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## FOUNDATIONAL VALUES IN PUBLIC SERVICES/GOVERNANCE

Public services and governance in India are guided by several core values and principles that help ensure the functioning of a democratic and accountable system.

Some of the key core values of public services and governance listed by the Nolan Committee include:

- **Selflessness** - Public officials should act solely in the public interest and not for personal gain. They should set aside their own families' or friends' interests when making decisions and performing their duties.
- **Integrity** - Public officials should be honest and truthful. They should not seek to deceive or conceal information. Integrity is fundamental to building public trust.
- **Objectivity** - Decisions should be made based on evidence, reason, and impartiality, rather than personal bias or prejudice. Public officials should avoid favouritism and conflicts of interest.
- **Accountability** - Public officials are accountable for their actions and decisions. They should be prepared to explain and justify their choices, and mechanisms should be in place to hold them to account.
- **Openness** - Information should be made available to the public unless there are compelling reasons to withhold it. Transparency promotes public understanding and trust.
- **Honesty** - Public officials should be truthful and straightforward in their communications. They should not knowingly mislead the public or others.
- **Leadership** - Those in leadership positions should set a positive example of ethical behaviour. They should promote and uphold these principles within their organizations.

Some of the Values are also provided by the 10th Report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission. These values are:

- **Impartiality** - Impartiality is the quality of making decisions without bias or prejudice; an example of impartiality is when no favouritism is involved.
- **Non-partisanship** - Non-partisanship means not supporting any political party, even if you agree with their ideas. It's about not aligning with any political group.
- **Dedication to Public Service** - Dedication to public service means a strong commitment to the public interest, excellence, efficiency, and continuous improvement.
- **Empathy** - Empathy is the ability to understand and share another person's emotions and experiences,

including their mental state and feelings. It helped to understand the problems of citizens effectively.

- **Tolerance** - It requires a civil servant to make fair decisions, to be impartial, objective, non-partisan, and tolerant of diverse perspectives.
- **Compassion** - Compassion is a profound form of empathy, involving a genuine desire to help those who are suffering. It includes emotional understanding, empathy, and a strong urge to provide support and protection.

### **Why Core Values is Required in Public Services/ Governance?**

Core values are essential in public services and governance for several reasons:

- **Guidance** - Core values provide a clear moral and ethical compass for public officials and institutions, helping them make decisions and conduct themselves in ways that align with the best interests of the public.
- **To Ensure Accountability** - They serve as a basis for holding public servants accountable for their actions and decisions.
  - ❖ When values are violated, there are standards against which behaviour can be assessed.
- **To Create Trust and Credibility** - Upholding core values builds trust and credibility with the public.
  - ❖ Citizens are more likely to have confidence in a government that adheres to principles of transparency, fairness, and integrity.
- **To Promote Fairness and Equity** - Values like fairness and equity ensure that public services are provided without discrimination, benefiting all citizens equally.
- **To Maintain Efficiency and Effectiveness** - Values like Openness and Accountability, guide resource allocation and service delivery, ensuring that government actions achieve the desired outcomes.
- **To Ensure Ethical Conduct** - Core values promote ethical conduct, preventing corruption, favouritism, and abuse of power within the public sector.
- **Guarantee Public Interest** - They emphasize the primacy of the public interest over personal or political gain, reinforcing the idea that public officials are servants of the people.
- **Establish Long-Term Sustainability** - Values like Leadership, Openness, Accountability, etc. promote policies that look ahead and prioritize the long-term well-being of both society and the environment.

**Challenges for Core Value Implementation in Public Services:**

Implementing core values in public services can be challenging due to various factors:

- **Resistance to Change** - Bureaucratic structures and established practices, resist adopting new values and behaviours, hindering their integration into the system.
- **Political Interference** - Political agendas and pressures, sometimes, compromise the adherence to values, leading to favouritism or biased decision-making.
- **Lack of Awareness** - Public servants and officials do not fully understand or be aware of the core values, making it challenging to apply them consistently.
- **Enforcement Challenges** - Ensuring accountability for violations of core values can be challenging, as mechanisms for enforcement may be weak or ineffective.
- **Training and Education:** Training regarding the core values is inefficient and inadequate, and implementing core values in administration is challenging.
- **Public Perception and Trust** - Rebuilding public trust in cases where core values have been compromised is a significant challenge.
- **Changing Political Leadership** - Changes in political leadership can bring shifts in priorities and values, impacting the consistency of value implementation.

**Way Forward:**

To address these challenges and ensure the effective implementation of core values in public services, several strategies can be pursued:

- **Leadership Commitment** - Strong leadership at both political and administrative levels is essential.
  - ❖ Leaders should demonstrate a commitment to core values and set an example for others to follow.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Invest in comprehensive training and capacity-building programs for public servants.
  - ❖ Ensure that they understand the core values and know how to apply them in their daily work.
- **Awareness Campaigns** - Launch awareness campaigns to educate both public servants and the general public about the importance of core values in public service. This can help build a shared understanding and commitment.

- **Accountability Mechanisms** - Strengthen mechanisms for holding public servants accountable for violations of core values. This may include establishing independent oversight bodies and whistleblower protection.
- **Clear Policies and Procedures** - Develop clear policies and procedures that explicitly state the importance of core values and provide guidelines for their implementation.
- **Regular Audits and Reviews** - Conduct regular audits and reviews of public service operations to identify areas where core values may be compromised. Take corrective actions promptly.
- **Public Engagement** - Involve the public in the monitoring and evaluation of public services. Their feedback can be valuable in assessing the adherence to core values.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Promote transparency in decision-making processes to reduce the scope for political interference and favouritism. Encourage open and fair procedures.
- **Civil Society Engagement** - Engage civil society organizations and watchdog groups to help monitor and advocate for the implementation of core values.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration** - Encourage collaboration between government agencies, civil society, academia, and the private sector to collectively work towards value-based governance.

**Various Actions taken by the Indian Government to reinforce ethical guidelines:**

- **Executive Accountability to Parliament** - The Constitution of India mandates that the Council of Ministers are responsible to the parliament, which ensures accountability of the executives.
- **Code of Conduct for Civil Servants** - A code of conduct has been mandated for civil servants, to enhance public trust in government by ensuring that personal influence and interests do not compromise government decisions.
- **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (Mission Karmayogi)** - The Government's National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) adapts to citizens' evolving needs and aims to bolster the civil services nationally.
- **e-Human Resource Management System (e-HRMS)** - The Central Government has introduced an electronic Human Resources Management System (e-HRMS) across all departments to streamline service matters digitally.
  - ❖ This reduces time and costs, provides digital records, offers MIS dashboards, enables real-time manpower monitoring, and enhances

productivity.

- **Faceless Assessment Scheme** - The faceless assessment scheme, launched in 2020, aims for efficient tax administration, less physical interaction, enhanced accountability, and team-based assessments.
- **Geo-MGNREGA** - Geo-tagging of the assets of MGNREGA with the use of remote sensing and GIS (Geographic Information System) based information, enhanced the transparency in the govt schemes.
- **Right to Information Act of 2005** - The act ensures citizens' access to government information, promoting transparency and accountability in public authorities.
- **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013** - The act establishes a Lokpal at the Union level and Lokayukta at the State level to investigate corruption allegations against specific public officials.
- **Whistle-blowers Protection Act of 2014** - The act creates a mechanism to receive complaints about corruption or misuse of power by public servants and to investigate these allegations.

**Conclusion:**

The foundational values of public services and governance play a crucial role in ensuring the effective functioning of a democratic and accountable system. These values, such as selflessness, integrity, accountability, and transparency, serve as guiding principles that help build public trust, promote fairness, and maintain ethical conduct within the public sector.

**Philosophical Basis of Public Service and Governance**

The philosophical basis of public services and governance encompasses a wide range of ideas and principles that have evolved over centuries. These principles provide a foundation for how societies organize and manage their affairs to meet the needs and interests of their citizens.

**Several key philosophical concepts underpin public services and governance:**

- **Social Contract Theory** - Social contract theory, was first articulated by philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.
  - ❖ They suggest that individuals in a society agree to give up certain freedoms and submit to the authority of a government in exchange for protection, security, and the benefits of an organized society.
  - ❖ This theory underscores the legitimacy of government as long as it serves the best interests of its citizens.

- **Democratic Principles** - Democracy is based on the idea that government derives its authority from the consent of the governed.
  - ❖ Philosophers like John Stuart Mill and John Rawls have contributed to the development of democratic theory, emphasizing concepts such as individual rights, the rule of law, and the importance of public participation in governance.
- **Utilitarianism:** Utilitarianism, championed by philosophers like Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, suggests that public policies and governance should aim to maximize the overall happiness or well-being of the greatest number of people.
  - ❖ This concept informs decisions about resource allocation, public services, and policy priorities.
- **Justice and Equity** - Philosophical notions of justice and equity, as exemplified by thinkers like John Rawls, prioritize fairness in distributing societal benefits and burdens.
  - ❖ Public services and governance should aim to rectify disparities in wealth, opportunity, and well-being.
- **The Common Good** - Some philosophical traditions, such as communitarianism, emphasize the importance of the common good or the well-being of the community as a whole.
  - ❖ This perspective suggests that public services and governance should prioritize collective welfare over individual interests.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Philosophical principles of accountability and transparency emphasize that governments should be answerable to their citizens.
  - ❖ Citizens have the right to know what their government is doing and to hold it responsible for its actions.
- **Ethical Considerations** - Ethics play a significant role in the philosophical basis of public services and governance.
  - ❖ Ethical principles guide decision-making in areas such as public service delivery, policymaking, and the treatment of citizens.
- **Human Dignity** - The concept of human dignity underpins many philosophical approaches to governance.
  - ❖ It emphasizes the inherent worth and rights of every individual, and governance systems should

protect and promote human dignity through the provision of essential services and respect for human rights.

- **Rule of Law:** The rule of law is a foundational principle that asserts that all individuals and institutions are subject to and accountable under the law.
  - ❖ It promotes legal consistency, fairness, and the protection of individual rights.
- **Public Interest:** The idea that public services and governance should act in the public interest is fundamental.
  - ❖ This means that decisions and policies should prioritize the well-being and interests of the broader society rather than serving narrow or special interests.

### Integrity

Integrity means doing things honestly and truthfully. It's about consistently sticking to your strong moral and ethical beliefs without ever compromising them.

#### **Significance of Integrity in Public Services/Governance:**

- **Enhance Trust and Legitimacy** - Integrity helps build trust between the government and its citizens. When public officials and institutions operate with integrity, it enhances the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the public.
- **Ensure Accountability** - Integrity is closely linked to accountability. When public officials are held to high ethical standards, they are more likely to be accountable for their actions and decisions.
- **Enhance Efficiency and Effectiveness** - Integrity in public services enhances efficiency and effectiveness by ensuring decisions prioritize the public interest over personal gain or politics, leading to better resource allocation and higher-quality services.
- **Impartiality and Objectivity** - A public servant, with values and integrity, makes decisions without being biased and based on facts and merits.
- **Curb the Corruption** - Integrity also reduces the evil of corruption within the government and bureaucracy, and also reduces its negative impact on society.
- **Uphold Rule of Law** - Integrity upholds the rule of law, reinforcing that all citizens are equal before it, irrespective of their status or connections.
- **Promote Social Cohesion** - Integrity is imperative for promoting fairness and justice, which in turn helps to reduce social tensions and fosters unity.

#### **Role of Integrity to Promote Democracy:**

- **Building Trust** - Integrity in democracy instills trust by ensuring transparent and honest operations of democratic institutions, boosting citizens' confidence in the fairness of the system.
- **Informed Voting** - Integrity provides truthful information for voters, enabling informed choices during elections.
- **Prevent Authoritarianism** - When leaders and institutions remain accountable to the people and adhere to ethical standards, they are less likely to concentrate power, suppress dissent, or undermine democratic values.
- **Ensure Protection of Rights** - Integrity safeguards individual rights and ensures equal treatment under the rule of law.
- **Promote Ethical Leadership** - Leaders with integrity prioritize the public good over personal gain, inspiring ethical citizenship.
- **Ensure Inclusivity** - Upholding integrity ensures inclusivity and diversity within democracy. It ensures that all citizens, regardless of their background or beliefs, have an equal and fair opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

#### **Challenges to Enforce Integrity in Public Service/Governance:**

- **Political Interference** - Elected leaders put improper pressure on government employees and organizations, which undermines their ability to uphold honesty and weakens the enforcement of rules and laws.
- **Corruption** - Corruption within public service and government is a significant obstacle to integrity. Bribery, embezzlement, and other corrupt practices erode trust and hinder efforts to enforce integrity.
- **Lack of Transparency** - A lack of transparency in decision-making processes makes it difficult to detect and address instances of misconduct or unethical behaviour.
- **Cultural Norms** - In some societies, cultural norms tolerate or even encourage practices that are considered unethical or corrupt in other contexts.
- **Public Apathy** - When the public is disengaged or apathetic about issues of integrity in governance, there is less pressure on officials to act ethically.

#### **Measures to be Adopted to Promote Integrity in Civil Services:**

- **Clear Codes of Conduct** - These codes should outline expected behaviours, ethical principles, and consequences for violations.
- **Training and Capacity Building** - Civil servants

should be educated on the importance of ethical behaviour and how to recognize and report unethical conduct.

- **Leadership by Example** - Promote ethical leadership from the top down. Leaders within the civil service should exemplify high standards of integrity and ethics.
- **Use of Technology and Digitalization** - Implement technology solutions for transparency and accountability, such as e-procurement systems, online reporting mechanisms, and digital records management.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns** - Run public awareness campaigns to inform citizens about their rights, the importance of integrity in public service, and how to report corruption or unethical behaviour.

Integrity stands as a fundamental pillar in the realm of public services, governance, and the promotion of democracy. Its significance cannot be overstated, as it encompasses a wide range of benefits that contribute to the stability and prosperity of societies.

### Transparency and Objectivity

#### **Transparency**

- Transparency in public services involves government agencies being open and accountable, and sharing information about their activities and decisions with the public to foster trust and understanding.

#### **Objectivity**

- In public services, objectivity means making impartial decisions based on evidence and facts and avoiding personal biases or favouritism.

#### **Relationship Between Objectivity and Transparency:**

- **Transparency Fosters Objectivity** - When government agencies and officials are transparent about their actions, decisions, and processes, it becomes easier to ensure that these actions are carried out objectively.
- **Objectivity Enhances Transparency** - The government's objective decisions instil confidence in them to transparently communicate these objective decisions and the rationale behind them to the public, further enhancing public trust.
- **Mutual Reinforcement** - Together, they create a system in which public services are both impartially delivered and subject to public scrutiny, fostering accountability and trust.

### Work Culture in Public Services and Governance

Work culture in public services refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, attitudes, and behaviours that characterize the working environment and interactions within government organizations and agencies.

- It encompasses the collective mindset and practices of public servants and leaders and significantly influences how work is conducted, decisions are made, and services are delivered within the public sector.

#### Importance of Positive Work Culture:

- **Service Delivery** - A positive work culture can lead to better service delivery.
  - When government employees are motivated, satisfied, and engaged in their work, they are more likely to provide efficient and high-quality services to the public.
  - **Accountability** - A healthy work culture promotes accountability and transparency within government organizations.
    - ❖ When employees feel empowered to speak up and report wrongdoing, it can help prevent corruption and unethical behaviour.
  - **Effective Communication** - A healthy work culture provides a platform for effective communication among the verticals and horizontals of the organisation which helps in getting work done effectively.
  - **Employee Engagement** - A positive work culture fosters employee engagement, which can lead to higher productivity and better outcomes for the public.
  - **Recruitment and Retention** - A good work culture can attract and keep talented employees. When workers are happy and appreciated, they tend to stay and contribute their knowledge to the organization.
  - **Reduced Conflicts** - A good work culture promotes effective communication and helps in reducing conflicts among individuals/teams during work.
- #### Impact of Hostile Work Culture:
- **Decreased Employee Morale** - Employees in a hostile work culture often experience low morale and reduced job satisfaction.
  - **High Turnover Rates** - High turnover rates result in increased recruitment and training costs and can disrupt team dynamics and productivity.
  - **Negative Health Effects** - It may lead to stress, anxiety, depression, and even physical health issues, such as hypertension or sleep disorders.
  - **Reduced Collaboration** - People may become



defensive, unwilling to share ideas, or reluctant to work together, which can hinder innovation and teamwork.

- **Diminished Creativity and Innovation** - When employees are afraid to voice their ideas or concerns, valuable insights and solutions may go unnoticed, harming the organization's ability to adapt and grow.
- **Negative Customer Impact** - Employee dissatisfaction often spills over into interactions with customers or clients, resulting in poor customer service and potential loss of business.
- **Decreased Organizational Performance** - A hostile work culture can hinder an organization's ability to meet its goals and objectives. Projects may be delayed, quality may suffer, and financial performance may decline.
- **Management Challenges** - Leaders and managers may face difficulties in retaining and motivating their teams in a hostile environment. This can lead to leadership turnover and instability within the organization.

**Way Forward:**

- **Lead by Example** - Leadership sets the tone for the workplace culture. Leaders should characterize the values and behaviours they want to see in their employees.
- **Define Core Values** - Clearly define the core values that your organization stands for.
  - ❖ Ensure that these values are communicated and integrated into all aspects of the workplace.
- **Communicate Effectively** - Foster open and transparent communication channels.
  - ❖ Encourage employees to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas.
- **Empower Employees** - Give employees autonomy and the authority to make decisions within their roles.
  - ❖ Empowered employees feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility.
- **Recognize and Reward** - Acknowledge and reward employees for their achievements and contributions.
- **Promote Work-Life Balance** - Encourage employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
  - ❖ Avoid overloading them with excessive workloads or unrealistic expectations.
- **Conflict Resolution** - Develop a fair and effective conflict resolution process to address issues promptly and fairly when they arise.

In conclusion, fostering a positive work culture within public services is not just a matter of employee satisfaction, it directly impacts the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of government organizations.

**Corruption**

Corruption is the misuse of power or resources for personal gain, often at the expense of the public good, through practices like bribery, fraud, and nepotism.

Factors Responsible for the Corruption in India:

- **Political Factors:**
  - ❖ **Election Funding** - Corruption often begins with the use of illicit funds in elections. Candidates view campaign expenditures as investments, which can lead to the misuse of power once elected.
  - ❖ **Criminalisation of Politics** - A significant percentage of Indian legislators have pending criminal cases against them, creating a scenario where those with legal issues are entrusted to make and uphold laws.
  - ❖ **Collusion with Business** - Economic reforms have opened doors for the private sector, but this has also given rise to questionable alliances between politicians and business leaders, contributing to corrupt practices.
- **Economic Factors:**
  - ❖ **Informal Sector Dominance** - Around 83% of the Indian workforce operates in the informal sector, evading taxation and labour regulations.
  - ❖ This often compels businesses to resort to bribery to avoid complex compliance issues.
  - ❖ **Complex Business Environment** - Lengthy approval processes, a lack of transparency, and limited legal accountability in matters such as timelines, force entrepreneurs to navigate bureaucracy through illicit means.
  - ❖ **Income Disparities** - In India, a small group of the richest 1% have way too much money, which leads to corrupt deals among them and forces poor people to pay bribes just to survive.
- **Administrative Factors:**
  - ❖ **Legacy of Colonial Bureaucracy** - India's bureaucratic system retains its colonial character with obsolete laws, excessive discretion, a lack of transparency, and no effective legal accountability.
  - ❖ **Stalled Reforms** - Despite the need for critical reforms like citizen charters, Right to Information (RTI), and e-governance, political resistance

and bureaucratic hurdles have hindered their implementation.

- ❖ **Low Public Sector Compensation:** Public sector wages are often less competitive than those in the private sector, particularly at lower levels, resulting in difficult working conditions and limited career growth opportunities.
- ❖ **Judicial Challenges:** The difficulties faced by the judicial system in pursuing cases against corrupt officials, including politicians, are compounded by the constitutional safeguards outlined in Articles 309 and 310, which mandate government authorization before initiating prosecution.

➤ **Social and Ethical Factors:**

- ❖ **Changing Values** - Shifting societal values towards individualism and materialism fosters a desire for a luxurious lifestyle, encouraging officials to resort to corrupt practices without regard for ethics.
- ❖ **Social Vulnerability** - Due to their lack of awareness and dependence on state services, the poor and marginalised often become easy targets for exploitation by corrupt officials.
- ❖ **Education Deficiencies** - The education system in India has failed to instil essential values such as empathy, compassion, integrity, and equity, and the impact of globalization has further eroded moral values within society.

**Consequences of Corruption:**

- **Lack of Quality in Services** – Corrupt practices by the service provider led to the degraded quality of the services.
  - ❖ E.g., electricity cuts, lack of availability of water, poor infrastructure like roads, bridges, etc.
- **Erode Trusts of the Public** – Corruption eroded the public trust in bureaucracy and the government.
- **Tax Evasion** – Corruption within the tax administration fosters significant tax evasion, giving rise to the creation of unreported income, which in turn fuels corruption.
  - ❖ According to various estimates, the informal economy in India could be as large as 50% of its GDP.
- **Hinder Ease of Doing Business** - Corruption hinders ease of doing business in India, as noted by the Global Competitiveness Index.
  - ❖ This deters private investments, job creation,

and innovation, contributing to brain drain from the country.

- **Threatened National Security** – Corruption is one of the major challenges to the national security of the country.
  - ❖ E.g., Past corruption in defence deals has delayed armed forces modernization amid rising regional hostility, posing security challenges for India.
- **Adversely Affects Economic Development and Achievement** - It promotes inefficiencies in the utilisation of resources, distorts the markets, compromises quality, and destroys the environment.
- **Decline in Foreign Investment** - Corruption within government institutions has driven away foreign investments from developing countries.
- **Impoverishment of the Poor** – Corruption led to the unequal distribution of resources and diversion of resources for personal greed, leading to the destitution of the vulnerable section of society.
  - ❖ E.g., PDS ratio diversion, Fake ID creation in MGNREGA, etc.
- **Lack of Proper Justice** - Police corruption leads to underreported crime, encouraging criminals. Corruption within the judicial system results in unjust outcomes, causing suffering for victims of crimes.

**Various Initiatives Started by Government to Curb Corruption:**

- **Legislative Actions**
  - ❖ **Implementation of the Right to Information Act (RTI)** - The Act aims to ensure citizens' access to public information, promoting transparency and accountability in government operations.
  - ❖ **The Prevention of Corruption Act of 1988** – The act criminalizes the act of giving bribes and will help check big-ticket corruption by creating a vicarious liability in respect of senior management of commercial organizations.
  - ❖ **The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013** - An act aimed at creating an institution known as the Lokpal at the national level and Lokayuktas at the state level to investigate accusations of corruption against specific public officials and associated or related matters.
  - ❖ **The Prevention of Money Laundering Act of 2002** – The act aims to prevent money laundering and prohibits using the 'proceeds of crime' in India.

- ❖ **The Companies Act of 2013** – The act provides for corporate governance and prevention of corruption and fraud in the corporate sector.
- ❖ **The Whistleblowers Protection Act of 2014** - It enables any person (i.e., a whistleblower) to report an act of corruption, wilful misuse of power or discretion, or criminal offence by a public servant.
- **Anti-Corruption Bodies:**
  - ❖ **Central Vigilance Commission** - The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is an apex Indian governmental body created in 1964 to address governmental corruption.
  - ❖ **Central Bureau of Investigation** – It plays an important role in the prevention of corruption and maintaining integrity in administration.
  - ❖ **Lokpal and Lokayuktas** – Established under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013 they provide a uniform vigilance and anti-corruption road map for the nation both at the centre and at the states.
- **Schemes:**
  - ❖ **Faceless Assessment Scheme** - Under the faceless assessment system, a taxpayer or an assessee is not required to visit an I-T department office or meet a department official for income tax-related businesses. It will curb the activities related to corruption.
  - ❖ **Geo-MGNREGA** - Geo MGNREGA revolutionizes MGNREGA by using space tech for geo-tagging assets, boosting planning, monitoring, visibility, and transparency.
  - ❖ **Biometric Authenticated Public Distribution System (PDS)** - It will ensure transparency in PDS and prevent smuggling.
    - ❖ Unauthorised persons cannot use the ration cards of others and it will largely reduce fake entries.
  - ❖ **Direct Benefit Transfer** - DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) has been instrumental in streamlining social safety net payments, minimizing leakages, combating corruption, and expanding coverage by delivering government funds directly to beneficiaries' bank accounts.

**Why have these efforts failed to yield results?**

- **Lack of Political Will** – Lack of political will to initiate strict measures and reforms to curb corruption.
- **Poor Implementation of Laws and Policies** – Inadequate policy and law enforcement contribute to anti-corruption measures' failure.

- **Level of Penetration** – Corruption has deeply entrenched itself within the bureaucratic system in India, making it a formidable challenge for the government to eradicate.
- **Excessive Government Control** – Excessive government control over the bureaucracy and frequent interference in their operations have impeded anti-corruption efforts.
- **Tolerative Culture** – The public also has become habitual to corruption, that they feel more comfortable paying a bribe to get the service rather than to complain about it.
- **Inefficient Judicial System** – The sluggish pace of the judiciary, lengthy court processes, and immunity granted to officials bolster the confidence of corrupt individuals.
- **Lack of Awareness** – Insufficient citizen awareness about laws and their rights further exacerbates corruption.

**Way Forward:**

- **Strengthening Anti-Corruption Agencies** - Bolster organizations like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to enhance their capacity to investigate and prosecute corruption cases.
- **Transparency and Accountability** - Promote transparency in government operations and decision-making processes. Implement mechanisms for accountability, such as audits and oversight bodies.
- **Whistleblower Protection** - Enact strong laws and safeguards to protect whistleblowers who expose corruption within government and private sectors.
- **Digitization** - Implement e-governance solutions to reduce direct interactions between citizens and bureaucrats, minimizing opportunities for corruption.
- **Simplifying Regulations** - Streamline bureaucratic processes, licenses, and permits to reduce red tape and opportunities for bribery.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns** - Educate citizens about their rights, the consequences of corruption, and how to report corrupt activities.
- **Judicial Reforms** - Expedite the judicial process, reduce the backlog, and ensure swift trials for corruption cases.

The fight against corruption in India remains an ongoing challenge, and addressing it comprehensively requires a concerted effort across all sectors of society. Education and awareness programs, coupled with ethical reforms, are essential to instil values of integrity and accountability in the nation's collective consciousness

**Professionalism in Public Services**

Professionalism in public services and governance refers to the consistent adherence to high ethical standards, competence, accountability, and a focus on the public interest by individuals working within government or public-sector organizations.

**Key Aspects of the Professionalism in Public Services/ Governance:**

- **Ethical conduct and integrity** - Upholding honesty and transparency while serving the public interest.
- **Accountability** - Taking responsibility for actions, decisions, and public resources.
- **Competence and expertise** - Possessing the necessary skills for effective public service.
- **Impartiality and fairness** - Treating all fairly and making decisions based on merit and the law.
- **Public interest focus** - Prioritizing the well-being of the public in decision-making.
- **Communication and transparency** - Clear, open communication with stakeholders.
- **Respect and courtesy** - Treating everyone with consideration and respect.
- **Teamwork and collaboration** - Collaborating for effective public service delivery.
- **Continuous improvement** - Ongoing learning and development.
- **Adherence to legal frameworks** - Complying with laws and regulations.
- **Resource stewardship** - Responsible management of public resources.
- **Adaptability and flexibility** - Being open to change and flexible in problem-solving.

**Role of Professionalism in Public Services and Governance:**

- **Enhancing Trust** - Professionalism builds trust between the government and the public.
- **Effective Service Delivery** - Professionals in public services are more likely to provide efficient and high-quality services.
- **Curb the Corruption** - Professionalism in public service promotes ethical decision-making that prioritizes the public interest, reducing corruption and unethical behaviour.
- **Promote Social Justice and Equality** - Professionalism requires public servants to treat all citizens fairly and impartially, regardless of their background or status. This promotes social justice and equality.
- **Effective Communication** - Professionals in public

services are often better at communicating with the public and stakeholders.

- **Efficient Conflict Resolution** - Professional public servants adeptly resolve conflicts impartially, preserving societal peace and order.
- **Resource Management** - Professionalism in managing public resources ensures that taxpayer money is used efficiently, and effectively and minimizing wastage.
- **Adaptability to Change** - Professionals adapt to change, enabling effective government responses to crises and evolving needs.

Ultimately, professionalism in public services and governance is a cornerstone of good governance, helping to create a more just, transparent, and efficient government that serves the best interests of its citizens.

**Political Pressure**

Political pressure in public services is the influence and demands from elected officials, political groups, and the wider political climate that impact how public service organizations make decisions, allocate resources, create policies, and deliver services.

- Political pressure impacts the decision-making process within public service agencies.

**Various Factors Responsible for the Political Pressures:**

- **Policy Alignment** - Elected officials push public agencies to match their party's agenda, leading to changes in priorities and goals.
- **To Secure Vote Bank** - Politicians exploit public services for electoral gain, urging popular project announcements and resource allocation to secure voter support, sometimes diverting from urgent needs.
- **Role of Media** - Media increases political pressure by highlighting issues or scandals, compelling public officials to react to public scrutiny or outrage.
- **Lobbying and Interest Groups** - Special interest groups and lobbyists use their influence and resources to pressure public service organizations to support policies or initiatives that benefit their members or industries.
- E.g., Farmer's Organisation. Trade Groups, etc.
- **Public Opinion** - Public sentiment and public pressure significantly impact public services. Politicians often respond to popular demands or concerns, which can lead to rapid policy changes and resource reallocation.
- E.g., the Jhangi-Thopan HEP project dispute.

**Consequences of the Political Pressures:**

- **Negative Consequences:**
  - ❖ **Undermining Objectivity and Impartiality** - This leads to favouritism, discrimination, or the prioritization of political interests over the public good.
  - ❖ **Reduced Effectiveness** - Decision-making becomes slow and cumbersome due to the need to navigate political considerations.
  - ❖ **Diminished Accountability** - Elected officials are less inclined to investigate or address issues within these organizations if they align with their political interests.
  - ❖ **Erosion of Public Trust:** - When the public perceives that these organizations are heavily influenced by political considerations, it erodes trust in their ability to serve the public impartially and professionally.
  - ❖ **Inconsistent Policies and Practices** - Frequent changes in leadership or policies driven by political pressures lead to inconsistent and constantly shifting approaches within public service organizations.
  - ❖ **Short-Term Focus** - Political pressures often prioritize short-term gains and immediate political objectives over long-term planning and sustainable solutions.
  - ❖ **Boost Corruption** - Politicians shielding corrupt public servants for loyalty fosters a culture of impunity, where corruption remains unchallenged.
  - ❖ **Loss of Expertise** - Political pressure may replace experts with unqualified appointees, hindering effective public service management.
- **Positive Consequences:**
  - ❖ **Citizen-Centric Development** - Pressure from public demands led the government to initiate development projects, based on the needs of the people.
  - ❖ **Ensure Accountability** - Political pressure on the government and its agencies makes them provide various data to the public, ensuring accountability and transparency.
    - ❖ E.g., RTI Act Of 2005.
  - ❖ **Protect the Interest of the People** - Pressure from various pressure groups helped to curb the negative consequences on the environment and the livelihood of the people.
    - ❖ E.g., protest against the Jhansi-Thopan HEP project, which led to the loss of the endangered species Chilgoza, an important

cash crop of the region.

- **Participation of People in Governance** - Through the help of pressure groups, people directly or indirectly take part in the governance.
- **Social Change** - Political pressures can drive positive social change by pushing for reforms in areas like criminal justice, healthcare access, and educational equity.
- **Upliftment of the Marginal Section of the Society** - Political pressure promotes marginalized community representation in government, ensuring policies align with their needs.

**Steps to be Taken to Eliminate the Negative Consequences of the Political Pressure:**

- **Established Strong Ethical Guidelines** - Establish and uphold ethical guidelines prioritizing integrity, honesty, and the best interests of the public and stakeholders in all organizational decision-making processes.
- **Promote Transparency** - Prioritize transparency by publicly sharing operational, decision-making, and financial information for accessibility by the public, stakeholders, and regulators.
- **Community Participation** - To minimize corruption and to make officials responsible, community participation must be enhanced more.
- **Formation of Special Courts** - Special courts should be created to expedite the resolution of cases involving corrupt officials and politicians within a set timeframe.

In addressing the challenges posed by political pressure, it is incumbent upon governments, public service organizations, and civil society to work together to create an environment where the influence of politics serves the greater good rather than detracting from it.

**Code of Conduct in Civil Services**

The Civil Service Code, or Code of Conduct in Civil Services, comprises a set of guidelines and principles that civil servants must adhere to while fulfilling their roles as public servants.

- Civil Services in INDIA, recruited by UPSC, are classified into two categories, i.e., All India Services (IAS) and Central Services.
  - ❖ The All-India Services, such as the IAS, IPS, and IFS, are governed by Article 312 of the Indian Constitution.
  - ❖ The central government selects officers for these services, who are then assigned to various state cadres. Bureaucrats from each state can also

serve the central government on deputation.

- Central Civil Services, including the Indian Foreign Service, the Indian Revenue Service, Customs and Central Excise Service, among others, operate directly under the central government without a state cadre system.

**Code of Conduct for Civil Services:**

There are two distinct sets of rules in place for civil servants, differentiating between AIS and CCS employees.

- **All India Services Conduct Rules of 1968** - The AIS Conduct Rules of 1968 govern the behaviour and ethics of All India Services officers.
- **Central Civil Services Conduct Rules of 1964** - Central Civil Services officers adhere to the CCS Conduct Rules of 1964, outlining their code of conduct.
- **Roots in Anti-Corruption Efforts** - Both sets of rules find their origins in the recommendations of the 1962 Committee on Prevention of Corruption, led by K Santhanam.

**Rules and Regulations for Civil Servants under the Acts are:**

- **Appropriate Conduct** - Under the rules, the Civil Servants must act appropriately and maintain personal integrity, being honest and morally upright.
- **Appropriate Use of Public Resources** - They must use public resources wisely, declare conflicts of interest, and always act in a manner befitting their role in the Service.
- **Being Politically Neutral** - Rule 5(1) emphasizes that civil servants must remain politically neutral and should not engage with or support any political parties.
- **No Use of Power for Personal Favour** - Civil Servants are not allowed to utilize their position to obtain job opportunities for any of their family members at a private company or non-governmental organization (NGO).
- **Restriction on Personal Opinion** - The AIS Conduct Rules, places limitations on expressing personal opinions through any public media if it involves strong criticism of government actions.
- **Prohibition on Dowry** - Under the AIS Rules, both offering and accepting dowry are strictly forbidden.
- **Reporting of Gifts** - Rule 11(1) mandates that a civil servant must inform the Government when receiving a gift exceeding the value of Rs. 25,000.

**Repercussions for Breaking Rules:**

- **Major and Minor Penalties** - Violations may result

in either major or minor penalties, with major penalties potentially leading to dismissal from the service.

- **Penal Provisions** - Additionally, there exist penal provisions outlined in the Prevention of Corruption Act (POCA).
- **Coverage** - Officers are subject to the rules from the moment they commence training, and some rules remain applicable even after retirement.

**Significance of the Code of Conduct in the Civil Services:**

- **Ensure Ethical Conduct** - Though, there is no ethical code for Civil Services, the Code of Conduct, under various rules, ensures the ethical conduct of the Civil Servants.
- **Ensure Objectivity and Impartiality** - The code of Conduct ensures that public servants don't use their position for personal gains or favours.
- **Maintain Public Trust** - Code of Conduct ensures that Civil Servants acts with integrity, objectivity and professionalism, which boost the confidence and trust of the public in government institution.
- **Curb the Corruption** - It also helps to curb the activities of corruption in bureaucracy and also provides reasonable penalties for such activities.
- **Ensure Accountability** - A code of conduct holds civil servants accountable by defining expected behaviour and making acceptable and unacceptable conduct clear.
- **Keep Consistency in Policies** - A code of conduct prohibits civil servants from supporting political parties or criticizing government policies, ensuring policy consistency during power transitions.

**Challenges Relate to the Code of Conduct Rules of Civil Services:**

- **Vague Rules** - Some rules are quite vague.
  - ❖ E.g., Even though there may not be specific rules against promoting casteism, acting in a casteist manner can still be considered unprofessional for a civil servant.
- **Unclear Concepts** - The concept of personal integrity is often unclear and open to interpretation.
- **No Ethical Code** - There is no ethical code for civil servants in India, despite similar standards exist in other nations.

**Difference Between Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics:**

Code of Conduct	Code of Ethics
➤ A legally binding set of rules for behaviour within a specific context (e.g., workplace) and covers things like dress code, punctuality, and respectful communication.	➤ A Code of Ethics guides moral decision-making, emphasizing principles like integrity, honesty, fairness, and moral responsibility across various situations.
➤ Prescribes the required behaviour for employees.	➤ Describes the decision-making process.
➤ It has a broader scope.	➤ It has a narrower scope.
➤ Codes of Conduct are often subject to change and adaptation based on the specific needs and circumstances of the organization.	➤ Codes of Ethics are stable, and enduring, and require infrequent, deliberate changes to their ethical principles.
➤ In India, the existing ethical guidelines are outlined in the Central Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, and similar rules for All India Services and State Government employees.	➤ Unlike some other nations, India does not have a prescribed Code of Ethics for civil servants.

**Way Forward:**

- **Clarity and Specificity in Rules:** The vague rules can be clarified and made more specific. This involves identifying areas where ambiguity exists and providing clear guidelines on what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- **Ethical Code Development:** Developing a comprehensive ethical code specifically tailored to civil servants in India is essential.
- **Mechanisms for Reporting Unethical Behaviour -** Promote transparency by creating a clear reporting mechanism for unethical behaviour and establishing an efficient complaint investigation process.
- **Periodic Review -** Regularly review and update the Code of Conduct to adapt to changing societal norms and challenges. This ensures that the rules remain relevant and effective over time.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns -** Launch public awareness campaigns to inform citizens about the

Code of Conduct and the expected behaviour of civil servants. This can help foster a culture of accountability and ethical behaviour.

In conclusion, a robust and well-defined Civil Service Code of Conduct is instrumental in upholding the integrity of the civil services, ensuring that they remain accountable to the public they serve, and curbing corruption.

**GANDHIAN THOUGHT**

Gandhian thought refers to the philosophical and ideological principles associated with Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's thoughts and teachings have had a profound and lasting impact, not only in India but also on the global stage.

**Some Key Aspects of Gandhian Thought:**

- **Satya (Truth)** - Of all the moral principles, Gandhi placed truth as the first and foremost. He called it "the sovereign principle", which included numerous other principles.
  - ❖ **Compared Truth with God** - Gandhi believed that God and truth were the same. He said, "I worship truth as my God. I'm still searching for Him, but I'm determined to find Him."
  - ❖ **Truth in Thought and Action** - He asserted to follow truth not only in one's speech but in thoughts and actions.
  - ❖ **Conflict Resolution** - Gandhi believed that conflicts could be resolved through the pursuit of truth and dialogue. He advocated for open and honest communication as a means of finding common ground and resolving disputes.
- **Ahimsa (Non-Violence)** - Non-violence was another fundamental principle of Gandhi's philosophy. He defined ahimsa as the complete absence of violence in thought, word, and deed.
- **Nonviolent Resistance** - Gandhi's most well-known application of nonviolence was in the form of nonviolent resistance, or satyagraha. He believed that nonviolent action was a powerful means of confronting oppression and injustice without causing harm to others.
- **Compassion and Empathy** - Ahimsa urged people to develop compassion and empathy for all beings and to tackle the underlying causes of conflict and violence.
- **The notion of Courage and Sacrifice** - Gandhi knew that nonviolence demanded courage and sacrifice, and he and his followers endured hardship, even violence, from oppressors while upholding this principle.

- **Political and Social Change** - Gandhi believed that nonviolence could bring about powerful political and social change.
- **Satyagraha** - Satyagraha is a Sanskrit term that combines “satya” (truth) and “agraha” (insistence or holding firmly to). Satyagraha involves obtaining rights through personal suffering rather than causing harm to others. The various key features of Gandhi’s Satyagraha were:
  - **Use of Non-Violence** - He attributed to the use of Ahimsa or non-violence to tackle the oppressor and achieve the goals.
  - **Adhered to Truth and Morality** - Satyagraha is rooted in truth and morality. Gandhi believed that individuals must be truthful and honest in their dealings and that truth is the ultimate force that can lead to social and political change.
  - **Passive Resistance** - Gandhi saw Satyagraha as proactive and positive, aiming to transform the oppressor’s heart and mind, rejecting the notion of passive resistance with its negative connotations.
  - **Love and Compassion** - Gandhi stressed love and compassion toward adversaries, advocating for winning them over through love and understanding rather than hatred or harm.
  - **Self-Suffering** - Gandhi practised self-suffering as a means of achieving change. He often went on hunger strikes and endured physical hardship to demonstrate his commitment to the cause and to encourage others to join the struggle.
  - **Ends and Means** - End is the ultimate goal and Mean is the methods adopted to achieve that goal. According to Mahatma Gandhi, Means are as important as the Ends.
  - **Good Means to Achieve Ends** - He asserted that one should pursue the good means to achieve the goals because it is not the end that we can work with but only means. Different Means led to the different Ends.
  - **Focus on Satya and Ahimsa** - In Gandhi’s moral and political beliefs, he valued two key principles; Satya (Truth) and Ahimsa (Non-Violence). He believed that Ahimsa is the way to achieve Satya, which is the ultimate truth.
  - **Satyagraha as a Mean** - He employed Satyagraha as a means to achieve Independence because, in his view, violent approaches create a nation based on violence.
  - **Principle of Trusteeship** - According to Gandhi, the wealthy people are the trustees of the wealth of the poor and unprivileged section of society, and they should employ their riches for the betterment of society.

- ❖ The reason, he put forward, is that rich people earned this wealth with the help of workers and the poor, hence it should be used for their upliftment as well.
- **Religion and Politics** - According to Gandhi, serving the higher truth or what he perceived as God evolved, resulting in a continuous growth process.
  - ❖ **Main Purpose of Religion** - According to Gandhi’s view, the main purpose of religion is the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to reality-centeredness.
  - ❖ **Universal Religion** - Gandhi didn’t aim to merge various religions, instead, he focused on the underlying principles and discovered truth within all of them.
  - ❖ **Centered on Humanity** - His religion centred on humanity, where he believed serving others was serving God. He emphasized cultivating virtues like love, understanding, and peace through religion.
- **Karma yoga Bhakti** - Gandhi believed in the ethical core of religion, emphasizing Karmayoga and Svadharma from the Gita, which entailed fulfilling one’s God-given duties.
- **Relationship with Politics** - As per his views, religion and politics are inseparable and religion and morality are the foundation of politics.
  - ❖ His religion was the religion, which infused morality and ethical behaviour in his persona and motivated him to live a virtuous life.
  - ❖ As politics is a service of mankind, as per his ideas, no politics can promote welfare which has no morality, kindness, or ethics.
  - ❖ He said, “I don’t accept a politics without religion, polity is a servant of religion, a polity without religion leads to doom, as it kills one soul”.

**Relevance of Gandhi’s Teaching in the Contemporary World:**

- **Nonviolence and Peaceful Resistance** - Gandhi’s advocacy for nonviolent resistance remains highly relevant, even in today’s world
  - ❖ E.g., Farmers protest to repeal three farms’ laws, Anna Hazare’s movement for Lokpal Bill, etc.
- **Social Justice and Equality** - Gandhi emphasized the importance of social justice and equality and these are needed in relevant society as well.
  - ❖ E.g., Dalit rights, rights of LGBTQ+, etc.



- **Sustainable Living and Environmentalism** - Gandhi's emphasis on simple living and sustainability is highly relevant in today's environmentally conscious world.
  - ❖ E.g., Lifestyle for Environment Movement (LiFE).
- **Community and Self-Reliance** - Gandhi's vision of self-reliant villages and strong communities is crucial in tackling poverty, rural development, and the challenges posed by globalization.
  - ❖ E.g., Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Cooperative Societies, promotion of Khadi industries, etc.
- **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding** - Gandhi's approach to resolving conflicts through dialogue and reconciliation is relevant in international diplomacy.
  - ❖ E.g., the Russia-Ukraine war.
- **Promote Communal Harmony** - Gandhi's idea of acceptance and respect of all religions is a need of the day.
  - ❖ E.g., Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India, Muslim-Jewish conflict in Middle-East region, Muslim-Buddhist conflict in Myanmar, etc.
- **Upliftment of the Poor** - Gandhi's principle of Sarvodaya is quite relevant today as well to empower and promote the welfare of the weaker section of society.

In a world facing numerous challenges, from social injustices to environmental crises and global conflicts, Gandhi's teachings continue to offer valuable guidance towards a more peaceful, equitable, and sustainable future.

### INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT OF INDIA

The National Policy on Disaster Management, formulated in 2009, aligns with and complies with the Disaster Management Act of 2005. This policy sets out the comprehensive plan and direction for effectively managing disasters.

- Under the provisions of the Act, the Disaster Management Authorities have been established at 3 levels viz. National, State and District.

#### **Bodies at the National Level:**

- **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)** - The NDMA is the apex body responsible for formulating policies, plans, and guidelines for

disaster management in India.

- ❖ It is chaired by the Prime Minister of India and has members, not exceeding 9.
- ❖ The functions of the NDMA are:
  - To lay down policies on disaster management.
  - To approve the national plans.
  - To lay down guidelines to be followed by State DMAs in drawing up the state plans.
  - To recommend the provisions of funds for mitigation.
  - To coordinate the policy enforcement, implementation and disaster management plan.
- **National Executive Committee (NEC)** - The NEC is responsible for assisting the NDMA in the coordination of disaster response and recovery efforts.
  - ❖ The ex-officio chairperson of this organization is the Secretary of the Union Home Ministry.
  - ❖ The functions of the NEC are:
    - ❖ Act as the coordinating and monitoring body for disaster management;
    - ❖ Prepare the National Plan to be approved by the National Authority;
    - ❖ Coordinate and monitor the implementation of the National Policy;
    - ❖ Provide necessary technical assistance to the State Governments and the State Authorities for preparing their disaster management plans according to the guidelines laid down by the National Authority.
- **National Disaster Response Force** - The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is a specialized Indian force established to provide a unique and rapid response to imminent disaster situations or disasters as mandated by the Disaster Management Act of 2005.
  - ❖ It is chaired by the Prime minister of India.
  - ❖ The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has 16 teams that work like paramilitary groups, and their members are borrowed from India's paramilitary forces.
  - ❖ **Functions of the NDRF:**
    - ❖ To conduct search and rescue operations in various disaster situations.
    - ❖ Provides immediate medical assistance to disaster-affected individuals.
    - ❖ To assist in the evacuation of people from

danger zones during disasters.

- ❖ Distribute essential relief materials like food, water, and shelter to disaster-affected populations.

➤ **National Disaster Relief Fund** - This fund, overseen by the Central Government, is designated for covering costs associated with responding to, providing relief for, and facilitating rehabilitation in the event of any impending disaster or disaster.

- ❖ It is held within the “Public Account” of the Government of India in the category of “reserve funds without accruing interest.”

**Bodies at the State Level:**

➤ **State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)** - Each state and union territory in India has its own SDMA, which is responsible for implementing disaster management strategies and plans at the state level.

- ❖ The state’s Chief Minister or the Union Territory administrator chairs the SDMA.
- ❖ The functions of the NDMA are:
  - ✓ To lay down policies on state disaster management.
  - ✓ To approve the state plans.
  - ✓ To recommend the provisions of funds for mitigation.
  - ✓ To coordinate the enforcement and implementation of the state plan.

➤ **State Disaster Response Force** - As per Section 3.4.5 of National Policy on Disaster Management 2009, the State Governments are required to raise their SDRF to quickly respond to disasters.

- ❖ Functions of SDRF are:
  - ✓ Used for Community Capacity Building and Awareness Generation programmes within the State.
  - ✓ Placed strategically at suitable locations well connected to the airport, railheads and roads for their immediate deployment at the disaster sites.
  - ✓ Pre-disaster planning by analysing the terrain and susceptible disaster sites.

➤ **State Disaster Response Fund** - The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has been constituted in each State under Section 48 (1) (a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

- ❖ The fund is the primary fund available to State

Governments for responses to notified disasters.

- ❖ The Central Government contributes 75% to the SDRF in general States and 90% in North-East and Himalayan States.

**Bodies at the District Level:**

➤ **District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)** - Every state government should have to establish a DDMA for every district in the state.

- ❖ It consists of a chairperson and other members, not exceeding seven.
- ❖ The Collector or DM or DC of the district is the ex-officio chairperson of the DDMA.
- ❖ The functions of the DDMA are:

- ✓ To prepare a disaster management plan including a district response plan for the district.
- ✓ To coordinate and monitor the implementation of the national policy, state policy, national plan, state plan, and district plan.
- ✓ Identification of the vulnerable sites in the district and suitable measures for the prevention of disasters.
- ✓ To organise and coordinate specialised training programmes for different levels of district officers, employees, and voluntary rescue workers.

**Other Key Entities:**

➤ **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society** - NGOs, community-based organizations, and civil society groups also contribute to disaster management efforts through their expertise, resources, and community engagement.

- ❖ E.g., Doers is a humanitarian organization dedicated to enhancing resilience and sustainability in the Indian Himalayas through disaster preparedness, mapping, capacity building, and research.

➤ **Research and Training Institutions:** India has several research and training institutions dedicated to disaster management and risk reduction.

- ❖ E.g., the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) and the National Disaster Response Academy (NIDRA).

➤ **Early Warning Systems** - India has established various early warning systems for different types of disasters, including cyclone warning systems, flood forecasting, and earthquake monitoring, to provide

timely information to the public and authorities.

- ❖ E.g., Landslide Early Warning System has been installed in various parts of the H.P.

- **Community-Based Disaster Management Committees:** At the grassroots level, local communities are encouraged to form disaster management committees to enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts at the community level.

**Issues Related to the Disaster Management Framework:**

- **Absence of Disaster-prone Zones** - The Act doesn't define disaster-prone areas, making it hard to plan for and prevent disasters effectively.
- **Neglects Progressive Nature** - The Act ignores slow-onset disasters like disease outbreaks and missing opportunities for timely intervention.
- E.g., the pandemic exposed the limitation of the framework.
- **Overlapping Functions** - The Act establishes redundant national bodies, leading to coordination issues, while local authorities lack clear guidance and support.
- **Procedural Delays and Inadequate Technology** - The Act suffers from procedural delays and lacks the necessary technology for accurate prediction and measurement of disasters, resulting in significant damage.

**Way Forward:**

- **Defining Disaster-Prone Zones** - Create a comprehensive national database mapping disaster-prone areas based on historical data, vulnerability assessments, and scientific analysis.
- **Accounting for Progressive Disasters** - Amend the Act to include provisions for addressing slow-onset disasters and related machinery.
- **Streamlining Functions** - Streamline national bodies' functions with clear roles, improve coordination through meetings, shared resources, and data, and empower local authorities with training and resources.
- **Public Awareness and Participation** - Engage communities in disaster risk reduction efforts through awareness campaigns, training, and community-based disaster management plans.
- **International Collaboration** - Collaborate with neighbouring countries and international organizations for a coordinated response to transboundary disasters and access to global expertise and resources.

By addressing these issues and implementing the

suggested improvements, India can strengthen its disaster management framework, reduce vulnerabilities, and enhance its resilience in the face of various disasters.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Governance is how decisions are made and enforced in a group or society, involving laws, norms, power, and communication.

- Whereas, Good Governance is defined as the optimal utilisation of the resources of a nation by its government so that the benefits arise from the resources reach every section of the society equally.

**The Characteristics of the Good Governance are:**



- **Participation** - An opportunity for everyone to voice their opinions through institutions or representations.
- **Rule of law** - To implement good governance, the legal framework in the country must be enforced impartially, especially concerning human rights law.
- **Transparency** - It means the power-holding institutions must require to provide information, related to policy-making to the public.
- **Responsiveness** - Good governance needs institutions and processes to attempt to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time.
- **Consensus-oriented** - This fifth principle is related to the decision-making process. When the decision-making process cannot accommodate everyone's wishes, then at a minimum, the decision must be a decision that can be accepted by everyone and does not harm anyone.
- **Equity and inclusiveness** - Good governance ensures that everyone has the same opportunity to maintain and improve their welfare.
- **Effectiveness and efficiency** - Every decision-making process and its institutions must be able to produce decisions that meet every community's needs.
  - ❖ Community resources must also be utilised

optimally by the government.

- **Accountability** - Every institution engaged in good governance should be held accountable to the public for their actions and policies.

**Significance of Good Governance:**

- **Enhanced Accountability** - Good governance promotes transparency, which ensures responsible public servants and government.
- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** It helps in the efficient allocation of resources, both human and financial, and promotes equality.
- **Rule of Law** - Good governance upholds the rule of law, which is essential for maintaining order and justice in society.
  - ❖ It ensures that laws are enacted and enforced fairly and consistently.
- **Protection of Human Rights** - It ensures the protection of individuals’ fundamental rights and freedoms, creating a conducive atmosphere in which people can lead their lives freely and express themselves without the worry of facing discrimination or persecution.
- **Economic Development** - Good governance fosters an environment conducive to economic growth and development. It attracts investments, promotes entrepreneurship, and creates jobs, ultimately leading to higher living standards.
- **Political Stability:** Countries with good governance are more likely to experience political stability, reducing the risk of conflicts and civil unrest.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Environmental governance, a component of good governance, tackles environmental concerns crucial for sustainable resource management and safeguarding the environment for future generations.
- **Trust and Legitimacy** - Good governance builds trust in government institutions and enhances their legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Citizens are more likely to participate in civic activities when they have confidence in their government.
- **Reduced Corruption** - Transparent and accountable governance systems are less susceptible to corrupt practices, which can drain resources and erode public trust.

**Challenges to the Good Governance:**

- **Centralization Challenge** - Excessive central control leads to policies disconnected from citizens’ needs, resulting in a gap between required services and what’s provided.

- **Capacity Building Deficiency** - Inadequate training for personnel hampers law implementation, causing policies and laws to suffer from poor execution.
- **Citizen Awareness Gap** - Limited understanding of duties and rights among citizens hinders good governance, creating obstacles in complying with laws.
- **Civil Servants’ Attitude Concern** - The inflexible and self-perpetuating nature of civil services is a worry, as it makes officers insensitive and fosters an authority-cantered culture.
- **Criminalisation of Politics** - This is a major challenge for good governance as a law-breaking person involved in the law-making process.
- **Corruption** - Corruption has deeply infiltrated the executive system, resulting in inefficiency and ineffectiveness in governance.
- **Lack of Accountability** - Government officials and bureaucrats remain unaccountable to the general public due to inadequate supervision of the executive’s actions and a lack of transparency in policy development and execution.

**Way Forward to Ensure Good Governance:**

- **Decartelised Planning** - Promote active involvement of local communities in shaping policies and development initiatives to prioritize citizen-centred progress.
- **Capacity Building** - Provide executives with sufficient training and guidance to ensure proper and efficient implementation of the various policies and welfare initiatives.
- **Awareness Generation** - Utilize a range of programs and frameworks to foster awareness among citizens about their rights and responsibilities, with a particular focus on empowering marginalized segments of society.
- **Behavioural Change Program** - Launch reform initiatives and enforce a robust code of conduct for civil servants to change the colonial attitude of civil servants and promote empathy toward citizens.
  - ❖ E.g., Mission Karmayogi.
- **Prevent Criminalisation of Politics** - Adopt a strict and zero-tolerant policy against the corruption and entry of criminals in law-making processes.
- **Use of Technology** - Use new technologies to provide various services, which curb corruption practices and also enhance transparency and accountability.
  - ❖ E.g., Faceless Assessment Scheme, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), etc.

**Difference Between Good Governance and Inclusive Governance:**

Aspects	Good Governance	Inclusive Governance
Definition	Effective and responsible management of resources and affairs to promote the well-being of citizens or members.	Emphasizes meaningful and equitable participation of all segments of society, including marginalized groups.
Focus	Quality of governance, efficiency, transparency, accountability, rule of law.	Representation and participation of a wide range of stakeholders in decision-making.
Principles	Transparency, accountability, responsiveness, efficiency, and rule of law.	Inclusivity, diversity, participation, representation.
Outcomes	Economic growth, stability, and effective public service delivery.	Social cohesion, reduced inequality, social justice.
Examples	Mission Karmayogi, Faceless Assessment Scheme, Direct Benefit Transfer, etc.	Reservation for SCs, STs, Women in PRIs, ULBs and legislative assemblies, empowerment of Gram Sabhas of scheduled areas by PESA act, participation of Communities in development programs, etc.

Efforts to promote good governance should be ongoing and responsive to the evolving needs of society. By prioritizing good governance, nations can create a more just, prosperous, and sustainable future for all their citizens, fostering an environment where individuals can thrive, businesses can flourish, and communities can prosper.

**Accountability and Transparency**

**Transparency**

- Transparency in public services involves government agencies being open and accountable, and sharing

information about their activities and decisions with the public to foster trust and understanding.

**Accountability**

- Accountability in public services means that government agencies and officials are responsible for their actions and decisions.
- They are answerable to the public and oversight bodies, ensuring transparency and ethical conduct in delivering public services.

**Relationship Between Transparency and Accountability:**

Transparency and accountability are interconnected principles that go hand in hand:

- **Mutual Reinforcement** - Transparency supports accountability by providing the information needed for scrutiny and evaluation of actions and decisions of the public servants.
- **Consequence Mechanism** - Accountability enforces responsible behaviour by ensuring that individuals or entities are held answerable for their actions, which in turn promotes transparency as it discourages hidden or unethical conduct.
- **Trust and Confidence** - Transparency builds trust through openness, while accountability strengthens that trust.
- **Effective Governance** - Together, transparency and accountability are fundamental for effective governance, as they foster responsible decision-making, ethical conduct, and the efficient allocation of resources, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.

**Significance of the Accountability and Transparency:**

- **Generate Trust** - Transparency in governance and accessible government policy information fosters trust in citizens towards public institutions.
- **Ensure Equality** - Accountability and transparency ensure efficient resource utilization and equitable service distribution across society.
- **Curb Corruption** - Transparent and accountable governance is a key deterrent to corruption.
- **Democratic Participation** - They encourage citizen engagement and participation in the decision-making process.
- **Improvement and Innovation** - They stimulate improvements and innovations in governance processes as accountability reveals areas in need of reform.
- **Citizen Empowerment** - Accountability and

transparency empower citizens to engage in government, hold it accountable, and influence decisions that affect their lives.

**Various initiatives started by the Government to Ensure Transparency and Accountability:**

- **Right to Information Act of 2005** - This law empowers Indian citizens to seek any accessible information from a Public Authority and makes the Government and its functionaries more accountable and responsible.
- **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013** - It provides an effective way to counter corruption at all levels of government and brings transparency and accountability to the system.
- **Social Audits** - Social audit in India, initiated with the MGNREGA Act in 2005, aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in social welfare program governance and execution.
- **Government e-Marketplace (GEM) Portal** - Public procurement through the GEM portal has been started to ensure a transparent procurement process.
- **Faceless Assessment Scheme** - The Faceless Assessment Scheme was introduced by the Central Government to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in income tax assessments.
- **Citizen Charters** - The Citizen's Charter outlines government agencies' responsibilities and sets clear service timelines, enhancing their accountability to citizens.
- **E-Governance** - E-Governance initiatives aim to establish an accountable administration by efficiently addressing public grievances and providing on-time delivery of services.
  - ❖ E.g., such as the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRMS), Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), e-billing, etc.

Overall, transparency and accountability are not only critical for good governance but also for fostering trust, citizen empowerment, and the efficient functioning of a democratic society.

**Citizen Charter**

A citizen's charter is a concise, written document that outlines the rights, services, and service standards provided by government agencies to citizens, promoting transparency, accountability, and improved service delivery.

**Principles of Citizen Charter:**

The six principles of the Citizen's Charter movement as originally framed are:

- **Quality** - Improving the quality of services;
- **Choice** - Wherever possible;
- **Standards** - Specifying what to expect and how to act if standards are not met;
- **Value** - For the taxpayers' money;
- **Accountability** - Individuals and Organisations;
- **Transparency** - Rules/Procedures/Schemes/Grievances.



**Significance of the Citizen Charter:**

- **Transparency** - A citizen's charter promotes transparency by clearly outlining the services provided, the procedures to access them, and the expected standards of service delivery.
- **Accountability** - It holds government agencies and public service providers accountable for their actions and services.
- **Citizen Empowerment** - Citizen charters empower by informing citizens of their rights, enabling them to demand better services and exercise their rights effectively.
- **Improved Service Quality** - The existence of a citizen's charter can drive organizations to improve the quality of their services.
- **Redressal Mechanisms** - Citizen charters include grievance mechanisms, assuring citizens that issues will be addressed, and increasing their confidence in the system.
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness** - Citizen's charters streamline government operations, boosting service efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Trust Building** - A citizen's charter can help build trust between the government and its citizens. When people have clear expectations and see that these expectations are being met, it fosters trust in public

institutions.

- **Benchmarking** - Citizen charters can serve as benchmarks for comparison between different government agencies or service providers.
- **Continuous Improvement** - Citizen feedback on charters drives service improvement, fostering ongoing enhancements in quality.

**Challenges Related to the Citizen Charter:**

- **Minimal Consultation:** Organizations often created Citizen's Charters due to top-down directives, leading to minimal or absent consultation. This made the Charter routine without a clear focus.
- **Lack of Employee Training:** Effective implementation of Citizen's Charters relies on well-trained and informed employees. In many cases, staff were not adequately trained and sensitized to the Charter's spirit and content.
- **Disruptive Transfers:** Critical officer transfers during the formulation or implementation stages of Citizen's Charters disrupted strategic processes, hindering the initiative's progress.
- **Inadequate Awareness Campaigns:** Organizations did not systematically conduct awareness campaigns to educate clients about the Citizen's Charter, resulting in limited public knowledge.
- **Unrealistic Standards:** Some Citizen's Charters set service standards or time norms that were either too lax or too stringent, creating an unfavourable impression among clients.
- **Misunderstood Concept:** The fundamental concept behind Citizen's Charters was often not properly understood. Information brochures, publicity materials, and pamphlets were sometimes mistaken for the actual Charters confusing.
- **One for All Approach** - One ministry drafted one charter for all organisations and departments without considering the specific requirements of the departments.
- **Difficult Language** - The language used in Charters is vague and difficult, making it hard for consumers to understand the objectives.

**Way Forward:**

- Recommendations provided by 2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Reform Commission:
  - ❖ **Specify Remedy and Compensation** - Ensure that charters define remedies and compensation in case standards are not met.
  - ❖ **Prioritize Realistic Promises** - Limit promises to achievable commitments instead of lengthy unfulfilled lists.

- ❖ **Restructure Processes** - Organizational setup and processes should be revamped before charter creation.
- ❖ **Local Customization** - Customize charters to local needs instead of a uniform approach across organizations.
- ❖ **Inclusive Drafting** - Involve all stakeholders in charter development.
- ❖ **Firm Commitments and Redressal** - Maintain strong commitments and establish citizen-friendly redressal mechanisms.
- ❖ **Accountability** - Hold officers accountable for unmet commitments.
- ❖ **Regular Review** - Periodically review and revise citizen charters for relevance and effectiveness.

By addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, governments can unlock the full potential of the Citizen's Charter, building trust between citizens and public institutions, and fostering continuous improvement in the quality of services provided.

**Various Role of Deputy Commissioner**

The general administration of the district is vested with the Deputy Commissioner. He holds the roles of Deputy Commissioner, District Magistrate, and Collector simultaneously.

**Various duties performed by the Deputy Commissioner are:**

- **District Administration** - The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for the overall administration of the district.
  - ❖ They serve as the head of the district administration;
  - ❖ Responsible for maintaining law and order;
  - ❖ Coordinating various government activities at the district level;
  - ❖ Ensuring the smooth functioning of government offices within the district.
- **Revenue Administration** - The Deputy Commissioner is the highest-ranking revenue officer in the district.
  - ❖ Responsible for land revenue collection, land acquisition, and revenue records maintenance;
  - ❖ Resolving land-related disputes;
  - ❖ Implementing land reforms.
- **Disaster Management** - The various roles of DC related to disaster management are:
  - ❖ **Leadership Role** - The Deputy Commissioner

serves as the ex-officio chairperson of the District Disaster Management Authority, providing vital leadership during times of crisis.

- ❖ **Contingency Planning** - Responsible for drawing up contingency plans to address disasters in the state, ensuring preparedness for various scenarios.
  - ❖ **Relief and Rescue Coordination** - The Deputy Commissioner plays a pivotal role in coordinating relief and rescue operations, offering aid and support to affected communities.
  - ❖ **Policy Implementation Oversight** - In the realm of disaster management, the Deputy Commissioner coordinates and monitors the implementation of various plans and policies, ensuring efficient execution.
  - ❖ **NGO Collaboration** - The Deputy Commissioner also collaborates with NGOs capable of assisting during or after disasters, fostering partnerships to enhance disaster response and recovery efforts.
- **Elections** - The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for conducting elections within the district, including parliamentary, assembly, and local body elections.
- ❖ He/she is appointed as Returning Officer during the election of Lok-Sabha or legislative assemblies.
  - ❖ Secure elections that are transparent and unbiased.
  - ❖ **Development Administration** - The DC is responsible for managing and coordinating development programs in the district, working with other government departments to tackle issues like education, healthcare, infrastructure, and social welfare.
- **Civil Services** - The DC supervises and coordinates the work of various civil services officers in the district, including the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and Indian Revenue Service (IRS), among others.
- ❖ They provide leadership and guidance to these officers in their respective areas of expertise.
- **Law and Order** - He/she works closely with the Superintendent of Police (SP) to handle law enforcement and security-related issues.
- **Crisis Management** - In times of crises like protests or emergencies, the Deputy Commissioner ensures peace and order by managing and resolving such situations.
- **Budget Management** - The Deputy Commissioner manages the district's budget and ensures that

government funds are allocated and utilized effectively for various developmental and administrative purposes.

- **Coordination with Central and State Governments** - They maintain a close working relationship with the state and central government authorities to ensure the effective implementation of government policies and programs at the district level.

**Role of Deputy Commissioner as District Collector:**

- **Revenue Collection** - He is accountable for gathering land revenue, various government taxes, fees, and any outstanding dues as arrears of land revenue.
- **Updated Land Rights Records** - He is responsible for ensuring the maintenance of accurate and up-to-date records of rights as regards the land.
- **Appointment of Revenue Staff** - He appoints Patwaris, Kanungos, and administrative staff in various offices, excluding the Superintendent of the Deputy Commissioner's Office and some subordinate revenue staff.
- **Judicial Authority** - As the District Collector, he holds the highest judicial authority for revenue matters within the district.

**Role of Deputy Commissioner as District Magistrate:**

- **Maintenance of Law and Order** - The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for maintaining law and order in the district, acting as the head of criminal administration, and supervising all Executive Magistrates.
- **Control of Police** - The Deputy Commissioner exercises control over and provides direction to the actions of the local police force.
- **Supervision of Jails and Lock-ups** - This role includes supervisory authority over the administration of jails and lock-up facilities within the district.
- **Issuance of Adoption Order** - The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Rules, 2022 has empowered the District Magistrates to issue adoption orders.
- **Issuance of Arms and Ammunition License** - The District Magistrate provides arms and ammunition licenses under the Arms Act.
- **Restriction on Assemblies** - Under Section 144 of the CrPC., he can control unlawful assemblies and implement curfews as needed.

Hence, the Deputy Commissioner has a multifaceted role, which is essential in ensuring effective governance and the well-being of the district's residents.



**E-Governance**

E-Governance, short for Electronic Governance, refers to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance and streamline government operations, improve service delivery to citizens, promote transparency and accountability, and engage with the public.

- It involves the digitalization and automation of government processes and services to make them more efficient, accessible, and citizen-centric.

**The principle under the E-Governance:**

E-Governance driven by the SMART principles (Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent).

- **Simple** - Simplify government rules and processes with technology for a user-friendly experience.
- **Moral** - Using technology to improve how government agencies work, making them more efficient and ethical in their operations.
- **Accountable** - Establishing systems to monitor and hold public servants accountable for their performance.
- **Responsive** - Accelerating government processes for swift response to people’s needs through increased efficiency.
- **Transparent** - Sharing government information via websites and portals to make actions and processes transparent and accessible to all.

**Benefits of the E-Governance:**

**BENEFITS OF E-GOVERNMENT**



- **Efficient Service Delivery** - Streamlining government processes and utilizing technology can

lead to quicker and more effective service delivery, reducing bureaucracy and delays.

- **Citizen Empowerment** - Providing easy access to government data and policies empowers citizens to make informed decisions and engage in civic participation.
- **Promote Good Governance** - Modernizing administrative systems can lead to better resource allocation, performance monitoring, and decision-making within government agencies.
- **Curb the Corruption** - Transparency and digitalization can reduce opportunities for corrupt practices, promoting a cleaner and more accountable government.
- **Increased Transparency and Accountability** - Open data and accountability measures build trust and ensure that government actions are visible and understandable to the public.
- **Greater convenience to citizens and businesses:** Digital services and streamlined processes make it easier for people and companies to interact with the government.
- **Cost Reduction** - Furthermore, it contributes to the reduction in the cost of the governance.
- **Increased Legitimacy of the Government** - Effective governance and responsiveness to citizens’ needs enhance the government’s legitimacy and credibility.
- **Flatten’s organizational structure (less hierarchic)** - Reducing layers of bureaucracy can make decision-making more agile and responsive to changing circumstances.

**Various Initiatives Started by the Indian Government to Promote E-Governance:**

- **Common Services Centres** - CSCs are offering government and business services in digital mode in rural areas through Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs).
  - ❖ Over 400 digital services are being offered by these CSCs.
- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG)** - for providing government services to citizens through mobile.
  - ❖ More than 1,570 government services and over 22,000 bill payment services are made available at UMANG.
- **The e-District Mission Mode Project (MMP)** - E-MMP is a nationwide initiative in India that offers a range of e-services to citizens at district and sub-district levels.

- ❖ These services include certificates (birth, caste, death, income, and resident), pensions (old age, disability, and widow), electoral services, consumer court support, revenue court assistance, etc.
- ❖ Currently, 4,671 e-services are available across 709 districts in India.
- **DigiLocker** - It is facilitating the paperless availability of public documents.
  - ❖ Digital Locker has more than 11.7 crore users and more than 532 crore documents are made available through DigiLocker from 2,167 issuer organisations.
- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI)** - UPI is the leading digital payment platform.
  - ❖ It is integrated with 330 banks and facilitated over 586 crore monthly transactions worth over Rs 10 lakh crore has been facilitated for June 2022.
- **Mukhya Mantri Seva Sankalp Yojana** - Under Mukhyamantri Seva Sankalp Yojana, Himachal Pradesh Government has initiated a portal on which citizens can lodge complaints regarding diverse issues online.

**Challenges to E-Governance in India:**

- **Digital Divide** – In India, the accessibility of internet-based services is inadequately available.
  - ❖ E.g., In the poorest 20% of households, only 2.7% have computers and 8.9% have internet access. Rural internet usage is 31%, while urban usage is 67%.
- **Language Barrier** – The availability of most of the E-services in the English language further hinders the implementation of e-services.
  - ❖ E.g., only 10% population of India is estimated to speak in English language.
- **Digital Illiteracy** – This is one of the major hurdles.
  - ❖ E.g., only 38 per cent of households in the country are digitally literate.
- **Lack of Digital Infrastructure** - In numerous regions, particularly in rural and remote areas, reliable internet connectivity and digital infrastructure are lacking or non-existent.
- **Fragmented Services** - There is a lack of integration among most e-governance services provided by both state and central governments.

- **Privacy and Security Issues** – In the era of cyber-crimes and lack of data security legislation, further hinders the achievement of goals of e-governance.
- **Lack of Awareness** – Lack of awareness about the e-services among the masses is also a major concern.
- **Lack of Efficient Grievance Redressal Mechanism** - The lack of a quick and efficient system for addressing complaints is a significant issue.

**Way Forward:**

- **Infrastructure Development** - Focus on expanding internet infrastructure in rural and remote areas through public-private partnerships.
  - ❖ Initiatives like the BharatNet project can be accelerated to provide affordable broadband access to every village.
- **Digital Literacy Programs** – Ensure proper and mission-mode implementation of nationwide digital literacy campaigns, targeting both urban and rural populations.
  - ❖ E.g., Digital India Program.
- **Local Language Content** - Translate and offer government services in multiple Indian languages to overcome the language barrier.
  - ❖ An Indian research group called Jugabandi is using AI to develop a mobile app that provides government scheme information in multiple languages.
- **Integrated Services** - Develop a unified platform for e-governance services that integrates offerings from both state and central governments.
  - ❖ E.g., the UMANG app offers access to over 1668 government services and a wide range of 20,197 bill payment services through a mobile platform.
- **Privacy and Security Measures** - Implement robust data protection and cybersecurity measures and establish dedicated cybercrime units.
  - ❖ E.g., Data Protection Bill of 2023.
- **Awareness Campaigns** - Launch nationwide awareness campaigns about the availability and benefits of e-services by using both traditional and digital media for outreach.
- **Efficient Grievance Redressal** - Establish a digital platform for citizens to submit and track their complaints and strengthen the existed platforms.
  - ❖ E.g., Centralised Public Grievance Redress and

**Monitoring System (CPGRAMS).**

- **Community Engagement** - Involve local communities and grassroots organizations in promoting e-governance.
- **Incentives for Adoption** - Provide incentives, such as discounts on government services or cashback schemes, to encourage citizens to use digital services.

E-Governance can revolutionize India's governance, enhancing inclusivity, efficiency, and accountability. By overcoming challenges and embracing technology, India can ensure accessible government services and empower citizens in the democratic process.

**Local Self Government**

Local self-government refers to the administration of local matters by elected local bodies, entrusted with this responsibility by the local populace.

- This system encompasses governance in both rural and urban settings and constitutes the third tier of government.
- It is characterized by the operation of two distinct types of local government entities: Panchayats in rural regions and Municipalities in urban areas.

**Panchayati Raj System (PRI)**

- Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) is a system of rural local self-government in India.
- The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act provided the PRI with a constitutional status.

**Significance of the Act:**

- **Added New Schedule** - The act added the 11<sup>th</sup> schedule to the constitution. This schedule contains 29 function items of the panchayats.
- **Remove State's Hegemony** - PRI elections and tenure are now subject to judicial review, removing state legislature control.
- **Gram Sabha** - The act provides for the establishment of the Gram Sabha as the foundation of the PRI.
- **Three-Tier System** - It provides for a three-tier system of PRI, i.e., Gram Panchayats at the village level, Panchayat Samitis at the intermediary or block level and Zila Parishad at the district level.
- **Elections of the Members** - All the members of PRI are elected directly by the people.
- **Reservation of the Seats** - It provides for reservation of the seats for SCs, STs, and Women.
- **Duration of Panchayats** - The act provides for a

five-year term of office to the Panchayats at every level.

- **Disqualification** - The act also provides for the disqualification of the members of the PRI.
- **Formation of State Election Commission** - It consists of the formation of State Election Commission to conduct, supervise and control the elections of PRI.
- **Provisions for Finance Commission** - It also provides for the formation of a Finance Commission by the Governor, after every five years to review the financial position of the Panchayats.
- **Powers and Functions** - The act also provides for the power and functions of the PRI.

**Compulsory and Voluntary Provisions under the Act:**

**Compulsory Provisions:**

- ❖ Organisation of Gram Sabhas.
- ❖ Establishment of Panchayats at every level.
- ❖ Direct Elections to all the seats.
- ❖ Voting rights to the chairperson and other members of panchayats elected directly or indirectly.
- ❖ Reservation of seats.
- ❖ Fixing tenure of Panchayats at every level.
- ❖ Establishment of State Election Commission and State Finance Commission.

**Voluntary Provisions:**

- ❖ Endowing powers and functions to the Gram Sabhas.
- ❖ Determining the manner of elections of the chairpersons of the village panchayat.
- ❖ Giving reservations to the chairpersons of the intermediary panchayats in the district panchayats.
- ❖ Provide reservation of seats to OBCs.
- ❖ Devolution of powers and responsibility.
- ❖ Granting financial powers to the panchayats.
- ❖ Making grant-in-aid to the panchayats from the consolidated fund of the state.

**Significance of Granting Local Self Government in Rural areas:**

- **Empowerment of Rural Communities** - It empowers rural communities by giving them a say in local governance, allowing them to make decisions on matters that directly affect their lives.
- **Effective Local Development** - Local governments can better address local issues and needs, leading to

more efficient and effective development initiatives tailored to the specific requirements of the area.

- **Enhanced Accountability** - It promotes transparency and accountability in governance, as local leaders are directly accountable to the people they serve.
- **Promotion of Grassroots Democracy** - It fosters grassroots democracy by encouraging local participation in the decision-making process, thus strengthening the overall democratic framework.
- **Economic Development** - Local self-governments can facilitate economic development by planning and implementing local infrastructure projects, promoting local businesses, and attracting investments.
- **Social Inclusion** - It can help address social inequalities by ensuring that marginalized and underrepresented groups have a voice in local governance.
- **Cultural Preservation** - Local governments can play a role in preserving and promoting local cultures and traditions, which is often crucial in rural areas.

**Various Issues Related to PRIs:**

- **Lack of Adequate Devolution** – The state has not taken adequate steps to dissolve adequate fiscal powers, even after many recommendations of the State Finance Commission.
- **Limited Autonomy and State Oversight** - Gram Panchayats have limited control over their lone employee, while in Panchayat Samitis, the Block Development Officer (BDO) serves as the Ex-Officio Secretary, appointed by the State Government.
- **Tied Nature of Funds** – Activities in a certain scheme may not fit all parts of the district, causing ineffective promotions and fund underutilization.
- **The Sarpanch Pati Syndrome** - The “Sarpanch Pati Syndrome” has undermined the core goal of women’s empowerment.
- **Corruption** – Corruption within Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) has become widespread in recent times.
- **Reluctance to Use Fiscal Power** – An important power devolved to Gram- Panchayat is the right to levy taxes, but very few panchayats use their fiscal power to levy and collect the taxes.
- **Creation of Parallel Bodies** – Creating parallel bodies for speedy implementation and accountability often doesn’t prevent issues like partisan politics, corruption, and elite capture.
- **Poor Infrastructure** – A large number of gramme Panchayats in the state do not have even full-time secretaries. Many panchayats do not have basic office buildings
- **Lack of Awareness** - A large number of elected representatives of Panchayati Rajasthan are semi-

literate or literate and know little about their roles and responsibilities, programme, procedure, and system.

- **Lack of Digital Infrastructure** – According to the e-Swaraj portal of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, out of 3615 Panchayats in Himachal Pradesh, only 2031 i.e., 56% of Panchayats are connected to the internet

**Way Forward:**

- **Incentivizing Devolution** - Rewarding states that delegate more functions, funds, and functionaries to Panchayats.
- **Capacity Building** - Providing financial and technical assistance for enhancing Panchayat capabilities.
- **Financial Transparency** - Strengthening budgeting, accounting, and auditing systems to ensure fiscal transparency.
- **Technology Integration** - Development of software applications for efficient Panchayat management and imparting training for Panchayats to utilize these applications effectively.
- **Accountability Enhancement** - Promoting transparency, accountability, and efficiency in Panchayat operations.
- **Performance Recognition** - Granting incentive awards to outstandingly performing Panchayats.
- **Participatory Planning** - Assisting states in formulating guidelines for participatory Gram Panchayat Development Plans and empowering Gram Panchayats to utilize available resources effectively.
- **Infrastructural Development** – Ensure availability of proper staff, buildings and adequate digital availability.
- **Strict Action Against Sarpanch Pati Syndrome** – Periodic audits and reviews must be conducted to check and remove Sarpanch Pati Syndrome.

In summary, India’s Panchayati Raj System, established by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, decentralizes power, empowers rural communities, and enhances local governance. But, challenges like limited autonomy and corruption persist. Addressing these issues and promoting transparency is crucial for its success.

**Urban Local Bodies**

The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act provided the constitutional status to the Urban Local Bodies.

- These bodies are responsible for managing and providing various essential services and infrastructure in cities and towns.

**The Salient Features of the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional**

**Amendment Act are:**

- **Added New Schedule** – It added the 12<sup>th</sup> schedule to the Constitution of India.
- **End the Hegemony of the State** – It brought the elections and tenure of municipalities under the preview of the justiciable part of the Constitution.
- **Three-Tier Municipalities** – The act provides for three types of municipalities, i.e., Nagar Panchayats, Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations.
- **Composition** – The act also provides for the composition of the three-tier municipalities.
- **Ward Committees** – It provides for the establishment of ward committees, within a territorial area of municipalities, having a population of 3 lakhs or more.
- **Reservation of the Seats** – It provides for the reservation of seats for SCs, STs and Women at every level.
- **Duration of Municipalities** – The act provides for a five-year term of office for every municipality.
- **Disqualification** – The act also provides for the disqualification of the members of the municipality.
- **Formation of State Election Commission** – It consists of the formation of State Election Commission to conduct, supervise and control the elections of ULBs.
- **Provisions for Finance Commission** – It also provides for the formation of a Finance Commission by the Governor, after every five years to review the financial position of the ULBs.
- **Powers and Functions** – The act also provides for the power and functions of the ULBs.

**Types of Urban Government:**

- **Municipal Corporation** – Municipal corporations are created for the administration of big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Shimla, etc.
  - ❖ They are established in the states by the acts of the concerned state legislatures and in the UTs by the acts of the parliament.
  - ❖ The Municipal Corporation has three authorities, namely the Council, the Standing Committees, and the Commissioner.
- **Municipalities** – The municipalities are established for the administration of towns and smaller cities.
  - ❖ They are also established in the states by the acts of the concerned state legislatures and in the UTs by the acts of the parliament.
  - ❖ Like a municipal corporation, a municipality also has three authorities, the Council, the Standing

Committees and the Chief Executive Officer.

- **Notified Area Committee** – A Notified Area Committee is established to govern two types of areas; fast-developing towns undergoing industrialization and towns considered important by the state government but not meeting the conditions for municipality formation.
  - ❖ Its powers are almost equivalent to those of a municipality but unlike the municipality, it is an entirely nominated body.
  - ❖ It is neither an elected body nor a statutory body.
- **Town Area Committee** - The Town Area Committee is present in small towns and exercises limited jurisdiction, primarily overseeing tasks like street lighting, drainage, roads, and sanitation.
  - ❖ It may be wholly elected or wholly nominated, or partly elected or partly nominated body.
- **Cantonment Board** – A cantonment board is established for municipal administration for the civilian population in the cantonment area.
  - ❖ It is set up under the act of parliament.
  - ❖ It works under the administration control of the Defence Ministry.
  - ❖ It consists of partly elected and partially nominated members.
- **Township** - A Township is an alternative urban governance model designed to offer essential services to staff and workers residing in colonies near industrial plants.
  - ❖ It lacks elected representatives and essentially functions as an extension of the bureaucratic hierarchy.
  - ❖ It has no elected members.
- **Port Trust** - Port Trusts are set up in port regions like Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, and others.
  - ❖ They oversee and maintain the ports while also offering essential public services to the residents in the vicinity.
  - ❖ It consists of both elected and nominated members.
- **Special Purpose Agency** – These are established by the state government for special purposes.
  - ❖ These can be established as a statutory body by an act of state legislature or as departments by an executive resolution.

**Issues Related to the ULBs:**

- **Delay in Municipal Elections** - One significant issue affecting municipal self-governance in India is the frequent and arbitrary postponement of municipal elections by various states.
- **Hurdles for State Election Commission** - State Election Commissions are hindered by the delay in delimitation of municipal wards, controlled by state governments. This hampers timely elections due to the lack of necessary boundaries for polling.
- **Lesser Functional Autonomy** - ULBs are not provided with enough powers and functions to operate smoothly and independently.
  - ❖ E.g., in states like Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Bihar, town planning continues to be performed by the state.
- **Lacking Financial Autonomy and Inadequate Revenue Base** - Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) rely heavily on state governments due to their lack of financial independence and the absence of a systematic process for resource allocation.
- **Lack of Adequate Skills of Municipal Employees** - Municipalities struggle with staff shortages and skill gaps, hindering their ability to efficiently deliver public services.
- **Poor Link with Urban Citizens** - The citizens in urban areas are rarely included or involved in decision-making, especially the marginalised and vulnerable sections of society who indeed are the most affected by the emerging crisis of urbanisation.
- **Corruption** - Corruption, favouritism, and nepotism are prevalent issues in these bodies.

**Way Forward:**

- **More Autonomy** - More subjects, powers and functions should be allotted to the ULBs to ensure effective local self-governance.
- **Ensure People's Participation** - To enhance civic participation, organize society into groups, including neighbourhood associations and NGOs, and also encourage youth involvement for better municipal governance.
- **Capacity Building** - Implement capacity-building programs to enhance municipal personnel's governance and management skills.
- **Timely Election** - To bolster ULBs, ensure minimum staffing in metropolitan areas and limit election delays to six months at most.
- **More Financial Autonomy** - New measures should be adopted to provide more financial autonomy to the ULBs. E.g., Municipal Bonds.

These bodies play a crucial role in managing and

providing essential services and infrastructure in cities and towns. By addressing these challenges and implementing these reforms, India can pave the way for better urban governance and improved quality of life for its urban citizens.

**Effective Service Delivery**

Effective service delivery in government means providing services efficiently and responsively to meet citizens' needs and expectations.

- It is a critical aspect of good governance and is essential for ensuring the well-being and satisfaction of the population.

**Key Principles of Effective Service Delivery are:**

- **Citizen-Centric Approach** - Effective service delivery should put citizens first, actively seeking their input to meet their needs and expectations.
- **Transparency** - Citizens should have access to information about government activities, budgets, and service standards.
- **Accountability** - Accountability ensures that government officials and agencies are held responsible for their actions and the use of public resources.
- **Effective Grievances Redressal Mechanism** - There should be mechanisms in place for citizens to report grievances and for government officials to respond to those grievances.
- **Efficiency** - Government agencies should strive to minimize wastage, reduce bureaucracy, and streamline processes.
- **Equity and Inclusivity** - Services must be distributed fairly to all, without discrimination. Special focus is needed on marginalized and vulnerable groups to meet their needs.
- **Quality** - Services should meet or exceed established quality standards.

**Significance of the Effective Service Delivery:**

- **Citizen Satisfaction** - High-quality service delivery directly impacts the satisfaction of citizens.
- **Trust and Legitimacy** - Effective service delivery builds trust in government institutions.
- **Social Equity** - Effective service delivery ensures that these services reach marginalized and vulnerable populations, reducing disparities in access to education, healthcare, and other critical services.
- **Economic Growth** - Efficient public services (e.g., infrastructure, transportation, education) boost business growth, attract investments, and drive economic development.
- **Political Stability** - Governments that fail to provide

basic services face protests, demonstrations, and social unrest, undermining their stability and ability to govern.

- **Rule of Law** - Effective service delivery contributes to the rule of law.
- **Productive Human Capital** - Effective service delivery in health, education, training, etc. creates productive human capital and fosters overall development.

**Various Initiatives by the Government to Provide ESD:**

- **Citizen Charters** - A Citizens' Charter represents the commitment of the Organisation towards standard, quality and time frame of service delivery, grievance redress mechanism, transparency and accountability.
- **Umang Portal** - UMANG is a mobile app offering 1,570+ government services and 22,000+ bill payment services to citizens.
- **Common Services Centres** - CSCs are offering government and business services in digital mode in rural areas through Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). Over 400 digital services are being offered by these CSCs.
- **Jan Dhan Yojana** - A financial inclusion initiative aimed at extending formal banking facilities and services to citizens, with a particular focus on marginalized sections of society.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** - Jal Jeevan Mission, is envisioned to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.
- **Ayushman Bharat Scheme** - Ayushman Bharat Yojana was established to offer medical benefits to underprivileged segments of society, providing healthcare coverage of Rs. 5 lakh per family annually to promote equity in society.
- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana** - Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is a government initiative in India, providing affordable housing access to low and moderate-income citizens through a credit-linked subsidy scheme.

**Challenges to the Effective Service Delivery:**

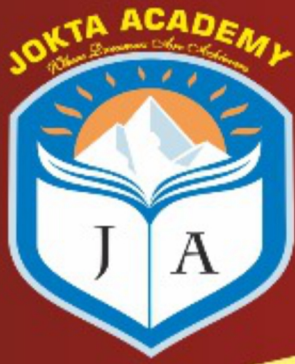
- **Resource Constraints** - Limited budgets and resources can hinder the government's ability to provide quality services.
- **Bureaucracy and Red Tape** - Excessive bureaucratic processes can slow down service delivery and increase inefficiencies.
- **Infrastructure Deficits** - Inadequate infrastructure, such as roads and communication networks, can impede the timely delivery of services.

- **Corruption** - Corruption within the system can divert resources away from their intended beneficiaries and erode trust in service delivery.
- **Geographic Barriers** - Serving remote or isolated areas can be logistically challenging, leading to delays and inefficiencies.
- **Capacity and Training** - Insufficient training and capacity-building among service providers can affect the quality and effectiveness of services.
- **Technology Gaps** - Lack of access to modern technology or outdated systems can hinder data management and service delivery processes.
- **Public Awareness** - Limited awareness among the target population about available services and how to access them can be a barrier.

**Measures to Improve Quality of Service Delivery:**

- **Invest in Employee Training and Development** - Providing ongoing training and professional growth opportunities ensures government employees have the necessary skills for high-quality service provision.
- **Utilize Data for Continuous Improvement** - Regularly collecting and analysing performance data helps identify areas for improvement, driving ongoing enhancements in service delivery.
- **Cultivate a Customer-Centric Culture** - Creating a culture focused on customer service within government agencies ensures that employees prioritize meeting citizens' needs and expectations.
- **Simplify Policies and Procedures** - Streamlining policies and procedures reduces bureaucracy and enhances service efficiency.
- **Engage Citizens in the Service Process** - Involving citizens in the delivery process ensures that services align with the needs and expectations of the people they serve.
- **Establish Clear Objectives and Performance Standards** - Clearly defining goals and performance standards is essential for consistent and effective service delivery.
- **Leverage Technology for Efficiency** - The use of reliable and user-friendly technology can significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

As governments continue to evolve their approaches to service delivery, the ultimate goal remains the same: to provide responsive, efficient, and high-quality services that enhance the well-being of their citizens and contribute to the overall development of society.



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