



Centre for Civil Society

Activities Report 2001-02



The Centre for Civil Society is an independent, non-profit, research, and educational organization—think tank. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of all citizens of India. But we don't run primary schools, or health clinics, or garbage collection programs. We do it differently: we try to change peoples' ideas, opinions, mode of thinking, mindset by research, seminars, and publications. We champion limited government, rule of law, free trade, and competitive markets. These principles promote civil society—peace, harmony, and prosperity.

The Centre was inaugurated on August 15, 1997 signifying the necessity of achieving economic, social, and cultural independence from the Indian state after attaining political independence from an alien state in 1947.

• Publications

Profiles in Courage: Dissent on Indian Socialism edited by Parth J Shah is a compendium on the lone voices of liberalism and economic freedom during the era of socialist command.

Money, Markets, Marketwallahs by R K Amin discusses capitalism, free banking, and the lives and contributions of B R Shenoy and F A Hayek.

Research Internship Papers 2001 edited by H B Soumya is a compilation of sixteen articles written by nine college students as part of the 2001 summer internship program.

View Point Series:

- ◆ *View Point 1: Do Corporations Have Social Responsibility?* edited with an introduction by Parth J Shah is a compilation of two articles by Milton Friedman and Alexei M Marcoux challenging the conventional view on corporate social responsibility.
- ◆ *View Point 2: Population Causes Prosperity* by Sauvik Chakraverti presents a radical view that population is the cause of prosperity.
- ◆ *View Point 3: The Indian Financial Sector After a Decade of Reforms* by Jayanth Varma.

• Liberty & Society Seminars

As a starting point for spreading the ideas of freedom, the Liberty and Society Seminar (LSS) for college students has been spectacularly successful. The four-day residential seminar is organized to provide students a greater understanding of the larger world—society, economy, and the culture—within the classical liberal framework that emphasizes limited government, rule of law, free trade, and competitive markets. The format is interactive with discussions, working groups, and documentaries.

We organized **four** Liberty & Society Seminars in 2001. The details are given below.

Chennai: December 18-21, 2001

Speaker	Topic
Sauvik Chakraverti, <i>Economic Times</i>	India's Population: Boon or Bane? New Public Management Working Group on the Environment
Raja J Chelliah, Madras School of Economics	Liberalisation: Past, Present, and Future
Babu Joseph, Indian Liberal Group	Implications of Liberalism
Joseph Overton, Mackinac Centre for Public Policy	Private and Political Markets Education Policy: Choice and Competition Concepts of Government Libertarian Principles
Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society	Why is India Poor?
Panel Discussion on A Market for Water? Paul Appasamy, U Shankar, Madras School of Economics, and Joseph Overton. Moderator: Sauvik Chakraverti	

Lucknow: October 1-4, 2001

Speaker	Topic
Sauvik Chakraverti, <i>Economic Times</i>	India's Population: Boon or Bane? New Public Management
Bibek Debroy, Rajiv Gandhi Institute	India's Liberalisation: Past, Present, and Future WTO, IPR, & other 3-letter words
Shubhashis Gangopadhyay, Indian Statistical Institute	Law & Economics Poverty Alleviation Programs
Yazad Jal, Centre for Civil Society	Private and Political Markets
Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society	Spontaneous Order Why is India Poor? Working Group on the Environment Education Policy: Choice and Competition Libertarian Principles
Panel Discussion on Corporate Social Responsibility D Chatterjee and A Pande, IIM Lucknow, and Parth J Shah. Moderator: Sauvik Chakraverti	

Mumbai: September 2-5, 2001

Speaker	Topic
S S Bhandari, Tata Economic Consultancy Services	India in the WTO
Sauvik Chakraverti, <i>Economic Times</i>	Morality of the Marketplace India's Population: Boon or Bane? New Public Management
Asghar Ali Engineer	Kashmir: Problems and Solutions
Yazad Jal, Centre for Civil Society	Private and Political Markets
Ajit Ranade, ABN-Ambro	Electoral Reform
Ajay Shah, IGIDR	Financial Markets and Manias
Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society	Why is India Poor? Working Group on the Environment Education Policy: Choice and Competition Libertarian Principles

New Delhi: August 11-14, 2001

Speaker	Topic
Sauvik Chakraverti, <i>Economic Times</i>	India's Population: Boon or Bane? New Public Management
Shubhashis Gangopadhyay, Indian Statistical Institute	Law & Economics
Yazad Jal, Centre for Civil Society	Private and Political Markets
Pratap Mehta, Jawaharlal Nehru University	Relevance of Liberalism to India
Barun Mitra, Liberty Institute	Sustained Development
Kanwal Rekhi, IndUS Entrepreneurs	Lessons from the Silicon Valley
Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society	Why is India Poor? Working Group on the Environment Education Policy: Choice and Competition Libertarian Principles
Rakesh Wadhwa	Globalisation & You

- **LSS Grad e-group**

To take the interest sparked in the graduates of the Liberty & Society Seminar forward, we moderate a discussion forum on the net, LSS_Graduates@yahoo.com. It is also open to other interested individuals.

- **Friends of Freedom**

To provide a platform for self-development and a deeper understanding of the principles and policies of liberalism, LSS graduates of each major city come together and form **Friends of Freedom** (FoF). Young professionals, particularly fans of Ayn Rand also join.

- **Annual B R Shenoy Memorial Essay Competition**

To promote the ideas of liberty and to encourage independent thought, the Centre organizes an Annual B R Shenoy Memorial Essay Competition for school students, college students, and the general public. In each category, three prizes are given out.

The topic for the Second Annual B R Shenoy Essay Competition 2001 was **Education: The Role of Markets**.

We received *three hundred and fifty one* entries (general public:144; college:116; school: 91), ten times as many entries as the First Annual B R Shenoy Essay Competition. Entries came from all over India and a few from abroad as well. It was gratifying to see entries from even the most remote and rural parts of India.

- **Summer Research Internship Program 2001**

We had an enthusiastic bunch of six students from Delhi and two from abroad (one each from Germany and the US). The research projects were broadly divided in two categories. One was list of short-term projects focusing on licensing procedures for entry-level professions (License & Livelihood), application process for various government certificates needed by a typical family (Birth to Death Certificates), and costs of completely unnecessary agencies and departments of the Delhi government (Bureaucrush). Here interns had to visit government offices, deal with bureaucrats, and go through the procedure for the license or the certificate.

They researched licenses required to open a barber shop, purchase and operate an *autorickshaw* (three wheelers), start a private school, sell liquor in the city of Delhi, and the procedure to acquire a ration card.

The second category was of longer-term research projects requiring a great deal of reading and secondary data collection. The interns worked on the history and methods of privatizing public sector units; comparative study of the pension system in Chile, China, Singapore, and India; Equal Remuneration Act; workplace safety regulations; pros and cons of Bt Cotton; restrictions on the movement and marketing of agricultural products; government crop insurance schemes; and *Kisan* (Farmer) Credit Card.

The research papers are available at ccsindia.org. The *Economic Times* published two articles based on the research, *A for Application, B for Babus and C for Corruption* by Mayank Wadhwa and *Tipsy Liquor policy* by H B Soumya. Support for the program also came from Sir Ratan Tata Trust in Bombay.

• School Lectures

Centre organized a lecture series, one per week, in April-May 2002 at Delhi Public School, R K Puram, New Delhi, for about 200 students in 12th grade. The issues covered were *Population: The Ultimate Resource, Why is India Poor?, and India's Liberalisation: Past, Present, and Future*. This is now an ongoing program at the Delhi Public School and several other schools have shown interest.

• Dialogues and Panel Discussions

The Centre holds regular dialogues to provide a forum for discussions on topical issues.

- **The Indian Financial Sector After a Decade of Reforms** (April 2002) based on a paper presented by Jayanth R Varma (Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad). Bibek Debroy (Director, Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies) and Ajay Shah (Consultant, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance) were the discussants and the panel was chaired by Shankar Acharya (Honorary Professor, ICRIER).
- **Fighting Poverty Diseases: Institutions and Infrastructure for Global Health** (March 2002) Richard Tren (Africa Fighting Malaria); Bimla Kapoor (Reader, IGNOU, Program Coordinator, Nursing); Derek Lobo (Communicable Diseases Department, WHO); V P Sharma (WHO South East Asia Regional Office), Julian Morris (International Policy Network, London); Ahmed Zaheer (Skin specialist, Apollo Hospitals); Prasanna Athreya (The Leprosy Mission, New Delhi); and Parth J Shah (President, Centre for Civil Society) were on the panel for a day-long program.
- **Do Corporations have Social Responsibility?** (November 2001) In collaboration with PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI). Panelists included Vikram Bajaj (MD, Amrit Agro Industries); Siddarth Shriram (Chairman, Usha International Ltd); M M Sabharwal (Former Chairman, Bata India); Binay Kumar (Chairman, PHDCCI Business Practices Committee); Gurcharan Das (Author and Former Chairman, Proctor & Gamble India); Arun Kapur (Vice President, PHDCCI); M B Athreya (Director, Indian Centre for Philanthropy); and Parth J Shah (President, Centre for Civil Society).

- **The Real Story of Economics: From Adam Smith to Marx and Keynes** (June 2001) Professor Mark Skousen of Rollins College, Florida, gave an animated lecture on the history of economics, based on his latest book *The Making of Modern Economic*. His talk was interspersed with western classical music pieces. The program was co-hosted with Liberty Institute, New Delhi.
- **Sustainable Development: Role of Corporation** (May 2001) This was the first in our series of dialogues on sustainable development leading up to the Rio +10 conference to be held in Johannesburg in 2002. We had Arun Viswanath and Suman Majumdar (both from Proctor & Gamble, India), Harpreet Singh Kandra (Tata Energy Research Institute, TERI) and Barun Mitra, (Liberty Institute) on the panel. Dilip Biswas, (Central Pollution Control Board) chaired the ensuing debate. The program was co-hosted with Liberty Institute, New Delhi.
- **Anti-dumping Rules: Myths and Realities** (February 2001) An international panel consisting of Brink Lindsey, (Trade Policy Analyst, Cato Institute, Washington D.C.) and Sharad Joshi, (Chairman, Taskforce on Agriculture, Government of India) discussed a variety of economic, legal, and political considerations as well as the applicability of anti-dumping rules. It was chaired by Bibek Debroy, (Director, Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Research). The program was co-hosted with Liberty Institute, New Delhi.
- **Law and Economics** (January 2001) In collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi Institute, we organised a seminar by Justice Douglas Ginsburg of the US Appeals Court.

• Public Interest Litigation

Recently, the Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO) was privatised. This privatisation had been challenged in the Supreme Court by trade unions. With the help of advocates Parag Tripathi and Suranya Aiyar, the Centre filed an intervention to support that the privatisation of public sector companies is in the public interest and its opposition serves only parochial interests.

• National Conference on Primary Education

The Centre organised a National Conference on Primary Education for the Indo-Dutch Program on Alternatives in Development (IDPAD) in December 2001. Eminent activists, policy makers, and academics presented, discussed, and debated innovations in government delivery of education, role of new technologies, barriers to the entry of educational institutions, methods of assuring quality of education, and decentralisation of curricula and textbook authorship. All papers and written comments will be published in a volume to serve as a powerful policy guideline in future.

• Mont Pelerin Society Special Asian Regional Meeting, Goa, January 2002

The Centre co-organised the MPS Meeting at Taj Exotica Hotel in Goa along with the Liberty Institute. The theme was Making Democracy Work. The program and the papers are available at mpsgoa.org site.

- **Swaminomics on the Net**

The Centre has created a website swaminomics.org to house Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar's popular Sunday column "Swaminomics" in *Times of India*. Mr. Aiyar is consulting editor, *Economic Times* and major supporter of liberal policies in India.