



Mains Practice Question

Q. Explain the significance of Gandhi's Talisman for a civil servant in pursuit of administrative justice? (150 words)

28 Nov, 2019 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Mention Gandhi's Talisman in the introduction.
- Explain with examples, its relevance for a civil servant in relation to his/her personal and public life.

Introduction

Gandhi said **"Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much, recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man/woman whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him/her. Will it lead to swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then your self will melt away."**

Body

This talisman can help a civil servant in pursuit of administrative justice in the following ways:

- **Framing inclusive policies:** A civil servant must make sure that the benefits of government policies reach the most needful person. Gandhi's vision of '*Sarvodaya through Antyodaya*' can only be achieved when welfare policies are inclusive and well-directed.
- **Judicious utilization of resources:** All public resources must be utilized in a fair and transparent manner. It is the duty of civil servants to check underutilization and misappropriation of public funds.
 - For ex: public money spent on building unnecessary statues and parks can be better utilized for the welfare of the poor.
- **Special provisions for the marginalized:** A civil servant should think about how his actions will benefit the marginalized sections of the society.
 - For ex: a civil servant must ensure that the government offices are accessible for the differently-abled citizens.
 - He/she can make sure that there are separate and clean toilets for school girls.
- **Motivating the staff:** Civil servants may face the problem of the unskilled and demotivated workforce in government offices. It is his duty to make them realize that efficiency in their work is critical for delivering public services to the last man standing.
- **Handling continuous public criticism:** Civil servants are constantly under public scrutiny for their actions. A civil servant must not stop taking decisions which will benefit the poor and downtrodden, even though he/she has to face criticism for that.
- **Managing political interference in work:** Political interference must be handled deftly without offending the public representative for the larger public interest. Unnecessary transfers due to political vendetta may deprive the public of the intended benefits of an officer's proposed policies.

- **Managing personal life:** The family of civil servants may face several challenges due to frequent transfers to remote places lacking even the basic infrastructure. Hence, a civil servant should be motivated to work even in remote places and see it as an opportunity to develop better schools, hospitals and public places in such areas.

Conclusion

Hence, just as the Preamble acts as a key to our constitution, the Gandhian Talisman acts as a key to the soul of humanity. It holds immense value and provides searchlight in the darkest hour of moral dilemma for any civil servant.

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