajendraprasad, Rajaji, Dr Abdul Kalam have visited this Vidyalaya and have spent time with the students. Till recently, the Governor of Tamilnadu used to take lunch with the students in this premises on the Gandhi Jayanthi day and the expenses were met by Raj Bhavan.

A dedicated team of Gandhians manage this Vidyalaya as Trustees of Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya Samiti. The Vidyalaya provides skill based and employment oriented trainings along with knowledge of trade to poor people and preference will be given to Harijans. Even the failed students of 8th standard are trained in various skills and are made employable. Many of their students now run their own workshops or business, owning even four wheelers.

The skills are provided for fitters, electricians, wiremen, carpenters, welders, tailoring, etc. Their trainings are supported by National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) of Government of India. The students are charged very nominal fee, when compared to the market. Vidyalaya also runs a primary school for poor children up to 5th standard free of cost.

All the students and employees, including those who stay inside the campus are taught Gandhian way of simple life and are made good citizens. They plan to start a Gandhi Museum soon.

Corporates and individuals can support this noble Institution by adopting few poor children to develop their employment skills and also by purchasing furniture made by these students.

Their website: <http://www.thakkarbapavidyalaya.org/>
E Mail id : tbvitc@gmail.com

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