



IC Centre for Governance

Sardar Patel
Lecture on Governance

New Delhi | October 31, 2022

3



IC Centre for Governance

The IC Centre for Governance has been set up with the objective of collective thinking and acting on important issues of governance. It believes that public governance is too serious a matter to be left entirely to the state and that the involvement of the Civil Society is not only desirable but also essential. The Centre seeks to strengthen the capacity of Civil Society and government for ensuring good governance.

Read more about the Centre at <https://www.iccfg.net/>

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C-59, Okhla Industrial Area,
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Please address all correspondence to

IC Centre for Governance
3, Palam Marg, 3rd Floor, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110057
Tel: +91-40809939, +91- 9315606289
E-mail: iccfg@yahoo.co.in, info.iccfg@gmail.com
Website: <https://www.iccfg.net/>



Shri Arif Mohammed Khan

Hon'ble Governor of Kerala

PROGRAMME

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About the Lecture

“In a tough time the cowards find excuses, the brave people find the way”.

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel

In every programme on Ethics in Governance conducted by IC Centre for Governance since 2005, the participating members of the All India Services are being reminded of the stirring words and inspiring actions of Sardar Patel, the tallest among nation builders of India. His address to the first batch of the Indian Administrative Services is circulated to them to act as a veritable guide in their career.

Sardar Patel was a true nationalist, who placed the interests of the country above everything else. Nothing else except the country mattered to him. It would be apt to describe him as the unifier of India and what was achieved by him during the turbulent days of partition remains unparalleled in modern history.

In our view, it is necessary to reiterate the work and principles of the Sardar—loyalty to the motherland, unshakeable commitment to nationalism and unflinching service to the Nation – so that the new generations do not forget the great legacy.

The Centre has, therefore, decided to pay its humble tribute to the great leader by institutionalizing an annual lecture on the theme of Governance in his name. This small initiative is aimed at keeping his fire of nationalism alive in our hearts and reiterating his principles of governance to motivate those in government and those who observe the governments from outside.

The first ICCfG Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance was delivered by Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, the Vice President of India on 24 January 2020. The second lecture was delivered by Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Former Chairman, ISRO, MP (Rajya Sabha) on February 19, 2022. The third lecture was delivered by Shri Arif Mohammed Khan, Governor of Kerala on October 31, 2022.

Prabhat Kumar

President, IC Centre for Governance

National Anthem

जन गण मन अधिनायक जय हे, भारत भाग्य विधाता
पंजाब सिंध गुजरात मराठा, द्रविड उत्कल बंग
विंध्य हिमाचल यमुना गंगा, उच्छल जलधि तरंग
तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशिष मांगे
गाहे तव जय गाथा
जन गण मंगल दायक जय हे, भारत भाग्य विधाता
जय हे जय हे जय हे, जय जय जय जय हे



INTRODUCTION

Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, Shri Arif Mohammed ji, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Shri Harivansh Ji, President of the IC Centre for Governance, Shri Prabhat Kumar, Secretary General of the IC Centre, Shri Shanti Narain, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I have great pleasure in welcoming you all this evening to the third Sardar Patel Memorial lecture.

The first lecture was held in an auditorium named after Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. We are very fortunate and lucky indeed to have Arif Mohammed Khan ji today on the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. It is a great honour for us and for him to speak about the man who is referred to as the 'Iron Man' of the country. Before I request Shri Prabhat Kumar for his welcome address, may I request you all, to kindly switch-off your mobile phones or put it on the silent mode. Thank you.

Mahesh Kapoor

Vice President, IC Centre for Governance

Welcome Address - Shri Prabhat Kumar, President, IC Centre for Governance



Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, Shri Arif Mohammed Khan sahab, Hon'ble Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Harivansh Ji, Shri Narain ji, Shri Mahesh Kapoor ji, (*I see so many friends here*) distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It's my most pleasant duty to welcome all of you to this IC Centre's Sardar Patel lecture of 2022 being held in collaboration with the India International Centre.

As we know there is a common perception that governance in many parts of the world is not what it should be. Most of us are concerned about the quality of governance and some are actively thinking about it. In fact not a day passes without there being a conclave or a conference or a seminar somewhere on some aspect of public governance.

I have spent almost four decades in the system and I think that governance is a very complex subject. There are so many views about it; political thinkers and commentators have given their own views. But according to the classical understanding of public governance, there are three essential components of governance, the Constitutional legitimacy of the government, the organization of the political system and the third is the organization of the administrative system. Within the matrix of these three components there are competitive political narratives which are ruling various parts of the world for quite some time. And in a country like ours, a large country like India, governance has multiple pursuits, multiple priorities. And the curious thing is that some of these priorities are mutually contradictory. Choices have to be made but not all the choices are without costs and therefore, we find that there is no settled view about the type of governance that provides an arrangement which is least elitist and most rooted in a responsive socialism, responsive to public welfare. So in order to reinforce the public discourse on public governance, the IC Centre which has been there for the last two decades is struggling with efforts to find possible solutions to public policy issues.

The IC Centre decided to have an annual lecture on governance and it chose the name Sardar Patel Lecture for obvious reasons. I need not explain the reasons why we chose the name Sardar Patel Lecture. because you know, if there was one leader in this country who envisioned the governance in Independent India it was the venerable Sardar; if there was one leader who gave a shape to the nation state it was Sardar; and if there was one leader who defined the unity and integrity of the nation it was Sardar. So we are remembering Sardar by honoring his memory and it is very befitting that we are doing it on his birth anniversary.

To deliver the third Sardar Patel lecture, we have Shri Arif Mohammed Khan, a staunch nationalist and a confirmed secular, who is well-versed in religious and historical texts. He is sometimes criticized, often loved but hard to ignore. Shri Khan was that way when he entered the political arena as a student leader. An erudite scholar of Islamic law and philosophy, a statesman of high repute and a distinguished political leader, he was president of Aligarh Muslim University students union in the seventies, and later the Cabinet Minister of Energy and Civil Aviation in Rajiv Gandhi Cabinet.

Interestingly, he wrote his resignation as cabinet minister sitting in the parliament when the then prime minister chose political security over social change; he did not care about the risk of destabilizing his own political career at a young age of 35 years.

And presently he occupies the constitutional position of the governor of a state. He is a gifted writer and brilliant orator. A compilation of his articles on the message and spirit of Quran, Islamic history and contemporary issues has appeared as ‘text and context’ (*Sir it’s a brilliant book*)

Those who have followed his statements concerning governance would have seen his recent statement that he would not sign a Bill passed by the state assembly, if it goes against the spirit of the Constitution and decisions of the Supreme Court. Also he recently, said, “I condemn any ideology of those who think violence can be used. There is no room for violence in India.”

We are grateful to you sir for agreeing to deliver the lecture today.

We are also happy to have Shri Harivansh ji, the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha with us today to preside over the event. To those in the media, Harivansh ji is an exemplar par excellence. He has seen governance at the state and federal levels with a very sharp eye.

Harivansh ji has worked in several different media publication houses through his career, starting with The Times of India. In 1974, when Jayaprakash Narain was spearheading the call for total revolution against the then government, Harivansh ji also joined him. Later, he served as a media advisor to former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar.

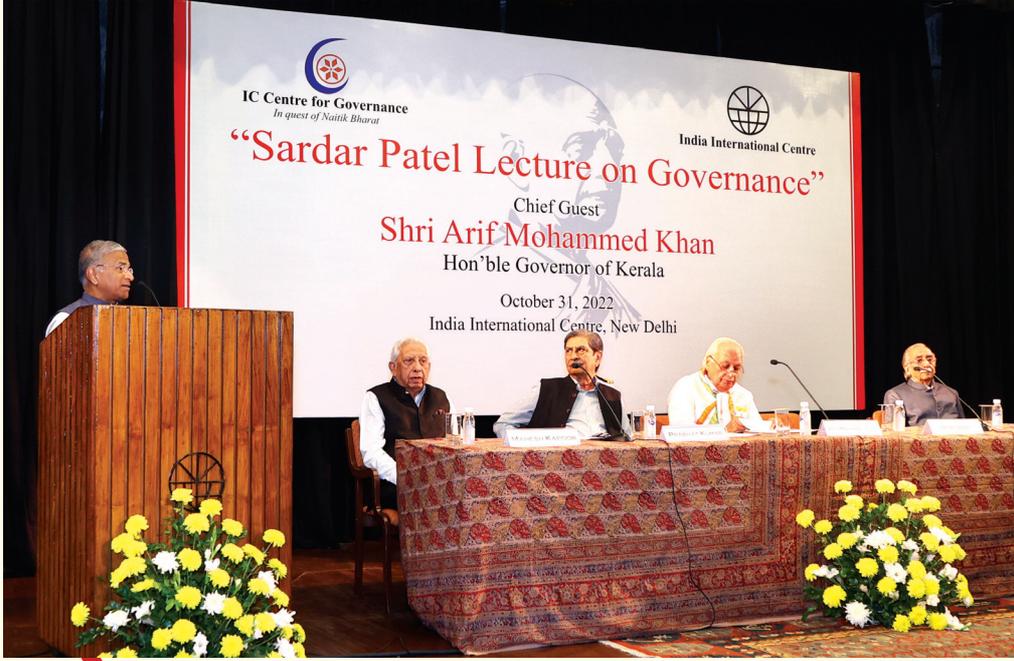
He joined the obscure and nearly dead Hindi daily newspaper Prabhat Khabar in 1989, and scaled it up to become one of the top newspapers in India. The newspaper was known for investigating many high-profile stories, including the Fodder scam. Under his leadership, Prabhat Khabar became a movement for probity in governance with the banner heading ‘Akhbar nahin, Andolan’

In August 2018, he was elected as Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and re-elected in September 2020 after he returned to the Rajya Sabha for his second term.

With these few words, I welcome all of you again to the third Sardar Patel lecture on governance to be delivered by Shri Arif Mohammed Khan.

And now I request Harivansh ji to make his presidential comments. Thank you.

Presidential Address - Shri Harivansh Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha



कैरल के महामहिम राज्यपाल श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान जी, पूर्व राज्यपाल आई सी सेन्टर ऑफ गवर्नेन्स के अध्यक्ष माननीय प्रभात कुमार जी, जनरल सैक्टरी, आई सी सेन्टर ऑफ गवर्नेन्स के श्री शांति नारायण जी और श्री महेश कपूर जी उपस्थित सभी सम्मानित सज्जनों, यहां आमंत्रित करने के लिए आई.सी. सेंटर फॉर गवर्नेंस के प्रेसीडेंट माननीय प्रभात कुमार जी समेत आप सबको धन्यवाद।

व्यक्तिगत अनुभव है दशकों से यह सेंटर, प्रशिक्षण और कार्यशालाओं के माध्यम से गवर्नेंस के महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दों पर श्रेष्ठ काम कर रहा है। साथ ही सार्वजनिक संस्थानों की क्षमता-निर्माण में भी इस संस्था का उल्लेखनीय योगदान है। माननीय प्रभात कुमार जी में Passion की तरह यह है। झारखंड विश्वविद्यालयों में गुणात्मक बदलाव।

याद है शायद 10-12 वर्षों पहले IC सेंटर ने ही 'In Search of Ethical Leadership' R M Lala की पुस्तक का विमोचन। हाल में 'Public Service Ethics' (A Quest for Naitaik Bharat) माननीय प्रभात कुमार जी की उल्लेखनीय किताब। मुकुंद कौशल जी की Remarkable किताब 'SAILING ON MY OWN COMPASS'

(A POLICEMAN'S DIARY) पढ़ी। यानी यह संस्था और आप Individually बड़ा काम कर रहे हैं।

यह आज की सबसे बड़ी समस्या है कि Ethical / Moral Society का अभियान चले। आज सोशल मीडिया के दौर में यह चुनौती व जरूरत है। यह सेंटर ऐसे मुद्दों पर बातचीत और आत्मनिरीक्षण का एक महत्वपूर्ण माध्यम है। हमने अब तक क्या हासिल किया है, हमारी कमियां क्या हैं और आने वाले समय की चुनौतियों के संदर्भ में हमें किन क्षेत्रों में सुधार करने की आवश्यकता है, इस बारे में निरंतर विचार करने का उचित मंच है।

सम्मानित मित्रों, Under the Sage Leadership of Shri Prabhat Kumar Jee and his distinguished team this centre has been dedicatedly and Passionately encouraging collective thinking and ideating on Public governance, Public Policy issues, ethics in governance amongst many other issues related. to good governance and administration. It is a matter of Pride that the training Programs imparted by the centre on 'Ethics in Public Governance' are gaining international repute for its quality and impact में I. C. Centre for Governance का vision statement देख रहा था, तब मुझे रियलाइज हुआ कि इस व्याख्यान माला को लौह पुरुष सरदार पटेल को क्यों समर्पित किया गया है।

सरदार पटेल ने 1947 में एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव सर्विस के आफिसर्स को सम्बोधित करते हुए सलाह दी थी- *"to maintain utmost the impartiality and incorruptibility of administration"*.

इस प्रकार Good गवर्नेंस का Golden Rule, जो सरदार पटेल जी ने शुरुआती दिनों में तय किया था, समय के साथ उन पर जो धूल की परतें चढ़ती गयीं, उन्हें आज निखारने की उतनी ही जरूरत है।

भारत के पहले राष्ट्रपति राजेंद्र बाबू ने कहा था- *"That there is today an India to think and talk about is very largely due to Sardar Patel's statesmanship and firm administration"*.

1946 में Viceroy Wavell पटेल से पहली बार मिले। अपनी डायरी में लिखा, मिलने के बाद- 'Not an attractive Personality and uncompromising, but More of a man than most of the Indian Politicians I have met...'

यह लेक्चर शृंखला इस दिशा में एक बड़ा प्रभावी प्रयास है। आपने इस व्याख्यान के लिए बहुत सही चयन, महामहिम आरिफ खान साहब का किया है। श्रेष्ठ स्कालर। Conviction की राजनीति के नाम। Moral Politics के प्रतीक। खान साहब ने छात्र नेता के रूप में फिर efficient Parliamentarian, छाप छोड़ने वाले मंत्री के रूप में और अब राज्यपाल के रूप में, Public Governance को नजदीक से देखा, हस्तक्षेप किया और दिशा देने

का काम भी कर रहे हैं। वह ऐसे Public leaders के रूप में जाने जाते हैं। Who has Mind of his own. हम सभी उत्सुक हैं, उन्हें सुनने को।

आज का दिन सरदार साहब की स्मृति का दिन भी है। जन्मदिन। उन्हें सही रूप में 'Father of Modern All India services' भी कहा जाता है।

गवर्नेस में चुनौतियां

आजादी के 75 वर्ष हो चुके हैं। आजादी का अमृत काल है। माननीय प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी के नेतृत्व में केंद्र सरकार भी 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' के रास्ते चल रही है। इस दिशा में अनेक नये प्रयोग और टेक्नालॉजी का प्रभावशाली इस्तेमाल हो रहा है। एक आगे बढ़ते देश के सामने हमेशा संसाधन और बजटीय प्राथमिकताओं के बीच प्रबंधन की चुनौती होती है। भारत में भी देश निर्माण, इसकी उन्नति एवं पब्लिक वेलफेयर की अपनी प्रतिबद्धताओं को पूरा करने में हमने सीमित संसाधन की चुनौती का सामना किया है।

ऐसे में गवर्नेस सिस्टम का महत्व और बढ़ जाता है कि कैसे उपलब्ध संसाधनों का रैशनल यूज कर, कम से कम समय में लक्ष्यों को पूरा किया जाए। इसलिए, लोगों की अपेक्षाओं को पूरा करने के लिए गुड गवर्नेस प्रैक्टिसेस की पहचान, जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करना और सार्वजनिक संस्थानों को मजबूत करना ही एक मात्र विकल्प है।

गवर्नेस केवल प्रशासन के सीमित संदर्भ में न लिया जाए। इसमें सरकार एवं प्रशासन के अलावा, विधायिका एवं जूडिशियरी का उतना ही महत्व है। समय पर कानून बनें एवं लोगों को त्वरित न्याय मिले यह भी आवश्यक है। जहां जरूरत हो वहां कानून बनाना उचित है, परन्तु पुराने कानूनों को हटाना भी उतना ही जरूरी है।

कानूनों को प्रभावी ढंग से लागू करने और उनकी प्रासंगिकता की समीक्षा करने में हमारी कमी ने समाज को ढेर सारे नियमों और विनियमों के बोझ तले दबा दिया है। आम बोलचाल में इसे ही हम 'रेड टेपिज्म' या 'लाल फीताशाही' कहते हैं। मुझे खुशी है कि संसद ने करीब 1500 ओब्सोलीट हो चुके कानूनों को निरस्त कर दिया है। राज्य स्तर पर भी भारी संख्या में रिडंडेंट हो चुके, कानूनों को रिपील करने पर अधिक ध्यान देने की जरूरत है।

सिविल सेवकों की क्षमता

कानूनों के साथ-साथ हमारे प्रशासन की संरचना को भी समय की मांग एवं चुनौतियों के अनुरूप आधुनिक करने की आवश्यकता है। प्रशासनिक हायरारकी, पदनाम और यहां तक कि हमारी सिविल सेवाओं की केन्द्रीय भूमिका की भी पुर्ननिरीक्षण करने की आवश्यकता है।

2016 में नीति आयोग में एक व्याख्यान में माननीय प्रधान मंत्री ने कहा था कि हम हम 19वीं सदी के प्रशासन के साथ 21वीं सदी में प्रवेश नहीं कर सकते। केंद्र सरकार ने 'मिशन

कर्मयोगी' लॉन्च किया है, जिसे वर्तमान और भविष्य की शासन की जरूरतों को पूरा करने हेतु सिविल सेवकों की क्षमता को बढ़ाने के लिए डिजाइन किया गया है।

टेक्नालाजी गेमचेंजर साबित हुआ है।

1. कोविड नियंत्रण
2. टीकाकरण
3. AI दौर। 20-30 का दशक AI का।

इसने शीर्ष पर निर्णय लेने की क्षमता में तीव्रता लाने और एक कुशल सप्लाइ चैन का प्रबंधन करने में मदद की। शासन की चुनौतियों से निपटने में टेक्नालाजी की भूमिका के बारे में श्री एन.के. सिंह और श्री पी.के. मिश्रा द्वारा लिखी गई नई पुस्तक 'रिकेलीब्रेट' पढ़ा। यह पुस्तक स्वास्थ्य, आपदा प्रबंधन, सार्वजनिक वित्त आदि जैसे क्षेत्रों में नीति निर्माण कैसे विकसित हुई है, इस पर कुछ दिलचस्प अंतर्दृष्टि प्रदान करती है।

रेगुलेटरी बाडीज पर पुनर्विचार

अंत में, मैं गवर्नेंस के एक महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र - रेगुलेटरी बाडीज के बारे में कहना चाहूंगा, जिनकी आवश्यकता उदारीकरण के बाद बढ़ी है। कोविड -19 महामारी ने इन निकायों पर भी इस बारे में ध्यान खींचा है। इनके कामकाज में और अधिक सुधार की आवश्यकता है। आज, गवर्नेंस इम्प्लीमेंटेशन का प्रबंधन मुख्यतः रेगुलेटर्स द्वारा किया जाता है। संसद इन रेगुलेटर्स को पावर भले डेलीगेट करती है, पर वे उसके प्रति सम्यक रूप से उत्तरदाई नहीं होते हैं। दुनिया का पब्लिक फाइनेंस विभिन्न केंद्रीय बैंकों की मौद्रिक नीतियों से तय होता है, डिजिटलीकरण की बढ़ती गति को ट्राई के माध्यम से नियंत्रित किया जाता है, और हम जो खाना खाते हैं वह एफ.एस.एस.ए.आई. द्वारा नियंत्रित होता है।

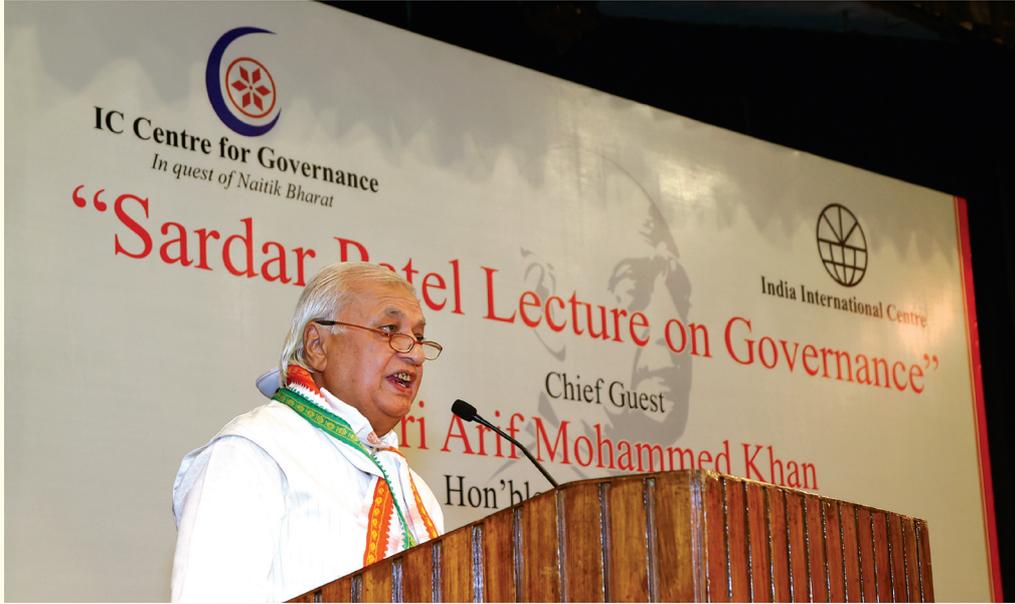
यह रेगुलेटर्स लोगों के जीवन को सीधे तौर से प्रभावित करते हैं। जब हम राज्य की क्षमता को मजबूत करने पर विचार करते हैं, तो इन रेगुलेटरी बाडीज को अधिक जवाबदेह बनाने की भी आवश्यकता को नजर अंदाज नहीं कर सकते।

विश्वास है कि आई.सी. सेंटर फॉर गवर्नेंस भी भविष्य में इन प्रयासों में अपना योगदान देगा।

इस महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर मुझे बोलने के लिए आमंत्रित करने के लिए आप सबको धन्यवाद,

जय हिंद।

Chief Guest address – Shri Arif Mohammed Khan, Hon’ble Governor of Kerala



सम्मानिय उपाध्यक्ष राज्य सभा श्री हरिवंश जी, हमारे पूर्व कैबिनेट सेक्रेटरी और झारखण्ड के गवर्नर श्री प्रभात कुमार जी, श्री महेश कपूर जी, श्री शांति नारायण जी, देवीओं और सज्जनो।

I must express my deep gratitude to Prabhat Kumar ji, for his kind invite and giving me this opportunity to pay my profound tributes to the sacred memory of the 'लौहपुरुष' who laid the foundation of a strong and united India. An achievement without parallel in our thousands of years long history.

Of the makers of Modern India, he is one of the most prominent. His passionate patriotism, robust realism, fearless courage and organizing ability were mainly responsible for the emergence of United India. It is because of Sardar Patel, that we say with pride that we are Indians, citizens of the largest democracy in the world.

Sardar was a man of few words and great deeds and it is that we have to remember. What he expected from us, was to continue the task of rebuilding our nation with all dedication, devotion and sincerity.

We may look upon Sardar's life in three parts, a devoted freedom fighter, ready to make any sacrifice to liberate his motherland, a statesmen who was clear in his mind that the unification of politically fragmented India must be realized at the initial stage itself, or else, the country may be balkanized and third - a competent and visionary administrator.

Until we attained freedom, he was a disciplined soldier carrying out the behest of his leader Mahatma Gandhi. Even when he differed with him he sank his views and merely carried out the wishes of the General. He proved by example that only those who know how to obey really know how to command.

The Bardoli Satyagraha, the Civil Disobedience movement, the integration of States - all stood witnesses to the great qualities which he possessed. The greatest of all was his disciplined behavior; but an even more important side of his work was as a Statesman. Immediately after the achievement of freedom, in a period of just two years, by skillfully employing and handling persuasive power, he integrated over 562 States into the Indian Union and if I remember correctly, they constituted almost 48 percent of Indian landmass.

The great Shankaracharya who was born in Kerala in the last millennium is credited with making India culturally and spiritually united. This unity created common moral and ethical values and based on them, an Indian way of life. This unity ensured the continuity of our culture, despite very adverse circumstances. However, lack of political unity had deprived us of the strength to protect our freedom, our way of life and our values - they faced a crisis.

In modern times, it was Sardar Patel who had the vision to translate the cultural and spiritual unity created by Shankaracharya into political and National Solidarity. He laid the foundation of an India that will have the requisite strength to protect and preserve its way of life and the ability to build a modern and progressive country on that foundation. What this country would have been without such integration is hard to imagine.

Even after this irrevocable integration more than seven decades ago, we still can hear the discordant voices and divisive mindsets seeking to project communal or caste identities above the national identity and fanning separatist tendencies in the name of province or region, thereby trying to build walls between various States of India. If we are sincere in our tribute to the memory of the great Sardar, then it is our obligation and Dharma to exercise utmost vigilance to protect and strengthen our national unity and integrity and deal firmly with both the threats

from within and without and those who seek to vitiate and pollute our social and national life.

About the achievements of Sardar sahab, just now Harivansh ji has quoted our first President Dr. Rajendra Prasad ji. But even those who ruled over us held him in high esteem. The London Times, after his death wrote a tribute in which they said – ‘this peaceful integration of 562 princely States will stand out as a great historic achievement by Sardar Patel on a level with Bismarck, if not higher’.

We have therefore in Sardar Patel, a great, courageous freedom fighter, a wise statesman and a model administrator. If we remember these inspiring qualities of Vallabhbhai Patel then, there is no doubt that our country will soon gain its rightful place in the comity of nations.

Unity and strength - these are the qualities which help us to overcome any obstacle and dissonance from within and dangers from without. These are the things which we have to cultivate if we remember Sardar Patel's life.

I hope all of us who have assembled here who have read and listened to the life story of Sardar Patel would agree that fidelity to the ideal and sensitivity to the actual was the principle that governed his life. He always acted in such a manner that the principle of his action became a general rule for others to emulate. The interaction of the two, the ideal and the actual secured the emergence of the United India that we see today and more, this unity has consolidated more strength we would require to realize the dreams of our freedom fighters.

I am emphasizing this because, as our honorable Prime Minister has repeatedly said, we have celebrated ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ and now we have entered into the ‘Amrit Kaal’ where we wish that when we turn 100, the dreams of our freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifices without any hope that they will see the independence, can become a reality.

It has been an honor for me to speak on Sardar Patel at his ashram in Bardoli not just once but twice, and the first time when I went there, it had taken me some time to read his biographies and other material on him and the more I read about him and listened to stories of his life, a word came to my mind from our ancient tradition. The word is ‘Dheer Purush’.

The Dheer are men and women who cultivate the qualities of justice and compassion and are strong, stable and peaceful with a robust sense of moral and ethical values. These qualities develop when one accepts the basic principle of

the divine nature of man as 'Atma' as outlined by Vedanta. Then a new focus on human freedom dignity, equality and redemption is built into one's person, waiting only to be unfolded and discovered. It is through such women and men alone that a society becomes just and grows to its full potential.

Bhartruhari in his famous 'Niti Shatak' - has described the 'Dheers'

निन्दन्तु नीतिनिपुणा यदि वा स्तुवन्तु ।

लक्ष्मीः समाविशतु गच्छतु वा यथेष्टम् ॥

अधैव वा मरणमस्तु युगान्तरे वा ।

न्याय्यात्पथः प्रविचलन्ति पदं न धीराः ॥

'Let jurists - those who know things - blame or praise me, let Lakshmi come or go away as she pleases, let death come just now or after 100 years, the Dheers never deviate an inch from the path of Nyay'.

What is the source of this extraordinary strength of the Dheers? Is it physical power 'Bahubal'? No. Is it money power 'Arthikbal'? No. Is it intellectual power 'Buddhibal'? No. They are all important but, more important is what in our tradition has been described as 'Atmabal', 'Naitikbal', 'Yogbal', the moral or spiritual power, the common inheritance of all mankind. It is not any esoteric or magical power but the strength of character and conviction driving from the unfolding of the divine in the heart of man. The Divinity that dwells inside everybody 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, तत् त्वम् असि'.

The Kena Upanishad proclaims that this 'Atmabal', this power, this energy, this strength is acquired through the knowledge of the self, the 'Atma'. आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेमृतम्। It is the knowledge of the self यो मां पश्यति यत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति। One who is able to see the self in all and all in the self, that is the source of that moral strength and spiritual strength. It is the Dheers who have power and the potential to take the nation on the path of power and glory.

Swami Vivekananda has described this phenomenon as the manifestation of divinity that already exists in every human being. Because we are Indians, we have a universal vision because our culture is not defined either by the race or faith, tradition or the way we offer our devotion to the deity or the language which we speak.

Instead, our culture and civilization have been defined by the 'Atma' - a totally

inclusive paradigm which does not exclude anybody. That is the reason why Indian culture does not view a person in terms of the variable and alienable characteristic associated with the birth; rather it views a person in terms of the invariable and inalienable characteristic, which is Atma the Soul.

This lecture is on the subject of Administration, so I am reminded of a very popular Platonic axiom that says that philosophers, the thinkers, should be the rulers. But our own tradition which is older than the Platonic thought says - आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः That one who is trying to realize the Supreme Spirit, he is not supposed to go and live in the forest, he must be 'Kriyavan' and live an active life and must engage with the society and this comes from 'Mundoka Upanishad'.

Similarly it is said, elsewhere, विवेकी सर्वथा मुक्तः कुर्वतो नास्ति कर्तृता। अलेपवादमाश्रित्य श्रीकृष्णजनकौ यथा। That even Lord Krishna and King Janak who were the fountain heads of wisdom, were not just thinkers or just meditating and reflecting on various issues. They were people of action.

So we can say that this axiom is something which is common to all great cultures. The men of vision, the thinkers, the philosophers - they have a duty to transform that vision into reality by efforts and dedicated work. That is exactly what our Sardar did.

There are politicians who appeal to each other even in Parliament: *"Please rise above Party politics; this is something very important - humanitarian or national interest is involved"*. While they make such appeals to each other, one wonders whether party or politics is a *dirty job*. That is not the Indian concept of politics.

What then, is the Indian concept of politics?

सर्वे त्यागा राजधर्मेषु दुष्टाः सर्वा दीक्षा राजधर्मेषु चोक्ताः।

सर्वा विद्या राजधर्मेषु युक्ताः सर्वे लोका राजधर्मे प्रविष्टाः

If you want to be in public life then our tradition tells us, that it is in politics that the highest forms of renunciation is expected. One should be ready to make Supreme Sacrifice. If unless you have found something, a cause which you consider greater than yourselves, there is no reason why you should enter into public life.

And for that cause, you should be ready to make Supreme sacrifice and only when you have gone through 'तपःस्वाध्याय निरत' and have devoted yourself to the pursuit of knowledge - you become suited for public life.

Not that anybody can acquire all the knowledge. One needs dedication to the acquisition of knowledge and should develop the capability to look at all people with same sightedness. Only then do you become entitled to enter into public affairs and pursue what we call politics.

In the context of administration, I will say, governance is considered to be a complex subject but the Indian tradition has made it so simple, all complexities lost. According to Indian traditions, we have four Ashrams - 'Brahmacharya' that is the period which you spent pursuing knowledge; then 'Grahastha' and two others. Grahastha is the ashram which is considered most important because the other three ashrams depend totally on the 'Grahastha Ashram'. Our tradition tells us how to live 'Grahastha' which includes Administration, which involves governance. The tradition, says:

ब्रह्मनिष्ठो गृहस्थः स्यात् तत्त्व-ज्ञान-परायणः।

यत् यत् कर्म प्रकुर्वीत तत् ब्रह्मणि समर्पयेत् ॥

You have to live your practical life after 'Brahmacharya' when you enter into practical life. I would say that governance is not for only those who are in the government as administrators but in a private company or may be anywhere. The quality which has to be cultivated has been described in these two words 'ब्रह्मनिष्ठो गृहस्थः'

The householder shall have his life established in the Supreme Truth, shall pursue the deeper truth of all things and in all activities of life dedicate his work to the Eternal Being. If I am doing my work I feel the presence of that Supreme Being all the time and whatever work I do, I do with such spirit as when I am offering devotion to the deity in which I believe. Is there any way that you will deviate from the path, is there any way that you will step on the feet of the other person?

There is another very powerful line from 'Upanishad' that says – 'साक्षरा विपरीता श्रुचेत् राक्षसा भवति ध्रुवंः'

A person may be very learned but if he lacks a sense of moral and ethical values then he runs the risk of being degenerated into a demon, into a brute. But that does not come to us merely through an official training; it comes through our 'Sanskars' and the first training we receive at home - training which we receive from our teachers, from the society. That sense of moral values must guide us.

In the context of administration I would like to say what ‘Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore’ has written in one of his essays that India cannot attain true Independence unless it is recognized that her foundation is in the mind, which, with its diverse powers and confidence in those powers goes on all the time creating ‘Swaraj’ for itself.

India's genius is intellectual power. Even when the Renaissance had not really taken off in Europe, we were recognized by the world as a knowledge destination. You refer to the books which were written in 10th and 11th centuries - that is the time when Renaissance had not yet started in Europe. They all refer to the volumes of books by Arab historians, whose first chapter is mostly devoted to India as America was not discovered by that time.

There are only five civilizations in the world. The Persian civilization is known for its ‘Majesty’, Roman for their ‘Beauty’, Chinese for their ‘Craftsmanship’ and obedience to the rulers, the ‘Dutch’ for their bravery and India is the only civilization which is known for promotion of knowledge and wisdom - ‘Gyan’ and ‘Pragya’.

You must have heard, there's a line in Urdu poem which says - **मीर-ए-अरब को आई ठंडी हवा जहाँ से।** Here, **मीर-ए-अरब** means Holy Prophet. So when I read this as a child, I thought India has been a very spiritual country and so the Prophet felt some good vibes from India. But the actual text says – “I am feeling the cool breeze of knowledge coming from the land of India”.

That is our genius, but long periods of slavery somewhere has eroded our self-confidence, created problems for us and unless others recognize the potential of India and Indians, we are not ready to believe it.

Now, since last few years, the whole world has started talking about India and therefore we are also acquiring that kind of confidence.

No, we were the first in the world to become knowledge destination and what our sages, our thought leaders, our ‘Rishis’ had envisioned - **एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः । स्वं स्वं चरित्रं शिक्षेरन्मृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः।** They envisioned in India, people belonging to different civilizations and culture. They will come to India not to study Indian culture and civilization, they will come to study their own culture and civilization.

What does it mean? It means that we will have such erudite and capable teachers who will attract an Arab to come to India to study 'Islam'. Somebody from Europe coming to study 'European Civilization' or 'Christianity' and we should not forget that our Christianity is 300 years older than the European Christianity.

Swami Vivekananda said "I have great sense of Pride that I belong to a country which has sheltered all persecuted people and races in the world". We received them with open arms when the Jews were persecuted, when the Temple of Solomon was destroyed when it became difficult for the 'Parsies' to live in their own country and Christians came to us in the first century itself, so this is our heritage.

I think if we become more familiar with our own heritage, with our own legacy and we try to know it little more then, I am confident that most of the problems that we are facing whether in the field of governance or other related fields, I think it will become much easier for us to overcome these problems and that to my mind will be a fitting tribute to the 'Great Sardar Patel'.

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु

Thank you very much,

Jai Hind.

VOTE OF THANKS



On behalf of the India International Centre and the IC Centre for Governance I have great pleasure in thanking the honorable governor of Kerala Shri Arif Mohammed ji for an excellent narration on governance. He has taken us back to our past to understand how just and complicated governance was and how it was practiced to provide good governance. Where self is all and all this is self, is what he said.

Thank you very much sir, we will keep these words with us while solving problems and looking at governance afresh. I also thank the audience and everybody here who have come to make this program a success.

Mahesh Kapoor

Vice President, IC Centre for Governance

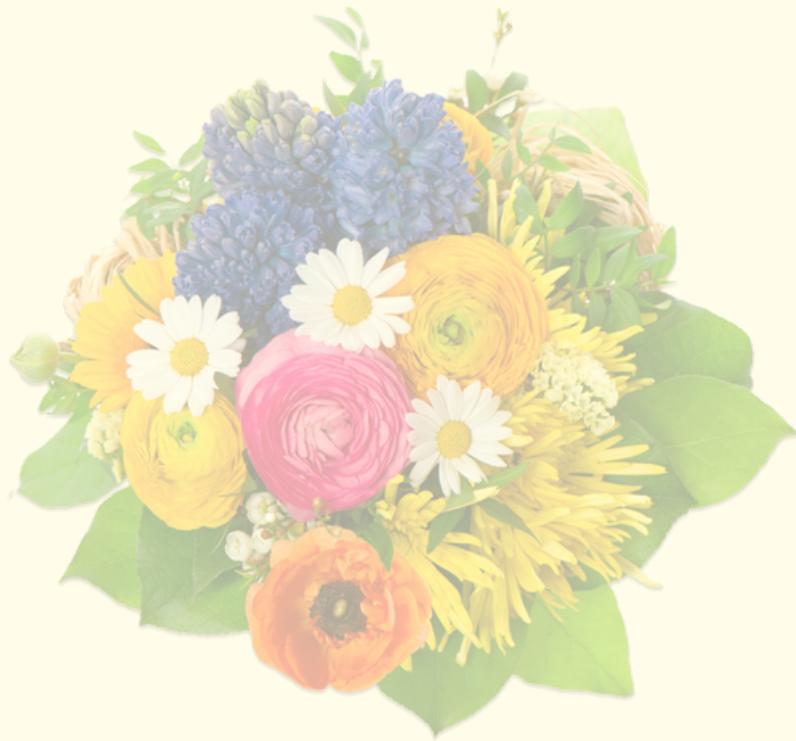


Photo Album of Event











IC Centre for Governance

3, Palam Marg, 3rd Floor, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110057

Tel: +91-40809939, +91- 9315606289

E-mail: iccfg@yahoo.co.in, info.iccfg@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.iccfg.net/>
