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Building Capacity for Governance

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REFORMS IN GOVERNANCE

Address at the interactive session
with Assistant Secretaries

~ V. Srinivas, IAS

Secretary to Government of India,
Department of Administrative Reforms
and Public Grievances
and
Department of Pensions and
Pensioners Welfare

JULY 29, 2022

Indian Institute of Public Administration



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“In the Amrit Period of Independence, we are marching ahead rapidly to create a transparent system, efficient process and smooth governance to make development all-round and all-inclusive. The Government is committed to strengthening good governance, that is pro-people, and proactive governance. Guided by the ‘citizen-first’ approach, we remain untiring in our efforts to further deepen the outreach of our service delivery mechanisms and make them more effective.”

– Prime Minister Narendra Modi

¹Message of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji at the Sushasan Saptah dated December 20, 2021

REFORMS IN GOVERNANCE

~ V.SRINIVAS, IAS

Introduction

I am extremely grateful to Dr. S.N.Tripathi ji, IAS (retd) Director General IIPA for inviting me for today's interaction with the Assistant Secretaries to Government of India. In the 75th Year of Indian Independence, the Amrit Kaal Period, the 2020 batch of the IAS serving as Assistant Secretaries to Government of India will be witness to a historical year in Indian democracy, marking the Nation's deep and abiding commitment to Constitutional values, Good Governance and will be associated with the formulation of Vision India@2047. In many ways, the appointment of IAS officers after Phase II, as Assistant Secretaries to Government of India is one of the far-reaching administrative reforms introduced by Government, a quest for a new narrative for the Indian Administrative Service. The objective is to provide a deeper understanding of the functioning of the Central Secretariat, exposure to the higher echelons of Governance marked by strong institutions, higher accountability and data driven decision making, regulatory governance models and above all an ethical governance model with a zero-tolerance approach to corruption.

Maximum Governance – Minimum Government

The Government's policy has been "Maximum Governance – Minimum Government". India has succeeded in transforming technologically obsolete institutions into modern day digital institutions which benefit millions of Indians. In the Amrit Kaal period, the Government's clarion call is for adoption of Next Generation Reforms by bridging the gap between government and citizens. This vision of Next Generation administrative reforms is outlined by Secretariat Reforms, Swachhta Campaigns, Benchmarking of Governance and Services, Redressal of Public Grievances & Improving Service Delivery, recognizing meritocracy and replication of good governance practices form the core of India's good governance

model. In this interaction, it is my endeavour to present the Administrative Reforms that have facilitated the move from digitization to digitalization to digital transformation in creation of an agile, collaborative and connected government.

The PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration

The Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration acknowledge, recognize and reward the exemplary work done by civil servants across the country. One of the significant administrative reforms undertaken was the broad-basing of the scheme of PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration in 2014 and 2019 with focus on priority sector schemes and broad-basing the innovations category. In 2022, 2150 nominations were submitted by District Collectors, States and Central Ministries of which 16 nominations were selected for the PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration. The PM's awards are conferred by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on April 21, National Civil Services Day.

Amongst the PM's Awards winners 2021 are

- 1) iDEX - Innovations for Defence Excellence of the Department of Defence Production, a system that enables paperless, real-time interaction between the startup ecosystem and defence acquisition agencies;
- 2) National Generic Document Registration System of Department of Land Resources to provide document registration services by leveraging modern technology to the people in 12 States reducing transaction costs and time;
- 3) Seva Sindhu an initiative of Government of Karnataka to deliver government services to the citizens through a common platform in a cashless, contactless and paperless manner providing 798 government services of 78 departments;
- 4) NDMC 311 App enabled through a comprehensive inclusive strategy monitored from the integrated command and control centre successfully brought down turnaround time for service delivery.

The Awards also recognized several outstanding district performances including

- 1) Chanpatia Navpravartan Startup Zone of West Champaran District, Bihar, to help returnee migrants from different parts of the country to set up their own brand creating thousands of direct and indirect employment;
- 2) Project Sampoorna of Bongaigaon District, Assam which aimed to reduce malnutrition in children by using a decentralized technology based model using community participation;
- 3) Data Driven Real Time Monitoring Model of Samagra Shiksha Kendra for Schools an initiative of Education Department of Gujarat directly impacting the learning of 1.15 crore students and improving grade-appropriate learning outcomes;
- 4) Building of Efficient Greenhouse to Grow Crops of Agriculture Department, Ladakh enabling cultivation of crops all year around through large number of passive solar greenhouses.

The Award-winning nominations are disseminated for replication to a national audience through the National Good Governance Webinar Series and in the Regional Conferences conducted in various State capitals. In 2021, the Regional Conferences were held at Srinagar, Lucknow, Bhubaneswar and in 2022 Regional Conferences have been held at Srinagar and Bengaluru. The Regional Conferences experience sharing sessions have a participation of 250 officials from 10-15 States/ UT's and provide an opportunity for intensive deliberations over a 2 day period. In addition, the Good Governance Webinars have brought together Academicians, Senior Administrators, International Civil Servants, District Collectors of Aspirational Districts, Technocrats on a single forum to discuss issues of ethics, constitutional values, fundamental duties, e-governance innovations, management practices in 21st century governance etc.

The National e-Governance Awards

Government implements the Awards Scheme for National Awards for e-Governance. This Scheme is recognized amongst the most competitive

and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country. 2021 witnessed an all-time high of 1377 registrations and 698 nominations being received on the DARPG portal. Amongst the National e-Governance Awards winners 2021 were the Central Government Initiatives of Department of Justice, Ministry of Rural Development, Department of School Education, MoHFW and MyGov. Amongst the Award Winners from State Governments were innovations from Punjab, UP, Chattisgarh, Telangana, Odisha, Daman and Diu and Karnataka. The Award Winners from Districts include nominations from Goalpara Assam, Nagaur Rajasthan, Dehradun Uttarakhand, Solan Himachal Pradesh, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Bandipora and Srinagar of J&K, Indore of MP, Godda of Jharkhand and Mon District of Nagaland. In the category of outstanding research by Academic Institutions the nominations from AIIMS New Delhi and IIT Roorkee received the Awards. The NeGA recognized the performance of Indian Oil Corporation in the category Excellence in adopting Emerging Technologies. The National e-Governance Awards are disseminated for replication through the Annual National e-Governance Conferences, the last 3 National e-Governance Conferences were held at Shillong 2019, Mumbai 2020 and Hyderabad 2022.

Benchmarking Governance

Government benchmarks governance with the following indices:

1. **Good Governance Index 2021** – An Assessment of State of Governance in States/ UT's on a biannual basis
2. **District Good Governance Index 2022** – An Assessment of State of Governance in Districts of States/ UT's through digital portals
3. **National e-Services Delivery Assessment 2022** – An Assessment of States and Central Ministries on the depth and effectiveness of e-Governance service delivery

The Good Governance Index 2021 and District Good Governance Index 2022

GGI 2021 Framework covered ten sectors and 58 indicators. The sectors

of GGI 2020-21 are 1.) Agriculture and Allied Sectors, 2.) Commerce & Industries, 3.) Human Resource Development, 4.) Public Health, 5.) Public Infrastructure & Utilities, 6.) Economic Governance, 7.) Social Welfare & Development, 8.) Judicial & Public Security, 9.) Environment, and 10.) Citizen-Centric Governance. The GGI 2020-21 categorizes States and UTs into four categories, i.e., (i) Other States – Group A; (ii) Other States – Group B; (iii) North-East and Hill States; and (iv) Union Territories.

Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa top the composite rank score covering 10 sectors. GGI 2021 says that Gujarat registered 12.3 percent increase and Goa registered 24.7 percent increase over GGI 2019 indicators. Uttar Pradesh has shown an incremental growth of 8.9% over GGI 2019 performance. Jharkhand has shown an incremental growth of 12.6 percent over GGI 2019 performance. Rajasthan has shown an incremental growth of 1.7 percent over the GGI 2019 performance. In the North-East and Hill States category, Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir have registered an overall increase of 10.4% and 3.7% respectively over GGI 2019. In the Union Territories category, Delhi tops the composite rank registering a 14 percent increase over the GGI 2019 indicators. The GGI 2021 says that 20 States have improved their composite GGI scores over the GGI 2019 index scores. Analysis of scoring suggests that there is a marginal difference among the States in their composite governance scores. This indicates that overall governance in the States of India is moving in the positive direction.

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has collaborated with the Government of Jammu & Kashmir to publish District Good Governance Index for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The District Good Governance Index of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir is unique. The District Good Governance Index aimed to assess the state of Governance in all the 20 Districts of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Region specific Governance Indicators were developed to assess the ground realities and meeting the aspirations of the people. The District Good Governance Index provides policy analysis on a wide range of indicators at

a disaggregated level and enables critical policy interventions for improving governance models. The District Good Governance Index exercise enabled strengthening of the Directorate of Economics & Statistics through timely publication of datasets. The District Good Governance Index of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir was released by the Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah ji on January 22, 2022.

Top ranking States in the Sectors as well as in Composite Ranks is as follows:

Sectors	Group A	Group B	NE & Hill States	UTs Signature
Agriculture & Allied Sector	Andhra Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh	Mizoram	D & N Haveli
Commerce and Industry	Telangana	Uttar Pradesh	J & K	Daman & Diu
Human Resource Development	Punjab	Odisha	Himachal Pradesh	Chandigarh
Public Health	Kerala	West Bengal	Mizoram	A & N Island
Public Infrastructure and Utilities	Goa	Bihar	Himachal Pradesh	A & N Island
Economic Governance	Gujarat	Odisha	Tripura	Delhi
Social Welfare and Development	Telangana	Chhattisgarh	Sikkim	D & N Haveli
Judiciary and Public Safety	Tamil Nadu	Rajasthan	Nagaland	Chandigarh
Environment	Kerala	Rajasthan	Manipur	Daman & Diu
Citizen Centric Governance	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttarakhand	Delhi
Composite	Gujarat	Madhya Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh	Delhi

It's entirely feasible, and desirable, to build an online "good governance index" that tracks annual improvements on the lines of the District Good Governance Index of Jammu & Kashmir which is monitored through a digital portal in every State of India. As State power is a significant authority for nation building and development, rededicating the state authority for the public good, comprehensively and transparently, is an urgent reform. Therefore, the District Good Government, Index is extremely valuable with comparative and competitive data being put in the public domain. Government of India is collaborating with Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Arunachal Pradesh for developing the next series of District Good Governance Indices in 2022.

Digital Transformation of Governance:

Digital Transformation of Governance has been brought about by a series of deep and coordinated culture, workforce, and technology shifts that enabled transformation of governance models in strategic directions. An agile government has modernized with times, innovated faster, and met citizen demands/ expectations, become more resilient, delivered mission/ vision goals in prescribed time periods, complied with regulations and adapted to changes.

This was achieved by the following steps:

a) National e-Services Delivery Assessment - The National e-Services Delivery Assessment 2019 represented an assessment of the state of e-Services Delivery across the Nation. The NeSDA framework assessed all the Service Portals of States/ Union Territories and select Central Ministries on 7 key parameters. The services assessed were the most sought after by the citizen which were delivered online and maintained by concerned Ministry/ State/ UT. Kerala topped the State Portals with Haryana and Rajasthan being the top performers in the Service Portals. What was visible in preparing the NeSDA 2021 is that the status of e-Governance in India has moved forward in all States/ UT's of India. This is in consonance with the findings of the Good Governance Index which

showed many States/ UT's have shown positive trends in incremental Governance Indices.

In 2021, the NeSDA framework covered G2C and G2B services across 7 sectors, viz., Finance, Labour and Employment, Education, Local Governance & Utility Services, Social Welfare, Environment and Tourism sectors. A total of 56 services were assessed for every State/ UT and 27 services were assessed for Central Ministries. The NeSDA framework assessed all the State and Central Ministry portals on the key parameters of accessibility, content availability, ease of use and information security and privacy. The Service portals were assessed on an additional 3 parameters viz., End-Service Delivery, Integrated Service Delivery and Status and Request Tracking. In NeSDA 2021 study, 1400 services across all States/ UT's were evaluated, an increase of over 60 percent from that in 2019. Punjab and Tamil Nadu are the leading States providing all 56 mandatory services online and Jammu & Kashmir is the leading Union Territory in e-Governance. 69 percent of all possible mandatory e-services have been delivered by States/ UT's which is up from the 48 percent in NeSDA 2019. Citizen satisfaction was as high as 74 percent.

The trend for e-Services delivery shifting from silo departmental portals to integrated portals/ centralized portals resulted in higher citizen satisfaction. Several of the Central Portals provide easy access to common services and create universally accessible digital resources. In addressing some of the biggest challenges that citizens face, the portals create collaborative digital platforms for participative governance. Some of the Central Ministries' portals that have made a difference in the lives of citizens include the following:

- 1) Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission bridges the gap amongst different stakeholders of healthcare ecosystem through digital highways, over 20 crore ABHA numbers created.
- 2) Bhavishya seeks to ensure an active and dignified life for pensioners

by ensuring payments of all retirement dues and delivery of pension payment orders to the retiring employee on the day of retirement itself, implemented in 814 offices.

- 3) Civil Registration System seeks to promote uniformity in the registration of births and deaths across India and compilation of vital statistics based thereon.
- 4) DIKSHA Portal (PM e-Vidya) benefits 25 crores school children across India unifying all efforts related to digital/ online services to enable multi-modal access to education.
- 5) eSHRAM creates a National Database for Unorganized workers which are seeded in Aadhar, witnessed 33 lac completed registrations.
- 6) Jeevan Praman is a biometric enabled digital service for pensioners digitizing the process of getting a life certificate using an aadhar platform, has benefitted 5.63 crore pensioners.
- 7) National Generic Document Registration System is an application for use by Sub-Registrars and citizens by offering a complete user interface for property and document registration and enables citizens to buy land online.
- 8) National Integrated Database of Hospitality Management empowers India's tourism and hospitality businesses by electronic delivery of various hospitality services and showcase Incredible India.
- 9) Parivaahan Seva facilitates computerization of over 1300+ Road Transport Offices across India, lays down the standards for documents across the country and ensures inter-operability, correctness and timely availability of information.

There are also several District level seamless service delivery initiatives which have benefitted citizens. The Indore 311 Application of Indore Municipal Corporation, Silvassa Citizen Connect Project of Silvassa Municipal Council, Panchayat Development Index of Bandipora District, J&K, Electronic Authority Services Enabling Application (eASE app), of Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand, Saksham Surajpur of Surajpur District Chattisgarh, Illegal Mining Tracking System (IMTS) of Chhota Udepur District, Gujarat, Divyang

Mitra App of Nanded District Maharashtra are some of the prominent seamless service delivery applications at the district level.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, India developed a number of web and mobile applications at the Centre/ State/ District levels to help in monitoring and management of different aspects of the pandemic – dissemination of information, advisories, ePass systems, complaint management systems, COVID-19 tests management, tele-education, helpline portals and dashboards. The initiatives included COWIN portal, Aarogya Setu, COVID-19 India portal of MOHFW, COVID Management – information and dissemination of My GOV, Repat Portal of Vande Bharat Mission, Ministry of External Affairs, Karnataka State COVID war-room, Uttar Pradesh Higher Education Digital Library, Higher Education Department of Government of UP.

b) Adoption of e-Office ver 7.0 – e-Office is aimed to bring in more transparency, efficiency and accountability in Secretariat functioning leading to increased productivity. One of the key areas of Digital Transformation witnessed in the Central Secretariat is the movement from a manual document, file and paper based functioning to an “electronic” environment which also involved digitization and storing of existing physical files and records and also creating new electronic files and records. Over 25 lac e-files are currently operational in the Central Secretariat and the number of physical files came down to around 10 lac.

Government has approved policy amendments in the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure 2019 which made it possible to issue virtual private networks to Deputy Secretaries of Government of India and Digital Signature Certificates upto Section Officers in Central Secretariat. DARPG received the Jury Category award in Digital India Awards 2021 for e-Office implementation conferred by the Rashtrapti ji on December 31, 2021.

Let me mention a few success stories:

- The uninterrupted functioning of the Central Secretariat in the pandemic and lockdown was possible because of e-Office. Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and Secretaries had access to Virtual Private Network and could take policy decisions on e-files during this period. Further 25 percent Under Secretaries were issued laptops to ensure steady file movement. The adoption of Digital Signature Certificate upto Section Officer level brought credibility to the e-file system. Since 2018, I have witnessed the linear expansion in number of files on e-Office from 4,00,000 e-files to 26,36,116 e-files in 2022. The fortnightly increase in e-files in June 2022 is 27,694.
- The operationalization of 2 Secretariats in Jammu & Kashmir was possible because of e-Office. In 2019, Government asked me to lead a delegation from the Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions to Srinagar a few days after the abrogation of Article 370. One of the issues for collaboration posed by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir was the operationalization of 2 Secretariats in Srinagar and Jammu and the Darbar movement carrying over 280 truckloads of files between the 2 capitals. The DARPG collaborated with Government of Jammu & Kashmir to implement e-Office in both the Secretariats digitalizing several crores of file pages in a short period of time using heavy duty scanners. The adoption of e-Office has enabled the simultaneous operationalization of both Jammu & Srinagar Secretariats simultaneously and was one of the biggest reforms that stopped Darbar movement.
- The adoption of e-Office in DRDO, represented a milestone as it demonstrated that Departments with multiple field offices could use e-Office for real time transfer of files. In 2022, DRDO collaborated with DARPG in propagation of the use of e-Office in DRDO and all field offices of DRDO and the Headquarters. This effectively shattered the notion that field offices with heavy project files could not handle paper on e-file system.
- e-Office has enabled the seamless movement of files to IFD and Department of Expenditure. E-Office ver 7.0 is a significant advancement

on e-Office ver 6.0 with a number of new features, enabling references to external offices. This has enabled seamless movement of files to IFD and Dept of Expenditure.

- c) CPGRAMS:** The CPGRAMS is an online public grievance platform available 24x7 with security features mapped across all Ministries/ Departments, Attached, Subordinate and Autonomous bodies. Further the CPGRAMS is also being used by several Union Territories. 2021 witnessed 21 lac PG cases being received on the CPGRAMS with 19.95 lac cases being redressed. Over 80000 Grievance Officers have been mapped on the CPGRAMS system. CPGRAMS enabled massive scaling up in handling public grievances in the period 2014-2022, provides trackability of grievances, feedback and rating on disposal quality and an appeal facility to citizens.

India has several best practices in States to handle public grievances – SWAGAT portal of Gujarat, Jan Sunwai portal of Uttar Pradesh, e-Janaspandana of Karnataka, CM Window of Haryana, Mo Sarkar of Odisha, JKIGRAMS of J&K, Aaple Sarkar of Maharashtra, SPANDANA of Andhra Pradesh, Janahita of Telangana, Jan Sampark of Rajasthan are some of the top performing public grievance portals.

Government has made significant efforts for a comprehensive grievance redressal system, several measures for strengthening CPGRAMS have been introduced. Monitoring dashboards for stakeholders facilitate deeper analysis of grievances, capacity building of stakeholders under the Sevottam Scheme for effective redressal of grievances, universalization of CPGRAMS ver 7.0 for auto-routing of grievances to last mile, integration of State portals with CPGRAMS, operationalization of feedback call centers, developing an inclusive system by using common service centers, and a regional language interface. The operationalization of the National COVID Grievances Monitoring Dashboard enabled the grievance redressal during the pandemic with an average time of 1.45 days.

Government introduced a category for “Improving Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances” in the Scheme for Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2020 which received significant nominations. An experience sharing session on “Technology Platforms for Redressal of Public Grievances” was held by DARPG which showcased the Grievance Redressal Platforms being adopted across States. For Improving Service Delivery, the DARPG has pursued collaboration with the Right to Services Commissions across India. The Nagpur Regional Conference aimed at bringing greater focus to Improving Service Delivery in Governance and greater visibility to Citizen Charters.

Special Campaigns:

In 2021, India’s roadmap for Next Generation Administrative Reforms witnessed three major initiatives undertaken by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances – (a) the successful implementation of the Special Campaign for Disposal of Pending Matters from October 2-31, 2021, (b) the Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making in Central Secretariat from March – October 2021, (c) the Good Governance Week from December 20-25, 2021 – Prashasan Gaon ki Aur campaign, each of which was implemented on digital platforms across thousands of government institutions.

Special Campaign for Disposal of Pending Matters:

The Special Campaign for Disposal of Pending Matters was implemented in Central Government from October 2-October 31, 2021. Under the Special Campaign, 3.5 lac public grievances were redressed, cleanliness campaign was carried out in 6154 sites, 21.90 lac files were weeded out, 12.01 lakh square feet of space was freed, and scrap disposal earned Rs. 62.54 crores.

The Special Campaign for Reducing Pending Matters showed that Government Departments can innovate on a subject like cleanliness. The Hon’ble Prime Minister mentioned the successful implementation of the

Swachhta Campaign in his 84th Mann Ki Baat saying that “this is the new thinking in the country which is being led by all the countrymen together.” The special campaign brought in a number of success stories in digitization, efficient management of office spaces, enhancement of office premises, environment friendly practices, inclusivity, protocols and mechanisms being put in place and waste disposal.

- The Department of Health Research went digital by providing an e-library with both national/ international subscription alternatives and freed up physical library space. Several Ministries were working with e-files, and departments started issue of circulars electronically. Intranet portals were created to upload circulars and reduce circulation of physical copies. Dedicated grievance portals were created to link the Ministry with all Subordinate offices across the country. Payments systems in cafeterias was cashless with token cards for entitled and non-entitled members. An app and a web-portal to order food online from the cafeteria was enabled.
- For efficient management of space, compactors were installed, current and future space requirements were assessed and excess space rented out was foregone that resulted in financial savings. Most Ministries/ Departments cleared scrap disposal, weeded out files and transformed the space into record rooms, section offices, parking spaces.
- The most noticeable portion was a courtyard cum cafeteria that was established with modern aesthetics from a dump-yard in Department of Posts. In some other Ministries also Departmental Canteens in the style of modular fitting, modern aesthetics with contemporary seating were established. The Department of Land Resources and a few other Ministries established health and wellness centres along with gymnasium facilities within their premises. In the North Block, information boards highlighting the preamble, fundamental duties were put up, corridors were dedicated to women freedom fighters, the Mahatma’s ideals of cleanliness, portals and glimpses of his life were showcased, along with digital screens showcasing swachh bharat campaign.

- Several environment friendly practices - electric vehicle charging stations, solar panels to conserve energy, air quality meters to monitor pollution levels, bamboo dustbins, water treatment plants, plastic free zones, wastewater RO plants, rainwater harvesting facilities, turning off desktops/ laptops for an hour every day for energy conservation were witnessed.
- Inclusivity measures included washrooms for differently abled persons, female washrooms being equipped with both sanitary and napkin vending machines and incinerators.
- Several protocols and monitoring measures were seen – whatsapp groups to address sanitation and hygiene issues, internal competition and awards to motivate team behaviour changes, coordination committees for sanitation, installation of Swachh ATM inside Nirman Bhavan that converted waste into cash, waste papers were collected and recycled to provide file covers and file boards, yearly offline auctions were held.
- For improved waste disposal, weeded out scrap was sent to a recycling unit, compost making plants were established outside cafeteria spaces along with waste converter plants, separate dustbins for disposing lithium batteries, segregated waste dustbins for dry, wet, bio-hazard and hazardous were setup.

Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Central Secretariat

The Central Secretariat adopted the Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making in Government. Under this initiative, a four-pronged approach was adopted by the Central Government with DARPG as the nodal department.

- Review of Channels of Submission for creating flatter organizations – the channel of submission was reduced to not more than 4 levels from 7-8 levels
- Delegation of Financial/ Administrative powers to lower functionaries
- Adoption of Desk Officer System to ensure single points of file disposal
- Adoption of e-Office version 7.0

- Digitalization of all receipts in the Central Registration Units.

Some of the key highlights are the following:

- Channel of Submission and Levels of Disposal were reviewed in 70 Ministries/ Departments. In these Ministries, the channel of submission was reduced to 4,3 and 2 levels as per new delegation. Financial delegation for miscellaneous and contingent expenditure was made to DS/ Director level officers.
- Officers were divided into separate categories. Delayering entailed reducing number of levels, and level jumping was adopted amongst officers and staff with the guidelines that no officer falling in a particular category will put up files to another officer in the same category, which means they work in parallel, horizontal organizational structures.
- Additional Secretaries/ Joint Secretaries were placed in category II and Deputy Secretary/ Under Secretary were placed in category III across Ministries/ Departments.
- The review of the channel of submission resulted in identification of surplus manpower who could be redeployed to other Ministries. Several areas of financial delegation which were not revisited for several years were reviewed.
- Use of heavy-duty scanners in central registration units was adopted, and fresh receipts were replied to in digital form. The digitalization of Central Registration Units along with e-Office has resulted in significant reduction in paper consumption in several Ministries/ Departments. Flatter organizations have enabled faster decision making.
- To enable a work from home environment in the pandemic, the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure 2019 provided Virtual Private Network Facility upto Deputy Secretary level and laptops were provided upto Under Secretary level.
- Desk officer system was operationalized in all Ministries/ Departments where it was feasible. The Ministry of External Affairs has operationalized 264 desk officers along with Department of Telecom and Department of Posts with specific assignment of responsibilities.

The Government's initiative for "Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making" represented one of the most complicated and far reaching administrative reforms witnessed in the Central Secretariat. It brought a silent reform in work culture, reduced hierarchies and resulted in significant adoption of new technology. It has also enabled responsive communication and enhanced efficiency in processing of receipts.

Good Governance Week – December 20-25, 2021

DARPG has strived to translate the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister for Next Generation Administrative Reforms during the Amrit Kaal period through the successful conduct of the Sushasan Saptah, across all Districts and Tehsils of India. The Sushasan Saptah witnessed a Nation-Wide Campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery which in all Districts, States, Union Territories of India. Over 700 District Collectors participated in the campaign and visited Tehsils and Panchyat Samiti Headquarters. The Good Governance week events conducted in Delhi over 6 days covered governance reforms in Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions, Ministry of External Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Senior Officials from Centre and States participated in the Good Governance week events and reviewed progress. The progress of the Good Governance week was monitored on a dedicated portal. District Collectors uploaded progress on the Good Governance Week – Prashasan Gaon ki Aur Campaign portal, good governance practices and posted video clips. This period saw several of the Nation's Grievance Redressal Digital Platforms functioning in unison – Grievances received on CPGRAMS portal were redressed with Grievances received on State portals. 6 lac Grievances were redressed in the week-long period and 289 lac applications for Service Delivery were addressed. This is the first time in 75 years that Government of India has conducted a National Campaign at Tehsil level to address Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery. The Prashasan Gaon ki Aur Abhiyan has been extremely successful and created a National movement for good governance.

Vision India@2047 on Governance - Focus on Young Civil Servants:

The India at 2047 would be governed by civil servants who are currently in their 8th-10th year of Civil Service. Government has strived to inspire and involve the young civil servants with Vision India@2047. Futuristic governance models would be highly complex necessitating considerable domain expertise. An interface between technology, academia, start-ups is necessary for young civil servants to be abreast of these sectors. Forty young IAS officers teamed with forty young faculty of IIT Madras, forty seed-stage entrepreneurs and forty established young entrepreneurs brainstormed to evolve what they will like India to be in 2047 from 7th – 9th March 2022 at DARPG-IIT Madras Conference. Forty nucleus teams have been created at the DARPG- IIT Madras Conference which will continue to work for the next 3 years, 10 years and 25 years. Four such nucleus teams form a cell team. A cell team is responsible for one of the 10 theme areas. There are 10 cell teams. Each cell team has prepared a 3-page report on the thematic areas. By mid-2022, each cell team is expected to prepare a twenty-page vision paper for their theme. These papers will go into Vision 2047 DARPG document which will be updated periodically.

The ten thematic areas have been based on the challenging futuristic governance policy endeavours that civil servants would face in their career - Energy and Net Zero, Education, Health Care and Assistive Technology, Water, Infrastructure and Communications, Transport and Mobility, Urbanization and Housing, Rural Development and Agriculture, Fintech and Inclusion, Information Security and Defence. The DARPG would expand the ambit of young civil servants associated with the initiative by inviting more academia and start-ups to ensure that majority of young IAS officers are an integral part of specific thematic areas of Vision India@2047 on Governance and are sensitized on the challenging policy endeavours that are needed to ensure India plays a critical role in future global models of governance. The ten cells created would be further connected to the Line Ministries/ Departments for enabling greater degree of specialization.

Ethics in Governance

The Civil Service Conduct Rules were revalidated in 2021, it is mandatory for the members of the Central and All India Services to be citizen responsive and sensitive. The Charter of Ethics and the Civil Service Code emphasise several thrust areas for reform - developing an effective and transparent system of governance; promoting a code of conduct that is in consonance with global standards; ensuring integrity in personnel performance; and training civil servants to be competent professionals with flagship program Mission Karmayogi. The fact that the Anti-Corruption Act has been repeatedly amended amply proves the sincere intent of the Indian state to inculcate the value of ethical governance among its civil servants.

Conclusion – The Pursuit for Good Governance

As an institution, the IAS has always commanded the respect from the people of India. Such respect emanates from a perception that decision making will be neutral and unbiased and would enable the Nation to achieve the objectives outlined in the Preamble of the Constitution. In a broader sense, the challenges that civil servants face in the 21st century are quite similar to those of the 20th century – commitment to the larger public good against all odds. Further the new age competency remains anchored in integrity, building credibility and trust in the institution of civil service. Even in new age India these values are foundational and non-negotiable. You can hire skills but leadership and faith in fairness and impartiality cannot be outsourced.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (SARC) summarized the core principles of Good Governance as Rule of law which requires that laws and their implementation be transparent, predictable, equitable and credible; Accountability at each level of administration; Minimization of unfettered discretion; Putting the citizen first; Government to be built on a strong ethical foundation and the Principle of subsidiarity, which implies both devolution and delegation of authority. The new rights given to the people, e-governance, computerization of government records, Citizen

Charters, Public Service Guarantee Acts will change the face of the government in the years to come.

Let me conclude by saying that the effort is to bring the Government and Citizen closer by use of digital technology pursuing Next Generation Administrative Reforms with the policy objective of “Maximum Governance – Minimum Government”. The citizen is the centrality of the civil servant’s odyssey and commitment to larger public good against all odds is the defining goal. I wish each one of you an outstanding career in the IAS.

Jai Hind.

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BRIEF CV OF V.SRINIVAS, IAS

V.Srinivas serves as Secretary to Government of India, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare with additional charge of Director General National Centre for Good Governance. He represents India on the Council of Administration of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels.

V.Srinivas has a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering from College of Technology, Osmania University. He has served as Special Secretary and Additional Secretary DARPG, Joint Secretary in the Ministries of Health & Family Welfare, Culture and Textiles and Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Further he served as Private Secretary to Finance Minister and Private Secretary to External Affairs Minister and as Advisor to Executive Director (India) in the International Monetary Fund, Washington DC from 2003-2006. In the State Government, he has served as Chairman of the Board of Revenue for Rajasthan, Ajmer with additional charge of Chairman of the Rajasthan Tax Board and as Secretary to Government of Rajasthan in Planning, Finance, Health and Science & Technology Departments. He has represented India on the International Cotton Advisory Committee from 2010-2013. He has authored 2 books – "India's Relations with the International Monetary Fund 1991-2016: 25 Years in Perspective" and "Towards a New India: Governance Transformed 2014-2019", 187 papers/ articles on public finance and public administration and delivered 91 orations. He is authoring his 3rd book "G20@2023 - the Indian Presidency". He is a senior administrator, a respected academician and an institution builder par excellence.

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INDRAPRASTHA ESTATE, RING ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110 002

☎ | 011-23468363

📠 | 011-23356528



✉ | helpdesk.ipa@gmail.com

🌐 | ipa.org.in

🐦 | [@ipa9](https://twitter.com/ipa9)