



Civil Services Reforms

For Prelims: Mission Karmayogi, Citizen Charters, National Conference on e-Governance, CPGRAMS.

For Mains: Need for Reforms in Civil Services.

Why in News?

Recently, one of India's most respected police officers highlighted a case for the government to launch a "Nitipath" scheme on the lines of [Agnipath](#) and the Short Service Commission for military officers.

What can be the Framework of the Scheme?

▪ About:

- Officers can be filtered out after 10, 25 and 30 years of service.
- This would rectify the top-heavy structure, and create a culture of public service and performance.
- The government can **recruit four times as many candidates at the entry level** without being constrained by the number of apex level positions and career paths.
- Instead of **600-1,000 candidates appointed to the AIS, we can have 4,000 officers entering service every year.**
 - Only 25% of them will be retained after a performance review after the fourth year.

▪ Benefits:

- This **will bring a lot of young and energetic officers at the junior levels**, give them strong incentives to perform, and give them work experience in government.
 - The average quality of the top 4,000 all-India rank holders will not be markedly different from that of the top 1,000. So, **a four-year review period will allow the government** to get a better pick than merely exam and interview scores.
- Those who leave government service after four years will have **good economic prospects**. It is quite likely many will voluntarily choose to leave and opt for higher studies or private employment. The addition of such youthful, trained and experienced managerial cadre will benefit the broader economy.
- Instituting **performance reviews and exit filters every five years will create a path towards a semi-structural reform** of India's administrative machinery.
- A lateral entry scheme can accommodate the re-entry of people who might have been filtered out at junior levels but have distinguished themselves since.

What are the areas which require Reforms?

▪ Conversion of ICS into IAS:

- After the post-Independence conversion of ICS into IAS, it failed in bringing about a more indigenous element in it.
- This was because **no substantive attempts were made to link IAS with our very own and essentially Indian philosophy** of public administration.
- As a consequence, the transformation of ICS to IAS ended up being just in the

abbreviations.

- The governance philosophy of the likes of great Indian administrators like Arya Chanakya, Rajendra Chola, Harihara and Bukka of Vijayanagara fame, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj or Sayajirao Gaikwad continued to be largely ignored even after Independence.

▪ **Needless and Excessive Element of Security:**

- To start with, the thick and enduring firewall that protects civil services personnel needs a relook.
- After entering the prestigious club of civil servants, one virtually never looks back, never looks around, and more importantly, never looks within.
- This security **cover makes them insensitive to and unconcerned about people's expectations**; the heady cocktail of superiority complex and arrogance afflicts their thinking; and more worryingly this security cover provides them a sense of permanency in power vis-a-vis their politician bosses.
- The behaviour of several civil services officers shows their total disregard for transparency and accountability.

▪ **Lack of Specialisation:**

- Administrative officials are **supposed to handle several issues that require specialised know-how**.
 - In what way can a secretary, steel and mines, today be expected to handle an assignment as secretary, culture, tomorrow?
- While generalists also have their importance, in today's world it **would be practical to segregate IAS officers in at least four-five important groupings** like education-culture, finance, infra development with natural resources, and social ministries like social justice, labour, women and children, etc.
- This would bring greater domain knowledge to the table and empower officers for more enlightened and insightful decision-making.

▪ **Absence of Systematic Mechanism:**

- **An inbuilt mechanism to ensure periodical de-thick-skinning** through re-inculcation of sense of purpose and motivation is also needed. Excessive security breeds insensitivity and lack of concern.
- In a very short span of time, strugglers of yesterday filled with idealism become a part of the 'establishment' today.
- To avoid this, periodically holding experience-based and practical-knowledge centric innovative examinations may help.

What are the Related Initiatives?

▪ **Mission Karmayogi:**

- This is a National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB). It is a comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus at individual, institutional and process levels for efficient public service delivery.

▪ **Lateral Entry Reform:**

- **Lateral entry** means when personnel from the private sector are selected to an administrative post of the government despite them not being selected in or being part of a bureaucratic setup.
- This is significant because contemporary times require highly skilled and motivated individuals at the helm of administrative affairs, without which public service delivery mechanisms do not work smoothly.

▪ **e-Samiksha:**

- A **real time online system for monitoring and follow up action** on the decisions taken by the Government at the Apex level in respect of implementation of important Government programmes/projects.

▪ **Citizen Charters:**

- Government has mandated **Citizen Charters** for all Ministries/Departments which are updated and reviewed on a regular basis.

▪ **National Conference on e-Governance:**

- It provides a **platform for the government to engage with experts, intellectuals** from industry and academic institutions to exchange experiences relating to e-Governance initiatives.

- **Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS):**
 - It is an **online web-enabled system** developed by National Informatics Centre (Ministry of Electronics & IT [MeitY]), in association with Directorate of Public Grievances (DPG) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).
 - The **CPGRAMS** provides the facility to lodge a grievance online from any geographical location. It enables the citizen to track online the grievance being followed up with Departments concerned and also enables DARPG to monitor the grievance.
- **National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment:**
 - It aims at assessing the States, UTs and Central Ministries on the efficiency of e-Governance service delivery.

Way Forward

- **Focus on External Accountability Mechanisms:**
 - Reforms are an obvious response to the new challenges confronting the state institution managing public affairs; what lies at the root of such an exercise is the effort to enhance administrative capability in the changed scenario.
 - Since the civil servants are accountable to political executives and that results in politicisation of civil services, the focus must be on external accountability mechanisms like citizen charters, social audits and encouraging outcome orientation among civil servants.
- **Bridging Governance Gap:**
 - Everywhere around the world, **government capacity tends to lag socio-economic development.**
 - This governance gap is acute in India and is growing wider. Bridging it requires talent in adequate numbers, with appropriate training and incentives.
 - For India@100 to be a success story, the Indian state must do its job well. Nitipath is the way to go.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year's Question (PYQs)

Q. "Institutional quality is a crucial driver of economic performance". In this context suggest reforms in the Civil Service for strengthening democracy. **(2020)**

Source: [Livemint](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/civil-services-reforms-1>