Time for the Indian bureaucracy to change?

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Starting from the era of Lord Cornwallis in the 18th century, the idea of civil service has been an integral part of our society and the way this society has been governed. From policy implementation, law and order, handling administration, and in earlier times even the judiciary was handled by civil servants, not only to govern but with such immense powers also to rule us. Since independence, the very structure used to oppress was transformed into the "steel frame" holding us together. Since then, several reforms and commissions have tried to establish a better and more suitable bureaucracy for its own people. Yet, since globalization, the bureaucracy and its rigid structures couldn't keep pace with the speed at which not only the economy but also the conscience of the public evolved. This resulted in the ever-increasing gap between the expectations of the society from the bureaucracy and the speed at which the bureaucracy was adapting to those needs. This created a need for reform. The 2nd ARC not only seconded the opinion of its predecessor but also added a few key parameters and desired objectives for the Indian bureaucracy. With the increasing digital growth in the world, the needs and means of the people will also change, and thus the way of administration will also have to be changed and civil services will have to be more adaptive. This creates a need for civil services reform "today".

Keywords: *bureaucracy, civil services reforms, administrative reforms commission.*

INTRODUCTION

India, the largest democracy on earth with over 130 crore individuals requires not just a constitution to govern, or a legislature to pump new regulations but an efficient and robust mechanism for fluidic execution of the same. This is where the bureaucracy comes in. The permanent executive alias "the civil servants" or say "bureaucracy" is the backbone of Indian policymaking and the execution exercise. Bureaucracy is a leadership that is capable of transforming vision into reality. To bring the ideas of the elected representatives on the floor the executive or the civil servants are the forefront vanguard standing tall as flagbearers. The permanent executive thus helps the political executive to implement the laws. Hence, bureaucracy generally implies a body of government employees tasked with the adaptation of the country and mandated to implement the policy of the government.

It is said that change is the only constant but unfortunately our civil service as a whole seems to have maintained its status quo instead of sweeping changes in the social and economic scenario. Some may say that it is the resilience of this service but the truth is that the Indian bureaucracy has not been successfully able to deliver service based upon what people and our founding fathers of the constitution expected. There comes a time when everything needs to be reformed to meet the concurrent demands of society and so is the time for our bureaucracy. This paper, is, therefore, an attempt to explain the problems affecting the Indian bureaucracy and the reforms that are needed to make it vibrant and delivered according to the expectations.

WHAT IS BUREAUCRACY?

A French economist *Vincent de Gourney* coined the term bureaucracy in 1745. The term *'bureau'* means writing table and office, and *'cracy'* is the Greek term for 'rule'. Bureaucracy for him meant the *"rule of officials"*. The German sociologist and political economist *Max Webber* was the first scholar who systematically studied analyzed and provided a theoretical framework for bureaucracy as a system of organization. The credit for the systematic formulation of bureaucratic theory goes to him. He defined bureaucracy as, "*structure of the organization that is*

characterized by rules and regulations, standardized processes, precise division of labour and responsibility, unambiguous hierarchies and professional, detached and impersonal interactions between the employees". He identified the bureaucracy with the legal-rational authority. According to Weber, the essence of bureaucracy is its rational character, that is, it is governed by a set of rules which is easily understood. He saw bureaucracy as an impersonal system operating based on known rules and implemented by full-time appointed officials. Therefore, the Weberian model of bureaucracy excludes the elected political executives. He regarded the bureaucracy based on the legal-rational authority as the most effective basis of an organization. He saw it as the most efficient organization formed for administrative purposes.

Impersonal order, separation of personal and public ends, written documents, rules, the sphere of competence, hierarchy, career services, etc. are some of the important elements of the Weberian model of bureaucracy. The terms bureaucracy and civil service have a common thread connecting them and in various contexts, they reflect and have a similar meaning. The term bureaucracy has come to denote the administration and hence the civil service is the body of permanent government officials who are appointed to run the country. In this paper we will be using the terms 'Bureaucracy' and 'Civil Service' as they both refer to the same- the public official appointed to the government with the mandate to serve the nation with the public interest.

EVOLUTION OF BUREAUCRACY

Though the term bureaucracy is of recent origin, a similar organizational structure had always existed in the past and since then has been ever existing in varying forms to perform the various functions of the state. In ancient India, *Kautilya'sArthasastra* provided for a bureaucracy-like structure that consisted of the 'mantris' and the 'amatyas'.While the mantris were the highest advisors to the king, amatyas were the civil servants. The system evolved into the 'mansabdari system' during the *Mughal rule.* The Mansabdars were the civil servants engaged in civil or military deployments.

It was finally the *East India company* that introduced the civil service system in the form as we know it today. Though it was started to benefit the company in its commercial affairs, later on, it got transformed into a well-structured apparatus to look after the administrative affairs of the acquired territories in India. Lord Cornwallis and Wellesley were the two Governor-Generals of India who took onto themselves the task of reforming civil services to end corruption and properly train the recruits. It was in 1854 when the *Macaulay Committee* gave India its first modern civil service. It recommended that the patronage-based system of the East India Company should be replaced by a permanent civil service built on a merit-based system through competitive entrance examination.

Post-Independence, while designing a successor civil service, the Indian political leaders choose to retain elements of the British structure of a unified administrative system. The bureaucracy was entrusted with the key responsibilities of nation-building. But it would not have been possible if the bureaucracy was not safeguarded from unforeseeable threats that could have come from either the politicians or the corruption. This is why the Constitution makers included *Part XIV* (Art. 308 to 323) in the Indian Constitution[1] which exclusively deals with the services under Central and State Governments. *Article 311[2]*, among all, is of remarkable importance as it protects the civil servants from any arbitrary dismissal, removal, or reduction in rank of any civil servant under the Union or a State.

ROLE OF BUREAUCRACY IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel once said, "*you will not have a united India if you do not have a good All India service which has the independence to speak out its mind.*" In addition to the role and importance indicated in the above quote, civil services also perform other, but not limited to, important functions such as:

- Providing crucial policy inputs to the legislature during **policy formulation** as they have the field experience exposure and expertise.

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[1] Constitution of India, 1950, art 308-323

[2] Constitution of India, 1950, art 311

- There are times when civil servants perform **delegated legislation**. Due to lack of time, pressure, and work legislators often make laws in skeleton form and delegate the power to the civil servants to fill in the details.

- A policy that has been formulated by the political executive and legislature gets implemented by the civil service. Thus, **policy implementation** becomes one of the most important functions of civil services.

- As said by Sardar Patel, in democratic nations which are characterized by political instability and immaturity, a permanent and well-structured bureaucracy is required to ensure and **promote unity and integrity of the nation**.

- Bureaucracy serves as the only way to **ensure social justice** in a non-egalitarian and asymmetrical society, where caste, religion, ethnicity, region, and language play a significant role in everyday life, the upper classes and elites do not, and will not, allow the deprived, oppressed and marginalized lower groups to share the economic, social and political power.

- Bureaucracy acts as an instrument of **national integration** in nations that are facing challenges of sub-nationalism and secessionism.

- Civil services also act as **major service providers** as it administers various kinds of services like education, health, transportation managing large-scale commercial services, etc.

ATTRIBUTES OF BUREAUCRACY

Max Weber said, "*Bureaucracy is by far the most efficient instrument of large-scale administration which has been developed and the modern social order has become overwhelming dependent on it*". The characteristics such as precision, discipline, strictness, continuity, and reliability are the underlying features of the bureaucracy. The main features of the bureaucracy can be broadly divided under the following two heads:

1) Structural Features -

- *Hierarchy -* It is a formal structure of a well-defined authority. Each level controls a level below them and in turn, is controlled by the level above them. The roles and responsibilities are well defined at each level. this is to ensure that no office is left uncontrolled in the system. It serves as a line of control and also a delegation of authority.

- *Division of Work -* The functioning is divided based on the principle of specialization. Officials performing the same work over the years gain competence in their work. This raises the overall productivity and efficiency of the organization. It also makes sure that no area is left uncovered.

- *Strict adherence to Rules and Regulations -* the emphasis is laid upon the rules to avoid arbitrariness, personal favour, etc. which may hinder the working of the organization. It reduces the discretionary powers of the officials. The rules help in maintaining uniformity, consistency, stability, and coordination in the efforts of the civil servants.

- *Competence -* Qualifications are laid down for every position. The recruitment to the official positions is based on merit. This helps in optimally utilizing the human capital by hiring the right person for the right position.

2) Behavioral Features:

- *Non-Partisanship -* It denotes doing one's duty without fear of anything. It is to ensure neutrality in the functioning of the organization.

- *Impartiality -* Irrational sentiments have to be avoided in any organization, especially in a public organization such as bureaucracy. The officials have to discard their likes, dislikes, etc. while performing their official duty. There has to be no bias while performing such tasks for the government. The decisions should be governed by rational factors and rather than personal ones.

- *Neutrality -* Officials should not use their official position for personal interest. Complete absence of any kind of bias, be it political or personal, should be maintained.

- *Integrity* - Bureaucracy requires its officials to be honest while having strong moral principles. It helps them to take strong decisions in the interest of the people in the country.

TIME FOR CHANGE

In the 2021 Budget Session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi questioned the functioning of Civil Services in India, especially that of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and the power centre that has been created by handing over everything in the country in the hands of IAS officers. To put in his words, "*Officers will do everything. By becoming IAS officers, they will operate fertilizer factories, even fly airplanes. What is this big power we have created? What are we going to achieve by handing over the reins of the nation to these officers?*"[3] P.M.'s statement raised a valid question of bringing reforms in our bureaucracy.

These reforms are a deliberate attempt to improve the functioning of bureaucracy by improving its capacity to effectively and efficiently implement the policies on the ground. But the bureaucracy seems to continue to be in the mould of its colonial predecessor despite many efforts at reform. One single important characteristic of the administrative system is its centralizing tendency and the fact that All India Services have been so conceived as to control administration from the central level to the district and local level. In the federal distribution of powers, most of the developmental subjects were assigned to the States and hence the responsibility of implementing policies related to them. But in the course of planned development, policies began to emanate from the centre which also took upon the responsibility to see that these policies were implemented in a way that reflected central concerns. The Central administration was expected to guide the state administration but soon transformed its role and created a control and command system.

Since the institution of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) in the British era, the task of implementing the development strategy was entrusted to the civil service. During the independence movement, Nehru demanded a radical transformation of the ICS but it was left

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[3] 'Civil Service Reforms in India'(*The Hindu,* 07 April 2021) <https://www.thehindu.com/brandhub/civil-services-reforms-in-india/article34262003.ece> accessed 06 November 2021

to Patel to argue for its place in the constitution. The ICS Was seen to present state interest and to be relatively autonomous of local pulls and pressures. The doctrine of neutrality and impartiality was seen as its predominant behavioural trait, and it was assumed that its successor, moulded in the same tradition, would withstand the parochial pressures on the state. However, the national orientation and professional ethos soon lost their gloss because the developmental projects could not be managed effectively and efficiently by this civil service.

While the Indian bureaucracy is often cited as having Weberian characteristics, it is not known for creating sufficient state autonomy to pursue developmental interests. It has turned out to be a weak instrument of the state and the network that it has created has usually been of rent-making variety. The growth of red-tapism and the alliance between the politicians and the bureaucrats became increasingly evident. The image of ICS became so substandard that the Congress President Mr. S. Nijalingappa during the Prime Ministership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi argued that "*the present bureaucracy under the orthodox turn conservative leadership of the Indian civil service with its conservative upper-class prejudices can hardly be expected to meet the requirements of social and economic change along socialist lines.*"[4]

Since then, much has remained the same and no formal change took place but the practice of shifting bureaucrats on demands of political leadership became a characteristic that is spread widely in the system today. The bureaucracy by its very nature is risk-averse, thus change-resistant. It instinctively withdraws from being responsive to the new ideas. But the time has come to change and restructure the bureaucracy. The ramifications of the changes brought around globally in form of decentralization and social activism have been felt by the government in form of increasing expectations for better governance and effective service delivery, transparency, accountability, and rule of law from the society.[5] There's no denying the fact that the bureaucracy must keep pace with the changing times in order to meet the aspirations of the people. The reforms are to restructure the bureaucracy into a more effective,

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[4] Bidyut Chakrabarty, *Public Administration: A Reader* (Oxford University Press 2003) 272

[5] M. Satish, 'Civil Service Reforms'(*Center for Good Governance,* November 2004) <https://www.cgg.gov.in/core/uploads/2017/07/CivilServicesReform.pdf> accessed 22 December 2021

efficient, transparent, and accountable organization for the public service delivery built on the ethos and values of integrity, impartiality, impersonality, and neutrality.[6]

There is no need to import structural designs. Our structure centred on local self-government and decentralization has, despite the ills so lucidly described by Dr. Ambedkar, and what has been described as a mixed experience thus far, a strong tradition both in its functioning and in its public interface. It will need to be built upon, and not replaced. Before moving to the reforms, the current stock of the situation of bureaucracy should be taken note of. Several reports and findings were released to recognize the challenges that plague the civil services and find the solutions to them. But the most pertinent among them all has been the *Second Administrative Reforms Commission Report (2nd ARC),* which makes the following observations:

- Civil Service has been historically more concerned with the internal processes rather than with the results.
- The rigidity, complexities, and over-centralization in the system of policymaking and implementation are too rigid and constraining.
- Due to the hierarchy in the system, a large number of veto points have to be negotiated in order to finalize a decision.
- Excessive division of work and the number of departments in ministries with often overlapping functions overload the decision-making system.
- The bureaucracy by its very nature is risk-averse, thus change-resistant. It instinctively withdraws from being responsive to the new ideas.
- An increase in the range of demands on government rising from decentralization and outsourcing has increased the pressure on civil service. It needs to be rightsized.
- There is a need to shift to effective governance from pre-eminence of governance while focusing on decentralization and citizen-centricity.

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[6] M. Satish (n 4)

COMPONENTS OF CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS

Reforming India's bureaucracy is a "mission impossible", similar to the punishment meted out by Zeus to Sisyphus, of endlessly rolling a boulder up a hill. But the bureaucracy that took India through the last 75 years can't be the one to take it through the next 75 — we need a proactive, imaginative, technology-savvy, enabling bureaucracy.[7]

The main components of civil service reforms are:

1) Stability of Tenure

The 2nd ARC in its tenth report said that the arbitrary and motivated transfers of government servants which are not in the public interest and good governance have become a matter of great concern. In *Smt. Mohsina Begum v Nagar Palika Parishad Shahjahanpur and 2 Ors.*[8]the Supreme Court observed that with the change in the government at centre or state, a large number of civil servants are transferred on the basis of their political biases, religion, caste, etc. ultimately leading to demoralization and division of bureaucracy. The lack of tenure stability also leads to secondary problems such as corrosion of the moral basis of bureaucracy's independence, corruption, the politicization of bureaucracy, etc.

Solution - The *National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution*[9] **(NCRWC), Hota committee**, and 2nd ARC recommends setting up a statutory and autonomous *Civil Services Board* to look into the questions of all matters related to postings and transfers of civil servants. They also recommend setting up an *Ombudsman* to investigate the grievances of the officials related to their pre-mature transfers.

2) Strict Adherence to Rules

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[7] Srivatsa Krishna, 'Why India's Bureaucracy needs urgent reform'(*The Indian Express,* 06 October 2021) <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-bureaucracy-reforms-civil-services-pm-narendra-modi-7572196/> assessed on 24 December 2021

[8]*Smt. Mohsina Begum v Nagar Palika Parishad Shahjahanpur and 2 Ors.* 1993 AIR 2465, SCR 295

[9] 'Report of the National of the National Commission to Review the working of the Constitution'(*The Hindu Centre)* <https://www.thehinducentre.com/multimedia/archive/03091/ncrwc_3091109a.pdf> accessed 24 December 2021

Following rules and regulations is a part and parcel of bureaucracy. But strict adherence to a rigid set of rules without any application of emotional intelligence has detached the bureaucracy from the society. This high emphasis on rules, regulations, and procedures has made the 'means' that is 'rules' more important than the 'ends' that are 'public welfare'. It further often leads to delays in the decision-making process.

Solution - The complexities can be removed by simplification of rules, regulations, and procedures that can be easily adhered to and more importantly that can be easily understood not just by the officials but by the masses too. Provisions for time-bound delivery of service can be included in various laws. Citizen Charters can prove to be of great help that exclusively deals with the bureaucracy and its relationship with the public.

3) Morale and Motivation

The transactional benefits or say, the salary of civil servants have always been lower than the transformational benefits. Even though the Seventh Pay Commission did increase their salaries, it's still nowhere near what their counterparts earn in the private sector. Apart from it, the continuous political interference and their inability to work independently due to the hierarchal system often leads to lower morale and motivation.

Solution- The *2nd ARC* recommended recognising the outstanding work performed by civil servants in their line of duty including through National Awards. The removal of every cause of dissatisfaction such as political interference, poor working conditions, low salaries, unfair personnel policies, etc. Can boost the morale and motivation of civil servants, thus leading to higher job satisfaction.

4) Coordination and Collaboration

Excessive division of work and the number of departments in ministries with often overlapping functions based upon the principle of specialization leads to overburdening and lack of a coherent approach. The multiplicity of ministries and the departments therein, where

each one of them tries to maximize their interest, goes against the need to have a unified and integrated policy.

Solution - The Central government principle of "*Minimum Government, Maximum Governance*" should be focused upon. The departments and ministries with overlapping functions should be merged with each other. More departments or ministries should be set up to promote horizontal and vertical coordination.

5) Generalists vs Specialists Debate

It has been often argued that IAS is a generalist service and neither does it deal with any expertise nor possess any special knowledge in a particular field. Despite this, most of the departments (technical and non-technical) are headed by IAS Officers. It becomes quite an aberrant thing that a generalist issues orders that are required to be followed by the specialists in their respective fields. The proponent of this system argues that the generalists being specialists in the field of administration can look into issues in a much broader sense than a specialist could. Moreover, an IAS officer who is promoted from a ground level to the highest level would have worked in many different departments and ministries, putting him in the best position to understand the ground realities. These specialists argue that the 'intelligent amateur theory' which is the basis for generalist civil service in India developed in Britain during the 19th century, may not hold good in the present times as the functions of administration have become more complex more technical, and subject-specific. This may deprive a minister of expert advice from the subject experts.

Solution - the IAS can be made more functional by introducing the eight broad areas of specialization which were recommended by the *First ARC*. The *Surinder Nath Committee*similarly suggested 11 domains of specialization. The *Hota Committee on Civil Service Reforms* also voiced similar recommendations of domain assignment of civil servants to encourage the acquisition of skills and professional excellence. The ARC further recommended a scheme of reforms to enable entry into middle and senior management levels in the central secretariat from all services on the basis of knowledge and experience in the

respective areas of specialization. All the above-stated recommendations indicate promoting '*Lateral Entry*' to encourage the participation of people from the private sector in the administration field.

6) Accountability

The accountability of civil servants plays a major role in keeping bureaucracy corruption-free. The civil service has 'Internal' and 'Procedural' Accountability. While the civil servants are generally accountable within the Government, that is, internally accountable to Parliament, Judiciary, etc., they are mostly accountable for following rules, regulations, and procedures called Procedural Accountability. However, both the mechanisms of accountability have proved to be inadequate to keep the civil servants in check and in ensuring that they act desirably.

Solution - The external accountability of civil servants must be strengthened through various tools such as the right to information, citizens charters, regular surveys of service delivery by the officials, etc. The officers need to be made accountable to the entities that reside outside of the government such as the people, civil society organizations, NGOs, etc. An act on the lines of the United States's*False Claims Act* can be implemented in India which would encourage the whistleblowers to expose the hidden corruptions in the system. Though the recommendations of the **Santhanam Committee (Committee on Prevention of Corruption)** of constituting a *Central Vigilance Commission* and administrative vigilance divisions in all departments and major organizations of the government, and that of the **First ARC** to establish Lokpal and Lok Ayuktas to deal with the acts of corruption have been already implemented, it still has a long way to go. The post of the Chief Vigilance Officer is often surrounded by controversies. The Lok Pal on the other hand has still not been fully operationalized even after six years of the passing of the Act.[10] This has made these institutions an Ombudsman without teethes to bite corruption.

7) Ethical Guidance and Framework

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[10] Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

Ethics and integrity make the most important behavioural feature of a bureaucracy. A civil servant working toward the betterment of society should have ethical conduct with integrity intact. Many countries have adopted a Code of Ethics to guide civil servants. However, India has only enacted a Code of Conduct for Civil Servants.[11] The code is in a simple form of *Dos and Don'ts* for the civil servants. It does not help the officials in any way to solve the ethical dilemmas which they may face while discharging their duties.

Solution - We need to introduce a separate *Code of Ethics* for the civil servants. It can be formed on the line of the principles put forward by the UK's **Nolan Committee**.[12] Called the *Seven Principles of Public Life[13]*, they apply to anyone who works as a public office holder. These are - Selflessness, Honesty, Accountability, Integrity, leadership, Objectivity, and Openness. The **Hota Committee** also recommended for formation of a *Code of Ethics* incorporating the core principles of integrity, merit, and excellence in public service. It further recommended drawing up a *Model Code of Governance* to set a benchmark for the standards of governance to be made available to the citizens. Section 13(1)(d) and Section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988[14] and Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973[15] were also amended on recommendations of the Hota Committee to protect honest civil servants from malicious prosecution and harassment.

8) Personnel Management

Recruitment - The lack of transparency and corruption in the recruitment process of the government services especially at the lower levels have led to the ingress of many incompetent persons in the service. The working of Union and State Public Commissions can be made more transparent to solve this issue. The selection process can also be reformed to make it more difficult for the incompetent ones to make it into the service. The **Hota Committee**

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[11] All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968

[12] 'The Seven Principles of Public Life' (*Gov.uk,* 31 May 1995)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2> assessed 24 December 2021

[13] *Ibid*

[14] Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, s 13(1)(D), 19

[15] Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, s 197

recommended introducing an aptitude and leadership test for the selection. The **2ⁿᵈ ARC** recommended establishing a *National Institute of Public Administration* to run Bachelor's Degree courses in public administration, governance, and management for those who want to appear in Civil Service Examination.

Training and Capacity Building - The higher emphasis is given on the training of All India Services than that of other government services. The Mid-Career training is also given much less emphasis. With the ever-evolving technologies and ideas of management, the officials often find themselves struggling with the know-how of these new things, especially during the mid of their careers. The ***Yugandhar Committee*** *to Review In-service Training of the IAS officers* suggested the introduction of a *Three-Stage Mid-Career Training Programme.* The training was to take place at the 12ᵗʰ, 20ᵗʰ, and 28ᵗʰ years of service as these are the years when there is a "major shift" in the nature of the work of the officer.

Performance Appraisal - The performance appraisal holds an important place in the official life of a civil servant as it impacts his salary, future career prospects, retirement, etc. The process was called the *Annual Confidential Report* (ACR). It was mostly done by the superiors in a non-transparent way. After the passing of the *Right to Information Act, 2005* this was changed to the *Annual Performance Appraisal Report* (APAR). It was presented as a human resource development tool rather than a fault-finding process. However, it also created inefficiencies as the superiors were now required to give recommendations and their comments on their juniors. The *2ⁿᵈ ARC*recommended making the appraisal process more transparent and consultative. ***Sunder Nath Committee*** suggested using the performance appraisal for the overall development of an officer and placing him in an area where her full potential can be put to use. This was called the "*360-degree*" performance appraisal. The performance appraisal should lay greater emphasis on the objective assessment of the work of a civil servant rather than emphasizing upon whether the work was done according to the work plans that were agreed upon.

9) Article 311 of the Indian Constitution

Article 311[16] protects honest civil servants from arbitrary dismissal from the service by providing that no civil servant can be removed, reduces, or dismissed from his post unless he has been given a reasonable opportunity to be heard. This means that no prosecution against a civil servant can be initiated without the permission of the central or the state government. Experts are of the opinion that the protection provided under this article has led to an increase in corruption and inefficiency in government. It also makes it difficult for the government to remove the unfit and inefficient civil servants. Art. 311 needs to be revisited to ensure that the honest and efficient officials are given the requisite protection but the dishonest are not allowed to prosper in office.

Solution - Based on the recommendations of various committees, Art. 311 should either be amended in a way to disapprove the dishonest officers of any safeguard or protection or should altogether be removed. Suitable legislation to provide all necessary terms and conditions of services along with the protection of bona fide actions of public servants taken in the public interest can be covered by widening the scope of Article 309[17].

SOME OTHER REFORMS

New India @ 75 - The **NITI Aayog** in its Strategy for New India @ 75 elaborated on civil services reforms in Chapter 38. The NITI Aayog defines the objective of the civil service reforms as to "put in place a reformed system of recruitment, training and performance evaluation of the civil service to ensure more effective and efficient delivery of public services to achieve the development goals envisaged in New India 2022."[18] It explains various constraints that impede the development of an efficient, transparent, and accountable bureaucracy. The report suggests a few measures to tackle these constraints by interventions in the following areas: recruitment, training, evaluation, governance and E-initiatives, and probity.

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[16] Constitution of India, 1950, art 311
[17] Constitution of India, 1950, art 309

PRAGATI - PRAGATI stands for *Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.* It is a unique integrating and interactive ICT (Information and Communication Technology) platform under Prime Minister's Office. The e-platform addresses the common man's grievances while simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important government projects and programmes implementation. What makes PRAGATI even more unique is its combination in the direction of cooperative federalism that lets the Prime Minister connect to the Secretaries of Government of India and the Chief Secretaries of the States directly regarding the issues flagged every week. The timely appraisal of schemes, projects, and issues by the PM not only helps in addressing the common man problems but also makes the entire administration more effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable toward the public service delivery.

Mission Karmayogi - Dubbed as the biggest bureaucratic reform initiative, it is a new capacity-building scheme for civil servants. The fundamental aim of the scheme is to create a citizen-centric civil service. The scheme lay greater thrust on behavioural change by shifting the focus from "rules-based training" to "role-based training". The scheme formalizes the recruiting process by calibrating all the civil service positions to a *Framework of Roles, Activities, and Competencies* (FRACs) approach. This will help in creating content that is relevant to the identified FRACs in every government entity. It will help the bureaucracy to develop domain knowledge alongside administrative capacity.

WAY FORWARD

Our economy is evolving, and it is evolving alongside the digital infrastructure leading to the opening of various vistas of opportunities for India. The ever-growing digital technology throughout our economy and society has made administration and governance a specialized task. The recent introduction to the concept of 'Metaverse' that may soon be on our minds will certainly make administration even more difficult as life will slowly move online. Thus, a paradigm shift in the nature of bureaucracy is required to keep up with the emerging demands of the socio-economic structure. We cannot hope to move towards a $5-trillion economy without reforming our bureaucracy into a results-oriented, modern, and progressive one. Our

bureaucracy has always been regarded as the 'Steel Frame' for administration in India and it must be made even stronger, so much so that it can endure what others cannot in times of need, a bureaucracy that does not shy away from its problems but stands to the fore. One should not forget that the majority of the civil servants are doing exceptional jobs, even better than their counterparts in the private sector. The challenge now remains to focus on an innovative incentive structure among the bureaucracy, move those who are honest yet don't want to perform, remove the non-performers, and those who steal and impregnate the whole system using state-of-the-art modern technology. Thus, surfing the wave of the upcoming fifth Information Technology Revolution for the betterment of the society and in the progress of the society.