



SPEAKS

Cover Stories 2023

**Compiled by
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Ramesh Sundaram**

**Prime Point Foundation
Chennai**

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2023

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Introduction

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



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New Delhi-110011

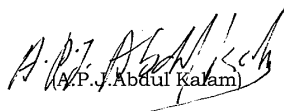
FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


(A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)


Journey of eMagazine PreSense - Milestones

Dec 1999	Launch of Prime Point Foundation, Publisher of the ezine.
Feb 2006	Launch of ezine, PreSense online by Dr Y S Rajan.
Aug 2006	Integration of Podcast with the ezine contents.
Aug 2007	Introduction of Guest Editors.
Feb 2008	Second Anniversary Edition with Dr Abdul Kalam's exclusive interview. Masthead changed.
Apr 2008	First ezine to become 'Media Partner' for a global event held at London.
July 2008	Introduction of cartoons – Cartoon Character 'Prince' launched by Dr Abdul Kalam.
Sep 2008	Change in layout, introducing photographs on the cover.
Jan 2010	Ezine's new initiative 'Education Loan Task Force' (ELTF) launched to create awareness among students and parents.
May 2010	Ezine's second initiative to honour top performing Parliamentarians, with the <i>Sansad Ratna</i> Award launched. Golden Jubilee (50 th) Edition launched.
Feb 2011	Diamond Jubilee (60 th) Edition.

A hiatus after 5 years of uninterrupted journey

Apr 2012	Ezine resumed in a new format of contents. The tag line changed from 'Communicate the Communication' to 'Spreading Positive Vibrations'.
Apr 2013	Tamil Nadu Governor launched a special edition on the Indian Parliament, coinciding with the <i>Sansad Ratna</i> Awards.

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Jun 2013	Platinum Jubilee (75 th) Edition launched by the youth at three places simultaneously, across the nation.
Jun 2015	100 th Edition - PreSense 100 released in print format.
Mar 2016	Ezine's third initiative 'Digital Journalists Association of India' (DiJAI) launched.
Jun 2016	Second edition of PreSense 100+ released in print format
Dec 2017	Ezine's fourth initiative 'Digital Security Association of India' (DiSAI) launched.
Mar 2018	Third edition of Digest PreSense130 released in print format.
Aug 2019	Fourth edition of Digest PreSense150 launched in pdf format.
May 2021	PreSense Speaks Series – First volume released on Communication (compilation of articles published earlier)
Sep 2021	Fifth edition of Digest PreSense175 in 6 volumes released.
Jul 2022	PreSense Speaks Series – Second volume released compiling the Editorials published between 2020 and 2022
Mar 2023	Two eBooks on Editorials and Cover Stories covering the articles published in 2022 released.
Feb 2024	Four eBooks covering the Editorials and Cover stories published in 2023 and a handbook for young political aspirants released.

The Journey Continues.....

Editorial Team – Jan 2024

Publisher and Managing Editor	K. Srinivasan (Prime Point Srinivasan)
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Website	<u>www.corpezine.com</u>



Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives

Prime Point Foundation, a Non-Profit Trust and NGO was founded in December 1999 by Shri K Srinivasan (popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan), a former Senior Banker and a Digital Journalist and Communication Professional, to promote leadership and communication skills among the youth. Very eminent persons are associated with the Foundation.

In the past 24 years, the Foundation has organised several seminars, workshops, training and interactive sessions, both offline and online, on various subjects of national interest. The Foundation manages various online discussion groups and podcasts on communication, and digital journalism.

The Foundation has formed 5 initiatives to create awareness in various domains. All these initiatives are managed independently by passionate experts. These initiatives are non-commercial, and focussed on youth.

The Foundation has published 36 eBooks and some of them are in print also. All the eBooks and printed books are distributed free for the benefit of youth.

Website: www.primepointfoundation.in

PreSense: The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to promote positive journalism. Till Dec 2023, the Foundation has published 202 editions. This is a digital-only magazine. Digests, containing select articles upto 150 editions of the eMagazine, have so far been published. Dr Abdul Kalam has written the foreword for the Digest of articles up to 100 editions. PreSense publishes the cartoon character Prince, which was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam in 2008. PreSense has published a Digest of select articles published up to 175 editions in 8 volumes.



India Book of Records has recognised PreSense for publishing maximum number of digital only eMagazine since 2006 through voluntary efforts.

Website: www.corpezine.com

Sansad Ratna Awards: This is a flagship initiative started in 2010 to honour top performing Parliamentarians every year, based on various performance parameters, and selected by a Jury Committee of eminent Parliamentarians. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the first edition of the Awards event in May 2010. Till 2023, the Foundation has conducted 13 editions and presented 106 Awards. IIT Madras was the supporting Partner up to the 9th Edition. 10th Edition was held at Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu. 11th, 12th and 13th Editions were held at New Delhi.



India Bank of Records (IBR) has recognised Sansad Ratna Awards for maximum number of Parliamentary Awards (86) given and maximum number of award events (12) by the civil society based on the performance in consecutive years.

Website: www.sansadratna.in

Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) is an off-shoot of Sansad Ratna Awards. This is a registered NGO operating since 2018. NGPL has organised several workshops online and offline, for young political leaders and aspirants. Ministers, parliamentarians, legislators and retired constitutional authorities have participated and shared their views. NGPL will shortly be instituting Awards for young promising politicians.



Website: www.ngpl.org.in

Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) was started in 2010 to create awareness about education loans, among students and parents. More than 30,000 queries have been responded to, through email, and more than 5000 serious complaints have been taken up with the top management of the banks concerned, for redressal. Many policy issues have been taken up by Sansad Ratna Awardee MPs, in the Parliament for solution. ELTF does not facilitate loans.



Website: www.eltf.in

Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI): DiJAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to create awareness about digital journalism and its implications, among the public and particularly among the journalists. DiJAI conducts several online and offline workshops and seminars, with panels of domain experts.



Website: www.dijai.in

Preface to the Twelfth Edition of 'PreSense Speaks' series

On behalf of the Editorial Team of PreSense, we present the 12th edition of 'PreSense Speaks' Series, covering the Editorials published by us in 2023. The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India, for positive journalism. In the coming March 2024, PreSense will be completing 18 years. We have published 202 editions till Dec 2023.

As readers are aware, we have published digests of select articles up to 100, 110, 130, 150 and 175 editions. We had the unique privilege of carrying Foreword from Dr Abdul Kalam himself for the 100th edition.

The first edition of PreSense Speaks series was released by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Mos, Parliamentary Affairs in May 2021. The first edition was the compilation of articles on communication. This 12th edition of PreSense Speaks Series contains the Editorials published by us in 2023. We release this edition, coinciding with the 14th Edition of Sansad Ratna Awards function.

I thank all the Editorial Team members for the excellent support and cooperation provided by them for release of every issue of PreSense. I am confident that this edition will be useful for all our readers.

K. Srinivasan
(Prime Point Srinivasan)
Publisher and Managing Editor
PreSense
www.corpezine.com
February 17, 2024

Cover Stories Published in PreSense - 2023

Andaman Islands – The Capital of Indian Freedom Movement

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (Jan 2023)

Penal Settlement at Andaman Islands



Penal colony prisoners in 1880

After the First War of Independence in 1857, 200 aggressive and revolutionary freedom fighters were transported (literally exiled) to the Andaman Islands. They arrived at the Islands on 10th March 1858. They were

kept in Chatham Island in the open prison. That marked the beginning of the penal settlement in Andamans by the British. All life and long-term prisoners, from eighteen to forty years of age, who on some grounds have escaped the death penalty in India and Burma, were selected for imprisonment in the penal settlement of the Andaman Islands. This was also popularly called 'Kala Pani' (Black Water).

Four days after their first landing on the island, one of the convicts, Narain (Bihar), who had been convicted for sedition, tried to escape but was caught and shot dead. Another prisoner, Naringun Singh (Punjab), who was a deserter, committed suicide by hanging. 86 prisoners who tried to escape were caught by the Britishers and all of them were summarily put to death by hanging on a single day.

As the settlement grew, "hardened criminals" from undivided India and Burma were also brought in. The 'hard labour' of chain gangs quickly produced the necessary infrastructure. Palatial bungalows for the administrators and barracks for the prisoners, jail and formidable gallows sprung up on Ross and

Viper Islands between 1864 and 1867. A saw-mill on the Chatham Island supplied the timber.



The location where Lord Mayo was assassinated

The Viceroy of United India, Lord Mayo, who was on tour at Andaman, paid a visit to the settlement. Sher Ali, serving the Life Sentence stabbed the Viceroy to death on 8th February, 1872. He was arrested immediately and hanged. In the Indian freedom movement, this is the only incident where a sitting Viceroy was assassinated. With the freedom movement picking up momentum, the number of freedom fighters sentenced to transportation also increased. The need arose for a high security jail that could hold a large number in solitary confinement.

Cellular Jail

The construction of Cellular Jail started in 1896 and completed in 1906. Spread as seven spokes of a bicycle wheel, this unique three-storied structure was the first of its kind in India as it had 693 cells specially built for solitary confinement of the prisoners.

Extraordinary feature of the Jail was the total absence of communication between prisoners housed in different wings since front of the row of cells faced the back of the other. The cost of construction at that time was Rs.5.17 lakhs.



Cellular Jail – Main entrance

A two-storied building on the left side near the entrance of the Jail was constructed to be used as the Jail hospital. On the plinth of this building now stands the Martyr's Column. Near

the compound wall at the right of the main entrance is the gallows where three persons could be executed simultaneously with a separate door in the outer compound wall to carry the corpses.



A model of the Cellular Jail with seven wings

Singh, etc. were incarcerated here among others. Revolutionaries involved in Alipore Bomb case, Nasik Conspiracy Case, Lahore Conspiracy Case, Chittagong Armoury Raid Case, Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, Gaya Conspiracy Case were also brought to the Cellular Jail under long terms of imprisonment.

Many charismatic freedom fighters were imprisoned in this Jail. Savarkar brothers, Hotilal Verma, Babu Ram Hari, Pandit Parmanand, Ladha Ram, Ullaskar Dutt, Barin Kumaar Ghosh, Bhai Parmanand, Indu Bhushan Roy, Prithvi Singh Azad, Pulin Das, Trailokyanath Chakravarthi, Gurumukh



Instruments of torture

The Cellular Jail is the most prominent landmark of Port Blair and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The first stop for any dignitary visiting the Islands is the Martyrs Memorial inside the Jail. Many familiar with the history of the freedom struggle are moved to tears at the sight of the Chain fetter, Cross Bar fetter, Bar fetter, flogging frame with whipping, Jute uniform, oil extraction, Coir pounding to extract coir from coconut husk and the other instruments of torture on display in the Jail Museum. A 'must' on the itinerary of all tourists is the 'Sound & Light Show' every evening, which brings to life a dark chapter in the history of the Islands as a penal settlement. (Now stopped for some time for upgradation.)

The Jail celebrated its centenary on March 10, 2006. It has been a long journey for the Jail - from a torture machine to a National Memorial, from a dreaded prison to a place of patriotic pilgrimage, a place where the memories of brave freedom fighters are revived and patriotic fervour surges through the veins of the visitors.



Outer and inner A view of the Cell

Today, the entrance block of the National Memorial houses Freedom Fighters Photos and Exhibition Gallery is on the ground floor. The first floor of the building has an Art Gallery, Netaji Gallery and a Library on freedom movement. A gallery on the First War of Independence and another gallery with rare collection of old photographs has also been set up on the premises. An eternal Flame "Freedom-Swatantrya Jyot" has been erected in the vicinity of the Cellular Jail in memory of all freedom fighters and martyrs.

Structure

Each of the seven wings has three stories upon completion. There are no dormitories with a total of 696 cells. Each cell is 13.6 ft × 7.6 ft in size with a ventilator located at a height of 7 ft. The name, "Cellular Jail", derived from the solitary cells which prevented any prisoner from communicating with any other. Also, the spokes were so designed such that the face of a cell in a spoke saw the back of cells in another spoke. This way, communication between prisoners was impossible. They were all in solitary confinement. The locks of the prison cells were



Gallows – Top: Place for ritual before execution | Bottom right: Execution chamber | Bottom left: Place for dead body after execution

designed in such a way that the inmate would never be able to reach the latch of the lock.

Prison conditions

Conditions faced by prisoners in the Cellular Jail were horrible. They faced torture, medical tests, forced labour and for many, death. In response to poor conditions in the Cellular Jail, including the quality of prison food, numerous prisoners went on hunger strikes. Those who did were often force-fed by the prison authorities. It is also said that many of them died due to force feeding.

Andaman Island served as the ideal place for the British Government to isolate the aggressive and revolutionary freedom fighters from the rest of the society. These people were kept in solitary confinement in the Cellular Jail.

Massacre of 44 ILL Members

During the World War II, in 1942, Japan took over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Britishers left. Netaji Subash Chandra Bose arrived at Port Blair and hoisted the Indian Tri Colour in Dec. 1943 at Cellular Jail. After Bhose had left, on 30 January 1944, 44 Indians, the members of the

Indian Independence League (ILL), were wrongly accused of spying and shot by the Japanese Army in what was known as the Homfraygunj Massacre.



After the end of World War II, Japan surrendered to the British Army and the British re-occupied the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. During this period of three years, Japan had committed more atrocities.

Cellular Jail was made a National Monument by Prime Minister Morarji Desai in 1979. The Airport is named after Veer Savarkar. Ross

Island is named after Netaji Subash Chandra Bose by Prime Minister Modi. Also the 21 unnamed Islands were named after Param Vir Chakra recipients in Jan 2023 by Prime Minister Modi.

Just like every Indian makes a spiritual pilgrimage to Kasi, Mecca and Jerusalem, they should also make a 'Patriotic Pilgrimage' to the Andaman Islands and pay homage to the great freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for our Independence.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its Applications in the day to day life: An Exclusive Interview with Robot ChatGPT

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor (Feb 2023)

The Cover Story is in two Parts. This is Part one

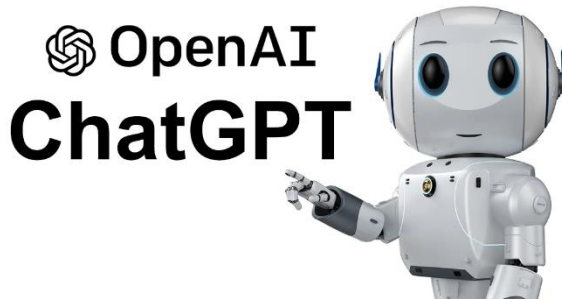
(Currently lot of discussions are going on about the Artificial Intelligence and its application to the day to life to help the society. As an experimental measure, instead of taking an interview with an expert, our Editorial Team decided to chat with OpenAI-ChatGPT directly and get the response. The response was validated by Ms. VM Charumathy, an Entrepreneur and AI expert. Please read this interview with Robot conducted through Chat. Please also see the clarity of response by the machine – Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor conducted the interview)

What is Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how will it be useful for mankind?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly evolving field that has been transforming various industries and aspects of human life. AI is a branch of Computer Science that aims to create intelligent machines that work and learn like humans. The technology behind AI involves teaching computers to recognize patterns and make decisions based on the data they have been trained on. It is achieved through a combination of techniques, including machine learning, deep learning, and natural language processing.

AI has been around for several decades, but it has only recently become practical for widespread commercial use. Today, AI is being applied in a variety of industries and fields, from healthcare to finance and from retail to education. AI has

the potential to significantly improve our lives by making processes more efficient and effective, freeing up time for humans to focus on more meaningful and creative tasks.



What are the practical uses of AI currently employed today?

One of the most significant applications of AI in the current times is in the field of **Healthcare**. AI is being used to diagnose diseases, predict health outcomes, and personalize treatments. AI algorithms are trained on large amounts of medical data and can identify patterns and relationships that would be difficult for human Doctors to discern. For example, AI can analyse medical images, such as x-rays or MRIs, and assist in the early detection of conditions like cancer. AI can also be used to predict potential health outcomes based on a patient's medical history and current condition. This allows healthcare providers to proactively intervene and prevent the onset of serious conditions.

Another area where AI is being applied is in the **Financial sector**. AI is being used to analyse vast amounts of financial data and help investment firms make informed decisions. AI

algorithms can analyse market trends, identify patterns in financial data, and make predictions about future market conditions. AI can also be used to automate various financial processes, such as compliance checks, fraud detection, and risk management. This not only makes the financial sector more efficient, but also helps to reduce the risk of errors and fraud.

Retail is another industry that is being transformed by AI. AI is being used to personalize shopping experiences and make recommendations to customers. Retailers are using AI algorithms to analyse customer data, such as purchase history and online browsing behaviour, to provide personalized recommendations and targeted promotions. AI can also be used to optimize pricing and inventory management, which can help retailers increase sales and reduce waste.

In the field of **Education**, AI algorithms are being used to analyse student data, such as test scores and performance history, to provide customized learning plans and personalized feedback. AI can also be used to provide real-time feedback to teachers, allowing them to adjust their teaching methods and improve student outcomes. In addition, AI can be used to automate administrative tasks, such as grading and record-keeping, freeing up teachers' time to focus on teaching and student engagement.

Can AI help study the perception of people in Politics and Governance?

AI has the potential to help study people's perceptions in politics and governance in several ways:

Sentiment Analysis: AI algorithms can be used to analyse large amounts of text data, such as social media posts, news

articles, and survey responses, to determine the overall sentiment of people towards a particular issue, political figure, or policy.

Predictive Analytics: AI algorithms can be used to analyse data on political events and public opinions to make predictions about future trends and voter behaviour.

Image Recognition: AI algorithms can be used to analyse images and videos, such as political rallies and protests, to gain insights into people's attitudes and behaviours.

By providing more accurate, comprehensive, and real-time insights into public opinion, AI can help improve our understanding of political and social trends and informed decision-making at all levels of government.

What are the drawbacks of using AI?

There are several potential drawbacks to using AI technology:

AI automation can lead to job loss, as machines and algorithms replace human workers in certain tasks.

AI algorithms can perpetuate and amplify existing biases and discrimination if they are trained on biased data.

AI systems can be vulnerable to hacking and other security threats, potentially leading to sensitive information being compromised.

There are also concerns around the ethical use of AI, particularly with regards to its potential use in military or surveillance applications.

Overreliance on AI can lead to a loss of critical thinking skills and decision-making abilities, as well as a decrease in human creativity.

In conclusion, AI is a rapidly evolving field that has the potential to transform various industries and aspects of human life. AI is being applied in healthcare, finance, retail, and education, among other fields, and has the potential to significantly improve our lives by making processes more efficient and effective. However, it is important to evaluate the drawbacks and work to mitigate them. It is equally important to carefully consider the potential consequences of AI and ensure that it is used in an ethical and responsible manner.

How to use ChatGPT for our Routine Works

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor (Feb 2023)

This is Part Two of the Cover Story in Feb 2023 Edition

(Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor conducted this interview with the Robot of OpenAI/ChatGPT on its own function and usefulness to the society. This Chat script also validated by Ms V M Charumathy, Entrepreneur and AI expert. Please read the interview with the Robot)

What is ChatGPT and its relevance to OpenAI?

OpenAI is a research organization that was founded in 2015 with the goal of developing and promoting friendly AI (Artificial Intelligence) in a way that benefits humanity as a whole. Over the years, OpenAI has made significant contributions to this field, particularly in the areas of natural language processing (NLP) and generative models. OpenAI was founded by Elon Musk, Sam Altman, Greg Brockman, Ilya Sutskever, John Schulman, and Wojciech Zaremba.

One of OpenAI's well-known AI models is ChatGPT, a state-of-the-art language generation model that can generate human-like text. ChatGPT is a variant of the Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) architecture, which has revolutionized the field of NLP. These GPT models have been widely recognized as a major breakthrough in the field of AI and have been used for a wide range of applications, including chatbots, content generation and language translation. The ChatGPT application has been trained on a massive amount of text data and can generate human-like text responses to a wide range of prompts and questions.



What are the main applications of ChatGPT?

One of the main uses of ChatGPT is as a conversational AI model. The model can be integrated into voice assistants, and other conversational systems to provide users with a more natural and human-like experience. For example, a chatbot powered by ChatGPT can respond to customer inquiries and help resolve issues, allowing companies to provide 24/7 support to their customers.

Another use for ChatGPT is as a language generation model. The model can be used to generate text for a variety of applications, such as content creation, news writing, and language translation. For example, a news organization could use ChatGPT to generate articles on a wide range of topics, freeing up journalists to focus on more in-depth reporting.

In addition to its language generation capabilities, ChatGPT can also be used for language analysis and understanding. The model can be used to perform tasks such as sentiment

analysis, text classification, and named entity recognition. This makes ChatGPT a valuable tool for companies looking to gain insights into customer sentiment and behaviour.

Can ChatGPT be used in the field of Digital Journalism?

Yes, ChatGPT can be used in the field of digital journalism. ChatGPT's ability to generate human-like text responses and its capacity for language generation and analysis make it a valuable tool for journalists. Here are some ways in which ChatGPT can be used in digital journalism:

1. News generation: ChatGPT can be used to generate news articles on a wide range of topics. For example, ChatGPT could generate articles on sports, weather, or business news, allowing journalists to focus on more complex and nuanced stories.
2. Data analysis: ChatGPT can also be used to analyse large amounts of data, such as financial or political data, to uncover trends and patterns. This can help journalists to provide more in-depth analysis and insights into the stories they are covering.
3. Personalized content generation: ChatGPT can be integrated into digital news platforms to provide users with personalized content recommendations based on their interests and reading history. This can help improve user engagement and increase the reach of digital journalism.
4. Fact-checking: ChatGPT can be used to fact-check statements made by politicians, public figures, and others, helping to ensure that news articles are accurate and reliable.

5. Content creation: ChatGPT can be used to generate content for digital journalism, such as headlines, summaries, and captions. This can help to save time and improve the efficiency of the content creation process.

ChatGPT has the potential to bring about significant benefits for digital journalism, from news generation and data analysis to personalized content and fact-checking. However, it is important to ensure that the use of AI in journalism aligns with ethical principles and standards, and that the technology is used in a way that benefits the public and strengthens the credibility of journalism.

How can ChatGPT help in rural development in India?

ChatGPT, being an AI-powered language model, can assist with rural development in India in several ways:

1. Agriculture: ChatGPT can provide valuable information on best practices for farming, such as crop selection, irrigation methods, and soil management, helping farmers improve their yields and increase their income.
2. Education: ChatGPT can provide access to educational resources for people in rural areas, helping to bridge the digital divide and improve educational outcomes.
3. Healthcare: ChatGPT can provide information on basic healthcare practices and connect people in rural areas with healthcare providers, improving access to essential health services.
4. Financial Services: ChatGPT can provide information on financial services, such as microfinance, insurance, and

savings schemes, helping people in rural areas access these services and improve their financial wellbeing.

5. Job Creation: ChatGPT can provide information on job opportunities and entrepreneurial training, helping to create employment and stimulate economic growth in rural areas.

These are just a few examples of how ChatGPT can support rural development in India. However, it is important to note that the impact of AI-powered systems like ChatGPT will depend on the quality and availability of data, as well as the overall technology infrastructure in the country.

Is AI reliable? What about the information given by ChatGPT?

The reliability of AI systems can vary greatly depending on the specific system, the data it was trained on, and the use case it is applied to.

In general, AI systems can be highly accurate and reliable when they are well-designed, trained on high-quality data, and the problem they are solving is well-defined. However, AI systems can also be prone to errors and biases if they are trained on biased data or if the problem they are trying to solve is complex and not well understood. It's important to carefully evaluate the reliability and limitations of AI systems before using them in real-world applications.

With regards to ChatGPT - as a language model developed by OpenAI, I strive to provide accurate and reliable information. However, it is important to note that I am not perfect and can sometimes provide incorrect information.

Please keep in mind that I am a machine learning model and my responses are generated based on patterns in the data I was trained on. My responses are not intended to be a substitute for professional advice, and I cannot be held responsible for any consequences that may result from using the information I provide.

What do you think is the future technology beyond AI?

The future beyond AI is uncertain and difficult to predict, as technology is constantly evolving and new breakthroughs are being made all the time. However, some potential areas of technology that may become prominent in the future include:

Quantum Computing: This has the potential to revolutionize many areas of technology, including cryptography, simulation, and optimization, by providing dramatically increased computational power.

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR): AR and VR technologies have the potential to change the way we interact with computers and the world around us, by providing new and more immersive ways of experiencing and interacting with digital content.

Internet of Things (IoT): IoT involves connecting a large number of devices to the internet, allowing for the exchange of data and the creation of new applications and services. The future of IoT could lead to the development of smart cities, homes, and industries.

Robotics: Robotics is likely to continue to evolve and improve, leading to the development of more advanced and sophisticated robots that can perform a wider range of tasks, such as caregiving, manufacturing, and space exploration.

These are just a few examples of the many areas of technology that could become prominent in the future beyond AI. It is important to note that the technology landscape is constantly changing, and new breakthroughs and innovations are being made all the time, so the future beyond AI is likely to be much different and more advanced than what we can imagine today.

In conclusion, OpenAI and ChatGPT have been key players in the evolution of artificial intelligence. They have been at the forefront of language generation technology, and their work has had a significant impact on the field as a whole. However, they are far from the only companies and individuals working on AI, and the competition in this field is intense. ChatGPT is a powerful AI model with a wide range of potential uses. From conversational AI to language generation and analysis, ChatGPT has the potential to bring about significant benefits for a variety of industries and applications. However, it is also important to carefully consider the potential drawbacks of AI and work to ensure that its development and use align with humanity's best interests. OpenAI's commitment to transparency and accountability in AI and its ethical principles are steps in the right direction towards ensuring that AI benefits all of society.

13th Edition of Sansad Ratna Awards 2023 Celebrating the 100th Award Mark - A Report

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor (March 2023)



13th Edition of Sansad Ratna Awards 2023 was held on Saturday, 25th March 2023 at New Maharashtra Sadan, Delhi. Shri Bandaru Dattatreya (Hon'ble Governor of Haryana) was the Chief Guest and presented the Awards. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble MoS, Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India and the Chairman of Jury Committee was the Guest of Honour. 8 Lok Sabha MPs, 5 Rajya Sabha MPs and two Departmentally Related Standing Committees were honoured

with Sansad Ratna Awards 2023. One Veteran Parliamentarian was honoured with “Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Lifetime Achievement Award”. During this event, 100th Award Mark was crossed. The Awards are given on behalf of the Civil Society.

Mugavari

An eminent Jury Committee chaired by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal and Co-Chaired by Shri T S Krishnamurthy (Former Chief Election Commissioner of India) nominated the Awardees.

Prime Point Foundation and the eMagazine PreSense started honouring the top performing Parliamentarians based on their performance parameters (Initiated Debates, Private Members Bills and Questions) inside the House, on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam from March 2009. Till this 13th Edition, 106 Awards have been presented and all Awardees have received the Awards in person on the stage.

Sansad Ratna Award Winners 2023



Please watch the Award presentation ceremony in this link
Video:

<https://youtu.be/tjri4ZFnyws> |

Photos

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/TCJtxvVQosypU7vLZ>

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Lifetime Achievement Award

Shri T K Rangarajan (82), a Senior CPI-M leader was honoured with 'Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Lifetime Achievement Award'. He has served Rajya Sabha for 12 years. He is in the public service for the past 62 years, including Trade Union activities. He is one of the highly respected political leaders in India by all parties.

Sansad Ratna Awards 2023 – Individuals – Lok Sabha

These Awards for Lok Sabha Members are given based on their individual performance parameters from the first sitting of 17th Lok Sabha till the end of Winter Session 2022. The data relating to Initiated debates, Private Members Bills and Questions are sourced from PRS India. Eight Members of Lok Sabha received the Award.

Sansad Ratna Awards 2023 – Individuals – Rajya Sabha

Since Rajya Sabha members retire every two years, the sitting members of the Rajya Sabha get the Awards for the total tally of their performance in Initiated Debates, Private Members Bills and Questions during the calendar year 2022. Every year, we honour the Rajya Sabha Members, who retired in the previous calendar year, i.e., in this case 2022, based on their total performance tally of Debates, Private Members Bills and Questions during their six-year term.

Dr John Brittas, CPI-M, Kerala could not personally attend the event due to sudden bereavement in his family. His citation will be delivered at his residence by the Committee Members.

Sansad Ratna Awards 2023 – Departmentally Related Standing Committees (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha)

Parliamentary Committees silently contribute to the functioning of Parliamentary democracy. They are the real unsung heroes. Two committees one from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha get the Awards for their performance in reports presented and sitting held during the period from 1st June 2019 to 31st December 2022.

eBook Launch during the Sansad Ratna event 2023



L to R : Priyadharshni Rahul, Dr Heena Vijayakumar Gavit MP, Hon'ble Governor Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Shirang Appa Barne MP and Prime Point Srinivasan

New Guidelines on Fake News – PIB Fact Checking – What is Perceived and What is Not Understood?

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (April 2023)

On 6th April 2023, Government of India notified the “Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023”. Among other things, this notification and guidelines attempt to curb the misinformation and fake news that are being spread through the Digital media. The Government is setting up a ‘Fact Checking Unit’ under Press Information Bureau (PIB) to verify all the information relating to Central Government Ministries and PSUs. The notification is available in this link for download.

<https://tinyurl.com/meity2023>

Reaction from the Media organisations

Within few hours of this notification, some media organisations issued Press Releases demanding ‘withdrawal’ of this notification on the ground that the Government may use this to censor the information thereby curbing the ‘freedom of expression’ provided under Article 19 of the Constitution. They also described this as ‘Draconian’ and they accused the Government of trying to create a ‘chilling effect’. This Press Release was widely shared in various social media and messaging platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram. Leading dailies like The Hindu carried Editorial condemning these guidelines.

PreSense contacted many people who condemned the guidelines and asked them which were the clauses that could affect freedom of expression and draconian in nature. Unfortunately, none of the people had read the guidelines fully and simply forwarded those messages seeking withdrawal of

the notification. Sadly, even the senior media persons simply forwarded such messages without knowing the content of the guidelines. PreSense decided to run this Cover Story to remove the wrong impressions and to emphasize the need for proper regulations to curb fake news, in consultation with stakeholders..

Fake News menace

Misinformation, false news and fake news have been causing menace throughout the world and creating disturbances in the society. PreSense for the past few years has been writing editorials requesting the Government to formulate proper 'Regulations' to curb the false news and fake news, in consultation with stakeholders. Even the Supreme Court of India has several times advised the Government to bring in proper regulations. Whenever the Central Government attempts to bring some rules, immediately, the 'fighters of freedom of expression' surface and make a huge noise and try to stop the rules. They even go to the High Courts or Supreme Court challenging the rules.



These activists should keep in mind that their reaction, knowingly or unknowingly help the criminals and anti-social elements to spread false news and fake news without any fear. Fake news and False news are short-lived and they create more damages within short time, before they are identified. Indian Constitution does not provide 'freedom of speech and expression' to people to spread false news and fake news. Also there is no special privilege for 'media' under 'freedom of speech' in the Indian Constitution. Media (traditional and social media) enjoy the same privileges and rights like any other citizen of this country. There is no absolute freedom to anybody, including media under Indian Constitution.

Removal of 66A – A case study



Section 66A of the Information Technology Act 2000 prescribed three years imprisonment to any person who sends out 'messages' (SMS or mail) using computer

device causing 'annoyance' or 'grossly offensive'. Some activists went to Supreme Court challenging this Section 66A as unconstitutional violating the provisions of fundamental right of 'freedom of speech' given under Article 19(1). This Section 66A related only to messages communicated to individuals and not published in the social media or website. In the Shreya Singhal vs. Union of India case, Supreme Court struck down in 2015 this section 66A as unconstitutional. Many media and activists hailed this judgement as 'second freedom'. At that time, PreSense and few other Cyber Law experts cautioned that the judgement would open up risk to women in this country in future.

In a similar case for the same section in UK, their Court advised the Government to frame the rules for clarity and retained the section. But in India, the section 66A was completely struck down. Though the Government promised to bring in a new Section to safeguard women victims, till date nothing has been done.

Till now, after the removal of Section 66A, there is no provision in the Indian law to punish any person, who sends out annoying or offensive messages through computer devices (SMS or email) to other persons, including ladies and create disturbance. Now, many ladies are complaining that Police is not taking action against those people who torture them through offensive messages.

Removal of Section 66A has given freedom to wrong persons to send out offensive and annoying messages. We are quoting this incident to establish that any knee-jerk reaction in the name of protecting 'freedom of speech' without understanding the implications of the guidelines or rules may help only criminals and anti-social elements who are interested in creating disturbance in the society. Those who are fighting for 'freedom of speech' should fight for the safety of the innocent people in the cyber space and not for the wrong persons who create disturbance in the society.

Today the ladies are left unprotected in the cyber space after the removal of 66A. We have not seen any organisation fighting for fundamental rights of women victims by taking up with the Government for their protection.

Objections for the new Guidelines

The Senior Journalists have appealed to the Government to withdraw the notification mainly on the two grounds.

1. determination of fake news cannot be in the sole hands of the government and will result in the censorship of the press.
2. violation of Fundamental Right to freedom of speech

Though the Government of India has issued notification, neither the MIB (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) or MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) have organized any discussions online or offline to get the views of various stakeholders or explain the importance of these guidelines. They have left the guidelines to be interpreted by the people as they



wanted. Even when the Senior journalists issued statement showing their concern, these two Ministries have not taken seriously to explain and remove the apprehension. When PreSense attempted to reach out to some officials for getting first-hand information, they did not respond. Notwithstanding this, PreSense spoke to some experts.

Naa. Vijayashankar, Bengaluru based Cyber Law expert says, "It is unfortunate that a speculative narrative is being built and is being propagated by vested interests and we need the public to realize that these views are biased and need to be rejected."

According to him that there are more than 30 Fact Checking Websites operating in the Private Sector and the PIB Fact Checking Unit verifies the false news and fake news information relating to Government of India and connected PSUs. Even a general public can refer any information to them for verification. If PIB, after verification, found the information to be false, only flag the posting. In a way, this helps the viewers to be cautious about the information. PIB does not have any authority to order removal of the content. If PIB goes wrong, they can be questioned in the Parliament.



If any content is flagged by PIB as fake or false, the intermediary has to take note of the caution and with 'due diligence', they have to take decision. The intermediary (the platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) have the right to remove the content if they also find it fake or false or continue the content. After the flagging by PIB, the intermediary may lose 'safe harbour' protection under Section 79 of the Information

Technology Act. If any aggrieved person goes to Court for remedy, and if the content is found to be fake or false, the Court may hold the intermediary also liable.

"According to Shreya Singhal vs. Union of India judgement (2015), Supreme Court has upheld the Section 79. According to the Judgement, contents can be ordered to be removed only by (1) Competent Court and (2) the Authority appointed under Section 69A of the IT Act. In view of this, the apprehension that PIB's Fact Checking Unit can order removal of the content or leading to censorship is highly misleading", Naa. Vijayashankar added.

"Also, nobody has the right to spread fake news, misinformation or false news through digital media. Freedom of speech and expression provided in the Constitution does not apply to spreading wrong information. Hence, the second apprehension is also not based on facts", Naa Vijayashankar added.

According to Swaminathan Iyer from Singapore, a digital media expert, who has held high positions in various platforms in Asia Pacific Region said, "Every country has its own regulations. Australia, UK, Singapore has rules to remove the contents which are misleading or fake news. China is the strictest of the lot. With the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, the world would be facing more risk of fake news and false news. Every Government and every platform are facing this problem globally. When the technology grows, the law and regulations are also framed. They are getting improved based on the experience in consultation with stakeholders."



Vinoth Poovalingam, CEO, Hocalwire, who provides technology support to various digital media organisations, said that regulations were needed to curb fake news. "Presently, when a fake news is found, the author removes the content. There is no trace of the author having put up the wrong content. But in print media, if a wrong news gets published, the Editor publishes an apology. Same way, in the digital media also, fake news content should remain in the site with flagged 'false news mark' and the author should be forced to apologise", Vinoth Poovalingam added.

Digital Media Ethics Code

In 2021, Digital Media Ethics Code was given to address the grievances of aggrieved persons. Three levels of regulations have been prescribed. (a) Level I - Self-regulation by the publishers; (b) Level II – Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the publishers; (c) Level III - Oversight mechanism by the Central Government.

It suggested a self-regulatory body of the Industry and Grievances Appellate Committee. Any member of the public can put up a complaint for redressal. The Government may now review the current position as to how it works and take remedial measures to improve the system.

Conclusion

When the Technology evolves, correspondingly regulations and law also should evolve to protect innocent people and to punish criminals. 'No regulation regime' will lead us nowhere. It would help only wrong people.

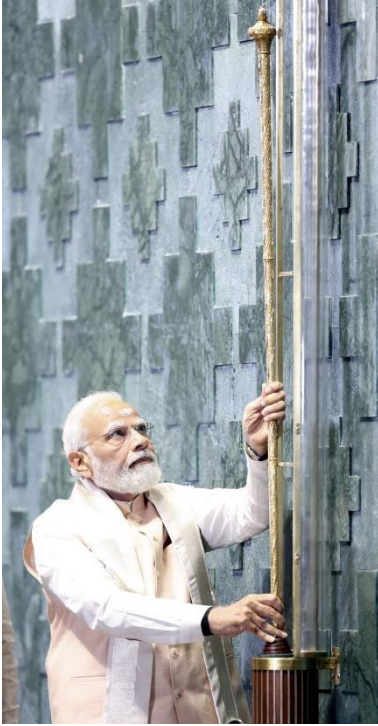
Senior Journalists and activists should understand the ground reality and provide valuable suggestions to the Government to tackle the challenges in future, instead of demanding 'no regulation' regime in the name of 'freedom of speech'.

Senior journalists and stakeholders get apprehension about the new guidelines, because of the lack of communication by

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. They should take the stakeholders into confidence and seek their support and guidance in framing the guidelines. Ultimately, the innocent people should be protected and criminals and anti-social elements should be punished.

Sengol, the symbol of Indian Tradition and Culture adorns the New Parliament

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (May 2023)



***Prime Minister Modi
installing Sengol in
Parliament***

More than the inauguration of the New Parliament Building, the news of the Prime Minister Modi consecrating the 'Sengol' adjoining the Speaker's Chair has created more interest and curiosity among the citizens.

The Sengol (Sceptre), which is also known as 'Raja Danda' symbolises Indian tradition and culture. Whenever there was a change of power, the Rajaguru used to present the King or the Ruler with this Sengol (Sceptre) to symbolize the change of power. Even in Ramayana and Mahabharata, this Raja Danda is referred. The Sengol signifies the 'righteousness' to rule the land impartially with 'Dharma'. It is also referred to as 'Dharma Dhanda' in some ancient literature. Ancient Tamil literature speaks a lot about Sengol and how the King or the

Ruler should rule without showing partiality under Dharma. Saint Thiruvalluvar in Thirukkural, written 2000 years ago, devotes 10 couplets exclusively on the significance of Sengol.

Sengol presented during Independence

When the British decided to hand over power to India and give Independence, the then Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten requested Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to find out the details of the actual ceremony and the symbolic methods to transfer power to India. C Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) was to take over as the Governor General of India after Independence. Rajaji was a great scholar of Indian traditions and culture. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru requested Rajaji to suggest symbolic methods for the transfer of power from British to India.

Being a great scholar himself, Rajaji felt that the traditional method of presenting Sengol by Saints to the new ruler, as it used to be in the Chola dynasty, was the best way. The Chola Kings were known for their valour, fleet, and great governance. They are also said to be the descendants of Lord Rama. Whenever power was transferred to a new Chola King, the Rajaguru used to hand over the 'Sengol' with 'Nandi' on the top and bless them.

Rajaji wanted to adopt the same procedure and requested one of the leading Saiva Mutts 'Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam' to help in making the 'Sengol' and perform the rituals for transfer of power. On the suggestion of the Senior Pontiff of Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam, a 5-foot long gold-plated Sengol was made at 'Vummidi Bangaru Chetty and Sons' jewellers, Chennai before the Independence.

The Government of India arranged a special flight to take the Sengol from Chennai to Delhi on 14th August 1947. Since Senior Pontiff was not well, his second in command led the team of Odhuvars (singers of Tamil hymns) and Nadaswaram team.



Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with 'Sengol'

On 14th August 1947 night , the Sengol was presented to Lord Mountbatten by the Pontiff and taken back. It was a great moment for the country. After 200 years of struggle and loss of thousands of lives, we were getting freedom from the British.. Immediately after getting back the Sengol from Lord Mountbatten, it was purified with Ganga Jal and taken in procession to the residence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. During the procession, the Odhuvars were singing 'Kolaru Pathigam', of Saint Gnanasambandar with traditional South Indian Nadaswaram. The Sengol was handed over to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the night at 11.45 pm on 14th August 1947 by the Junior Adheenam with blessings. They all chanted a Tamil hymn ending with "*Arasaalvaar aanai namade*". This means they were invoking Lord Shiva's blessings and His orders that he (in this context Pandit Nehru) would rule the nation. The Sengol contained the Nandhi, signifying Justice. During that brief ceremony, the Pontiff applied sacred ash (Vibuthi) on the forehead of Pandit Nehru and adorned him with a silk shawl. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who was the President

of the Constituent Assembly, was also present there. After the brief ceremony, Nehru made the special address 'Tryst with destiny' in the Constituent Assembly.

Sengol lost and regained

Though this brief traditional ceremony was done on the suggestion of Lord Mountbatten as a symbol of transfer of power, the details are not found in the Government records. This event was reported in the Time Magazine dated 25th August 1947 published from USA and also in the Indian newspapers at that time. Many of the authors, including D.F. Karaka, Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins and Dr BR Ambedkar have referred about this event in their books. Unfortunately, no records are available in the Government Archive.



Sengol displayed as a 'walking stick'

The Sengol which was presented in a ceremonial manner to Pandit Nehru was later kept in Allahabad Museum with the caption 'Walking Stick'. In a casual conversation on 15th August 1978 (31 years after Independence), Sri Kanchi Maha Swamigal narrated this incident in detail to some of the devotees, including Dr Subramaniam. The doctor later published this conversation in his book. Again from 2017, the matter started surfacing again slowly in local media with stories. The matter was brought to the notice of Prime Minister Modi in 2021, who ordered a thorough investigation



Time Magazine 25th August 1947



THIRUVAVADUTHURAI ADEENAKARTHAR'S Presentation of Golden Sceptre to NEHRUJEE



His Holiness Sri Ambalavara Pandarasannidhi (60th Maha Sannidhanam), who made arrangements to present the Golden Sceptre along with his Blessings to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the First Premier of Free India, on the Eve of Independence Day i.e. at 10 p.m. on 14th August, 1947, at his residence 11, York Road, New Delhi.



The Hindu dated 28th August 1947

in to the matter. During the research, it was found out that Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam had the complete details of this event in their records with a photo.



Prime Minister Modi prostrating before Sengol before installation in Parliament

Vummidi Ehirajulu (96), who made this Sengol in 1947 also confirmed the event. The research team of Prime Minister's Office, after confirming the incident, located the Sengol at Allahabad Museum displayed as a Walking Stick. PreSense spoke to Dr H V Hande (former Minister of Tamil Nadu and aged 96), who was groomed by Rajaji.

Dr. Hande also confirmed that he was aware of this event organised by Rajaji through various conversations he had with him. Now after the confirmation of the event and locating the Sengol, Prime Minister Modi has kept this symbol of Indian tradition and culture at the new Parliament next to the Chair of the Speaker on 28th May 2023. He organized the re-enactment of the Sengol Ceremony during the inauguration of the New Parliament building inviting the 20-plus Adheenams from Tamil Nadu with the rendering of Tamil hymns invoking the blessings of Lord Shiva. The most touching part of the

event was that Prime Minister prostrated before the Sengol before accepting it from the Seers.

Controversies

Though the Sengol Ceremony is confirmed through various media reports and photos, some of the opposition parties, including Congress do not want to accept this.

Ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu, though in their official document presented last year in the Assembly confirmed the Sengol Ceremony of 1947 for transfer of power, boycotted this inauguration now, on a flimsy reason. Though they have been claiming to be the saviours of the Tamil language, it is sad that these parties boycotted when Tamil culture was being hailed in the new Parliament. One of the Ministers in the DMK Government also tweeted in mocking at Prime Minister for this Sengol Ceremony in unparliamentary words. After a huge public protest, the tweet was removed.

The DMK leaders were making fun of whether Sengol presentation was relevant in the democracy when it was used for Kings. Interestingly, when the sitting Mayor of Chennai Priya assumed office, Sengol was presented to her as a customary procedure by the Minister concerned. (Photo)



Another objection made by the opposition parties is the 'Nandhi' kept on the top of the Sengol. They argue that Nandhi is a Hindu symbol. The attitude of some of the opposition parties in mocking the rich tradition and culture of our country, for their political reasons, may

become counter-productive to them during the election time. They should learn to differentiate between politics and Indian culture.

Though PreSense may not like to go deep into the reasons for hiding the Sengol Ceremony all these years from the knowledge of the citizens, we appeal to the Modi Government to include this part in all history and text books.

PM Modi's Nine-Year Rule Gets Good Rating, but the Middle-Class Expresses Concerns

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (June 2023)

In May 2023, Narendra Modi has completed 9 years of his rule. The Government has issued lot of advertisements claiming spectacular achievements on many fronts. Generally, it is said that politics and elections are based more on 'perception' than on 'performance'. We have in the past, seen several Prime Ministers (PMs) and Chief Ministers (CMs) losing elections in spite of their sterling performances, and several non-performing politicians winning again. In order to quickly study the perception of the people across the nation, PreSense conducted a snap survey on 6th June with a few questions. The link was circulated on social media and through various WhatsApp groups. Within 24 hours, we got 1661 responses from all the States from different age groups, with varied professional backgrounds and gender. After cleaning up the extreme views, we could get 1404 balanced responses. It may also be recalled that PreSense conducted a similar snap survey in June 2021, after Modi completed 7 years of rule. This was published in our June 2021 edition.

The survey has indicated a lot of insights about the positive and negative aspects of the Modi rule. Even those respondents who gave higher ratings to Modi expressed serious concerns about some of the issues.

Since it was conducted online, we can safely take this as the perception or mood of the average educated middle class and lower middle class segment across India. This segment was the base, which provided Modi with a huge mandate both in the 2014 and 2019 General Elections. Even now, this section forms part of nearly 50 per cent of the vote bank and can influence another 10 to 15 per cent of other segments.

Hence, these perceptions are significant to the Modi team. We also clarify that we have not done any study of the Below Poverty Line (BPL) segment.

Positive Aspects

Generally, all the respondents, irrespective of whether they were supporters of Modi or not, perceived the following as his positive achievements:

Good corruption-free and scam-free Governance, Effective COVID management, managing various schemes for poor people, infrastructure development, raising the image of India globally, maintaining national security, resolving the Kashmir issue, Digitalisation, and Economic reforms constitute around 85% of the views of the respondents. Since we have asked an 'open-ended question' to mention the positive aspects, we could feel the respondents were quite comfortable with the governance of Modi. Many people perceive Modi as a 'clean' person providing strong leadership.

Corruption-free governance gets huge appreciation from the respondents, including his critics.

Even during June 2021, we got the same perception. That means Modi maintains the leadership and clean image intact.

Negative Aspects

As indicated earlier, the respondents belong to the average middle-class and lower-middle-class segment. Hence, this can be considered the perception of this segment.

Though the respondents appreciate Modi Government for Corruption free governance, one-fifth of the respondents across the nation uniformly feel that Modi Government does not take action and punish the corrupt people. Though a lot

of raids are conducted, nothing is being done thereafter. According to many respondents, corrupt people are roaming free without fear of punishment.

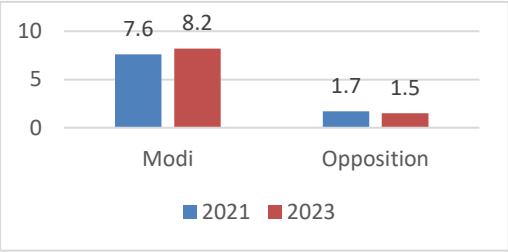
The other negative aspects perceived by the respondents are:

- Petrol and diesel price hike, leading to a price rise of other commodities;
- Unemployment problem / job losses;
- Not done anything to favour the middle class and senior citizens, including Pensioners (bank interest is getting reduced for deposits);
- While the schemes are laudable, implementation is poor;
- Some Ministers are generally inefficient, and Gujarat cadre officers dominate the bureaucracy;
- Poor communication strategies – not making any serious effort to counter fake messages and false news;
- ‘Perceived arrogance’ of some BJP and RSS leaders – not connecting with people –assuming themselves to be ‘intellectual islands’ with an ‘I Know It All’ attitude;
- Not taking enough action against continuous protests against CAA, Farm Laws, etc
- Not popularising the Central Government Schemes.
- Not doing anything to protect Hindu community, though claiming to be the saviour of Hindus. Not releasing Hindu temples from Government control.

Interestingly, the persons who voted for Modi in 2014 and 2019, and confirm voting for him in 2024 too, are highly critical of his handling of economic issues and the insensitivity of the Government towards the problems faced by the common man.

Rating of Modi Government and Opposition

When the respondents were asked to rate the Modi



Government on a 0 to 10 scale, 83% rated more than 8.0. The average rating by all the respondents was 8.2 out of 10. A similar online survey was conducted by us in June 2021 and

published in June 2021 issue of PreSense, when Modi completed 7 years of rule. At that time, Modi got a rating of 7.6 out of 10.

The respondents were also asked to rate the performance of the Opposition Parties led by Indian National Congress as an effective opposition, on a scale of 0 to 10. Only 4% of the respondents rated more than 8 out of 10. The average rating was 1.5 out of 10. In June 2021, the Opposition got a rating of 1.7 out of 10.

These two indicators reveal that the popularity of Modi has gone up in these two years, in spite of all the negative observations. It may be probably due to a lack of credible opposition and alternative to Modi.

It is also observed that there is a marginal decline in voting pattern with 4% of respondents who voted for Modi in 2019, not voting for Modi in 2024. This may be due to the frustration of middle and lower-middle-class voters due to price rise, including the increase of gas and petrol, taxation and withdrawal of subsidies. Even senior citizens express concern over the declining rate of interest, withdrawal of concessions and huge medical insurance premiums. This decline of 4% is an indicator of frustration, in spite of a good

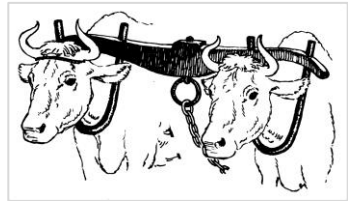
rating. It should be noted that rating is different from voting. Though this is a small percentage, Modi Team cannot ignore this.

Alternate to Modi

The respondents were asked to specify an alternate to Modi. 58% of the respondents could not specify anybody and left the column blank. 23% of the respondents preferred Yogi Adityanath. Naveen Patnaik (5%), Amit Shah (3%) and Rahul Gandhi (2%) are also indicated by them. During the analysis, our team observed that many respondents got struck without anybody's name coming to their minds.

Functioning of the Opposition Parties

As indicated earlier, even those respondents who were against Modi were critical of the Opposition Parties led by Indian National Congress. In any democracy, both the opposition and the ruling parties are like bullocks tied to a yoke.



Both have to travel together in a balanced manner. Both have the responsibility to run the democracy, and both are accountable to the citizens.

In 1991, when Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister, the country was facing a major financial crisis, leading to the liberalisation of the economy. Although RSS was against the principles of liberalisation, the then-opposition leaders, Vajpayee and Advani worked closely with Narasimha Rao to bail out the country from the crisis. Both the PM and the Opposition Leaders placed the nation above their political gains. Even as a minority government, Narasimha Rao completed his full term, implementing many financial reforms, the fruits of which we enjoy today. When Pakistan raised

allegations against India, Narasimha Rao, instead of travelling himself, deputed Vajpayee to give a befitting response on behalf of India, to Pakistan at the United Nations. This gesture sent a strong message globally that all the political parties in India follow a similar policy on Jammu and Kashmir.

Today, unfortunately, our opposition parties do not act responsibly. They try to politicise every insignificant issue by spreading fake and unverified messages. Sometimes, they issue statements that favour enemy countries too. The opposition parties, barring a few parties, create a ruckus in the Parliament, defeating the very purpose of democracy.

Our Observations

Modi gets a better rating in 2023 among the respondents than in 2021, probably due to TINA (There is no Alternate) factor. We can take this survey as the mood of the lower middle-class and middle-class segments. (The mood of the Below Poverty Line was not taken). Modi enjoys a 'clean' and 'corruption-free' governance image. But at the same time, respondents feel that he is not taking any action against corrupt people to punish them. Though the middle-class people indicate their pains due to price rise, taxation, and unemployment, they seem to prefer Modi, since the opposition is very weak. As already indicated, there is a marginal decline in voters who voted in his favour in 2019.

From the various responses in the survey, it is clearly indicated that the people are more anxious and concerned about their day-to-day life than about the trumpeted achievements of a better macro policy or sound foreign relations. However, during the course of conversation with a senior Foreign Service Officer, it is understood that only because of the cordial relationship with various countries, including Russia and the US, we are able to maintain the petrol and gas prices at this level. He also further said that if India had not maintained a

good relationship with other countries, the prices would have gone up very high triggering huge inflation. But this factor has not been communicated effectively by the Government to the people. The ruling party should not ignore this fact.

In the past, more than the economic issues, emotional issues have helped BJP to come to power. With the new set of young voters and the growing frustration of the average middle class, emotional issues may not play a significant role in future, particularly in South India. When a national party like Indian National Congress is weak, it could lead to a fragmented mandate with many regional parties securing seats, leading to chaos and leadership confusion. India has witnessed many fragile governments in the past, with Charan Singh, Deve Gowda, IK Gujral, Chandrasekar and VP Singh ruling without a majority mandate, collapsing at the whims and fancies of various regional party leaders. It is also sad that Indian National Congress is not taking enough efforts to emerge as a strong opposition party. A weak Congress is not good for democracy and India.

Our Conclusion and Suggestions

There is also a feeling among the respondents that the Government was not handling the protests against CAA, Farm Laws, etc effectively. They have allowed too much time for the protests, causing inconvenience to the general public. Also, they do not act heavily on those who spread wrong/fake messages against the country. They also feel that the Government is soft towards corrupt people, who already have cases booked against them.

Unfortunately, communication strategy of the ruling segment is very poor. Although the Government has managed to overcome a lot of challenges, they are not being communicated effectively to the people. Even though the Government boasts of good governance, it is not felt at the

grass root level, mainly because of a lack of implementation and effective communication. The Government does not counter fake news effectively, and wrong information is spread by print, television and social media.

Modi commands the confidence of the people and enjoys a clean non-corrupt image. This is a great advantage. Although the next Parliament election is due in 2024, with Assembly elections in some States scheduled shortly, both the ruling and the opposition leaders should introspect about taking the country to the next level like bullocks in the yoke.

The survey in general indicates that there is no visible anti-incumbency factor with regard to the Parliament election against Modi even after his 9 years of ruling.

(Support for Survey analysis by Prof. Dr K Prabhakar)

Uniform Civil Code Promotes Gender Equality, Dream of Dr BR Ambedkar

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (July 2023)

Introduction

The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is a concept that has been at the forefront of the Indian societal and political discourse for decades. It refers to the idea of having a single set of secular civil laws that apply uniformly to all citizens, irrespective of their religion. The UCC aims to promote gender equality, social justice, and national integration by eradicating the prevailing disparities in personal laws governed by different religious communities.

Though the discussion on UCC is happening for several decades after Independence, it is now being seriously debated after the Law Commission has called for views from the citizens. Article 44 of the Indian Constitution states, "The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India." Though the Government has not released the draft of the UCC, debates are going on either opposing or welcoming the UCC. The debate about the common civil code has polarized the political parties. The opposition parties allege that the UCC may destroy the religious identity of the minorities, mainly Muslims. The ruling party has not provided its official stand, to allay these fears.

Though the Constitution provides Gender Equality, in practice women are discriminated against in many aspects like marriage, divorce, inheritance, maintenance, adoption, etc. due to various personal laws followed by various communities. The UCC will remove only the anomalies of the injustice done to women in various communities providing equal status that has been enshrined in the Constitution. It will not affect the religious aspects of the communities. The opponents of UCC

are fighting against the UCC without realising that they are fighting against the 'gender equality' provided in the Constitution. Probably, it is due to the lack of understanding by the opponents or deliberately due to vote bank politics.

Position before Independence

Before 1937, Hindus and Muslims in India were following the personal laws adopted in that area. That means, even Muslims were following the practices of Hindus and vice versa. Though India was ruled by various invaders for nearly 800 years, there was no problem. Only in 1937, British Government enacted Shariat Law for Muslims, to create a wedge between Hindus and Muslims as part of their 'divide and rule' policy. After Indian Independence, the Constituent Assembly debated whether the 'Uniform Civil Code' could be implemented across the nation.

Constituent Assembly Discussion and Article 35

The Constituent Assembly of India, while framing the Constitution, engaged in extensive discussions about the need for a Uniform Civil Code.

It needs to be noted that the early proponents of UCC were women. Among the 15 women, who were part of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution, Hansa Mehta's contribution in trying to make UCC justiciable remains most significant. As a member of Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee, she along with Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Dr B R Ambedkar and M R Masani stressed the need for establishing a single Indian identity over multiple religious identities and the role that the state has to play in ensuring this. Dakshayani Velayudhan, the first and the only Dalit woman in the cabinet had also made a strong case for UCC.

The Constituent Assembly took up the issue of Uniform Civil Code on 23 November, 1948 as part of Article 35 of the Constitution. There were impassioned debates on the topic

with the 24 November 1948 edition of the Times of India describing it as “a series of full-blooded speeches.”

Interestingly, the amendments to the Draft were tabled by five Muslim members – M. Muhammad Ismail, Naziruddin Ahmad, Mahboob Ali Baig, B Pocker and KTM Ahmed Ibrahim. Their dominant view was that the implementation of UCC was “tyrannical” and that the state had no right to “interfere” in the personal laws of any community.

Among the members who felt that UCC was necessary to keep India united, the most vociferous arguments were put forth by K M Munshi. He said, the enactment of a common code affects Hindus equally and the goal of such legislation is to protect the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution like ensuring gender equality. Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer asked if India should be welded together as a single nation or always kept up as a series of competing communities. Ananthasayanam Iyengar also supported the UCC.

Dr Ambedkar’s views

Dr B R Ambedkar in his response pointed out that there was already a uniform code of laws covering almost all aspects of human relationships which meant that it was possible to have a uniform civil code in the country. Differing on the argument that the Muslim personal law was uniform throughout the country, he reminded the Assembly of the North-West Frontier Province which followed the Hindu Law in the matter of succession and others till, in 1939 the Central Legislature passed a law to apply Shariat to the Muslim dominated areas. Even in the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Bombay, the Muslims to a large extent were governed by the Hindu Law in the matter of succession. He also brought attention to the fact that in North Malabar, the matriarchal form of law, Marumakkathayam Law was applied to both Hindus and Muslims.

Concluding the debate on 2 December 1948 on UCC, Ambedkar said, "All that the State is claiming in this matter is a power to legislate. There is no obligation upon the State to do away with personal laws. Therefore, no one need be apprehensive of the fact that if the State has the power, the State will immediately proceed to execute or enforce that power in a manner that may be found to be objectionable by the Muslims or by the Christians or by any other community in India ... Sovereignty is always limited, no matter even if you assert that it is unlimited because sovereignty in the exercise of that power must reconcile itself to the sentiments of different communities. No Government can exercise its powers in such a manner as to provoke the Muslim community to rise in rebellion. I think it would be a mad government if it did so".

He assured the Assembly that the feelings of everyone will be taken into consideration and said that in future, the Parliament may make provisions where the uniform civil code is applied to only those who want to be voluntarily governed by it. In the end, it was decided that the amendments proposed to Article 35 do not hold any merit and it was adopted as it is. This article was later moved to the Directive Principles of State Policy as the law makers felt that the nation was not yet ready to accept a common civil code. Thus, the goal of a uniform civil code was enshrined in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution and read thus:

"The state shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India."

Present situation

Though criminal law is applicable to all citizens uniformly, there are various personal civil laws governing the various religions and communities. There were several practices among the Hindus across the nation for marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption, etc. Practices like Sati, polygamy, early marriage, discrimination of women in properties, etc. were prevalent among the Hindus in those times. In spite of the

resistance, Hindu Laws were enacted in 1955 to bring uniformity among the Hindus. A modern civilisation needs to adopt reforms based on the need.

Islamic personal laws permit women to get married at the time of puberty or 15 whichever is earlier, while Hindu laws permit marriage only at 18. If a person marries a 15-year-old girl, the offence is determined based on his religion. Even for divorce, various communities have different procedures. There is no uniformity for the inheritance of properties. When Hindu laws prohibit polygamy, there are several cases in the courts where women plead that their husbands convert to Islam to get married to another woman. Legally women are discriminated in spite of the Constitutional guarantee of equality.

Supreme Court of India in many cases have pointed out these anomalies and advised the Government to bring legislation and implement UCC as provided under Article 44 of the Indian Constitution.

Though Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr Ambedkar wanted to bring UCC immediately after Independence, presently the followers of both leaders oppose UCC for their own political reasons. The political parties who were pleading for women's equality, now oppose UCC. The RSS in the 1970s opposed the UCC but now is in favour.

Way Ahead

Though Constitution provides equality for citizens, even after 75 years of Independence, women are discriminated against due to their religious practices and 'Gender equality' is only on paper. There is a fear among minorities that UCC may interfere with their religious practices. The Government and the media should explain the need for the UCC properly and allay the fears of minorities and others. All political parties should realise that in the name of opposing UCC, they are opposing Gender equality, which was piloted by Dr Ambedkar and Pandit Nehru. It may be noted that Goa State has been

following the UCC right from the Portuguese days and continued the same laws even after their liberation in 1961.

Any change may create a fear psychosis and uncertainty. The government of India should come out with the draft UCC and create confidence among minorities that it is meant only for Gender Equity and does not interfere with religious practices. At the same time, the opposition parties also, instead of playing vote bank politics over this vital issue, follow the sentiments of Dr Ambedkar and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and help the Government in a smooth transition for the reforms.

Freedom of Speech vs. National Security: Where to Draw the Line? NewsClick controversy

By Ramesh Sundaram, Editor in Chief (August 2023)



Recently, Indian television media have put out screaming stories on "NewsClick", a digital portal, alleging their involvement in anti-Indian propaganda with the support of Indian politicians. This generated a big political controversy when Parliament was in session.

NewsClick is an English digital portal that is viewer-funded. The portal says it is an independent media organization. But the moot question here is: Did China change its propaganda from mobile apps to media and fund some organisations, journalists, and some eminent people for this explicit purpose?

The online news portal NewsClick is now mired in this controversy.

The accusations

Based on a report by the New York Times (NYT), more than 250 retired judges, bureaucrats, and veterans including former Chief Justice of Telangana K Sreedhar Rao, former Home Secretary LC Goyal, former RAW Chief Sanjeev Tripathi, many former justices, ambassadors and DGPs, have addressed a letter to Hon'ble President Droupadi Murmu asking her to take action against the digital news portal NewsClick as 'traitors' for allegedly receiving funds from China-linked American millionaire Neville Rai Singham. They sought action against the portal. They quoted an NYT report about the alleged link between the millionaire Singham and the Chinese Communist Party. It also wrote about the link between the NYT report and a raid by the Enforcement Directorate in 2021 at the portal's office and residences of top employees, like its Editor-in-Chief Prabir Purkayastha.

The raids brought out regular e-mail exchanges linked to the Communist Party of China. These emails showed the involvement of not only journalists but also veteran members of political parties in India. The letter alleged that the portal's most recent news coverage was pro-China. The letter claimed that amidst the 2020 Galwan clashes between India and China, the portal built a pro-China narrative. The signatories alleged that there were email exchanges with Chinese agents about how to change the Indian map to show undisputed Indian areas as either disputed or as part of China itself.

Enforcement Directorate Probe

The ED action against the NewsClick portal uncovered the alleged involvement of the portal in promoting pro-China propaganda in a news format. The letter further accused a 'sinister' conspiracy between NewsClick and some opposition party members, thus easily playing into the machinations of

an anti-national agenda. It also said the media coverage of the Rafale deal and the remarks of opposition leaders on the issue clearly show a nexus between NewsClick and millionaire Singham. The ED probe brought to light an email correspondence between CPI(M) leader Prakash Karat and Neville Rai Singham, making the issue murkier and murkier. The ED also uncovered the portal's director Prabir Purkayastha's email exchanges with many Indian journalists and the millionaire Neveille Roy Singham.

These emails were recovered by the ED from its searches during the money laundering probe against NewsClick. It is alleged that the email exchanges promoted China's propaganda on its fight against the pandemic, Indian Communists' affinity towards China, and some vital conversations regarding the India-China map. It was also mentioned that the millionaire Singham, who lives in China, illegally funded NewsClick to the tune of Rs. 38 crore for promoting pro-China information in India. The NewsClick director and his team of journalists were accused of publishing paid news on their website. This was in exchange for the funds transferred by Singham to PPK NewsClick Studio Pvt. Ltd. The ED alleged that NewsClick was not the only one to receive illegal funds, they alleged.

It said Javed Anand, husband of noted activist Teesta Setelvad (who is charged with her purported role in fabricating evidence during the 2002 Gujarat riots), had received over 12 lakh rupees, and Tamara, Teesta's daughter, received about Rs. 11 lakhs. Gautam Navalkha, accused in the Ela Parishad case, who received over 20 lakhs, and CPI(M) member Bappaditya Sinha, who maintains CPI(M)'s Twitter handle, were also alleged to be the beneficiaries. Media reports allege that there is also digital evidence that proves Singham and his journalists were working on various projects to enhance the image of China and to support China's action against the Chinese business magnate Jack Ma, the owner of Alibaba. It is pertinent here to mention that ED had earlier attached the

property of NewsClick's director, Prabir Purkayastha. Popular social media platform X (formerly Twitter) had also suspended the NewsClick portal's official account, but it was later revoked.

The Government's ban on some mobile apps and gaming consoles

Earlier, the Central Government had banned some mobile apps and some gaming consoles because the Indian agencies found that China was using them to weaken the Indian economy through cellphones, gaming applications, and even some firms. They were further used for moneylaundering from China to India and spying on the Indian defence system. In stringent action against some Chinese companies, the ED froze money lying in the bank accounts of China-based Xiami Group and also against mobile venture Vivo.

This is one side of the story.

Allegations denied

On the other side, all these were totally denied by the millionaire Neville Rai Singham. The NewsClick also denied money laundering and foreign remittances. About 800 eminent citizens, including the Director of The Hindu Group of Publications, N Ram, former editors of Wire, Siddharth Vardarajan and MK Venu, Former Judge of Madras High Court, Justice K Chandru, Journalists Prem Shankar Jha and P Sainath, also expressed their solidarity with the online news portal in a signed statement. They said the hounding of the news portal is an attack on independent journalism and freedom of expression enshrined in the Constitution. They took exception to what they termed as false accusations on the online news portal NewsClick. The signatories said this was an attack on independent journalism devoid of corporate influence.

A statement by the CPI (M) condemned the ED raid on the offices of NewsClick. The statement said the raid was a brazen attempt to intimidate and suppress the portal. It said central agencies were being used by the Modi government to harass and suppress independent media. It demanded an end to vindictive action against NewsClick and its management. The CPI(M) leader Prakash Karat has also denied the allegations and termed the allegation a bunch of lies propagated by the BJP.

Many eminent persons whom PreSense contacted said independent journalism and freedom of expression should not be at the cost of the country's security. They said there are limitations to freedom of expression when it involves the nation's security. National security takes precedence over freedom of speech, they said. They said the online portal must be taken to task and severely punished if the money laundering charges are proved.

In the Court

On August 11, 2023, the Delhi High Court issued notice to NewsClick and its director, Prabir Purkayastha, in response to a plea by the ED seeking a vacation of the HC's order that granted interim protection regarding involvement in the money laundering issue. The Court said it had prima facie found merit in ED's plea and hence needed deliberation. The Court has listed the case for further hearing on September 6, 2023. Earlier on June 21, 2020, the Delhi High Court ordered the ED not to take coercive action against the online news portal and its director. The Enforcement Directorate first began its investigation into alleged illegal foreign funding in 2021. The ED said its investigation revealed that a foreign fund of Rs. 38.05 crore was fraudulently infused for three years into PPK NewsClick Studio Pvt. Ltd., which was distributed to many journalists, including Gautam Navalkha.

In these types of allegations, there may be truth or otherwise. When such serious allegations surface, the investigation

authorities and judicial system should take immediate action without any delay. Justice delayed is justice denied. If there is any breach of national security the perpetrators should be punished forthwith. Freedom of expression provided in the Constitution does not empower anybody to follow the toolkit of enemy countries to defame India and spread false information among the people.

From Tragedy to Triumph: Changing Lives Through Education - The Inspiring Story of the Mugavari Foundation

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Managing Editor (Sep 2023)



A patient Perumayee (34), from a small village near Salem (Tamil Nadu), was admitted to Madras Medical College Hospital in 1998 for heart surgery. Though she could have been discharged after 10 days, she was kept at the hospital for longer days without proper care. Her younger brother, Ramesh Kuppudaiyar (20), studying a degree course at a college, watched helplessly, as they did not hail from a rich and influential family. The young boy observed the casual approach of the doctors and other medical staff, mainly attending only to the influential patients. Meanwhile, Perumayee died in the hospital after 76 days without proper care. Ramesh watched her dying helplessly. As a young boy from a poor family, he could not do anything. Ramesh returned to his village sadly, with a disturbed mind. Though he hailed from an ordinary low-income agricultural family, out of emotion, he vowed to create more doctors to support poor people in the Government hospital with proper care. We see such vows only in films and not in reality.

The start of the journey

When he returned to his village after the death of his sister in Chennai, a female student named Kasthuri from his village came to him with a marksheet stating that she had passed 10th standard with first rank in the school. Emotion struck Ramesh asked her to complete the Higher Secondary with the first rank in the school and promised her that he would help her become a doctor. The girl, Kasthuri also hailed from an ordinary, poor family without any income. Through his contact, he got admission for her in the Higher Secondary course in a private school.

Ramesh forgot about this promise given under emotion. He completed his degree and started to pursue Chartered Accountancy at Salem.

The young student Kasthuri, with the assurance of Ramesh to educate her in medicine, started working hard, completed her Higher Secondary with 95 percent marks, and stood first in the school. After getting her marks, she ran to Ramesh to convey the news. She firmly believed that Ramesh would make her a doctor. Ramesh totally forgot about his earlier promise to make her a doctor. When she told him about the marks, Ramesh asked her why she should not become a teacher. Greatly disappointed, Kasthuri reminded him of his promise to make her a doctor when she completed 10th standard and she explained how she worked hard, based on his promise. Ramesh remembered the promise given out of emotion two years earlier. However, he promised her that he would help her become a doctor.

Turning Point

This incident was a turning point in Ramesh's life. He consulted many people and sought their help to prepare her for the

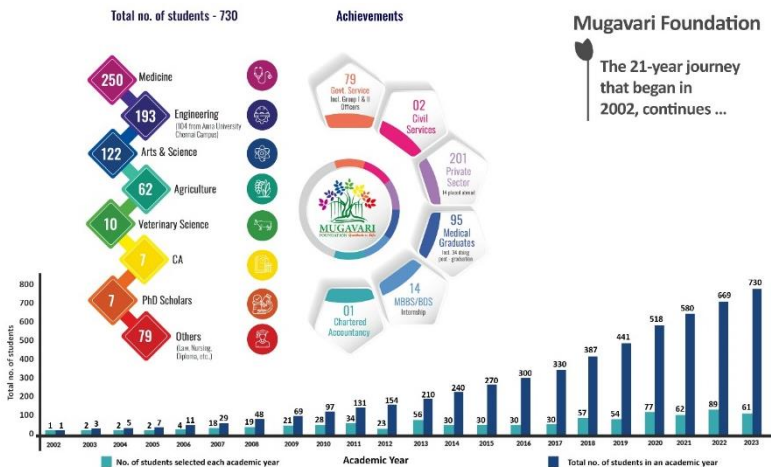
entrance examination. He admitted Kasthuri to the best coaching centre, and she passed with high marks. Kasthuri got a medical seat out of merit at a leading Government Medical College in Tamil Nadu.

Kasthuri's family was not in a position to spend any money on her education. Ramesh wanted to ensure that Kasthuri completed her medical course at any cost. He approached many people for help. It was not an easy task to gather money to educate a student. Fortunately he came into contact with A R Murugadoss, a leading Tamil and Hindi Film Director in 2002. When Ramesh explained his promise and dream to Murugadoss, he was happy and assured that he would take care of the expenses of Kasthuri's education.

Ramesh breathed a huge sigh of relief for securing support for the girl. When he returned to his village, the news had already spread, and many people started approaching him for support to pursue higher education. This had posed a great challenge to him.

"I thought it was an opportunity provided and a direction given by God to me to support the poor and needy. I continued my efforts to hunt for sponsorships for needy students. I discontinued my Chartered Accountancy studies and moved to Chennai, taking up this task full-time. Braving all challenges, I completed the Inter but did not proceed further. I got inspiration from my parents, who were always helping others the needy. After supporting 21 students through various sponsors in 2007, I met Shri Saidai Duraisamy, a well-known politician who is still running free IAS training centres (Manidhaneyam Free IAS Academy) for underprivileged students. When I told him about my mission, he offered to help me personally pursue higher education. I refused and pleaded with him to support some students. Immediately, he offered one of his buildings rent-free to enable students to stay

there and complete their studies. Besides accommodation, he also offered food. In the course of time, he accommodated 33 students in his building with food. That was a turning point in our initiative", Ramesh recalled.



Achievement

Ramesh formalised his initiative by creating a non-profit trust, Mugavari Foundation, in 2011. 'Mugavari' in Tamil means 'address'. Ramesh wanted to provide address to each and every poor and deserving student in life. Till now, 730 students have been supported by the Mugavari Foundation. Of these, 250 have been supported for medical courses. 95 students have already graduated and are working in various hospitals, and some of them are pursuing PG also. 193 students have been supported for engineering courses and 62 for Agricultural studies.

Till the Mugavari Foundation was formally registered in 2011, Ramesh ensured that the sponsors sent the payments directly

to the colleges. Now the foundation has seven trustees, of whom three are Mugavari student beneficiaries, who have completed their studies and are placed in good positions in their lives.



Sumathi, Trustee

Sumathi, a senior official in a leading multinational company in Chennai, voluntarily joined the Trust as one of the trustees in 2019 out of passion for supporting deserving poor students. "I joined the Trust in 2019 on seeing the commitment of Ramesh. I wanted to be part of this great mission, like a squirrel. During weekends, I spend time looking after the planning and administration. In the last year, i.e. 2022-2023, we supported the students to the extent of nearly Rs. 2 crores. The sponsors directly send the payment to us, and we make the payment to the colleges. We have a robust internal audit system", said Sumathi.

"Till now, we have had 450 donors and sponsors. 100 of them are active and have adopted one or more students till the completion of their studies. Film director Murugadoss, Sida Duraisamy, and former Canara Bank Chairman TN Manoharan (now IDBI Bank Chairman) have been supporting personally and through their contacts. When we had a challenging time during COVID time, TN Manoharan, as a chartered accountant, introduced some of his contacts, who later became well-wishers of Mugavari Foundation", added Ramesh.

Mugavari Team met Dr Abdul Kalam in 2013 at Raj Bhavan, when they were supporting 200 students. Dr. Kalam appreciated them and advised them to continue their efforts.

Selection Process

The selection process is very tough. Students from very poor backgrounds, particularly from villages, are given preference. After the announcement of Plus Two results in June every year,



Mugavari Ramesh, the silent man behind all these achievements

they receive applications. A selection committee consisting of students who have completed their studies visits the applicants, interviews them, and selects the students for support. "Every year, we get around 1,000 applications. Finally, we select around 70 to 80 students. This process is over by August every year. Later I go around seeking sponsorship for these students. On average, we need Rs. 1 lakh per year for a medical student. We take only the poor students who get admission to government colleges

through merit. We prefer students from government schools, largely from rural backgrounds with single parent or no one to take care of them. We prefer to support more female students. Nearly 50 per cent of our students are girls", said Ramesh.

Focusing on ethics and values

Interestingly, Ramesh does not own any vehicle. Wherever he wants to seek sponsorship support, he travels by bus only.

The students are spread across India in various domains like medicine, engineering, agriculture, arts & science, etc. either in different organisations as employees or in educational institutions, including hospitals. They have networked themselves through WhatsApp groups and support each other both professionally and individually. Ramesh has strictly taught them to follow ethics and values wherever they are and support needy people. Every year, the students of Mugavari meet in September in Chennai to discuss future plans and listen to motivating speeches. Normally, around 400 students participate across the nation.



**Dr Vijaya has conducted 1200
plus deliveries**

Dr. Vijaya from a small village near Kallakurichi completed her MBBS with the support of the Mugavari Foundation. She hails from a very poor family in the nearby district. She pursued MS thereafter through a government stipend. She is a gynaecologist. She has conducted more than 1200 deliveries. "More than 250 medical students and doctors of the Mugavari family are in our network, spread over 65 medical colleges and hospitals across India. We have developed a culture among ourselves to support all the patients coming to

us with proper care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, through our network, we could handle many patients with proper care when their relatives could not enter the hospital. This is what Ramesh Anna wants us to do", says Dr. Vijaya proudly. She introduced three deserving students, who are now supported by Mugavari Foundation.



Dharani, educating poor children in a remote village

Dharani, who is working as a teacher in a high school, was also supported by Mugavari to pursue her degree, post-graduation, and then B.Ed. She works in a remote village where the children of labourer parents cannot get one meal per day. Thanks to the government's noon meal scheme, these

children attend school. She is helping these children get better marks and go for higher education. She teaches English and 100% of her students pass their examinations. "I am teaching ethics and values to the children that I have learned from Ramesh Anna", claims Dharani.

T. S. Krishnamurthy, the former Chief Election Commissioner of India, while addressing the Mugavari family annual meeting in September 2023, described Ramesh as a saint who has dedicated his entire life to supporting the poor children's education.

Supporting students for education silently



A R Murugadoss



Saidai Duraisamy



T N Manoharan

In the 21 years of his journey, Ramesh has not posed for a photograph. Even at the annual meeting, he used to sit with the audience while the students managed the stage. After much persuasion, we got his photograph for PreSense.

We asked him about the number of students who involve themselves after their studies to support needy students. Ramesh said that they have introduced a "Vanavil Scheme", in which the students after employment can contribute every month any money after meeting their family expenses. Some of them contribute money, and many of them are involved in various other projects. "Getting sponsorships is a challenging task. One has to put up with the disrespect shown; sometimes, one has to tolerate losing self-respect, etc. I continue the efforts as a divine duty. Nearly 20 to 25% of our student beneficiaries may be indifferent after their graduation. Sadly, this is an increasingly new trend with the current generation. Majority of the students have realised the pain of poverty and hence are backing the initiative in one form or another. Whenever I am depressed because of a lack of response, I get a message that someone has completed his studies with high

marks; another student has got good employment; a message from a donor to take up two students, etc. These messages will strengthen me, and I will bounce back. I am now happy that, with God's graces, my emotional vow to create more doctors is coming slowly true", said Ramesh, with tears rolling down his cheeks.

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PreSense 200: A Walk Down Memory Lane

By Editorial Team (Oct 2023)

Launch of Internet in 1995

The Internet came to India for commercial use on August 15, 1995, when Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) launched the Internet. Srinivasan (the Founder of this eMagazine PreSense) was present on the first day of the launch at VSNL and realised that the internet was going to change the way of our communication and activities, including governance. Even before Yahoo and Google started the discussion groups, he started online discussion groups in 1998 with onelist.com and egroups.com, to bring together communication professionals, including public relations, marketing, branding and journalism domains. Later these groups were merged with Yahoo groups. These discussion groups provided opportunities for various professionals to interact and learn from each other. In spite of the fact that the speed of the internet was only 18 kbps (please note kilobytes and not megabytes), these discussion groups were popular among working professionals.

Launch of Prime Point Foundation



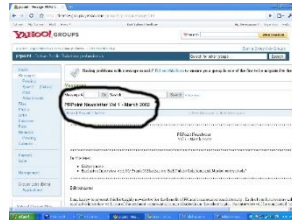
Srinivasan started Prime Point Foundation, a non-profit trust along with Shri S Narendra (then Information Advisor to Prime Minister) to promote communication awareness, in Dec 1999 at Chennai. The Foundation was launched by the

renowned agricultural scientist Dr M S Swaminathan. Prime

Point Foundation organised several workshops and seminars on various aspects of communication.

Interestingly, the Foundation organised a seminar in April 2000, jointly with the Madras Union of Journalists (MUJ) on the topic of how the internet was going to change the landscape of media.

Prof. Sreenath Sreenivasan, then Dean of Columbia University, School of Journalism, was the main speaker. When the print and television media were at their peak and the internet was at a nascent stage, this seminar evoked mixed responses. Many people even mocked Srinivasan. The Foundation continued with more such seminars on the impact of technology on communication.



Launch of Newsletter

In 2002, the Foundation started an eNewsletter titled 'PR Point Newsletter'. Since the Foundation was managing discussion groups, the newsletter carried exclusive interviews with experts across the world. Out of over-enthusiasm, the newsletters were delivered once in 10 days, with an autoresponder technique. The interviews contained advanced concepts that were likely to emerge. After the 8th edition, the Foundation observed that the newsletter did not have many readers and it was stopped.

Launch of eMagazine PreSense

The founder Srinivasan was very close to Dr Abdul Kalam and a great follower of his vision. In early 2006, Dr Abdul Kalam suggested all media persons adopt positive journalism that can benefit society. On February 18, 2006, Srinivasan, convened



an urgent meeting of his students and other communication professionals. Seven persons participated. It was decided to start an eMagazine (at that time, it was called ezine), for communication professionals. Within one hour, the title was decided as PReSense and the tagline was chosen as 'Communicate the Communication'. The masthead was also decided immediately by one of the team members.

It was decided to launch the ezine on March 6, 2006, online through the Yahoo group. Though the Foundation was running huge discussion groups on Yahoo with communication professionals across India and the globe, nobody was willing to give an interview for the first edition, as many preferred to talk to mainline media and not to a new and that too to a small, digital magazine. When Srinivasan discussed this challenge with Dr Y S Rajan, a close associate of Dr Abdul Kalam and Co-Author of the book India 2020, he readily agreed to give his first interview and also to launch the ezine online. Dr Y S Rajan launched the first edition on March 6, 2006, as scheduled.

Every month, the digital editions were distributed through various discussion groups and through the website. Dr. Abdul Kalam gave his exclusive interview in the 25th edition when we changed the logo and masthead, which is being used to date. From the 25th edition, the layout was also changed to the present format.

Every month one theme on communication-related topics, like internal communication, business communication, public relations, cartoons, Facebook, Twitter, Public Relations Society of America, Media Relations, Accreditation of Communication professionals, etc. were discussed. Eminent experts across the globe shared their views and even guest edited the ezine.

Meanwhile, PReSense became a digital media partner for global events on communication in London, Detroit, Singapore, etc. At that time, this was the only digital magazine for communication professionals.

Integrating with Podcast

The concept of Podcast started becoming popular globally in 2005 and 2006. PReSense was the first digital magazine to adopt this new concept within five months of its launch. The August 2006 edition carried an interview integrated with a Podcast. It was well received by the readers.



Digital Media Partnership



Generally, print and television media only used to be taken as Media Partners for any global event. Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), the official Institute to accredit communication professionals included PReSense as their digital media partner for the first time for their Global conference held in London. Several leading organisations at the global level have made this eMagazine their digital partner.

Cartoon launched



Dr Abdul Kalam launching the first Prince cartoon on 24th July 2008 at Raj Bhavan, Chennai



On the suggestion of Dr Abdul Kalam, a cartoon character Prince was created by Raipur-based Triambak Sharma, a well-known cartoonist. The first cartoon was launched in July 2008 by Dr Abdul Kalam himself with his autograph.

From then on, every edition carries one cartoon with Prince. Till now, 185 Prince cartoons have been published. As desired by Dr Kalam, we moved the cartoon to the first page. He was a regular reader of this eMagazine and was also a fan of Prince cartoons.

One of the Prince cartoons published by this eMagazine was reproduced by Wall Street Journal with the permission of the Editor.

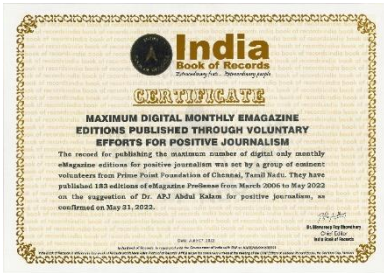
Shift to general topics

When the ezine was published, there were only niche and limited audiences. From the 61st edition, the tagline was changed from 'Communicate the communication' to 'Spreading positive vibrations'. PReSense became PreSense to mark the changeover. But the masthead remained the same. From that edition, till now, all general topics, including

with communication-related



politics, health, environment, education, book reviews, interviews, etc. are being covered.



Till now, PreSense is run without any commercial motive and without entertaining advertisements. Eminent professionals across all domains volunteer to run this digital magazine. In 2022, the India Book of Records has recognised PreSense for the

maximum number of monthly digital magazines published with voluntary efforts for positive journalism.

Prime Point Foundation and PreSense have started initiatives like the Education Loan Task Force, Sansad Ratna Awards, Next Gen Political Leaders and Digital Journalists Association of India. These initiatives are also handled by eminent volunteers to serve the society. The flagship initiative Sansad Ratna Awards has honoured till now 106 outstanding Parliamentarians in 13 award events. Education Loan Task Force creates awareness about education loans among students and the problems faced by the students are taken up with the Government through Sansad Ratna Awardees. Next Gen Political Leaders creates political leaders for the future. Digital Journalists Association of India creates awareness about the changing pattern of communication and the need for following ethics in the digital era.

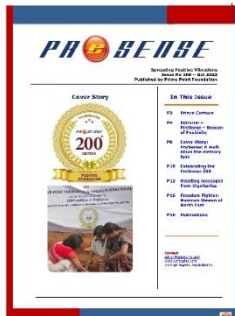
Special features

All the articles, including the Editorials and Cover Stories, are written after due research in an unbiased manner providing a balanced view.

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2023



1st Edition - March 2006



200th Edition - October 2023

So far, PreSense has published 34 eBooks, including the Digest of articles published earlier, Parliamentary speeches of various Sansad Awardees, etc. All the eBooks are available for free download.

The Editorial team ensures that the eMagazine can be read on all devices including mobiles, laptops, tablets, etc. comfortably with friendly fonts and colours.

The Editorial Board pledges that it will maintain the highest level of professional ethics and values to maintain credibility.

A detailed Brochure can be downloaded from <https://www.prpoint.com/publication/presense200-journey.pdf>

Words as Weapons: The Rise of Hate Speech in Indian Politics

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (Nov 2023)

(Indian politics grapples with rising hate speeches causing social discord and violence. Legal, political, and educational reforms are vital for eradication. The global comparison highlights challenges and solutions.)



Hate speeches in Indian politics have emerged as a significant and alarming issue, leading to divisiveness, social discord, and even violence. A recent speech by a Tamil Nadu political leader to eradicate 'Sanatana Dharma' created huge national controversy, leading to political implications. Madras High

Court also advised the political leaders to be careful during their speeches, not to hurt the sentiments of others. Recently, a Chief Minister of a big State used in the Assembly some inappropriate words against women, which were opposed nationwide. Later, he graciously withdrew that word. With the General Elections in a few months, hate speeches by political leaders are going to increase.

Origin of Hate Speeches in Indian Politics:

The roots of hate speeches in Indian politics can be traced back to historical and socio-political factors. Politicians have often exploited India's rich diversity of cultures, religions, and languages to advance their agendas. The colonial legacy of 'divide and rule' further deepened societal fault lines, making it easier for politicians to manipulate and sow seeds of hatred. Hindu-Muslim clashes in North India during the 1940s were the results of the hate speeches triggered by the 'Divide and rule' policy of the British regime. In the early 1930s, the 'anti-brahmin movement' by the British loyalists in Tamil Nadu spread hatred against Brahmins and it continues to date. Presently, hate speeches are often used as a means to polarise voters, targeting specific religious, caste, or regional groups, playing on their insecurities and prejudices for electoral gains.

The Use of Hate Speeches for Vote Bank Politics:

Hate speeches have become an integral part of the vote bank politics in India. Various political parties have been known to strategically use hate speeches to appeal to particular demographic groups, aiming to consolidate their support. Politicians often rally their base by playing on existing fault lines and exploiting communal and caste identities, making it a powerful tool for electoral victories. This divisive strategy perpetuates a vicious cycle, as politicians continue to engage in hate speeches to secure and maintain their vote banks.

In recent years, social media platforms have become a significant arena for the dissemination of hate speech. The

instantaneous and widespread nature of these platforms allows hate speech to reach a large audience quickly, amplifying its impact. Politicians of all parties leverage these platforms to communicate directly with the public, but sometimes this communication takes the form of provocative language, further deepening the conflict among various communities.

Legal Provisions Under Indian Laws:

India has a range of legal provisions to combat hate speech, including the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Section 153A, Section 295A of the IPC, and Section 125 of the Representation of the Peoples Act (RPA) 1951 deal with promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, and committing deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings, respectively. The Election Commission of India also monitors and acts against hate speeches during elections.

Punitive Action Taken in the Past:

Despite legal provisions, the enforcement of laws against hate speech has often been inconsistent. Some politicians have faced consequences for their inflammatory rhetoric, but many escape unscathed due to political affiliations or the lengthy legal process. However, there have been instances of punitive action. However, there have been instances where individuals have been convicted for hate speeches. In 2018, a BJP MLA was sentenced to two years in jail for hate speech against Muslims. In 2022, a Supreme Court lawyer was sentenced to six months in jail for hate speech remarks. Time and again High Courts and the Supreme Court of India have been cautioning against these hate speeches and advising authorities to act. But in reality, it is not happening.

Eradicating the Hate Speech Syndrome:

Eradicating hate speeches in Indian politics requires a multi-pronged approach.

Strengthening Legal Framework: The legal framework needs to be strengthened to ensure swifter and more effective action against hate speech perpetrators. This includes better definitions of hate speech, clearer guidelines, and faster trials. Many times, hate speeches are perceived as freedom of speech, which is not correct as per the Constitution.

Political Accountability: Politicians should be held accountable for their actions. Strong public condemnation and pressure from civil society can play a significant role in discouraging hate speech.

Media Responsibility: Media plays a vital role in amplifying or mitigating hate speech. Responsible journalism and fact-checking can help curb the spread of divisive rhetoric.

Education and Awareness: Promoting inclusivity and diversity through education can help reduce the susceptibility of individuals to hate speech.

Inter-faith and Inter-community Dialogue: Encouraging dialogue and understanding among different communities can foster tolerance and unity. All religious leaders should issue greeting messages when other religious groups are celebrating their festivals.

Global Comparison:

In the US, the First Amendment to the Constitution protects freedom of speech, making it difficult to legislate against hate speech. However, the Supreme Court has recognised certain limitations to this right, such as incitement to violence or discriminatory speech that interferes with the rights of others.

The UK has adopted a more proactive approach to tackling hate speech than the US. In 2006, the UK Parliament passed

the Racial and Religious Hatred Act, which criminalises the use of hate speech based on race or religion. The Act also establishes a Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Hate Crime Unit, which is responsible for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

In addition to the Racial and Religious Hatred Act, the UK has also implemented several other measures to combat hate speech, including:

- The Public Order Act 1986: This Act prohibits the use of threatening, abusive, or insulting language in a public place.
- The Communications Act 2003: This Act prohibits the sending of offensive or obscene messages via electronic communications.
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988: This Act prohibits the sending of communications that are intended to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

The UK government has also taken steps to promote tolerance and understanding, such as:

- Funding community groups that work to combat hate speech and discrimination.
- Launching campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers of hate speech.
- Supporting schools and other educational institutions to teach children about respect and tolerance.

Despite these efforts, hate speech remains a problem in the UK. In 2021, the CPS reported a 43% increase in hate crimes motivated by religion or belief. The rise in hate crimes has been attributed to several factors, including the increased use of social media, the rise of populist and nationalist movements, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion:

Hate speeches in Indian politics are a dangerous tool used for vote bank politics, exploiting divisions among the population. Legal provisions exist, but inconsistent enforcement and political affiliations often shield perpetrators. Eradicating this syndrome requires a comprehensive approach, including legal reforms, political accountability, responsible media, education, and inter-community dialogue.

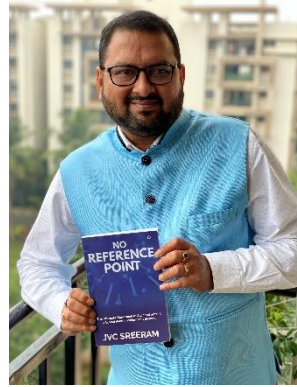
The recent incidents involving many leaders for their controversial remarks underscore the importance of political leaders choosing their words wisely. Comparative analysis of the United States and the United Kingdom reveals that hate speech is a global concern, with each country grappling with its unique challenges and solutions. Addressing hate speeches is crucial not only for the harmony of Indian society but also for the health of democracies worldwide.

Ballots and Beyond: Decoding the 2023 Assembly Elections

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor (Dec 2023)

(Political commentator JVC Sreeram discusses the impact of the 2023 State Assembly Elections, analysing outcomes, campaign strategies, and lessons.)

In an exclusive interview with Prime Point Srinivasan, Managing Editor, PreSense, JVC Sreeram, a well-known political commentator, poll analyst, author, and media personality shares the impact of the recent State Assembly Elections held in November 2023. He shares extensively on the campaign strategies followed by both the major parties like BJP and Congress and the lessons to be learnt. Excerpts:



PPS: I know that you have been predicting accurately the outcome of the State Assembly elections recently. Can you summarize the recent State Assembly elections' outcomes, focusing on major parties' vote and seat shares?"

JVC: I will start with Chhattisgarh, which went to the polls first. BJP gained 46.27% (+13.3% over 2018 elections) vote share with 54 (+39) seats. Congress got 42.23% (-0.81%) with 35 (-33) seats.

In Madhya Pradesh BJP secured 48.55% (+7.53%) with 163 (+54) seats. Congress got 40.40% (-0.49%) with 66 (-48) seats.

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In Rajasthan, BJP gained 41.6% (+2.92%) votes with 115 (+42) seats. Congress got 39.53% (+0.23%) with 69 (-31) seats.

In Telangana, Congress has won with 39.4% (+11%) with 64 (+45) seats. BRS got 37.35% (-9.5%) with 39 (-49) seats. BJP secured 13.90% (+6.92%) with 8 (+7) seats. BJP has increased the vote and seat share here.

Vote Share and Seat Share of Major Parties in the Assembly Elections 2023

State	BJP	Congress
Chhattisgarh	Vote 46.27% (+13.3%) Seats 54 (+39)	Vote 42.23% (-0.81%) Seats 35 (-33)
Madhya Pradesh	Votes 48.55% (+7.53%) Seats 163 (54)	Votes 40.40% (-0.49%) Seats 66 (-48)
Rajasthan	Vote 41.6% (+2.92%) Seats 115 (+42)	Vote 39.53% (+0.23%) Seats 69 (-31)

Telangana

Congress	BRS	BJP
Vote 39.4% (+11%) Seats 64 (+45)	Vote 37.35% (-9.5%) Seats 39 (-49)	Vote 13.90% (+6.92%) Seats 8 (+7)

PPS: What were the campaign strategies in these States by the major parties?

JVC: In Chhattisgarh, Congress focused on the welfare measures implemented by Bupesh Baghel, their Chief Minister. BJP announced their candidates well in advance. Modi Guarantee for increased procurement prices to farmers, 12000 rupees for women per year has gained votes.

In Madhya Pradesh, BJP focused on women's welfare schemes. Congress did not have proper campaign strategies. Congress

had a lot of factionalism. This led to a large vote share gap of 8% between BJP and Congress.

In Rajasthan, the failure of the incumbent Government to maintain law and order was the major issue. Women rape issues were focused more by BJP. Congress gave a lot of poll promises like subsidies for LPG and 12000 rupees for women, etc. Congress did not change the candidates. Rajasthan is one State, where the people vote for Congress and BJP alternatively. BJP focused on the failures of the Government. Without a CM face, they were able to win.

In Telangana, the campaign was specific. Congress utilised the anger against the incumbent Chief Minister KCR and his family. The BJP which was setting the narrative till January this year, was not active after that. Their promise of OBC CM came very late. However, they secured 8 seats, 7 seats more than what they got earlier. BRS party went to polls with their implemented welfare schemes. However, it did not help them because of the anger against KCR and the MLAs.

One common thread running in Telangana, Rajasthan & Chhattisgarh was the failure of the incumbent governments to provide jobs to youth which was promised before. Paper leaks had happened 18 times in Rajasthan & in Telangana, Public Service Commission exams were cancelled or postponed several times. These created disenchantment amongst youth which resulted in them voting against the government.

PPS: Do you think the Sanadhana comment made by DMK has played any role in the election outcome?

JVC: Yes definitely. Madhya Pradesh is a Hindutva State and Chhattisgarh is a soft Hindutva State. The comment made by DMK, an ally of Congress, has played a significant role in the defeat of Congress in all three States.

PPS: BJP has made relatively unknown faces as Chief Ministers in the three States won by them. What do you say on this?

JVC: I politely disagree with you. Vishnu Deo Sai, the present Chhattisgarh Chief Minister joined politics in 1989. He is a two-time MLA and five-time MP. He was a Minister of State in the Central Government. He was also the President of BJP in Chhattisgarh. He is a tribal face of the party. He is not an unknown person.

As far as the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are concerned, they are hard-core RSS karyakarthas. They have been in the organisation since the 1990s. The generational changes, what the BJP is looking for, have resulted in new faces.

PPS: Congress has won in Telangana. What impact it may create in the Southern States?

JVC: I feel Congress is strong in the Southern States. In Kerala, BJP is not there. In Tamil Nadu, BJP is trying to grow. In Karnataka, Congress has defeated BJP. I think Congress will get sizeable vote share and seats in Telangana. In Karnataka, the dynamics are changing, due to the alliance of JDU and BJP. The anti-incumbency factor in Tamil Nadu against DMK may impact the I.N.D.I.A alliance. We do not know how much it may affect. It is a million-dollar question. In Kerala, the fight is between UDF and LDF. BJP with 12 to 15 percent vote share is not expected to win any seat. In Andhra, Congress is not there. I do not buy any argument that the South would vote for Congress overwhelmingly.

PPS: Now that you have talked about the South, how this Assembly election will have impact in the North during the General Elections 2024?

JVC: When BJP lost these States in 2018, I have been repeatedly saying that those elections were not the Semifinals. I always say that the route to Delhi is only through Lucknow. The semi-final was March 2022 Elections. Winning of BJP in UP Elections in 2022 has set the narrative. Now BJP leaders

and Karyakarthis can go with confidence to face the 2024 elections.

PPS: Could the BJP's margin have changed, if the I.N.D.I.A alliance formed in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh? Please elaborate.

JVC: No No. I totally disagree with you. In Chhattisgarh, there is no alliance for Congress. GGP, BSP, and small parties are there and they are not the allies. BJP has secured a 46% vote share. In Rajasthan, if Congress had allied with the small parties, there could have been some change. Not a major dramatic change. Already Congress had an alliance with RLD. BSP is not part of Congress alliance.

PPS: What are the lessons to be learnt by BJP and Congress out of these State Elections?

JVC: BJP should announce candidates well in advance, at least in the areas where they are not strong. This would help the party workers to plan well. In Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, BJP announced the candidates in August itself and those candidates won. But in Telangana, 'B form' was given by BJP in some constituencies only on the day of filing nomination. This is the major lesson that BJP has to learn now out of these elections.

As far as Congress is concerned, they are clueless in the Hindi belt. They have to find out the organizational strength. Also, they have to be very careful about their narrative. In the name of appeasing minorities, they have allowed their partners to talk against Sanatana Dharma. This has affected their chances adversely.

PPS: In the Hindi belt, Congress has nearly 40 percent vote share. What do you say?

JVC: In the two-party system, when one party gets around 47 or 49 percent, naturally, the other party would consolidate and get automatically 40 percent. In Madhya Pradesh BJP got 49%

and 47 in Chhattisgarh. The third parties were elbowed out. In the process, Congress is gaining. What Congress gains is now swing voters. This cannot be eternal. Congress has to work on its organizational strength. Otherwise, these swing votes will go away. If Congress loses its organizational strength, it cannot get back. What happened in Bihar and UP? Congress has lost organizational strength and is not able to come back.

Presently, in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh, an alternative to BJP is only Congress. Even in Gujarat, the Congress was the alternative to BJP. When the Aam Adhmi Party entered, Congress lost their vote share to them. If Congress does not build up its organizational strength in these three States, a third party like Aam Adhmi Party may enter and walk away with the votes of Congress.

Please watch the full interview in the YouTuber

<https://youtu.be/1Rf5dW8WtpE?si=RZM91tSFUJJ9G9qe>

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