

## ANNA PHENOMENON

May be I should call this the phenomenon!

There are two experiences that make me feel worse than in would normally have all because of Anna.

The first one is something many of us take for granted namely, the process of getting orders from and then collecting ones dues from PSU's and Govt. organizations is generally accomplished through the greasing of palms. What is interesting here is that the senior finance functionary of an organization was talking about his experience. The blatant ways in which the very rich and powerful official asked for a bribe and then went about bargaining! Our friend was very happy to have bargained the gentleman (?) down. Then the orders flowed, not end of story. Our friend then went on to talk about Anna Hazare and was very proud of the fact that he went on the streets wearing the cap and waving the flag!!

I was going on to Bangalore and was in a very disturbed frame of mind after this conversation, particularly the fact that my friend did not see the contradiction and the irony of his actions. I get into a Meru cab, and I notice for the third time a ritual being enacted: the driver leans over, closes the window on his far side and then starts to move. I get busy with my calls and with my iPad (yes, I have one). I notice that there is smell of diesel and the car is a bit noisy. I am more alert to this now. I look at the driver's window, it is open. The a/c is not on. I ask why is it not on? The driver is very prompt and polite, he switches the a/c on. I ask him if the charges are different for a/c usage and Nona/c usage. He says "all same only Saar". This is the routine. The first time I thought it was a genuine mistake, the second I was irritated. This time I was in great appreciation of the training ability and the 'kaizen' that will result in a small increased margin. The routine is so well enacted and so identical, I refuse to believe it is not company policy!

How does one deal with all this? Is Anna just a joke? Are we completely insensitive and cynical? Is expecting simple honesty out of fashion?