

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CURRENT Affairs

This will help students in interlinking current affairs with Paper 1 and Paper 2 in mains examination 2026.

Public Administration

By

Ajeet Yadav.

Faculty, ForumIAS



Outlook



Niti Aayog

नीति आयोग

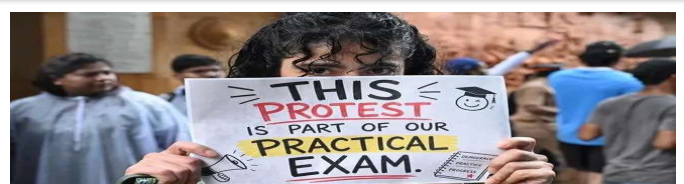
National Institution for Transforming India

Context - Stress training to Haryana

officers - The Haryana government has asked all administrative secretaries to nominate officers for a five-day training on stress management to be held in Gangtok by the National Productivity Council, an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry. senior IAS officer counter-argued that such initiatives serve little structural purpose beyond acting as an upscale "outing". They emphasized that civil servants are already trained to handle intense workload pressures. Instead, they argued true stress stems from political pressure to bypass rules, meaning the government should focus on building a legally secure, stress-free work environment rather than sending personnel to luxury destinations. The IAS officer's critique directly mirrors **Herzberg**. The officer argues that luxury junkets do not fix the structural "hygiene" flaws of the workplace specifically, the intense stress caused by political pressure to bypass rules. From a **Waldonian** perspective, a "stress-free" environment is built when officers have the structural protection to uphold constitutional values and resist improper political directive.

Context - Protest by Gen Z - Several RAF personnel were seen without name tags or badge numbers visible on their uniforms, a requirement the Supreme Court laid down in **D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal** with its 1996 ruling on safeguards against custodial abuse. The Delhi Police faced intense criticism for employing excessive force, including lathi charges and tear gas, against Gen Z-led "Cockroach Janta Party" (CJP) protestors during the "Chalo Sansad" march. **Post-modern thinkers** in Public Administration view protest not as a disruption of order, but as a legitimate, necessary tool for democratic discourse. They reframe protest through several key lenses such as

- **Deconstruction of Power** - Post-modernists see protest as a way to challenge dominant bureaucratic narratives and expose systemic biases.
- **Discursive Democracy** - Thinkers like **David John Farmer** argue that public administration should be a open dialogue. Protest functions as a legitimate voice for marginalized groups who are excluded from traditional policy-making channels.
- **Anti-Administration** - This perspective views protest as a healthy rejection of rigid, technocratic control, promoting a more fluid, citizen-centric approach to governance.



Context - 49th Monthly Report on Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) - The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) released the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) monthly report for May, 2026, which provides a detailed analysis of types and categories of public grievances and the nature of disposal. This is the 49th report on Central Ministries/Departments published by DARPG. The Department of Posts, Department of Financial Services (Insurance Division), and Department of Telecommunications topped in Group A of the Grievance Redressal Assessment & Index (GRAI). The Department of Heavy Industries, Ministry of Textiles, and Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs led in Group B. The AI-Enabled Voice Chatbot, Samadhan Didi, was launched on May 30, 2026, for grievance redressal. **Christopher Hood** argued for a shift from rigid procedural compliance to quantifiable performance. The report's tracking of 1,78,423 resolved grievances and the precise 13-day average disposal time perfectly illustrate Hood's focus on measurable outputs and performance indicators. **Barbara Romzek & Melvin Dubnick** identified a quadrant of accountability mechanisms. CPGRAMS shifts the bureaucracy away from blind hierarchical obedience toward a strong administrative/legal accountability system. By using clear metrics and automated tech, it creates internal systems of scrutiny based on explicit performance standards.

Context - Study on City Governance by Niti Aayog - India's urban governance architecture is failing its cities with "symbolic" mayors, fragmented authority, weak finances and capacity gaps which undermine the ability of urban local bodies (ULBs) to deliver basic services, report has warned. At the heart of the problem lies the office of the mayor. Mayors generally do not play a significant role in city administration in the absence of having adequate executive powers," said the report, 'Moving Towards Effective City Government- A framework for million-plus cities'. It added that in most cities, the position is reduced to a "largely symbolic stature". Real authority, it says, rests with municipal commissioners or state-controlled agencies, creating a structural disconnect between elected representatives and governance. The problem is made worse by uneven electoral systems and short mayoral tenures. In many cities, mayors are not directly elected and serve terms as short as one year, leaving little room for continuity or accountability.

Robert Dahl highlighted the tension between "system effectiveness" and "citizen participation." State governments often centralize power under a municipal commissioner in the name of technical efficiency and speed, but they do so at the direct expense of local democratic governance. Similarly, **Brian C. Smith** in **Devolution vs. Deconcentration** argued that true decentralization requires devolution i.e. transferring both political authority and executive power to locally elected bodies. The report reveals that India instead practices deconcentration, where the state government retains real authority through unelected Municipal Commissioners, reducing the mayor to a symbolic figure.



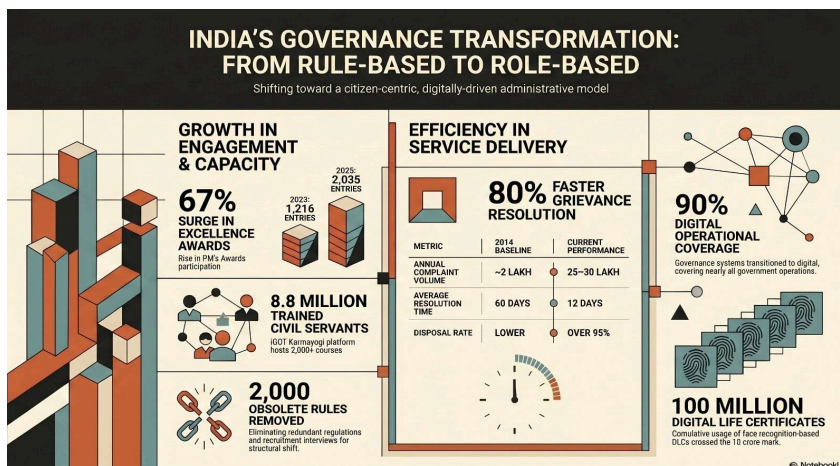
Context - NTA sacks 47 officials - Data presented by the Ministry of Education in the Rajya Sabha revealed that the National Testing Agency (NTA) which manages high-stakes exams like NEET-UG and JEE Main for over 6.6 crore candidates operates with just 24 permanent officials. Even these 24 are not direct hires they are on temporary deputation from other departments. Instead, the core of the NTA's massive operation relies on an external workforce of 197 non-permanent hands 73 Contractual Employees: This includes 44 consultants, senior advisors, and young professionals. 124 Outsourced Personnel. These staff handle day-to-day operations. This hollowed-out staffing model collapsed under the weight of the 2024-2026 paper leak scandals. Because contractual staff lack institutional security, structural accountability, or long-term loyalty to the civil service, the agency was easily infiltrated by localized paper-leak mafias. This ultimately forced the Ministry of Education to abruptly sack 47 contractual officials in an attempt to defuse public anger.

NPM advocates for "agencification" breaking large government ministries into small, autonomous, business-like agencies. The NTA was created to be a "lean" agency, eschewing a heavy, permanent bureaucratic footprint in favor of a hyper-flexible corporate structure. In *Government by the Market*, Peter Self argued that market criteria like cost-cutting and flexible hiring are fundamentally incompatible with essential public services that demand equity, trust, and absolute security.

Context - Study on Gram Sabha - The report, 'National Study on Low Participation in Gram Sabha', prepared by the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, surveyed nearly 7,790 respondents across 400 Gram Panchayats in 26 states and Union Territories, to understand why attendance remains low in Gram Sabhas. According to the survey, 55.5 percent of respondents cited livelihood and time constraints as a barrier to attending Gram Sabha. This is followed by 16.2 percent citing awareness and communication issues and 9.9 percent citing lack of interest for not attending Gram Sabha meetings. Among respondents who reported discomfort in speaking, 35.8 percent cited a lack of confidence, 17.4 percent feared authority figures and 17.2 percent said influential individuals dominated discussions. Gender discrimination and caste discrimination were also cited as barriers by 9.05 percent and 6.6 percent, respectively apart from low attendance, the study highlights a decline in people's perception of Gram Sabha meetings as capable of addressing local issues. Survey results show that 45.5 percent of respondents expressed concerns over a lack of transparency, 41.9 percent said meetings lacked visible outcomes, while 33.4 percent said discussions were becoming repetitive and a mere formality. The findings suggest that participation is not determined solely by awareness and attendance but is also shaped by the extent to which citizens perceive Gram Sabha meetings as meaningful, responsive and capable of addressing local concerns," the report stated.

Michel Foucault: Governmentality and the Illusion of Choice Foucault's concept of governmentality (governmental rationality) explains how modern states control populations not through overt force, but by shaping habits, desires, and behaviors. **Robert Chambers** (*Putting the Last First*): Chambers argued for rural development that prioritizes the knowledge and priorities of the poorest. If Gram Sabhas are hijacked by local elites or rigid administrative agendas, marginalized citizens realize the forum is not "meaningful" to their lives and drop out.

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



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-

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-

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

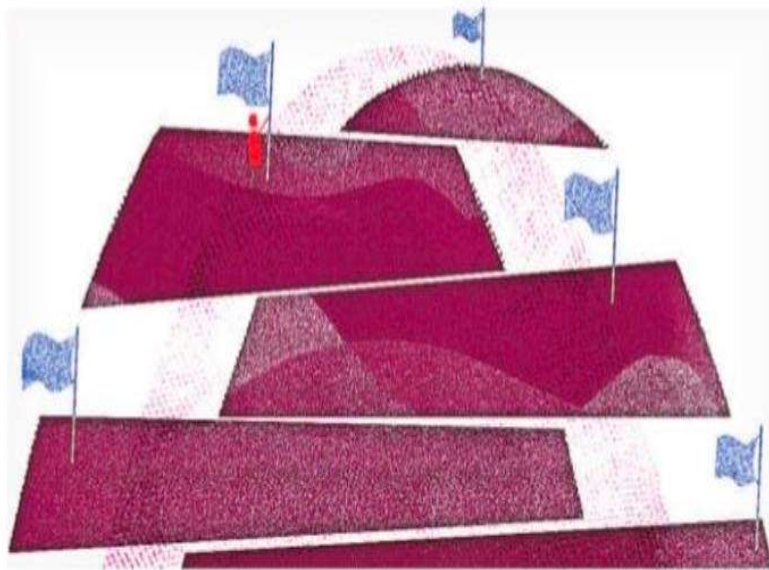


ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

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 steamrolled, 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 desi version 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?

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.

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.

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.

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 DEFECACTION
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 "debate 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-



Cabinet Secretary
TV Somanathan

STRESSING PROBITY

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

Somanathan 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.



CASE STUDY - LG Listening Post - A dedicated cell within the Delhi LG Secretariat has been established to process complaints submitted through multiple channels. So far, several issues, particularly those affecting civic bodies have been addressed, signaling a commitment to resolving both minor and significant civic problems. By providing mobile apps (Android/iOS) and web portals, the system moves grievance submission from physical offices to the "doorstep" of the citizen

Quote of the week - "The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said." - Peter Drucker

LONGEST-SERVING HEADS OF GOVERNMENT			
2	PAWAN KUMAR CHAMLING 8,930 days Sikkim CM (1994-2019)	3	NAVEEN PATNAIK 8,865 days Odisha CM (2000-24)
4	JYOTI BASU 8,539 days West Bengal CM (1977-2000)	5	GEGONG APANG 8,286 days Arunachal Pradesh CM (1980-99, 2003-07)

Context - The Prime Minister Tenure Debate, Dr B.R. Ambedkar emphasised the concept of "daily accountability" through parliamentary mechanisms such as question hour, no-confidence motions, and adjournment motions. He argued that these mechanisms were more effective than periodic elections in ensuring executive responsibility. India has developed an informal convention limiting the President to two terms, despite the Constitution not mandating such a restriction thus following in the spirit of Aristotle's idea that citizens should take turns being the ruler and the ruled. The introduction of the Tenth Schedule through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment in 1985 significantly weakened the effectiveness of no-confidence motions, as ruling party members are unlikely to vote against their own government as a result, the primary mechanism envisioned by the framers to check executive power has been diluted.

Petty Power, Real Harm

Why the constable and the clerk behave the way they do – and what the state can actually do about it.



OP SINGH

FORMER DGP, HARYANA

There is a particular kind of humiliation that most Indians have experienced but few can name. You walk into a police station or a government office – educated, taxpaying, perhaps better-dressed than the person behind the desk – and within thirty seconds you are made to feel small. The constable does not look up. The clerk waves you away mid-sentence. You wait. You return. You wait again. You say sir to a man who earns a third of what you do. And somewhere in the exchange, you understand, wordlessly, that he knows exactly what he is doing.

But here is what I also know. Last year, at the North India Inter-State Council meeting at Surajkund, several senior IAS officers told me something that surprised them. While driving through Gurugram, they had been stopped at police nakabandis. The constables had addressed them respectfully, requested permission to search the vehicle, apologised for the inconvenience, and thanked them for cooperation. These were not anecdotes of exception. They were evidence that change, when it comes from the top with genuine intent, can reach all the way to the roadside barrier.

Many states have tried soft-skills training. It has not worked, and it will not work, because training addresses manner without touching cause. The cause is structural, and it has a name.

India's constables and government clerks occupy one of the most psychologically volatile positions in any society. They sit at the very bottom of their organisational ladders, yet they face the public armed with enormous discretionary authority. Constables make up eighty-five per cent of the Indian police. Most will retire at or below the rank of Sub-Inspector, regardless of qualification or years of service.



The clerk in the revenue office is no different – overworked, underpaid, invisible to his superiors, and yet the sole gatekeeper between a citizen and whatever the citizen needs.

In 1954, the American sociologist Gerhard Lenski gave this condition its name: status inconsistency. When a person's social dimensions are out of alignment – when power is high but rank is low, when authority is real but recognition is absent – the psychological strain does not stay internal. It turns outward. The constable who makes you stand while he sits, the clerk who loses your file and blames you for it – they are not simply being difficult. They are asserting over you the dominance that the rest of their working lives deny them. Their uniform gives them power the institution gives them no dignity to match. That gap is the engine of every unpleasant encounter at the thana gate and the government counter.

Powerlessness also breeds something darker. A landmark 2021 study by Swaab and colleagues, published in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, found across five controlled experiments that low power – not high power – reliably increases paranoia, which in turn drives aggression. The clerk who suspects every applicant of trying to bypass him, the constable who treats every complainant as a potential troublemaker – these are not personality defects. They are predictable responses to structural vulnerability. When you spend your working life uncertain whether your superiors notice you, whether your rank will ever change, the citizen at the counter – perhaps wealthier, perhaps better-educated – becomes the most convenient target for that accumulated anxiety.

The architecture of this problem is colonial and deliberate. The Po-

lice Act of 1861 – written to govern a subject population – still governs, in most states, the terms under which a constable meets a citizen in 2025. Michael Lipsky, whose 1980 work *Street-Level Bureaucracy* remains the foundational text on front-line public workers, argued that these men and women "hold the keys to a dimension of citizenship." The constable and the clerk are not minor functionaries. In that moment of encounter, they are the entire republic. The republic, however, has spent a hundred and sixty years treating them as instruments of control – tools pointed at the citizen rather than toward them.

When I took charge as Director General of Police, Haryana, I asked myself where to begin. Training programmes existed. Sensitisation workshops had been held. Behaviour had not changed.

I started with status. I told the constabulary – directly, and in writing – that they were the most important rank in the Indian Police. They receive the lowest pay, take the maximum risk, and work the longest hours. I wanted them to hear that from their head before they were asked for anything.

I then wrote to every rank, in Hindi, in two hundred words, starting with the jawans. We work for the people, at their cost. Meet citizens where they are. Be gentle with those who obey the law willingly. Take no coercive action for a bonafide, inadvertent violation. Citizens who come to a police station are having a difficult day. Offer them a chair. Offer them a cup of tea. Look at your thana through their eyes – does the gate say come in or keep out?

The response was not what sceptics predicted. These are, in the main, good people inside a broken system. They respond when leadership speaks to their dignity rather than merely demanding their compliance. The problem has never been the constable's

character. It has been the silence of those above him – a silence that, over decades, becomes permission.

But goodwill from the top has a shelf life. Durable change requires something the state has so far declined to provide: a redesign of what gets rewarded.

The proof that incentive redesign works comes from an unlikely place. After Georgia's 2003 Rose Revolution, President Saakashvili inherited a police force so corrupt that citizens considered contact with it a hazard. He fired thirty thousand officers and rebuilt from scratch, dramatically raising salaries and tying retention to conduct and merit. Within six years – documented by Princeton University's *Innovations for Successful Societies* programme – that force ranked as the third most trusted institution in the country, behind only the Church and the Army. The salary hike mattered. But what mattered more was that officers were given something to lose by behaving badly, and something to gain by behaving well. The incentive geometry changed. So did the behaviour.

India's departments must follow the same logic. A clerk who clears files without harassment, a constable who treats a marginalised complainant with dignity – these acts must be formally cited, tangibly rewarded, and systematically celebrated. Lenski's insight was that status inconsistency poisons behaviour. The corrective is not a workshop. It is to align what the institution rewards with what it claims to value. Constables must be trusted with roles in investigation, not just physical presence. Promotion must be linked to performance. A man who serves thirty years and retires at the rank he entered is not a professional. He is a labourer in uniform.

Lenski showed us why the gap between status and power corrupts. Lipsky showed us that front-line workers are the state, in practice. Swaab showed us that powerlessness, without recognition or support, turns outward – onto whoever is standing at the counter. What all three were really saying is what a good police chief knows on the first morning of his posting: you cannot ask people to give dignity they have never been shown.

Give the constable and the clerk something to gain by being good. That is the reform. Everything else is noise.

/ DAILYWORLD /

The writer is a former Director General of Police, Haryana. **FEAR TAX: THE PRICE OF PLAYING IT SAFE** is his forthcoming book.

CASE STUDY – How Khurpenchh became the UPSC watchdog online – Called Khurpenchh Hindi for "picking out faults" the popular X handle has built a large social media following by scrutinising the credentials of civil servants and aspirants digging into forged certificates to inflated claims of bureaucratic achievements. The Khurpenchh team operates behind pseudonyms they are whistleblower, The account's anonymity however, remains a point of contention. Khurpenchh's administrators say we want to become a change-maker. We want to create an open source, public data portal where people can easily see the report card of their area. Through campaigns like "Ye Thik Karke Dikhao" (Show us you can fix this) they have used crowdsourced photos and videos to pressure local administrators into fixing broken infrastructure like roads and schools. By using social media to highlight governance failures Khurpench acts as the environment that constantly interacts with the administrative system by putting pressure on it which thus forcing it to be responsive rather than just rule-bound also (Systems theory) also as Mohit Bhattacharya identifies e-Governance as a tool to reduce corruption and empower citizens Khurpench leverages the digital platforms to bridge the information gap between the state and the public thus strengthening the "authority of citizens" highlighted by Dwight Waldo in the book "Administrative State" in form of the inherent tension between the authority of citizens (democracy) and the authority of officials (bureaucracy)



STAFFING SHORTAGES

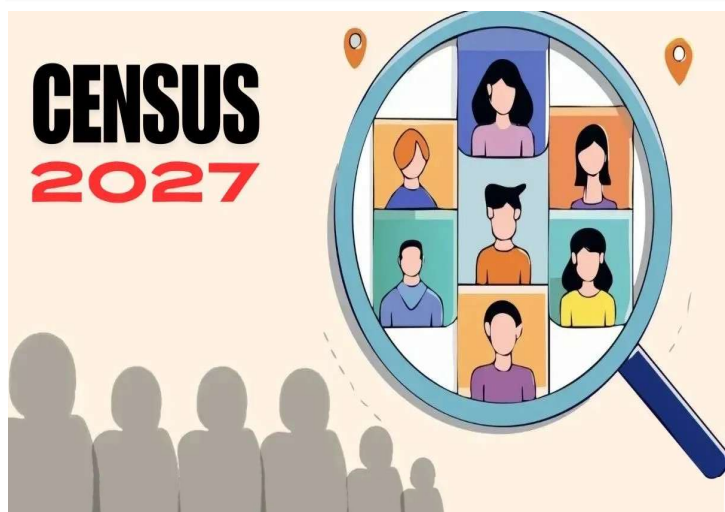
Context – Staffing shortage becoming a governance Failure – India is facing a critical shortage of nearly 1,300 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, with vacancies representing roughly 20% of the sanctioned strength and severely hindering governance and welfare delivery. A parliamentary panel has highlighted this "quiet normalisation" of the deficit, which leads to overworked staff and slower decision-making across state especially For a system that still relies heavily on a generalist administrative elite to deliver everything from welfare scheme s to crisis response, this is not a small problem. With 20% fewer officers, the "Span of Control" for existing seniors expands beyond manageable limits, leading to supervision fatigue and a breakdown in oversight also as highlighted by New Public Administration A thin-stretched bureaucracy becomes defensive and clings to rules just to survive the workload. It stops being a "change agent" and becomes a barrier to changes required in Society thus loosing its relevance.

Context - Large-scale transfers of senior IAS/IPS officers in poll-bound states - The Election Commission of India is mandated to conduct elections not run governments, it should exercise its powers with transparency and discretion thus upholding India's democratic principles rather than acting like a governing body. Critics argue that neither the Representation of the People Act, 1950/1951 nor the All India Services Act, 1951 explicitly empowers the ECI to transfer state officers unilaterally, raising questions about whether the ECI is exceeding its jurisdiction. The ECI defends its actions by citing the need to prevent "poll violence" and ensure officials do not influence the electoral process in favor of the ruling party. Administrative thinker Elton Mayo would view these transfers as a blow to informal organization and group morale. Branding a group of officers as unfit for election duty creates a climate of suspicion. According to Mayo a demotivated uprooted bureaucrat will perform poorly regardless of the neutrality.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK - "ANY SYSTEM OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION INEVITABLY REFLECTS ITS ENVIRONMENT". - L.D. WHITE



Context - Self enumeration Census 2027, The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (ORGI) is a permanent organization under the Ministry of Home Affairs responsible for conducting the decennial Census and managing vital statistics, The organization operates through 33 Directorates of Census Operations (DCO) i. e. field agencies located in nearly all States and Union Territories, which manage field activities at the local level.



Context - Poor infrastructure Audit of Gurugram Audit report from CAG reveals that Indian cities suffer from a "weak civic compact," where high investment fails to translate into livability due to poor enforcement and maintenance. A 2025-2026 assessment shows that nearly 50% of public infrastructure is unprepared for disaster management. Between 2021 and 2025, India recorded 50 major infrastructure failures (e.g., bridge collapses in Bihar and Gujarat), resulting in damages exceeding ₹5,000 crore. Over 2,400 buildings in Delhi and other metros are currently at high risk of structural damage due to land subsidence. Solving India's urban problem needs shift to financial autonomy to cities via GIS-based property tax and municipal bonds, mandating independent third-party audits by technical institutes like the IITs, and adopting "Sponge City" urban planning to handle climate stress. Ultimately, success depends on moving toward a Mayor-in-Council model as highlighted by 2nd ARC where local leaders have the direct authority As highlighted by thinker Robert Chambers

Context - Being considered for promotion is a Fundamental Right The judgment by the Punjab and Haryana High Court holding that the right to be considered for a promotion is a fundamental right, brings into focus a nuanced legal principle governing public employment in India. It highlights that while no government employee can demand a promotion as an absolute guarantee the Constitution ensures that they must be fairly evaluated for one if they meet the eligibility criteria. Henri Fayol's principle of equity emphasises on fairness and justice is a key principle of organisation for its long term survival.



Context – Stampede kills 8 in Bihar, Stampede management in India is a critical aspect of public safety, given that approximately 79% of all stampedes in the country occur at religious gatherings. From 2000 to 2022, India recorded 3,074 deaths across nearly 4,000 stampede events, one of the main reasons for this have been Poor venue design (shared entry/exit points), and lack of coordination between police, district administration, and event organisers (**coordination is the biggest problem of organisation** as highlighted by the Classical theorist **Mooney and Reilly** their book "**Onward Industry**").

Context – AI based application of AIIMS for mental health AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) has launched several AI-based applications and initiatives to enhance student wellness and patient care. The most prominent recent release is **Never Alone**, an AI-driven mental health platform. AI based applications serve as a model for e-governance by integrating technology into public health administration to improve transparency, efficiency, and accessibility. These initiatives strengthen networks between stakeholders including government bodies, healthcare providers, educational institutions, and the public by creating seamless, data-driven communication and service delivery channels as explained by **Public Administration Network Theory** which shows us how modern governance has shifted from a rigid, top-down hierarchy to a fluid "web" of collaboration between multiple stakeholders.

Context – The Parliament passed the Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill solidifying IPS officer deputation in top CAPF roles. The legislation mandates a quota for IPS officers (50% IG, 67% ADG, 100% SDG/DG) in CAPFs, effectively overriding a 2025 Supreme Court ruling that had favored promotion for CAPF cadre officers. **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs** Recommended that senior positions, including Director General (DG), should not be exclusively reserved for IPS it Stated that CAPF officers must have an equal opportunity to reach the top rank within their own forces.



> **Vohra Committee** Highlighted that filling the topmost security posts with individuals lacking long-term security management experience (like rotating IPS officers) can lead to internal security failure, It Advocated for moving away from political and generalist control toward leadership known for professional domain integrity.

As per **Abraham Maslow** theory the top is the ultimate self-actualization. The Bill makes this impossible within chosen career path which needs to be resolved by the Government, as a middle path the top posts should be open to all rather than reserving for particular services.



'CASE STUDY - LG Listening Post - A dedicated cell within the Delhi LG Secretariat has been established to process complaints submitted through multiple channels. So far, several issues, particularly those affecting civic bodies have been addressed, signaling a commitment to resolving both minor and significant civic problems. By providing mobile apps (Android/iOS) and web portals, the system moves grievance submission from physical offices to the **"doorstep"** of the citizen

Quote of the week - "The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said." - Peter Drucker

LONGEST-SERVING HEADS OF GOVERNMENT			
2	PAWAN KUMAR CHAMLING 8,930 days Sikkim CM (1994-2019)		
3	NAVEEN PATNAIK 8,865 days Odisha CM (2000-24)		
4	JYOTI BASU 8,539 days West Bengal CM (1977-2000)		
5	GEGONG APANG 8,286 days Arunachal Pradesh CM (1980-99, 2003-07)		

Context - The Prime Minister Tenure Debate, Dr B.R. Ambedkar emphasised the concept of **"daily accountability"** through parliamentary mechanisms such as question hour, no-confidence motions, and adjournment motions. He argued that these mechanisms were more effective than periodic elections in ensuring executive responsibility. India has developed an informal convention limiting the President to two terms, despite the Constitution not mandating such a restriction thus following in the spirit of **Aristotle's** idea that citizens should take turns being the ruler and the ruled. The introduction of the Tenth Schedule through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment in 1985 significantly weakened the effectiveness of no-confidence motions, as ruling party members are unlikely to vote against their own government as a result, the primary mechanism envisioned by the framers to check executive power has been diluted.

Petty Power, Real Harm

Why the constable and the clerk behave the way they do – and what the state can actually do about it.



OP SINGH

FORMER DGP, HARYANA

There is a particular kind of humiliation that most Indians have experienced but few can name. You walk into a police station or a government office – educated, taxpaying, perhaps better-dressed than the person behind the desk – and within thirty seconds you are made to feel small. The constable does not look up. The clerk waves you away mid-sentence. You wait. You return. You wait again. You say sir to a man who earns a third of what you do. And somewhere in the exchange, you understand, wordlessly, that he knows exactly what he is doing.

But here is what I also know. Last year, at the North India Inter-State Council meeting at Surajkund, several senior IAS officers told me something that surprised them. While driving through Gurugram, they had been stopped at police nakabandis. The constables had addressed them respectfully, requested permission to search the vehicle, apologised for the inconvenience, and thanked them for cooperation. These were not anecdotes of exception. They were evidence that change, when it comes from the top with genuine intent, can reach all the way to the roadside barrier.

Many states have tried soft-skills training. It has not worked, and it will not work, because training addresses manner without touching cause. The cause is structural, and it has a name.

India's constables and government clerks occupy one of the most psychologically volatile positions in any society. They sit at the very bottom of their organisational ladders, yet they face the public armed with enormous discretionary authority. Constables make up eighty-five per cent of the Indian police. Most will retire at or below the rank of Sub-Inspector, regardless of qualification or years of service.



The clerk in the revenue office is no different – overworked, underpaid, invisible to his superiors, and yet the sole gatekeeper between a citizen and whatever the citizen needs.

In 1954, the American sociologist Gerhard Lenski gave this condition its name: status inconsistency. When a person's social dimensions are out of alignment – when power is high but rank is low, when authority is real but recognition is absent – the psychological strain does not stay internal. It turns outward. The constable who makes you stand while he sits, the clerk who loses your file and blames you for it – they are not simply being difficult. They are asserting over you the dominance that the rest of their working lives deny them. Their uniform gives them power the institution gives them no dignity to match. That gap is the engine of every unpleasant encounter at the thana gate and the government counter.

Powerlessness also breeds something darker. A landmark 2021 study by Swaab and colleagues, published in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, found across five controlled experiments that low power – not high power – reliably increases paranoia, which in turn drives aggression. The clerk who suspects every applicant of trying to bypass him, the constable who treats every complainant as a potential troublemaker – these are not personality defects. They are predictable responses to structural vulnerability. When you spend your working life uncertain whether your superiors notice you, whether your rank will ever change, the citizen at the counter – perhaps wealthier, perhaps better-educated – becomes the most convenient target for that accumulated anxiety.

The architecture of this problem is colonial and deliberate. The Po-

lice Act of 1861 – written to govern a subject population – still governs, in most states, the terms under which a constable meets a citizen in 2025. Michael Lipsky, whose 1980 work *Street-Level Bureaucracy* remains the foundational text on front-line public workers, argued that these men and women "hold the keys to a dimension of citizenship." The constable and the clerk are not minor functionaries. In that moment of encounter, they are the entire republic. The republic, however, has spent a hundred and sixty years treating them as instruments of control – tools pointed at the citizen rather than toward them.

When I took charge as Director General of Police, Haryana, I asked myself where to begin. Training programmes existed. Sensitisation workshops had been held. Behaviour had not changed.

I started with status. I told the constabulary – directly, and in writing – that they were the most important rank in the Indian Police. They receive the lowest pay, take the maximum risk, and work the longest hours. I wanted them to hear that from their head before they were asked for anything.

I then wrote to every rank, in Hindi, in two hundred words, starting with the jawans. We work for the people, at their cost. Meet citizens where they are. Be gentle with those who obey the law willingly. Take no coercive action for a bonafide, inadvertent violation. Citizens who come to a police station are having a difficult day. Offer them a chair. Offer them a cup of tea. Look at your thana through their eyes – does the gate say come in or keep out?

The response was not what sceptics predicted. These are, in the main, good people inside a broken system. They respond when leadership speaks to their dignity rather than merely demanding their compliance. The problem has never been the constable's

character. It has been the silence of those above him – a silence that, over decades, becomes permission.

But goodwill from the top has a shelf life. Durable change requires something the state has so far declined to provide: a redesign of what gets rewarded.

The proof that incentive redesign works comes from an unlikely place. After Georgia's 2003 Rose Revolution, President Saakashvili inherited a police force so corrupt that citizens considered contact with it a hazard. He fired thirty thousand officers and rebuilt from scratch, dramatically raising salaries and tying retention to conduct and merit. Within six years – documented by Princeton University's *Innovations for Successful Societies* programme – that force ranked as the third most trusted institution in the country, behind only the Church and the Army. The salary hike mattered. But what mattered more was that officers were given something to lose by behaving badly, and something to gain by behaving well. The incentive geometry changed. So did the behaviour.

India's departments must follow the same logic. A clerk who clears files without harassment, a constable who treats a marginalised complainant with dignity – these acts must be formally cited, tangibly rewarded, and systematically celebrated. Lenski's insight was that status inconsistency poisons behaviour. The corrective is not a workshop. It is to align what the institution rewards with what it claims to value. Constables must be trusted with roles in investigation, not just physical presence. Promotion must be linked to performance. A man who serves thirty years and retires at the rank he entered is not a professional. He is a labourer in uniform.

Lenski showed us why the gap between status and power corrupts. Lipsky showed us that front-line workers are the state, in practice. Swaab showed us that powerlessness, without recognition or support, turns outward – onto whoever is standing at the counter. What all three were really saying is what a good police chief knows on the first morning of his posting: you cannot ask people to give dignity they have never been shown.

Give the constable and the clerk something to gain by being good. That is the reform. Everything else is noise.

/ DAILYWORLD /

The writer is a former Director General of Police, Haryana. **FEAR TAX: THE PRICE OF PLAYING IT SAFE** is his forthcoming book.

CASE STUDY – How Khurpenchh became the UPSC watchdog online – Called Khurpenchh Hindi for "picking out faults" the popular X handle has built a large social media following by scrutinising the credentials of civil servants and aspirants digging into forged certificates to inflated claims of bureaucratic achievements. The Khurpenchh team operates behind pseudonyms they are whistleblower, The account's anonymity however, remains a point of contention. Khurpenchh's administrators say we want to become a change-maker. We want to create an open source, public data portal where people can easily see the report card of their area. Through campaigns like "Ye Thik Karke Dikhao" (Show us you can fix this) they have used crowdsourced photos and videos to pressure local administrators into fixing broken infrastructure like roads and schools. By using social media to highlight governance failures Khurpenchh acts as the environment that constantly interacts with the administrative system by putting pressure on it which thus forcing it to be responsive rather than just rule-bound also (Systems theory) also as Mohit Bhattacharya identifies e-Governance as a tool to reduce corruption and empower citizens Khurpenchh leverages the digital platforms to bridge the information gap between the state and the public thus strengthening the "authority of citizens" highlighted by Dwight Waldo in the book "Administrative State" in form of the inherent tension between the authority of citizens (democracy) and the authority of officials (bureaucracy)



STAFFING SHORTAGES

Context – Staffing shortage becoming a governance Failure – India is facing a critical shortage of nearly 1,300 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, with vacancies representing roughly 20% of the sanctioned strength and severely hindering governance and welfare delivery. A parliamentary panel has highlighted this "quiet normalisation" of the deficit, which leads to overworked staff and slower decision-making across state especially For a system that still relies heavily on a generalist administrative elite to deliver everything from welfare scheme s to crisis response, this is not a small problem. With 20% fewer officers, the "Span of Control" for existing seniors expands beyond manageable limits, leading to supervision fatigue and a breakdown in oversight also as highlighted by New Public Administration A thin-stretched bureaucracy becomes defensive and clings to rules just to survive the workload. It stops being a "change agent" and becomes a barrier to changes required in Society thus loosing its relevance.

Context - Large-scale transfers of senior IAS/IPS officers in poll-bound states - The Election Commission of India is mandated to conduct elections not run governments, it should exercise its powers with transparency and discretion thus upholding India's democratic principles rather than acting like a governing body. Critics argue that neither the Representation of the People Act, 1950/1951 nor the All India Services Act, 1951 explicitly empowers the ECI to transfer state officers unilaterally, raising questions about whether the ECI is exceeding its jurisdiction. The ECI defends its actions by citing the need to prevent "poll violence" and ensure officials do not influence the electoral process in favor of the ruling party. Administrative thinker Elton Mayo would view these transfers as a blow to informal organization and group morale. Branding a group of officers as unfit for election duty creates a climate of suspicion. According to Mayo a demotivated uprooted bureaucrat will perform poorly regardless of the neutrality.