



# ***“Minimizing Role of Middle-Men/Agents in India”***

**Collective inputs from over 200,000 Citizens in circle**

**“Transform India with Modi”**

***(Current state, Issues, Root Causes and Proposed Solutions)***

***September 03, 2015***

## **Minimizing Role of Middle Men/Agents in India**

### **Executive Summary**

One of the major problems that Indian citizens have been facing for ever is the problem of agents and middle men. The agents most times are a channel through which bribes are facilitated to Government officials for getting work done or getting it done faster. As a result, the common man who cannot afford the agent channel is hugely disadvantaged because their work is either not done or takes much longer. There is a strong belief that till the time the agent/middle men interface exists between Citizens/Business and Government, India will not be able to achieve the model of Good Governance.

The 200,000+ strong “Transform India with Narendra Modi” online community has come together to collectively identify the key issues, root causes and solutions for the Middle Men/Agent system in India and the community expects that the Government will work towards implementing the identified solutions.

### **Issues Identified:**

1. In India middle men are involved in almost all the sectors
2. Middle men lead to an increase in the prices of goods
3. Middle men charge a commission
4. Middle men facilitate corruption
5. In many cases, Government officers themselves point customers towards the middle men so that they could make money without taking bribes themselves
6. Middle men are involved in hoarding
7. Middle men lead to increase in the time taken for the goods to reach the end consumer
8. Middle men increase the turn-around time of the service delivery
9. In some Government departments, you just cannot get work done until you go through a middle man
10. Middle men exploit the knowledge gap of the consumer
11. Some middle men mislead and take advantage of the situation
12. In many cases, only agents seem to have the latest forms

### **Root Causes Identified:**

1. Most people do have not proper knowledge of processes in Government Departments

2. Most corporates and citizens don't have much time to spend on long and hectic processes
3. Government Departments do not have any Key Performance Indicators (KPI/KRAs).
4. Almost all Government Departments do not have any initiative to improve Turn Around Times (TATs)
5. E Governance is not practiced effectively
6. Most of the times, the Government websites are not updated with the latest information
7. Availability of forms is always an issue
8. Lack of transparency in law
9. The escalation mechanism is missing
10. Illiteracy is another major issue which leads to people depending on middle men
11. No commitment for completion of jobs by Government officers
12. There is a strong nexus between many Government officers and these middle men
13. A lot of middle men also have political contacts
14. Through the middle men channel, the Government officers don't take bribe directly from citizens but get the bribe indirectly
15. Middle men manipulate the law of supply and demand to their favour
16. There is a lack of awareness among common people
17. The only motive of the middle men is to earn more and more money out of a transaction
18. Middle men know how to get things moving and what is absolutely required for things to happen fast
19. Middle men are not afraid of law as they are used to bribing and getting let off
20. No stringent measures/law against the presence of middlemen

### **Solutions Identified:**

1. Centralized systems should be set up at various locations to collect food grains & various commodities from the farmers
2. Fair price shops should be established across the country
3. The shops purchasing material in large quantity should be given a rebate on the materials purchased, similar to big super markets
4. Officials should be made accountable and punished for delay/failure in delivery of service within stipulated timelines
5. All the offices should be made user friendly and properly guided with signboard
6. The names of the officials responsible for any procedures should be publicly available and they should be held accountable for their work or lack of it
7. RTO, Property Registration and Passport offices should ban entry of middlemen/agents in their offices

8. Information on Government procedures should be made easily available
9. The processes and form filling at Government offices should be eased out
10. Dedicated helplines should be set up to answer any query that a person might have
11. All Government procedures and permissions should have a stipulated time limit
12. Introduction of a public relation desk staffed with a capable individual in every Government Department is a must
13. Computerisation and bringing everything on systems and online will reduce paper work and minimize the need for the middle man
14. E-services must be encouraged
15. All the forms should be made available on the internet
16. The relatively simpler works should all be automated
17. The tendering system should be automated to decrease human intervention
18. Contract for updating the Government websites should be outsourced
19. The citizens should take up responsibility of not encouraging middle men, if their work takes a little longer time
20. Businesses must be made to interface with the Government offices directly
21. Every Government Office should have a box near reception where anonymous requests can be submitted enabling everyone to report a middlemen/agent and who they generally visit.
22. The corrupt officers who are identified colluding with middlemen should be immediately suspended.

## Minimizing role of Middle Men in India – A few citizen posts and comments:

1. There are many govt. departments doing cumbersome jobs of individual identifications of a very large numbers of citizens spread over vast areas and ' all this to be without mistakes else, corruption charges etc. are forced upon ' - why not such large cases be entrusted to our new age youth and make them available due charges in turn being responsible for any loss to the treasury from KYC, Witness etc. many problems in realities - sometimes middle men play a vital roles in public policies / life – **Sanjeev Larambelkar**
2. In every government office, the procedure of the job (say getting a driving license, or applying for a subsidy etc.) should be prominently displayed, written in simple language and one contact person for the vigilance cell should be also notified to act against any anomaly or any case of middlemen being involved for the bribe channel. The complaints should be promptly addressed through a given time frame and the Head of the office and the Head of the Department should be made personally responsible for this. This can solve the problem to a great extent – **Satya Ranjan Panda**
3. If an employee works honestly, there is no need of middle man, must make the process easy and real help desk, and in public dealing area when there is rush increase the windows with workers, unnecessary delay in works forces people to go middle man, please take care of it – **Dinesh Mohan**
4. There is a nexus between corrupt Government officials & agents/Middlemen as a result an educated man who knows regulations & rules is not able to get his work done without giving to them .Due to this most of the Government officials are unapproachable to get the work done due to their vested interest. They are like pimps & they have entered every service & even in Government hospitals to get patients admitted & treated. Something drastic has to be done as deserving people without adequate money are victims of the present existing system 7 & are not able get their work done without paying the agents who has link to a Government officials – **Kiran Ganapathy**
5. The question is as to whether the state and central government can adopt a uniform policy of blanking out middlemen in all their activities. For this decision making shall be non-discretionary, transparent, on-line, and time bound. Also, the law shall prohibit and punish the individual and the related middleman, when detected. For this allow citizen to report online or through SMS any wrong doing anywhere. Subject to verification of the report action shall be initiated without troubling the person reporting the matter – **Amitava Sur**
6. Not only the law needs to be revised to eliminate the middlemen at all sector even the supporters or patronage of such people should be strictly punished irrespective of their political parties – **Amrita Chowdhury**

7. The middle men menace is often felt in real estate & while renting a house. They are the ones who speculate & raise the price of the land. There should be a concrete system to eliminate this broker nuisance which is affecting especially the middle classes – **George Prathap**
8. Government implements the policies in public interest / People connect government bodies /departments for day-to-day routine work since long, still people are not close to law due to intervention of mediators. Mediators are mainly the close relative/friends or associates of the concern authorities on sharing of profits. In the present circumstances, the liaison has become a professional stream – **Sudhir Jain**
9. E-Business, E-Governance, E-Tendering has removed middleman. E-stores like Amazon are creating a genuine low price market. The benefit goes to the consumer. This is needed in Agriculture sector in India. When APMC is captured by the Mafia and farmer doesn't get good price but middlemen pockets huge margin- THIS NEEDS AN URGENT CORRECTION. Remove middlemen from every segment of life, be it a business or else. And begin it with the essential commodities and Agriculture sector. – **Haridas Raigaga**
10. The system is so corrupt that nothing can be done without the agents. If we have go for a driving licence there are people whom you pay around 4000 rupees and they get you the licence .all other sectors are involved. Transparency in the system is lacking. Either you pay or should have 'sifarish' to get your work done. On line system will be of help to the commoners – **M A W Deva**
11. Middle men are touts they exploit the buyer & seller their only motive is make money our 1st action should be to ensure they vanish from all Government offices that deal exclusively with Public RTO Ration card junior courts then go to next step – Narendra **Vikram Singh**