Report on
National Seminar on Administrative Culture in India : Trends and Threats
(October 25-26, 2013)

The Department of Public Administration, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur had organized a two days' National Seminar on "Administrative Culture in India: Trends and Threats" on October 25 and 26, 2013 at seminar hall of University College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Background

Administrative system of a country is highly affected by its socio-economic and geo-political forces and the circumstances. The ecology of administration describes the surrounding environment and the conditions of an administrative system and their interaction with each other. Since, the administrative culture is broadly described as a sub-culture of the common culture of the society; it borrows the basic traits, values, beliefs, norms and symbols, etc., from the social environment. Administrative culture of a country is characterized broadly by the functioning and working styles of the public officials as well as the public's attitude towards government machinery. The bureaucratic working of Indian administration has been a matter of deep concern since the independence of country. By and large the Indian administration is criticized as lethargic, inefficient, corrupt, unaccountable and power-driven government machinery.

Recommendations of the Seminar

The experts of various disciplines of social sciences, practitioners of public administration and representatives of civil society have given the following suggestions to make Indian Public Administration more effective, responsive, democratic and people-oriented work culture:

1. The system of 'attestation of documents by the gazetted officers' must be abolished, since it is a useless and undemocratic legacy of colonial rule. Self attestation must be followed. The UPSC, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur and some more government agencies are accepting the self-attested photocopies of the mark sheets and other documents.

2. Time and again it has been advocated by many administrative reforms commissions and committees that maximum level of disposal of a file or case must be fixed, so as to dispose off a matter within a reasonable time.

3. Task and duty chart with the specified responsibilities must be chalked out by each unit of the administration, so that accountability can be fixed.

4. The principle of equal pay to all employees of cadre needs fresh attention. Performance-based pay may be given to motivate committed and hard working employees.

5. Internet accessed documents like mark sheet of an examination or e-mail letter must be accepted by the concerned authorities. Many times,

it has been noticed that academic institutions and public authorities do not accept the web documents.

6. Biometric attendance must be followed by the government organizations. Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur is operating the system effectively.

7. C.C. TV camera must be installed in each unit/branch of government offices, class rooms in universities and colleges and wards of the hospitals to have a constant watch by the supervisors or bosses of the employees to check the public dealing by the subordinates.

8. Performance appraisal must be based on 360 degree evaluation. Every employee's annual performance must be assessed through five-way inputs, i.e.—the reports of the superiors, peer group review, self appraisal, feedback from the subordinates and the clients or beneficiary wherever possible.

9. A well designed training programme for soft skills, civic manners and public-dealing must be imparted for each employee of the government organizations after every 5-7 years.

10. E-mail and web-based letters, file and services must be pampered to avoid the use of paper and save the trees.

11. Information, data and other facilities of all government organizations must be available in public domain widely, so as to access by each citizen everywhere, 24 × 7 and easily. Maximum documents be uploaded on internet and it should be mandatory for each organization to opt e-Governance predominantly. E-filing, E-treasury, E-tender, E-banking, etc., needs to be popularized.

12. Technocrats must be given higher place in the policy making and at other positions in the government.

13. A holistic survey and assessment study must be conducted on the suits/writs filed against government in various courts of law and a policy must be formulated to check the unnecessary legal burdens of public authorities.

14. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) of Govt. of India and Administrative Reforms Departments of the state governments must launch a fellowship programme to support research projects on the themes like administrative reforms and work-culture in government agencies.

15. Centre for Administrative Reforms in the state universities must be established and sponsored by the DARPG for research, training and documentation of best practices.

Note: *The above mentioned recommendations have been sent to the Government of India (DARPG) and Government of Rajasthan.*