

1. DO WE REALLY NEED A CHIEF SECRETARY IN TODAY'S POLITICO-ADMINISTRATIVE AMBIENCE IN THE STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES? CRITICALLY COMMENT.

The Chief Secretary is the head of the civil administration in the state or union territory. He is an officer who represents not just his own service but all services within the civil administration.

The chief secretary is invariably the choice of the Chief Minister and there is a need to have understanding and mutual trust between them.

The main responsibilities of the Chief Secretary are the following.

- guardian of the morale of the civil services and in particular the All India Services;
- design and continuous improvement of administrative systems;
- human resource development in the civil services;
- preserve integrity, neutrality and responsiveness in the civil services;
- as a holistic representative of the government, ensure an integrated image of the government internally and externally;
- install and activate appropriate long-term planning, implementation and evaluation systems.

These are roles that are too important to be neglected in politico-administrative ambience of the states.

However, the bizarre tussle between the CM of Delhi and the Chief Secretary in recent time has put a tenterhook

Frequent transfers, apex court's adverse judgement on various occasions and overlooking of the Chief Secretary in decision making by the Chief Minister have diluted the position of the office of the Chief Secretaries. In one famous judgment, the Supreme Court, dismissing the petition of an IAS officer against his supersession for promotion as Secretary to the Government of India, remarked that "it is the privilege of the master to choose his cook."



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