



CONCEPT NOTE

High-Level Roundtable Discussion on ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN INDIA: FROM VISION TO ACTION

(Sunday, April 2, 2017, Jacaranda Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi)

Introduction

Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business is organizing a High-Level Roundtable Discussion on ‘Administrative Reforms in India: From Vision to Action.’ The *Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)* has agreed to be a network partner for this important event of national importance.

Bharti Institute of Public Policy is an independent think tank within ISB with a vision to impact public policy by delivering cutting-edge education, research and engagement. The Institute currently focuses on the following areas:

- Governance
- Food policy
- Energy
- Financial sector policy
- Education

The Institute works closely with ISB’s partner school, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA.

The **Indian School of Business (ISB)** is a research-driven, truly world-class business school in India. According to Financial Times ranking of business schools, ISB is the highest ranked Business school in India. The School has grown at a rapid pace since its inception is the youngest School ever to consistently rank among the top Global MBA programmes, the first institution in South Asia to receive the prestigious AACSB accreditation and one of the largest providers of Executive Education in Asia.

Established in 1927, **FICCI** is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. Its history is closely interwoven with India's struggle for independence, its industrialization, and its emergence as one of the most rapidly growing global economies. A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. FICCI provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across sectors and is the first port of call for Indian industry, policy makers and the international business community.

Background

The first Administrative Reform Commission was set up in 1966. It produced 20 reports. The Second Administrative Reform Commission was set in 2005 and it produced 15 reports. In the intervening 40 years a large numbers of committees and commissions were set up and they generated an impressive amount of recommendations. However, there is a widespread

feeling among citizens of India that the implementation of the recommendation has not kept pace with the generation of recommendations. This Roundtable will seriously attempt to begin the process to rectify this apparent imbalance.

The scope of discussion is indeed immense and one round table is not likely to make a big dent. But we have to start somewhere and initiate a professional discussion that will be non-partisan and squarely in national interest.

ARC 2 was mandated to prepare a detailed blueprint for revamping the public administration system. The Commission was given the mandate to suggest measures to achieve a proactive, responsive, accountable, sustainable and efficient administration for the country at all levels of the government. The Commission was asked to consider the following:

(i) Organisational structure of the Government of India (ii) Ethics in governance (iii) Refurbishing of Personnel Administration (iv) Strengthening of Financial Management Systems (v) Steps to ensure effective administration at the State level (vi) Steps to ensure effective District Administration (vii) Local Self-Government / Panchayati Raj Institutions (viii) Social Capital, Trust and Participative public service delivery (ix) Citizen-centric administration (x) Promoting e-governance (xi) Issues of Federal Polity (xii) Crisis Management (xiii) Public Order.

This is a rich treasure trove of ideas and we do not need to re-invent the wheel again. Our focus now has to be on the implementation of ideas that have been widely accepted.

Objective of the Roundtable Discussion

The Panel Discussion on ‘**Administrative Reforms in India: From Vision to Action**’ aims to:

- Deepen the understanding about the need for urgent implementation of administrative reforms;
- Highlight the opportunity cost of inaction on this front as inefficiency of government is the single largest tax on private sector.
- Understand the reasons behind poor implementation record of the recommendations.
- Generate a consensus on options for significantly ramping implementation of Administration Reforms.
- Share national and international best practice in implementation of administrative reforms
- Contribute to the preparation of a high-level white paper on implementation of administrative reforms with focus on options for moving forward.

Structure

For the Roundtable it is proposed to have a very high profile panel of former cabinet secretaries who have been responsible for the design and implementation of administrative

reforms. Following six former Cabinet Secretaries to the Government in India have accepted our invitation to be a panellist on this High-Level Roundtable. .

	Name	Served as Cabinet Secretary	
		From	To
1	Shri Naresh Chandra	11-12-1990	31-07-1992
2	Shri Surendra Singh	01-08-1994	31-07-1996
3	Shri T.S.R. Subramanian	01-08-1996	31-03-1998
4	Shri B.K. Chaturvedi	14-06-2004	13-06-2007
5	Shri K.M. Chandrasekhar	14-06-2007	13-06-2011
6	Shri Ajit Seth	14-06-2011	13-06-2015

Each panellist will be invited to make a brief 5-10 minute remarks before we have a discussion on a few selected recommendations of the Second Administrative Reform Commission along with those of other committees and commissions.

The programme for the High-Level Roundtable will be as follows:

09:00 – 09:50 AM	Registration / Welcome Tea/ Coffee
10:00 – 11:30 AM	Session 1
11:30 – 12:00 Noon	Tea/Coffee/Snacks
12:00 – 01:30 PM	Session 2
01:30 – 02:30 PM	Lunch
02:30 – 03:30 PM	Organizational Meeting for the ISB Alumni Public Policy Club for ISB alums only

Venue:

Jacaranda Hall, India Habitat Centre, Delhi

Participants

The Roundtable Discussion will include ISB Alums from Hyderabad and Mohali campuses (essentially working bureaucrats and public policy professionals in the corporate space and the civil society). It is primarily a **Thought Leadership** Initiative by Bharti Institute of Public Policy and **ISB Alumni Public Policy Group**, a non-partisan professional club which intends to provide a forum to discuss, learn and deliberate upon various public policy issues and ideas at a national and international level.

In addition to ISB Alums, we will invite

1. Current Cabinet Secretary, Mr. P. K. Sinha
2. Serving Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and Joint Secretaries from Government of India and State Governments

3. Select former secretaries, chief secretaries of states and leading academics. This will enrich the discussion and provide momentum for on-going work.
4. Private Sector leaders such as Mr. Didar Singh (Secretary General FICCI), Rakesh Bharti Mittal, Analjit Singh, Sunil Munjal, and others
5. ISB Faculty
6. Other academicians

Expected outcome

- *A white paper on implementation of administrative reforms*
- *A community of practitioners who are devoted to the cause of implementing administrative reforms.*

Brief Profile of the Roundtable Chair

Prof. Prajapati Trivedi is a Senior Fellow (Governance) and an Adjunct Professor of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business (ISB), where he is directing a project on ‘*Regulating the Regulators*’ and is the Faculty Chair for the Management Programme in Public Policy (MPPP). In addition, he is a Visiting Fellow at the IBM Center for the Business of Government, Washington, DC, and Visiting Economics Faculty at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Prior to joining ISB, from 2009-2014, he worked as a Secretary to the Government of India in the Cabinet Secretariat, where he was responsible for designing a highly regarded whole-of-government performance monitoring and evaluation system for government departments and reporting the results to the Prime Minister of India. He worked as a Senior Economist with the World Bank from 1995-2009; Economic Adviser to Government of India (1992-1994) and a Chaired Professor of Public Sector Management at the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (1987-1992). He received M.Sc. (Economics) from London School of Economics in 1972 and Ph. D. (Economics) from Boston University in 1985. Author of four books and several academic papers, he has worked in more than 30 countries around the world. He is the first Indian to receive the International Public Administration Award from the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA).