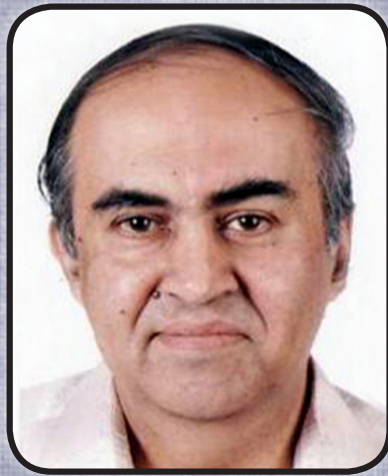


DR. RAKESH HOOJA MEMORIAL LECTURE



**Indian Institute of Public Administration
New Delhi**

**FOURTH DR. RAKESH HOOJA MEMORIAL
LECTURE**

ON

**ISSUES RELATING TO IMPLEMENTATION
OF 73rd CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

November 20, 2018

by

Smt. Sudha Pillai

Former Secretary to the Government of India

Proceedings Edited by

Prof. C. Sheela Reddy

Chair Professor

DR. B.R. Ambedkar Chair in Social Justice



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FOREWORD

I am indeed glad that IIPA is bringing out this valuable booklet on the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture held on 20th November 2018. The growing regularity of this Lecture Series is a matter of great satisfaction, as we pay our tribute and honour to Rakesh, who as Director IIPA and civil servant belonging to the Rajasthan cadre of the IAS (1974 batch) contributed immensely to Public Administration and Governance, both administratively and academically. His writings and publications are a testimony to his commitment, erudition and scholarship.

Though I could not attend this year's Lecture, I am happy to learn that the topic 'Issues relating to Implementation of 73rd Constitutional Amendment' was a subject on which Rakesh worked and wrote profusely and is key to grassroots democracy and empowerment of the people. Smt Sudha Pillai, an eminent retired civil servant, who delivered the Lecture, has herself played a crucial role in shaping and monitoring the developments in Panchayati Raj after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment came into force. She has specially highlighted the role and potential of women elected representatives. The slack in transferring functions, functionaries and adequate finances in the spirit of the constitutional amendment has also been brought out by her.

Dr. T Chatterjee, the then Director and Prof. C. Sheela Reddy have played an important role in organising the Lectures and I

compliment them and their team for their efforts. Mrs.Meenakshi, Rakesh's wife and family have been instrumental and contributed in all ways to facilitate the series of Lectures. On behalf of IIPA and my own personal behalf,I express my heartfelt thanks to them. I am confident that this Lecture series will continue for long time to come and make valuable contribution to the knowledge of Public Administration and overall Governance.

T. N. Chaturvedi

T. N Chaturvedi
Chairman IIPA
New Delhi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture on ‘Issues Relating to Implementation of 73rd Constitutional Amendment’ was organized by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) on November 20, 2018. The Lecture was delivered by Smt. Sudha Pillai, Former Secretary to the Government of India.

I am extremely grateful to Shri T. N. Chaturvedi, Former Governor of Karnataka and Chairman, IIPA, for taking keen interest in organizing the event. I am highly beholden to him for writing a foreword to this Memorial Lecture.

I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. T. Chatterjee, Director, IIPA for his support and guidance. I wish to place on record my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Meenakshi Hooja, for constantly being in touch with IIPA, rendering timely advice and facilitating the smooth conduct of this Memorial Lecture.

I am deeply indebted to Smt. Sudha Pillai, Former Secretary to the Government of India for setting the stage of this publication by delivering an insightful and erudite Lecture.

I am thankful to Prof. Ashok Vishandass, Professor of Applied Economics and Programme Director, 44th Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA) for his support in organizing the Lecture.

I extend my special thanks to the Publication Division, IIPA for the timely assistance in giving a shape to this publication. I duly acknowledge the support received from Shri Anil, Computer Operator, Dr. Ambedkar Chair in Social Justice in this endeavor.

C. Sheela Reddy

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WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Dr. C. Sheela Reddy

On behalf of Indian Institute of Public Administration, it gives me immense pleasure to accord a warm welcome to all of you on the occasion of the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture. The Lecture is being organized in honour and memory of Dr. Rakesh Hooja who served as Director, IIPA from August 6th, 2010 to 7th September, 2012.

This is a solemn occasion as we remember and celebrate the life and achievements of Dr. Rakesh Hooja, an administrator who had a profound academic orientation. Dr. Rakesh Hooja was a versatile genius with wide knowledge and varied interests. He had the aptitude for regular work and willingness to take up every responsible task. He had a yearning for lifelong learning. Dr. Hooja emphasized on inter and multi-disciplinary approach to critical analysis of problems. He was always conscious of the need to work diligently and had right balance among professional, personal and social interests. The areas of administration and governance were dear to him and wrote extensively on them. He advocated for a combination of techniques to train officers at different levels in administration for acquiring required knowledge, skills and attitudes.

We are honoured to have amidst us Smt. Sudha Pillai, Former Secretary to the Government of India, who has kindly consented to deliver the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture on the topic, 'Issues Relating to implementation of 73rd Constitutional Amendment. We also have Dr. T. Chatterjee, Director, IIPA and Former Secretary, Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests, and Mrs. Meenakshi Hooja, a 1975 batch IAS of Rajasthan cadre and wife of late Dr. Rakesh Hooja, and Prof. Ashok Vishandass, Professor of Applied Economics and Programme Director, 44th Advance Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA). I am happy that the participants of the 44th APPPA are attending the Lecture. Under the aegis of the Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India, APPPA is a ten months' programme, designed for senior officers of

the All India Services, Central and Defence Services. I extend a warm welcome to them.

It is a proud privilege to us at IIPA and me personally to organize the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture. We await to hear from Smt. Sudha Pillai, a 1972 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre. She holds Masters Degree in Psychology, Gold Medalist from Punjab University and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Kennedy School. Mrs. Pillai has 45 years of rich experience in policy formulation. She has contributed immensely in processing 73rd Amendment of the Constitution of India, Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas in 1996. She has also been instrumental in drafting the Companies Bill, 1993, formulating and implementing New Land Policy for Mizoram (2009 – 2012), and Integrated Action Plan for Naxal-affected districts (2010 - 2012). She has served as Member-Secretary of the Planning Commission of India in the rank of Minister of State, Government of India.

I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to family and friends of Dr. Rakesh Hooja, other invitees, especially Prof. Arvind K. Sharma who presided over the Second Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture, faculty and staff of IIPA.

ABOUT DR. RAKESH HOOJA

(24th November, 1950 – 7th September, 2012)

Dr. Rakesh Hooja was born in London on 24th November, 1950. He spent his early childhood in London, Delhi, Shimla and Rajasthan. He did his Indian School Certificate (ISC) Examination from St. Xaviers, Jaipur in 1966. Later, he obtained his B. A. Honors and M.A. in Political Science from the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. Dr. Hooja taught Political Science and Public Administration for a brief period before he joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1974 and was allotted to the Rajasthan Cadre. He became the Director, IIPA on August 6, 2010. He had long innings of 36 years in IAS. Dr. Hooja went on to become the Chief Secretary to the Government of Rajasthan. Earlier, he was Additional Chief Secretary, Development and Training, Development Commissioner and Chairman Board of Revenue for Rajasthan. He was the Director of HCM Rajasthan State Institute of Public Administration, Jaipur. He was the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs in charge of Jammu & Kashmir Affairs under the Government of India (1997 - May 2004). Dr. Hooja's prior assignments under the Government of Rajasthan include District Collector of Jaipur and Sikar, Project Officer, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Agency, Ajmer, Additional Area Development Commissioner, Chambal, Command Area Development (CAD) Project at Kota. He was Special Secretary, Agriculture Special Schemes, Director & Special Secretary Agriculture Marketing, Special Secretary Education, Director, Rural Development, and Area Development Commissioner, Indira Gandhi Canal Project, Bikaner. Dr. Hooja also served as the Vice Chancellor of Rajasthan Agriculture University, Bikaner. He was Secretary, Energy Department, Secretary CAD and Water Utilization Department-cum-Commissioner for Agriculture Development Project (March 1994 to October 1997) and Chairman and Managing Director, Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited, Jaipur.

Dr. Hooja took voluntary retirement from Indian Administrative Service in 2010 on his appointment as the Director, IIPA. He was known for his integrity, uprightness and commitment to his duty. The contributions of Dr. Rakesh Hooja have been testified by

numerous awards and certificates including the President of India Silver Medal for Census 1981, State Government Cash Award and merit certificates for books on District Planning (1988) and on Management of Water for Agriculture (2007). He was the recipient of the T. N. Chaturvedi Annual Prize 2009 for the best article published in Indian Journal of Public Administration. Dr. Hooja has the distinction of being declared as one of nine Outstanding Young Persons of India for the year 1981 at the Calcutta National Convention of Indian Jayees. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission of India has acknowledged Hooja's contribution (between 2006 and 2009) in the preparation of a number of its reports. Government of India's IAS Induction Training Syllabus Review Committee (Vaidyanathan Aiyar Committee) has acknowledged Dr. Hooja's contribution in deliberation and preparation of its report (2005-2007). He played a major role in framing the Government of Rajasthan State Training Policy 2008.

Dr. Hooja's credentials testify his multi-faceted personality. A prolific writer, he authored several books, articles and book reviews. His areas of interest were wide and diverse. Among others, they include development studies, public policy, land-water management, decentralized and district planning, rural development, public administration and governance, training and capacity building, state and district administration, Panchayati Raj, development administration, reforms in higher education, project formulation, participatory irrigation management and management of desert and semi-arid areas, federalism, administrative theory and management, urban development, globalization, disaster management, civil service and administrative reform. His writings had vertical depth and broad horizontal spectrum in integrating issues that ranged from measurement issues of a khasra in a village to participation in irrigation management, to functioning of Panchayats, to civil service training and forms of federal system in a globalizing world. He had in-depth knowledge of grassroots level problems which stood him in good stead in shaping and implementing programmes and policies at different stages.

Apart from the academic and professional life, Dr. Rakesh Hooja, as a person, was affable, amiable and accessible to his friends and colleagues. He was also known for his warmth and compassion. Dr. Rakesh Hooja may not be physically with us. But, his legacy inspires and sustains us.

DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

Dr. T. Chatterjee

Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration

Dignitaries on the dais, Sudha Pillai Ji, Meenakshi Hooja Ji, Prof. Vishandass, Dr. Sheela Reddy, friends and family of Rakesh, colleagues from the faculty, and 44th APPPA participants. Thank you very much for your presence.

This is the fourth in the series of Lectures initiated by my colleague of the 1975 batch IAS, Meenakshi Hooja. In these Lectures, we have confined to subject areas of interest to Dr. Rakesh on which he wrote prolifically. The First Dr. Rakesh Hooja Lecture on 'Challenges of Administration in the 21st Century' was delivered by Ajit Seth, Former Cabinet Secretary, Government of India. The Second Lecture on 'Bridging the Gap Between Academia and Administration', was by N.C. Saxena, Former Secretary, Planning Commission, a serious academician, sincere administrator and a good friend of Rakesh. The Third Lecture related to water, one of the topics close to Rakesh, 'Governance for Water Security in 21st Century: Framing of the Institutional Choices in Water Management' was delivered by Prof. Dinesh K. Marothia, Member, State Planning Commission, Chhattisgarh.

The year 2018 marks the 25th anniversary of the historic enactment of 73rd Amendment. This prompted us to choose the theme of the Lecture, 'Issues Pertaining to Implementation of 73rd Constitutional Amendment'. Dr. Rakesh Hooja has written at length on the theme which continues to be a major governance concern and challenge. The formation of 2,49,016 Gram Panchayats, 6,603 Intermediate Panchayats and 606 Zilla Panchayats certainly indicates the reach of decentralised governance in India. Many states have taken measures and reserved 50% of seats for women in these local bodies. The thought process behind PRIs was to make democracy functional at the local level driven by citizens' needs and participation. The Panchayat Raj system has definitely deepened political representation in the country. However, the 73rd Amendment only mandated the creation of local self-governing bodies and left the decision to delegate

powers, functions, and finances to the state legislatures. Most importantly, much depends on the willingness of the states, the extent to which the functionaries and finances coalesce and integrate at the grassroots level. It is only few states like Kerala, Sikkim, West Bengal and others which have done well in terms of trained manpower and empowering by law thereby bringing in a bottom up surge for good governance. Kerala, of course, is ahead as literacy and education levels are high, but it has to happen in the rest of the country too. It is necessary to train the trainers, a separate cadre at the State level for Panchayati Raj and to bring in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the extent they are appropriate for micro level applications at the village level. It is also important to train the sarpanches, Panchayat members, Panchayat secretaries and others to monitor the funds given by the Central Government and State Government for effective implementation of the SDGs at the local governance level.

Some relevant issues regarding Panchayat Raj which need deliberation include leveraging out Centrally-sponsored schemes, Central sector schemes grants for Panchayats, effective devolution by States and empowerment of Gram Sabhas. The other important issues are fiscal decentralization, provision of basic infrastructure, capacity creation, gender mainstreaming, e-Governance, etc. Smt.Sudha Pillai would definitely touch upon some of these issues in her address.

I really hope that today we take another step forward towards continuing these Memorial Lectures because they bring out the best on the topic of the day. IIPA is privileged to have Smt. Sudha Pillai with us to share her experiences on the theme of the Lecture.

REMINISCENCES

Mrs. Meenakshi Hooja

Director, IIPA, Dr. T. Chatterjee, Smt. Sudha Pillai, who has kindly consented to deliver the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture, Prof. C. Sheela Reddy, Prof. Ashok Vishandass, Programme, Director, 44th Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA), distinguished guests, faculty and staff of IIPA, participants of APPPA, friends and family, ladies and gentlemen. I extend a warm welcome on behalf of my family and on my own behalf and thank everyone present here for taking time off their busy schedule to attend the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture.

I am grateful to IIPA for initiating this Lecture series, which now appears to be a regular feature. In this context, I express my deep gratitude to Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Chairman, IIPA and Former Governor of Karnataka, who has been our friend, philosopher and guide in this journey though he could not make it to today's event. We have always held him in high esteem, having known him as a senior in the Rajasthan cadre of the IAS. Shri Shekhar Dutt, Vice - President, IIPA and Former Governor, Chhattisgarh, who is also not here due to an eye operation, has been a constant inspiration and helped us in organizing last year's Lecture. Dr. T. Chatterjee with all possible support and encouragement has been the force behind the Memorial Lectures so far organized. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Sheela Reddy who bears me patiently throughout the year and it is her efforts that show the results when the publication of the Lecture is brought out at the Annual General Body Meeting of IIPA. Prof. Ashok Vishandass has been especially helpful in organising this year's Lecture.

Dr. Chatterjee has already referred to the speakers who came for the previous three Lectures. I am happy with the presence of Prof. Arvind Sharma, who presided over the Second Lecture. Panchayati Raj and Rural Development is pertinent and imperative for the overall development of the country. We are glad that Smt. Sudha Pillai who is an authority on the subject is here to deliver the Lecture.

Though many amongst the audience know Rakesh and have attended the previous Lectures, there are new faces and attendees too. I would like to say that Rakesh was a voracious reader, right from the beginning and a prolific writer and was encouraged by his teachers at St. Xaviers, Jaipur, especially by Father Harland, as he often used to tell us. He got the opportunity to edit the school magazine, *X-Rays and The Blue and Gold*. My brother Satish is here who also studied in the same school and he knows how important the magazine is for anyone studying in that school. It was a privilege for Rakesh to be the editor and after that there was no looking back. He wrote in *Junior Statesman, Enact, Illustrated Weekly of India*, the prestigious and high standard magazines and journals of that time. Later, when Rakesh went to the University, the writings became more academic than literary. After his joining the IAS in 1974, the writings acquired an administrative flavor, covering policies and implementation. He started to write on subjects like District Administration, Role of Collector, Planning, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Water Resources, Governance and so many aspects that it is difficult to mention them all right here. He always felt very greatly attached to IIPA. He became a life member long back in the early 1970s, and in 1973, he published his first article on, 'District as a Unit of Planning: Style and Locus' in *Indian Journal of Public Administration (IJPA)*, the prestigious administrative journal brought out by IIPA and is rated high internationally. Unhesitatingly, he considered his stint as Director, IIPA as one of the best.

Rakesh was meticulous in keeping his bio data and Curriculum Vitae updated and kept a record of all his writings and publications. However, as I started preparing a catalogue of his writings in the years 2014 and 2015, it was surprising to know that he wrote more than 450 articles, many book reviews, books, both authored and edited. I am quite sure that we may discover more in the various boxes and almirahs with us. I have been able to prepare a compilation of his articles and book reviews, which are more than 40 in number, in IJPA itself, with the help of Prof. M.P. Singh, Usha M. Munshi, Librarian, Meghna, Assistant Publication Officer and Surabhi Anand, Library Assistant, IIPA.

Rakesh and I got married in 1976 under the Special Marriage Act at Jaipur. Having born in England, Rakesh liked a different kind of

life and said that on his wedding, he possibly could not go round in circles (Pheras!). Therefore, we had a very simple marriage at our home. His mother drove the car with him and the family to our house and just a few more guests followed them. In those days, there was Guest Control Order and he ensured that our family abided by it. The lighting was limited and the food served was as permitted. In the reception which they hosted, he ensured that there were no cereals served because at that time, in 1970s, there was a prohibition on them for bigger gathering. Thereafter, we continued simple, principled and pleasant way of life. He kept himself busy with varied assignments and worked hard till the end. He has left behind a good legacy for us, in the family, for me and my sons Rajat and Rakshat. My elder son, Rajat, daughter-in-law, Himangini and younger son Rakshat have not been able to come here because of a national level shooting championship. However, they have always encouraged me to go ahead with the Lecture series.

At the end, I would like to once again thank everyone present here and IIPA for all the support rendered in organising the Lectures. I am grateful to Smt. Sudha Pillai, an eminent administrator and an academic who has found time and agreed to our request to speak on a very important subject of Panchayati Raj.

DR. RAKESH HOOJA MEMORIAL LECTURE

ISSUES RELATING TO IMPLEMENTATION OF 73rd CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Smt. Sudha Pillai

Former Secretary to the Government of India

I would like to thank Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) for having invited me to deliver the Fourth Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture. I feel quite at home in IIPA, with its ambience of teaching, training and research.

I am here for two reasons. The first and foremost is that when I joined the Ministry of Rural Development as Joint Secretary, I was assigned the task of implementing the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. This Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) vested powers and functions in a three tier Panchayati Raj System. The operationalisation and implementation of this Amendment Act was in its infancy. We had to face several hurdles in the implementation of its various provisions. The second reason for being here is because of two people. One is Dr. Rakesh Hooja and the other my father, who in the 50s was an acknowledged expert on local self government. He oversaw the very first Panchayat elections in Punjab and also wrote many books on the subject, one of which was cited by Gunnar Myrdal in his book, *The Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*. My father's work served as an inspiration in all our struggles in the late 90s while implementing the 73rd Amendment Act. Rakesh Hooja's devoted and excellent work in the very challenging task of devolution of powers upon Panchayats is to be lauded and remembered. He was a dear colleague and friend. He and his wife Mrs. Meenakshi made an amazing pair. Rakesh's writings were marked by intellectual inputs and analytical vigour which ignited imagination of many.

The initial two years of operationalisation of 73rd Constitutional Amendment had been characterised by support at the top

communicating to State Governments, Ministries and even the Planning Commission to ensure that steps were taken in the right earnest to re-establish Panchayati Raj as contemplated in the Constitution. At the end of two years and six months, it was found that even the most clear mandatory provisions had not been operationalised. I had become well acquainted with the philosophy behind the law, during my stint as District Collector in the late eighties, when a series of region-wise conferences with District Magistrates (DMs) were chaired by the then Prime Minister on the subject of 'Responsive Administration'. Apart from discussions, the subject greatly appealed to me as I truly believe that unless people at the grassroots have an opportunity to set their own priorities and work to achieve them, social and economic potential cannot be realised. We have a deeply ingrained '*mai baap*' approach, which has now stood in the way of operationalizing the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. The small division looking after this subject had to work almost like activists. However, even after the passage of two and half years, many States and Union Territories had not even taken the first step of holding elections. We were also guided by the pronouncement of the Apex Court that it was the 'plenary responsibility' of the Government of India to enforce the provisions of the 73rd Amendment. Throughout the five year period when I worked as Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, we were working with State Governments to hold elections to Panchayat Raj Institutions. Most of the states had passed the State laws in consonance with the Constitutional provisions. However, many of them were not in a hurry to implement these provisions. The Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996 extending Panchayati Raj to the Schedule V areas of India gave strength to face struggles. Schedule V straddles the tribal heartland of eight states, now nine, from Gujarat in the West to Orissa and Jharkhand in the east. The only non-contiguous State was Himachal Pradesh. The PESA gave us a hope that the State Governments would start the process of holding elections, strengthening the Gram Sabhas and putting in place relevant laws and rules that would enable tribal societies to have a say in the use of natural resources as well as vesting in them the ownership over Minor Forest Produce.

The efforts to implement the provisions of the two sets of law entailed advocacy, several rounds of meetings and conferences, workshops, as well as action to move Courts to enforce the holding of elections. Advocacy also involved co-producing a film called Sanshodhan, with the involvement of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and National Film Development Corporation (NFDC); compiling all earlier letters, guidelines and records of discussions. There was also a meeting of the Prime Minister in early 1997 with State Ministers and Chief Ministers of States having Schedule V areas. Compiling of data from States with regard to status of 73rd CAA and PESA was very time consuming and we started sharing sixteen points broadsheet with Central Government Ministries, State Governments and Institutes dealing with rural development such as National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) and State Institute of Rural Developments (SIRDs). It was very gratifying to find that many writers and researchers also found this material useful. In spite of solid arguments in favour of devolution of powers, funds and functionaries; timely and regular conduct of elections; representation of the hitherto marginalised sections in the Panchayats; only the conduct of regular elections in tune with the reservation provisions could be claimed as an achievement after a relentless struggle of almost five years. As I look back, I cannot imagine that we were fighting Court cases in many High Courts and even in the Supreme Court to have the provisions of CAA enforced. Some other emphatic steps were withholding of the Central Finance Commission grants to a State which had not held elections. This withholding was in consonance with the Finance Commission award, but it did not deter the states from insisting that the grant be released. However, the Ministry of Finance stood firm. The last state to hold elections was Jharkhand. As regards PESA areas, the election issue continued even beyond my tenure and I had to come back from Thiruvananthapuram to assist the Attorney General in a High Court, where he had been asked by that Honourable Court to appear on behalf of Government of India.

Notwithstanding all the advocacy, positive and negative incentives, largely in the Central Finance Commission awards, it was found that only a couple of States had taken meaningful steps to devolve powers, finances and staff to enable the Panchayats to function as institutions

of self-government. The situation at the ground level was encouraging. All the newly elected Panchayat representatives assumed positions and the information gained from many field visits was that they felt empowered. Despite much negative propaganda, such as 'decentralisation of corruption', rule of 'sarpanch patis' etc, the women and also the previously disempowered men in particular were actually beginning to exercise the power vested in the Members and Chairpersons of Panchayats. The 3.4 million elected Panchayat representatives made India the world's most representative democracy and the silent mutiny that was up ended the entrenched power structures in villages. The year 1999 was declared the 'Year of Gramsabha'. The Gram Sabha meetings conducted regularly and properly were universally viewed as the way to empower local people. During this period, I was the Area Officer for Rajasthan. I met hundreds of elected Panchayat members and Chairpersons, many of them women. I found them astonishingly wise and productive, brimming with confidence and earning social respect and esteem for their dedicated work on improving water supply and education. An article contrasting two women Panchayat Presidents appeared in *The New York Times*, one was empowered but the status and authority of the other one was usurped by her husband.

In many States, the number of empowered women was larger. Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Sikkim and also Madhya Pradesh were characterized by a larger percentage of empowered grassroots representatives. The stories of many of them are truly inspiring. However, we were concerned over the near stasis in the implementation of Article 243G-which in conjunction with Schedule XI advocates vesting of powers and functions to enable Panchayats to function as institutions of self-government. Most States had not taken adequate steps to devolve funds and functions except Kerala, which had made an early start and later Sikkim. There were many instances where power, given with one hand was taken away with the other. We consulted National Law School at Bangalore to find out if there were any legal or Constitutional reasons which enabled the large number of States to continue with the status quo. The experts said very clearly that while the Constitution has a Central List and a State List, there is no Panchayat List as such. Also, if State Assembly elections are not held on time there will be a Constitutional crisis as the budget cannot be passed or expenditure authorized.

While informally discussing this matter with the State Ministers and Secretaries, a Minister from one of the better performing States remarked that ‘if you have the will, you do not need a bill’. How do State Governments find the will to devolve power and funds, provide Panchayats at each level with staff to function as institutions of self-government? Here, I just want to digress a bit to illustrate how self-governance leads to better decisions. There are four ways in which money can be spent. Firstly, when you spend your own money on yourself, the kind of value you derive from that is one kind of outcome; second is when you spend your own money on someone else, the third when you spend somebody else’s money on other people, say public money on public schemes and finally somebody else’s money, say public money, on yourself, what kind of value does that money have in your eyes? When State Governments are getting central grants, funds for Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes and spending that money on beneficiaries -what kind of value does that money generate? What kind of decision making or assessment of local needs precedes this kind of expenditure? In my opinion, the least value from a unit of expenditure is derived when somebody else’s money is spent on somebody else. The best value is derived when you spend your own money on yourself. That is why local decision making and local raising of funds is so very important to obtain the best outcomes.

Local level planning, timely release of State grant funds, provision for untied funds, powers of taxation, maintenance of accounts and their audit in so far as Panchayats are concerned were issues that were to engage my attention when I returned to Kerala in 2001 as Principal Secretary, Finance. The State plan budget vested slightly more than one third in the Panchayats. Training in the maintenance of accounts and other aspects of financial management was given but I cannot say that I was satisfied. The ‘new kid on the block’ was however doing better in Kerala than elsewhere. In 2004, I came back to Delhi as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Mines. However, a new Ministry of Panchayats Raj had been announced and after just three months in the Ministry of Mines, I was posted in the new Ministry and I began, with an even smaller team to set up the new Ministry, looking for office space etc. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, the Minister started on a series of Round Table Conferences with State

Governments in different State Capitals. The records of discussion clearly articulated the action that was required to be taken at Central, State and Local levels. The resolutions passed reiterated the commitment of State Governments as represented by their Ministers for Panchayats Raj. A national level conference of elected Panchayat representatives was held. However, the State Governments proceeded with devolution at their own pace. The list of subjects in the XI Schedule is such that the needs and vulnerabilities of the village communities could be effectively addressed. Had the subject matter committees been formed as stipulated and expected, the material gains would have matched social and psychological gains. The focus on the empowerment of Panchayat members (Panch) and not just the president would have led to broad based growth, improvement in the standards of education and healthcare, a more accountable village bureaucracy with better results and value for every unit of expenditure. However, this truth has not yet caught the imagination of policy and decision makers. Even Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committees of companies have not utilised the potential of Panchayats. I am a member of some CSR Committees and find myself urging them to involve Panchayats in their various programmes. The fact is that parallel bodies are numerous and powerful and panchayats seem to be invisible.

In one of their papers Rakesh and Meenakshi raise an interesting point about the dichotomy between Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat. It is only in the PESA that the Gram Sabha is an empowered body. However, even in non-PESA areas, the Gram Panchayat is accountable to the Gram Sabha. Proactive States have tried to solve this problem of accountability. There are things to be done firmly if the 73rd CAA is to be implemented at every level. So far, the message from Central Government has been equivocal and in the States Panchayati Raj is being viewed perhaps as yet another Central Sponsored Scheme rather than a system of governance.

I feel very proud of the role that many elected Panchayat representatives are playing and of the fact that the percentage of women representatives has registered an impressive growth. Every time I met these representatives, I had a feeling of awe, even in those early days. I must mention here the huge contribution made in their empowerment by civil society organisations such as Rural Litigation

and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK), Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP), institutions such as Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), Anna University and IIPA. I have particularly relied upon the data and intellectual insights provided by the IIPA in recent years.

India's villages can thrive if those who take administrative and political decisions give panchayats their due place and implement the provisions of 73rd CAA and PESA in letter and spirit. My experience as Chairperson of the Empowered Committee of Secretaries during my stint as Member Secretary of Planning Commission clearly brought home that village communities are ill served by our rigid and stereotyped prescriptions for their well-being. This Committee had the power to alter guidelines which were unsuited to the most vulnerable and deprived but natural resource rich parts of our country and the Left Wing Extremism affected Schedule V areas. Empowered, accountable and responsive local government is the answer to effective grassroots governance.

I am thankful to IIPA for this opportunity of meeting you all and also request to compile stories of exceptional success which can serve as inspiration and persuade all policy makers to initiate the process and experience the benefits of devolution.

CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. C. Sheela Reddy

Smt. Sudha Pillai shared her fund of knowledge, expertise and experiences on the theme of the Lecture. She threw light upon different facets and dimensions of Panchayat Raj system in her insightful address. She eloquently gave an account of facts, major developments and achievements pertaining to implementation of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. We are deeply indebted to her for the invaluable inputs.

I am profusely thankful to Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, distinguished Chairman, IIPA for his constant support and guidance in organizing this Lecture.

I express my sincere thanks to Dr. T. Chatterjee, Director, IIPA for his inspiration and encouragement in all our endeavours. His timely suggestions and advice facilitated the smooth conduct of this Lecture.

I also express my gratitude to Mrs. Meenakshi Hooja who has worked very hard and planned this event. This event would not have been possible but for her persistent and enduring efforts.

I express my heartfelt thanks to Prof. Arvind K. Sharma, all the invitees, including the family, friends of Dr. Rakesh Hooja, 44th APPPA participants, faculty and staff of IIPA for their presence.

I wholeheartedly thank the entire administration, IIPA, specifically Shri Amitabh Ranjan, Registrar, IIPA and Shri Mithun Barua, Deputy Registrar, Academic Support for making the timely arrangements.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not thank Shri Pawan Kumar Yadav and his staff in R&C Unit and the staff on Ambedkar Chair, Mr. Anil for their support.

It is a matter of gratification for me to be associated with this event. I joined IIPA in 2011 and I always looked up to Dr. Rakesh Hooja for support and advice when he was the Director.

INVITATION CARD



Director
Indian Institute of Public Administration
New Delhi

Cordially invites you to
4th Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lecture
by

Smt. Sudha Pillai

Former Secretary to the Government of India

on

***“Issues Relating to Implementation of
73rd Constitutional Amendment”***

Padma Vibhushan Shri T. N. Chaturvedi

Chairman, IIPA and Former Governor of Karnataka

will preside

Shri Shekhar Dutt

Vice-President, IIPA and Former Governor of Chhattisgarh

will grace the occasion

Date and Time: Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 02:30 p.m.

Venue: Conference Hall, IIPA, Ring Road, New Delhi-110002

R. S. V. P.

Shri Mithun Barua: 011-23468305

Programme
Overleaf

PROGRAMME

- 02.30 P.O.M. – 02.35 P.M. : **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Dr. T. Chatterjee, Director, IIPA
- 02.35 P.M. – 02.40 P.M. : **Remarks**
Smt. Meenakshi Hooja
- 02:40 P.M. – 02.50 P.M. : **Special Address**
Shri Shekhar Dutt
Vice-President, IIPA and
Former Governor of Chhattisgarh
- 02.50 P.M. – 03.20 P.M. : **4th Dr. Rakesh Hooja Memorial
Lecture**
Smt. Sudha Pillai
Former Secretary to the
Government of India
- 03.20 P.M. – 03.35 P.M. : **Presidential Remarks**
Shri T. N. Chaturvedi
Chairman, IIPA and Former
Governor of Karnataka
- 03.35 P.M. – 03.45 P.M. : **Vote of Thanks**
Dr. C. Sheela Reddy
Chair Professor,
Dr. Ambedkar Chair in Social
Justice, IIPA
- 03:45 P.M. : **High Tea**

Details of DR. Rakesh Hooja Memorial Lectures (2015 onwards)

Theme of the Memorial Lecture	Lecture Delivered by	Date
First Memorial Lecture on 'Challenges of Administration in the 21 st Century'	Shri Ajit Kumar Seth Chairman, Public Enterprises Selection Board and Former Cabinet Secretary, Government of India	November 19, 2015
Second Memorial Lecture on 'Bridging the Gap between Academia and Administration'	Dr. N. C. Saxena, IAS (Retd.) Former Secretary of Planning Commission	December 07, 2016
Third Memorial Lecture on 'Governance for Water Security in 21 st Century: Framing of Institutional Choices'	Prof. Dinesh K. Marothia Member, State Planning Commission, Chhattisgarh and President, National Institute of Ecology	November 22, 2019

GLIMPSES OF THE EVENT



Lighting of the lamp: Smt. Meenakshi Hooja and Smt. Sudha Pillai



Prof. C. Sheela Reddy and Dr. Usha M. Munshi



Dr. Chatterjee, Director, IIPA presenting a bouquet to Smt. Sudha Pillai



Smt. Sudha Pillai delivering the Memorial Lecture



Distinguished Guests Attending the Lecture



44th APPPA Participants and other invitees



Releasing the compilation of Articles and Book Reviews of
Dr. Rakesh Hooja



Nonika Sekhuja, Sheela Reddy, Sunita Gulati, Arvind Sharma, Abanti
Sarma, Meenakshi Hooja, Sudhir Saxena, T. Chatterjee, Sudha Pillai,
Satish Mathur, Sonia, Charru Malhotra, Madhu Singh, Nupur Tiwari,
Surbhi Pandey