



From the CGDA's Desk

The days seem to be as busy as before, maybe only a touch busier than when I last communicated with you all – more than a fortnight ago. There is so much to do, so much to perform, so much to contribute, that I often wonder if I could expand the day well beyond the 24 hours to fulfill all that I set out to do during the course of a day but – alas – invariably fall short of doing! This juggle though goes on in my head relentlessly, prompting me to try balance and manage time better than before. But let this thought not detain me here, and let me convey how things have been all this while and what we have been able to do.

I am glad we have been able to translate few of the things I had referred to earlier. One such was the Defence Accounts Placement Board (DAPB) for placement of IDAS officers up to the level of Additional CDA. The DAPB met on the morning of July 4, 2015 (Saturday), ploughed through all relevant files/documents, dwelling on the issues in great detail and putting down in so many words the logic of their recommendations before winding up their task by late evening. Not to waste on time, we examined the cases the very next day on Sunday before taking the final call on Monday, July 6, 2015. We uploaded the DAPB's recommendations in its entirety as also the office note where the decision was taken to let everyone know how the processes were gone through which is entirely in keeping with the promise I had made. I would like to assure what, of course, could be rather obvious to you by now: for the sake of equity and transparency, we are going to be democratic and equitable, and it is going to be just the same in all other cases as well. This is important, because transparency is the bedrock on which institutions are built; there doubtless cannot be any tinkering on this basic element. I must place on record my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the three IDAS officers – Mr. Alok Chaturvedi, Ms Anuradha Prasad and Mr. Sugata Ghosh Dastidar – who despite their punishing official schedule made time (upending their weekend) to address the issue competently and make this happen. They have indeed blazed the trail and set an exacting, transparent standard that others can proudly emulate. There are other similar issues in the pipeline, still more on the anvil, some embryonic, some at an advanced stage, all work-in-progress, and – slow, as it may seem today – the inexorable demands and force of transparency shall inevitably unfurl in the days ahead.

I know managing change doesn't come easy. It takes time and energy. I have encountered them any number of times in the past. It is easy to break good traditions and

extremely hard to break bad ones. It is a dialectic that is inevitable. That's what history has taught us. The wrongs fight the rights – a seething, lacerating engagement, a battle of attrition in a genteel world that we live and work in – where wrongs join hands shamelessly, even muster the gall to paint the rights as wrongs and wrongs right, and where even the pot has the gumption to call the snowflakes black! We need to have the largeness of heart to tolerate such delays and roadblocks before we finally come out trumps.

Let me change tack and give out some positive vibes before I sign off. Pension and grievances remain one of the serious issues receiving the highest attention at all quarters. It is a simple matter of how to ensure accurate and timely disbursement of pension without the pensioner bothering about the correction of the amount. We have technologies available today. It is just a matter of leveraging the same. We are at it and we hope we'll be able to find a solution soon enough whereby beyond the mandatory requirement of providing an annual survival certificate, the pensioner will have to bother about nothing else. In this connection I made a short visit to PCDA (Pension) Allahabad to see for myself the SOP and discuss ways to improve upon our service delivery with the experts. I met a cross section of our officials including the leaders of our Associations who, apart from being warm and welcoming, most unreservedly expressed their unstinting support in the betterment of our department and improvement of our services. That was indeed very heartening. And I hope the spirit holds and stays, and animates us all every step of our way.

July 8, 2015

Sudhansu Mohanty