

Statement of India
At the 13th Meeting of Open-ended
Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption
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Hon'ble Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to extend our warm greetings to the chair of the 13th Meeting of Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption and assure you of our full cooperation in the conduct of this session.

India values the work of Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption and thank the UNODC Secretariat for providing a platform to delve into various aspects of prevention of corruption.

The importance of preventive measures to combat corruption had been recognized by India way back in the year 1964 when India established an independent integrity institution- the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) at the apex level to oversee matters of anti-corruption in the Federal Government. The Commission as an apex integrity institution has oversight over the different Ministries and Departments of the government and exercises extensive superintendence over the vigilance administration. There are as many as **1056 Ministries/Departments/Organizations** under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The Commission has Chief Vigilance Officers (Full/Part Time) posted in all these organizations.

The Lokpal of India is another anti-corruption organisation at the Federal level with a wide jurisdiction which includes public servants and elected representatives. It has become recently operational in 2019. At State Government level, we have State Vigilance Commissions, Anti-Corruption Bureaus and the Lokayuktas. Besides, the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are the prime investigating agencies responsible for

investigating corruption offences and money laundering respectively. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) is a law enforcement agency in the area of tax crime.

Several legislations like the Lokpal & Lokayuktas Act, 2013, Right to Information Act, 2005, Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018, Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018 have been enacted by Parliament for combating corruption.

GOOD PRACTICES AND INITIATIVES IN THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION: THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON PROMOTING THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION.

It is well established that lack of objectivity and consistency in application of rules and procedures, subjectivity in decision-making, human intervention, lack of transparency in decision-making, restricted access to information are some of the factors that breed corruption. Use of technology and e-governance are powerful tools to overcome such problems especially in the delivery of public services.

India has effectively implemented the e-Governance through extensive use of ICT tools which has reduced the scope of petty corruption substantially at all levels. e-Governance in India has steadily evolved from computerization of Government Departments to initiatives that encapsulate the finer points of Governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency. Over the years, many initiatives have been undertaken by various public organisations and Government Ministries to usher in an era of e-Governance. The Digital India programme is the flagship programme of the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy and a more connected Government.

Further, the National e-Governance Services Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) framework, which was conceptualized and launched in August 2018, assesses the effectiveness / quality of the e-Governance service delivery mechanism from the citizen's perspective. Some of the examples of use of ICT for prevention of corruption and hassle-free service delivery are: e-Procurement through Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP), Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal, Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) through Aadhaar Payment Bridge (APB), E-Bill, Treasury Single Account and State Nodal Agency for fund tracking. In addition, there are

fully automated Income Tax compliances, Commercial taxes compliances, Passport & Visa services, e-banking, disbursement of scholarship, life certificate for pensioners. Digi Lockers for Government issued certificates, online transfer of property, e-payment of stamp duties, online complaints & grievance portal, online Right to Information application, Common Services Centers (CSCs), Voter cards, Food Security cards, e-courts and other legal services, medical consultancy, and other IT enabled services are in place. The world's largest Vaccination drive against COVID-19, with an aim that vaccines reach the most vulnerable first, with the help of end-to-end digital solution i.e., CoWIN was implemented in the country in a very effective manner.

The Central Vigilance Commission provides an end-to-end Complaint handling portal wherein citizens can lodge their complaints online against corrupt activities, which are to their logical conclusion as complaint handling policy of the Commission. The Enforcement Directorate has been effectively using forensic analysis of digital communication data, geo-spatial mapping, in investigation and to ensure that proceeds of corruption are not dissipated. The CDBT as a law enforcement agency against tax crimes uses innovative ICT tools to make the complex information into actionable inputs of information. A brief on the specific recent Initiatives on Preventive Vigilance using Information & Communication Technologies is annexed.

Challenges in ICT implementation

While digitisation has resulted in several benefits like reducing petty corruptions, efficient delivery of services, enhanced transparency, awareness amongst citizens, it poses its own challenges of vulnerability of intentional/unintentional manipulations which need to be diagnosed and tackled on continuous basis. Instances of cyber frauds, cyber-crimes, hacking, phishing, malpractices by government officials and employees of vendors manning the IT systems and outsiders also have come to the fore globally and need to be tackled/addressed effectively. Issue of digital exclusion also needs to be deliberated upon.

THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON THE CHALLENGES TO AND GOOD PRACTICES IN ANTI CORRUPTION AWARENESS RAISING, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Awareness Raising

It is universally acknowledged that one of the key steps towards tackling the menace of corruption is by raising public awareness to the evils of corruption and reduce society's tolerance towards corruption. One of the primary means towards soliciting the participation of the public in India is through the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week, which is observed every year in the month of Oct-Nov with specific theme for the year. The week begins with taking of Integrity Pledge, both online and offline by every stakeholder. To foster probity and integrity in public life, the Central Vigilance Commission has launched in November 2016, an 'Integrity Pledge' which can be taken electronically (<http://pledge.cvc.nic.in>) by the citizens as well as by organisations. The Online Integrity Pledge is open to all and remains active throughout the year. **So far 14.8 million citizens and 0.22 million organisations including civil societies, private sector, etc. have undertaken the pledge.** In addition to above, 59,28,089 individuals have taken in-Person pledge.

The Central Vigilance Commission of India also engages with young and vulnerable stake holders, such as students of schools/colleges, local representatives at the village level, at different platforms. With regards to students, a number of competitions such as essay writing, quizzes, debates, slogan writing, poster-making etc were conducted in different parts of the country. In 2021, a total of 8,835 schools and 30,35,011 school students were involved in different activities. At the college level, a total of 2,280 colleges/educational institutes with 1,48,574 college students were involved.

Various Organizations also organized meetings with representatives of local institutions such as panchayats at the village level by organizing "Awareness Gram Sabhas" (Village Councils) to increase awareness against corruption. A total number of 15,302 Gram Sabhas were organized during Vigilance Awareness Week, 2021. In 2020, approximately 3879 Awareness Gram Sabhas were conducted. Anti-corruption messages in vernacular languages were spread through banners, posters, graffiti, lectures, slogans, songs, etc.

In 2021, India's whistleblower policy, officially known as PIDPI (Public Interest Disclosure and Protection of Informers) Resolution, was one of the focus areas of Awareness Raising. The CVC of India is the Designated Agency under the PIDPI Resolution. Posters were prepared by the Commission and sent to all Ministries and Departments and Organisations to display in all their field offices, preferably in local languages. The message of PIDPI was also spread across the public with different jingles. Organizations made informative videos about the guidelines to be followed to file a complaint in the correct manner. These initiatives proved to be very successful as there was consequently an increase in the number of complaints against corruption received. This initiative is now being designed as a yearlong exercise that organizations can undertake to keep the message going. **In this way, the notion of awareness-raising of anti-corruption measures is institutionalized in India.**

As a part of further outreach program, Regional Conferences were held throughout India to disseminate the message of zero tolerance to corruption and to bring in more synergy between the Commission and the Chief Vigilance Officers posted at different Ministries/ Departments/ Organizations at the field level.

For dissemination of good practices adopted by public organisations in the area of preventive measures, the Central Vigilance Commission has published a compilation in the form of a booklet on preventive vigilance. This is available online at www.cvc.gov.in. The CVC also periodically organizes workshops for spreading awareness about good initiatives taken by various organisations.

Education

Morals and values are of prime import in every civilised society and play a pivotal role in disseminating the ethical values which eventually translates into anti-corruption efforts. At the behest of the Commission, a moral curriculum- values of honesty and integrity has been introduced in the schools. The Central Board of Secondary Education has launched it as "The Values Education Kit" in 2012 and has made the process more inclusive by making value education an essential part of curricular and co-curricular activities. An inter disciplinary approach in value education where values are intermingled with the content of all major subjects in Class IX to XII (High School) with assessment weightage for 5% has been followed. The concept of Integrity Clubs (IC) has been introduced in schools. The members of IC are called as 'Young Champions of Ethics' (YCEs) with living values as their motto.

The New National Education Policy of India 2020 (NEP 2020) focusses on ethics, humane & Constitutional values. The Purpose of the NEP 2020 is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, with sound ethical moorings and values.

Training

Training is considered as a preventive vigilance tool to combat corruption and strengthen Vigilance administration. Induction and mid-career training programs across all the Government organizations like Public Sector Undertakings and Public Sector Banks having a Preventive vigilance module have been institutionalized. A training programme for timely finalization of disciplinary proceedings as capacity building measures was started in September 2021, and over 1400 officers have been imparted this training. Since 2017, 233 Chief Vigilance Officers have been imparted induction training and 60 Chief Vigilance Officers have been imparted training on preventive forensics and investigation. A total of 179 officers including 92 chief vigilance officers have been imparted international customized training on anti-corruption at IAACA, Vienna.

Research:

CVC constantly advises organizations to do detailed technical examinations, systems review and studies and come out with systemic improvements and SOPs needed to improve systems. To further give structure to implementation of systemic improvements, a Systemic Improvement Committee has been constituted for monitoring implementation across organizations. Data analysis and reports are generated regularly to analyse trends and to ensure required interventions to further strengthen anti-corruption interventions.

Recently, the Central Vigilance Commission has launched an initiative to conduct Management Audit of Vigilance Units (MAVU) of organizations covered under its jurisdiction as an instrument for better understanding of the work being done by the Vigilance Units and as a tool of effective supervision.

India is confident that the deliberations at this meeting will help in working out effective strategies to deal firmly with corruption, in all its forms and manifestations.

Thank you very much.

RECENT INITIATIVES ON PREVENTIVE VIGILANCE USING INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

A. CLOUD BASED PROJECT MONITORING TOOL

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURE/ INITIATIVE: Data Lake, has been implemented to track and monitor the progress of projects and act as the central repository of documents across the project lifecycle and can be accessed by all key stakeholders. Since its implementation, it has served as a centralized project repository supported with system generated MIS reports and a role-based dashboard for internal and external users.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS:

Data lake has resulted in real-time tracking of construction progress and expeditious closure of pending Extension of Time including improved control over monitoring of the Supervision Consultant with remote visual inspection.

B. MOBILE APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE DURING TRAVEL: RAILMADAD

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURE/ INITIATIVE: The Ministry of Railways has started an online Grievance Portal System, which helps citizens to lodge complaints from anywhere using any device (like laptop, mobile phones etc.) in a way that is convenient and saves time, effort, and the traditional paperwork.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS:

A comprehensive Complaint Portal of Indian Railways, RailMadad has assisted the Railway Management to identify areas of grievance and those needing system improvement. It has increased transparency and accessibility for the common citizens. This is a scalable application with infinite potential to reach out to the citizens in the hour of need.

C. CONTRACTORS' LABOUR INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CLIMS)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURE/ INITIATIVE: To streamline the system of payment to contractors and ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, an IT based system

called “Contractors' Labour Information and Management System' (CLIMS) has been implemented. The CLIMS application also has inbuilt features like bio-metric attendance, medical fitness, safety training/ clearances, ESI registration, and other regulatory checks.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS: It aims to streamline the processes relating to the deployment of contractual labour like proper keeping of records in a digitalized format and ensuring that the wages and other benefits of labourers deployed at thermal power plants are disbursed correctly and in time.

D. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MACHINE LEARNING FOR OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURE/ INITIATIVE: As an initiative towards Preventive Vigilance, a Bank has developed and implemented Artificial Intelligence /Machine Learning (AI/ML) based model (Charges model, Intelligent Voucher model, Suspicious CSOs model) for Operational Risk Management and Credit Risk Management in branches.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS:

These initiatives address Vigilance risk at the initial stage itself and uphold the confidence of customers in the bank. Moreover, being preventive vigilance, the contingent manpower cost, financial loss cost, operational cost is substantially decreased and resulting in confidence of the customers in the bank.

E. CENTRALIZED CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME FOR MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES PORTAL

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MEASURE/ INITIATIVE: The scheme aims to make available collateral-free credit to the micro and small enterprise sector and a Trust was established for this purpose. This initiative comprised of streamlining the process of guaranteed coverage, Non-Performing Asset (NPA) marking, and lodging of claims across the Bank to the Trust in an online mode.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS: Focused implementation of Govt. guidelines with 100% coverage of credit facilities, probable loss due to delay in the lodging of claims in NPA accounts is reduced.
