

Camraderie in the IAS

"The camraderie is gone. The bon homie is lost. The IAS Association has ceased to be the friendly forum which it used to be when officers could meet their colleagues in a tension-free atmosphere over a hot cup of tea", laments an innocent soul. No way can we disagree. These are great thoughts. He has done a great service to humanity by recording them for the benefit of future generations.

However, to be true to ourselves, we don't feel the so called agony of departing from those golden days. On the contrary, we used to feel great distress when we had to be part of that bon homie, because we knew that the man who was backslapping one of us was an enemy of the people whom we were supposed to serve, we knew the man who was waxing eloquent on the stage on corruption was the most corrupt himself, and we could see a sense of achievement in another's body language which demanded admiration for his skill in accumulating illegal wealth without being caught. We used to feel frustrated. A sense of utter incapacity and shame used to depress our spirits. Did we join the IAS to break bread with someone whom we could have avoided like plague if he were not in the same service as ourselves?

The bon-homie as it existed in those good old days was rape. Our sensibility was the victim of the rape. Our childhood dream of joining a service with a mission was the innocent child whom they repeatedly raped. The men who imposed themselves on us. We abhorred. But they professed bon homie with me. They enjoyed chatting with us or people like us over a cup of tea in a tension-free atmosphere.

Sympathizers of corruption try to paint that the IAS Association has lost its bon-homie as a result of its fight against corruption. Their argument is "you may have gained something, but you have lost the bon homie. You gain something, you lose something". We hold a different view. We think we have gained both ways. The termination of bon homie, as it existed earlier, is an achievement in itself. The joviality of the get-togethers organized in the days was only superficial. Behind the mask of pleasantries exchanged between the members was the domination of the corrupt. Those who were experts in bleeding the country were in command. Their words hold sway over the foolish utterances of an odd guy who did not know how to be worldly-wise. They strode the stage like huge colossuses. The sincere and the truthful were relegated to the option of either singing the praises of those lords of all what they surveyed or being mute spectators to what the wiser people decided for the welfare of the corrupt.

Who cries over the loss of bon-homie in the Association? The very same people who used the IAS Association as a shield against any possible punishment for their sins. Off late, that was the great purpose for which the IAS Association was put to use with impunity. Also, some minor sinners whose found a safe shelter under the wings of those

monstrous vultures. And also some spineless specimens of God's creations who would have enjoyed any available situation.

Do you think this dispensation was natural to the genius of the elite service? An association membered by some of the brightest minds could have been held captive by a coterie of self-seeking mercenaries? It was an artificial superstructure evolved over the years by manipulation. Manipulation cunningly trained by those who enormously valued their stacks of currency notes and benami factories in comparison to the smiles on the faces of the impoverished and the satisfaction of participating in the growth of the state's economy.

We are happy that the corrupt dominated bon-homie in the IAS Association has disintegrated. It has yielded place to a different ambience. Now the corrupt enter the portals of the association unnoticed. They enter after the meeting start and while they walk into the halls, their shoes don't produce any sound. They take care to sit on chairs that do not creak and their heads are held high only when they suspect mischief from a lizard sitting on the roof.

Discussions are dominated by honest officers who want to do something good for the people of the state. There are resolutions demanding punishment for the guilty. These proposals are never silenced by the super wisdom emanating from the dark skulls of corruption-hardened crusty cerebra. There is no diminution in the spirit of bon-homie. The gatherings are as convivial as before. The atmosphere is no less gregarious. The only difference is that it is not dominated by those who think that corruption is not a matter to be ashamed of.

Some people may think that this is no bon-homie at all. But we think it is exact bon-homie that we had all these years, longed for. Some say they don't feel like attending the Association meetings. We are happier.