

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WEEKLY APRIL WEEK 3)

Public Administration

By

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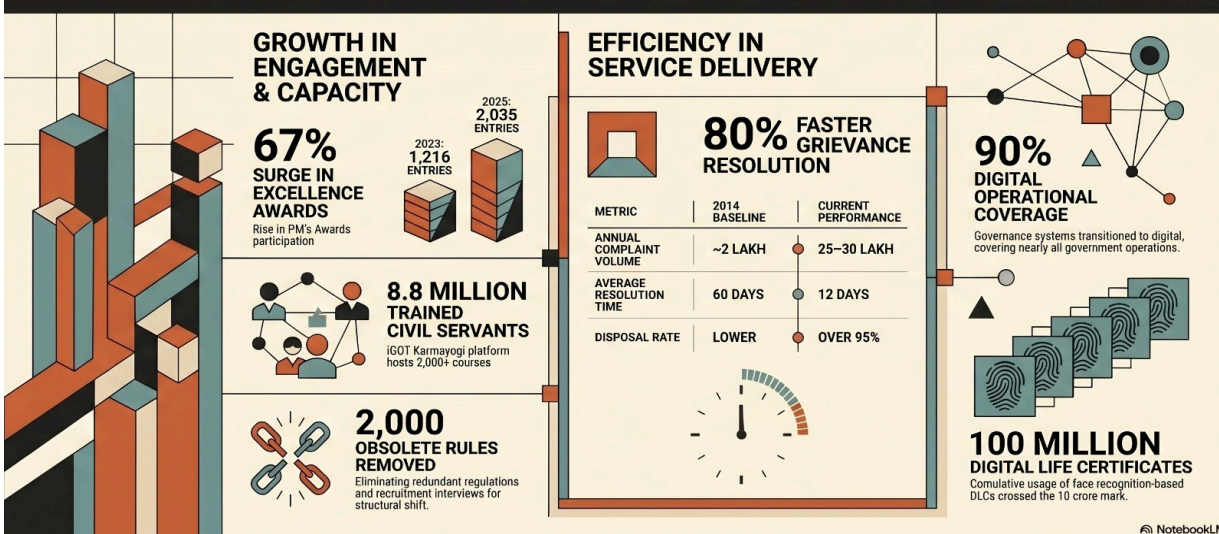
This initiative will help students in interlinking current affairs with Paper 1 and Paper 2 while doing answer writing. These examples can be directly used in mains answers.

Quote of the week - "The endurance of organisation depends upon the quality of leadership and that quality derives from the breadth of the morality upon which it rests". - Chester Bernard



INDIA'S GOVERNANCE TRANSFORMATION: FROM RULE-BASED TO ROLE-BASED

Shifting toward a citizen-centric, digitally-driven administrative model



Outlook



Context - 18th Civil Service Day, 2026 - The Minister of Personnel emphasised that there is a need for structural shifts in governance, including a move "from individual delivery to institutionalised delivery" and from "rule-based" to "role-based" administration. He pointed to the removal of nearly 2,000 obsolete rules, abolition of interviews for certain recruitment processes. The evaluation framework for excellence awards has been restructured to focus on flagship programme outcomes rather than individual officer profiles. Institutional innovations such as the Assistant Secretary programme, digital governance systems covering nearly 90% of government operations, and international collaborations, including hosting global administrative forums, were also highlighted. Ministers highlight of the 95% grievance disposal rate is a direct application of **Drucker's** theory that "what gets measured, gets managed", also By involving various stakeholders, NGOs, and different tiers of government in the "Holistic Development" India is moving away from a single, rigid top-down command toward **Ostrom's** multi-centered governance".

Ahead of the next delimitation, we need a great national consultation



THAROORTHINK

BY SHASHI THAROOR

THE DEFEAT of the trifecta of Bills in the Lok Sabha has already been disingenuously portrayed by the Treasury benches as a setback for Indian women.

Let us be clear: The rejection was not a vote against women's representation — a cause for which there is near-unanimous consensus across the aisle — but a decisive stand against a legislative Trojan Horse. Under the noble guise of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, the government attempted to smuggle in an ill-conceived delimitation exercise that would have fundamentally skewed the arithmetic of our Union and devastated our democracy. By tethering the long-overdue empowerment of women to the demographic volatility of a redrawing of boundaries, the government sought to use a moral imperative as a shield for a political land-grab.

There is no logical or constitutional reason why women cannot be granted their 33 per cent reservation today, based on our existing parliamentary strength. Instead, the government presented a "Buy One, Get One Free" offer that no self-respecting federalist could accept. The idea was just like the disastrous demonetisation — "pass in haste, repent at leisure". To accept these Bills was to accept a "political demonetisation" that would have effectively disenfranchised states that have successfully implemented national goals of population control and human development; it would have rendered small states irrelevant and punished major contributors to the exchequer by rewarding economic excellence with political irrelevance. The Opposition has done the nation a favour by warding off such a catastrophe.

But we should be grateful to the government: Its over-reach offers us a providential opportunity to examine fundamental questions about the very design of our democ-

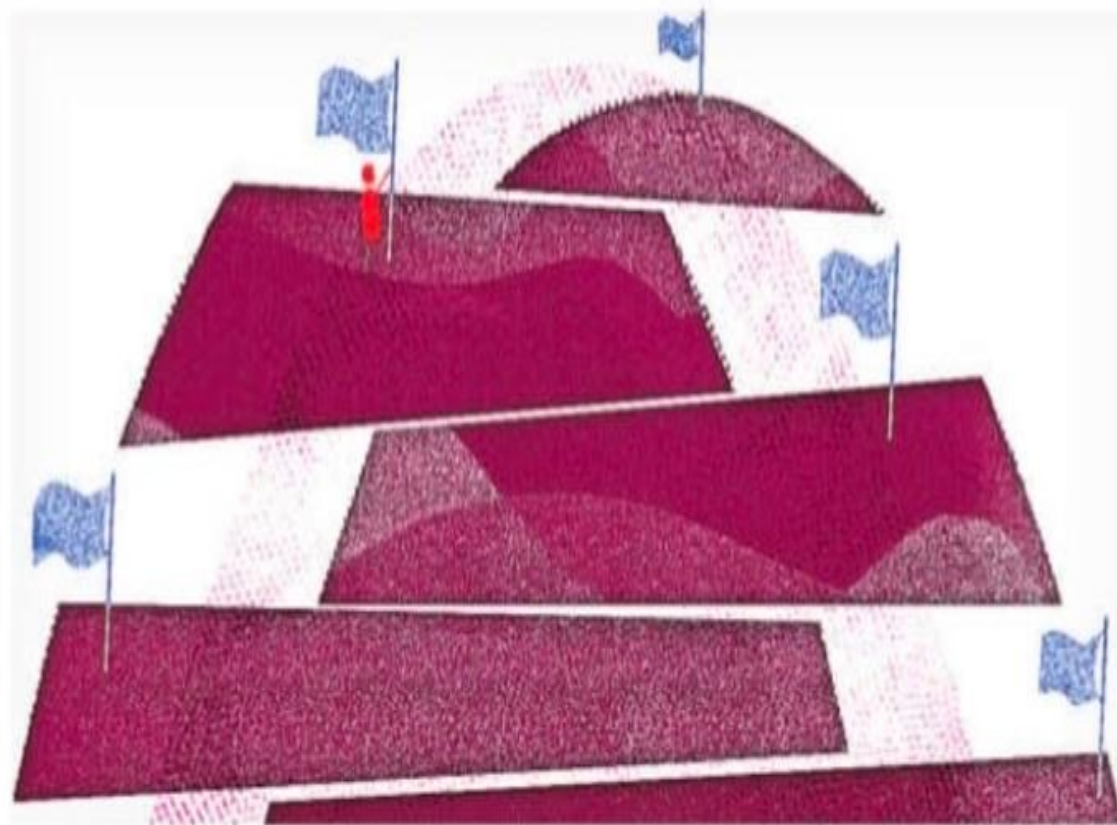


ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

racy, nearly eight decades after Independence. We must ask ourselves if a model of parliamentary representation designed in the mid-20th century is still suitable for a sprawling, diverse nation of 145 crore people with such vast disparities among its constituent units. As we look toward the inevitable results of the next Census, we are confronted by a demographic divergence that threatens our federal fabric.

On one side stand states, primarily in the south, that have governed well, curbed population growth, and invested in the education and health of their citizens. On the other are states where population growth has been rampant. If we adhere to a simplistic "one person, one vote" formula, we perversely reward failure and penalise success. We risk creating a Union where a handful of states, by virtue of their demographic weight alone, can dominate the national discourse and the national exchequer, while those contributing the most to our GDP and social progress find themselves reduced to bystanders in the national conversation.

We must, therefore, explore alternative models of representation that can balance the rights of individual citizens with the rights of the constituent units, since the Constitution calls us a "Union of States". In the United States, the Connecticut Compromise solved a similar deadlock by creating a bi-

cameral system where the House reflects population, but the Senate treats every state as an equal, regardless of size. In the European Union, the principle of degressive proportionality ensures that while larger nations have more weight, smaller nations are given a minimum threshold of representation that prevents them from being steam-rolled, and bigger states have a ceiling so they do not dominate the Union. It is all very well for the BJP to mouth pieties about "one citizen, one vote, one value", but in a land of such major cultural diversity, how about giving equal importance to "one state, one equal partner, one value"?

Then there is the question of whether the proposed solution isn't worse than the disease in our democracy. Can a Lok Sabha of 850 really have any meaningful discussions, or will it become an echo chamber, a desecration of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference? The US House has stayed at 435 members since 1929 even as the population it represents has increased threefold. In Friday's debate, the Home Minister asked how a single MP could meaningfully represent 30 lakh people. Doesn't the answer lie in a clear division of labour between the more numerous MLAs, who represent smaller units of population in their states, and a smaller set of MPs, whose role could be confined to broader policy questions and larger development issues?

There is no logical or constitutional reason why women cannot be granted their 33 per cent reservation today, based on our existing parliamentary strength

Could we not, perhaps, consider a radical redesign of our own two chambers to balance each other more effectively? Perhaps the Rajya Sabha ought to evolve from a secondary chamber into a true "House of the States" with equal or near-equal representation for all units of the Union, acting as a genuine federal check on the Lok Sabha. We must also confront the elephant in the room: Is it time to reconsider the size of our constituent units? The sheer administrative and political weight of our largest states often dwarfs that of many sovereign nations. There is a compelling case for breaking up some of these unwieldy behemoths to ensure better governance and a more balanced federal equilibrium. When Mayawati was chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, the legislature passed a resolution urging that the state be divided into four (I have urged, in this column, the establishment of a States' Reorganisation Commission to examine this and related ideas).

These are just some of the issues that need to be considered before the Census triggers the process that makes a future delimitation inevitable. They are not questions that can be answered in a hasty two-day session called without adequate consultation with state governments, political parties, or civil society. What we need is a great national consultation, involving all state chief ministers, all political parties, and civil society. We must address everything from the fiscal imbalances where tax-contributing states feel exploited, to the political imbalances where performing states feel ignored.

The government's defeat is a victory for the spirit of the Constitution. It has hit the "pause" button on a potential disaster and opened a window for a more profound conversation about the nation's future. Let us pass women's reservation as a standalone measure. But let us also treat the redrawing of our democratic map with the solemnity, the time, and the inclusive consultation it deserves. Our Union is too precious to be sacrificed on the altar of cynical electoral arithmetic.

The writer is Member of Parliament for Thiruvananthapuram, Lok Sabha and the author of India: From Midnight to the Millennium, The Battle of Belonging and other books on Indian nationhood

Context - To ensure coordinated emergency response, LG of Delhi reviewed the functioning of the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) and directed the integration of fire, ambulance and police control room (PCR) services on a common emergency call system, stressing that all three must be co-located. This call rightly highlights the classical school of thought basic Scalar Principle i.e. hierarchy where orders flow from a central authority to ensure disparate units act as a single machine.

Breaking Barriers: The Leadership Journey of Smt. Mamta Devi

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

ENTRENCHED PATRIARCHAL NORMS

Prevailing "proxy politics" often allowed men to control elected women representatives via family pressure.

THE PATH TO TRANSFORMATION

TARGETED CAPACITY BUILDING

Engagement with Mahila Mandals (Women's Groups) provided the leadership and financial literacy training needed.

MULTI-SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH

Successfully lobbied for a local law college, solar lighting, and a 500-capacity community center.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DECAY

The Panchayat faced broken irrigation canals, unsafe mountain walkways, and high unemployment from mining bans.

THE MARGINALIZATION GAP

Women faced limited mobility, high rates of female feticide, and restricted access to education.

CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

Mamta broke norms by prioritizing her daughter's private education over her son's.

BEFORE & AFTER MAMTA DEVI'S LEADERSHIP INTERVENTIONS

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOME UNDER LEADERSHIP
Sanitation	100% HOUSEHOLD TOILET UTILIZATION OPEN DEFEICATION
Employment	RESTORED HUNDREDS OF JOBS MINING FINES LIFTED
Governance	ELIMINATED PROXY RUNNING & INCREASED PARTICIPATION ELIMINATED PARTICIPATION

NotebookLM

Case study : Smt. Mamta Devi, a young woman from the marginalised Schedule Caste (SC) community of Soukni-da-Kot Panchayat, Dharamshala Block, Kangra Himachal Pradesh

Invoking Patel, Cabinet Secy Pushes No-politics, No-communalism Code

At civil services day, Somanathan stresses duty to give frank, fearless advice to executive

Jatin Takkar

New Delhi: Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan on Monday while invoking Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's foundational vision for the bureaucracy underscored three key tenets for civil servants — distance from politics, strict avoidance of communal entanglements, and the duty to offer frank and fearless advice to the executive, even at the risk of causing displeasure.

Addressing the 18th Civil Services Day at Vigyan Bhavan here, Somanathan extensively quoted Patel's 1947 address to the first batch of civil servants, anchoring his remarks in the founding ethos of the services.

He cited Patel's caution that a civil servant "must not take part in politics, nor involve himself in communal wrangles," stressing that any departure from this path of rectitude would "debase public services and lower its dignity."

The cabinet secretary made it clear that these were not merely historical observations but enduring standards of administrative conduct. He also highlighted Patel's emphasis on integrity, noting that no service can claim credibility without striving for the highest standards of probity.

On bureaucratic independence, So-



STRESSING PROBITY
Cabinet secy also cites Patel's stress on integrity, saying no service is credible without highest standards of probity

manathan referred to Patel's 1949 remarks in the Constituent Assembly to underline that civil servants must be free to express their views "without fear or favour," even if such advice risks displeasing ministers. Patel had cautioned against reducing officials to mere executors of orders, asserting that the strength of the Union rests on a professional civil service that can speak its mind with honesty.

Somanathan noted that while individual officers may, at times, have

VP BACKS TARGETED WELFARE

Vice-President Radhakrishnan Bats for Equitable Growth

New Delhi: Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan on Tuesday pitched for equitable growth, saying higher revenue contribution by states cannot be the sole basis for resource allocation, while calling for targeted welfare and greater representation of women in legislatures. Addressing Civil Services Day, he said just as states must support all districts irrespective of contribution, the Centre must ensure no state remains underdeveloped. On freebies, he backed support for the poorest but cautioned against universalisation. Welcoming the rising number of women in civil services, he expressed hope for similar gains in legislatures. — OPB

"fallen short of these high ideals," the core ethos of a politically neutral civil service capable of offering impartial and candid advice has endured. He said the civil services have played a vital role in preserving India's unity, integrity, and democratic framework.

Highlighting their wide-ranging responsibilities, he pointed to their role in maintaining law and order and national security, collection of revenue, delivery of basic services, and, crucially, conduct of free and fair elections.

He also emphasised their responsibility in ensuring that public finances are properly maintained and rigorously audited.

He added that while governance systems must evolve with changing times, the foundational values laid down by Patel remain constant and non-negotiable.

Somanathan, who began his address by quoting Patel, concluded by citing Prime Minister Narendra Modi, linking these principles to the vision of a developed India by 2047.

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