

The *Bhagidari* Programme of Delhi Government

Smt. Sheila Dikshit, the Honorable Chief Minister of Delhi, visited the Observer Research Foundation campus on April 10, 2008 to make a presentation on her government's '*Bhagidari* Programme'. The discussion was facilitated by Ambassador M. Rasgotra. This discourse is an abridged documentation of the Chief Minister's speech and the ensuing discussion with the participants.

Background

In January 2000, the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi initiated a 'Bhagidari Programme' as an attempt to resolve the various problems being faced by the city's residents. These problems include water shortage and pipe leakages, choked sewers, power shortage and faulty electricity meters, solid waste heaps, broken roads and lanes, poor maintenance of parks, traffic congestion, crime, encroachments, slums, grievances related to collection and payment of taxes, issue of licences, sales tax, weights and measurements used for commercial purposes. In order to fulfil such an enormous task, various Departments of the Delhi Government are working together along with a number of citizen groups, without whom, it is realised, successful governance cannot be achieved. The citizen groups and government officials meet, interact, overcome their inhibitions, and develop a genuine dialogue with each other. Frequent workshops are held to discuss issues, identify possible solutions, and execute pragmatic steps towards the programme's implementation. Monthly reviews are held by departmental heads and deputy

commissioners to assess the programme's progress; reviews by Chief Secretary and Steering Committee, headed by the Chief Minister, are held quarterly. Thus, Bhagidari may be referred to as a showcase of citizen-government partnership towards good governance. A 'Bhagidari Cell' has been created in the Chief Minister's Office for the coordination of activities, and the General Administration Department functions as a nodal agency to provide financial and administrative support. A decentralised approach is being followed to involve more people in the programme: at the Revenue District Level, the Deputy Commissioners (Revenue) operate as district coordinators. At present, more than 1100 citizen groups are part of the programme.

Smt. Sheila Dikshit's Presentation

Thank you for asking me to share some of the initiatives that Delhi has taken in the past seven to eight years. Delhi has a very peculiar administrative system, where the government neither owns land nor has law and order under it, but it has a Chief Minister, a Cabinet and an Assembly. About eight years ago, we realised that governing Delhi was not easy because of various reasons: (i) people thought that it was the government which was responsible for everything; (ii) the elected Members of Parliament are not expected to concentrate only on Delhi or have any administrative control over it, as they are too far away; and (iii) the federal government itself is too far away, and people just cannot go to any of the Ministries to say 'We want this, we want that' or 'This is how it should happen'. Then, we have a New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), a cantonment area and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). The NDMC is not an elected body; it comprises nominated members. It is

doing well but is still not as good as it ought to be if you compare it to other cities of the world. The Cantonment Board is better than NDMC. But MCD, which holds 97 per cent of the responsibility of keeping the daily lives of the people comfortable, has been abysmally poor in its performance.

Right in front of this very beautiful complex of some of Delhi's finest buildings and institutions, I saw a huge dump yard. We have tried very hard, though -- through cooperation and goodwill -- to give Delhi a better image. One of our greatest challenges, which is sometimes an opportunity but is mostly a challenge, is that the city receives about 400-500 thousand new migrants every single year. Delhi is a very attractive place to come to and people gravitate to this city in search of jobs. We understand that they arrange for themselves either a rickshaw or a *thela* or some construction work, and manage to earn ten times what they would be earning in their home state. The migrant population then has to be provided water, power, roads, transport, and housing. Clearly, there has been a shortcoming in housing, otherwise we would not have the kind of slums that we have today or the unauthorised colonies which we talk about so much. Poor people, or rather anybody who comes to Delhi, cannot afford to live in a decent house; it is not available, to begin with. They have to live somewhere, so they put up a shanty or buy a tiny plot of land sold by a private farmer or a private builder, and then start living there.

Delhi also has a very active judiciary. Perhaps Delhi would have one of the highest Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the country, and even in the

world. Anybody can file a PIL on anything and judgements are passed, and courts cannot be ignored. So we face situations, which are also created by the courts, because people file PILs.

It was in the face of all these difficulties that we thought of the Bhagidari Scheme. The idea behind it was to get the people's involvement in the democratic process. We started it off with 11 groups; today we have about 2,000. In the past four days alone we added another 2,000 groups from the unauthorised colonies. The system we follow is that we organise workshops with the representatives of the Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs). The RWAs themselves are sometimes problematic because there may be two parallel RWAs running at the same time, or maybe even four. It was difficult to identify the officially recognised RWAs. So we introduced criteria like three years of account books and proper elections having been held. Unless the RWA fulfils these conditions, it cannot be taken into the *Bhagidari*.

We started with 11 citizen groups, very timidly and with great fear because we did not know the possible outcome. All these years we built it up, and now we have the satisfaction of saying that, one, people are involved in governance, and two, they understand what governance is. They understand that if something happens, nobody has a magic wand to change it immediately. There are certain laws, rules, regulations, systems which work in government. Thus the answer to their problem may not be that immediate. There are many problems which can be settled immediately, so we try and settle those. Our District Commissioners (Revenue) as well as

MCD officials are involved in the local districts. They have monthly meetings with the RWAs, which I now have started addressing personally for the past one or two years through video conferencing. We have video conferencing with the districts. Some people say they don't get water, some talk about roads, some complain about bills, some say that the pipelines are broken. We have local officers sitting at that end of the video conferencing, and we have the high officials sitting at our end. We are able to interact with each other, tell them whether or not we will do it, and the amount of time it will take. We attend to it as quickly as we can. Also, we review what has happened in that meeting. Then, every four months or so, we have a series of workshops to get feedback from the people about their experience.

In the continuing spirit of this constant interaction with the citizens, we also have a public grievances cell which people directly deal with. It could be a government officer who retired six years back yet for some reason cannot claim his pension. We have solved such problems of the individual kind. Similarly, we receive various complaints such as excessive bills, or companies not providing bills, or those from elderly citizens who demand higher pension. We have also had to take a hard stand on the bureaucracy, because the bureaucrats did not like the idea of citizens barging into their offices for various enquiries. So we organised training programmes for the officers, especially those who deal directly with the public. We have also introduced e-governance, which helps citizens understand rules and regulations, as well as other concerns with government such as when a particular thing would be made available. Practically all our offices are

online, giving citizens access to various types of information and services, such as marriage certificates, birth certificates, or obtaining medicines which they are entitled to but could not get in the hospitals. We have also tried to provide the hospitals with a list of medicines that a patient would be entitled to because he has come to a government hospital or a dispensary. It has been really hard trying to change the bureaucracy's work practices, given that it is not willing to share and the people do not understand. Bringing them together and saying that we are working for each other was indeed a challenging task. After all, what is a bureaucrat for? He was appointed to serve and do whatever he was supposed to do, whether it is related to land records, birth certificates, or whether it is the roads that he is supposed to build, or the street lights, water connections, meters that he is supposed to provide -- all of which people are asking for. There has been increased understanding between the two and I do believe that we have made some progress both in the way things are thought of and the way people think of a government. In our democratic system, what has so far been happening was that you give a vote, constitute a government, and then forget about it. Five years later people will make their own judgement and decide whether they want to change the government or not, and there is no valid reason for changing or not changing. This initiative has helped bring people together and that is why we called it *Bhagidari*.

Without our knowing it, there were people watching us. First, we were asked by the Department of Administrative Reforms, who wanted to know what the system is and how we do it. The Scheme was later documented by

them, and sent to all the States of India to assess if such practices could be followed by the other States. Then, we received an award for best practices in governance from the Commonwealth community. The United Nations also gave us an award about four years ago, describing our Scheme as one of the best practices, which brings in people into governance in a continuous way. Such recognitions have made our officers and bureaucrats feel more confident about what they were doing.

We were the first State to introduce the Right to Information (RTI); the Government of India later enacted the RTI Act. The RTI has become a potent weapon for people to demand access to information, as the normal practice in government offices was that the person who comes to seek information or guidance is generally considered an intruder, without the government office realising that the person has spent money, travelled, spent half his day only to be told to come again, and with an appointment. Thus the RTI has made some sort of a beginning in making that officer also responsible, because he is answerable to his seniors as to why such things happen, and the citizen also realises his rights to access information.

Infrastructure and Services

Of course, a lot of this information is being disseminated through the Internet by several departments, and what we find, and where the Observer Research Foundation can really help, is that in the system of governance, there is a wide gap between making decisions and implementing them. For example, we make an announcement that from tomorrow this *dalao* and the road leading up to this area should be improved, and money is allocated for

the purpose. Then starts the horrendous system of inviting tenders and going through those tenders. But then somebody comes out to say that the tenders were doctored, and that only so and so could apply, etc. To my mind, the implementation in this system of government has become too archaic and slow compared to the kind of development that we are all looking for. People want quick results. If they go to a hospital for a tetanus injection, which is free and they are entitled to it, the hospital staff will say that they don't have tetanus shots, etc., and ask the people to purchase it from outside instead, and then they themselves will give the injection. Similarly, the hospital staff might say that they do not have an X-ray plate or malaria medicine. These may be minor things, but they are big irritants and for this reason, the people have to suffer.

The same thing happens in our schools. Government schools are considered as second-rate. Nobody would want to send their children to government schools. Those who can afford it would rather send their children to a private school. It does not matter what the educational level is: the general impression is that private schools look nice. But in these past five years, we have managed to bring the pass percentage of our schools from a mere 32 per cent to 82 per cent in the 12th class and 78 per cent or so in the 10th class. How did we achieve this? We have training programmes with teachers. We constituted the *Vidyarthi Kalyan Samitis* (in the schools) comprising five or six eminent citizens living in the neighbourhood, such as a retired doctor, a senior citizen or an old teacher, and gave them funds of at least Rs. 2 lakhs, telling them to spend the money, ensure that the toilets are okay, maintain the buildings, go to the shop and buy a piece of glass for

a broken window and replace it, tell the children how to keep the school clean, has it got trees in it, is it being kept clean, if the school is not clean today because the cleaner is absent, you let the children do the cleaning. All this was motivated by the *Vidyarthi Kalyan Samitis*. These *Samitis* also felt very nice because those were children from their neighbourhood and they have a stake in it.

The idea behind it is that we are all stakeholders. People have rights and it is our duty to perform. If we go wayward, then people have to tell us so. That is why you must have seen that people raise a voice. They ask, why is my electricity bill so inflated? Why is my meter running so fast? To address their queries, we have set up a whole system of checking and satisfying them. Otherwise, the common practice in government is that once something is decided, people can't do anything about it. Therefore, every time we have increased any utility cost, we have always consulted citizen groups and we tried and explain that the power purchase has become expensive, your bills are wrong therefore we took the decision that those bills which pertain to the period before the system was privatised will be written off because they are notional, and nobody is going to pay them. How can you expect a poor widow living in a tiny little house to pay a bill of 20 years amounting to Rs. 4 lakhs? This incident came to our notice because people came to us every morning to tell us that she is a poor woman. How can the bill be for Rs. 4 lakhs? Moreover, the person taking the bill says that if the bill is not paid, we will disconnect the power supply. This is the kind of cooperation and understanding of each other, respect

for each other, and interchange of ideas and demands and responsibilities, which this *Bhagidari* movement has brought about.

As I am talking to you right now we are having a series of workshops. Today will be the last of the four-day workshop in which at least 3,000 Resident Welfare Associations -- only for the unauthorised colonies which have been authorised -- participated. We have had this workshop one day area-wise, where we are informing people what authorisation means; it gives you the right to live here; you are now legally entitled to your house. Yes, you made a mistake, but the mistake was also ours. Why did we not build houses? We knew that there were construction labour and so many other people coming in. But we were not able to cater to them. So it is partly our fault for not being able to provide houses. We have been running this idea of holding areas, where construction labour can come in, live in a kind of a holding area, or a *dharamshala*, so that when they want to go back, they pay a little amount for staying in that room or that dormitory, and then go back. If they become citizens of Delhi, we help them in getting entitlement to a house.

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), which has been started by the Government of India, has brought in a lot of funds to the cities. This has enabled us to construct one- and two-room tenements with attached toilet and kitchen. The two-room one costs about Rs. 2.20 lakhs, of which Rs. 1.25 lakhs is paid to that owner by the Government of India. Then, our State government is already giving another Rs. 60,000 because these people have cleared that land. Of that Rs. 60,000,

some amount is contributed by the person on whose land these encroachments took place, i.e., to clear them off, you pay that much. Eventually that person has to pay about Rs. 40,000-50,000. These are rough estimates. We have tied up with banks, that over a period of 15-20 years or 25 years, people pay back. So even in the *jhuggi* dwellings in Delhi you will find a *jhuggi* labour paying about Rs. 800-1,200 a month as rent, and it will be his prerogative to be able to live in dignity and it will be the government's prerogative to see that a *jhuggi* is not established anywhere on a right of way or anywhere that people feel like. The same thing is being done regarding hawkers.

People more easily come to an understanding of all of these changes provided the government is in contact with them throughout the process. I sincerely believe that democracy is not only about votes; democracy is a continuous process where you act and react according to the people's needs, which keep changing.

The city needs more engineering colleges. We have added three or four. We need more IITs, training institutions, and universities. We have planned another new university, which will be established shortly, namely Ambedkar University. We have established more technology-related institutions. Therefore, facilities like education, health, housing, water, power, and roads have improved enormously. We know -- and we keep telling people -- that we will get 4,000 MW of power by the year 2010, actually 8,000 MW. However, if the consumption keeps on increasing at the rate of 10 or 7 or 5 per cent every year, it is not humanly possible unless we

begin to conserve. I learnt my first lesson when a group of farmers came to me and said they don't get electricity. I told them, let us look into this problem. One of the wise old men told me very nicely, "*didi, jahan heater hai wahan meter nahin hai, jahan meter hai wahan heater nahin hai*". I thought that was the wisest piece of advice, because if people are going to get it free they are going to get their bulbs to run. Also, they will have to be told that ten years ago they did not have microwaves or refrigerators. They had only one air conditioner. Today they have two. They had only one car, now they have four cars per family. People also have to realise what their contribution is. Sometimes they put a lot of pressure on the civic services. Cars today are the biggest problem we face. We have got the maximum number of cars compared to all the metropolitan cities put together. We also have the greatest number of red light stoppages. We have all that, but do we use it well? We have to follow some discipline.

Education of Girl Child

We want parents to send their children to school. We also tell them that infant foeticide is a crime. Many people think that a girl child is a burden. We have started the *Laadli* programme for them, in consultation with women's groups and NGOs. If a girl child is born, we provide a birth certificate, and tell parents that the day she is admitted in a school, Rs.10,000 will be deposited in her name by the government. By the time she passes 12th class, she gets a cheque of Rs. 1 lakh. We want that a girl child be considered as sunshine instead of a burden. This support will also help in getting her married. This scheme is for people with an income of Rs.1 lakh per year. We hope that our initiative will motivate people to

change the psychology that a girl is a burden. She is really not a burden. We have connected our efforts with education. We tell parents that if they don't get their girl child educated upto 12th class, then she will not be their *laadli*.

Social Schemes for Weaker Sections

We have initiated *Sandhya Prayas* scheme in our *jhuggi-jhopdi* clusters, where we inform the residents on how they can get a ration card. Many people make a group of about 100 ration cards which entitles them to a fair amount of ration. Such people never go to buy their ration. People like us, for instance, never go to buy ration in a ration shop. The ration generally goes to the mill workers who grind it and make it into flour, which is sold to all of us at Rs. 40-50 a kilo. Still a lot of debate is going on, several people are angry, but among the ones angry, we found, was a person who had a Honda car. Another person was a Deputy Secretary in the Government of India. A third person lives in Jor Bagh. Therefore we tell people, unless they also cooperate, the government can have any number of good policies.

We also have a social entitlements scheme, under which we offer poor women or poor men who are 60 years and above, even if they are a couple, Rs.1,000 a month as pension. It gives them some dignity. Many of them are ill-treated, something that happens in our kind of evolving societies.

Delhi's Governance

One last point which I would like to state very categorically is that for a large city like Delhi, which has a population of about one crore and sixty lakhs, we must have a city-state kind of a governance. We have large States, which are, primarily at the moment, rural but are fast becoming urban. But for the larger urban cities, we need to introduce a city-state ruled system. It is easier for me to say that I can interact with people in Delhi because it is a confined area, however much its population may be, but it is very difficult for the Madhya Pradesh Government to say that they can adopt *Bhagidari*, because they have thousands of villages and it is difficult to implement such schemes. I think *Bhagidari* has led to better governance and, above all, more responsive governance. We know that every time we hike a rate, whether for electricity or some other utility, the government's strategy has been to first become efficient and then people will not mind paying; but people do mind paying for our inefficiency. Earlier, we were losing 52 per cent revenue, and through *Bhagidari* we have brought the losses down to 20 per cent. The ideal would be 17-18 per cent. But 52 per cent is certainly not acceptable. We also found, much to our surprise, that the more affluent the colony is, the more power theft there is. The industries are doing more theft than the farmers. How much theft can a poor man or an ordinary family do? The more influential people hook their wiring to their houses and get free power, and all that they require is to pay something to the person who comes to read their meters. *Bhagidari* is, therefore, a continuous interaction and action with the people. We also told people not to litter, put up boards and posters just about anywhere in the city. We tried to change our bus stands, and soon after we found several of them broken because somebody had caused damage. So we gave their maintenance to private

companies for 5 or 10 years and told them that the money they earn from advertising will go into their pockets. Hence, they have an incentive. You will find that the bus stands in Lutyen's Delhi now have completely changed, and you don't find the glass ripped off or scratches all over because there are people looking after them. We are going to do this all over Delhi and I think within a year's time this will happen.

Now, we have introduced the new green buses. We would also be launching red buses, which are air-conditioned. The Agency running the Delhi Metro has been careful since the beginning. They made the people aware on how to keep it clean; that you don't make any scratches, etc., and people responded well since they were proud of it. In the green buses that we have launched, which have hydraulic doors, people started to complain of suffocation, inconvenience in getting on and off the bus, but once they got used to it, they felt more comfortable. It took us a lot of time to train the bus drivers and conductors.

All this happens if you have responsible people and a responsive government, and above all, the government of the day has to be responsive. We just have to teach people, because many times they just do not know. If the blue line buses cause a lot of accidents, the cause has not always been the blue line driver. There is certainly no doubt about it, but there could be an instance when a scooter suddenly appears in the way and the driver fails to see it.

There are many things that we have to do, and *Bhagidari* has given me personally and our government a lot of confidence. If we involve people, if we train them, it costs a lot of time and a lot of money also to have them come for a whole day, sit in a workshop, talk to them, but we feel that once you sit there, the whole thing has a cascading effect. University students, as well as NGOs, are doing some marvelous work. People are taking several initiatives on their own. I wish the press was a little more friendly towards these ideas and report them, too; not for us but for the city as such, which will bring about a sense of belonging, a feeling that ‘This is my city and I am going to be proud of it.’ I am sure we are going to feel much prouder two years from now, when the city hosts the Commonwealth Games.

We managed the greening of Delhi also through *Bhagidari*. In this initiative we have particularly involved the school children in. We have in our government schools and other schools about 1,800 eco-clubs and we make the children do the greening. We have organised nature walks through the Asola forests. We even have one in my residence. Twice a week children from various schools go there to learn more about nature. I don’t know if many of us have noticed that the good old sparrow is no longer visible in Delhi. We need to make people aware of many things. From school we want to start. How do you cross a road? Can you help an old person? Ask your grand parents to drop you to the bus stop if mom and dad are too busy. We want children to do all these things so that they don’t run around everywhere. Children, to my mind, seem to know more than we ever knew at their age.

Therefore, we have involved the eco-clubs, the NGOs, the civil society, the RWAs, and groups of people, and named it as *Bhagidari*, i.e., governance through a partnership.

Thank you very much.

Chair (Amb. M. Rasgotra): Ladies and gentlemen, you have heard a very lucid and persuasive expose of a very vital initiative bringing the citizen and the government together into a partnership for truly democratic governance. Chief Minister, congratulations on this initiative. The floor is now open for discussion.

Question and Answer Session

Prof. Sushma Yadav, IIPA: How do you ensure that the poor and the marginalised sections of society participate in this initiative of *Bhagidari*? I am sure it is reaching the educated. Are the poorer sections able to come and share their problems with the government?

Smt. Sheila Dikshit: When we conduct interactive workshops comprising 300-500 people, at the end of the workshop a badge is given to the participants, which is called the Team Delhi badge. When they wear the Team Delhi badge, they get some confidence. When they meet a ration officer they tell them that they are Team Delhi members. That is the kind of confidence many of them have. Our feedback from the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office, which we continuously take, is that people

show their Team Delhi badge and inform that it has been given by the Chief Minister's office. Due to this, the staff at the DC office has become a little more responsive. A very good point that you made is how we get to the poorer sections. We have started *Sandhya Prayas* with the poorer sections. We have involved two NGOs. They are working with the people to educate them about their rights, including those for pension and ration. The Public Distribution System (PDS) is in such a bad state that these poor women go with their bags and find the shop closed. That is why we shifted the entire ration from the rich people to the poor so that they get their full ration. We have also fixed the timings. I discovered that the ration used to be available towards the last week of the month, and people came to me and told me that they don't have money during the last week. So we have changed the timings. I must say that NGOs have been of great help to us. Under the *Laadli* programme, we have a gender resource centre for women to teach them skills like cooking and sewing, so that they can derive even a little income out of it. We have about 42 gender resource centres running and I hope there will be many more. We have involved the NGOs to run them; we give them the funds. We also have two mother NGOs overseeing the funds, making sure that they are being spent properly. So we are trying to plug in as much as we know but it is a continuous and a long process.

Dr. Niranjan Sahoo, ORF: What will happen to the *Bhagidari* programme after you leave the political scene? Has this programme been institutionalised? I remember *Janmabhoomi* programme which was started by Chandrababu Naidu. It evoked a lot of interest and it was a success in its

initial stages. But when Chandrababu Naidu was defeated, the programme was completely dismantled by the next government.

Smt. Sheila Dikshit: We could not institutionalise this programme. I wanted to give it some legality. We have given the money for 'My Delhi I Care' fund to every district, of which Rs. 50 lakhs are to be spent on what the RWAs or the members of Team Delhi wanted to be spent on. Legalisation becomes somewhat tricky because the elected representatives don't want it. They say that they have been elected and their power is being taken away by these people. That is a big problem. I have been toying with this idea for four years now but every time I bring this up I am inundated with near abuses. So there is that little conflict. But I do feel that even if our government is not in power, I keep telling my *bhagidars*, please don't let the programme die. You have a voice and let it not fade. I think the responsibility will have to be borne. As a government and as a political party it is difficult for me to legislate, though I would like to do it.

Shri Vinod Kumar, Gole Market: Can you implement the *Laadli* programme through RWAs?

Smt. Sheila Dikshit: We are doing it from 1st April. I am monitoring it myself.

Dr. Manika Negi, HSMI: Under JNNURM you will be providing houses for the lower income groups. How would one ensure that they are not sold

off, which is the trend in Delhi? Also, will the livelihood needs be taken care of along with the housing?

Smt. Sheila Dikshit: We are bringing out a policy. We have already constructed about 10,000 houses. You are absolutely right that people will sell it off. Therefore, there is a condition that people will have to pay for it and it is not going to be free. When people get it registered in a woman's name, they will pay less stamp duty. We cannot take away this right from them. How can you stop people from selling their house? I hope that over time, people will like to live there rather than the shanties that they live in. That is the attraction over there. There will be a school, shops for daily necessities, playground, dispensary, and other facilities. So the hope is that they will get used to living in a decent place. It will take time, though, and there will be cases like this. How can you stop them?

Yes, the livelihood is there. That is why the huge fleet of buses which we are going to introduce – increasing the number from the present 8,000 to 16,000 – will ensure that bus systems work properly. I think by the year 2010, before the Commonwealth Games are held, we should have the buses. Metro (MRT) is available in many places, and we are also introducing, in 10 to 15 days, battery-operated scooters. But all this will take time. When we go to the field, we face a lot of difficulties. At one place, I have resettled 50,000 people from the Yamuna bed. When I visited that place for the first time, I had to bear a lot of abuse. But two years later, one will find there some of the best schools, shopping centres, and the people are quite happy.

Smt. Anjali Issar, Ashok Nagar RWA: We have a RWA running since 1982, but we do not have any accommodation for our office as well as for our senior citizens. You have mentioned in the newspapers that RWAs can come forward and locate a site.

Smt. Sheila Dikshit We will have it done. In my area, for instance, we have given Porta Cabins. In Delhi, the MLA gets Rs. 2 crores a year, which has helped us in providing Porta Cabins for all our colonies so that their RWAs can sit there, entertain themselves and also conduct their meetings.

Dr. Sowesh Pattanaik, independent researcher: I have a question on the concept of governance. I see very contradictory and conflicting policies of the government. On the one hand, you have privatisation, characterised by removal of state from areas of delivering services. Against this backdrop, you introduce initiatives like *Bhagidari*.

Smt. Sheila Dikshit I must tell you that this change needs commitment. It needs a lot of changes in a lot of places. That is where the Foundation can also help. For instance, most people are not aware of the number of central and state government programmes that we have. That is where people like you, NGOs or political activists come into the picture and make the people aware. We have formulated a policy. But I think it is people's awareness which has to be awakened. That demand has to be there. But how do they know their rights? That is where the activists come in. It is much easier to do the political work that most of us do, but to really get

down to the people is not easy, because in this country you have to do a lot of work for awareness. What is true in Orissa is not true for Delhi. For instance, in Delhi I feel we could have done five times as much if we did not have multiplicity of authorities. The States do not suffer from multiplicity, but they have other problems. Their outreach is much larger, it is not cohesive. So I think that is where all the people have a role to play.

Participants:

- ***RWA Members*** - Mr. Ashok Kumar, Jan Kalyan Sabha, R.K. Puram; Mr. Vikram Singh, Jan Kalyan Sabha, R.K. Puram; Mr. V.K. Matoltia, Clive Square; Mr. Sunil Kumar Bhadamia, Sarojini Nagar; Mr. Ghanshyam Goel, Mayapuri; Ms. Anjali. C. Issar, Ashok Nagar; Mr. R.K. Suri, Ashok Nagar; Mr. S.D. Achrunani, Ashok Nagar; Mr. Naveen Joshi, Gole Market; Mr. Manbar Singh Rawat, Panchkuyan Road; Mr. S.C. Jain, Sarojini Nagar; Mr. B.P. Singh, Mayapuri; Dr. R.K. Tikoo, Sarojini Nagar; Mr. Hari Ram, Kidwai Nagar; Shri Vinod Kumar, Gole Market; Mr. S. Jain, Ghaziabad.

- ***Urban Development Experts*** - Prof. (Ms.) Sushma Yadav, and Dr. Sachin Chowdhury Indian Institute of Public Administration; Smt. Asha Kaul and Dr. Manika Negi, Human Settlement Management Institute; Mr. Lojy Thomas and Mr. R. Narendhar, All India Institute of Local Self Government; Mr. Anand Kumar Tiwari, R. Prasad and Mr. S.M Ali, New Delhi Municipal Council; Dr. Barun Kumar, Delhi University; Ms.

Shruti Garga, World Bank; Dr. Sowesh Pattanaik, Independent Researcher.

This Discourse has been prepared by Dr Rumi Aijaz, Research Fellow, National Initiative, Observer Research Foundation .