



CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY
Social Change Through Public Policy

INDIA BEFORE '91: STORIES FROM LIFE UNDER LICENSE RAJ

1991 is known as a watershed year for India—signaled by a systemic shift to a more open economy with greater reliance upon market forces, a larger role for the private sector including through foreign investment, and a restructuring of the role of Government. These reforms introduced far-reaching measures and have been key to unlocking India's enormous growth potential and entrepreneurial forces.

The post-reform changes have been witnessed across all spheres of our society- economic, social, cultural and political, which have been highlighted through several case studies and research papers. However, how was life before 1991 and how did these reforms impact the lives of ordinary citizens? This is poorly understood today, especially among the youth, who often take for granted the difficult lessons we learnt during the 'License-Permit-Quota Raj'. It is crucial that we educate our future leaders on the significance of these reforms in their lives as well as celebrate the promises it fulfilled for those that lived through this era.

What do we want to do?

In 2016, to mark the 25th anniversary of Indian economic reforms, Centre for Civil Society aims to bring to light human interest stories from across the country highlighting the crucial role that liberalization played in improving the lives of our people. The reforms were proof of the acceptance of the value of 'freedom', whose importance we need to continue to advocate. This research will provide a greater understanding of the long-term impact of liberal policy reform, as well as the value that market forces have and continue to bring into our lives in contemporary times.

How do we want to do this?

1. **Crowd source stories** in the form of short videos (3-5 min), audio messages, photo essays and articles from individuals representing all sections of society through online platforms, in-house research, partnerships with profession-specific associations and groups (Eg. FICCI to reach out to industrialists, BKS and BMS to reach out to farmers and workers, school associations to reach out to teachers and principals, etc).
2. **Launch a portal** www.indiabefore91.in among high profile delegates and the media in January to publicize the project and call for submissions of stories. This portal will also be a repository of stories that we receive throughout the project period.
3. **Launch the best stories** that we receive on the portal through the creation of various products, eg. Short documentaries made using various video entries, or a coffee table book developed using photo essays and articles.
4. Celebrate the 25th anniversary of the reforms on 24th July among notable guests, delegates and the media by showcasing the best stories and products developed through the project.