



Good Governance

For Prelims: Citizen Centric Governance, Jan Samarth Portal

For Mains: Significance of Good Governance and Associated Challenges

Why in News?

While launching an **Integrated Credit Portal 'Jan Samarth'**, Prime Minister said that India is moving ahead with the approach of **Citizen-Centric Governance**, which is the fundamental aspect of **Good Governance**, leaving behind the government-centric approach.

What is Jan Samarth Portal?

- The portal, **an initiative of the Ministry of Finance**, is a **one-stop gateway for over a dozen of the government's credit-linked schemes** directly connecting beneficiaries to lenders.
- The portal will act as **a single platform for loan application and processing** under Credit-Linked Government Schemes.
- The portal will **improve the lives of students, farmers, businessmen, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises entrepreneurs** and will also **help the start-up ecosystem**.
 - The idea behind launching this portal is **to encourage inclusive growth and development of several sectors**.

What is Good Governance?

- **About:**
 - Governance is the **process of decision-making** and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented).
 - Governance can be used in several contexts such as **corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance**.
 - Good Governance is defined as **"the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development"**
 - The concept of good governance existed even during the days of Chanakya.
 - He had mentioned it **elaborately in Arthashastra**.
 - **Citizens centric administration** lies on the foundation of good governance.
- **8 Principles of Good Governance:**
 - **Participation:**
 - People should be able to voice their own opinions through legitimate immediate organizations or representatives.
 - This includes men and women, vulnerable sections of society, backward classes, minorities, etc.
 - Participation also implies freedom of association and expression.
 - **Rule of Law:**
 - Legal framework should be enforced impartially, especially on human rights laws.
 - Without rule of law, politics will follow the principle of matsya nyaya ie law of fish

which means the strong will prevail over the weak.

- **Consensus Oriented:**
 - Consensus oriented decision-making ensures that even if everyone does not achieve what they want to the fullest, a common minimum can be achieved by everyone which will not be detrimental to anyone.
 - It mediates differing interests to meet the broad consensus on the best interests of a community.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness:**
 - Good governance assures an equitable society.
 - People should have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency:**
 - Processes and institutions should be able to produce results that meet the needs of their community.
 - Resources of the community should be used effectively for the maximum output.
- **Accountability:**
 - Good governance aims towards betterment of people, and this can not take place without the government being accountable to the people.
 - Governmental institutions, private sectors, and civil society organizations should be held accountable to the public and institutional stakeholders.
- **Transparency:**
 - Information should be accessible to the public and should be understandable and monitored.
 - It also means free media and access of information to them.
- **Responsiveness:**
 - Institutions and processes should serve all stakeholders in a reasonable period of time.

What is the Need for Good Governance?

- Improving governance is a part of the development process.
- It is argued that **corruption can be curbed by systematic changes in governance through introducing participation**, Governance, Transparency & Accountability in the administration.
- The **right to good governance is considered as an essential part of the citizens' rights**.
- Reports have shown that substantially enhanced public sector outlays for education, health, water, sanitation, rural employment, etc. have not resulted in the desired outcomes. At the centre of an answer to this paradox is the **issue of 'transparent and accountable governance'**.
- Without **good governance, no amount of developmental schemes can bring in improvement in the quality of life of the citizens**.
- Poor governance generates and reinforces poverty and subverts efforts to reduce it. There is growing evidence that the fruits of economic reforms have not been equally distributed, **regional and socio-cultural disparities have only increased**.

What are the Challenges to Good Governance?

- **Attitudinal Problems of Civil Servants:** As per the 2nd ARC report Civil Servants have become inflexible, self-perpetuating, inward-looking.
- **Lack of Accountability:** Very rarely disciplinary actions are initiated against delinquent officers. There is no performance evaluation structure.
- **Red Tapism:** Bureaucracies have to adhere to rules and procedures which are important for good governance, however sometimes these rules and procedures are ill-conceived and cumbersome and they do not serve the very purpose of their existence.
- **Low Levels of Awareness of the Rights and Duties of Citizens:** Awareness of rights and duties would ensure that officials and other citizens discharge duties effectively and honestly.
- **Ineffective Implementation of Laws and Rules:** We have a large number of laws to protect the rights of the citizens and vulnerable sections of society, but the weak implementation of these laws erodes the faith of the citizens in the Government machinery.

What are the Recommendations?

- To Make the Administration more Citizen-Centric, the **2nd ARC (Administrative Reforms Commission)** has examined the following strategies, processes, tools, and mechanisms.
 - Re-engineering processes to make Governance 'citizen-centric'.
 - Adoption of Appropriate Modern Technology.
 - Right to Information.
 - Citizens Charters.
 - Independent Evaluation of Services.
 - Grievance Redressal Mechanisms.
 - Active Citizens Participation – Public-Private Partnerships.

What are the Related Initiatives?

- **Right to Information.**
- **E-Governance.**
- **Ease of Doing Business.**
- **Police Reforms.**
- **Aspirational Districts Programme.**
- **Good Governance Index.**
- **Unified Payment Interface.**

Way Forward

- There is a need to reformulate our national strategy to accord primacy to the Gandhian principle of 'Antyodaya" to restore good governance in the country.
- India should also focus on developing probity in governance, which will make the governance more ethical.
- The government should continue to work on the ideals of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas which will lead to inclusive and sustainable development.
- All public offices need to take schemes and reform initiatives to the intended beneficiaries rather than waiting for the people to come to them.

Source: HT