

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE US STATE DEPARTMENT'S LEGISLATIVE FELLOWSHIP 2017 BY

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Background:

Dr. Edmond Fernandes was selected by the US State Department as a Legislative Fellow 2017. He was among the 12 others who represented India in America for this prestigious fellowship.

Dr. Edmond Fernandes is the Founder and CEO, CHD Group – Center for Health and Development which is a public health organisation championing the destinies of humans forever. He is also a Member – Health Task Force, DDMA, Government of Karnataka. He has written 2 books, has 17 research publications and written over 150 articles in print and electronic media. He is widely invited around the country and across the world as a resource person, keynote speaker and policy strategist in International Health and Development. As a Community Health Physician, he engages widely in both curative and preventive healthcare, besides building power from below.

TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS & POWERFUL FELLOW CITIZENS

The recommendations made draw heavily from the observations and the cross cultural learning dwelled into. It is my belief that India can go a long way should this recommendations be implemented in a phased manner around the country.

1. SETTING UP THE PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWSHIP AT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL AND THE CHIEF MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP AT THE STATE LEVEL

Investing in mid-career professionals in the age bracket of 20-40 years will go a long way to shape the trajectory of India. The talent in India goes wasted because of the inability to cultivate and groom more leaders, thereby leading to brain drain. The Presidential Fellowship must engage mid-career professionals from among the 30 states in India for a one week leadership convergence in Rastrapati Bhawan.

Likewise the Chief Minister's Fellows must engage at the State Headquarters for a one week leadership programme. Due exposure must be given to issues pertaining to governance, policy making, approach to multiple sectors and engagement in decision making through a more meaningful democratic inclusivity. The essence of the Indian Constitution must be approached in an inclusive manner.

2. A MEMORIAL FOR OUR DEFENDERS

A memorial must be put up for our soldiers, police, home guards, civil defence and other personnel who have lost their lives because of a war, a terrorist attack, while protecting civilians, because of responding to any form of disaster.

The Arlington Cemetery in Washington DC becomes a classic case study of how to honour those who no longer physically live, but those who will live forever in the hearts and minds of their loved ones for all the ages.

3. INVESTING IN OUR PUBLIC SPACES

Public infrastructure investment becomes the cornerstone to mark the visible progress of progressive countries.

More signage, CCTV monitored public roads, clear zebra crossing signs and lane disciplines on highways must be created.

Special emphasis on disability friendly public spaces, public transport and railway stations must be built.

Patrolling of water bodies through speed-boats. Civic construction and repair and maintenance must be covered completely to avoid dust and public nuisance and also non residential area civic construction must be carried out at day and night to avoid continued public inconvenience.

4. SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN A BIG WAY

Non Government Organisations known by many names and which come in multiple forms must be supported completely by the Governments. NGOs are the key pillars of society which often work very hard and not just aid government efforts but most often rescue them and bail them out of the many myriad problems which societies and civilians face on a daily basis.

5. BRING VALUE TO GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES – BOTH CENTRAL AND STATE RUN UNIVERSITIES.

It is both important and necessary to take responsibility to instil values of honesty, hardwork and good citizenship in our youth and those willing to learn. Encourage higher education institutes to work together with parents and students and their alumini.

Give credit points and higher ranks to students who engage in community service and volunteer with organisations on ground.

6. CREATING A PATIENT DATABASE AND PRIORITIZING DOCUMENTATION AT HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

Hospitals must have the ability to store and save previous patient history. As a nation and also for the security of our own workforce and to make life easier in hospital, it is a wise investment to have a robust hospital patient database which is accessible to every primary care physician.

7. STAFF THE GOVERNMENT OFFICES BASED ON TALENT, NOT POLITICAL LOYALTIES

Insufficient regard for competence and reliance on political loyalty and ideology must be discouraged. Branches and structures in governments must cut across political processes to favour individuals, and must rather be guided more on the basis of merit. The state of the union must shine at all costs.

8. CREATING A MORE ROBUST POLICE FORCE AND A CASE FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

Law enforcement agencies must be empowered to meet the population burden and to also ensure that peace prevails, crime rates are at a new low and that obedience and respect becomes a way of life in public spaces.



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