

1. Examine the relevance of the following in the context of civil service: (250 Words)

1. Spirit of enquiry
2. Professional autonomy
3. Objectivity
4. Courage of integrity
5. Political neutrality

ETHICS Terms

Answer:

Deterioration of human and professional values has become a phenomenon in many nations, including India. Recent instances like in 2017, the arrest of an IPS probationer for cheating in exam, in 2016 the arrest of Regional Provident Fund (PF) Commissioner, Chennai, prove that the canker of corruption has blighted the higher echelons of the civil service. This trend of decline in values does not only pose serious threat to the future course of development of the country but even for its survival, respect and authority itself. So there is a need for imbibing necessary values for effective functioning of public administration.

1. Spirit of enquiry:

Spirit of inquiry is a persistent sense of curiosity that informs both learning and practice. A spirit of inquiry in civil servants engenders innovative thinking and extends possibilities for discovering novel solutions in both predictable and unpredictable situations.

A circulating Whatsapp message warning against child kidnappers has caused widespread panic in Jharkhand, leading to villagers turning violent and resulting in the lynching of seven men in 2017 shows the authenticity of news is not even verified by the people. In these instances civil servants with spirit of inquiry would raise questions and seek creative approaches to problem-solving. A spirit of inquiry suggests, to some degree, a childlike sense of wonder.

2. Professional autonomy :-

Professional autonomy means having the authority to make decisions and the freedom to act in accordance with one's professional knowledge base.

Autonomy grants civil servants to act in public interest and free from undue pressure leading to successful initiatives like Operation Sulaimani, a decentralized participatory project to address hunger in urban areas in Kerala, idea of serving food at primary health centers in Medak district of Andhra etc.

3. Objectivity :-

Objectivity means the state or quality of being true even outside a subject's individual biases, interpretations, feelings, and imaginings. Policy based / rule based decisions are examples of objective decision because you're doing them as per the prescribed policy/rule.

When an IPS officer is doing a sensitive murder investigation, he/she should not be bound by emotions but instead work with the merits of the case and be objective.

4. Courage of integrity :-

Integrity is associated with the value of being honest and maintain strong moral principles. Courage of integrity is dare to be yourself in the face of adversity, choosing right over wrong, ethics over convenience and truth over popularity. A good example would be an officer who is under 'peer pressure' to 'overlook' some of the minute details while approving a tender for a private party in return for a bribe, largely because others also do the same but integrity won't allow him/her to do so.

In integrity, officers do not blindly follow duties. But if one's conscience permits, one will do it.

5. Political neutrality :-

Civil servant must not be associated with any political party or ideology. Officer is expected to cooperate with any political party in power. He/she must not allow his/her political values/ideology to interfere in day to day work.

Neutrality is required to keep:

- Public confidence in civil services.
- Political executives confidence in civil services after regime is changed. If there is lack of mutual trust, they can't work for larger interest
- Unfortunately, this vision of civil service neutrality no longer holds good. Changes in governments particularly at the state level often lead to wholesale transfer of civil servants.

All these values are imperative for the success of civil servants and for them to gain trust in the society and from the public.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. Recently Supreme Court in its judgement said that more than Rs. 28,000 crore meant for the welfare of construction workers lies stagnant in state coffers. Bring out the reasons behind it and what steps can be taken to resolve this issue.
2. Discuss the potential of newly drafted law by home ministry to curb the hate speech over social media.