

Standing Committee Report Summary

Review of Functioning of Recruitment Organisations of Government of India

- The Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice (Chair: Mr. Sushil Kumar Modi) submitted its report on ‘Review of Functioning of Recruitment Organisations of Government of India’, on August 3, 2023. The Committee examined the present working procedure followed by various recruitment organisations including the: (i) Union Public Services Commission (UPSC), (ii) Staff Selection Committee (SSC), (iii) National Recruitment Agency (NRA), (iv) Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), and (v) Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS). Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
 - **Timeline of recruitment exam:** The Committee observed that each recruitment exam conducted by UPSC takes anywhere between six months to one year to complete. It noted that the entire process should not be more than six months. The Committee inquired whether UPSC had considered any changes to curtail the length of the examination cycle. The Committee recommended that the SSC should implement computer-based examination wherever possible to reduce the timeline of the examination cycle.
 - **Functioning of NRA:** The Committee observed that the NRA, which has been tasked with conducting examinations for ‘Group B’ and ‘Group C’ employees, is not yet functional. The Committee recommended the NRA to consult with the SSC and the Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) regarding the recruitment proposal being prepared. Further, it recommended the NRA begin with graduate level examinations to reduce the number of eligible candidates.
 - **Recruitment pattern:** The Committee observed that most organisations have the same recruitment and question pattern regardless of the nature of the job. In context of the banking sector, it noted that currently neither the speed and accuracy nor the services are improving. It also noted the need to periodically change the examination pattern, considering the banks’ nature of work. It recommended the need to revamp the syllabus to meet the changing demands of the banking sector.
 - Further, the Committee noted that the same recruitment process is used to select candidates for top administrative posts in various services. This can result in the selection of candidate whose aptitude and interest may not be suitable for the particular post. It also noted that around 70% of recruitments in the civil services by UPSC are from the technical stream. Many technocrats, who are likely to work in other areas are drawn to the civil services. Therefore, the Committee stated that the recruitment process for the civil services should not adversely affect other fields of work.
 - **Agniveer Scheme:** The Committee suggested exploring the possibility of bringing an Act to regulate recruitment under the Agniveer Scheme. Currently after four years of service, 75% of soldiers are discharged, which can cause discontent amongst Agniveers. To avoid this, the Committee suggested reserving/preferencing them for other government jobs such as the Police Forces
 - **Women and transgender officers in CAPFs:** The Committee observed that difficult terrains and harsh working conditions prevented women from joining the CAPFs. The Ministry of Home Affairs should take all necessary steps to encourage women to join CAPFs. It suggested exploring a policy to provide women officers soft postings, subject to circumstances like war or shortage of male officers. It recommended reservation to be provided for transgenders in the CAPFs.
 - **Increasing examination centres for IBPS:** The Committee noted that not more than one lakh examinees can appear at once for exams conducted by IBPS. It noted that IBPS should increase the number of centres and execute a computer-based exam to increase the number of examinees. It advised RRB and IBPS to assess areas with high volumes of applications. It advocated IBPS to prepare a cost assessment for an applicant to reach the examination centre and pay the fee.
 - **Staff vacancies in SSC:** The Committee noted that SSC has a staff shortage of 39% with a staff strength of 329 personnel against a sanctioned strength of 541 personnel. It noted that the SSC requires a complete staff to conduct its functions with utmost efficiency in a time bound manner. It recommended that the SSC needs to fill the vacant positions at the earliest.

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