

## 4. 100 Years of UPSC – Polity

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) marks a century of its establishment on October 1.

### Historical Background of UPSC

**Early Origins** – The concept of a central service commission was first introduced under the Government of India Act, 1919. October 1926 – Public Service Commission established based on recommendations of the Lee Commission (1924).

### Evolution of Name and Structure

**1937** – Renamed Federal Public Service Commission.

**26th January 1950** – With adoption of the Constitution, it became Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

**Civil Services Examinations** – UPSC conducts competitive exams to select officers for Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and other Group A and B services.

### Composition and Tenure

**Membership** – Maximum of 10 members besides the Chairman. Chairman and members are appointed by the President of India.

**Term** – Chairman and members serve a term of 6 years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier.

**Reappointment** – Chairman is not eligible for reappointment after completing their term.

**Removal of Members (Article 317)** –

**By President on grounds of misbehaviour** – Requires a Supreme Court inquiry and report.

**Without Supreme Court inquiry** – If member is adjudged insolvent, engages in paid employment outside office, or is mentally/physically unfit.

**Civil Services Day** – Observed on 21st April every year. Commemorates the day in 1947 when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the first batch of civil servants at Metcalfe House, New Delhi.

**Significance** – Patel termed civil servants as the “Steel Frame of India”, emphasizing their role in maintaining unity and integrity.

### History of Civil Services in India

**Colonial Roots** –

**Lord Cornwallis** – Considered the Father of Civil Services in India.

**1800** – Lord Wellesley established the College of Fort William in Calcutta to train civil servants.

**1806** – College replaced by East India College at Haileybury, England.

**Competitive Recruitment** –

**Charter Act 1853** – Abolished patronage and introduced open competitive examinations.

**1855** – First Indian Civil Service (ICS) exams held in London.

**1864** – Satyendranath Tagore became first Indian ICS officer.

**1922 onwards** – Civil Service Examination began to be held in India.

### Constitutional Provisions

**Article 309** – Parliament and State Legislatures regulate recruitment and service conditions.

**Article 310** – Civil servants hold office during the pleasure of the President or Governor.

**Article 311** – Safeguards civil servants against arbitrary dismissal or removal.

**Article 312** – Provides for creation of All India Services – IAS, IPS, IFS.

**Articles 315–323** – Establish Public Service Commissions at Union (UPSC) and State levels (SPSC).

### Role of Civil Services in Governance

**Service Delivery** – Implement welfare schemes ensuring last-mile delivery of benefits.

**Maintaining Law and Order** – Uphold peace, justice, and security; coordinate with law enforcement.

**Election Management** – Ensure free and fair elections; smooth transfer of power at Centre and States.

**Uninterrupted Administration** – Maintain governance during President's rule or political transitions.

**Policy Formulation and Implementation** – Advise governments on policy and execute political directives effectively.

## Challenges Faced by Civil Services

**Political Bias** – Excessive political interference affects neutrality and decision-making.

**Lack of Expertise** – Generalist bureaucrats may struggle with technical and specialized domains.

**Red-Tapism** – Excessive procedural formalities cause delays and inefficiencies.

**Mental Health Issues** – High-pressure environments and long working hours affect well-being.

**Resistance to Innovation** – Rigid administrative culture discourages experimentation and modernization.

**Outdated Rules** – Many regulations are colonial-era legacies unsuitable for contemporary governance.

## Governance Reforms to Enhance Efficiency

**Mission Karmayogi National Programme (2020)** – Aims to transform Civil Services from rule-based to role-based, focusing on citizen-centric governance. Emphasizes capacity building, skill enhancement, and digital learning.

**Lateral Entry** – Allows domain experts to join civil services, promoting technical competence and competitiveness.

### e-Governance Initiatives –

**CPGRAMS** – Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System.

**SPARROW** – For performance appraisal and HR management.

**Digitization of Service Records** – Enhances efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

## Conclusion

Civil services are the backbone of India's democratic governance, contributing to policy formulation, service delivery, law and order, and administrative stability. While praised for professionalism and institutional stability, they face challenges such as procedural rigidity, political interference, and adaptation to modern governance needs. Strengthening transparency, efficiency, and accountability, along with training and technology adoption, is essential for civil servants to remain effective architects of Viksit Bharat.

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