

"Prof. Arindam Chaudhuri" - Why the educated youth must join politics...

Why the educated youth must join politics... the hurdles... and why they need to lobby for a better judicial system to make their dream a reality...

Dec. 11, 2008 - [PRLog](#) -- In the backdrop of the Mumbai terror attacks, there has been a lot of talk about the need to go and vote... the need to elect the right government... the need for educated youth to come up and join politics and the need for a new political force that can bring about the real change. This topic is something that's very close to my heart, as ever since I can remember, may be since I was eight years old or so, I remember my father always told me that it is not politics which is dirty, but the people in politics who have made it dirty; and that politics is the biggest service to a nation that one can think of; something that able and educated men with leadership skills should always think of keeping in the forefront of their ambition list. As a response to my workshops on the Great Indian Dream, as well as to my editorials – especially the ones criticising the government, and more especially the last two on the Mumbai blasts – many people have sent me messages: why criticise; why not try to be the change!

Yes, the truth is, I have personally always believed that politics is where the educated youth should be. Some of my published interviews, which date back to as early as 1997, stand testimony to the fact that I myself had wished to be a part of the political process sometime in my life – my students from the '94 batch at IIPM and onwards would vouch that that is the truth, because they have heard me say so time and again. What's also the biggest truth is that, year after year, when my students come and ask me where should I want to see them fifteen years or so down the line, without an iota of doubt, this has always been my answer – in politics! And parents of our students who have heard me speak at the orientation programme at IIPM or at the convocation programmes at IIPM know that that has always been my advice for their children... for I know one of the biggest strengths at IIPM is our super combination of entrepreneurial and management education, along with sharp and incisive education in economics – some things our politicians have always lacked! Either our leaders have been great managers with no understanding of economics leading to disaster, or our leaders have been great economists with no clue about management and leadership, and, therefore, have spelt disaster. To me, one of the stories that unforgettably describe India's tragedy is about 'The mother of India who had two sons.' One knew how to run (the country, that is) but went to fly and met his end; the other knew how to fly, but went to run and met his end. Symbolically, that has always been India's problem – misallocation of resources and incapable leaders at the top; and that's why I have always considered our students to be great resource material as future politicians of this country with the perfect mix of education – for management education doesn't always mean only focusing on how to maximise private profits. That's not to say others aren't capable, but just because I am personally involved with teaching IIPM students, through them, I want to show my faith and passion in my belief in the role of youth in politics.

Well, having said how passionately I believe that the clean and educated youth in India should be a part of politics, I must also say that unfortunately, the government has created a system that is non-conducive for clean people to enter politics. It doesn't allow the youth with the passion and education to just jump in and start making the change; because if they were to do so, they would only end up being disillusioned; or worse, a part of the corrupt system itself. It's because elections in this country are neither fought with passions and policies nor with candlelight processions. Elections are fought by motorcycle brigades with guns in hand. The truth is that Indian politics is not fought with ideology, but with muscle power and ruthless rigging in the interiors. Indian politics is a hierarchy of criminals and goons. At the grassroots, a local MLA wins through a bunch of goons. On top of a few such MLAs sits the MP; and on top of such mostly criminal and corrupt MPs sits the Prime Minister. And that a man sitting as the Prime Minister could be a poet, a literary genius, who knows 17 languages or an economist, but the reality is that he sits there

because his party has a hierarchy of criminals; and the stronger this criminalisation is at the grassroots level, the tougher it is to defeat them – West Bengal being a case in point. You can be a big leader – say an Uma Bharti – but the moment the system of criminalisation that you sit upon and win elections with is gone, you are reduced to a nonentity. Even a cosmopolitan state like Delhi has no place for educated, clean people. Only those who get key party tickets have won over the years.

Yet, we know – and should believe – that one day, the educated must take over this system... One day, the youth must come forward and make the difference... But before clean and honest youth can come forward, we need to give the youth the environment to fight on the basis of policies and passion and not on the basis of guns. And for that to happen, we need a very very strong and powerful judiciary that is alive and not paralysed... A very strong judicial system that stops criminalisation of daily life and weeds out the criminals from the system, and sees to it that criminals cannot fight elections or win them through rigging... and instills fear in the minds of the criminals through a quick process of justice! But surely, not the way it is today – a process of endless delays and inefficiencies! And these are issues we at TSI have been relentlessly lobbying for since our inception. The other option is, of course, a Constitutional change that brings about a Presidential system in India – again an issue we at TSI have lobbied for in the past – so that like in the USA, the Indian leadership can also be determined on the basis of debates and policies.

Until we can achieve either of the two, the need for educated and clean people to enter politics will unfortunately remain more of a slogan; for the environment is, I repeat, unfortunately not conducive for them to make any dent. Yet, I must say, they must not give up the hope. They must come forward and lobby for the right changes – and a strong judiciary is what should top their list and agenda. And if they keep their focus right, and fight for the correct causes, they will one day make the system conducive for the big change. I have personally always believed, “If you think you can, you are right!”... I am sure the time is not far when one amongst the educated and clean people will be bringing about change in this country... a change that we too can believe in... And at TSI, we will keep lobbying and doing our bit to make that change a reality.

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Noted economist & management guru Professor Arindam Chaudhuri is an eminent author, an authoritative speaker & a transformational leader.

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