

3. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN INDIA

The problem of administrative reforms in India is obviously a very difficult one, some of the most glaring defects of the existing administrative systems are : (1) faults in administrative organisation and structure, (2) delay in the despatch of business, (3) inefficiency and (4) lack of integrity or corruption. Other defects is diffusion of responsibility and the plethora of consultation before a decision is reached accompanied by a general lack of follow up and implementation. Last, but not the least important, issue faced by us today is that of the relationship between Ministers and civil servants. It is certain that no administration can successfully discharge its duties unless it is left along and allowed to implement the policies of the government. But experience shows during last 50 years there has been constant interference in the administration right from the top to the lowest level. Therefore, the civil servants are fast losing self-confidence and sense of responsibility and administrators do not want to do any original thinking at all. That is why the administrative reform is needed urgently.

The question of administrative reforms has engaged the attention of the Government of India, State Governments, statesmen and administrators. Therefore, various attempts for reforming the administrative system have been made after independence. An impression has grown that the administration is immune to reforms and innovations and remains status-oriented rather than work-oriented. The abolition of the ICS privileges has not increased the responsiveness of the higher services to the need for change but only strengthened the bureaucratic hold of the IAS. The method of recruitment for the IAS has introduced a serious imbalance in the system and the UPSC examinations neither tests intellectual attainments sufficiently nor qualities of initiative and leadership of the candidates and has made the service a preserve of the upper classes hailing from urban centres.

The central government was very much concerned with the matter and since 1947, appointed near about 30 committees/commissions to suggest administrative reforms, as listed below :

Reports on Indian Administration, 1946-97

1. Reorganisation of Central Government (Richard Tottenham), 1946. (This report is significant in understanding Independent India's public administration ; hence, its enumeration here).
2. Secretariat Reorganisation Committee (Girija Shankar Bajpai), 1947.
3. Central Pay Commission (Srinivas Varadachariar), 1947.
4. Economy Committee (Kasturbai Lalbhai), 1948.
5. Reorganisation of the Machinery of Government (N.Gopalaswami Ayyangar), 1949.
6. Report on Public Administration (A.D.Gorwala), 1951.
7. Report on the Efficient Conduct of State Enterprise (A.D.Gorwala), 1951.
8. The Machinery of Government—Improvement of Efficiency (R.A.Gopalaswami), 1952.
9. Report on Indian and State Administrative Services and Problems of District Administration (V.T.Krishnamachari), 1952.
10. Public Administration in India-Report of a Survey (Paul H. Appleby), 1953.
11. Railway Corruption Enquiry Committee (J.B. Kriplani), 1955.
12. Notes on Changes Necessary in System of Budgetary and Financial Control (Asoka Chanda), 1956.
13. Re-examination of India's Administrative System with special reference to Administration of Government's Industrial and Commercial Enterprises (Paul H. Appleby), 1956.
14. Public Service (Qualifications for Recruitment) Committee (A.Ramaswami Mudaliar), 1956.
15. Balwant Rai Mehta Committee on Community Projects and National Extension Service, 1957.
16. Commission of Enquiry of Emoluments and Conditions

- of Service of Central Government Employees (Jagannadha Das), 1959.
17. Staff Welfare Review Committee (Fateh Singh), 1961.
 18. Committee on Prevention of Corruption (K. Santhanam), 1964.
 19. The Administrative Reforms Commission (Chairman, Morarji Desai & Late K. Hanumanthaiya), 1966-70.
 20. Third Central Pay Commission (Raghubar Dayal), 1973.
 21. Committee on Recruitment Policy and Selection Methods (D.S. Kothari), 1976.
 22. Asok Mehta Committee on Panchayati Raj Institution, 1977.
 23. National Police Commission, 1977.
 24. Economic Administration Reforms Commission (Chairman, L.K. Jha), 1981-85.
 25. Fourth Central Pay Commission Report, 1983.
 26. Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Relations, 1983.
 27. Committee to Review the Existing Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programmes (CAARD) (Chairman, G.V.K. Rao), 1985-88.
 28. Committee to Review the Scheme of Civil Services Examinations (Satish Chandra), 1988-1990.
 29. Dr. Raja J. Chelliah Committee on the Tax Reforms, 1991-92.
 30. Fifth Pay Commission Report, April 9, 1994—January 30, 1997.

The Administrative Reforms is a continuous process, therefore, is better to study it in the historical perspective. The attempts for administrative reforms in our country, for the sake of study, can be divided into the following periods :

First Phase 1947-1964 A period of historical building, till the death of Pt. Nehru.

Second Phase 1964-1976 A Period of Comprehensive

Reforms and era of Administrative Reforms Commission till the Congress ruled at the Centre.

Third Phase 1977-1990 A period of new ideas and reforms

Fourth Phase 1990-onwards. A period of privatisation and Decentralisation

First Phase (1947-1964)

In July 1947 a Secretariat Reorganisation Committee, which functioned like an officer's shortage committee, was appointed. The government set up, in 1948, the Economy Committee to review the increase in the civil expenditure of the central government since 1938-39 and to make recommendations for the promotion of true economy in the administration by the elimination of unnecessary wasteful or extravagant expenditure, under the Chairmanship of Kasturbhai Lalbhai a prominent industrialist. It was followed by the government of India Reorganisation of Machinery of Government Report in 1949 by N. Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar. His major recommendations was on the grouping of central governmental ministries into four bureau: was primarily designed to secure 'co-ordination of policy and planning, the establishment of a common Financial Advisory Organisation and a common Central Administrative Office for the efficient performance of common services and administrative coordination. Administrative innovations devised by Ayyangar were perhaps far ahead of the time, however, the Ministry of Economic and Defence Coordination was a belated vindication of Ayyangar's rationalism and foresight. The O & M division originally suggested by Ayyangar, was also set up in 1954.

The Planning Commission which was set up in March 1950, asked A.D. Gorwala in July 1951 a retired administrator, to assess how far the existing administrative machinery and methods were adequate to meet the requirements of planned development. Gorwala's report served as the basis for the formulation of certain important proposals for the reform of administration, which were later included in the First Five Year Plan.

The two reports by Paul H. Appleby, submitted in 1953 and 1956 to the Government of India, had a significant influence on thinking about administrative reforms in government circles as well as the educated public, His first report 'Public Administration

in India : Report of a Survey, dealt more with changes in the basic principles and concepts including the Indian administrative organisation and practice and less with the details of the administrative machinery and methods. In his second report 'Re-examination of India's Administrative System' he made several suggestions for streamlining organisation, work procedures, recruitment, training and relations between Administration and Parliament, administration and Planning Commission, and Administration and the Comptroller and Auditor General.

In 1954 Asoka Chanda submitted his report entitled, "Notes on Changes Necessary in the system of Budgetary and Financial Control and in Other Methods" to eliminate delays in execution of projects. Chanda recommended greater measure of delegation, creation of all India services, adoption of office-oriented system of functioning, constitution of a common service divided vertically into departments to provide for specialised training in the different spheres of governmental activity.

In 1962 the government set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of K. Santhanam, known as the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, to examine the problem of corruption in government. The Committee submitted its report in 1964.

In 1963 while conducting the mid-term appraisal of the Third Plan, it was found that the pace of economic growth was slow, therefore, Central and State Governments were directed to enhance the administrative efficiency for speedy implementation of development programmes. The review resulted in setting up a new Department of Administrative Reforms in the Home Ministry in March 1964 and O & M division was transferred from Cabinet Secretariat to this department. In 1965, Bureau of Public Enterprises was set up in the Ministry of Finance for better management of public enterprises. In September 1985 it became the Department of Public Enterprises under the Ministry of Industry. As already mentioned Government of India appointed number of other Committees and Commissions to make suggestions for administrative improvement.

Apart from these Committees, there have been five Pay Commissions which the Central Government set up in 1946, 1958, 1971-72, 1982-83 and 1996. Fifth Pay Commission's

reform proposals are important and will be discussed in the end of the chapter.

The Planning Commission has also been recommending changes in the public administration of the country. Each Five Year Plan contains a chapter on public administration. Planning Commission determines the nature of the administrative machinery to secure the successful implementation of the Plan." The Estimated Committee of Parliament also covers within its ambit the reform of the machinery of government and its personnel. Some of the reports are devoted entirely to questions of administrative reform. Mention in this connection must be made of its second report on Reorganisation of the Secretariat and Departments of the Government of India (1950-51), Ninth Report on Administrative, Financial and other Reforms (1953-54) and Ninety-third Report on Public Services (1965-66).

The discussion may be summed up by saying that government took several steps as a result of recommendations of these Committees. The special Reorganisation Unit was reorganised in 1958 to incorporate the use of work study techniques for determining work loads and staff complements and overhauling procedures. Two high level institutions, the Central O & M division and Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), were set up in 1954. In August 1960 Administrative Vigilance Division was set up in the Ministry of Home Affairs to render assistance and to coordinate the activities of the Central Government in their campaign against corruption in the Public Services.

The Government of India set up in March 1964 the Department of Administrative Reforms in the Ministry of Home Affairs now it is under a separate Ministry known as the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Pensions and Public Grievances to deal with problems of reform, reorganisation and modernisation of administration at all levels so as to make it an efficient and sensitive instrument for carrying out the task of economic development and social welfare and for achieving the general social objectives which the country has set and the need for setting up of the agency for evolving a machinery for the redressal of grievances of citizens arising from unsound procedures, delays, lack of courtesy and consideration in official dealings.

The first and second Pay Commissions which submitted their reports in 1947-48 and 1956-57 respectively made several important observations concerning public administration. Many suggestions were made by the Estimates Committee and other Committees of the Parliament. State Governments also appointed number of committees which suggested administrative reforms.

The O & M Division was meant basically to provide leadership for cooperative effort to improve the administration. It encourages civil servants to use the scientific method to find out what is wrong and what are the remedies.

The Ministry of Finance also set up a Special Reorganisation unit in the Department of Expenditure to assess the requirement of Staff in various Ministries/Departments through work measurement techniques. This Unit also became a permanent agency for reviewing the organisation and procedure of the Government of India and suggested improvement in the existing methods of works.

Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)

The Institute was set up as a result of Paul H. Appleby's recommendation. It runs a number of training courses for the public administrators and conducts researches on the subject matters of public administration. It publishes the Indian Journal of Public Administration which provides very good material for the implementation of Public Administration. Several other developments took place during this period. On the recommendation of Santhanam Committee in 1964 a Central Vigilance Commission was established to inquire into the cases of corruption by higher civil servants. Likewise on the recommendation of the Second Pay Commission (1957), a Whitley type Machinery for redressal of grievances of Civil Servants was set up by the Government. In November 1963, as a presume of Parliament Das Commission was appointed to inquire into the corruption charges against Pratap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister of Punjab. In March 1964 the O & M Division was converted into a full fledged department of Administrative Reforms in the Ministry of Home Affairs. The department provided impetus to the administrative reforms.

Main features of First Phase

The first phase of administrative reforms is full of

establishment of new institutions for efficient administration. Some of its main features are : First, the administrative reforms were based on the parallel lines i.e., the O & M and through Committees set up from time to time. Second, erosion in the integrity of administration which caused the establishment of Central Vigilance Commission. Third, during this period, parliament asserted in matters of administrative reforms. Fourth, entrance of the government in business in the form of public enterprises provided opportunity to judge the effectiveness of bureaucracy in economic growth.

Second phase (1965-1976)

Administrative Reforms, until the setting up of the Administrative Reforms Commission, have been carried out mostly in the spirit, style and shape of improvisations. Those several Committees that have been set up to report on administrative reforms have been content to suggest some alterations here and some additions there. Few have gone deeper and examined the whole system of administration as such ; almost all have been the prisoners of the existing framework and the system that underscores it."¹⁰

K.Hanumanthaiya while commenting on this period rightly pointed out, "during the last twenty years, there were only adjustments and no reforms in the administration."¹¹ Thus, this period is characterised by "too ready a disposition on the part of the government to appoint Committees but on equal measure of apathy or even indifference to profit from their labours."¹² The government even delayed the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committees.

Administrative Reforms Commission (1966-70)

The Resolution of setting up the Administrative Reforms Commission, issued in 1964, said that "it will give consideration to the need for ensuring the highest standards of efficiency and integrity in the public services, and for making public administration a fit instrument for carrying out the social and economic policies of the Government and achieving social and economic goals of development as also one which is responsive to people." The Commission was asked to consider the following :

- (i) The machinery of the Government of India and its

procedures of work ; (ii) The machinery for planning at all levels ; (iii) Centre-State Relationships ; (iv) Financial Administration ; (v) Personnel Administration ; (vi) Economic Administration ; (vii) Administration at the State level ; (viii) District Administration ; (ix) Agricultural Administration ; and (x) Problems of redress of citizens' grievances.

Thus, the Commission was asked on such a vast array of subjects to examine and report. It is an example of all-embracing attempt at reform. The Commission submitted 20 reports for the reforms in various fields of administration in India. The Commission has made, in all, 581 recommendations and suggestions. In the words of Shri Hanumanthaiya government has accepted 80% of recommendations made by the Commission. As the Commission also explored areas within the states' jurisdiction, the central government evidently lacks direct authority to take or compel action on them it may bring such recommendations to the notice of the States and at best, use moral pressure in favour of them. Even recommendations directly concerning the centre broadly fall into two categories from the angle of implementation. Some recommendations concern formal structure and procedures of work. The other category calls for restructuring of rules, behaviour and attitudes, which, in turn, ultimately rests on the inner urges and orientations of the elective and permanent administrators. A large number of structure-and-procedure based recommendations are rather mild, emphasizing as they do only minor re-adjustments, modifications and realignments. Even after taking into account all these factors, one cannot escape the painful conclusion that the record of acceptance of the Commission's recommendations has been discouraging and disheartening.¹³

During the period 1979-80, due to ARC recommendations and efforts of the Central reform agency, enormous changes in administrative structure, system and procedures took place. On the recommendation of the ARC, the department of personnel was set up, department of administrative reforms was restructured for better performance, system of secretariat working was improved by introducing desk officer system, performance budgeting was introduced by all government ministries ; maximum possible powers were delegated, and the working of

Bureau of Public Enterprises was improved after the recommendations of the ARC Report on Public Sector.

The department of administrative reforms, carried out many studies relating to management such as organisational structure, methods and procedures, information system, records management, employees satisfaction, use of modern office machines, equipment and financial administration, etc. These studies improved the working of the offices and attention was paid for citizens satisfaction. All the States set up the department of personnel and administrative reform at the State level along with State Bureau of Public Enterprises, during the 70s. In 1976 Audit and Accounts were separated for administrative improvements. However, the Emergency in 1975-77, gave a rude shock to the image of Public Administration when the credibility of the policy making and policy executing levels suffered.¹⁴

Third Phase (1977-1990)

After the internal emergency, elections were held in March 1977 and the Janata Party came in power at the centre. Janata Party government appointed various commissions to point out the Emergency excesses and no tangible improvement took place in the administration. Again in 1980 Congress party came in power and reform process started.

The Fazal Committee (1980-82) on Public Enterprises also felt the need of accountability in Public Sector. The Jha Commission (EARC 1981-85) in its report on 'accountability' stressed the need of accountability and laid emphasis on performance, and results rather than rules and procedures.¹⁵ Both the Fazal Committee and Jha Commission suggested the changes in organisations relating to clear-cut definition of their goals and objectives, delegation of powers, system of performance appraisal, with a system of reward and punishment, etc. As a follow up action on the recommendations of these two committees the MPI and DPAR took concrete steps to institutionalise accountability in the government by introducing annual action plan (AAP). The AAP would mention the key activities/functions and the responsibility centres at the level of Joint Secretary by name.

In March 1985 a fullfledged *Ministry of Personnel, Public*

Grievances and Pensions was set up, with three departments namely, department of Personnel and Training, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Department of Pensions and Pensioners' Welfare. This Ministry was placed directly under the Prime Minister assisted by a Minister of State. During this period more emphasis was laid on Work Culture and highest priority was given to performance, results and outcomes. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, addressing the nation on January 5, 1985 announced several measures to equip administration for social and economic transformation. These measures included decentralisation, accountability, effective machinery for redressal of public grievances and prompt courteous service to the citizens. In September 1985, a new Ministry of programme implementation was created under the charge of Prime Minister. The Ministry mainly coordinated all poverty alleviation programmes and made administration more responsive. The Ministry of Programmes Implementation (MPI) introduced the concept of Management by Objective (MBO). According to this a task plan along with time frame for each task has to be prepared and allocated to the individual officers and units to fix specific responsibility. Monitoring of the target achievements is done every month at the level of Secretary and MPI. A new system of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was adopted at the direction of the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for public enterprises. This is an annual action plan drawn up by public enterprises and agreed upon between the PEs and administration, ministries/departments.¹⁶

To match the responsibility, powers have been delegated by the Ministries to the lower level functionaries by Finance Ministry to administrative ministries, so that responsibility for the performance can be pinpointed. Likewise inter-ministerial consultations took long time to arrive at any decision ; to improve the situation and avoid delay improved procedures have been evolved for speedy decisions. In such cases time has been fixed and within that period the Ministry/department has to send his comments otherwise it will be presumed that the concerned Ministry/department has nothing to comment.

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has also taken several steps to improve administrative reforms. The department has prepared a scheme for modernisation of government offices to make them model office

through functional layouts, better services to the public and removal of public grievances and cost effective management. All the offices have been given separate budgets for purchase of modern equipments such as photocopiers, electronic type-writers and computers. To increase productivity, concept of work improvement team has been introduced. The scheme seeks to generate higher employee moral, improved productivity and reduction in cost through participation at the grassroot level. This scheme has been introduced in the departments which come in contact with large number of people daily such as Railways, posts, DDA, health, labour, banking etc. Other measures include lump-sum payment of road tax for personal vehicles like cars, scooters and motor-cycles, new telephone number through electronic exchanges easy to remember, Computerised reservation facilities for rail reservations, paper work has been reduced and several other procedures have been simplified. Attention has also been paid for speedy removal of public grievances by setting and strengthening grievances removal machinery. A senior officer in each Ministry/department is designated as Director of Grievance for speedy disposal of complaints. Personnel reforms were also proposed during 80s and a major step in this field was introduction of compulsory training programme for IAS officers. These programmes were structured to meet the needs of officers with six to nine years' service, 10-16 years and 16-20 years in regard to programme implementation, management concepts, decision making techniques, policy planning and analysis respectively.¹⁷ The 15 months National management education programme was also devised for young civil servants and managers of public and private sector organisations with the cooperation of All IITs and the Xavier Labour Relations Institute, Jamshedpur and Management Institute Gurgaon (Haryana).

Main Characteristics of Third phase

In this three steps were taken for comprehensive administrative reforms. In this period Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) was appointed, which examined our administrative system comprehensively and put forth 581 recommendations in all for the administrative reforms. Second, the government accepted the recommendation of creating 'Ombudsman' like institution 'Lokpal' and 'Lokayukta' in India to deal with public grievances and Bill is pending before the Parliament for the establishment of 'Lokpal', while 'Lokayuktas'

have been appointed in many States. Third, during this phase, the Government had created 'Administrative Tribunals' for expeditious disposal of the grievances of the public servants. Fourth, the central government have introduced performance budgeting since 1970-71. Fifth, during this period administrative reforms were more management oriented. A greater emphasis was laid on management and administrative reforms began to be viewed as management intensive exercise. During this period behavioural approach which insists on human element in administration also emerged. The concept emanated from the business schools which remained highly influenced by the American thought. Sixth, for the improvement of civil servants, greater emphasis was laid on the institutional training. Of course, in India training of civil servants has a longer history, but a new emphasis was given in 1966 by creating a separate training division in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Now this training division is a part of the department of the Personnel Administrative Reforms and Training of the Ministry of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Public Grievances and Pensions. The training programmes have been diversified and have grown in numbers. But the emphasis on training has been criticised on the grounds that, the contribution of training to the over all efficiency of the organisation is limited, civil servants have no sufficient motivation to take training seriously, trainers are not selected properly and training material sometimes is also not upto the mark.

Fourth Phase 1990-onwards

This period is marked by minority unstable governments at the centre with weak political leadership. The process of liberalisation, started during this period has paved the way for removal of controls and delicensing in Industrial policy. The new Economic Policy since 1991 has simplified the process of industrialisation in the country.¹⁸ Moreover, in this period steps have been taken to decentralise the powers through 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments Acts, 1992, which have constitutionalised Panchayati Raj and Municipal bodies. We have already discussed this aspect in detail in relevant chapters.

The Government of India constituted a Tax Reforms Committee in 29 August 1991, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Raja J. Chelliah to examine the structure of direct and indirect

taxes. The committee, on its interim report submitted in December 1991 ; observed that "certain important administrative and policy issues, however, deserve brief mention in this interim report because of the urgent need for initiating suitable action in regard to them. First and foremost among them is the need to tone up the administration. No amount of tax reform, rationalisation or simplification can substantially improve tax compliance, unless there is a substantial improvement in public perception regarding the efficiency, technical competence, integrity and ability of tax authorities to relentlessly pursue and punish tax evaders, without political or other interference." The committee suggested that "for this, the morale of the work force should improve. The Government should recognise the paramount importance of the Revenue Departments and should spare no efforts in improving their condition of service, technical skills and work environment.¹⁹ The committee submitted its final report on August 25, 1992 to the Finance Minister and made wide-ranging recommendations.

In this period, the nexus between politicians, Civil servants and business houses became clearly visible, when scams of various kinds were unearthed. These include Bofors, Security scam, Urea and Fertilizer, Hawala and much talked about fodder scam of Bihar in which the Chief Minister of the State has been charge sheeted by the CBI even then he had not resigned. He resigned after much dilly-dallying. He could not be easily arrested due to fear of largescale violence by his political supporters in the State. Thus, the administration was unable to perform its legitimate functions what we talk of administrative reforms.

4. FIFTH PAY COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

The Fifth Central Pay Commission (FCPC) while recommending high salaries for the government employees it also pleaded for administrative reforms keeping in view that substantial pay hike unaccompanied by administrative reforms would amount to further pampering government employees. The FCPC in its voluminous report of 172 chapters and 1600 pages devoted chapter 33 to the administrative reforms. The reform package includes that the government should do for less than now and it should confine to the core functions that cannot be

performed by the market and everything else should be left to private hands as the public choice theory propogates. The Commission, therefore, recommends the dismantling of the permit-licence system, disinvestment in the public sector, corporatisation of departmental undertakings and privatisation and contracting out of services now performed directly by the government. Thus the government has to perform the core function only. Further, keeping in view the lesser work of the government if it is left with core functions. Only the FCPC proposed to cut manpower by 30 per cent near about 3.5 lakh posts in ten years, which seems to be a long drawn out period. The government has not accepted this recommendation.²⁰

The other recommendations of FCPC are enactment of a right to information Act, that all government services should be covered by the Consumer Protection Act, establishment of a national election fund as well as an anti-corruption agency having an independent constitutional status and introduction of a citizen's charter. These steps would address to the problems like lack of transparency, spread of corruption and absence of people friendly administration. Further, the Commission has recommended that no file should be required to move through more than three hierarchical levels for any decision to be taken. This step would certainly lessen file pushing, quicken decision making and promote accountability.

The Commission rightly recommended that legitimacy should be accorded to contract employment, especially in situations like short-term vacancies up to five years, time bound special projects and specialised jobs not generally required. Contract appointments are seen as opening the door to the lateral entry of experts. It may prove better if all government employments are made contractual because constitutional guarantee of security of service under Article 311 to governmental personnel had gone counter to accountability. The recommendation of the Commission that the army should be withdrawn from its counter-insurgency role and that the Rashtriya Rifles should be disbanded, are warmly welcomed to strengthen democracy because it restores responsibility for dealing with inter-security problems to civil governments. Moreover, the Commission has recommended that the 'Central Public Organisations' have grown

at the cancerous rate of 5.6 per cent per annum, as against one per cent for the bureaucracy as a whole, therefore, their numbers should be pruned by a third in 10 years is timely and good but "the pruning should be far more and effected much quicker. A substantial reduction of the Union's para-military forces would help move the management of it out of the coercive trap."²¹ The Commission has suggested for a "carefully funded scheme for improving the effectiveness of State Police Forces", seems to be meaningless because police reforms need decentralisation of police administration under democratic cover.

The Commission has given pre-eminence to the IAS which has caused much resentment among other services. The Commission's assertion that bureaucrats are catalytic agents of change, that they enforce socially beneficial regulations, that they act as watchdogs supporting good people and suppressing malefactors, and so on, is retrograde and regressive proposition. Further, the Commission has made extra-ordinary assertion that only a net work of "All India Services" can insure the country against disintegration. As if without All India Services, country cannot remain united. The experience proves it otherwise. In spite of All India Services separatist movements like Gorkhaland, in Bengal, Uttarakhand in U.P., Bodoland in Assam, Vidharbha in Maharashtra, 'Jharkhand' in Bihar have gained momentum. Unity of the country depends on emotional attachment cultural bond and feeling of nationalism rather than on administration. Not only this the commission have suggested for the creation of more All India Services in the name of country's larger interest, forgetting that the States have earlier objected for the creation of more All India Services and put an end to the process after accepting only an All India Forest Service. This is an anti-federal move and let the country decide which way it wants to go. The suggestion of the Commission to have civil service boards at the centre and in the states, headed by retired Supreme Court/High Court judges, to control transfers of government servants, and in case a particular government overrules its board the matter should be placed before the concerned legislature. This suggestion of the Commission is anti-democratic.²² Let the people decide what they want more bureaucracy or a strong and clean democracy.

The other suggestions of the Commission like to have only three national holidays—Republic Day, Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti and 12 casual leaves is timely to promote work culture... will it be implemented? The suggestion that bonus should be linked to productivity and not to production is good. The suggestion for modernisation through automation and computers needs to be supported.

The government has accepted the report of the Commission with some modifications. The government has not accepted commission's recommendation of increase in the retirement age from 58 years to 60 years ; and reduction of employees posts upto 30 per cent in 10 years, etc.

Administrative Reforms in the States

At the State level, many States have also appointed Administrative Reforms Commissions/Committees. For example, Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission, 1958 ; Administrative Enquiry Committee, Orissa, 1958 ; Andhra Pradesh Administrative Reforms Enquiry Committee, 1964 ; Punjab Administrative Reforms Committee, 1964 ; Rajasthan Administrative Reforms Committee 1966 ; MP. Administrative Reforms Commission 1969 ; Tamil Nadu Administrative Reforms Commission 1973 ; and West Bengal Administrative Reforms Committee 1982.

As a result of recommendations of these Commissions/Committees several states have introduced reforms in their administration.

5. FEATURES OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

The administrative reforms in India has passed through many stages and during the process acquired some features, important of them are :

- (i) In India the main sources of reforms are mainly three, first some reforms have come from the political process such as re-organisation of States or public inquiries against the Chief Ministers or a political scandal. Some reforms have been initiated by the reform committees/commissions ; i.e., ARC. While some have been initiated by the central agency such as

Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms.

- (ii) The Union Government has played the leadership role in the field of Administrative reforms in the country for all the three levels—Central, State and Local. This has happened mainly because of Centralised Planning. The Union Government has set up several Committees on the State list subjects such as, Balwant Rai Mehta Committee 1957 to suggest ways for people's participation and Panchayati Raj, V.T. Krishnamachari Committee report on Indian and State Administrative Services and problems of District Administration, Asok Mehta Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions, etc. Even the ARC also gave report on State Administration.
- (iii) Academic and Research Institutions in the country have not made any significant attempt to provide leadership in the field of administrative reforms. Even IIPA has not contributed much in this field.
- (iv) NGOs, Voluntary organisations and Citizens Forums etc. have also not taken active interest in the field of administrative reforms.

6. OVERALL IMPACT AND SHORTCOMING OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

First, though a number of committees and commissions examined and made recommendation for reform but the problems of field administration have not been examined in detail. Not only this the reports containing recommendations of committees and commissions appointed from time to time either not read or not considered for years. Second, the recommendations of committees and commissions were many but their implementation is very poor ; this is because of our bureaucratic culture which frustrates implementation of reforms leading to any change. Third, administrative reform is a low priority for political leadership. They take interest in short term changes here and there and not in long term administrative reforms. Fourth, lack of integrity and prevalence of speed money for any work in administration has also slowed down the process of administrative reform. The issues such as administrative morality, public accountability, democratisation and decentralisation of administration and openness of administrative actions, etc. are beyond the

vocabulary of administrative reforms.²³ Fifth, neglect of democratic decentralisation efforts during last four/five decades inspite of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1959), Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) and G.V.K.Rao Committee's (1985) recommendations for democratic decentralisation. Only recently Parliament (1992) has passed Constitutional Amendment Act (73rd) for establishment of Panchayati Raj in the country for decentralisation purposes. Sixth, the efforts for ministerial/departmental accountability through the system of annual action plans (AAP), launched with great zeal, were diluted as the time passed. The number and quality of AAPs deteriorated very fast with the passage of time. AAPs and performance budget have become only rituals. Thus, civil servants have evaded any accountability for their decisions and actions. MBO techniques and MOU extended to public enterprises both have not been taken in right earnest.

The success of administrative reforms depends on top politicians and bureaucratic support, but both are busy in furtherance of their mutual interest and hardly find time to pay attention for administrative reforms. The politics in the country is unstable after 1989 and bureaucrats hardly provide leadership for administrative reforms. What has been lacking in our administrative reform efforts in the last 50 years is a congruence between strategy, structure and substance.

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