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Whenever we hear the word 'corruption', we immediately visualize the scene of a political leader or the government official irrespective of his level, of any department or a police officer accepting a bribe. Probably this could be result of watching excessive TV or Movies. ☺

In fact, there is a very close relationship between 'corruption and a man'. The relationship is fairly age old. Now, corruption is not the prerogative of any one nation but this virus has now widely spread across the globe. In fact it would not be wrong if I say that there is a competition between nations on this topic. You must have also seen the 'rankings' published of Nations affected by corruption virus. We, Indians are occupying a fairly high ranking in the said list.

It is generally considered that corruption is equivalent to 'black money' and that's the reason you would find rush in malls, jewellery shops, electronic shops etc. for shopping in the midst of increasing inflation, unemployment etc. With this reality, our brain at times gets frozen.

I have already mentioned that corruption is a new type of virus which has spoiled the entire world. Few years back one highly influential political leader commented that it is possible to stop 'inward corruption' on an individual level but it is difficult to eradicate an 'outward corruption.' The virus called "Corruption" has spread practically into all segments of the society. e.g. educational institutions, hospitals, government and private sector offices, local municipal bodies, business houses etc.

You may be aware that penalty, fine etc. has been clearly spelt out in our various Acts for various offences. But even then, government officials blackmail the offenders due to their 'nuisance value' and offender's ignorance of the penal provisions. Offender should be inquisitive to find out the 'actual offence' committed by him and 'what is the penalty' in the Act. He must gather this information to avoid the blackmailing next time. Many a times, there is technical breach of law. It is also likely that the concerned officer may take the money for educating the offender about the loopholes in the Act itself. There is also a tendency of few officers to book the 'false complaint' even when there is no breach and harass the common man and hence people have no guts to oppose the 'corruption proposal' and are willing to give the bribe. In my opinion, unwillingness to exercise the power under the Act by the

government officials or their 'nuisance value' is the root cause of corruption. In the process, the Government treasury is deprived of penalty amount.

I always think as to what would be reaction of a corrupt officer in giving bribe for his work as 'outward bribe' is difficult to control?

Bribe quantum varies from corrupt person to person. Even if some staff is not accepting the bribe, the other staff members would still take the bribe on his behalf. (Obviously prestige of the department is at the stake and to avoid the wrong message to the service receivers.)

Many times the corruption starts from the entry point in the organization for seeking the employment. Corruption is also prevalent at the time of transfers, promotions etc. Many times this bribe is given against the wishes and is financed by resorting to borrowings. Hence, the said employee is left with no alternative and starts accepting bribe from the word go. This 'hunger' does not end on recovering the bribe amount and continues for ever. Some portion of bribe taken by down the line staff has to be shared with top bosses.

It is interesting to note the various categories of 'bribe takers.' Some officials do not favour in spite of accepting bribe or do the favour who gives more bribe between the various competitors. At the same time there are officials who help the needy person without displaying the 'Bribe Rate card' and accept the bribe given by the person as a token of love and affection for the favour received. Official who does the favour honestly by accepting a bribe is considered as 'honest' person in current scenario. Corruption has now entered the blood stream of a common man and his thinking that no work can be accomplished without offering the bribe. Common man does not like to waste his fruitful time & energy and resorts to short cut of bribe. In doing this, he takes into account the experience of persons swimming against the 'tide' refusing to pay the bribe inspite being in the right zone.

Having considered the words corruption, bribe in its natural meaning understood by all, it will be very interesting to look at these words from a wide and a zoom angle. If a professional uses his well acquired knowledge for acting as a middle man and gets the favours granted to his clients, can not be said to be utilizing the knowledge properly. On the contrary, a wrong message gets forwarded that any favour can be managed with vitamin 'M'.

We also notice some doctors compelling the patient for a surgery by frightening him under the disguise of medical complications or compel him to undergo number of unwarranted medical diagnostic procedures/tests. You are also aware about varying operation and hospital charges for the same operation. We can accept the difference due to the seniority of a doctor etc. but fail to understand or reconcile the huge difference in total medical expenses to be incurred.

When an average student gets admission from the 'Trustee Quota', is there any guarantee that such an average student would turn out to be a good engineer or a doctor? Student whose education is founded on the 'plinth of Bribe' cannot even become a 'good citizen'. By looking at the name board of a doctor, we can not get the information about the university offering the medical degree, number of attempts taken to clear the examination, whether admission was taken from management quota etc.? We simply take his appointment in good faith. Have you ever noticed lawyers trying to hack the client in the court's compound?

Few days back, I visited the Rationing Office for deleting two names. The Agents quoted a 'professional fee' of Rs. 750/- which was quite exorbitant. Obviously, I personally did the work in two visits without spending a single rupee at the said office.

Corrupt official also advocates the philosophy or logic that a person, who does not get the opportunity to take bribe, blows the trumpet of his 'honesty'. Friends, believe me that this is the wrong notion. If you decide to work honestly, then right on the first occasion you should be able to say 'no'. Once you start the walk on the corruption road, you cannot take a u-turn.

Friends, you will agree that corruption in its 'conventional meaning' and 'intellectual corruption' mentioned above will ruin the society one day. It is necessary to spread the 'honesty message' to the society. I was lucky to inherit the good qualities from my father such as sincerity, honesty, involvement, dedication, high moral values etc. I have not only preserved these qualities but sharpened them further. In the course of my employment & profession, I had ample opportunities to venture into corruption territory. But I managed to remain clean. I had to swim against the tide and also suffered mental agony for the same.

Friends, what is your experience? Do write to me. I look forward to your reply. Kindly forward this article to your friends.