



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the main features and functions of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) in India? How effective has it been in ensuring probity and accountability in public life? (250 words)

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Approach

- Start your answer with a brief introduction of CVC.
- Explain its main features and functions.
- Write some examples where CVC has played role in ensuring probity and accountability.
- Conclude accordingly.

Introduction:

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is the apex anti-corruption body in India that exercises superintendence over the vigilance administration of the central government and its organizations. It was established by an executive resolution in 1964 on the recommendation of the Santhanam Committee and was given a statutory status by the CVC Act, 2003.

Body:

Main Features and Functions of the CVC are:

- **Composition:**
 - The CVC consists of a Central Vigilance Commissioner and not more than two Vigilance Commissioners, who are appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha.
 - They hold office for a term of four years or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- **Jurisdiction:**
 - The CVC has jurisdiction over all central government employees, except members of the armed forces, and all central government organizations, corporations, societies, local authorities, etc.
 - It also has jurisdiction over employees of public sector undertakings, nationalized banks and insurance companies.
- **Functions:**
 - Advising the central government on matters relating to vigilance policy, norms and procedures.
 - Receiving complaints of corruption or misconduct against public servants and conducting inquiries or investigations into them.
 - Exercising superintendence over the functioning of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in relation to cases under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
 - Reviewing the progress of disciplinary cases against public servants and issuing directions for their speedy disposal.
 - Recommending appropriate action against public servants found guilty of corruption or

misconduct.

- Undertaking preventive vigilance measures such as conducting inspections, audits, reviews, etc. to detect and prevent corruption.
- Creating awareness and educating public servants and citizens about the ill-effects of corruption and the need for integrity and honesty in public life.

The CVC has been playing an important role in ensuring probity and accountability in public life by exposing and punishing various cases of corruption and misconduct involving public servants. Some of the examples are:

▪ **2G Spectrum Scam:**

- The CVC referred the case to the CBI for investigation and monitored its progress. The CVC also submitted a report to the Supreme Court on its findings and recommendations.

▪ **Coal Block Allocation Scam:**

- The CVC referred the case to the CBI for investigation and monitored its progress. The CVC also submitted a report to the Supreme Court on its findings and recommendations.

▪ **Commonwealth Games Scam:**

- The CVC conducted inspections, audits, inquiries and investigations into various aspects of the games such as infrastructure development, procurement, contracts, etc. Which led to the conviction of Suresh Kalamadi.

Conclusion:

The Central Vigilance Commission is often limited in its powers as it is treated as an advisory body with no power to register cases. Even though it is an independent agency, it lacks the resources and power to take action on complaints.

Such shortcomings of the systems need to be addressed to curb the menace of corruption in the rapidly growing economy.

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