

Vallurupalli Venkata Rama Seshadri Rao
Memorial Sixth Annual Oration

5th March 2016

Delivered by
Hon. Sri K.V. Chowdary,
Chief Vigilance Commissioner

Sri Nirmal Chand, the presiding officer for the today's Sri Vallurupalli Venkata Rama Seshadri Rao Memorial Sixth Annual Oration lecture. Dr. Nageswara Rao garu, Chairman of the society and his members of society, distinguished guests, students, ladies and gentlemen!

I thank the organisers of this memorial lecture organized in the name of an ordinary person who achieved extraordinary mile stones to establish the often said proverb that you don't need extraordinary men to do extraordinary things and it is the ordinary man who achieved extraordinary things, you have seen the short film made on him and from the very back. You find probably hundreds of such people wearing a dhoti and half shirt and with traditional chappals in most of our villagers, but it took one such person to establish this institute which is today housing about close to 10,000 or little more than that students and it has become a hub after him and during the course of a little bit of general thought. While I am coming here, in the flight Justice K.V. Ramana, Supreme Court justice is also travelling along with me and asked where are you going? When I said I am going to Gudlavalleru immediately he asked is it the same place where that famous Polytechnic college and Engineering colleges are there, and what are you going to do there?

The institution has attained such kind of reputation mainly because of the standards. Subsequently, taken forward by the others and present executives of this committee and probably more so by the alumni of this college and the present students, because you all have fully know of the Sanskrit saying "*Pandithaputra Parasuntaha*". It is hardly quoted in some places, if you be the products of this organisation; don't detect the qualities of the person who initiated this organisation, the persons who presently own this organisation.

Then in spite of all good, then the institution gets. So you are all also responsible for this good name. I wish the organisation all the best.

I take this opportunity to thank the organisation for inviting me, I really don't know whether I deserve this kind of honour because when I heard the role of honours, the first such lecture was initiated in 2010 was delivered by Padma Shri Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala, second by Padma Bhushan Dr. P.V. Indiresan from IIT Chennai where I was a student, third by Padma Sri Dr, Kota Harinarayana, the fourth by Padma Bushan Dr. Vijay Kumar Saraswat, Chair Person of the Dr. Homi J Baba Atomic Research Centre and the 5th and latest by Padma Vibhushan Dr. E. Sreedharan of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. I think when the role of honour is written

and my name goes there apart from something very obvious is missing here, I think I am too small enough.

I don't want to speak something what is brought and read it here. I am not going to do that, so much so and that one more last word and the generalities and the wonderful caption you have on the emblem "*Vignanam Jayathi*" Vignanam Jayathi, Vignanam is knowledge Jayathi is victory and by making our prayers and respects to Sri Vallurupalli Venkata Rama Seshadri Rao who helped them all his respects as well the man behind the scenes not on the arm, who brought up this institution paying the form of respects from the bottom of my heart and would like to make a small break.

I would like to touch upon what governance means, does governance mean most of you are science students, engineering students you have most of the machines there is a governor. What does it govern? It governs the functioning of the machine, if something goes wrong the governor breaks the circuit or something like that.

Governance is something that the government provides, according to me here are a few things that the governments which you need to have a bureaucracy to raise the resources or to implement the programs, but that became more important and the regulator became important, and the provision of services became important or what are those services which are provided, they became highly defective and inadequate, you get my point?.

In my days, I attended an elementary school in Machilipatnam and thereafter another though private school Hindu High School, but ended school then went to high school or college and then to IIT, where the payment of fee is minimum, but the quality of services were at certain level.

But today the same quality of services that developed a sector has gone down tremendously. They are hardly found in any of the educational institutions.

Whether it is Education, Health Transportation or Communication, if you look at the services provided in the public sector they are degenerated and so the private have to step in and to provide these services, so if governments means this, then what is good Governance.

May be considered for this, you should be of this age, etc., etc., you should know local language, etc., then that application form.

I have a fantasy for people having fair skin, or I have a fantasy for people who are very tall (6ft plus) or I have a fantasy for people who come from a particular region, North East region, North West region or the East Godavari, West Godavari whatever region or I have a fantasy for people speaking a particular language, or it could be a person belonging to a particular region, community so on and so forth.

So I would quicken the selection process in such a way that instead of the most deserving person for that post, somebody else will be there may or may not have all the qualifications, sometimes we may not have with all the qualifications also. He will get selected and all of us then we request you that he was not paid any money to purchase that particular post, there has been no monetary consideration and in an odd situation he may not even the noble fellow he just get that he got influenced by his resume that he is coming from a particular region this one is called Nepotism is one part of corruption. Many of us you may think that how does it affect governance, an industry, a steel industry you are going to setup and the somebody says that the

iron ore is abundantly available somewhere in Bailadilla, Limestone is available in Jaggayyapeta, Coal is available somewhere else, power is available somewhere else etc., we all come to a conclusion that Vishakhapatnam is the best place and give you an example to set up this plant. If I belong to this area, If it is my own constituency I don't mean that political constituency so I would quick the selection process in such a way that the plant is setup that may not be the most economically viable act or that may not be in the best interest of the nation, but the fact that I am in a position to do so I could do so and the plant gets installed, this is one form of corruption. I didn't take any money, because I also genuinely take that this should renovate this district or this place or this segment but this is one form of lack of integrity or corrupt practice.

The third one is that which is most people again didn't believe is not following a few process. I may again give the example of the recruitment process. In the recruitment process we laid down many of the conditions. He should not be less than 25 years old or he should not be more than 50 years old he should have a Ph.D. Everybody makes an application and the date of application is given and the date for application is 31st March.

Suddenly on 25th of March I decide that I already got 15 applications so I will close the applications today, though I advertise it as 31st March. I do the short listing and in that whatever XYZ conditions are there, I for good reasons which I think they are making.

I would say that a professor from IIT would stand higher compared to a Ph.D. from Gudlavalleru college it's just an example. But this I am doing after setting the process in motion so those of you who are making an application one who didn't have an opportunity to file the application till 31st March we will close the application on 15th so some of you are thinking that I will send the application on 16th to have the opportunity and after the application has been changed it is like some of you have heard that in cricket often this controversy arises when there is rain what you should do in the middle, somebody would say Duckworth Louis rule, somebody would say no no whoever has scored more number of runs as of now he should win so on and so forth but if you will be governed then there is lot a possibility that the system is being weak, this is one of the worst forms of corruption. If you see the corruptions or the allegations of corruption relating to two of major scams in the recent past like the 2G Scam and the other Coal Scam, the main reason is as of today the investigations are going on, the trials are going on, still it is to be pointed whether X gave money to Y and Y did he receive the money from X this matte is still pending. But all are uniform in accepting that the process has been weak a certain date has been given as a last date for making applications but the date was preponed for no reason and in the matter of evaluation no transparent criteria has been followed leading to a certain categories of people who are not otherwise eligible taking away the natural resources vis a vis a category of people who are otherwise eligible.

So this is one form of, worst form of corruption which public at large cannot see in their day to day life and this is the form of corruption which affords the policy making and the public at large in a larger sense much more than the bribery it happens in a single instance, I am not supporting bribery, bribery is bad but the impact of policy tweaking and the process not being followed is worst in the case of society at large so what needs to be done in these situations is that we need to have processes in place, let me repeat again, because this is a very important issue anything that is to be done in the matter of governance you need to lay down as to what are the rules, who

are the beneficiaries and what is the process to be followed and in what way that process will be implemented. Take for example the case of you are getting a scholarship from the government, then who are eligible you need to define and the definition should be very clear and once you define who are eligible the procedure by which you will be made eligible or you will be granted that scholarship has to be again defined by what way you should make the application, what should the documents which should accompany that if all these documents are applied then what is the criteria that is going to be applied for granting this scholarship. If anyone of these are in between change, then it would affect positively some people and affect adversely some other people and that would be a case of corruption so what we need to look at and what we need to develop is to lay down the processes, because there are lot of engineering students here, process does not mean only a mechanical process or a chemical processes, it is only one part of process. Even the decision making, even the policy making is a process and the process should maintain its integrity.

I'll tell you one example you all know about best practices and what are the best practices they differ from and you try to learn these best practices and you probably improvise them and implement them but once you standardise them you need to follow them in the same way, if you don't do that, that's going to cause a lot of payoff and if it's just payoff when you are doing your work you will bear with it. But when it comes to policy making it will affect a larger number of people, eligible becomes ineligible and ineligible becomes eligible so if we all agree that these are some of the corrupt practices how do we make sure that these corrupt practices don't enter our domain so that the deliverance of the governance is better or it's a good governance. In my view the first and the most important thing is the mechanism which enables people to make sure that the mistakes, crimes or misconduct don't occur.

Before I go to vigilance, let me explain what vigilance is, by and large people think that vigilance is a bad word. He has got into a vigilance problem; he has got into this problem. Vigilance is not a problem lack of vigilance is actually the problem vigilant means "being vigil" that means being aware. I am aware that this is the thing not to be done and if I do it I will get into the problem so being vigilant means that keeping away from what is going to get you into trouble. So what is preventive vigilance? Preventive vigilance is being aware of what are the situations in which we don't get into so that the system works and you as an individual do not get into any trouble.

There are a few institutions which have been brought out by the government both at the centre and state level to assist this exercise of anticorruption or promoting vigilance and the foremost among them is the Central Vigilance Commission which has been constituted way back in 1964 based on a report submitted by a committee called Santhanam Committee which recommended that there is a need for Central Vigilance Commissioner to oversee the vigilance administration in the central government and the PSU's and also to advise government on vigilance related matters, so it was constituted in 1964 with a resolution of the government and with a single member as Central Vigilance Commissioner subsequently in a particular case called Udit Narayan vs. Union of India popularly known as Jain Hawala Case which actually had nothing to do with this issue but the supreme court gave certain guidelines and the directions to the

government to constitute a Central Vigilance Commission as a multimember body to supervise and oversee CBI and also to advise the government on vigilance activities.

So an Act of the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 was passed and it became a multimember body, there is a Chief Vigilance Commissioner and two vigilance commissioners and their primary role is No. 1 to ensure the work of vigilance administration in the central and PSU's is done properly No. 2 is to supervise the work of CBI in so far as it relates to the work of anticorruption No. 3 is to take cases if it feels fit and investigates by itself and the fourth is to advise the government whenever the government needs an advise on its own, while the commission has been in existence for the past in the new form for about 12 years and much has been done and so far the commission has been concentrating mostly on the work we call it punitive vigilance. Punitive vigilance means that you have identified that the person has conducted misconduct or he has done wrong or he has done a crime and you try and catch hold of the guy get some evidences on him, prosecute him or conduct discipline proceedings laid a penalty or jail. This is by and large punitive vigilance that means that you get into the scene after the incident already happened, after the incident has been happened you get into the scene and you try and see who is responsible and what you do with him.

In the past few months after I have taken over charge we have been giving emphasis on what we call it as preventive vigilance. Preventive vigilance mainly looks at preventing this kind of misconduct or preventing this kind of criminalities by what ways, several ways we have visited, because we believe that "prevention is better than cure" so as a measure of preventive vigilance we have taken up some exercises. No. 1 is to bring awareness in the people as to what are corrupt practices No.2 how to avoid these corrupt practices and how to be away from these corrupt practices and how they can entuse others not to be a part of such corrupt practices as a part of this during this year we touched about 5000 colleges and schools build across the country in about 930 towns and cities to take the message to the students first because students are the future of this nation ours is a very young nation so if we can take this message to the students corruption is not a right thing for us and we need to be vigilant so we organised debates, oratory, some schools organised puppet shows, street plays and more about 6 lakh students participated in this event and we intend to take this forward this mission with more involvement of schools and colleges and the next thing we did was to bring out a series of real life episodes involving the corrupt practices how it affected the individuals involved the society, organisation for which he was working against which the fraud has been done so that it could be depicted with the people, these are the ill effects of corruption.

So we produced about 8 episodes based on real life incidents and this have been put on TV through the Doordarshan and is available on our website also anybody would like to see them they can access our website cvc.in you can see these episodes they are not very I won't say like your private channels propaganda but they do convey a good message.

The third activity we have taken up is we are trying to formulate a scheme of internship for the students to work with us during summer or winter vacations so that they come out, they do some research on the types of corruption that takes place in the society, how we prevent it, how we

predict it and then as a measure of preventive vigilance we take necessary steps to do that we will be notifying this scheme very shortly in our website, those children who would like to work on this sphere they can have a look into it.

The other thing was that we feel that in the matter of anticorruption even among educated people even among bureaucrats there is not so much awareness at a higher level so we have organised lectures on monthly basis by eminent people which could be heard and they could be enlightened we had a series of five lectures so far and this month we have the sixth one this also could be seen on our website. The other aspect of preventive vigilance is that I have mentioned to you the processes are very important but if the process itself has become obsolete then why it cannot be turned as corrupt? It is certainly not efficient. So we need to do a continuous reassessment of the processes so that we put better processes in place so this is one of the exercises which we have taken up with all the authorities, PSU's as well as the government agencies as to review the existing processes, redefine them and make them out in a more meticulous manner so that we can improve their efficiency and reduce the scope for corruption.

The other issue is that you improve the processes in such a way that the discretions are reduced to a greater extent and things are more crystallised and the extent of human intervention is brought down drastically, one more thing that is very useful is the issue of automation of the processes. What do you mean by automation? And what do you mean by computerisation? Automation is what you are doing mechanically again and again you replace it by a machine it does it by itself without any human intervention. A lot of people mistake automation with computerisation, computer is one part of a machine or one part of a system which automates, but mere computerisation is not enough typing of any letter on a typewriter you use to have those letters or a cartridge like something if something goes wrong you have to retype it again, after the computer has come and the electronic typewriter has come you started correcting those mistakes which are wrong and it gets saved, you print it so that your retyping has been reduced. Then the computer came you started saving it also by just making some changes or you have some templates, templates are now used so this is only mere automation there is no business intelligence involved in it if you start analysing this data of a large nature what you call big data's you can develop business intelligence and that is the business intelligence which you utilise if you are computerised.

The fact that if I had a laptop before me doesn't make me a computerised person if I just using it to multiply $2*2$ I normally know $2*2=4$ why I am saying this is, the analysis of the data is very very important thing if we have a data of how why and when people are committing misconducts or people are committing corrupt practices then it would help us to identify such situations and then prevent the occurrences of such events I think this is a very small and very cool example in our younger days people used to fear meeting anybody else in the last week of the month because whatever salary was paid it is spent may be it is the same with you guys also by 20th you spend all your money, may be your parents spend and then you start borrowing in the last ten days. Then you get the money from the father or the money order comes then you repay them.

Now an analysis done in certain sectors shows that just before say the big festival seasons there is high incidence of corruption is being going up or let's say somebody is working in education sector at the time of admissions or the declaration of results there is an increase in activity of corruption so and so forth. So there are very rude and crude examples why I am saying is that if you are having data then you could analyse and predict the behaviour of people and then you start questioning them in a preventive way look here we know that these things can happen and if these can be happened we get into trouble. That's how you can prevent the happening of corruption

The other issue I was mentioning to you was the punitive vigilance that is when corruption has already happened, how you would deal with it. If let's say today something wrong has happened and if the person is to be caught after 10 years and he will be tried for another 10 years and at the end of 25 years whether he is alive or dead or he is retired at that time you give a punishment to him neither it teaches a lesson to him nor it teaches a lesson to the others, people tend to think by and large that nothing happens either he has managed which may not be a correct statement but the fact that nothing happened makes people believe that either he has manipulated the system or nothing really happens so there is a need to quickly bring to light the misconducts committed by people by detecting them early and once detecting takes place try them by way of disciplinary proceedings or as a criminal proceedings at the shortest period of time and give them exemplary and uniform punishment so that people get to know that they doesn't dare to do misconducts and then get into trouble.

A study done by us showed that it was something like a challenge most people said don't do it you may get into trouble but we still wanted to know how dare we are, normally you take the maximum time limit for solving and disclosing the case, it shouldn't take more than 18 months. But the study done by us showed that there is a delay of about average of 84 months that is 18 months plus 84 months on an average it was taking 102 months if the average is 102 that means the worst case must have been 200 and in the best case might have been something like 30 or 40 months if a case is going to be finalised after 102 months that's about close to eight and half years I don't think that anybody should be seriously worried that he did a mistake and he is going to get into trouble. So we have brought in some kind of monitoring mechanism for taking up these cases in a fast track and how to monitor them so much so that we hope that by the end of this year we should be in a position to, if not bring it down to one and half years or 18 months something close to that by this year the other thing is

most people think that and their belief is reinforced by the fact that in most cases punishments comes late or the evidences are lost in the mean time and so they think that nothing has happened. In my view that's not correct. There is a saying that arms of the law are very long and they are very strong. We have had instances where a chief minister of a state is serving a giant term now of 10 years for irregularities in the recruitment of teachers and so the number will come but it's getting late. I agree that we need to improve it.

I have talked about the vigilance mechanism available in the central government namely the Central Vigilance Commission and the CBI which is only the investigating agency of the government and it does the investigation. Some of the state governments have a similar such organisation called the state vigilance commission, some don't have but they have some such similar mechanism there. But where does the role of citizen come here that's the most important one. The citizen is the one ultimately going to be the beneficiary or the affected person in the process of good governance or lack of good governance or the corrupt practices or the lack of it. The role of the citizen is the most important in as much as he being the stake holder he has to say and convincingly believe and act that he is not going to be part of these corrupt practices. Now that will happen only when he knows what a corrupt practice is.

Recently I had an occasion to address the students of IIM Ahmadabad. When they asked me to address I told that I would like to address you but I would like to get a feed back as to what is the level of understanding of what corruption is. So I sent them a Questionnaire of 20 questions that should be answered as yes or no which would take about 2 to 3 minutes to answer. Later we compiled it. One of the questions asked is that is payment of speed money corruption? You know what Speed money is, Speed money I would say is if you are entitled to a service let's say all of you applied for a scholarship and all of you are eligible for scholarship. There are no questions asked and all of you are going to get it. One sitting in the last row she has a bus to catch and so she would like to get it first so that she can catch the bus early and then go away where as others can keep waiting. Her application in the process whether role number wise or alphabetically adjusted wise or on first come first serve basis she is not the first one so she would like to give me some five rupees and ask why don't you process my application early. The moment I gave five rupees I pinned along with the application it is automatically understood that it is meant for that and that application comes first and I cleared that application. She hasn't taken away somebody else's scholarship. There are 100 scholarships 100 applications she hasn't taken away anybody's application, she also got, in the normal course she would get 230 let's say 250 this is something like speed money. What is to happen in the normal course you expertise. You make an application for a ration card and it is due to you but the inspector will take 10 days time to verify that you exist there, you have an Aadhar card and then he will issue the card. But you want to have it today so you cross a little money. This is speed money. Is speed money corruption? I don't know what this house will say because I didn't conduct the exercise before this was explained. 80% of the IIM students whether understanding or not understanding the meaning of that felt that it was not corruption it was normal business expenditure. There were some two, three leading questions and after that when this question was put and 90% of them agreed that speed money is corruption because it robbed the right of somebody else. The awareness that what I am doing is right or the awareness that the manner in which I am doing is right or wrong as the case may be is the most important.

So, the first role of the citizen is to make sure that it doesn't become the part of the corrupt process or the corrupting process. A lot of people say don't do this, do this, tell the truth so on and so forth. But in practice it is something difficult. It is once told that a mother brought a

child to Gandhiji and said Bapu “Yeh Ladkha sweet bahut kha raha hai” or this boy is eating lot of sweet. Please tell him not to eat. Gandhiji heard and kept quiet. The mother started insisting that you tell him. He said bring him after three weeks. The mother didn’t understand why he is telling like that, but she could not argue with him, so she went away. After three weeks, she again brought the child, he said son don’t eat jaggery so much, it is not good. The mother got little surprised as to why he didn’t advise the child on the first day and why he asked her to bring him after three weeks. Gandhiji explained, look here I myself was eating lot of jiggery and when you brought him if I had told something I am only doing a lip sympathy. I am not preaching what I am practicing and that is not the right thing. First three weeks I suffered to see that I don’t eat jiggery like the boy is doing. Now I know what the difficulties are or what is good. Now I can tell the boy don’t do it. Preaching and practicing are the two things which the citizen need to do.

The next issue is not being a part of the corrupt mechanism and second thing is reporting the corrupt activities. Lot of you think that if I report I will get into trouble and it is very correct also. Some may be true, some made up and some not fully reported. You must have heard about Satyanand Dube the NHA Boy who got killed. The fact remains that a number of complainants do face the risk. This is again another question, I put to the IIM Students who were just about to get into jobs in a couple of months, that do you know about Whistle Blower Mechanism (WBM). Most of them vaguely heard that there is something called Whistle Blower Mechanism (WBM).

But, only twenty percent of them knew how to make an application under whistleblower mechanism. How to protect your own identity if you want to make a complaint about misconduct or a corrupt practice? Now we have a whistleblower act which has been passed but still the rules are to be notified and some amendments are taking place and is pending in the current session of the parliament.

You have a whistleblower mechanism under which there is an application where people can make an application giving certain details where their identity is kept safe so that their personal safety is ensured and in appropriate cases even they are given some kind of protection from this is one thing which you need to keep in mind. The third and most important thing in my view is lot of people complain but they complain to wrong authorities. It is like you want to buy sugar and you go to the petrol bunk and ask for sugar and he says I don’t have sugar and you abuse them and ask what is this you are having such a big shop and you don’t sell sugar.

In the central vigilance commission we get about 18000 complaints per year either on our website or in a written form. Somebody doesn’t get water in his tap and he writes to the central vigilance commissioner that he doesn’t get water in his tap. After ten days he will send another complaint saying that i sent a complaint but you didn’t act upon. You must know whom to complaint. We spend a lot of our time or waste a lot of our time or say every regulatory authority in sorting out to whom this complaint relates. If you are not getting power you need to unite to electricity fellows.

We look at complaints relating to central government employees and public sector undertakings. We get complaints on these issues. A lot of time is wasted in distributing these complaints. Unless you make a complaint to the right authority you don't get the right and quick result.

I would like to touch upon one more issue because newspapers frequently write about India's rating in the global corruption index. This is the study conducted by transparency international and that has rated India at 76 now a few notches above the earlier survey in 2014. The heartening thing is we have improved in few places and the bad thing is we are somewhere in the middle or little over the middle in the corruption perception index. The issue is not where we stand. The issue is not where Pakistan or Bangladesh or Srilanka for that matter any other country stands or is in a position worse than us and so we feel happy we are better. The issue is how we reform our own society. How do we reform our nation? Because it's a myth to think that an extraordinary man will come one of these days and with a magic wand he is going to say 'abracadabra' this country is going to be free of corruption. No this doesn't happen.

Gandhiji was an ordinary man he achieved the extraordinary result of independence for this country in a nonviolent manner. We have talked about Seshadri Rao Garu an ordinary man bringing a revolution in education so on and so forth. What we need to look at is that every ordinary citizen, every ordinary individual in the society if he reforms himself, then we don't need to compare ourselves with the global corruption index. The change in outlook, the change in the behavioural patterns is what the need of the hour is. I can go on lecturing for one hour and each one of lecture for two hours on what about corruption is. Unless we practice a spoon of it is not going to improve our future. We need to practice not because we want to be better than Denmark which is in now in number one position. No we need to practice because we need to be better India. This is what my message is.