

A Discourse on the status of the 'Transition' in the Indian Bureaucracy

Introduction

The makers of the Indian Constitution were well aware of the need for an organized bureaucracy in India. Indian bureaucracy is the inherited bureaucratic model of the British Indian Empire. Therefore, because India is a federation, dual public services were envisioned. Service under the Commonwealth and Services under the State Government. In the words of Dr Ambedkar, "double policy is followed by double service" in all associations. The constitution stipulates that an all-India service shall be adopted on an all-India basis with familiar qualifications, uniform pay scales, etc., without depriving states of the right to form their public services. In India, it is divided into two categories, All India Services and State Civil Service. In addition, Section 312 creates categories of special services common to both federal and state.

Two services of this type are (1) Indian Government Service and (2) Indian Police Service. The All-India Service aims to bring greater cohesion to the federal structure and increase the efficiency of federal and state administrations. Such integrated public services are a unique feature of India's political system. Given the diversity and fragmentation of India's political system, an integrated public service was an inevitable necessity. Public Service members are recruited based on competence and competitions conducted by the Federal Public Service Board for All India Services and the State Public Service Board for Government Services. Members of the Service hold office for the President's term of office in the All-India Service and the governor's term of office in the case of the Government Service (Section 310). The Indian bureaucracy forms the backbone of public administration at the union and state levels. In India's administrative hierarchy, union presidents and state governors are the constitutional heads. The Council of Ministers forms the political cadre. However, honest, enduring, experienced, and knowledgeable leaders are civil servants or bureaucrats. The roles and functions of the Indian bureaucracy are greatly enhanced.

Recognising the Flaws and Fallacies in the Indian bureaucracy

With the onset of bureaucracy in the country, the need for efficient, honest administration was always in high demand for the country's citizens. However, with every passing day, there have been many lags in the bureaucratic duties of the officials at every administrative level. The following have left a negative impact on the bureaucracy.

I) Corruption and Red tapes

With the onset of bureaucracy in the country, the need for efficient, honest administration was always in high demand for the country's citizens. However, with every passing day, there have been many lags in the bureaucratic duties of the officials at every administrative level. The following have left a negative impact on the bureaucracy.

I) Corruption and Red tapes

Corruption is the most common Problem in the bureaucracy of any country. During the last two decades, the nation witnessed many corruption cases among the IAS officers. According to government data, there were at least 753 cases against the IAS officers between 2019-2020. There were at least 44 cases against the

IAS officers and 12 cases against the IPS officers from 2016 to March 2021. In 2012, a former MD, S. Malaichamy, was convicted to 5 years of jail due to the acquisition of disproportionate property worth 52 lakhs. In the same year, Nitesh Janardhan Thakur was held by the anti-corruption bureau in a corruption scam of 200 crore rupees stacked in his house along with luxurious cars in his apartment. In 2022, IAS officer Pooja Singhal and her husband in Jharkhand were charged with a case of fraud for getting caught with a huge amount of cash in their house. The money amounted to up to 1.43 crore. It is shocking that within 12 years of service, few IAS officers like Thakur have acquired this much wealth.

II) Political pressures

Bureaucrats must work in unison with their appointed region's MPs and MLAs. This ensures a holistic development and growth of the region and eventually the whole nation. The major constraint is the differences between the IAS officers and their political counterparts. There have been many disputes regarding forming an opinion, Red tapism, usage of the public offices for personal agenda and sometimes the legal protection provided to the party criminals by the ministers. Transfers and the fright of getting murdered under mysterious circumstances are the most common outcomes. These external political pressures and interferences lead to severe inefficiency in the administrative institution. There is a constant intervention by the 'upper fold' ministers. The inability of the administrators to work accordingly leads to transfers to remote places, which causes a hindrance in their daily lifestyle and family subsistence.

III) Prejudices of a 'White -Collar job'

Civil Services are the most prestigious jobs in the nation. Every year, thousands of students sit for the civil service examinations. The only reason is this service's respect and honour for its officials. These positions come with many perks, allowances, and other advantages. However, there have been instances in recent times where Bureaucrats have been seen using their powers in a negative light. The recent news of IAS Sanjeev Khirwar was in the headlines when he compelled the 'athletes' out of the Thyagraj Stadium in New Delhi. This was done solely for walking his dog in the stadium. A police report filed against him and his wife, Rinku Dugga, caused them to lose their luxurious life in Delhi, and they were immediately transferred to remote locations in India. In May 2022, Sanjeev was transferred to Ladakh, and his wife Rinku, also an IAS official, was transferred to Arunachal Pradesh. The issue here lies not with the fact that they love their pet dog and care for its well-being, but it is the mere fact that their liberty to use the stadium cannot interfere with the athlete's rights to use the stadium. This pride and prejudices in the bureaucrats cause a communication gap between the general public and the officers, which is questionable for the smooth functioning of the bureaucracy.

IV) Decentralization issues and Vacancy in posts

According to Government reports, there have been consistent vacancies in the civil services posts of states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, and Maharashtra. UP has only 548 recruits, whereas the total seats stand at 652. In West Bengal, there are 298 recruitments, less than the total number of 378.

Similar shortages have been seen in Gujrat and Bihar as well. The vacancies in the posts are creating a compulsion for the States to have the non-cadre officers appointed in cadre posts. The experts believe this would create inefficiency in the administrative duties and the annual recruitment needs to be done urgently. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice have directed the DOPT to increment the annual recruitment in the IAS sector. The committee believes that the changing needs of the administration need a swift change. Another issue with decentralising the administrative works has been the deputation of the IPS officers from various states to the central government. This hampers the state workings and also hits the paramilitary forces. However, according to a report produced by the Hindustan times, there has been a considerable decrease in this deputation since 2011. The number of the IAS officers appointed in central deputation reserve services (CDR) has been reduced from 309 to 223.

V) Backdated Civil service Examination

Authorities must also be judged on their achievements over decades in establishing better administrative practices and policies or instilling superior domain knowledge in the country. In essence, with the Indian regime, the Civil Service works the same as it did 165 years ago. The resource has changed; however, the spirit remains the same. Even after 74 years of independence, the country's sad state in terms of economy, public health, education, research and innovation is well known. Senior civil servants also participate in shaping national policy. So, the administration should also be blamed for the many failed policies of the past 74 years. Public Service is the only job in the world where one gets paid their entire career. The absence of intermediary examinations, an all-inclusive arena of studies, and a wide array of lucrative training methods and skillsets have drained the nation's resources into wrong valves. One examination decides one's competency in the Indian civil service examination, which may change with the advancement of changing times. However, apparent it might be the Civil Services Examinations layout still stays the same even today.

VI) Crimes against Officers

Indian Administrative Services (IAS) official D.K. Ravi, also known as D.K. Ravikumar, was hijacked by the land mafia in the Kolar district of Karnataka and allegedly hung himself and committed suicide. In 2005, an A-level official who worked as a manager of the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) was killed in Uttar because he attacked his two petrol pumps in Lakhimpur Kheri, in Uttar Pradesh. Manjunath ordered a petrol pump to be sealed for three months after he was found selling inferior fuel. He was shot during the operation to seal the Petrol pump. In 2011, Yashwant Sonawane, an additional district collector in Malegaon, was burned with kerosene by an oil mafia in Manmad, Maharashtra. 44-year-old Sonawane had caught an oil mafia stealing fuel from a tanker. Sonawane had filed a proceeding against a person named Popat Shinde, the main suspect in the murder. Sonawane confiscated 4,000 litres of kerosene and 3,000 litres of gasoline from Shinde's Dhaba. Indian Police (IPS) officer Narendra Kumar died while chasing a tractor loaded with illegally mined rocks in the Morena district of Madhya Pradesh. Kumar spots a tractor

while on patrol and tries to stop it by blocking the jeep's path. But the tractor driver got into him. Kumar was killed for trying to combat illegal mining in the state, and the death sparked outrage across the country.

Combating the inefficiency through reforms in the 21st century

Since its independence, the Union Government has constituted more than 50 commissions and committees to look into administrative and civil service reforms. The Committee was set up to suggest measures for achieving a proactive, responsive, accountable and, sustainable, efficient administration for the whole nation at all governmental levels.

The following 15-point Report was presented by the Committee to the Government¹:

- **Conceptualising the Right to Information**
- **Entitlements and good governance**
- **Efficient crisis management**
- **Initiation of ethics in governance**
- **Public order and justice for the citizens**
- **Smooth working of the local governance**
- **Capacity building for conflict resolution**
- **Combating terrorism**
- **Social capital**
- **Refurbishing of personnel administration**
- **Promoting e-Governance**
- **Equipping the administration for the citizens and making it more citizen centric**
- **Enhancing the organisational structure of Government of India**
- **Strengthening financial management system**
- **Changes in the state and district administration**

In 2005, then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was on track for his second term. Singh returns with a more significant majority, but it soon becomes clear that he is distracted by various crises and that administrative reform is his last thing to do. With the change of government in 2014, the implementation of the 2nd GWB seems to have been pushed further into the abyss. The low point of this disappointing journey over administrative reform was probably visited by a group of some 80 prominent officials led by former Chief Cabinet Secretary T.S.R. Subramanian petitioned the Supreme Court against the government's failure to implement administrative reforms in 2011. The Supreme Court accepted the two

¹ <https://simplifiedupsc.in/administrative-reforms-commission-arc/>

key proposals submitted by the petitioner. These are the prohibition of verbal instructions from political leaders and superiors and the fixed term of office².

During the new NDA government regime, there have been significant changes in the administrative institution of the nation. Under the banner of “Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas”, the Modi-led government introduced many new initiatives.

The Launch of “Mission Karma Yogi” – The National Civil Service Capacity Building Program (NPCSCB), moving from rules-based to role-based, was launched as a new National Civil Service architecture. This is a comprehensive reform of institutions to build capacity at the individual, organizational and process levels to deliver public services effectively.

The new technological drive had been a significant element in the initiatives taken under the Modi government. **E-Samiksha** - A real-time online system for monitoring and tracking government decisions at the top level related to implementing central government projects. The construction of the new **E-Office** - Enhancements to the e-Office **Mission Mode Project (MMP)** will enable departments to transition to paperless offices for efficient decision-making. The introduction of a more transparent system of **Self-Attestation of Documents for Appointment**. Recruitment agencies Can issue provisional letters of appointment based on a candidate’s submission of self-attestation documents. **Suspension of Junior Level Recruitment Interviews** - Recruitment interviews for all Group ‘C’ and Group ‘B’ (non-gazette posts) and other equivalent posts which have been conducted by all departments of the Government of India have been discontinued in order to curb fraud and bring objectivity to the selection process—initiating the **Officer Appointments** – Introduction of feedback procedures from multiple sources on co-secretary and above appointments. Creation of the **Civic Charter** - The Government has commissioned a Civic Charter for all ministries or departments, which is updated and reviewed regularly. Citizen charters of central government departments are available on their respective department and department websites. **Eliminating ineffective executives:** Intensive screening of executives of questionable integrity through early retirement. **Integrated Government Online Training Program:** Used for module-based online training. **Good Governance Index 2019:** Created to assess the state of governance and the impact of various State and UT interventions. The goal of the **GGI** is to provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance between the state and his UT and to formulate appropriate strategies for improving governance and moving to results-based approaches and management. to make it possible to implement. **Prime Minister Award for Excellence in Administration:** A significant restructuring of the award program for 2014 and 2020. **Promoting e-governance:** Various policy initiatives and projects are underway to promote e-governance in general. **National Conference on e-Governance:** Provides a platform for governments to collaborate with experts, industry intellectuals and academic institutions to share experiences related to e-governance initiatives. **National Evaluation of e-Governance Service Delivery:** Aimed at ranking states, UTs, and central ministries on their

2

<https://www.businesstoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/prajapati-trivedi-on-need-of-economic-business-reforms-138912-2014-12-27>

e-governance service delivery effectiveness. Participate in surveys. **Centralized Public Complaints and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS):** Governments receive complaints by enabling a questionnaire-driven registration process and providing automated referral of complaints to field-level officials to shorten appeals. Increasing efficiency in decision making in the Central **Secretariat:** By reducing the channels of submission, adoption of the greater digitization. Through this system, government is increasing efficiency in decision-making in Central Secretariat³.

The new **lateral entry system** introduced by the government recently recruited eight professionals for the joint secretary-level positions in varied ministries. Lateral Entry suggested that personnel from the private sector can join the Civil services without them being appointed through conventional methods.

Lateral Entry is claimed to be a result of changing times, which require highly proficient and motivated people at the helm of the governance, as there has been a very evident inefficiency in the public service delivery mechanisms. Experts believe that governance is changing into an advanced sphere requiring specialized skills; for example, increasing penetration of information dominates our lives. Generalist officers cannot be perpetually expected to be up-to-date with specialized data. Therefore, folks like an expert and subject specialists are needed to navigate the advanced desires of contemporary challenges. Per Department, there is a shortage of concerning 1500 IAS officers. Lateral Entry will facilitate bridging this deficit. Bringing a modification in Work Culture will facilitate in conveyance, modification in functionary culture in Government sector culture. This functionary culture is criticized for red-tapism, rule-book forms, and status quo. Lateral Entry helps understand the values of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the Government sector. It will also facilitate building a culture of performance inside the government sector. Presently, governance is changing into another democratic and multi-actor endeavour. In this context, lateral Entry provides stakeholders like the private sector and non-profits a chance to participate within the governance method. However, there have been many criticisms as well that have been charged against lateral entry. For conveyance experience, the govt does not strictly rent private-sector personnel. Experience is widely utilized by virtually every ministry — skilled committees, consultations, think factory engagements, etc. The success of lateral Entry needs an understanding of the system and a capability to figure with the “permanent” institution. No coaching or orientation is provided for this. By the time networks are designed, it is time to manoeuvre. In past proof, the lateral entrants who created the most significant impact are those who served within the system for a long time and at different levels. The private sector approach is profit-oriented; on the opposite hand, the motive of the government is public service. This is an elementary transition that a private sector person should create while operating in government. Hiring the private sector into government positions raises a potential conflict of interest problems. This issue needs a tight code of conduct for private-sector entrants to ensure conflict of interest is not prejudicious to the general public.

³<https://blog.mygov.in/administrative-reforms-for-a-new-india-a-systematic-approach-to-problem-solving/>

Retired IAS officer Anil Swaroop stated in one of his tweets that UPSC would do a marvellous job in choosing civil servants. Its moot purpose is not to determine whether or not lateral Entry can improve governance but will help inculcate leadership qualities. It will be a comprehensive approach to upgrading human resource management. The **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** is one of the best establishments in the country and is higher than the board. However, below the prevailing system of entrance exams, academically good people are elite on the idea of their written-communication skills, analytical skills and general awareness. Examinees' capability to crack the communication is tested, and various employment institutes assist them in doing this. A leader, however, needs far more than that. Leadership and management skills are what a leader should acquire. This entails setting examples, even at the price of some personal sacrifices. On the far side of writing skills, one should stand out in communication and soft skills. One should have a moral code of conduct and retain a positive perspective. None of those qualities is tested at the time of achievement.⁴

Training assumes a very important side in moulding these entrants into accomplished leaders. It should be centred on the conveyance of the suitable skills and perspective that may alter the officer to evolve as a frontrunner. Thus, the stress should be placed on cluster activities by quitting individual activities. A case study-based methodology must be adopted. The officers must be compelled to appreciate the requirement and utility of moral behaviour. Periodic up-gradation of skills and learning from one another should be the main focus of in-service coaching. This is often imperative within the context of a fast-changing world, each in terms of technology and management.

Given the importance of mentoring, officers who have done well in their careers are often asked to mentor contemporary entrants for the primary few years. These initial years within their service are important in moulding officers. Hence, they need plenty of support and steerage. Young officers should be nurtured, not left to a range of 'wolves'. The prevailing attribute doesn't encourage the culture of support and steerage. An institutional arrangement ought to be created in this regard. The correct inclination and power of the officer ought to be closely monitored. This can facilitate verifying their Postings and assignments. Frequent transfers are often extraordinarily enervating. Sadly, these appear to own become the order of the day in a very variety of states. If a political candidate is transferred oftentimes, not solely is he unable to deliver; however, responsibility can not be fastened for his inability to perform. This has resulted in the politicisation of the forms. The politician is happy; however, governance suffers.

The experiment with the Civil Services Board has not highly worked. This has to be made compulsory to be a significant thought. Postings ought to be supported on integrity and ability and not on pliability and

⁴
<https://www.news18.com/news/opinion/indian-administrative-service-does-not-need-an-epitaph-it-needs-reforms-3533549.html>

allegiance.⁵ Sadly enough, all these depend upon the character of signalling by the government and are heavily influenced by the ministers.

Lately, the proposed structure of the new Agnipath scheme has been suggested in the civil services. There was a proposition for weeding out officers for poor performance, charges of corruption, other misconduct of a significant nature, or for being physically unfit. The introduction of screening procedures at every stage must be rigorous, and the mechanism to try and do this should be impartial. It will have to be made compulsory to ensure that the officers are not put-upon for political reasons. Some bureaucrats have gone to the extent of suggesting that the IAS ought to be scrapped. Agnipath kind of theme would enable an enormous flow of young abilities. There are complaints concerning police brutality and extra-judicial killings. Young officers with higher ethical values and a keenness to unravel people's issues can build people-government trust. It has often been detected that after an official is chosen for the AIS, he/she develops a self-satisfied perspective that his/her career for 30 to 35 years is currently secure, which, below traditional circumstances, he/she would be able to reach the highest level. No wonder several of those officers become at ease. Agnipath's theme for the Civil Services can also facilitate getting rid of complacency in paperwork, provide officers to become performance-oriented, and acquire new skills and aptitude for innovation in administration. The primary role played by this inclusion shall be a cutback on favouritism and Red tape, collectively. Agnipath's theme can facilitate filtering officers and reduce favouritism as achievements would be supported. It might additionally make sure that the structure of services becomes pyramid-shaped and not the Trapezium, which it is currently.⁶

Analysing a way forward through a Comparative study of Indian Bureaucracy and the western bureaucratic system

Whenever we talk about a comparative study of the Indian bureaucracy with the bureaucracies of developed nations, the first issue which pops up is the level of efficiency in the system. The Indian bureaucratic system was set up in the British style. The British legacy was carried on to the citizens of the nations. Though there was a lot of opposition in the initial decision of having a bureaucracy in the country, however Saradar Vallabhbhai Patel was a strong supporter of having an integrated bureaucracy in the country. At a time when the nation was a nascent independent nation with a huge population, a newly elected government was at function.

⁵ Ibid., p.6

⁶

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/et-commentary/the-case-for-agnipath-not-just-army-ex-tend-it-to-civil-services-too/articleshow/92322600.cms>

However, the colonial legacy had to be changed over time. The British bureaucracy is a flexible and efficient system. There is no false sense of pride and a rigorous examination to join the civil services. There is no fear of forced transfers. Though there can be few transfers compelled by the senior politicians on the senior civil servants, one must understand that these are exceptions and not norms, unlike in Indian Civil services. The generalist idea of the 'prestigious' IAS officers creates a sense of ignorance among citizens about the other public sector services. In Britain, there is a free environment where junior civil servants can apply for promotions and choose the sectors of their choice. There are screening tests, assessments, group discussions and also leadership training camps. These enable the civil servants to build their personalities, arguably increasing the system's efficiency.

In the USA, an overt government presence is absent. The projection of power play by the administration officers is almost nil in American culture. In India, the 'blue collar' and white-collar jobs are categorized as the utmost position of respect and honour. Too many governments' public schemes tend to make the bureaucrats inefficient. The USA has privatized sectors and a strong federal system of governance. This enables a fluid and smooth functioning of the government through civil services. The inability of the citizens to be dependent on the government to fulfil their necessities always ensures an incentive in the economy and the bureaucracy. The states, if unable to pay their loans are eligible to go bankrupt, which in this case will create havoc on the citizens; thus, this results in an efficient bureaucracy. The idea of "Naukarshahi" is almost dead in India, according to an ex-IPS officer. Even though the civil servants are meant to provide honest services to the nation, we often face delayed deadlines and much corruption in the system. The omnipresent vacancies in the civil services are another reason for the increased instability in the administration services. In Britain, there are 5000 SCS against 6.6 million population, whereas the same number of IAS officers can be seen in India, where the population stands at 1.3 billion.⁷

There can be a change in the bureaucracy only through taking notes from the successful bureaucratic bodies of these nations. A new examination pattern needs to be set up to judge one's ability to govern and administer. Along with that, a decrease in the workload and the decrease in the political pressure through legislation. There needs to be specialized sectoral expertise of the officers. Along with that, the false idea of pride and prudent attitude must be kept under check. The youth is to be encouraged to take up direct paths through their services in the administrative blocks, but that would only be possible by letting the old colonial legacies fade away and paving the way for new and innovative reforms.

REFERENCES

"List of Top 10 corrupt IAS officers" Starsunfolded

Retrieved from: <https://starsunfolded.com/list-of-most-corrupt-ias-officers-in-india/>

"Challenges faced by an IAS officer" BYJU's Exam Prep

Retrieved from: <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/challenges-faced-by-an-ias-officer/>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n71SxiDAjRs>

“Fewer officials on deputation hits work” Hindustan Times, 2022

Retrieved from:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/officials-fewer-officers-on-deputation-hits-work-101642720292020.html>

“Civil services reforms” Drishti IAS, 2020

Retrieved from: <https://www.drishtiias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-editorials/civil-services-reforms>

Asthana N.C, “The Civil Services Have Failed to Deliver and It's Time to Reconsider Their Importance” The Wire, 2020

Retrieved from: <https://thewire.in/government/civil-services-india-failure>

Iqbal Adil, “IAS officer D K Ravikumar death: 5 Indian officers who paid a heavy price for honesty” India.com, 2015

Retrieved from:

<https://www.india.com/viral/ias-officer-d-k-ravikumar-death-5-indian-officers-who-paid-a-heavy-price-for-honesty-319464/>

Arora J.K, “Politicisation of Civil Services” Deccan Herald, 2021

Retrieved from:

<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/comment/politicisation-of-civil-services-1049722.html>

“J'khand IAS officer and husband had huge cash in their accounts, transferred money to CA: ED” Economic Times, 2022

Retrieved from:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/jkhand-ias-officer-and-husband-had-huge-cash>

Swarup A, “Indian Administrative service does not need an epitaph it needs reforms” News 18.com, 2021

Retrieved from:

<https://www.news18.com/news/opinion/indian-administrative-service-does-not-need-an-epitaph-it-needs-reforms-3533549.html>

“Lateral Entry Reform” Drishti IAS, 2021

Retrieved from: <https://www.drishtiias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-editorials/lateral-entry-reform>

Insights editor, “Editorial analysis: Why Agnipath scheme needs to be extended to all India services” Insight IAS, 2022

Retrieved from:

<https://www.insightsonindia.com/2022/07/26/editorial-analysis-why-agni-path-scheme-needs-to-be-extended-to-all-india-services/>

Ranganathan V, “The case for agnipath not just army: extend it to civil services too” The Economic Times, 2022

Retrieved from:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/et-commentary/the-case-for-agnipath-not-just-army-extend-it-to-civil-services-too/articleshow/92322600.cms>