

LOK SATTA
People Power

Citizen's Charters – Instruments for Practitioners

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401 Nirmal Towers, Dwarakapuri Colony, Punjagutta, Hyderabad – 500 082

Tel: 91 40 2335 0778 / 23350 790; Fax: 91 40 23350783; email: loksatta@satyam.net.in; url: www.loksatta.org

Lok Satta

*“It takes no compromise to give people
their rights.....it takes no money to
respect the individual”*

- Harvey Milk

Masters and Servants

- Governments exist to serve peoples' needs
- Citizens – Taxpayers – True masters
- Government employees – public servants
- Barometer of good governance – citizen's satisfaction

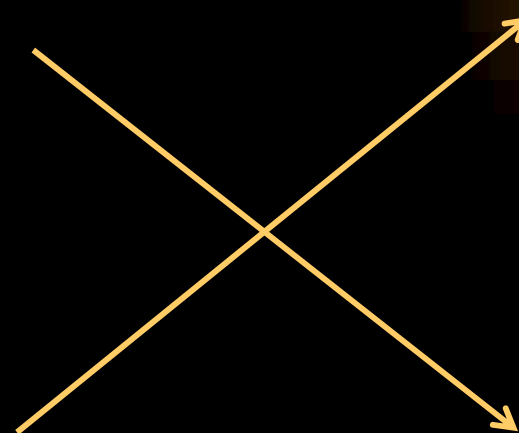
Role Reversal

Master / Sovereigns

Masters

Public Servants

Mendicants



Role Reversal – How and Why

Government Employees

70 % of organized work force in the country

Life time security

Dispenser of patronage

Better educated

Not accountable

Take protection under rules and procedures

Citizens / Private Domain

Only 8 million in a country of a one billion are in organized sector

Shadow of fear and indignity

Recipient in a system of license, quota, permit and subsidy.

Mostly illiterate and ignorant

Unaware of their rights

Lack of information

Consequences of Role Reversal

- Officials – hostile, arrogant, corrupt, inefficient, inaccessible, feared
- Citizens – humiliated, harassed, fleeced, often pay a heavy price because of time lost and money wasted

Consequences of Role Reversal

Citizens

- Afraid of cops
- No access to govt. offices without bribing
- Can't get a decent education in govt.schools
- Provisions not available in ration shops
- Public health care in shambles
- Farmers cannot sell at a fair price shop
- Public utilities – substandard amenities with high prices
- Poor have no access to justice

Why Can't Citizens Resist

- There is vicious cycle of corruption mediated by transfers, and resulting in extortion for simple services
- Every segment of the cycle feels helpless to resist the trend
- The price of resistance is much higher than the benefit accrued
- Even honest public servants are passive and helpless



Why are you clearing it. Any VIP visiting the city ?

Crisis of Governance

- Inefficient state apparatus
- Criminalization of politics
- Money and muscle power in elections
- Unresponsive bureaucracy
- Ineffective judicial system
- Increasing lawlessness
- All pervasive corruption
- Political instability
- Erosion of legitimacy of authority

Why is Governance Vital?

- Governments spend Rs 18 billion every day
- Fiscal deficit (Union and States) remains at 10% of GDP
- 50% Union tax revenues go towards interest payment

Can Economic Reform Alone Deliver

- Small and focused government will certainly help
- Monopoly must give place to competition and free enterprise
- But government still has a large and critical role
- Government's key functions cannot be privatized and there is a natural monopoly

Irreducible Role of Government

- Public order
- Rule of law
- Justice
- School education
- Healthcare
- Infrastructure
- Natural resource development

What does the Citizen Expect?

- Justice
- Dignity
- Vertical mobility

Way Out

- Assert people's sovereignty
- Fundamental democratic transformation
- People-centered governance

Instruments of Accountability

- Right to Information
- Independent crime investigation
- Independent appointment of constitutional functionaries
- Independent and effective anti-corruption agency
- Term limits for public office
- Strict penalties for abuse of office
- **Citizen's Charters**
- Stakeholder empowerment



Good news, sir! The enquiry report says that no one is responsible in the entire administration for anything

Citizen's Charter

- Citizen's Charter – for enhancing accountability and reducing corruption
- Key ingredients :
 - ➔ Clearly defined responsibility
 - ➔ Well-defined and quantifiable performance standards
 - ➔ Compensation for non-performance
 - ➔ Instant redressal mechanisms

Lok Satta – Citizen's Charters

- Lok Satta's advocacy – Citizen's Charters introduced in 9 departments by AP government

contd..

Lok Satta – Citizen's Charters

- **Citizen's Charter for Municipalities in A.P. – Lok Satta's creation – provides for compensation of Rs. 50/- day for delay in services – first in India**
 - Issue of birth and death certificates (5 days)
 - Residential water connection (30 - 10 days OYT)
 - Approval of house construction plan (15 days)
 - Property tax assessment (15 days)

Lok Satta – Citizen's Charters

- Lok Satta's advocacy – Citizen Charters in Gram Panchayats
 - Issue of birth and death certificates (5 days)
 - Residential water connection (15 days)
 - Disposal of building applications (30 days)
 - Repairs to hand pumps (24 hours)
 - Repairs to street lighting (3 days)
 - A compensation of Rs 10 for every day's delay in service

Lok Satta – Citizen's Charters

- In 1998, Lok Satta volunteers started random inspections of petrol stations
 - meters of 1500 petrol stations corrected
 - Rs. 10 million a day saved
 - cumulative benefit about Rs. 20 billion
- Several charters in Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere in India – numbering over 700
 - No-compensation and ineffective

Citizen's Charter in India – An Appraisal

Department of Posts – Survey Results

- Post Office : known as a citizen-friendly institution
- Awareness – Nine out of ten (front staff)
- Charter Preparation – Citizens not consulted
- Choice of services – No say for citizens
- No effective complaint redressal mechanism:
 - ➔ Citizens can lodge complaint only with Post Master General
 - ➔ No provisions to address complaints at grass roots

Citizen's Charter in India – An Appraisal

Department of Posts – Survey Results

- No periodic revision of Citizen's Charter
- None of the users ever heard of Citizen's Charter
- Very few staff members received training
- Copies of Citizen's Charter were not circulated among the staff
- No complaint box – no grievance was lodged ever since Citizen's Charter was implemented

Making Citizen's Charters Effective

- Mass communication
- Enforcement through collective action
- Visible examples of successful collective citizens' initiatives
- Psychology of competition – matching awards for collecting compensation
- Civil Society groups can play a facilitating role

Enabling Factors for Citizen's Charters

- Effective use of Information Technology.
- Transparency laws
- Generation of better information
 - Eg: survey and updating of land records
- Citizen-friendly procedures
 - Eg: complexity of voter registration
- Convergence of services
 - Eg: post office for voter registration
 - Municipality for passport application
 - E-Seva kendras for a variety of services/payments
- Fusion of authority with accountability
- Stake holder empowerment

Citizen's Charters

Rights Based

Vs

Normative

- Easy to implement
- No supply constraint
- Penalties possible
- Accountability easy
- Local empowerment

- Much harder
- Supply constraint
- No penalties
- Diffused accountability
- Centralized

Eg: Water connection

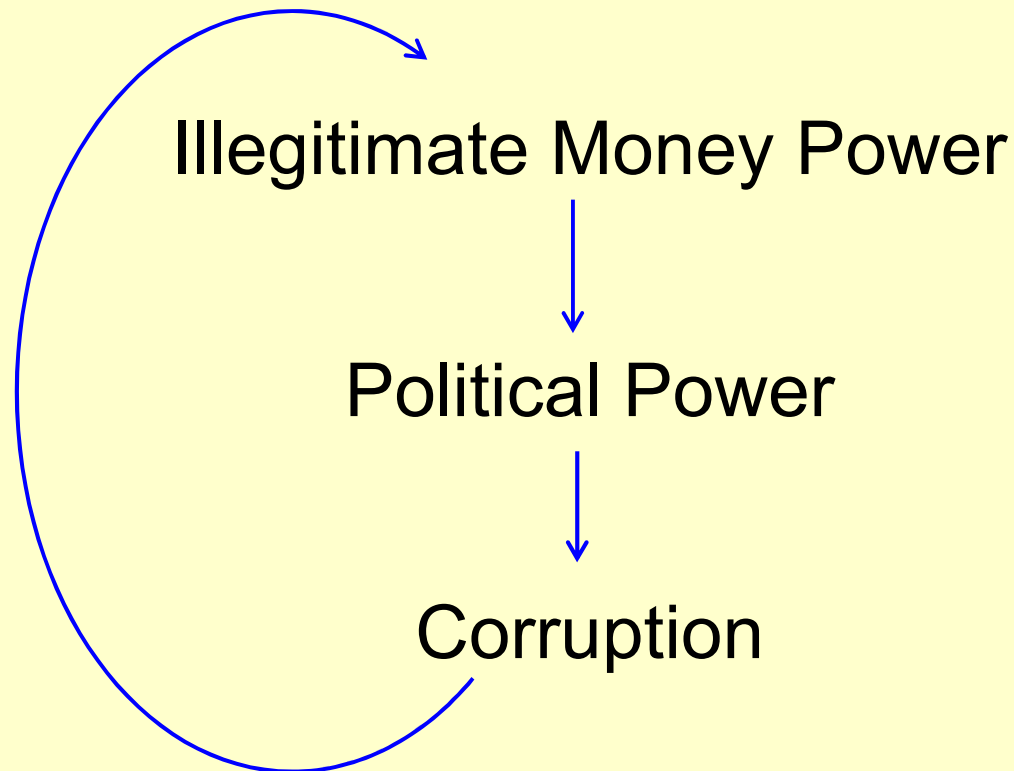
VS

50 gallons of potable water per capita

Prerequisites for Citizen's Charters


- Competition and choice are critical
- Absence of excessive discretion
- Transparency and simple procedures
- Effective decentralization
- Effective ombudsmen and swift punishment
- Informed citizenry
- Supply Constraints must be removed

Inexhaustible Demand for Illegitimate Funds





The reputation of this office is getting from bad to worse. This chap wants to know where to give the bribe!



The purpose of a government is to make
it easy for people to do good and difficult
to do evil

William Gladstone