Director's Column



It is heartening to see that buoyant economic growth has continued during the latter half of 2006. With this, the Indian economy has grown at over 7.5 percent for 14 quarters and surely, this shows that the economy has reached a higher growth trajectory. It is also heartening to see acceleration in the manufacturing sector growth in the last

quarter and this bodes well for balance in the growth pattern. Indeed, the optimistic scenario has led to setting the growth target at 8 percent for the Tenth Plan. This is eminently feasible if the Central and State governments augment infrastructure and unshackle the economy from various constraints. Continued focus on reforms is imperative both to augment infrastructure and to unshackle the economy.

As budget time approaches, expectations are rife on fiscal reforms. Considerable progress has been made in the last few years in achieving fiscal correction and the consolidated fiscal deficit relative to GDP has declined from the peak of 9.9 percent in 2001-02 to 7.5 percent in 2005-06. Similarly, the revenue deficit has declined from the high of 7 percent of GDP in 2001-02 to a little over 3 percent in 2005-06 and is likely to decline further in 2006-07. Despite compulsions of coalition politics and introduction and expansion of several spending schemes, the deficits are expected to come down further in 2006-07. Fiscal adjustment has been particularly heartening at the state level and the states taken together are well on their way to achieve the restructuring targets set by the Finance Commission. Of course, poor performance of some individual states continue to be a matter of concern. Further, competitive populism associated with coalition politics and large expenditure escalations expected from the impending pay commission award pose serious threat to fiscal consolidation in the medium term.

Sharp increases in the revenue productivity of central direct taxes have been a principal source of fiscal correction. Indeed, Indian experience with tax reforms has reaffirmed the dictum, 'tax administration is tax policy'. The establishment of TIN – the tax information network and entrusting the task to the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) is an important reform

measure that has helped the central direct taxes to grow at over 25 percent per year on average during the last 4 years, and the current year's collection shows a similar trend. Thus, building a strong computerised information system is a critical component of tax administration reform and this should be carried out by a competent agency. The lesson learnt is that there is a crying need to use modern technology in the administration of excise duties. Further, unless we gear up to strengthen the information system, the high buoyancy in the state VAT seen recently may decline as taxpayers adjust to the new tax system and find ways and means of evading the tax.

The year 2007 will be an exciting one for NIPFP. There will be immense opportunities to contribute further to research, advocacy, and training. The proliferation of tax exemptions and preferences go against the best practice approach to calibrating tax policy. Broadening the base by phasing out tax preferences will allow the government to reduce the rates of both direct and indirect taxes. The Institute has taken significant initiatives to undertake a series of studies on various tax exemptions and preferences for the Ministry of Finance. The studies on fiscal decentralisation and financing human development will continue to provide insights into the ways and means of improving allocative and technical efficiency in public spending to accelerate growth and reduce poverty. The work on state finances continues to be a significant thrust area. Important studies have been taken up for Bihar and Rajasthan. The detailed studies initiated on urban infrastructure and finance will also help policy calibration in this area. Studies on open economy macroeconomics and financial sectors will also be taken up to assist policy making in these areas.

Besides research, NIPFP has embarked upon capacity building in both national and international arenas. The programme of capacity building for fiscal policy in three Nigerian States has been taken up at the request of UNDP. The Institute is also involved in training tax officials from Sri Lanka on Practical Issues of Tax Policy and Reform. The programme of training university teachers will continue. The NIPFP will continue its role in research, training, and advocacy.

M. Govinda Rao

PROJECTS COMPLETED

• Finances of Karnataka: Fiscal Implications of Pay Revision, Government of Karnataka, December, 2006.

M. Govinda Rao and Pinaki Chakraborty

This study was undertaken at the instance of the Pay Commission of Karnataka. The objective of this study was to examine the extent of fiscal space required to carry out a pay revision. Based on the plausible assumption of pay revision across scales and group of employees, and future revenues and expenditures, the study examined the fiscal implications of a salary hike. The study also examined the impact of pay revision within the Medium Term Fiscal Policy (MTFP) framework of the Government of Karnataka and the question of fiscal sustainability thereon.

 Madhya Pradesh Public Expenditure Management, Government of Madhya Pradesh, September, 2006.

M. Govinda Rao and Pinaki Chakraborty

This programme was designed to enable the Government of Madhya Pradesh to strengthen performance management in government in a sustainable manner for effective poverty reduction and human development. The objective of the programme design was to develop a comprehensive framework for Public Expenditure Management (PEM) by devising a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and link it to annual budgets.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS/MONOGRAPHS

- Chelliah, Raja J. 2006, A Tract on Reform of Federal Fiscal Relations in India. Madras School of Economics: Monograph No.1.
- Mathur, O.P. (co-authored), 2006, State Finance Commissions and Urban Fiscal Decentralisation in India. Washington D.C.: The Urban Institute.

CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS, VOLUMES

- Amarnath, H.K. (co-authored), "Irrigation Subsidies: Can it Help Reforms in Karnataka?" in (eds.) Reddy, V. Ratna, and S. Mahendra Dev, Managing Water Resources: Policies, Institutions, and Technologies. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Chidambaram, S. Siva. "Open Access, Open Archive Initiative and Open Source Softwares are the Ladder of Library and Information Centres in the Emerging Knowledge Society," in (eds.) Kaul, H.K. and I.V. Malhan, Knowledge, Library and Information Networking: NACLIN 2006. University of Jammu: Developing Library Network (DELNET), 2006.
- Mathur, O.P. "Local Government Organisation and Finance: Urban India," in (ed.) Anwar Shah, Local Governments in Developing Countries. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2006.

- Pandey, Rita. "Children's
 Environmental Health Issues:
 Concerns and Challenges," in (ed.)
 Saba Gul Khattak, At the
 Crossroads: South Asian Research,
 Policy and Development in a
 Globalized World. Islamabad,
 Pakistan: SDPI, 2006.
- Rao, Govinda M. "Fiscal Federalism in India: Emerging Challenges," in (eds.) Raoul Blindenbacher and Abigail Ostien Karos, Dialogues on the Practice of Fiscal Federalism: Comparative Perspectives, A Global Dialogue on Federalism Booklet Series, Volume 4. Ottawa, Canada: Forum of Federations and International Association of Centers for Federal Studies, 2006.
- _____. "Fiscal Federalism in Planned Economies," in (eds.) Ehtisham Ahmad and Giorgio Brosio, Handbook of Fiscal Federalism. Northampton, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc., 2006.
- Rao Govinda M., and R. Kavita Rao, "Trends and Issues in Tax Policy and Reform in India," in (eds.) Suman Bery, Barry Bosworth, and Arvind Panagariya, NCAER/ Brookings India Policy Forum 2005/ 06, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006.

IOURNAL ARTICLES

- Amarnath, H.K. (co-authored), (2006), "Performance of Public Enterprises – A Case Study of Andhra Pradesh," *The Indian Journal of Commerce*, 59(1): 106-112.
- Bagchi, Amaresh. (co-authored), (2006), "India's Fiscal Management Post-Liberalisation: Impact on the Social Sector and Federal Fiscal Relations," *Economic and Political* Weekly, 41(39): 4117-4121.
- Jena, Pratap Ranjan. (2006), "Fiscal Marksmanship: Link between Forecasting Central Tax Revenues and States' Fiscal Management," Economic and Political Weekly, 41(37): 3971-3976.
- Pandey, Rita. (2006), "Looking Beyond I&M in Reducing Pollution from in-use Vehicles," Environmental Economics and Policy Studies, 7(4): 435-457.
- Rajaraman, Indira. (co-authored), (2006), "Predicting the Probability of Default on Bank Loans," Empirical Economics Letters, 5(3): 171-180.
- Rao, Govinda M. and Pinaki Chakraborty, (2006), "Multilateral Adjustment Lending to States in India: Hastening Fiscal Correction or Softening the Budget Constraint?" *Journal of International Trade and Economic Development*, 15 (3), September: 335-358.
- Sridhar, Kala S. (2006), "Local Employment Impact of Growth Centres: Evidence from India."

Urban Studies, 43 (12), November: 2205-2235.

WORKING PAPERS

- Chakraborty, Lekha. "Fiscal Deficit, Capital Formation and Crowding out: Evidence from India," NIPFP Working Paper No.43, December, 2006.
- _____. "Fiscal Decentralisation and Local Level Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Philippines: An Empirical Analysis," NIPFP Working Paper No.41, October, 2006.
- _____. "Fiscal Decentralisation and Gender Responsive Budgeting in Mexico: Some Observations," NIPFP Working Paper No.40, September, 2006.
- ______. "Fiscal Deficit, Capital Formation and Crowding out in India: Evidence from an Asymmetric VAR Model," Working Paper, The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College, New York.
- Chowdhury, Mita. "Public Spending on Health in Low-income States and Central Transfers," Policy Brief Series on Financing Human Development, *Policy Brief No. 1*, September, 2006.
- Rao, Govinda M. and Lekha Chakraborty. "Fiscal Decentralisation and Gender Responsive Budgeting in Morocco: Some Observations," NIPFP Working Paper No.42, November, 2006.

 Sridhar, Kala S. "Reforming Delivery of Urban Services in Developing Countries: Evidence from a Case in India," NIPFP Working Paper No.44, December, 2006.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES • WORKSHOPS

 Training Programmes on Practical Issues of Tax Policy and Tax Administration in Developing Countries, Officials of Government of Sri Lanka, NIPFP, New Delhi.

This programme comprised of a series of training modules held during July 17-21, August 28-September 1, September 18-22, October 16-20, and November 20-24, 2006.

Kavita Rao was the course coordinator.

Training Programme on *Public Finance and Budgeting*, Officials of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, NIPFP, New Delhi, September 15-21, 2006.

Mukesh Anand was the course coordinator.

- Training Programme for Desk Level Administrative Staff and Officers of NIPFP, NIPFP, New Delhi, September 11-15, 2006.
 - L. Gurumurthy was the course coordinator.
- Training Programme on Fiscal Policy, Officers of the Indian Economic Service, NIPFP, New Delhi, August 7-13, 2006.

- Mukesh Anand was the course coordinator.
- Roundtable on *Improving the Fiscal Health of Cities: An International Perspective*, World Bank, NIPFP, New Delhi, December 19, 2006.
 - Kala S. Sridhar was the coordinator of the workshop.

PRESENTATIONS BY NIPFP FACULTY/ STAFF AT NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- Chakraborty, Pinaki. Kerala State Finances. Session on Centre State Financial Relations, National Seminar on Kerala's Development in Globalised Setting: Fiscal Issues, Kerala Development Society, New Delhi, September 2, 2006.
- Chidambaram, S. Siva.
 Documentation Framework for
 Establishing NIPFP-Institutional
 Repository using DSpace Feasibility Study. International
 Conference on Digital Libraries
 (ICDL 2006), TERI, New Delhi,
 December 7, 2006.
- Open Access,
 Open Access Initiative & Open
 Source Softwares are the Ladder of
 Library and Information Centre in
 the Emerging Knowledge Society.
 Ninth National Convention,
 Knowledge, Library and
 Information Network, University of
 Jammu, September 30, 2006.
- Gupta, Manish. Estimating Shadow Prices of CO₂ Emissions: A Case Study of Power Generation Sector in India. Workshop on Valuation and Accounting of Urban

- Air Pollution in India, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, November 30, 2006.
- Mathur, O.P. ADB's Role in Asia's Urban Transition. Workshop, ADB, Manila, Philippines, December 11-13, 2006.
- _____. State Finance Commissions & Urban Fiscal Decentralisation in India. Workshop, USAID, New Delhi, October 17, 2006.
- _____. (Chairperson), Urban Planning for Municipal Bodies.
 DFID Workshop on Implementing Urban Reforms in India, New Delhi, October 12, 2006.
- ______. China and India's Urban Strategies. Seminar on Managing Cities in China, Beijing, China, September 21-22, 2006, and Chennai, India, September 25, 2006.

- _____. (Chairperson), Meeting of the Planning Commission Subgroup on Urban Development.

 Ministry of Urban Development and Planning Commission, NIPFP, New Delhi, August 9, 2006.
- _____. Managing the City in Asia. Conference on Managing the City in Asia, ADB, Manila, July 5-6, 2006.
- Mukhopadhyay, Swapna. Mental Health as an Indicator of Human Development: The Curious Case of Kerala Women. NIPFP, New Delhi, December 21, 2006.
- Pandey, Rita. Ecological Sustainability and Human Wellbeing. The Ninth Biennial Conference of The International Society for Ecological Economics, New Delhi, December 16-18, 2006.



Director, NIPFP, and Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, Roundtable on *Fiscal Health of Cities: An International Perspective*, NIPFP, New Delhi, December 19, 2006



Roundtable on Fiscal Health of Cities: An International Perspective, NIPFP, New Delhi, December 19, 2006

- _____. A Proposal for Stimulating Fuel Economy of Road Transport in India. Third World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists, Kyoto, Japan, July 3-7, 2006.
- Rajaraman, Indira. Effectiveness of Panchayati Raj Institutions as an Instrument of Delivery System in Rural Areas. National Colloquium on Innovation in Rural Institutions: A Driver for Agricultural Prosperity, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi, October 24, 2006.
- Incidence and Economic Impacts of Property Taxes in Developing and Transitional Countries.

 Conference on Making the Property Tax Work in Developing and Transitional Countries, Georgia State University, Atlanta, October 15-17, 2006.
- _____. The Design of Liquor

- Taxation and its Impact on Rural Consumption. Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, September 29-30, 2006.
- _____. (Chairperson), Session on Financing of Revenue
 Expenditure, National Seminar on Kerala's Development in Globalised Setting: Fiscal Issues, Kerala
 Development Society, New Delhi, September 2, 2006.
- Public Finance
 Implications of Trade Policy
 Reforms. UNDP Regional Centre,
 Colombo, Sri Lanka,
 July 28-29, 2006.
- Rao, Govinda M. Financial
 Arrangements between the Union
 and the States. All Party
 Representatives Committee from Sri
 Lanka, Ministry of Home Affairs,
 Government of India, New Delhi,
 October 26, 2006.

- _____. (Discussant), Fiscal Consolidation and Systemic Reforms. Conference on India: An Emerging Giant, Columbia University, New York, October 13-15, 2006.
- _____. Finances of Urban Local Bodies. National Colloquium on Urban Governance, Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, September 20-21, 2006.
- Sridhar, Kala S. Improving the Fiscal Health of India's Cities: A Pilot Study. Roundtable on Fiscal Health of Cities: An International Perspective, World Bank and NIPFP, New Delhi, December 19, 2006.
- _____. Density Gradients and their Determinants: Evidence from India. National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi, July 21, 2006.

SEMINARS BY GUESTS AT NIPFP

- July 12, 2006: Reforming Public Services in India: Drawing Lessons from Success, Vikram Chand, The World Bank.
- August 3, 2006: Predatory States and Failing States: An Agency Problem, Avinash Dixit, Princeton University.
- August 8, 2006: Trade and Foreign Investment: Comparing India and China, Arvind Panagariya, Columbia University.



Seminar on *Predatory States and Failing States: An Agency Problem,* Avinash Dixit, Princeton University, NIPFP, New Delhi, August 3, 2006

- September 8, 2006: The Importance of Venture Capital in New Firm Creation, Manju Puri, Duke University.
- September 12, 2006: Next
 Challenges for the Japanese
 Economy, Yasuhiro Maehara,
 Hitotsubashi University.
- October 13, 2006: Orienting
 Outlays Toward Needs: An
 Evidence-based, Equity-focused
 Approach for Sarva Shiksha
 Abhiyan, Dhir Jhingran and Deepa
 Sankar, MHRD and World Bank.
- October 30, 2006: Managing Cities in Developing Countries, Meine Pieter Van Dijk, Erasmus University.

GUEST LECTURES BY NIPFP FACULTY

 Chakraborty, Pinaki. "Value Added Tax in India," Training Programme for Indian Economic Service Officers, Institute of

- Economic Growth, New Delhi, September 27, 2006.
- _____. "Macro Economic Framework of India – An Overview," Orientation Training Programme, IA&AS Officers and Phase-II (Officer Trainees Batch 2004), National Academy of Audit & Accounts, Shimla, July 5, 2006.
- Gurumurthy, L. "Preparation of Budget & Expenditure Control," Training Programme for the Officers of National School of Drama (NSD), Delhi, September 13, 2006.
- Nagar, A.L. Lectures on Advanced Econometrics, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi, August – November, 2006.
- Pandey, Rita. "Tradable Permits for SPM Control: A Case Study," Training Programme for Indian Economic Service Officers, Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, October 31, 2006.

- _____. "Environmental Regulation in India: Issues in Monitoring and Enforcement," WWF Delhi, September 18, 2006.
- Rajaraman, Indira. "Public Debt: Sustainability Issues – I and II," Training Programme for Indian Economic Service Officers, Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, October 23, 2006.
- . _____. "Fiscal Strains in the Indian Federation," State University of New York, Buffalo, October 3, 2006; Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, October 5, 2006; Economics Department, University of California, San Diego, October 10, 2006.
- Rao, Govinda M. "Capital Account Convertibility: Is India Prepared?"
 Finance Area of IMT Conclave '06

 A National Symposium on The Burning Issues in Contemporary
 Finance, Institute of Management
 Technology (IMT), Ghaziabad,
 December 9, 2006.
- _____. "Domestic Indirect Tax Reforms in India: Issues and Options," Distinguished Lecture Series, The Economics Association, Sri Venkateswara College, New Delhi, November 2, 2006.
- _____. Special Lecture, Signing Ceremony of Addendum IX to Memorandum of Understanding with Government of India of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, New Delhi, August 3, 2006.

 ______. "National Public Finance and Policy," Probationers, National Academy of Customs Excise and Narcotics, Faridabad, July 19, 2006.

APPOINTMENT ON COMMITTEES/ AWARDS/ HONOURS

- Bagchi, Amaresh. Member, Task
 Force on Removal of Interstate
 Barriers to Trade, PHD Chamber
 of Commerce and Industry, August
 11, 2006.
- Chakraborty, Lekha. Honorary Research Associate, The Levy Economics Institute, Bard College, New York, November 2006.
- Chakraborty, Pinaki. Honorary Research Associate of Levy Economics, Institute of Bard College, New York, November 2006.
- ______, Member, Plan Committee on Resources, Draft Proposal for the Eleventh Five Year Plan, Sector constituted by State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
- ______, Member, Sub-Group on Public Sector's Draft on Private Sector Savings, Working Group on Savings for the Eleventh Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.
- _____, Examiner, Evaluation of M.Phil. Dissertation, Jawaharlal

Nehru University, New Delhi.

- Mathur, O.P. Member, National Core Group on Urban Poverty headed by the Minister of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, November 3, 2006.
- Minister's National Review
 Committee on Jawaharlal Nehru
 National Urban Renewal Mission
 (JNNURM). Second meeting with
 the Prime Minister, October 16,
 2006.
- _____, Chairperson, Steering Group on Vision Bihar: Emerging Urban Challenges, Government of Bihar, September 13, 2006.
- ______, Member, Municipal Finance Task Force, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, August 28, 2006.
- Pandey, Rita. Expert Reviewer, Oxford University Press.
- _____, Reviewer, Science for the Total Environment; Journal of Environmental Management; and Environmental Economics and Policy Studies.
- ______, Member, Board of Directors, Occupational Knowledge International, San Francisco, California, USA.
- _____, Study Group on Lotteries, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
- Rajaraman, Indira. Member, HRD Ministry Group on OBC Quotas in Technological/ Engineering Institutions, June-July, 2006.

Report submitted July 2006.

- ______, Member, Planning Commission Working Group on Centre's Financial Resources for the Eleventh Five Year Plan, May-Sept 2006. Report submitted September 2006.
- ______, Chairperson, Public Expenditure Review Committee of Kerala. Second report submitted November 2006.
- ______, Member, Public Expenditure Review Committee of Rajasthan. Meeting on September 11, 2006.
- ______, Referee, *Public Finance Review,* August and November 2006.
- Rao, Govinda M. Visiting
 Participant, Discussions on NIPFP-UNDP-Nigerian Government
 project "Capacity Building for
 Fiscal Policy Reforms in Selected
 Nigerian States, "Abuja, Nigeria,
 August, September, and November,
 2006.
- ______, Participant, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Thematic Working Group on Decentralisation, UNDP, New Delhi.
- of Experts for Formulating a New Scheme to replace the Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) Scheme, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
- _____, Co-chairman, Task Force on Removal of Inter-state

- Trade Barriers, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi.
- ______, Member, Second Technical Committee, Government Accounting, Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- _____, Member, Advisory
 Group of the Competition
 Commission of India, Government
 of India.
- ______, Chairman, Steering Group on Financial Resources, State Planning Board, Government of Bihar.
- ______, Member, Core Group (Project Development Group), National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG), Inter-State Council Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
- ______, Non-official parttime Director, Board of the Rural Electrification Corporation Limited, Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- Sridhar, Kala S. Reviewer, *Urban Studies*.
- ______, Reviewer, Regional Science and Urban Economics.
- ______, Sir Ratan Tata Trust Visiting Fellow, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, October 2006-March 2007.

NEW PROJECTS INITIATED

- Pandey, Rita, and Gautam Naresh.
 NER Vision 2020. Department of North-East Region, December 2006 - December 2007.
- Rao, M. Govinda. Fiscal Policy Capacity Building in Selected Nigerian States. UNDP-Nigerian Government, October 2006 – July 2007.
- Rao, M. Govinda and Pinaki Chakraborty. Progress of Implementation of VAT and Internal Resource Mobilisation: A Study of Bihar. Government of Bihar, September 2006 – February 2007.
- Rao, M. Govinda and Pinaki Chakraborty. Study to Draft FRBM Rules and Medium Term Fiscal Plan for the years 2005-2010 for the State of Goa. Government of Goa, October 2006-December 2006.
- Rao, M. Govinda and Kala S.
 Sridhar. Improving the Fiscal
 Health of Large Cities: A Pilot
 Study. World Bank, August 2006 August 2007.

STAFF NEWS

- Ila Patnaik joined NIPFP as Senior Fellow, w.e.f. December 1, 2006.
- Swapna Mukhopadhyay joined NIPFP as Adviser, w.e.f. October 17, 2006.

- S.D. Mudliar, Sr. Accounts Officer, left the Institute on December 18, 2006.
- Debdutta Majumdar, Economist, left the Institute on July 21, 2006.

Forthcoming Events

- Workshop on Building
 Information System for Income
 Tax Administration, Presentation
 by Mr. C. B. Bhave, Chairman,
 National Securities Depository
 Limited, February 9, 2007.
- Capacity Building for Fiscal Reforms; Workshop for Senior Officials of Kano and Ondo State Governments in Nigeria, Abuja, Nigeria, January 22-30, 2007.
- Training Programme for Indian Audit and Accounts Service Probationers, January
 15 – February 3, 2007.
- Refresher Training Programme for University Teachers, May 2007.
- Training Programme on Practical Issues in Tax Policy and Tax Administration, for Officials of the Internal Revenue Department, Government of Sri Lanka, February 19-24; March 12-16; April 9-13; May 21-25; and June 18-22, 2007.

Published & printed by Rita Wadhwa on behalf of National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, 18/2, Satsang Vihar Marg, Special Institutional Area, New Delhi 110067 & printed by VAP Enterprises, H-24, Green Park Extn, New Delhi -16. Tel:26196787 & published at 18/2, Satsang Vihar Marg, Special Institutional Area, New Delhi 110 067. Editor: Kala S. Sridhar.

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