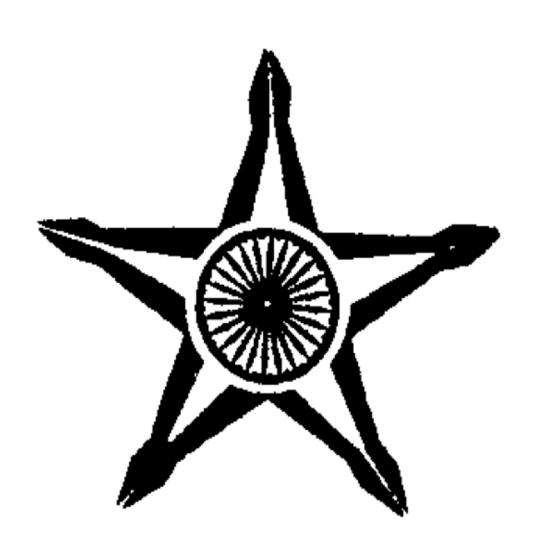
# **Lok Satta**



# Swarajya

The real Swaraj will come, not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused

- Mahatma Gandhi

#### **Crisis of Governance**

- # Increasing lawlessness
- # Inefficient state apparatus
- # Unresponsive bureaucracy
- # Ineffective judicial system
- # All pervasive corruption
- **# Marginalization of citizens**
- **#** Criminalization of politics
- # Money and muscle power in elections
- # Over centralization
- **#** Competitive populism
- # Political instability
- # Erosion of legitimacy of authority

# **Key to Resolution**

## Crisis encompasses all organs of state

- Executive
- Legislature
- Judiciary

Most players are victims of a vicious cycle

- Politicians
- Bureaucrats
- Judiciary
- Citizens
- Change in the rules of the game
- Not merely a change of players
- Focus on governance processes
- Not on contentious policy debates

# Why is Governance Vital?

- # Government spends Rs. 1250 crores every day
- Out of 27 million organised workers, government employs 70%
- # Fiscal deficit (Union and States) has reached 12% GDP
- 350% Union tax revenues go toward interest payment

# Is Money the Issue?

#### **Sanitation**

- # 140 million toilets needed
- # Cost: Rs 35000 crores
- # Equals just one month's expenditure

#### **School Education**

- # 2 million class rooms needed
- # Cost: Rs 20,000 crores capital Rs 8,000 crores recurrent
- # Equals 16 days expenditure capital 7 days expenditure recurrence

# In a Sane Democracy

- # Political process should resolve the crisis
- # Parties, elections and public office are the route to reform
- # In India a vicious cycle operates

#### **Failure of Political Process**

#### **# Parties**

- Autocratic and unaccountable
- Repel the best
- A problem, not solution
- Choice Tweedledom & Tweedledee

#### **# Elections**

- Change of players
- No change of rules of game
- Criminalization
- Money power
- Flawed process
  - Electoral rolls (40% errors)
  - Bogus voting (22%)

# Dangerously Stable Equilibrium

#### **Elections - a case - Andhra Pradesh: 1999**

Expenses of parties: Rs 600 crores

**Returns to Politicians:** 

ROI
risk
Rs 3000 crores
future
personal

#### Actual extortion from citizens:

rent-seeking at every level: Rs20,000 crores

#### Conformity:

- best option individually
- worst option societally

# **Way Out**

- # People's sovereignty
- # Fundamental democratic transformation

#### Can economic reforms deliver

- Smaller and more focussed government will help
- # But government still has large role

# Irreducible role of government

- # Law and order
- **#** Justice
- # Rule of law
- ★ School education
- # Primary health care
- # Basic infrastructure

# Citizens' initiatives Guiding principles

- # Freedom
- **# Self-governance**
- # Empowerment
- # Rule of law
- **# Self-correcting institutions**

#### **Possible Initiatives**

#### **# People's watch for public services**

- Collective
- Informal
- Assertive

#### **# Local reforms**

- Right to information
- Citizen's charters
- Local self-governance
- Stake-holder empowerment
- Access to school education
- Rural courts for speedy justice
- Toilets for every household

#### **Election Watch**

- # Parties' internal democracy
- # Accountable and transparent funding
- # Democratic choice of candidates
- # Electoral rolls
- # Campaign finance
- # Criminalization
- # Informed public discourse
- **X** Voter Identity cards
- **# Monitoring polling**

#### **National Movement**

- # Reform of parties
- # Electoral reforms
- # Federalism
- # Local self-governance
- **X** Accountable Bureaucracy
- **#** Speedy justice
- **#** Separation of powers
- **\*\*** Self-correcting mechanisms

#### **Concern to Action**

#### **# Obstacles**

- Ignorance

- Lack of common platform

#### **# Requirements**

- Common fate
- Knowledge
- Credible common platform

# **Keys to Action**

- # Day to day personal relevance
- # Tangible, easy action
- # Precise knowledge guiding action
- **#** Meticulous preparation
- # Wide dissemination
- # High credibility

# **Active Citizenship**

#### **# Nexus**

- Vote and pubic good
- Authority and accountability

## **# Passive Citizenry**

- Legal plunder
- Constitutional brigandage
- Anonymous tyranny

# **Window of Opportunity**

- # Impending fiscal collapse
- # Citizens' disgust
- # Unsustainable status-quo
- # Relatively sound private economy
- **#** Communications revolution
- **#** Satellite television
- **#** Rising expectations