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Ooo...f! this administration!

SUCHITA MALIK

Blaming the bureaucracy, nee administration, for all our ills, weaknesses and frustrations has become a cliche and a favourite pastime for the so-called modern, hep, pseudo-intellectual and elite class. Let a thing go amiss in any field ... civic, health, legal or social services, accusing the administration of inefficiency or apathy comes very handy to us. No need is felt to ascertain the facts at all or giving it a second thought.

I was on my way to the parking slot of a cinema hall where I had gone to watch a movie. While turning towards the parking space, the car ahead of me banged into the side fence with a deep dent. Unable to control the steering wheel to his dictates, the man in the driver's seat peeped out and started abusing the government left and right. "Look at this government...they don't do anything properly...bloody, greedy officers..." The man went on hurling abuses while I listened silently wondering as to how the government could be blamed for something which was clearly an error of judgement in this case.

Anyway, not to be put off by this raving and ranting, we went inside the cinema hall and were happily enjoying the movie when suddenly the light went out and the hall reverberated with the whistles and roars of protest from the audience. A good five minutes and I could hear people sneering and shouting "administration...hai, hai" till the generator was switched on and everything restored to normalcy. Again, I was left wondering as to how the government might be responsible if it turned out to be short-circuit indeed or a careless lapse on the part of an erring official.

The next day, however, had more such accusations galore! We all sat in the staffroom of our college in the free period when the discussion veered round to the perennial problem of thinning attendance in the classrooms. I was appalled when some of my "revered" colleagues started blaming the administration even for such a day-to-day problem. I, however, hastened to counter this argument by saying: "May be, this thinning attendance is a sad commentary on the quality and method of our teaching...may be we need to improve by being more focused..." "No, no, no..., you don't know," one of them cut me short, "actually these students are a pampered lot and go scot-free under the indulgent eye of the administration only". The teacher concerned conveniently forgot that she was indulging in this agitated discourse at the expense of the students who were waiting for her in the classroom patiently even after half the period was over already.

I was again left wondering whether it was fair to pass the entire buck on to administration for something which might be a human failing or could be attributed to the lack of national character in doing one's duty consciously and conscientiously. I knew for sure that if the instruments of this very administration ever came for an inspection in the college, we would certainly be the first ones to denounce their act as arbitrary and insulting or trying to check our so-called "very much intact" sense of duty with an iron hand.

The day was, however, over in the college. I came back home hoping for a quiet moment of peace when I was confronted by my maid who informed me that there had been no water supply since morning. "Pata nahin ai administration ki kardi hai" (God knows what this administration does). "Oh God, not again!" was all that I wanted to say but told her politely: "Water supply has been disrupted because of urgent maintenance work and would be restored by the evening." "Chalo, administration kuch te kardi hai" (Administration does something at least), she said with a wicked grin on her face. "Ooo...f this administration", I muttered and hastily climbed the stairs to my room thinking whom to blame.