**Corruption: a weapon of mass destruction**

***The most potent weapon of mass destruction and the most powerful enemy to be conquered***

Dictionary defines corruption in many ways, all having a common thread of *deviant behaviour of those in positions of power or authority*:

* Dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery
* Dis-honest or illegal behaviour, especially of people in authority
* Lack of integrity or honesty (susceptibility to bribery); use of a position of trust for dishonest gain
* Moral perversion; impairment of virtue and moral principles
* Inducement (of a public official) by improper means (bribery) to violate duty (by committing a felony)
* Dishonesty, fraud, fiddling (informal), graft (informal), bribery, extortion, profiteering, breach of trust, venality, shady dealings (informal), crookedness (informal), shadiness
* Departure from what is legally, ethically, and morally correct
* A term that offends against established usage standards

While integrity is the most powerful trait to win over, corruption is the most potent weapon to conquer. The British used corruption as a weapon to divide our country (India) of many princely states living in harmony and prosperity, and left *corruption* as an enemy difficult to be conquered now, after seven decades of independence. It is only gaining traction, getting more and more deeply entrenched, and spreading its tentacles in all spheres of our life.

Corruption is more powerful than any weapon invented ever to destroy your enemy, slowly, using their own people and resources and with minimum bloodshed and cost. It is like a creeping guerrilla warfare damaging the target slowly but steadily and unobtrusively. It is an invisible weapon that once triggered goes on auto pilot with no fuel to keep it running. It generates its own fuel and spreads wherever it can reach without being noticed. In fact our enemies use it effectively to slowly destroy our unity. It is used surreptitiously as a powerful bait on the lower rungs of the security establishment to gain information, access, plant destructive devices and walk away with no foot prints left, that makes it difficult to trace the origin to be used as an evidence.

*Corruption* if used ingeniously and patiently enables even a Lilliput to conquer an Oliver. Such is the power of destruction of this unobtrusive weapon. It is part of a larger game plan of intrigue where the fence eats the crop. It has been used in ancient times (Puranas) to corrupt the mind of enemy’s men to make them wage war (non-cooperation) against their own master and in turn achieving the objective. The same weapon is now destroying our society though without an identifiable hand behind it. Should we allow this self- destruction to work towards our own end?

*Corruption neither happens by accident or nor is catalysed by oversight, but is an organised business of intelligent minds.* The partners are many: policy makers, politicians, bureaucracy, oversight and law enforcement agencies, lower rung officials, mafia, service providers and motivated section of citizens. Corruption can happen only if a conducive environment exists. The job of these partners in crime is to create that environment, that is self-serving and at the cost of ordinary citizens and progress of the country. Those who indulge in corruption and be partners to it, are to be treated as national criminals, not petty thiefs. The job of well-meaning citizens is to break that conducive environment in which corruption and the corrupt thrive.

Corruption is the most debilitating bane of our society. It is a despicable phenomenon deeply entrenched in our culture. Corruption eats into all progressive initiatives and actions of the minority of well-meaning individuals and institutions in our society. Corruption is all pervading; not limited to a few spheres/levels of economic activity, segments of society, geographies or even hierarchical levels. It surfaces wherever and whenever there is an opportunity for illegitimate benefits (rent seeking) in whatever form it takes. The benefits transferred manifest in many forms: financial, material, tangible, intangible, immediate, delayed, open, masked, direct, indirect, minor, major, obtrusive and subtle, indulged in by functionaries (officials) across levels: higher, middle and lower; cutting across business, services, emergency care, not excluding crematoria, hospitals, police, judiciary, education, municipal services and any. It is rooted in a despicable mind-set to make illegitimate short term gains by short cuts by both parties to the transaction.

Corruption needs at least two parties to the transaction like in trading: the buyer and the seller (the giver and the taker). In some micro-societies (states / cities in our country) corruption has reached a stage of institutionalisation, where rates for illegitimate (or hassle free) transactions are fixed, corrupt transactions do not necessarily happen under cover, commitments are honoured, sharing of booty is organised including the percentage distribution of the booty across the hierarchy. Honesty to the core is the norm in corrupt transactions to the extent that, if the job is not done as committed, the corrupt transaction booty is returned. Fairness in corruption is the rule, except that there is no legal remedy for the illegal act. It is an organised parallel institutional mechanism that works more efficiently and effectively than the official *clean and transparent* mechanism. Corruption over time graduates into a mafia.

The key driver of corruption is the need for a favour delivered for a price that is off records. In fact the value of the corruption (monetary value of the illegal transaction) reflects the true price (value) of the service, similar to black market price reflecting the true value of the good, in a controlled economy. Corruption reflects the level of distortion in the economy: the gap between what society needs and what the system allows it to have. Value of corruption reflects the gap between demand and the supply of services to the level of satisfaction expected.

Favours extended in exchange for the corrupt gratification are not necessarily illegal or unofficial or in violation of rules, but are the rent sought and given for perfectly legitimate acts; that one can demand from an official, but without delay and harassment in various forms, to get the task completed. Corruption or speed money is the unofficial price for avoiding delay, jumping the queue, not being asked embarrassment questions, not probing beyond the necessary superficial verification, closing the eyes and ears to what is visible and within range of hearing, pretending to have not heard or seen, connivance and even active collusion. The price varies depending on the tangible benefit accrued or intangible loss contained (avoided) to the seeker of the service.

Harassment meted out to the one seeking service, by the official expected to deliver the service, can range from asking for unwanted pre-requisites (records, supporting documents), misleading the service seeker, misinformation, creating a situation for multiple visits to get the service completed, under various pretexts, pleading missing files, using innocuous grey areas in interpretation of laws and rules against the individual when it can be legitimately and without any hesitation used in his favour, manipulation of records, mis-representation and so on. It is the price for favourable use of discretionary power, speeding up the work without any extra effort, being just helpful whenever possible, sharing information and interpreting rules to help the task completion; just doing the job one is paid for but demanding illegal gratification.

Corruption cuts across levels: high levels (policy), implementation and operational levels. Corruption at policy level (wholesale) are of high value with less no. of participants (low volume high value deals) and those at operation and implementation levels are at retail levels (high volume low value business).

Corrupt practices exist in every social and economic activity: businesses, education, access to social and institutional infrastructure at individual level, access to legitimate government benefits (subsidies, pension, rations, doles), government services, basic approvals for access to municipal services, day to day needs, access to law and order, police services, judiciary.

Corruption happens due to several factors attributable to the parties to the transaction as well as policy makers and the relief providers. Speed, efficiency, cost and effectiveness of the relief providers and the justice system; clarity, transparency, specificity, currency, relevance, objectivity and practicality of the policy, rules, procedures and the institutional mechanism; e honesty, fear of the law, integrity of the officials involved; literacy, awareness, transparency, access to rules and procedures of the one seeking service; enterprise, awareness, assertiveness, belief in the system and integrity of the service seeker, influence corruption.

Corruption is driven by the general perception in society on how work can be got done (the smart way), the low moral standards in society, value systems and lack of determination to follow the right path to get ones’ work done and belief in the working of the system sans the speed money.

Corruption is built into the system by providing for discretion to the bureaucracy to be used favourably for a price. Bureaucrats who frame rules build in enough provisions for rent seeking for themselves and for everyone up and down the hierarchy. Rules are not made in a simple language comprehensible to the ordinary citizen, with built in layers and layers, wheels within wheels that create confusion and scope for interpretation, which is the main source of graft.

Rules are also framed keeping the need to provide jobs and opportunity to earn for lawyers, judges, consultants, middle men, intermediaries through convoluted definition, wordings that make it impractical for any right thinking citizen to be completely law abiding. This makes it unavoidable even for honest citizens to seek help to bend the rules, even to get normal legitimate work done. The lobbies of service providers who make their living by making life difficult for ordinary citizens and getting them out of the problem for a price, is a major reason for the corrupt to flourish.

Maximum corruption is at the highest and the lowest levels. At the highest levels to tweak government policies to favour self and create barriers for the competition. This includes eligibility criteria for government contracts, bidding and allocation for natural resources such as minerals, energy, spectrum, defence production and procurement, services where the stakes are high but no. of interested parties are low.

At the lowest levels corruption is rampant in distribution and access to all forms of benefits from government schemes such as rations, employment guarantees, subsidised water, electricity, housing and employment across levels in government. Even menial services such as issue of death and birth certificates, caste certificates, income certificates, building plan approvals, ownership records, and even for paying the dues to the government such as taxes. Here the corruption is mass based, each unit of corruption being of low value.

Corruption is indulged in by self-appointed unofficial intermediaries in the garb of providing assistance to the needy. These unofficial intermediaries are generally the underlings of political parties in power. Corruption at this level is an incentive or reward for supporting the party leaders during elections and even after. These underlings are small time thugs masquerading as good Samaritans helping the needy to *get things done*. Getting things done carry different shades of meaning: providing information, gaining access to officials, filling forms, submission, do all the manipulations to make the individual eligible even if not eligible, paying off officials, flexing muscles whenever needed and finally getting the individual a small fraction (10%) of what is due to him / her. The remaining 90% is systemic leakage, a euphemism for corrupt money shared by the various links in the chain. The individual practically becomes dependent on the Good Samaritan and falls under his control.

The government consciously designs schemes and systems to implement the scheme to provide this rent seeking opportunity, for the several intermediaries in the chain. In effect, 90% of the resources meant for the targeted poor end up in the pockets of these middle men, politicians and officials administering the scheme. Most of this gain goes outside the banking channels and form a large part of the black money (unaccounted in the GDP). Though the expenditure is accounted, the funds actually land in the hands of the wrong people and therefore it finds its place not in purchase of consumption goods by the poor but purchase of discretionary items by the rich as this is unaccounted and not earned.

Government carries out various surveys to assess the impact of such pro poor schemes. All surveys come up with colourful reports on expenditure data, but what is not found in records is where the loot has landed and who is the real beneficiary. Thus any study will only come up with (invisible) distorted findings on the impact of such programs. The real truth never comes out as even in surveys, the intended beneficiary only shares what he/she has been tutored to, during the survey, out of fear of harassment by the goons for spilling the beans. Also due to low level of literacy, many victims are not even aware of what was their due vis a vis what they got and how much has leaked out and where.

Efforts at disintermediation in distribution of benefits to the poor have been stymied by the whole army of illegal beneficiaries, including at the highest political and bureaucratic levels. The Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) through banking channels with national identity verification recently introduced has started moving only recently and has its own detractors who tend to lose the loot.

The level of degradation in stealing from the poor has reached alarming and unspeakable levels. Due to the huge opportunity for illegal earnings, there is a huge demand for employment in critical positions even at lower levels from over qualified individuals. Due to the high demand for these lucrative positions, another level of corruption has raised its head in recruitment and appointment to lucrative positions and postings.

There are cases of engineering post graduates applying for posts of office assistants, sub inspectors, RTOs, superintendents and so on, as the real net gain from these positions are found to be much more than the legitimate gain from a respectable professional job. This has also led to wasteful expenditure in education of persons who ultimately are heavily under-employed since underemployment is found to be more lucrative than appropriate employment commensurate with their skill level. This is a vicious chain, one feeding the other. A large part of the corruption is an organised crime with the passive support of the government, as it suits everyone in the chain, except the poor, who are oblivious to the loot under their name.

Deep rooted and all-encompassing corrupt system has deep rooted and wide range ramifications on the socio political economic eco-system. The corrupt system has led to deep rooted and wide ranging behavioural changes in people and systemic changes in the socio economic structure. The inefficient official system to deliver services including grievance redressal and dispute resolution, have become a great opportunity for informal institutions such as deal makers, settling disputes through means that are less than civilized and themselves being corrupt; crime syndicates and mafia indulging in settling disputes, law enforcement machinery such as the police indulging in activities beyond their purview such as settling disputes for a price, in favour of the one who has deeper pocket; and social unrest.

Lawlessness prevails due to inefficiency of the official law enforcement and judicial machinery. People tend to lose faith in the credibility, integrity and efficacy of the regulatory machinery as well as the appellate body, the judiciary. A sense of helplessness and apathy prevails. High energy is wasted in going through this cacophony of unreliable and opaque system, that could have been directed towards productive activities, leading to higher GDP.

This sense of helplessness and apathy with the system drives the educated class to seek opportunities in more matured, dependable, predictable, reliable and organised economies with systems that work. The country is thus left with people who perpetuate and benefit from the corrupt system as it exists and their victims, the poor who believe their needs are taken care of by their political masters (middlemen) , little realising the powerful undercurrents and how they are misused.

Even oversight institutions such as the Lok Pal / Lok Ayukta (institutions to check corruption), auditing agencies, the entire inspector machinery (covering labour laws, commercial and income tax, food safety, health) are part of the same system and demonstrate similar behaviour. The extent of this deep rooted malaise can be gauged by the fact that postings for some of these positions are auctioned informally (the price to be paid for a lucrative posting to political bosses and official supervisors), the highest bidder gets the right to loot during his tenure of 2-3 years, a well analysed business decision to pay the price, to be in a lucrative position for a couple of years (in business language life of the project for revenue streams in a payback period / NPV / IRR calculation). The official ensures a lucrative return on the capital investment made (bribe paid for the position).

No one needs an upright efficient officer as one’s subordinate. Everyone needs a flexible corrupt pliable individual, who will enrich himself and also the links in the machinery he is associated with.

No one speaks about it as anything to be discussed, as the public has adjusted to the situation with appropriate coping mechanism. The ones who try to challenge the system are harassed using provisions in the law with utmost unfavourable interpretations (as there is enough scope for interpretation of the rule book as they are outdated and impractical to follow).

The country is faced with a dilemma of having to bridge the huge void between what is needed and what is politically right and individually convenient. Laws are made to appease the poor illiterate ignorant mass voting population, with no intention of implementing them, as implementing them would amount to jeopardising economic growth objectives. This syndrome of having laws and not implementing them with integrity, is what provides the huge opportunity for rent seeking and corruption; all joining the party; a syndrome of blatant hippocracy.

Financial advisors / consultants, tax consultants, labour law consultants et al, consultants of any creed – many service providers masquerading as consultants are in simple language fixers / middle men, who bridge their client and the respective government functionary, for gaining access to services such as: funding from financial institutions, resolving tax dispute issues, settling labour law matters and so on. They do not add any true professional value compliant with law, but only do the menial job of broking the bribe settlement amount with the regulator / official. In turn, they take their own cut in addition to the fees. Many of them play the double game of collecting information from their client in trust under the mask of solving their problem, and leaking the same selectively to the authorities later who will issue notice, and the desperate client is forced to seek the help of the fixer consultant again, who will extract his pound of flesh, in addition to feeding the government official. Consultants end up as source of information to hound the citizen and in turn settle the matter for a price. This is how business for consultants is made using blackmail. This happens due to absolute lack of code of conduct and effective law on professional liability, data privacy and confidentiality.

Indians who are used to working in an eco-system of wheels within wheels, cacophony, opacity, bribery and corruption to get their work done, sometimes find themselves out of place in an alien culture where what is stated is what is meant, there are no hidden rules, consultants are not just middle men but who add real professional value. So is the reverse where overseas investors find themselves lost in the labyrinthine of rules, procedures and compliances when they start their business ventures in India. The gap between rules and practice, commitments and action, promises and performance, reality and rhetoric is huge for any normal person to comprehend and draw comfort from. These gaps are huge opportunities for feeding the corrupt practices. One can easily swing from extremes of compliance and non-compliance simply based on how one handles the problem; the way to handle the problem is not necessarily the way it is pronounced to be. A criminal becomes an innocent overnight and vice versa depending on his ability to strike the right chord with the right people at the right time.

Corruption is also linked to one psyche. For someone with high level of personal integrity, conviction, valuing one’s self esteem, determination to go to any length to do things right and fight your way, one may still be able to survive in the system. But it is a tall order. The premium for honesty is very high, not the other way. Honesty is penalised for the uninitiated and innocent mind. One needs to know the way around. Going around is the norm as the straight path is most times blocked or one will hit a wall after going some distance.

This scenario is the prime driver for *unease of doing business* in India. This syndrome is neither uniform throughout the country nor applicable equally in all sectors where there is a citizen government interface. The root cause for this is general reluctance of all stakeholders who benefit from this cacophony to rock the boat, as status quo suits those who are benefited and those who are not develop coping mechanisms and learn to live in the system or quit, but not change it.

One has to just erase concepts of ethical conduct, honesty, integrity, law abiding, fear of breaking the law and so on. This doesn’t mean one doesn’t get caught. Such unfortunate development may happen more by chance or one trying to be over ambitious or sparring with someone who is in the know of one’s ways. You can buy peace if you choose to be peaceful and contented. Obviously the enterprising ones are not willing to accept such compromises, which is the reason for India being branded as difficult to do business in, particularly for the novice and innocent, who are not trained to read the unwritten word or between lines.

In order to enhance cacophony which feeds corruption, a complex loop of exemptions, eligibility, prerequisites, qualifications and so on are built in or interpreted at the operating level that are loosely defined or undefined, and left to the articulation / interpretation of the lower level functionaries. These grey areas are feeding grounds for corruption. Poor drafting of rules lacking transparency, extremely poor convergence of many related laws that give scope for interpretation, manoeuvring and rent seeking, catalyses corruption. This is because of the huge disconnect between stated objectives (due to political compulsion) and what is needed and intended to ensure economic growth and progress. This is due to diversity of our demography and the ensuing diverse needs and aspirations of citizens. The political class and the bureaucracy thrive on this disconnect and would rather preserve the status quo in their own interest.

Corruption can be contained only if citizens are educated, organised and empowered to challenge the corrupt officials and practices. Empowerment happens through a mix of initiatives: transparency, access to information and an efficient, speedy, low cost redressal mechanism working in unison. We must also have an environment where booty from corruption is not celebrated; corrupt should be forced to surrender all their corrupt gains and more and also penalised with long imprisonment. Any money that is gained beyond legitimate disclosed earnings is corrupt money. There is no need for any lengthy convoluted delayed procedure (that causes delays in bringing the corrupt to justice which tantamount to escaping the law) to establish the source of the booty that is splurged. The expected value of graft should be very negative and high, considering the probability of conviction and the value of penalty. Swiftness, severity and certainty of justice are the key drivers of a crime free society.

Education on awareness on corruption: its ill effects, how to resist it, how to name and shame those who indulge in corruption (including parents), where and how to report instances of corrupt practices and officials, should start at the school level. Children should be trained to question their parents on the source of their money that is splurged on luxury goods and high living beyond recognisable means.

**Consequences of corruption in various spheres**

Below are typical cases of corruption and its cost to society. One can find innumerable such cases with a little field work

1. *Municipal services*

Tendering: favourable prequalification requirements orchestrated to suit interested bidders leads to reduced competition and non-participation from more competent entities. The work gets awarded to incompetent, unethical bidders at higher *value for money*, though lower bid despite availability of *more value for money* bidders. This leads to poor quality jobs of reduced durability, frequent rework, low level of service, accidents, disruption of life, lower citizen productivity, higher overall economic cost, suffering and low morale. The overall social and economic costs are high. The beneficiary is the official instrumental in manipulation of tendering and the bidder who will share the spoils, which in turn affects progress and quality of work. Such a scenario dissuades competent and ethical bidders who get discouraged and move away to more favourable environments. The city or the county loses in the bargain.

Execution of works: Manipulating tender conditions after award of contract: Another form of corruption is to dilute enforcement of contractual performance norms after award of contract or changing the terms in favour of the service provider for a price. This will again have the same effect as above.

Corruption in tendering for works adversely affects citizens, community, businesses and the overall economy disproportionate to the value of the private gain made by the corrupt partners to the deal.

Municipal services is one of the most implementation level corrupt practices at a huge cost to society in terms of delay, indirect consequential costs and obstruction to normal life. Though the value of each corrupt instance may be small, the collective value is huge and so is the price paid by society

*Education*

In government provided educational services, manipulation of various forms for a price, leads to provision of educational services to less deserving candidates and denial to more competent and deserving ones at huge subsidised cost to the government. This leads to drop outs mid-way through the program due to inability to cope up by those (the incompetent ones) who made an entry and the denied more competent ones choosing alternate educational avenues. This results in mismatch between competence and opportunity for both and collectively poorer outcome. Some competent ones choose to leave for greener pastures and they are lost for good to other countries where opportunities are more and conditions for education and opportunities for growth are better. This is the prime driver of brain drain either before education or after, when the competent ones are denied opportunity at higher levels of education or even in employment. Brain drain is a major loss to the country due to loos of brain power as well as inability to derive value from investments made in education. One can set up schools, colleges, universities and run them violating all norms and still claiming to be compliant and misleading all by deftly managing the license issuing, inspecting and oversight authorities). It is more important to know the individual and the informal system than the formal rules, procedures and so on. Job of most consultants is to get you the compliance certificates not necessarily be compliant. The certificate is more important than being compliant.

*Traffic police*

Expected to enforce traffic rules on the roads, on the move, without effective concurrent oversight, by lower rung of officials in the police establishment; traffic management at least in developing countries is a potent source of corruption. Instead of charging the offender for the violation and collecting the official penalty for the violation, traffic police collect a fraction of the official penalty from the offender without records, and share the difference between official penalty and the actual cash collection, with the offender. There is no record of the offence committed, no way to track and apprehend repeat offenders, no way to control repeat offences and even pre-empt fatal offences or crimes later. This leads to lack of a mechanism to ensure sustained safe traffic on the roads and even criminal offences. The price paid by the society is road accident fatalities, low confidence level for honest law abiding citizens to use roads without fear. This affects the level of economic activity due to reluctance to use roads freely.

*Law and order police*

Police are empowered to collect evidence on crimes reported or they come across. They use this power to manipulate evidence and filing charge against the offender on appropriate sections of the law. One can get charged for a very diluted version or minor offence for a price paid unofficially. Such a conduct leads to citizens losing trust and confidence in the objectivity of the law enforcement machinery, resorting to private compromises, using third party agents to resolve issues. Such a tendency is very dangerous and can lead to complete breakdown of the law and order, followed by loss of confidence and consequential outcomes. Following are other critical areas where corruption is rampant with consequential cost to society

* Judiciary
* Land and revenue
* Housing and construction
* Transport permits
* Environment and pollution control
* Defence and security
* Food and Drug safety
* Health Care, Pharma
* Issue of driving license (an underaged and incapacitated person can get license without even visiting the RTO or taking a driving test)

MBA programs should have a course on corruption, ethical business and corporate social responsibility

***Social and Economic Cost of corruption***

Existence of corruption in a society diverts valuable intellectual man-hours and man-years on countering the negative fall outs of corrupt practices in a society. Corrupt environment entices one tuned to misadventure given an opportunity to explore opportunities for quick gains. Mental power gets diverted from productive activity to ways and means of quick gains, risky misdemeanours, manipulative tendencies, obfuscation of facts, indulging in misinformation and its cover ups, crimes, and the fall out of the negative acts such as back ups and cover ups, defensive strategies, mental stress, non-cooperation or passive cooperation from suspicion, and so on. The same could have been productively invested in positive productive acts leading to progressive society and contributing to GDP. Openness also has the positive bye product of being physically and mentally healthy, improved collaboration, being able to see results and a general sense of wellbeing. Positive experience will drive more positive acts and is contagious as much as negative feelings are contagious. The value of this could be roughly estimated from below

It is understood that in Bangalore alone 8 lac IT employees generate $23 per hour of export revenue in a year (<http://qz.com/280082/the-true-cost-of-bangalores-traffic-gridlock-to-indias-it-industry-is-staggering/>). Bangalore contributes about 33% of all exports of IT services. Annual costs (productivity lost) only due to 2 hr lost per day on traffic alone is US$6.5 billion. Corrupt environment leads to at least 50% loss in productivity due to preoccupations in steering one’s way through the several corrupt officials and systems, corrupt thoughts, loss of productivity due to poor state of all infrastructure: physical, social, institutional; morbidity, sickness and loss of leisure and peace of mind. Extrapolating this to a larger population and the whole country, the cost of corruption is mind boggling. The real cost of corruption is several times the monetary costs (unofficial payments and resource leakages of all kinds at all levels). It would make sense to even simply pay off even twice the financial leakages from corruption and clean up the system. Still at a macro level we would be better off at society level.

A non-corrupt society members will be better able to integrate productively with other global economies and societies. It will also enhance our image in the global landscape and reduce cost of friction, learning, unlearning and relearning

***Irreversible damage to our psyche***

Negativity, diffidence, lack of trust, submissiveness, non-obtrusive and non-committal, experiencing constrained freedom, lack of enterprise mark the behavioural traits of Indians. This is due to the repeated hammering of children and youngsters by parents, school teachers, well-wishers and elders on the need to be cautious, keeping a low profile, not to trust anyone particularly strangers, always have a backup, never expose oneself, not to be aggressive and take risks and in essence not trusting the intelligence, competence, ability of youngsters to manage themselves. This experience is particularly true of children of parents who are born before independence as they have been witness to several negatives around them. This is also the reason why despite having all the capabilities and technical qualifications, Indians are found to be not able to exploit their full capabilities so long as they are within the country. When they leave the shores to work / study in developed economies, they are unable to trust their own abilities in a more organised and trusting western environment. This is the fundamental reason why many educated persons leave the shores to find their fortunes elsewhere where conditions congenial for enterprise and realising their true potential. Corruption thus has a very deep rooted negative influence on society that retards progress of the society. Post the internet era, larger exposure to the free world has opened the minds of Indians and given them renewed confidence on their own capabilities and the world is not as much of a barrier as they were conditioned to believe due to their own immediate circumstances. This is leading to more youngsters desiring to go out, return, and daring to express themselves even against established medieval norms of negativity and regress. The cost of this damage to the psyche is unfathomable. It would need a couple of more generations to come out of the slavish psyche and feudal practices characteristic of pre-independent times.