Unsound Proposal to Alter Selection of Officers

What is the issue?

\n\n

The proposal to alter thecurrent recruitment process of appointment of civil service officers is seen as unsound and unworkable.

\n\n

What is the current process of recruiting civil service officers?

\n\n

\n
- The Civil Service Examination for recruitments to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and about 20 other services of the government is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
\n
- UPSC conducts the exam every year in two stages: a preliminary examination and then the main examination and selects the best candidates through transparent procedures, insulating recruitments from political patronage.
\n
- The successful candidates are allocated services and cadres based on their ranks in the CSE and their preferences.
\n
- These successful candidates of the IAS, IFS, IPS and Central Services Group A undergo a 15-week foundation course in the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (training academy) in Mussoorie.
\n
- The course focusses on promoting inter-service camaraderie, cooperation, and capacity building of the officer-trainees.
\n

\n\n

What is the recent proposal about?

\n\n

\n

- The union government has recently mooted a radical proposal for allocating services and cadres based on the combined marks obtained in the CSE and the foundation course.
\n
- In other words, candidates who have cleared the CSE will have to wait till the foundation course is over to know which service and cadre they are likely to get.
\n
- The government has said that this is a suggestion under consideration and that no final decision has been taken yet.
\n
- There are good reasons to believe that the new proposal is legally unsound, administratively unfeasible and has not been thought through properly.
\n

\n\n

How unsound the recent proposal is?

\n\n

\n
- Articles 315 to 323 of the Constitution deal with Public Service Commissions of the Union and the States.
\n
- It states that conducting examinations for appointments to the services of Union and States shall be duty of Union and State Public Service Commission respectively.
\n
- Thus the duty of conducting the CSE is vested only in the UPSC, and not with the training academy which is not a part of UPSC.
\n
- Article 316 mentionsthe Chairperson and members of the UPSC as constitutional functionaries and provides security of their tenure and unchangeable conditions of service.
\n
- Article 319 also bars them from holding further office on ceasing to be members.
\n
- These constitutional safeguards enable them to function independently without fear or favour, which are not present for the Director or members of the training academy as they are civil servants on deputation or academicians.
\n
- Therefore the Director and faculty members may not be able to withstand

pressure from politicians, senior bureaucrats and others to give more marks to favoured candidates.
\n
- The training academy has facilities to handle only 400 candidates for the foundation course and if the limit exceeds, the foundation course will have to be conducted in other training academies situated in other cities.
\n
- With only about 12 faculty members in the training academy in Mussoorie, the trainer-trainee ratio for the foundation course is very high.
\n
- Hence it will be impossible to do the kind of rigorous and objective evaluation that is required under the government's new proposal.
\n
- This rigorous evaluation of the trainees will turn out to be less rigorous and objective when the foundation course is conducted in training academies situated elsewhere.
\n
- Since the competition in the CSE is very intense, difference of a few marks can decide whether a candidate will get the IAS or the Indian Ordnance Factories Service.
\n
- Therefore, the inclusion of the highly subjective foundation course marks can play havoc with the final rankings and with the allocation of services and cadres, and ruin countless careers.
\n
- Finally, nearly 60% of the candidates qualifying for services other than IAS & IFS, do not join the foundation course and give the exam again to improve their prospects.
\n
- So, it is clearly not possible to evaluate such candidates in the foundation course as contemplated in the new proposal.
\n
- These reasons prove that the recent proposal is constitutionally unsound and also administratively unworkable.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

\n
- **Source: The Hindu**
\n

\n



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering