



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the standards of public life as expounded by the Nolan Committee? (150 Words)

30 Jun, 2022 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Highlight the need for having public values for public servants
- Enumerate the values mentioned by the Nolan Committee
- Conclude by mentioning how these values help in achieving the ideals envisioned by the government and the public at large

Introduction

Public servants hold fiduciary positions and have special obligations as they are responsible for managing resources entrusted to them by the community. Their decisions affect all aspects of a community's life. Thus, the community has a right to expect that the civil service functions fairly, impartially and efficiently.

Body

Standards of public life as expounded by Nolan Committee are:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Conclusion

These principles ensure that the decisions and actions of civil servants reflect the policies of the government of the day and the standards that the community expects in terms of professionalism, responsiveness, etc.

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