

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

### **I**

***Indian Tourism, Policy Issues and Alternatives***, by M.R. Biju and M.R.B. Anantha Padmanabha (eds.), Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 2019, ISBN-13:978-93-86682-54-3  
Pages: 302

The names such as Megasthenes, Fa-Hien, Huien Tsang, Alberuni, Ibn Batuta, Marco Polo, Nicolo Conti, Abdul Razak, Afanasy Nikitin, Domingo Paes, Fernao Nunes, Captain William Hawkins, Thomas Roe, Pietro Della Valle, Al-Masudi, Francois Bernier signify that India must have been the central tourism destination for humanity since the ancient times. Initially, tourism must have been fostered by natural and social urge for knowledge of the ways of life of other societies. There are number of academic contributions by the travelers. In most cases, these writings are still considered worth consulting. However, tourism has become mainly an economic venture for the host places. This happens when one sub-system dominates the normative patterns of the society of that epoch. Today, tourism has acquired an exclusive economic perceptual foundation of its definition. And a well-timed book is an attempt in that direction with plenty of data.

The book is divided into three parts – Dynamics of Tourism, Facets of Eco-tourism, and Dynamics of Health Tourism having ten, six and four chapters respectively. The first chapter Hospitality Industry in India: Issues, Initiatives and Challenges by M.R.B. Anantha Padmanabha and M.R. Biju begins with the unfolding of the evolution of hospitality sector in a global context and examines the initiatives undertaken by Government of India for promotion of tourism. It has been concluded that Indian tourism has vast potential for generating employment and earning large sums of foreign exchange besides giving a fillip to the country's overall economic and social development. This finding is the rationale and strength of the book. It has been considered necessary that all wings of the Central and State Governments, private sector, and, voluntary organizations become active partners in the endeavour to attain sustainable growth in tourism if India is to become a world player in the tourist industry.

The next chapter Gauging the Pragmatic Perspectives of Tourism in the Ventures of make in India, by P. Mohanty, A. Chandran and Ravish Mathew aims to envisage ways and means by which tourism could play a sparking role in adding value to the campaign. According to the authors, India is expected to

clock 8-10 per cent growth during the next two to three years. It is argued that the noble goals of Indian tourism provides an image makeover for the country abroad and the main implications of that will be reflective in the investment scenario over a period of time.

The chapter *Strategies and Mechanisms to Recover Hospitality Industry in India* by A.K. Nambiar and Balaji, B. discusses the centrality of the services sector and hospitality sector in India. Authors find failures on many counts in spite of the country boasting of trained manpower, tourism products, well connected places and enviable heritage. The strategies to recover from such failures have been categorized and presented. They opine that India has a golden treasure and all that the nation needs is creative vision, diligent implementation and sustainable development.

The chapter *Initiatives for a Better Tourism Order: The Case of Sri Lanka* by M.R.B. Anantha Padmanabha and M.R. Biju presents tourism as one of the fastest growing industries globally, including the developing world. Employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and community welfare are aspects of tourism for authors. They further add that contribution of tourism industry is heavily influenced by international economic and political stability. This chapter alone could be a basis for comparative analysis with an international perspective.

The chapter *Human Rights and Tourism: Third world Perspective* by Shan Eugene focuses on the interface between tourism and human rights. Although tourism was not widely perceived as an area where the human rights declaration could find application but human rights approach to tourism is integral to true sustainability. Although human rights is an area of inquiry that can potentially address a lot of issues associated with tourism, not more than a handful of studies have been conducted relating the two and in this sense it is a formulation of good topic.

The chapter *Unemployment Problem and Tourism Industry in India: A Qualitative Study* by Amit. K. Chakrabarty analyses the role of tourism industry in reducing the problem of unemployment in India. Tourism is a labour intensive industry. This qualitative study is purely based on the information collected from different sources like websites, articles published in reputed journals, newspapers, and reference books related to the field. Authors argue that the development of tourism industry mainly depends on adequate hotel accommodation, better transport facilities, medical and communication facilities etc.

The chapter *Web and Technology: Beginning of New Era of Tourism Development* by Renu Malra analyses the linkage between web and technologies and its scientific application in hospitality sector. According to author, accessibility of information through web has been increasing in developed

---

countries and also congregates exploration of the potential of web and Mobile technology in providing the relevant services in the development of tourism.

The chapter *Scope of Responsible Tourism: Best Practices in Urban Areas* by Anitha, R. and Ambeeshmon, S. presents a study on the scope of responsible tourism in urban areas. According to authors, a responsible tourism initiative at its inception focused only on cultural and environmental aspects and was found to be successful in many countries. From the study it is observed that the hospitality and tour companies can promote the best practices with the support of both guests and hosts.

The chapter *Potentials to Stimulate Radical Changes at Destinations: A Study on Event Tourism in Odisha* by Preji, M.P. discusses the Event Tourism. Event tourism traditionally was not a part of mainstream tourism and now has got the makeover of a potential segment in special interest tourism. The author suggests a useful concept in the field of tourism and opines that events can be a better medium of cultural appraisals and social understanding of the places that tourists visit during the course of tour.

The chapter *Regional Competitiveness and Disparity in Foreign Tourists Arrivals in Kerala* by A.D. Rajeev Kumar and S.V. Sudheer analyse the uneven distribution of foreign tourists in different regions, i.e., southern, central, and northern Kerala. Realizing this, government has already initiated some proactive efforts to give a facelift to the major destinations of the northern region.

The chapter *Socio-economic Profile and Standard of Living Aspects of the Eco-tourism Communities of Kerala* by Bijith, G.A. and Rajasenan, D. explains that eco-tourism development of Kerala and the simultaneous increase in the flow of tourists to these destinations would help in providing livelihood opportunities to the local communities for the betterment of their lives. Authors also establish that there are zone-wise differences with respect to the socio-economic profiles of the community and hence reflect the basic indicators.

The chapter *Segmentation Strategy for Promotion of Eco-tourism Products: Evidence from Thenmala Eco-tourism Destination in Kollam district of Kerala* by Manoj, P.K. explores the vast potential of tourism for bringing about economic development and employment generation in the country. India has to traverse a long way to catch up with the top players. Author concludes that the promotion of eco-tourism in Kerala would ensure rich dividend in the days to come, given the huge growth prospects of eco-tourism in the state.

The chapter *Rural Empowerment through Eco-tourism: A Case Study on Darap Village in Sikkim* by T.G. Ramaih reiterates that tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for rural development. The development of a strong platform around the concept of Rural Tourism is definitely useful for a

country like India. According to the author, the Himalayan region is a big boon to promote rural tourism.

The chapter *Marketing of Eco-tourism Destinations: Case of Tripura* by Supriya Dam highlights the marketing of eco-tourism destinations in Tripura. Survey reveals that only budget segment of the tourists are venturing into eco-tourism sites in Tripura, which are overlooked by high end visitors. According to author, Tripura tourism has the potential to link it with fishery, agriculture and rubber plantation along with local handicrafts.

The chapter *The HOLSAT Approach to Destination Satisfaction at Kumarakom Backwaters* by Tejil Thomas and M.A. Joseph focuses on the assessment of destination satisfaction of domestic tourists by applying the model. The findings indicate that the tourists have distinct impressions about this holiday destination before and after the travel. It is concluded that natural beauty, climate conditions, house boat journey and Ayurveda are the main factors influencing domestic tourists to have a trip to Kumarakom Backwaters.

The chapter *An Empirical Analysis of Tea Tourism in the Tea Estates of Darjeeling: A Tea-Tourist's Perspective* by G.D. Rai analyses tea tourism in Darjeeling. According to author, tea tourism, though relatively new concept, has tremendous potentiality. However, author admits that despite being the second largest producer of tea in the global market, still it has not been possible to perform effectively in the context of tea tourism in international arena.

The chapter *Predictors of Behavioural Intention of Health Tourists* by Padmasani and Remya, V. discusses the issue of health and heritage tourism. It was found that the foreign tourists were more influenced by destination image, followed by satisfaction and service quality. It is suggested to manage right destination for effective inflow of foreign tourists in the state.

The chapter *Dental Tourism: Evolution, Relevance and Scope* by Aishwarya Biju examines the facets and dynamics of dental tourism, a subset of the sector known as medical tourism which involves individuals seeking dental care outside of their local healthcare systems. It was found that dentists are getting appreciated for their degree of professionalism and concerned care.

The chapter *Outbound Business Travel – An Emerging Trend among Pharma Companies* by Anitha, R. deals with the relationship of pharmaceutical companies and its incentives for travel. She concludes her investigation stating that outbound business travel is a new trend among pharma companies. Even though companies are following the cost cutting norm the trend still exists. For this outbound business travel for conference, conventions, meetings, award presentations etc. will be the best ways to retain top talent.

The chapter *Management of Archaeological Sites and Promotion of Heritage Tourism: Study of Nalanda* by Sujata, Y. Singh and Shyju, P.J. unfolds

the significance of archaeological sites as tourism destinations. Authors also focus the key aspects of management of archaeological sites and how heritage can be linked with ancient sites. It was suggested that in order to maintain the sites as destination, a study of individual preference pattern and motivating forces should be carried out.

Indisputably, the book is informative, interesting and topical. The book will be of immense use for the students of tourism, economic development and policy makers to develop tourism in India.

**Indu Shekhar**

Asstt. Director

NILERD

indusekhariamr@yahoo.com

## II

***Empowering Rural Consumers: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategies***, by Suresh Mishra and Mamta Pathania (eds.), Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2018, Pages: 327, Price: Rs. 1200

The Book is an outcome of a National Seminar on Globalization, marketing and the rural Consumers organized by the Centre For Consumer studies, Indian Institute of Public administration, New Delhi and sponsored by the Department of Consumers Affairs, Govt. of India. The book comprises of four sections and 22 chapters written by eminent experts in the area of consumer protection and welfare that analyse the rural scenario, the status of the rural consumer, the lack of safety mechanism and the ways and means to empower the rural consumer. Various strategies and policy interventions have been suggested by the authors to address the problems faced by the rural consumers. Section one, Consumer Education and Awareness, comprises of seven chapters; section two, Strengthening Consumer Movement: Role of NGOs and VCOs, comprises of four chapters; section three, Grassroots Democracy and Consumer Empowerment, comprises of five chapters; section four, Media Technology and Rural consumer, comprises of six chapters.

The Indian Rural consumers account for over 70 per cent of the population who are living around 6,40,867 villages across the country. Rural consumers are generally dependent on the weekly markets to purchase essential things, and are often cheated due to lack of choice. Services like insurance, banking, electricity and medical have expanded in the rural area without any checks and balances and the rural consumer continues to be exploited by the service providers.

The book begins with the Introduction chapter which explains some issues like rural market, rural population, estimated annual business from rural market,

household consumer expenditure, rural Indian food consumption with respect to cereals, cereals substitutes and milk as well as non-food item categories like clothing, footwear, medical, education etc. Initiatives and legal action taken by the Government of India has been highlighted to protect the consumer like Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practice Act, 1969, Consumer awareness in India, Rural Consumer Distribution, Rural Urban Comparison on Key Indicators, Rising Rural Prosperity and Changing Consumption pattern, decreasing trend of expenditure in rural India etc. on the basis of supporting data. It also covers the urban-rural usage pattern from 2001-2002 to 2009-2010. In the emerging scenario it is necessary to protect the rural consumer by educating them about their rights and empowering them to make decisions. Attending the capacity building programme by NGOs working in the area of consumer protection and welfare will help them to discharge their responsibilities in a better way. The Introduction comprises gives brief overview of all the sections on the specific theme.

Section one comprises of seven chapters. Chapter one focuses on the needs for education and awareness of rural consumer. This chapter highlights the issues such as low consumer education, government initiatives, various problems of rural consumer, the reasons for gullibility of rural consumers, the agencies to be identified to impart such consumer education and how to impart education and for what group, relevant educational material along with required government support for effective consumer protection of rural areas.

Second chapter focuses on Awareness of consumer Protection Act among rural consumers based on a study of Coimbatore. This chapter highlights that out of 121 crore Indians, rural people comprise of 83.3 per cent and remaining 37.7 per cent live in urban area. It has been pointed out that development of rural population is important and Government initiatives has been taken through various programmes i.e. community development programmes, IRDP, Local Self Government, the introduction of Panchayati Raj System, rural healthcare schemes, promotion of literacy and adult education expansion of rural industries etc. The study reveals the extent of consumer awareness among rural consumers of Coimbatore.

Third chapter is on Empowering Rural Consumers: Issues and concerns. According to the author, rural population do not have adequate market expansion, they have to purchase commodities at the terms and conditions of the venders. This chapter seeks to study the problems of rural consumers. Whether the rural consumer knows the remedies available? How can they get relief? Should they fight for small purchases of daily commodity and waste their time, money and energy? Who is responsible for their protection? Whether the State machinery is not responsible to provide adequate safety to the innocent rural consumers? These are the main focus areas of this chapter.

---

Fourth chapter highlights the role of consumer courts to protect the farmers as consumers. Author highlights the reasons behind committing suicide of Indian farmers. One main reason for this is non-germination and poor quality of seeds, which resulted in less production. Can the farmers get remedy under the Consumer Protection act, 1986? Does the farmer come within the definition of consumer as per section 2(I) (d) of the consumer protection Act? Will defective seeds be considered as defective goods under Protection Act? Whether farming is considered as commercial activity or self-employment? Whether consumer redressal agencies have jurisdiction to try such cases of sales of defective seeds to the farmers or not? This chapter attempts to answer such questions and discuss the role of judiciary to widen the ambit of the term Consumer under section 2 (I) (d) and to protect the farmer as consumer.

Fifth chapter, Empowering Rural Consumerism in Odisha: protection and redressal initiative, highlights that Odisha is one of the regions suffering from poverty and hunger. The new consumer culture has percolated to rural areas in one of the fastest developing states of the Indian Union – Odisha, but with this there is a large concentration of the disadvantaged and vulnerable people who are not aware about the new civilization that is creeping into their neighbourhood in the name of modernization and consumerism. Author focuses on the growth of consumption in rural Odisha, the pattern and strategies for sensitization of the rural consumer, the role of community organization, civil society activists and the Gram Sabha as the lower organ in the government-people interface.

Sixth chapter, Consumer protection measures in India – a study of the District Jind of Haryana highlights that the market has been shifted from buyers to consumers, their purchasing power has been increased due to government initiatives for the rural development. Main objective of the study is assessing the nature of rural consumer, their literacy level as well as their awareness level towards the consumer protection Act, 1986. Simultaneously, the challenges faced as well as suitable suggestions have been given to make consumer protection measures more effective and viable in the rural area.

Seventh chapter analyses the impact of education and awareness in rural marketing in India. The main focus areas are improvement in literacy rates and rising disposable income, better access to varied communication media channels which has brought about a major shift in the consumption patterns of the population in the rural area. There is a general agreement that there are tremendous growth opportunities which require investment in terms of distribution, product realignment, product variant creation etc. But at the same time the challenges, pretty unique in character, are many. For instance understanding the pulse of the rural consumers, their typical mindset, physical distribution of goods and services in the face of poor rural infrastructure and inhospitable terrain and finally problems related to generating awareness and communicating to a heterogeneous population. Successful rural marketing calls for a review of the

rural marketing environment, developing proper understanding of the nature and profile of rural consumer, designing the right product to appeal to them, adopting suitable media as well as appropriate strategies for communication and distribution. This chapter explores the nature and trends of rural marketing in India, factors affecting the awareness of the rural consumers with a focus on understanding the relationship between education and product awareness in the rural India market and how better awareness translates into successful rural marketing.

Section two, Strengthening Consumers Movement: Role of NGOs and VCOs, comprises of four chapters. Eighth chapter (First chapter of this section) highlights the role of consumer organizations in Rural India towards suggesting Action Agenda for consumer organization. Author tries to explain what is consumer organization, what role they play in increasing consumer awareness and education to protect consumer, importance of consumer organization in rural India, what methods they adopt to increase consumer education as well as what should be the action agenda in the context of rural society. This chapter covers nearly eleven categories of methods/practices which are adopted by the voluntary consumer organizations in rural India to increase the awareness and education of rural consumers.

Ninth chapter is on the menace of Food Adulteration in Rural Areas – Need to empower Women, which argues that women play a major role in decision making regarding food hence they need to be targeted as far as consumer education and awareness is concerned. This chapter studies how knowledge enhancement and skill development helps rural women to minimize adulteration practices in rural area. It is based on a case study which was carried out in six districts of Tamil Nadu where rural women especially the members of on SHGs have been trained to detect adulteration in food items. The outcome of the training was impressive and this chapter discusses in detail the importance of such type of skill development programmes in the rural area targeting the home makers to enhance their capacity in fighting the menace of food adulteration.

Tenth chapter of this book, Role of Civil Society Organizations in promoting awareness among Rural Consumer: Challenges and Strategies, explains that Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization have enabled the entry of several private traders including large multinationals who have transformed the Indian economy into a vibrant and rapidly growing consumer market. Author Sapna Chadha highlights how the lack of education and poor knowledge influence the rural consumer market. She explains the role of civil society organizations especially Voluntary Consumer Organisations VCOs for operating rural markets as well as using techniques that are beneficial for the rural consumers. Based on the empirical study she tries to analyses the role of civil society in promoting consumer awareness and advocates that there is a need for accreditation and professionalization of voluntary consumer organizations to raise their creditability.

---

Eleventh chapter is on the Role of VCOs in consumer protection. This study is also based on empirical data which urges that rural consumer is the pillar of economic development of any country. The study area comprises of two coastal districts of Karnataka state of India (Dakshina Kannada and Udupi). The study highlights the duties, tasks, contribution and functions of VCOs in promoting and protecting rights and interests of consumers.

Twelfth chapter of this section is focused on Grassroots Democracy and Empowerment of Rural Consumer and Panchayati raj Institutions. In this chapter the author highlights that ignorance is one of the prominent factors contributing to the exploitation of consumer in rural areas. The rural consumers face various problems like adulteration, short weighting and measuring, lack of safety and quality control in appliances and equipments, warranties and guarantees, imitation sale gimmicks and unreasonable prices. The chapter suggests how the rural consumer can be empowered through PRIs and what this institution is doing to empower the rural consumer.

Thirteenth chapter highlights the importance of PRIs for empowering rural consumers. Most of the rural consumers are illiterate, ignorant and not fully aware of their exploitation by the manufacturers, producers and shopkeepers and these people are unable to get justice. This chapter attempts to study how the panchayati raj Institutions will be a catalyst in making rural masses aware about their rights in their respective areas.

Fourteenth chapter authored by B.V. Gopalkrishna and C.L Ramesh is on Rural Consumers and the Panchayats: A Case of Shimora District of Karnataka. In this chapter the authors point out that the rural population in India live in unhygienic conditions and are deprived of basic necessities of life and even two square meals. They do not have knowledge about their rights and hence lack decision making skills. According to them, even after 25 years of enhancement of Consumer Protection Act in India, the rights and facilities provided under this Act have not reached to even 10 per cent of our rural population. Author explains the nature, status, and the problems of the consumers at grassroots level and the role panchayats can play in consumer protection as well as what other strategies are needed to protect consumers.

Fifteenth chapter is on the Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Consumer Protection which highlights that the evolution of law in the field of consumer protection and the constitutional status accorded to panchayati Raj Institutions are closely related. Author Alok Mishra mentions that the consumer protection law not only protects the welfare of masses but also can work as a tool for social development in conjunction with panchayati raj institutions. Author suggests that Empowerment of consumers and strengthening of redressal mechanisms is the need of the hour.

In sixteenth chapter on Gandhian Perspective on Problems of Rural Consumers in India – Issues and challenges the author Anil Dutt Mishra highlights that rural markets in India constitute a wide and untapped market for many products and services which are being marketed for the urban masses. Better quality of goods and services can be delivered by the introduction of modern and suitable technology along with participation from the private players through public private partnership. Author argues that village should be the centre of all activities as advocated by Gandhiji.

Section four of this book comprises of six chapters. Chapter seventeen (in continuation) is on the Role of Traditional Media in Consumer Empowerment: communicating with the rural audience. This chapter highlights that in India the process of development along with Globalization and Liberalization has increased a lot of issues. Authors, Suresh Mishra, Mamta Pathania, and Virendra Nath Mishra, argue that consumer education has an important role to play in supporting consumer with less developed knowledge and skills. Based on a survey this chapter examines the impact and effectiveness of traditional media on consumers.

Eighteenth chapter of this book is focused on rural consumers and the media. It focuses that the consumer market in rural area is expanding, rural markets account for well over 60 per cent of the national demand. Author D.S. Poornananda points out that besides the accessibility of print and electronic media, many forms of media have also emerged in the rural areas. To what extent these media cater to the interest of the rural consumer? Do they provide specific information about consumer rights and protection? How can the potential of the alternative media be used to enable rural consumers to make conscious and informed choices? This chapter examines these questions through a content analysis.

Next chapter on the Role of various Media in Tourism Marketing and influencing consumers in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh (HP) examines the role of media in marketing of the tourism products (goods and services) and influencing consumers in rural areas of HP. Author highlights that with better communication facilities various forms of media (newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, CDs, DVDs, banners, posters etc.) have made inroads into rural areas of the state that are playing an important role in marketing of the tourism products and influencing consumers in rural areas of HP.

Chapter twenty is focused on the Role of Communication Media in Rural Marketing. In this chapter Mahendra Kumar Padhy highlights the impact of marketing communication strategies in rural India and the shift of multinational corporations' focus towards the Indian rural/retail marketing. He concludes that rural markets in India are both lucrative and challenging. Each of the elements of the promotion mix confirms the level of awareness among the masses.

---

This chapter also reflects the changing behaviour of rural consumer due to advertising.

Chapter twenty-one is focused on availability, awareness, and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and information seeking behaviour of Rural Farmers in Southern India. The author urges that the use of ICT can provide rural farmers with access to information and knowledge and thereby enhance their quality of life and accelerate the pace of rural development. In spite of ICT interventions in including projects initiated by the government, NGOs, and other private players like ICT Village Information Centres (VICs) in Tamil Nadu, its acceptability and utilization has been very low in the rural areas. It is highlighted that there is significant relationship between awareness and information usage and demographic characteristic in addition to the sources of information utilization. Further, it does not affect the reciprocal relationship between the buyer (middlemen) and seller (farmer).

The last chapter authored by Sheetal Kapoor focuses on the Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Empowering Rural Consumers. The author also analyses the factors preventing rural communities from reaping the benefits of ICTs, government initiatives and attempts to identify the bottlenecks and solutions. This chapter discusses the need to focus on Indian Rural consumers to empower them to access information, knowledge by deploying the information and communication techniques (ICTs) and to explore the available media at different locations.

The book examines various issues impacting rural consumer behaviour and suggests strategies and interventions for empowering rural consumers. The book is an important contribution in the field of rural development. It will be relevant for academicians, researchers, consumer activists, policy-makers and social workers.

**Anita Kakkar**

Asstt. Director, NILERD  
Anitakakkar2004@yahoo.co.in

### III

***Right to Information & Good Governance***, by Rajvir S. Dhaka (ed.), 2018, Concept Publishing Company, Pages: 342, Price: Rs.1500, ISBN-13:978-93-5125-291-7(HB)

Right to Information (RTI) is an Act of the Parliament of India that provides for the right to information for citizens of India replacing the erstwhile Freedom of Information Act, 2002. In good governance people are served by their representatives and not ruled by them. RTI not only brings transparency, accountability in governance but also acts as a deterrent against arbitrary

actions, policies, and decisions of public authorities. RTI empowers people to seek information from the government and public organizations and to ask for government documents and their copies. Through RTI citizens can know about decisions and limitations of the government. RTI promotes transparency and accountability. Public Authorities must be proactive and voluntarily put the maximum possible information in the public domain for the use of citizens. RTI is a powerful tool. It strengthens democracy and promotes good governance by enhancing the citizen's ability to participate in the process.

The basic objective of the Right to Information Act is to empower the citizens, promote transparency and accountability in the working of the government and make our democracy work for the people in real sense. It helps make the government more accountable to the governed (citizens).

The RTI Act is indeed landmark legislation. It is claimed that the Constitution of India had set up only the parliamentary democracy at the national and state levels. The 73rd and 74th Amendment had created representative democracy at the grassroots level, both in the rural and the urban areas, but the Right to Information Act 2005 created a participatory democracy at the national, state and the local level. The enactment of this landmark legislation can be traced from several sources. These include the influence of the Scandinavian countries on the decision makers of India, judgements of Supreme Court of the country, the pressure of the World Bank on the decision makers of India for bringing about good governance by introducing transparency in the administration at all levels so that the financial assistance given to India by the World Bank is utilised in an efficient manner.

The credit of current enactment of RTI, 2005 goes to Aruna Rai Majdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan and the National Campaign for RTI by the leading member of civil society like Anna Hazare. At the same time, we must acknowledge the contribution of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi who headed National Advisory Council and Dr. Manmohan Singh who headed UPA Government for the enactment of the RTI and for the establishment of RTI regime at all the public authorities.

Dr. Rajvir Singh Dhaka's comprehensive work 'RTI and Good Governance' which was published in 2010 was a very useful device for understanding the various facets of this sincere effort for bringing good governance in India by increasing its transparency. This revised edition which the author published in 2018 is an enlarged form of his earlier work.

In addition to the Preface, which is a sort of Preamble for the book, it has been divided into nine chapters. The First chapter traces the genesis and evolution of this path breaking legislation. The Second chapter describes its salient features and also brings into draws attention to various deficiencies from witch this Act suffers.

---

The Third chapter spells out the duties and responsibilities of the State, Public Information Commission and the first Appellate authorities. The Fourth chapter describes the constitutional powers and functions of the Second Appellate authorities, the Central Information Commission and the State Information Commission. The Fifth chapter highlights the decisions of the Central Commission. The Sixth chapter discusses the judgements of the Supreme Court and High Courts on the petitions that had been filed by the agreed parties against the judgements of the Commission at the Centre and State levels. The Seventh chapter deals with the issues and concerns that had been created by the RTI Act, 2005, by the rules framed for the institutions created by the Central and State Governments. The Eighth chapter highlights the apprehension that have been created by the institutionalisation of the RTI regime and the operational problems that have emerged from time to time. The Ninth, i.e., the last chapter, provides a road map for the future. The book attempts to highlight the basic objective or purpose of RTI and its importance in good governance.

Dhaka has also added an Annexure for helping out the stakeholders in the RTI regime. This include the texts of the RTI (2005 Act), the central RTI Rules 2012, the Haryana RTI Rules 2009 and the Amendment in these in 2016. An interesting and instructive quiz on the RTI Act has also been appended. It is followed by the multiple choice questions on RTI Act and a brief description of the RTI rules at various levels.

The book has a comprehensive bibliography for those who are interested in making a deeper study of the working of the RTI regime. The Index at the end of the book is also very useful for scholars and students. The value of this book has been further enhanced through the Foreword by Wazzahat Habbibullah, IAS (retired), former Chief Information Commissioner, Central Information Commissioner, New Delhi.

But the problem with this bulky book is that the author seems to be overoptimistic about the success of the RTI regime and does not adequately take into account the fact that the information providers have not been able to fully liberate themselves from the cultural secrecy which they have inherited from the colonial rule. He also overlooked the fact that even after more than seven decades of Indian Independence in 1947, the masses of India has yet to acquire the needed civic culture. Both of these are great impediments in the success of Right to Information.

Above all, the author has not been able to foresee that the decision makers at the national level are capable of diluting it and the civil society is not strong enough to resist them. Be that as it may, both the author and the publisher deserve credit for bringing out this useful volume. The work shows that the author has made full use of his experience as a Senior Faculty, in-charge of RTI cell, in Haryana Institute of Public Administration, Gurgaon.

The expertise of the publisher is evident from the landmark on error-free production of this book. However, the price of the book (Rs.1500) is likely to restrict its demand only by the libraries of various institutions. The individual interested in RTI regime may not be able to spare this big amount. Therefore, the reviewer strongly feels the need for the publication of a paperback edition with lower price so that its purchase becomes possible for all the stakeholders in the RTI regime. Cover design, print, paper and overall quality of the publication is good. The book offers a very significant reading material to all concerned – development professionals, policy makers, students as well as teachers.

**Chaitali Roy**

Asstt. Director, NILERD  
drchaitali\_pal@yahoo.co.in