

## Foreword

Sardar Patel

- Described the IAS as India's 'steel frame'.
- "Today my secretary can write a note opposed to my views. I have given that freedom to all my secretaries. I have told them, "If you do not give your honest opinion for fear that it will displease your minister, please then you had better go." I will never be displeased over a frank expression of opinion."
- "You will not have a united India if you do not have a good All India Service which has independence to speak out its mind." (Constituent assembly speech, 1949)
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## Ch: 1

- India has done quite well in improving physical infrastructure, where contractors are involved, such as road transport and power transmission. It does poorly in programs that require the active involvement of grassroots democracy without contractors.
- People are more interested in the outcomes, than in the personal qualities of officers.
- According to a survey of 12 Asian economies done by the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy in 2011, India's "suffocating bureaucracy" was ranked the least efficient and working with the countries civil servants was described as a "slow and painful" process. "They are a power centre in their own right at both the national and state levels and are extremely resistant to reform that affects them or the way they go about their duties."

## Ch: 2

- The ICS consisted of 1,032 officers in 1931 out of an overall bureaucracy of 1 million in the population of 350 million.
- [ trust] In early 1964, then collector of Betul district of MP was asked by his chief secretary, Noronha, to make preparations for setting up refugee camps. Only one sentence instruction given. The collector probably broke all the rules in the book, yet set up camps within a week. Chief secretary wrote, "Collector carried out my orders in taking the above action. CM may approve." CM wrote, "I agree with the CS."

"The whole kit-and-caboodle of spies and counterspies, vigilance people and people who spy on vigilance people, enquiry followed by enquiry, has so vitiated the system that the civil services have reached almost the point of no return in the matter of efficiency, decision making and effectiveness." (Buch 2005)

Arun Ghosh, who worked in various positions in GOI said, "At an early stage of my career, I was suddenly entrusted with a special assignment with enormous consequences. Then secretary told me 3 things. 1. You have to succeed you will find all manner of rules which you may need to flout to succeed. Do not tell me the rules stood in the way. 2. If you get into trouble breaking rules, I will bail you out. 3. If I have to bail you out, this will be the last assignment from me."

MP, 4<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan ( 1969-74) was under deliberation. When file was sent minister refused to see. When the deputy secretary went to request him, minister said he was not interested. As he was leaving, he was asked if a particular inspector was transferred!

“This illustrates the real malaise of Indian administration at the sub-national level: bureaucrats formulate long-term policy and politicians responsible for higher-level government decide postings and transfers. This is an utter perversion of the system.” (Buch 2005)

B.G. Deshmukh, retired as cabinet secretary in 1989: “I was deputy secretary, GAD in Maharashtra in the 1960s. I was looking after the allotment of fiat cars. Our quarterly quota was 90. When the file with first 90 names in the waiting list went to the CM, he just kept it aside and sent his own list! I explained how the waiting list was maintained, CM said, ‘I have to allot cars even out of turn to some people.’ I asked, ‘then how many?’ He said, ‘Give me 20!’ Next time, I gave left first 20 blank and went strictly by the waiting list for the remaining.”

The postings of collectors and SPs are not decided by the CS or DGP but by the CM or those close to him. The choices are dictated by vested interests such as mafia gangs, builders’ lobby and others who control local politics. V.N. Vohra committee, 1993, found strong nexus among criminals, politicians and bureaucrats.

“Power will go to the hands of rascals, rogues and freebooters. All Indian leaders will be of low calibre and men of straw. They will have sweet tongues and silly hearts. They will fight among themselves for power and India will be lost in political squabbles.” Winston Churchill, at the Independence.

“Corruption is all-pervasive eating into the vitals of our system, undermining economic growth, distorting competition and disproportionately hurting the poor and marginalized citizens. Criminalization of politics continues unchecked, with money and muscle power playing a large role in the elections.” (2<sup>nd</sup> ARC, 2008)

The IAS serves the state, but the state structure itself is increasingly divorced from public interest.

Madhu Koda, the ex-CM of Jharkhand could amass Rs.4000 cr. Only with the help of friendly civil servants.

UP CM, Mulayam Singh Yadav, in a conclave of IAS officers, “You all have such excellent minds and education. You have good jobs. You are all respected by society. Why do you come and touch my feet? Why do you come and lick my shoes? Why do you come to me for personal favours? When you do, I will do as you desire and then extract my price from you.”

Sardar Patel said, “they are as good as we are.” At that time that was a compliment.

If one looks at the officers who donned the highest post of cabinet secretary in the last 30 years, one can assert with confidence that almost all of them had a strong reputation for integrity. The same can be said for many secretaries to GOI.

## Examples of civil servants

- (1) [2013] Durga Shakti Nagpal, a 2010 IAS officer in her first posting as an SDM took on all-powerful sand mining mafia in UP. SP leader and cabinet minister went about bragging, “It took me just 41 minutes to get her suspended.”

Suspension revoked later, transferred to centre.

- (2) H.C. Gupta was convicted by a CBI court in 2017. He chaired committee that made recommendations for coal allocation. Three former cabinet secretaries through newspaper articles put on record their appreciation of Gupta's integrity.

[Section 13, Prevention of Corruption Act " makes any civil servant criminally liable if his act leads to pecuniary benefit to anyone and which is deemed to be not in 'public interest'.]

- (3) P S Appu joined service in 1951 and left the service in 1982 when he was the director of IAS Academy. When somebody whom he dismissed came back. Wrote to the PM then, "It would be impossible to maintain the desired level of discipline at the Academy. What I considered to inculcate in them are the values of professional competence, political neutrality, social commitment, fearlessness, impartiality and integrity. If high standard of discipline can't be preserved at the Academy, it would be more difficult to do so at other places. Hence I decided to leave the service."

[trainee dismissed, but Appu did not come back]

- (4) S R Sankaran, 1957 batch. Lived very simple life. Donated part of his salary. As a secretary for social welfare in AP, he toured many villages to enforce abolition of bonded labour act. Not liked by CM. worked as chief secretary of Tripura under Nripen Chakraborty for 6 years. CM once spent a night sleeping on a bench in the verandah as he did not want to disturb single room rest house where he was sleeping. Awarded Padma Bhushan in 2005 but declined.

Was involved in the activities of Safai Karmachari Andolan founded by Bezwada Wilson which was involved freeing manual scavenging.

- (5) Armstrong Pame, a Naga, 2009 batch IAS. Posted as SDM of Tousem in 2012. Raised funds for a road through social media. 100 km road in Manipur to Nagaland and Assam. People's Road built. He came to be called The Miracle Man. Got Young Global Leader award by World Economic Forum.
- (6) Ashok Khemka, 1991, Haryana cadre. Best known for cancelling a 57 cr. Land deal between a real estate company and Robert Vadra in 2012. Transferred 51 times in 24 years of service. What does it reflect?
- (7) Arun Bhatia, 26 transfers. He once prosecuted a sitting chief secretary for awarding road contracts for wrong persons. When transferred, citizens went to the Bombay Court. It said, "The decision to transfer Bhatia is so outrageous that it defies all logic and any moral standard." (1999)

"Honesty is a necessity, but not a sufficient condition for the welfare of the people. Such officers forget they are there to perform as well. Unfortunately, they evaluate themselves only in terms how many people or institutions they exposed."

- (8) Harsh Mander, wrote on Gujarat riots in 2002, then resigned. Worked in tribal areas in MP and Chhattisgarh was very popular. 2000 acres of surplus land of a BJP leader distributed in MP. Currently director of Centre for Equity Studies. Known for integrity, humility, simplicity, courage when it came to defending the weak.
- (9) K J Alphons, 1979 batch IAS, made Kottayam town, Kerala first 100% literate town. As a commissioner of Delhi Development Authority, demolished many illegal buildings. Came to be called the Demolition Man. Time's hundred young global leaders in 1994. Retired from service in 1996.

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(11) Praveen Pardesi, 1985 batch, as additional CS, most trusted by CM of Maharashtra. Helped rehabilitate victims of earthquake in Latur in 1993. Support for relief and rehabilitation plan for flood hit areas in Kerala, 2018. Did excellent work in promoting Community Forest Rights for tribals.

## Ch 8: Bihar

- Lalu Prasad Yadav ruled Bihar directly from 1990 to 1997 and indirectly from 1997 to 2005.

World Bank, 2005, “There also appears to be a breakdown of hierarchy and the loss of control by DMs, heads of departments and departmental secretaries over subordinate personnel. The DMs appear to be frustrated by centralization, absence of support and understanding from their superiors, and inaction on reports of malfeasance and inefficiency at subordinate levels.”

New York Times, 2010 on Lalu’s regime, “Criminals could count on police for protection, not prosecution. Kidnapping was one of the state’s most profitable businesses. Violence raged between Muslims and Hindus, between upper castes and lower castes. The state was led by politicians who used divisive identity politics to entrench their rule, it was so corrupt it required a newly coined phrase: the Jungle Raj.”

During 2004-5 to 2014-15, Bihar’s income at constant prices grew by 10.1% per annum, significantly higher than national average.

Pratyaya Amrit was the only IAS officer that picked in 2011 in the individual category for the PM’s Excellence Award in Public Admn.

## Ch 9: Corruption

- Raghuram Rajan (2012) many lucrative sectors untouched. Such as oil, gas, mining, heavy industry. With great discretion to the GOI ministries. This bred corruption.
- India ranked 87 in International Transparency Index.
- Criminal cases were launched against those who tried to process or store minor forest produce (MFPs) in Odisha. The women who kept brooms were prosecuted in 1995. Hill brooms could be done only by government agency. In 2000, law passes denationalizing and freeing from government control 67 MFPs.
- Raghuram Rajan 2008, “The poor need the savvy politicians to help them navigate through rotten public services. The politician needs the corrupt businessman to provide funds that allows him to supply patronage to the poor and fight elections. The corrupt businessman needs the politician to get natural resources cheaply.”
- Jaffrelot, 2018, “Businessmen-turned MPs not only learn about the laws that parliament is making to regulate their activities (possibly influence them), but they also come to know the bureaucrats who will implement these rules. A former chairman of LIC, Sebi and NSE and a former finance secretary were part of Kingfisher’s Board of Directors.”
- In 1996, UP IAS association attempted a clean up and voted to identify the three most corrupt officers among themselves, offering the administration the details of their crimes. Two of them Akhand Pratap Singh and Neera Yadav rose to the highest position and became chief secretaries! (both later booked for corruption)

- “Politicians need civil servants to make money. They pick and choose the weakest. And UP has the worst politicians in India.” TSR Subramanian, former cabinet secretary, also former CS of the state. E-seva i
- In AP is an innovation. Bhoomi is a government to citizen on land records.

## Last Class

Sonia Gandhi tried to temper hard market fundamentalism with compassion and equity and this I believe was her most valuable and least acknowledged contribution to Indian political life.

" The growing influence on policy issues of activists who call themselves 'civil society' is a worrying trend.." Comment.

In UP, the average tenure of an IAS officer in the last 20 years is said to be as low as six months.

The fatal failing of the Indian bureaucracy has been its low level of professional competence.

An important factor which contributes to the surrender of senior officers before political masters is the total lack of any market value and lack of alternative employment potential.

Deshmukh (2004) “ Now consider the scenario in Bihar. Every new CM would have his favorite as the new CS. At one time, there were about 8 to 10 IAS officers drawing the pay of a CS only because their juniors were appointed as CS at one time or the other.”

The lure of after-retirement sinecures increases the number of those who would be willing to crawl when asked to bend.

FM, 2005 budget, “ We do not pay enough attention to outcomes as we do to outlays or to the physical targets as we do financial targets or to the quality as we do to the quantity. Government intends to strengthen evaluation. This needs to be supplemented by independent evaluations.”

World Bank (2008) found the average rate of teacher attendance was 65% in UP but the average rate of teacher activity was only 27%.

The overall percentage of severely malnourished children, in case of 0-3 years, according to the data reaching from GOI was only 2% as against 9.4% as reported by UNICEF ( 2014) in their survey. The practice of fudging is widespread.