

Letter from the Chairperson forwarding the Report

March 31, 2002

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I am happy to present to you the Report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution.

My colleagues in the Commission and I have been guided, right from the inception of our work, by our conviction that the exercise to review the working of the Constitution would be meaningful and productive – even in the minutest degree – only if undertaken, from start to finish, in an objective and strictly non-partisan way, drawing judiciously and realistically upon experience thus far and with as clear a perception as may be of existing and emerging problems impinging on national reconstruction as lighted by the ideals, values and goals of the Constitution.

It is in this spirit that we endeavoured to invite the cooperation of all who felt they had something to say in regard to the subject matter before the Commission. The Commission is sincerely and deeply appreciative of the advice and assistance tendered to it by eminent persons and institutions engaged in diverse sections of nation-building activity. These included: distinguished parliamentarians, judges, civil servants, experts in the fields of science and technology, economic sciences, as well as jurists, and prominent personalities in the Media.

Many leaders of political parties were particularly forthcoming to contribute their ideas and perceptions as to what needed to be done to strengthen our Constitution to fulfill its objectives better.

The Commission sought to secure in its work as broad an engagement as possible of the public. Consultation Papers on various topics, prepared for the Commission by expert

bodies, were publicized through the print and electronic media and placed on the Commission's web-site, and reactions from the people at large invited. The Commission was glad to avail of a large number of responses received from all regions of the country, from persons with stand-points in a wide-ranging variety of sectors. It was gratifying to note the interest in the public mind in the working of the Constitution and its organs, mechanisms and processes, and the frank expression of views in this respect made no doubt with a keen sense of personal involvement and duty as citizens with a real and direct stake in national well-being.

In reviewing the working of the Constitution, in the light of over fifty years of experience gained thus far, and formulating recommendations, the Commission has completed the task set for it in February 2000. Some recommendations, if found acceptable, may entail amendments to the Constitution; legislative interventions would be adequate for some others; and for the rest, administrative measures may suffice.

It is my pleasant duty to put on record that it has been a satisfactory experience to work with the distinguished members of the Commission who worked with a sense of duty and without accepting any consideration for performing the onerous task as a team. Members of the Drafting and Editorial Committee worked hard to draft and edit the report and help the Commission to adhere to the time schedule for presentation of the Report.

My colleagues in the Commission and I commend this Report to you.

With profound regards,

Yours sincerely,

(M.N. VENKATACHALIAH)

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee,

Prime Minister of India,

NEW DELHI.