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Q. Recent Odisha's declaration on corruption can be an effective tool to fight against corruption in the country. Elaborate. (200 words).

A. Odisha's Chief Minister declared in February 2021, that all government officials, and functionaries of the BJD party have to mandatorily disclose their property returns, and that it will be displayed online.

This declaration is a positive step in bringing transparency in the political and administrative establishment, and curbing the menace of corruption.

Corruption, theft and bribery costs the world \$1.26 billion each year (according to UN).

Benefits of the Odisha government's move:

- i) ~~Put~~ Brings transparency by removing information asymmetry
- ii) Invites public trust (after scrutiny) in the functionaries
- iii) Deters the functionaries from accumulating illegal wealth.

But ~~here~~ the problem does not end there:

- i) Effective implementation - The efforts of the judiciary and ECI to bring transparency in the centre was not fully successful because of poor implementation eg. Prevent benami transfer of land
- ii) Prosecution - Follow up action should be taken if functionary does not disclose ownership fully, or reveals illegal property holdings (eg. ECI mandated declaration of criminal antecedents of candidates, but not disqualification)
- iii) Mass sourcing of information - Allow citizens to anonymously submit data about the functionaries land holdings.
- iv) Continuous evaluation via real time updation
- v) Attitudinal reorientation of functionaries and awareness and zero tolerance policy of corruption by the citizens.

A lasting solution would involve ensuring that full disclosure is made, and time bound, that follow up action is taken, and that ^{The} citizens have a role to play in collecting landholding details of functionaries. Odisha's move would be a first step in ^{a power and information} breaking the monopoly of the functionaries and ~~but~~ making them accountable to the people.