

Foreword

DR. P. L. SANJEEV REDDY

The history of human civilization stands testimony to the power of ideas; to take up new challenges and trigger changes that have been responsible for the onward march of civilization. Change has never been easy and thinkers and intellectuals have faced severe opposition and persecution in their efforts to question the conventional and change the existing order.

However, ancient wisdom tells us that we should never give up trying for a good cause. The problem with well meaning people in public administration is that they give up when the going gets tough. What is needed is a band of committed people to persist with the idea of reform and change. We need more people who have faith in themselves to change things. **Rabindra Nath Tagore** had said that, 'faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark'. Similarly, sociologist **Margaret Meade** observed, 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.' Historian **Arnold Toynbee** observed, 'The growth of civilization lies in the hands of a creative minority'. It is a truism that, 'there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.' One hopes that the time has arrived and there will be a new awakening to reform the governance systems.

New Public Governance (NPG) or managerialism in governance or new public management has had the most significant impact on reshaping public administration to cope with the challenges of globalization. With the death of distance, emergence of global village, the increased awareness and

exposure has led to increasing demands on government to ensure not only good life to all but increasingly better quality of life. The basic premises of this new approach to public governance are: steering rather than rowing; empowering rather than serving; injecting competition into the service delivery rather than monopolizing; transforming rule-driven organizations into customer driven ones; funding outcomes rather than outlays; earning rather than spending; participation and team work rather than hierarchy and leveraging change through use of market mechanisms with an equally relentless emphasis on the need to improve service quality.

The new philosophy of public administration, described as New Public Management (NPM) has hugely transformed the performance of governments. The resultant new paradigm emphasizes the role of public managers in providing high quality services that citizens value, advocates increasing managerial autonomy, particularly by reducing central agency control; rewards both organizational and individual performance; recognizes the importance of providing human and technological resources that the managers need to meet performance targets; and is highly receptive to competition.

Performance contracting gives increased emphasis on performance and imposes accountability on public officials for delivering results. This generally implies an improvement in over-all efficiency, effectiveness, customer orientation and quality of service.

The new model of governance philosophy, which has emerged in developed countries, recognizes that the task of promoting public purpose has changed. Public administration is no longer about designing administrative structures to carry out public programmes on the basis of old bureaucratic structure of command and control. It is more about the relationships among democratically elected bodies, ministers and agencies, private profit-making and non-profit-making enterprises, interest groups, the media and the citizen. These developments taking place in the global arena hold significant lessons for India. How to design a new system, which will meet the aspirations of people, is a major challenge facing public administration. As observed succinctly by Bill Clinton and Al Gore:

We can no longer afford to pay more for and get less from our government. The answer for every problem cannot always be another programme or more money. It is time to radically change the way the government operates – to shift from top-down bureaucracy to entrepreneurial government that empowers citizens and communities to change our country from bottom-up. We must reward the people and ideas that work and get rid of those that don't.

The policies of developed and developing countries are increasingly influenced by this new approach to governance reflected in NPM and reinventing government prescriptions. In India, the issue of governance has emerged at the forefront of the entire development agenda. It is well recognized that good governance is a crucial pre-requisite if the targets of the Tenth Plan and the goals of the common minimums programme are to be achieved. The universally accepted features of good governance are exercise of legitimate political power; formulation and

implementation of policies and programmes that are equitable, inclusive transparent, non-discriminatory, socially sensitive, participatory, and accountable to the people at large. It has been experienced that while good governance can help secure human well-being and sustained development, poor governance could seriously erode the individual capabilities and enervate the institutional capacities to effectively meet the needs of society.

It is becoming increasingly clear that successful implementation of developmental programmes requires adequate funds, appropriate policy framework and effective institutional capacity to deliver. In a general sense, the ability to effectively target schemes/programmes to benefit the most deserving depends critically upon the quality of governance. The better the levels of governance, the more precise can be the targeting. It has been felt that efficient and effective governance, be it the case of the executive, the judiciary or the legislature, requires the institutions, the delivery mechanism that they adopt and the framework of supportive rules, regulations and procedures to continuously evolve in harmony with each other and in response to the changing milieu. With the acceptance of market liberalism and globalization, it is expected that the government confines itself to the core functions and the state vacates space to the market and the civil society in many areas. However, in a country like ours, the government can neither have a completely minimalist role nor an entirely proactive one. It has to be directed at building personal capabilities and community capacities for human development through all possible means.

For India to progress as a nation, it is imperative to radically reform and change the administrative machinery. Our public administrators should realize that unless they adapt and change, the millions of 'public

servants' will become an obsolete lot, lacking the skill and knowledge to meet the demands of the public services. As democracy takes root in the country and citizens get empowered, they increasingly demand that public servants should become friendly and responsive and deliver prompt, cost effective and efficient services.

We have to reinvent governance with human face, which has to be a combination of application of the principles and tools of management with an element of humanism and concern for the poor, the excluded and the marginalized. This is largely because the notion of the state as 'steering' society and 'coordinating' sectors of the economy are still central to the theories of governance. Approaching the state in a governance perspective helps us understand the emerging role of the state. Different forms or modes of governance are going to characterize the pursuit of collective interests in the foreseeable future. The gradual shift from 'government' towards 'governance' has significant ramifications both within the state and its relationship with the surrounding society. It is in this backdrop that the volume on **Handbook on New Public Governance** seeks to stimulate our thinking about these changes and how best to understand them. Governance includes the state, but transcends it by taking in the private sector as well as the civil society. All these are crucial for promoting and sustaining human development.

Moreover, this volume is an extremely relevant and timely contribution, especially as it comes from a civil society organization. What makes it most noteworthy is the fact that besides bringing together the best of existing literature available on the various aspects of governance and new public governance as well as the effective areas of reform viz. decentralization, participation, accountability and e-governance, it seeks to

project the most effective strategies and the best practices for making public services more efficient. A whole range of case studies, both national as well as international, which deal with issues like public toilets, market management, street lightening, river cleaning, solid waste, recycling, city greening, rain water reinvesting and education etc. make the volume highly value adding.

The role of Civil Society participation and public private partnerships has been explored with the help of case studies in these areas. It is interesting to see a discussion regarding issues of access, efficiency and legitimacy in the context of the changing role of the state, market and civil society institutions and the new initiatives, which are being taken in various countries with regard to public governance and civil public governance and civil society efforts towards improving it.

I compliment the editors Parth J. Shah and Makarand Bakore of the Centre for Civil Society for this excellent effort. The volume covers a wide range of issues related to Public Governance viz. the Role of Governance; Urban Governance; Lessons from the Best Practices in Asia; Market Models for Reforming Governments; A Transformative Perspective on Administrative Reforms; New Public Management – Undermining Political Control?; New Public Management in Developing Countries; Decentralization: A Complex Phenomena in Rethinking Decentralization in Developing Countries; Understanding Decentralization in Asia: An Overview of Key Issues and Challenges; Participation and Urban Governance; The Participatory state; What are the Most Effective Strategies for Understanding and Channeling the Preference of Service user to make Public Services More Impressive?; Roadmap for E – Government in the

Developing world and the Transformational Potential of E – Government: The Role of Political Leadership. All the chapters of this volume are very comprehensive and are also very analytical. It is heartening to note that with as vast an array of subjects as mentioned above, the volume also includes several case studies of national as well as of international concern.

The volume holds out huge promise for those interested in well informed and elevating discourse on issues related to public governance and reforms process within and outside the framework of traditional public administration. It provides significant theoretical insights as also

information on the ways in which experiments are being attempted to improve public governance. It is my sincere hope and wish that more such works on civil society, good governance and public-private partnership will be forthcoming to illumine this domain and highlight different pathways for new and improved public governance.