



Lateral Entry Into the Administrative Services

Why in News

Recently, the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** has issued an advertisement to recruit 30 persons at the Joint Secretary and Director level in the Central administration through **Lateral Entry**.

Key Points

▪ About:

- The term lateral entry relates to the **appointment of specialists**, mainly those **from the private sector**, in government organisations.
- Government is looking for **outstanding individuals, with expertise** in revenue, financial services, economic affairs, agriculture, cooperation and farmers' welfare, road transport and highway, shipping, environment, forests and climate change, and new and renewable energy, civil aviation and commerce.

▪ Advantages of Lateral Entry:

◦ Addresses Complexity:

- **People with expertise and specialist domain knowledge are required** to navigate the complex needs of present day administrative challenges.

◦ Meets Personnel Requirement:

- Lateral entry will help in **addressing the problem of shortage of IAS officers** at the Centre.

◦ Organisation Culture:

- It will **help in bringing the values of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the Government sector**.
- It will help in building a **culture of performance** within the Government sector.

◦ Participatory Governance:

- In the present times, governance is becoming more participatory and a multi actor endeavour, thus **lateral entry provides stakeholders such as the private sector and non-profits** an opportunity to participate in the governance process.

▪ Issues Involved:

◦ Need for Transparent Process:

- The key to the success of this scheme would lie in **selecting the right people** in a manner which is manifestly transparent.

◦ Difference in Organisational Values:

- The value systems between the government and the private sector are quite different.
- It is important to ensure that the people who come in are able to have the **skills to**

adjust to a totally different system of functioning. This is because the government imposes its own limitations.

- **Profit Motive vs Public Service:**

- **Private sector** approach is **profit oriented**. On the other hand, the motive of **Government is public service**. This is also a fundamental transition that a private sector person has to make while working in government.

- **Internal Resistance:**

- Lateral entry is likely to face strong resistance from in service Civil Servants and their associations. It **may also demotivate existing officials**.

- **Issue of Conflict of Interest:**

- The movement from the private sector raises issues of potential conflict of interest. Thus, a **stringent code of conduct for entrants** is required.

- **Narrow Scope:**

- Lateral entry at only top level policy making positions may have **little impact on field level implementation**, given the multiple links in the chain of command from the Union Government to a rural village.

Way Forward

- Lateral entry is **not a panacea for the ills of governance**. However, it opens a small window to get the **best from the American and British system** and puts **pressure on the system to reform and perform**.
- For lateral entry to deliver and more importantly win the confidence of the most oppressed sections of society, it **must be fair, transparent, and egalitarian**. Agencies such as UPSC can play a role based on a selection process approved by Parliament.

Source:TH

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