



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

Newsletter | ಸುದ್ದಿಪತ್ರ

Volume 6 | Issue 58 | May 2025

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Note from the Chief Editor



Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.)

Former Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka
Former Chairman, Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2
Chairperson, Indian Institute of Public Administration
Karnataka Regional Branch



I am happy to place before our readers the **May 2025** issue of our **Newsletter**. This is our **58th issue**, since we began this initiative.

Our **Lead Feature** is on **National Civil Services Day**. Celebrated every **April 21**, it recognizes the role of the Civil Services in advancing national development, implementing policies, and ensuring good governance.

Our **Lead Article** is by **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar** on **Challenges before the Civil Services in India** on the challenges that must be addressed to align the services with India's development aspirations, including the vision of a '**Viksit Bharat @2047**'.

In our section on **Branch Events**, we report on the **Panel Discussion** at **Jain University** on the **Evaluation Reports** commissioned by IIPA-KRB of the **Gruhalakshmi and Shakti Schemes of Karnataka**. We also carry summaries of the presentations made by **Shri T. Sethumadhavan** and **Dr. Sudeshna Mukherjee** at the Panel Discussion.

I am happy to inform our readers that our Branch has launched a new initiative, namely, **Documenting Oral History of Eminent Civil Servants** on 12th April 2025 in Bengaluru with a conversation with the distinguished nonagenarian civil servant, **Shri S. Ramanathan, IAS (Retd.)**, Chairman Emeritus of IIPA-KRB.

In our **Books** section, we carry details of a book written by **Dr. Renuka Vishwanathan, IAS (Retd.)** titled, **Bless this Mess: A Search for Democracy**.

In our section on **Branch Members Writings in the Media**, we carry links to articles penned by the following Life Members:

1. **Shri Gurucharan Gollerkeri, IAS (Retd.)**
2. **Smt. Uma Mahadevan, IAS;**
3. **Dr. Annapoorna Ravichander** and
4. **Prof. M.J. Vinod.**

And in our column on **Food for Thought**, we report and reflect on the trend of more and more students from Engineering and Science backgrounds clearing the UPSC Civil Service Examination.

I wish to add a disclaimer here that the views expressed by the contributors to the articles are their personal views, and do not necessarily represent the views or position of the Editorial Board or the members of the Executive Committee of the Branch. Do write in with your suggestions for improvement of the Newsletter.



Lead Feature



National Civil Services Day honours the contributions of Civil Servants who dedicate their careers to public service. Celebrated every **April 21**, it recognizes their role in advancing national development, implementing policies, and ensuring good governance. The day serves as a platform to express gratitude for their commitment to social equity, inclusive growth, and citizen welfare.

Why April 21?

The choice of April 21 traces back to a historic moment in 1947 when **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, India's first Deputy Prime Minister, addressed the first batch of Administrative Services officers at the All-India Administrative Service Training School in Metcalfe House, Delhi. He famously described Civil Services as the "**Steel Frame of India**," emphasizing their critical role in nation-building. To commemorate this address, April 21 was designated as **National Civil Services Day**, with the first official celebration held in 2006 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

The Significance of National Civil Services Day

National Civil Services Day is more than a ceremonial occasion; it's a call to action for Civil Servants to recommit to excellence. The day underscores their dual role as policy executors and policymakers, shaping India's socio-economic landscape. In 2025, the theme focused on empowering citizens and reaching the last mile, reflecting the government's commitment to inclusive and equitable growth.

National Civil Services Day 2025: Theme and Objectives

The 2025 theme, "**Empowering Citizens, Reaching the Last Mile**," emphasizes the role of Civil Servants in bridging gaps and ensuring that no citizen is left behind. This theme aligns with India's broader goals of achieving prosperity and equity for all.

Empowering Citizens

Empowerment is at the heart of the 2025 theme. Civil Servants are tasked with creating opportunities for citizens to thrive, whether through education, employment, or access to essential services.

Reaching the Last Mile

The concept of "**Reaching the Last Mile**" focuses on delivering services to the most remote and marginalized communities. Civil Servants work tirelessly to overcome logistical and socio-economic barriers, ensuring that government schemes benefit even the most underserved populations.

Achieving Equitable Development

Equitable development is a cornerstone of India's progress. The 2025 theme encourages Civil Servants to prioritize policies and initiatives that reduce disparities and promote fairness.

Awards for Excellence

The **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence** are a highlight of the celebrations. These awards recognize exceptional achievements in Public Administration, innovation, and service delivery. By honouring outstanding Civil Servants, the awards inspire others to emulate their dedication and impact.

The Scheme for **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** has been instituted to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts & Organizations of the Union and State Governments for the welfare of common citizens. For the **Prime Minister's Awards Scheme 2024**, the following priority programmes had been identified for the awards to be presented on Civil Services Day 2025:

- (a) Category 1 - Holistic Development of Districts**
- (b) Category 2- Aspirational Blocks Programme**
- (c) Category 3 - Innovation.**

The Prime Minister's Awards consist of: (i) Trophy, (ii) Scroll and (iii) an incentive of Rs. 20 lakhs to the awarded District/organization to be utilized for implementation of a project/programme or bridging resource gaps in any area of public welfare.

On April 21, 2025, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the nation's civil servants, emphasizing their

role in effective governance and service delivery. During the event, the Prime Minister conferred the **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** to recognize exceptional work in implementing priority programmes and innovations in Public Administration.

One notable awardee was the **Poshan Tracker**, a mobile-based digital platform developed under the **POSHAN Abhiyaan**. This application has revolutionized the delivery and monitoring of nutritional and childcare services across India, by enabling real-time data tracking and management by Anganwadi workers.

Additionally, **IAS officers, Dr. Athar Aamir Khan**, District Magistrate of Kulgam, and **Ayushi Sudan**, District Magistrate of Kupwara, both from Jammu & Kashmir, were recognized for their contributions to governance and their alignment with the '**Viksit Bharat 2047**' vision.

Dr. Athar Aamir Khan - District Magistrate, Kulgam

Dr. Khan received the award for exemplary governance initiatives implemented in Kulgam during 2023. Although the projects were initiated under the tenure of his predecessor, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Dr. Khan effectively presented and continued these initiatives before the Evaluation Committee, leading to the district's recognition.



Ayushi Sudan - District Magistrate, Kupwara

Ms. Ayushi Sudan was honoured for her innovative efforts in enhancing education and governance in Kupwara. Her initiatives include the development of over **300 smart classrooms**, establishment of **robotics and innovation labs**, and the implementation of **digital monitoring tools** to improve service delivery.

These recognitions highlight the pivotal role of young IAS officers in driving transformative governance at the grassroots level, aligning with the national objective of achieving a developed India by 2047.



For a comprehensive list of awardees and detailed information about the **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration**, please visit the official website: <https://pmawards.gov.in>.





Challenges before the Civil Services in India - D. Jeevan Kumar

The Civil Services in India are a vital component of governance, acting as the executive arm of the government and playing a critical role in policy implementation and Public Administration. With responsibilities that span from maintaining law and order to executing welfare schemes and managing crises, Civil Servants are expected to exhibit high levels of integrity, efficiency, and adaptability. However, as India progresses socially, economically, and technologically, Civil Services face both long-standing and emerging challenges. These issues must be understood and addressed to align the services with India's development aspirations, including the vision of a '*Viksit Bharat @2047*'.

I. Traditional Challenges

1. Colonial Legacy

The structure of Indian Civil Services finds its roots in the British era, where the administration was designed primarily for control, compliance, and revenue collection. Post-Independence, while democratic ideals were introduced, many colonial features remained entrenched—such as top-down decision-making, an overemphasis on rules rather than outcomes, and limited citizen participation. This legacy often creates friction in a democracy where empowerment, inclusion, and service delivery are more relevant.

2. Red Tape and Bureaucratic Inertia

The Civil Services is frequently criticized for its slow, rule-bound processes that result in procedural delays and inefficiencies. This phenomenon, known as *Red Tape*, refers to the excessive regulation or rigid conformity to formal rules that hinder decision-making and innovation. Bureaucratic inertia, a resistance to change, makes it difficult for new ideas or reforms to take root quickly. As a result, timely implementation of projects and policies often suffers.

3. Lack of Accountability

In the traditional bureaucratic setup, Civil Servants enjoy significant job security, which can sometimes result in complacency. The absence of robust Performance Appraisal mechanisms means that excellence and inefficiency are treated nearly equally, especially when promotions are based on tenure rather than merit. This dilutes accountability and may demotivate those who strive to make meaningful impacts.

4. Frequent Transfers and Political Interference

Civil Servants in India are often transferred from one post to another with little notice or rationale, sometimes due to political pressure or administrative convenience. This instability disrupts long-term developmental planning and weakens institutional memory. Moreover, political interference can compromise the objectivity and neutrality expected of Civil Servants, forcing them into ethical dilemmas.

5. Recruitment and Training Gaps

Although the UPSC examination is one of the most competitive and merit-based selection processes globally, the training provided post-selection often fails to keep up with the evolving demands of governance. It has been stated that there is an overemphasis on theoretical learning, with limited exposure to field challenges, technological applications, or behavioural skills necessary for modern administration. This results in a mismatch between what officers are trained for and what they encounter in practice.

II. Contemporary Challenges

1. Technological Disruption and Digital Governance

The growing use of digital tools in public service delivery, such as online portals, data analytics platforms, and real-time monitoring systems, demands that Civil Servants possess digital literacy and adaptability. While technology offers opportunities for transparency and efficiency, many officers are either unfamiliar with or resistant to new systems, which hinders digital transformation. There is a pressing need for continuous training in IT tools, cybersecurity, and data governance.

2. Increasing Citizen Expectations

Indian citizens today are more aware, informed, and vocal about their rights, thanks in part to social media and expanding literacy. They expect quick, efficient, and corruption-free public services. Civil Servants must now be more responsive, accessible, and transparent than ever before. The inability to meet these expectations can lead to a *Trust Deficit* between the public and the administration, often culminating in public outrage or media criticism.

3. Complex Policy Ecosystems

Today's governance involves dealing with multifaceted problems such as climate change, urban migration, artificial intelligence, and public health crises. These issues require inter-departmental coordination,

international cooperation, and technical expertise. The Generalist nature of the Indian Civil Services, while offering flexibility, sometimes lacks the depth needed to address such specialized concerns. There is a growing recognition of the need for domain-specific knowledge within the bureaucracy.

4. Corruption and Ethical Challenges

Despite various anti-corruption laws and watchdog institutions, unethical practices continue to plague the administrative system. Civil Servants may face pressure to serve vested interests or manipulate systems for personal gain. Additionally, grey areas in policy or lack of clear ethical frameworks can make it difficult for honest officers to take a principled stand. The erosion of ethical values in public life affects not only efficiency but also the credibility of governance.

5. Mental Health and Work-Life Balance

The role of a Civil Servant often involves long working hours, high-pressure situations, and public scrutiny. The constant stress, coupled with the fear of transfers, inquiries, or political retaliation, can take a toll on mental health. Unfortunately, there is minimal institutional support for psychological well-being, and discussions on mental health remain stigmatized within the bureaucracy. As governance becomes more complex, it is crucial to ensure that officers are mentally resilient and emotionally supported.

III. Reforms and the Way Forward

1. Lateral Entry and Specialization

To bridge the knowledge gap in specialized domains, the government has started recruiting professionals from outside the regular Civil Services through lateral entry. This can infuse fresh perspectives, technical expertise, and competition into the system. Encouraging some specialization within the services can also help in dealing with complex challenges more effectively.

2. Capacity Building and Training

Reforms like *Mission Karmayogi* are focused on transforming capacity building in Civil Services by making training more continuous, competency-based, and digitally enabled. Officers are now expected to upskill themselves periodically in line with emerging governance needs. The emphasis is shifting from tenure-based progress to Performance-Based Evaluation, which can foster a culture of learning and excellence.

3. Administrative Decentralization

Decentralizing authority to District, Block, and Panchayat-level officers can significantly enhance responsiveness and efficiency in service delivery. Empowering field-level officers to take decisions independently reduces delays and aligns governance more closely with local needs. Moreover, participatory governance involving local communities can improve accountability and trust in the system.

4. Technology Integration

Digital tools such as **Poshan Tracker**, **e-Office**, **Aadhaar-based authentication**, and **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** platforms have already begun to revolutionize Public Service Delivery. Continued investments in tech infrastructure, along with digital literacy programmes for officers, will be key to making the Civil Services more transparent, data-driven, and efficient.

5. Ethical Governance and Transparency

Strengthening institutions such as the Lokpal, Vigilance Commissions, and implementing strict *conflict-of-interest* policies can restore public trust. Ethics and public service values must be ingrained right from the training stages at institutions like LBSNAA and Administrative Training Institutes. Creating a culture that rewards integrity, public engagement, and accountability will help Civil Servants act as true guardians of the public interest.

Conclusion

In essence, the future of Civil Services in India rests on their ability to reinvent themselves without losing their foundational purpose. A more citizen-centric, technologically enabled, ethically grounded, and performance-oriented bureaucracy is the need of the hour. As India aspires to become a developed nation in the coming decades, the Civil Services must lead from the front—serving not only as instruments of administration but also as architects of transformation. A reformed and responsive Civil Services will be instrumental in achieving the goal of a “*Viksit Bharat by 2047*”—an India that is developed, inclusive, and globally competitive.



Guarantee Schemes of the Karnataka Government



(Summary of Presentation at Panel Discussion at Jain University)

Shri Thayyil Sethumadhavan

IA&AS (Retd.)

Formerly Principal Accountant General
Madhya Pradesh



In his Budget Speech for the Financial Year 2025-26, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asserted that the Guarantee Schemes were strategic investments based on economic and social principles. But the reality is that the “freebies culture”, as an election ploy, has intensified, and now, every political party uses them as an electoral inducement. In view of their impact of on the economy and fiscal balance, Jagdeep Dhankar, Vice-President of India, recently cautioned that populism is bad economics and instead of freebies, stress must be on sustainable empowerment of people. He advised that excessive spending on freebies will affect the State’s capacity to invest in infrastructure.

The IIPA-KRB-assisted evaluations of **Gruhalakshmi** and **Shakti** Schemes signify that they greatly assist in the objectives of women empowerment and gender parity. The Five Guarantees will, as per Budget Estimates, cost Rs.51,034 crores in 2025-26, more or less of the same level as in 2024-25. The Karnataka Budget assumes a Revenue Deficit of Rs.19,262 crores in 2025-26 and a Fiscal Deficit of Rs.90,428 crores. Borrowings are projected at Rs. 1,16,000 crores, namely, 28% of the Total Expenditure. The financial data shows that the Five Guarantees will account for 63% of the total Grants and Financial Assistance for the year (Rs.80,060 crores), but the State expects to manage the overall Fiscal Deficit and Public Debt to GSDP-Ratio within the FRBM limits. Nevertheless, the opportunity cost of the expenditure (on freebies) on Capital Expenditure cannot be gainsaid.

The sustainability of Social Welfare programmes in non-growth economies are causing concern all over the world. In a review of the developing countries in Africa and South

America, Ni Sowa concludes that subsidies are essential safety nets in poor countries but should be sifted carefully to select the right ones. In a study of OECD countries, Christine Walker and others point out the emerging problems facing the welfare schemes in non-growth countries: ageing populations, increasing costs of funding social welfare measures and climate change-related issues.

A review of grants and welfare schemes in the UK by National Audit Office (NAO) suggests that the ‘*Grants Landscape*’ could be simplified by rationalizing them through better planning and monitoring, as also to avoid frauds and errors. The **Government Grants Management Function (GGMF)** under the UK Cabinet Secretariat should play a more effective role in achieving them. The CAG of India, in a report on the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in Karnataka had pointed out several shortcomings, with recommendations to plug loopholes. The present Evaluation Reports also touch upon potential negative factors in the implementation of the Guarantees. Among the constraints are multiplicity of welfare schemes, delayed payments, diversion of funds, sub-optimal efficiency of DBT Portal, ineffective Public Grievance Mechanism, and implementation inefficiencies.

The bottom line is that while the Five Guarantees of the Government of Karnataka are by themselves a push for social and economic empowerment of women, there is need for better planning and monitoring to avoid multiplicity of schemes, duplication of benefits, ineligible beneficiaries etc. Creation of a separate Fund Account for the **Gruhalakshmi** scheme with possible accretions from CSR and donations, periodic evaluations of outcomes, social audits, etc. will help. **A Common Management Function like in the UK will be beneficial.**



Unpaid Work, Paid Recognition *Gruhalakshmi Yojana and Women's Economic Autonomy and Agency*

(Summary of Presentation at Panel Discussion at Jain University)

Dr. Sudeshna Mukherjee,
Asso. Professor
Centre for Women's Studies
Bangalore University
Bengaluru



In the heart of Karnataka, a silent revolution is underway—one that begins at the doorstep of women who have long toiled without recognition. The ***Gruhalakshmi Yojana***, a state-led initiative, is redefining the meaning of empowerment by directly acknowledging women's unpaid labour through unconditional cash transfers.

Designed specifically for women who head their households, the scheme targets those in economically vulnerable situations, provided they do not fall within the formal government employment or taxation brackets. With Aadhaar-linked documentation, proof of family headship, and minimal income thresholds, the application process prioritizes accessibility while ensuring only the deserving are included.

But to understand the true impact of this program, students and faculty, **Centre for Women's Studies, Bangalore University** supported by the **Karnataka Regional Branch** of the **IIPA**, undertook an exploratory study—both qualitative and quantitative in design—surveying over 440 women across districts like Ballari, Bangalore Urban and Rural, Raichur, and others. Of these, 410 were beneficiaries and 30 were from a control group of eligible non-beneficiaries.

The findings were striking. **A staggering 94.1% of women expressed satisfaction with the scheme, and nearly 98% reported that the cash assistance had bolstered their household income.** For most, especially those earning under ₹50,000 annually, the scheme was not just economic relief—it was recognition. Transgender persons, Devadasis, and sex workers too found a place in



this program, challenging social norms and broadening the very idea of who qualifies as "*Lakshmi*."

Women, often passive recipients of welfare, now found themselves in the role of decision-makers. Nearly half could withdraw funds independently, and over 65% felt an enhanced sense of self-worth. Some used the funds for medical expenses, others for children's education, while many prioritized personal care and savings. In a society where women's sacrifices are often invisible, this shift was transformative.

Take Rathamma, a 48-year-old widow from Bangalore Rural, who toils as a daily wage labourer. Before the scheme, she worked tirelessly every day, never affording herself rest. Now, with the ₹2,000 monthly benefit, she allows herself a weekly break, treating herself to a decent meal and moments of leisure. Her testimony is more than personal—it speaks to the psychological dignity the scheme brings.

Shobha, another beneficiary from Bangalore Urban, uses the allowance to hire childcare so she can expand her sewing business. These examples showcase how financial support fuels not just survival, but strategic life choices.

The ***Gruhalakshmi Yojana*** marks a transition from welfare to empowerment, from survival to self-assertion. While earlier schemes met basic needs—food, health, education—this programme echoes what thinkers like **Amartya Sen and Naila Kabeer describe as capability expansion**. Women are no longer recipients; they are actors shaping their destinies.

This empowerment isn't without its complexities. The study unearthed unintended consequences—family disputes, generational splits over ration cards, and dependency on male kin for withdrawing funds when banks were too far. Still, these are growing pains in a landscape shifting toward gendered economic citizenship.

However, such transformative schemes don't come without trade-offs. The opportunity cost is high. Funds used for direct transfers could have been allocated to infrastructure, education, or employment programs. Yet the symbolic and tangible outcomes of ***Gruhalakshmi***

argue that empowering women at the household level radiates wider societal benefits.

Ultimately, the *Gruhalakshmi Yojana* is a bold state assertion: ***We trust women to know what's best for their families. It pays for unpaid labour not just with cash, but with dignity, autonomy, and hope.***



Branch Events



1. Panel Discussion on Evaluation Reports of Gruhalakshmi and Shakti Schemes of Karnataka

On April 7, 2025, a **Panel Discussion** on Evaluation Reports of two women-centric welfare schemes **Gruhalakshmi** and **Shakti** of Govt. of Karnataka was hosted by the **Karnataka Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA-KRB)** and **Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE), School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)**, at its Jayanagar Campus. The session was attended by a diverse audience, including academics, policymakers, students and members of civil society.

This session marked an academic and policy-driven attempt to critically examine the two flagship schemes through the lens of field-level evaluation studies. These schemes aim to tackle long-standing issues of gender inequality, financial disempowerment, and limited mobility faced by women, particularly from underprivileged backgrounds. The panel was moderated by **Dr. Priyanca Mathur**, Head and Associate Professor, CeRSSE, JAIN (Deemed-to-be) University.



The Panel featured leading experts in social sciences, economics and public administration who presented their insights.

Prof. Sandeep Shastri presented findings from the quantitative survey of over 500 respondents across Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts. He highlighted that 95% of respondents acknowledged benefiting from the **Shakti** scheme, with 40% using it daily. Over half directed the funds saved toward household expenses or savings, and 57% noted improved employment opportunities. However, he raised concerns over a reported 44% increase in public harassment, emphasizing the urgent need for safer infrastructure to support the scheme.

Dr. Sudeshna Mukherjee shared insights from a quantitative and qualitative survey involving 410 **Gruhalakshmi** beneficiaries. She stressed the emotional and practical impact of the ₹2,000 monthly stipend, which enhanced women's dignity and agency, especially among low-income families and marginalized transgender, devadasi etc communities. She mentioned that more than 35% of beneficiaries were receiving benefits from more than one transfer scheme.

Mr. T. Sethumadhavan, IA&AS (Retd.) offered a macroeconomic perspective, raising concerns about the fiscal impact of welfare initiatives like **Gruhalakshmi**, with subsidies taking up a large chunk of the State's budget. He recommended establishing dedicated funds, a unified welfare management system and regular audits to ensure financial prudence and long-term viability.

Shri T. M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.) said that IIPA-KRB had sponsored the two studies conducted by students at Bangalore University as an attempt to bridge the gap between administrators and academia and give field experience to students. He mentioned that there was a need to estimate the actual percentage of usage of **Shakti** scheme by women belonging to SCs and STs. He said the issues of better targeting of schemes and making the **Gruhalakshmi** scheme a conditional transfer could be considered.

Takeaways & Closing Remarks: The session concluded with a collective understanding that while the **Gruhalakshmi** and **Shakti** schemes have demonstrated tangible benefits and have broadly achieved their intended objectives, continuous evaluation and fiscal responsibility must drive their future development. The session was followed by an interactive Q/A session moderated by Dr. Priyanca Mathur.

2. Documenting Oral History of Eminent Civil Servants

The Karnataka Regional Branch of the IIPA launched a new initiative titled, “**Documenting Oral History of Eminent Civil Servants**” with the following objectives:

1. **Preserve Institutional Memory:** To systematically record the experiences, challenges, and contributions of eminent civil servants, thereby preserving the unwritten history and institutional memory of Public Administration in the State and country.
2. **Inspire serving and future civil servants:** To create a resource that can motivate and guide serving young civil servants, aspiring Civil Servants and young professionals by showcasing real-life narratives of integrity, leadership, and public service.
3. **Highlight Evolution of Bureaucratic Culture:** To trace the evolution of governance practices and bureaucratic culture over time, as seen through the lived experiences of senior administrators.
4. **Acknowledge Contributions:** To recognize and honour the contributions of distinguished Civil Servants.
5. **Promote Research and Policy Understanding:** To provide scholars, policymakers, and governance researchers with firsthand accounts that reveal the inner workings of policy formulation, crisis management, and administrative reform.

This initiative was launched on 12th April 2025 in the Metropolitan Club, BTM Layout, Bengaluru with a conversation with the distinguished nonagenarian civil servant, **Shri S. Ramanathan, IAS (Retd.)** who served Karnataka and the country in remarkable ways in a career spanning 34 years. Shri S. Ramanathan is currently Chairman Emeritus of the Branch. He is the recipient of several awards which include the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award in 1998.

Shri S. Ramanathan recalled the advice of his father, late **Sri K.S. Aiyar** to him, upon his appointment to the Indian Administrative Service in 1952, *to maintain the highest standards of integrity and to remain incorruptible always*, which he followed meticulously till his retirement in 1986. He recalled stories of his **initiatives, innovations and best practices** in his postings, in the State, at the Centre and in an international assignment as **UN Community Development Expert in Afghanistan**. He was handpicked by the then Union Minister for Shipping and Transport, Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao to serve as **Director (Projects)** to expedite the completion of the Mangalore and Tuticorin Harbours and the Cochin Shipyard. Shri S.

Ramanathan recalled his long stint in the **Civil Aviation** sector as Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Chairman of the International Airport Authority of India and the Vice-President of the International Airports Association, Paris.

Shri S. Ramanathan also recalled his **post-retirement innings** in the social, educational, trade, commerce, industry and tourism sectors. He was President of Sadashivanagar Residents Welfare Association from 1990 to 2018. As **Chairman** of the **Karnataka Regional Branch** of the IIPA for 32 years, he said he was immensely satisfied to have laid the foundation of a Branch which has been recognized as one of the **Best Performing Branches** in the country.

Shri S. Ramanathan recounted stories of his **experiences in the Districts of Karnataka** (then Mysore) where there was no electricity, no attached bathrooms, no water connections and where travel to interior villages had to be done on horseback. It was compulsory for Deputy Commissioners to tour for three weeks continuously and hold camps in villages to listen to public grievances and take immediate action to resolve them. He even undertook a day-long fast in one particular village to ensure that land was made available for the establishment of a Primary Health Centre.

Questions from the audience ranged from his **experience in working with politicians, the shift in the IAS from a Generalist Service to a Specialist and Technical one, and the secret of his longevity!** He said he was privileged to work with first generation politicians of impeccable integrity and commitment to nation building. He did not believe in punishing errant subordinates but gave them sufficient time to mend their ways. He practised self-help, cleaned his own table and polished his own shoes. He led a dedicated and disciplined life. He was friendly and accessible to the public. **His motto in public service was to help everyone.**

Shri K. Jairaj, IAS (Retd.) did an admirable job as **Interlocutor**. **Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.)** Chairperson, IIPA-KRB chaired the event. **Smt. Shameem Banu, IAS (Retd.)**, President, Metropolitan Club, proposed a vote of thanks.





3. Training Programme for Taluk Nodal Officers of the Karnataka Administrative Service

The **Karnataka Regional Branch** of IIPA (IIPA-KRB) organized a day-long Training Programme for Taluk Nodal Officers (TNOs) of the **Karnataka Administrative Service** on '*Resolving Public Grievances and Increasing District Gross Domestic Product*' on 25 April 2025 at the IAS Officers Association Building, Bengaluru.

Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS, Chief Secretary of Karnataka inaugurated the programme. She emphasized the priority to be given to redressal of public grievances especially relating to loans, housing, pensions, land survey, personnel issues etc. She asked the TNOs to visit the taluks regularly and actively participate in the monthly *Abhiyanas* on different issues.

Introductory Remarks were made by **Shri S. Ramanathan**, Chairman Emeritus of the Branch. He said villages and taluks were the fundamental units of administration. He urged the participants to resolve public grievances within 15 days at the most.

Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.), former Chief Secretary of Karnataka and Chairperson of IIPA-KRB presided over the inaugural programme. He said that the

themes were carefully selected after deliberations. A mix of administrators and academicians had been selected to be resource persons.

Smt. Thulasi Maddineni, IAS, Secretary, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Govt of Karnataka (GoK) gave concluding remarks and proposed a vote of thanks.

The following **Resource Persons** delivered lectures on the themes indicated:

1. **Resolving Public Grievances, Janaspandana and Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (IPGRS): Smt. Rashmi, IAS**, Project Director, IPGRS, GoK;
2. **E-Procurement: Smt. Suma**, Project Director, E-Procurement, GoK;
3. **Role of Administrators in Industrial and Service Sector Promotion at Taluk Level: Shri Shivakumar., Additional Director**, Commissionerate for Industrial Development, GoK;
4. **Role of Administrators in Promoting Skill Development and Increasing Gross Enrolment Ratio in Secondary and Higher Education at Taluk Level: Prof. Dr. Pushkarni Panchamukhi**, Associate Dean,

School of Economics & Public Policy, R. V. University, Bengaluru.

5. Role of Administrators in Increasing Women's Participation in the Labour Force at Taluk Level: Dr. Chaya Degaonkar, Advisor, Public Finance, 5th State Finance Commission, Karnataka.

Smt. Thulasi Maddineni spoke in the last session and exhorted the participants to follow the guidance given by the Chief Secretary and by DPAR AR in visiting schools, health centres, Anganwadi centres and hostels. She pointed out that some TNOs had either not logged in on the TNOs portal or had not submitted reports on it. She urged them to log in and submit reports on the portal.

The Training Programme was well received by the participants, with most of them giving feedback that it was very relevant.

Photo - Dr. Shalini Rajneesh delivering the Inaugural Address.

L to R - Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, Shri S. Ramanathan. At extreme right is Smt. Thulasi Maddineni



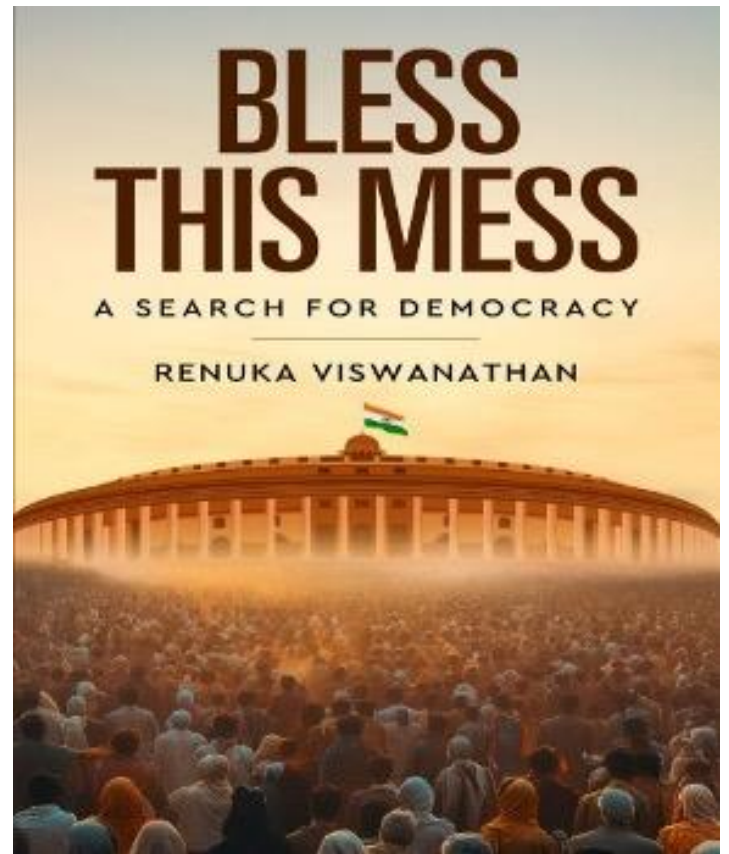
Book



Bless This Mess

Paperback: 236 pages
Publisher: White Falcon Publishing; 1st edition
(April 2025)
Price: ₹ 459.00

The book is a personalised approach to **Political Theory** based on the academic background of the author **Dr. Renuka Viswanathan, IAS (Retd.)** as a Ph.D. in Public Finance, professional experience in the **Indian Administrative Service, Karnataka cadre** running and regulating democratic institutions, field knowledge as an activist and volunteer for voter education and registration programmes, and political experience as supporter and candidate of a national political party - the Aam Aadmi Party. It focuses on the anomalies and distortions that arise when the **theory of democracy** clashes with campaigning and election practices. The book includes chapters on whether Indian women have gained from getting the vote, the interface between the bureaucracy and politicians and the effect of caste on electoral outcomes.



Branch Members' Writings In Popular Media



All Stress and No Play making Children anxious, with Fragile Mental Health

Psychologists and writers are linking the mental health crisis among teenagers to the rising use of digital technologies, a 'Pandora's box' rewiring their brains. The way out, they say, is limiting social media use drastically for children, more unsupervised play, childhood independence and reading.

In *The Hindu* dt. 25 April 2025

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/all-stress-and-no-play-making-children-anxious-with-fragile-mental-health/article69484086.ece>

Smt. Uma Mahadevan, IAS
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Dehradun Unplugged: A Breath of Mountain Air

<https://meghalayamonitor.com/dehradun-unplugged-a-breath-of-mountain-air/>

Importance of Strategy in Public Policy and Communication

<https://meghalayamonitor.com/importance-of-strategy-in-public-policy-and-communication/>

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Pahalgam and Pakistan's Two-Nation Delusion

In making Hindu pilgrims recite the Kalima — a Muslim declaration of faith — to identify and then execute non-Muslims, the attackers were not just engaging in violence, they were staging an ideological provocation of the most chilling kind.

In *Deccan Herald* dt. 28 April 2025

<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/pahalgam-and-pakistan-s-two-nation-delusion-3513370>

All the Mystic and Wonder of Malnad

Tejaswi's Kannada prose is known for its rich literary tapestry, drawing on the cultural and linguistic roots of Karnataka. A pioneer of the 'Navyottara' (post-modernist) literary movement, he gained prominence with his exploratory works that often delve into the mysteries of life and science.

In *Deccan Herald* dt. 4 May 2025

<https://www.deccanherald.com/features/books/all-the-mystic-and-wonder-of-malnad-3521777>

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The Oil Wealth Paradox in the Niger Delta

In *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol.59 Issue 52

<https://www.epw.in/journal/2024/52/letters/oil-wealth-paradox-niger-delta.html>

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More and More Students from Engineering and Science Backgrounds are clearing UPSC Civil Service Examinations

While the exact figures for 2024 are pending release, historical data underscores a consistent pattern of candidates from Engineering and Science backgrounds achieving success in the UPSC Civil Service Examinations, often by strategically selecting Social Science subjects to navigate the examination effectively.

Trends from previous years indicate a significant representation of candidates from engineering and science backgrounds among successful aspirants.

Educational Background Trends (2017–2021)

According to data presented in the Rajya Sabha, from 2017 to 2021: ([The Times of India](#))

- **Engineering Graduates:** Approximately **63.6%** (2,783 out of 4,371) of successful candidates held Engineering degrees.
- **Science and Medical Graduates:** Combined, candidates from Science and Medical backgrounds constituted about **12.7%** of the successful pool.
- **Social Science Graduates:** Represented around **23.6%** of the selected candidates.

Notably, despite their technical backgrounds, many Engineering graduates opted for Social Science subjects like **Political Science, International Relations, Sociology, and Geography** as their optional papers in the Mains examination. ([The Economic Times](#))

Implications of These Trends

1. **Strategic Subject Selection:** The preference for Social Science subjects among Engineering graduates suggests a strategic approach, leveraging the overlap between these subjects and the General Studies papers, as well as the perceived scoring potential.
2. **Skill Set Alignment:** The analytical and problem-solving skills inherent in Engineering education may provide an advantage in the UPSC examination's rigorous assessment process.
3. **Career Diversification:** The high participation of Engineers indicates a trend where individuals seek stable and prestigious careers in Civil Services, possibly due to limited opportunities or job satisfaction in their original fields. ([mycareer24.com](#))

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