

Introduction to Government: How it works and what it does?

The School of Liberal Studies hosted a three day capsule course on '*Introduction to Government*' from 27th November, 2018 to 29th November, 2018. The course was designed and structured with the help of an eminent faculty Mr. C.K. Koshy, Retired Additional Chief Secretary of the Government of Gujarat. The event brought together around 60 undergraduate and post-graduate students of 'Public Administration', 'Law and Governance' and 'Political Science' who extensively participated in discussions and interactive dialogue to collaboratively understand the 'how' and 'what' of government. In the direction of building up a holistic understanding of the government and its functioning, government officials and professional practitioners from the field of Urban Planning, Engineering and Governance were invited to facilitate a few sessions for the participants.

The course was introduced with the intent to impart knowledge and awareness about the role of government in today's era and its direct relation to the development of our society. The topics covered in lectures and discussions by Mr. Koshy included the understanding of the Constitution of India and the administrative relations between the union and the state, the battle of power between judiciary and the executive and debate of the generalists' v/s the specialists. These discussions helped the participants to closely relate their learning with current affairs and the experiences shared by Mr. Koshy. Experts such as Dr. Saswat Bandhopayay talked about the pressing need of governance and planning mechanisms at local level of administration for the sustainability of our cities. Mr Paresh Shah elaborately talked about the dilemma of development and ground realities they have faced during the construction of Narmada Sardar Sarovar Project. Mr. Himanshu Parekh and Dr. Ketan Gandhi gave valuable insights on the election process in India and shared their experiences about the same with us. Mr. C. S. Upadhyaya, Joint Secretary, discussed about the provisions made in *Right to Information Act* and *Land Acquisition Act* through the policy briefing as well as real life experiences.

The course concluded with presentations from participants to assess their overall learning by Dr. D Sriram and Mr. Koshy. The participants talked on topic ranging from Right to Information, Urban Sustainability, Land Acquisitions, Local Urban Bodies, Powers of Judiciary, Executive and Legislative etc. backed with a thorough review of literature and application of new theories and concepts learned from the course. Finally, certificates were distributed to all participants as a token of appreciation by Mr. Koshy, Dr. D Sriram, Prof. Nigam Dave, Dr. Pradeep Malik and Dr. Ashvin Dave.

Overall, the capsule course on '*Introduction to Government*' proved to be a strong foundation for aspiring students of Public Administration and Governance who have the utmost desire to bring a change in the system and society as well-informed citizens.

