



BLOCK 5

GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN INDIA

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UNIT 15 PUBLIC SERVICE GUARANTEE ACT, CITIZEN'S CHARTER, RIGHT TO INFORMATION, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY*

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15.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of public service;
- Identify the factors promoting effective public service delivery;
- Discuss the provisions and impact of Public Service Guarantee Act;
- Describe the concept and significance of Citizen's Charters;
- Examine the significance of Right to Information; and
- Analyse the significance of Corporate Social Responsibility.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Administration is an integral part of citizens and vice versa; the two are completely intertwined. The basic aim of administration is the welfare of the people that is, providing them the basic amenities of life. The success of any administrative system depends on the efficient and effective delivery of these services to the citizens. The administration on its own cannot provide effective goods and services to its citizen. It needs their support and cooperation. In other words, citizens should become active participants in the process of service delivery and should cooperate with administration. Since we talk of governance, citizen-centric administration is a key aspect.

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In fact, in the contemporary context, the powers and functions of the State have increased manifold and the scope of administration has widened. In this process, it has acquired immense discretionary powers and prerogatives. It is generally felt that in the exercise of vast administrative powers, there is always scope for malpractices, corruption and harassment of the citizens. It is being increasingly realised that the existing mechanism for the redressal of the citizens' grievances is inadequate to safeguard the citizens against the arbitrary use and misuse of power by the administrators and public authorities. In addition citizens interact with administration every day for getting basic services such as water, electricity and so on. Bhattacharya (2008) categorises citizens' interactions with administration into five forms- clients, regulatees, litigants, participants and cutting edge encounters. Many a times it makes them dissatisfied with the provision of services. This realisation has given rise to the need to bring administration closer to citizens and regain their trust in the former. The good governance initiatives are steps in this direction.

We have discussed about the concept of good governance in Unit 2 of this Course. In this Unit, we shall orient you with some of the initiatives taken in India such as Public Service Guarantee Act, Right to Information, Citizen's Charters, and Corporate Social Responsibility.

15.2 PUBLIC SERVICE: MEANING

Public service is associated with government and it is offered and guaranteed by the administrative bodies to its citizens. Public services offer the most common interface between the citizens and the State. Their functioning and delivery shape peoples' sense of trust in and expectations of government. The government through its various tiers – central, state and local – aims to provide equitable standards of living by opening up schools and hospitals, running an efficient public delivery system, and improving the standard of living of the people. These services are provided by the government to its citizens, either directly or by financing the private players.

Public service means all the goods and services, including functions, obligations, responsibility or duty, to be provided by a public authority (Citizen's Charter Bill 2011). Public services are those services which are mainly, or completely, funded by taxation. These services do not normally operate for financial profit or require an immediate payment for goods and services prior to delivery (Flynn, 1990). They are primarily of non-commercial character and are free of market competition. These services are provided on equitable basis and the resources are allocated according to need. Public service to a large extent caters to the consumers who do not have much choice in the market.

A public service is associated with the government and it is offered by the administrative bodies to the citizens living within its area of jurisdiction. It provides a medium of common interface between people and the government. These services are to be provided within a stipulated time frame under the Public Service Guarantee Act/ Right to Services Act in India. Some of the common public services which are to be provided as per the Act are the issuing of birth, caste, marriage and domicile certificates, electric connections, voters identity card, ration card, copies of land records and so on. The nature of these services is monopolistic, oligopolistic and mandatory.

15.3 FACTORS PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN INDIA

Public service delivery, in a developing country like India, is an important and integral part of the governance process. Without a proper delivery mechanism in place we

cannot deliver public services to the citizens. Since independence, many efforts have been made in this area, but desired results could not be achieved for some reason or the other. The public service delivery has been plagued with shortcomings in the bureaucratic system as also the political malpractices. Corruption in public distribution system and fair price shops has been very alarming. According to a data, an estimated 58 per cent of the subsidised food grains issued from the central pool do not reach the target groups i.e., the below poverty line families, and around 36 per cent is siphoned off in the supply chain (Planning Commission, 2009).

In such a scenario, the public service delivery was bound to suffer and the worst victims of this were the marginalised people living in the rural areas. During the nineties, with the reform era in place, efforts to make public service delivery gathered momentum. Since then a number of measures were adopted to enhance and promote the public service delivery in India. Some of these factors are discussed below:

There has been a global wave of efforts to reform the State especially since late eighties and early nineties. The concept of good governance with emphasis on adherence to rule of law, accountability, responsiveness, transparency triggered various initiatives.

Decentralisation: It is one such reform effort advocated throughout the globe. Accordingly, many countries decentralised State powers to the subnational governments and shifted some of its powers to the periphery. India was no exception to this. It formalised decentralisation by establishing local governments through 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in 1992. Though decentralisation of finances and functions started way back in the 19th century, it was the 73rd and 74th Amendments that brought decentralisation to the forefront.

Decentralisation has become one of the most politically correct ideals for better governance in today's time. It was seen as a means to reform the State in order to improve effectiveness of development programmes and schemes, public service delivery and thereby speeding up the process of development. It was also seen as a means for widening and deepening the roots of democracy, bringing government closer to the people, thereby fostering greater people's participation, civic virtue, protection of civil liberties and government accountability (Mullen, 2012).

Decentralisation has been looked at as a *singularly* useful mode of administration to deliver the public services from convenient local centres close to the clients' locality and thus more responsive to local needs. The developing world has undergone some form of decentralised governance in line to meet peoples' demands (Islam, 2007). Bringing administration to the doorsteps of the citizens and establishing a *direct* relationship between the citizens and the administration have been the driving force behind decentralisation in most of the countries.

Citizen's Awareness and Demand for Better Public Services: The contemporary times is witnessing information upsurge and people demanding better public services.

Community Mobilisation: This is one of the key factors impacting effective public service delivery. People mobilising in form of self-help groups, community based organisations and so on, assert their rights in demanding effective public services.

Technology

Technology in current scenario influences public service delivery. It impacts governmental functioning, sharing of information and delivery of services to the internal and external clients. It also ensures transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services as also in the governance process. The information and communication technology

brings government services to the beneficiaries in a transparent, speedy, easy and efficient way. The ICT-based governance opened new economic opportunities, brought transparency in public-private transactions, insights into outsourcing processes and an accountable administration. It introduced a minimum guarantee against arbitrary exchanges and government procurements and some form of standardisation of procedures (Nath, 2016).

The application of electronic means in the interaction between government and citizens (G2C) and government and business (G2B) as well as in internal government operations (G2G) has simplified and improved democratic government and business aspects of governance (Saxena, 2005). By providing online access and information to the citizens with regard to land records, caste and income certificates and various other government services, things have become very simple and easy for the citizens. Just by a click of the mouse, they get things readily available at their doorstep.

E-governance and digitalisation is changing the way governments are addressing the problems of the citizens and delivering them. Digitalisation will go a long way in making the system accountable and transparent and also ensure better and efficient delivery of public services.

The State level e-governance projects like Akshaya in Kerala, Gyandoot in Madhya Pradesh, Digital Saksharta Abhiyan in Haryana, SWAGAT in Gujarat, APSWAN and TWINS in Andhra Pradesh, Bhoomi in Karnataka, E-mitra and Rajasthan Sampark in Rajasthan, etc., are a proof that ICT is extensively being used in the various government departments for enhancing efficiency, transparency, accountability and providing better quality and time bound services to the people. We have discussed this in detail in Unit 8 of this Course.

On the whole, the impact of technology on governance has been encouraging. It represents a win-win situation for all the stake holders – the private sector, market, government; increases efficiency and effectiveness, citizens get more convenient services with greater transparency and less corruption. The innovative E-government applications have been already been implemented in isolated pockets. However, the real challenge is to have wide scale impact. Making E-government wide spread involves bridging the digital divide, enabling access to internet to rural areas and setting up into kiosks. A major task is to build institutional capacity for government reforms.

15.4 PUBLIC SERVICE GUARANTEE ACT

The public services law in India owes its origin from the Citizen's Charter of UK, which was promulgated in 1991. It is not a legal document in the strict sense of law. It is an agreement of contract entered into between the citizens and the public servants, which provides for competent and time bound delivery of services. It sought to add consumer rights to the list of citizens' rights, and thereby equipping them with the means of seeking personal redress if the services which they received were inadequate and not as promised. The main idea behind the charter was to make public services accountable, i.e., if the public service which people have paid for is not of good quality, then why should they not get their money back? This way they would have the right to purchase it from any shop or service provider in the private sector which is providing them better services.

The public service guarantee act is also known as Right to Public Services Act in some states. It provides for legislation and statutory laws that guarantee time bound delivery of services by the government to the citizen and provides mechanism for punishing the errant public servant who fails to provide the service stipulated under the statute, within stipulated time.

The introduction of Right to Services Act in India has given a powerful weapon in the hands of citizens of India. The era before its inception witnessed tormenting state of government departments where citizens had to go through unspoken hassles, corruption, delayed services with lack of transparency by some errant public servants with a sense of impunity in their government departments. In consideration for growing incidents, complaints and to introduce a statutory mechanism that could control such activities, the Right to Public Services Legislation was enacted.

The Right to Services Act is considered to be one of the most effective ways to reduce corruption in India, enhance transparency in public sector operations and provide public accountability. It is a state legislation and the states have complete discretion to adopt, implement and limit the Act in whatever manner they deem fit. Currently, there are twenty states that have implemented this Act and it represents duty towards citizens by providing them standard, quality, transparency and timely delivery of public services, in addition to an enforceable grievance redressal mechanism.

Madhya Pradesh was the first state to enact the Right to Service Act on 18th August 2010 and Bihar became the second state to implement it on 25th July 2011. The other states which followed the suit are Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Haryana, West Bengal, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Assam.

Main Provisions of the Act

The main provisions of the legislations in various states provide for granting of “right to public services”, to the public by the designated official within the stipulated time-frame. Under the legislation, the public services are to be granted as a right and are generally notified separately through gazette notification. Some of the common public services which are to be provided within the fixed time frame as a right under the Acts, include issuing caste, birth, marriage and domicile certificates, electric connections, voter's card, ration cards, copies of land records, etc. If the designated officer fails to provide the public services within the stipulated time or rejects to provide the service, the aggrieved person can approach the First Appellate Authority. The First Appellate Authority, after making a hearing, can accept or reject the appeal by making a written order stating the reasons for the order and intimate the same to the applicant, and can order the public servant to provide the service to the applicant. An appeal can be made from the order of the First Appellate Authority to the Second Appellate Authority, who can either accept or reject the application, by making a written order stating the reasons for the order and intimate the same to the applicant, and can order the public servant to provide the service to the applicant or can impose penalty on the designated officer for deficiency of service without any reasonable cause, which can range from Rs. 500 to Rs. 5000 or may recommend disciplinary proceedings. The applicant may be compensated out of the penalty imposed on the officer.

So far as the general procedure under Public Service Guarantee Act is concerned, once they submit an application to the public officer for the preferred service, citizens receive an acknowledgement. After that, the officer is ideally supposed to render the preferred service within the stipulated time from the date of the acknowledgement. As per the prescribed rules of government offices, acts and provisions as applicable on any respective government office, every service should be provided to the applicant within the fixed time frame unless there is some genuine reason. But, if the said officer fails to render the services within the given time-frame, the applicant is empowered by the Act to approach the First and Second Appellate Officers. The Appellate Officer shall instruct and bind the officer to provide the service to the applicant as they have the

power and authorities to impose the penalty, summon designated officers and instruct them to produce related documents. Any delay after the given instructions by the Appellate Officer shall attract fine on the delaying officer as per the State Provisions of the Act. Even the Appellate Officer can be penalised under this Act if he/she fails to perform his/her service or fails to give the substantial reason for non-performance or delivery of his/her service.

Impact of the Act

With around twenty states adopting the Act, it exhibits actual efforts made to curb corruption and foster transparency in government departments, which can help the citizen to avail public services without any hassle. However, the question that arises after the adoption of Right to Public Service Act is how well its implementation has transformed the existing system? The answer is right here! It is evident that there are variations in the Public Service Acts of the state with regard to the services they provide and the penalty mechanism for the failure to provide the public services. Each state has laid down penalty on failure to deliver the service within the set time and amount of penalty provided by states differ. The impact of the Act depends on every state's implementation order. If the implementation is strong, the legislation can play an instrumental role in curbing corruption and tracking the workflow in each government department. Amongst all the states mentioned above, Karnataka has won accolades. The past figures revealed that in a month long pilot study, one lakh applications were filed and out of them, 87,000 have been successfully disposed of. It is true that some of the participating states have had poor implementation and some have the good implementation.

So far as the central level is concerned, the Central Government proposed Citizen's Charter and Grievance Redressal Bill, 2011 or Right of Citizens for Time Bound Delivery of Goods and Services and Redressal of their Grievances Bill, 2011 on the same lines as that of Right to Services Act. It still has to be passed in the Parliament. It shall apply to central government departments, constitutional bodies, statutory authorities, Public-Private Partnerships and NGOs mainly funded by central government.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What do you understand by public service?

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2) What are the factors that promote effective public service delivery?

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3) Explain Public Service Guarantee Act.
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15.5 CITIZEN'S CHARTER

Citizen's Charter is a non-agency device for people's participation. It is a document representing an effort to focus on the commitment of the public organisations towards its clients/citizens. It was with the motto of 'Putting People First' that the Citizen's Charter initiative came up as a written declaration by government departments enlisting a set of commitments, standards of service delivery and redressal and remedial actions in case of non-compliance with the same. It includes adoption of an explicit statement of standards in the form of a charter. It is a manifestation of public organisations' desire to provide quality services to its clients. The idea behind the Charter is tapping citizen's responses to the actual working of government organisations and to build efficiency and effectiveness of public services.

The concept was first initiated in Great Britain when a white paper was issued in the form of Citizen's Charter in 1991. The other governments like Australia, Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, Canada and United States of America, followed the suit for providing better services to citizens. These countries have adopted citizen's charter, containing rights for the citizens, as part of their national strategic objective. A rights-based approach to public service delivery is also followed in India.

It is a concept based on government-citizen relationship. It views public services through the eyes of those who use them i.e., the citizens. Although citizen's charter is not enforceable by the citizens, it provides a tool for improving the public delivery system based on certain standards, quality and time frame. It gives more power to the citizens and also more freedom to choose. The key elements of citizen's charter are: standards, information and openness, choice and consultation, courtesy and helpfulness, putting things right and value for money.

The Sevottam model is designed as an assessment tool by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in 2006. SEVOTTAM is the 'Nine Criteria Model for Citizen Centricity', meaning Uttam Seva or excellence in service delivery. It is a three-module assessment tool that sets a benchmark which is to be complied with, while enhancing customer satisfaction, monitoring performance or assessing efficient and continual improvements in service delivery. Department of Posts, Gol Dak Khana, New Delhi was awarded the first Sevottam Certification in March 2008. Certified as an Indian standard IS 15700:2005 by the Bureau of Indian Standards in December 2005, it integrated the citizen-centric initiatives into one model. The model synthesises the nine compliance criteria into the following three modules: a) Charter Effectiveness, b) Public Grievance Redressal, and c) Service Delivery Capability. Sevottam guidelines make it as a necessity to enhance delivery capability by specifying satisfaction indicators

for stakeholders. These can be assessed by conducting surveys or consultations with the citizens who are the main customers and by establishing new schemes for the same. Employee punctuality, promptness and behaviour are essential conditions for carrying out operations in an organisation (Government of India, 2014).

Thus we see that the norms of the citizen's charter are a reiteration of the norms which are integral to the foundation of accountability of public administration. There is no doubt that the citizen's charter strategy, if formulated and implemented in an objective, conscious and committed manner to give the citizens their due, can lead us towards good governance (Jain, 2002). Citizen's Charters is a good example of the changing attitude of government towards citizens as also effective and efficient public service delivery.

15.6 RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Right to Information has emerged as a prominent concern in the field of public administration and is regarded as one of the most important social innovations of this century in the field of accountability and transparency and also public service delivery. It continues to be advocated as a pertinent component of policy packages to *improve* governance in developing countries. In fact, it has become an important instrument through which openness, transparency and accountability can be brought about in the governance process, citizens' grievances redressed and public services delivered in a better and efficient way. We have discussed this as a tool of accountability in Unit 12 of this Course.

Right to information has been derived from Article 19 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948. It is a fundamental human right and the touchstone for all freedoms to which UN is consecrated (UN General Assembly Resolution, 1946). Sweden was the first country to provide this freedom to its citizen's way back in 1766.

In India the Right to Freedom of Information is not explicitly provided for in the Indian Constitution. However, Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution includes the Right to Information when read with Article 19 of United Declaration on Human Right (UDHR). The Right to Information Act was enacted by the government in 2005.

Right to Information opens up government's records to public scrutiny, thereby arming citizens with a vital tool to inform them about what the government does and how effectively; thereby making the government more accountable. Information about functioning of government also enables citizens to participate in the governance process effectively. In a fundamental sense, Right to Information is a basic necessity of good governance (Government of India, 2006).

In a system seething with corruption and becoming increasingly insensitive to the problems of the disadvantaged citizenry, RTI has shown promise of empowering citizens to ensure accountability and act as an enforcer of good governance (Gandhi, 2009). The RTI Act is a torch-bearer that can lead to more open, accountable, responsive and people-friendly governance.

Right to Information (RTI) is a very potent weapon and its positive role has been witnessed especially at the grassroots levels in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The MGNREGA guidelines stipulate that all information be displayed to the public through display boards and paintings on the walls of the panchayat offices. Apart from this, there is also a provision that all the MGNREGA accounts and their summaries at the gram panchayat level should be made

publicly available for scrutiny (Aiyar and Samji, 2012). RTI at the grassroots level is being implemented through social audits of MGNREGA.

RTI has been successfully implemented and there are examples which clearly show that citizens and civil society groups are now legally demanding information on the functioning of state-sponsored rural development and welfare schemes by using RTI. Sabar Ekta Manch, a Gujarat based NGO, used RTI in 2006, to get information on the minimum wage being paid to MGNREGA workers. It was found that the workers were not being paid the amount as mandated under MGNREGA. On the basis of this information, a request seeking resolution of the irregular payment to the workers was filed in the Gujarat High Court (Trapnell, 2014).

In November 2007, the Rajasthan government collaborated with the Rozgar *Evam Soochna Ka Adhikar Abhiyaan*, to develop a decentralised worksite management system. The purpose of this *Abhiyaan* has been to create a pool of trained worksite managers that take daily measurements of worksites and determine daily output. The key emphasis is on transparency (*ibid*).

In Delhi, a voluntary organisation called *Parivartan*, has been quite successful in facilitating the use of Right to Information in addressing their grievances, getting the pending works done by the government departments and also inspecting the government works. It is helping the poor people in getting ration cards or receiving their ration quota on Antyodaya card under the public distribution system by exercising the RTI (Guha Roy, 2006).

In 2004, the slum dwellers with the help of a Delhi based NGO, Satark Nagrik Sangathan, made use of Delhi RTI Act for having access to ration shop records. It was found that the shopkeepers were siphoning off rationed wheat, rice and sugar on regular basis and selling it to fake ration-card holders (Trapnell, op.cit).

These examples are a clear indication of the fact that citizens are using RTI for a wide range of issues relating to public service, like primary and secondary education, health care, sanitation, water supply, electricity and pension to name a few. RTI has no doubt brought a sea change in the governance process and has made public service delivery effective and efficient.

15.7 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), a governance-centric approach to citizen's welfare, is an obligation on the part of the corporates to act in a manner which will serve the best interests of the society. The concept of CSR is based on the premise that it is not only the State through public policies which is responsible for societal development but the corporates also need to be responsible for such initiatives. The companies are made responsible to take care of not only their work force but contribute to societal development. It makes corporates integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and involve stakeholders in their activities. It also stresses on accountability, transparency and social and environmental investment as the key aspects of corporate social responsibility. It is a commitment by business by investing in socio-economic activities that can lead to societal betterment.

CSR covers three aspects which are as follows:

- i) Traditional corporate philanthropy, i.e., charity for socio-cultural and religious purposes.

- ii) Corporate social responsibility, with a focus on sustainable development and attending to stakeholders' priorities.
- iii) Ethical business based on social values and the stakeholders' long-term interests.

CSR is not a new concept. J.R.D. Tata recognised that business does not operate in isolation from society. Over the years, several business houses in India have shown their concern for social responsibility through their contribution in the field of education, health and rural development programmes. There have been attempts by Tatas, Birlas, Bajajs and others since independence in the fields of education, health and so on.

The business houses understood the need for contributing to economic growth, increase in employment, development of backward regions, health facilities, etc. They have also contributed to the ecological balance, increasing exports, encouraging ancillary industries and welfare of local communities where their plants are located. In other words, these business organisations provided a platform to undertake individual or collective social efforts toward charity (Sood and Arora, 2006).

Today CSR is articulated in a new fashion, underlining the contextual peculiarities involving the role of the State, civil society organisations and also the corporate houses. There has been a fundamental change in its nature from philanthropy-based model of CSR to one in which community as stakeholders becomes most critical. In the changed scenario, apart from profit, the corporate houses should also take care of human rights, business ethics, environmental concerns, community development and other relevant socio-economic issues (Chakrabarty, 2016).

Traditionally, CSR activities by corporate houses in India were predominantly determined by culture, family traditions and so on. During freedom struggle, Gandhiji's theory of trusteeship influenced the activities of corporates towards social development. After independence, the expansion of public sector witnessed certain CSR activities. From 1980s till date a drastic change is visible with the traditional philanthropic attempts transforming CSR into coherent and sustainable business strategy with multi-stakeholder involvement. We have examples of Wipro, Infosys, Mahindras and several companies working in areas of gender equality, women's empowerment, environmental sustainability, health, education and so on.

The new guidelines on CSR has made it mandatory on all companies to invest at least 2 per cent of average net profits of the company made during the three immediately preceding financial year, in pursuance of the company's CSR policy. The enactment of Section 135 of the Companies Act 2013 made CSR spending and reporting mandatory for the first time and brought CSR initiatives of Indian corporates under the purview of corporate law. It aims at corporate sustainability. The provisions under this is mandatory for companies with net worth of Rs.500 crore or more or those with turnover of Rs.1000 crore or more or those companies with net profit of Rs. 5 crore more.

Thus, we see that CSR is about the social agenda of the companies for a wider reach. The business houses are expected to be compassionate of the poor and the underprivileged. They are expected to relate to the reality and cannot persuade the government to make policies that help a few (Tehelka, 2009). Apart from this, the business houses should meaningfully address India's socio-economic concerns because these concerns being key to company's growth are also linked with the growth of the country. In other words, there has to be a meaningful cooperation between the government, civil society and corporate houses for efficient and quality public service delivery. CSR is thus a safety valve demonstrating the social concern of the corporate houses for the poor and down-trodden. CSR integrates business ethics and social accountability.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

Public Service
Guarantee Act,
Citizen's Charter,
Right to Information,
Corporate Social
Responsibility

1) How does Citizen's Charter help in service delivery?

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2) Explain the importance of RTI.

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3) What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

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15.8 CONCLUSION

The delivery of various goods and services has been one of the basic responsibilities of the state as also an imperative in independent India for human development. In a country like India, public service serves mostly the marginalised people of the society. The poor have always depended on essential public services for their survival and for breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. But the benefits of public service delivery could not reach the poor as most of them lacked awareness about these services as also their inability to articulate their grievances.

A number of good governance reforms have been attempted time and again with an aim to create honest, efficient and result-oriented public service so that it impacts the lives of the real beneficiaries in the true sense of the term. The concepts like good governance, public-private partnership, decentralisation, citizens' charter, right to information and e-governance, has no doubt, changed the face and quality of public service delivery in India. Once the public service guarantee act is in place, one is quite hopeful that public service delivery in India will go a long way in ensuring better quality services to the citizens.

15.9 GLOSSARY

TWINS : Twin Cities Network Services Project was implemented in Andhra Pradesh which provides a variety of services at one stop to the citizens of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, the twin cities with the combined population of four million. The department functionaries interact with the citizens to deliver a variety of services like payment of utility bills, issue of birth and death certificates, issue of driving licences, etc. The centre handles 3000 transactions a day of which 80 per cent involves the payment of utility bills. The project has been named E-Seva and has been extended to 18 other locations through partnership with the private sector.

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15.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Public service includes all the goods and services, including functions, obligations, responsibilities or duties to be provided by a public authority.
 - These are primarily non-commercial in nature and are mainly funded by taxation.
 - It is a medium of common interface between people and government.
 - Issuance of birth, caste, marriage certificate, voters identity card, ration card etc., are public services.

- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
 - Decentralisation
 - Citizen's awareness and demand for better public service
 - Community mobilisation
 - Technology

- 3) Your answer should include the following points:
- Public Service Guarantee Act also known as Right to Public Service in some states, provides for legislation and statutory laws that guarantee time bound delivery of services by the government to the citizens.
 - It provides for mechanism for punishing errant public servants who fail to provide service stipulated under the statute, within stipulated time .
 - The Act implemented by nearly twenty states attempts to provide standard, quality services in a timely and transparent manner.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following points:
- Citizen's Charter is a rights-based approach to public service delivery.
 - It is a tool for improving public service delivery system based on certain standards, quality and time frame.
 - It gives importance to standards, information and openness, choice and consultation, courtesy and helpfulness to be adhered to in public service delivery.
- 2) Your answer should include the following points:
- Right to Information is an instrument to ensure openness, transparency and accountability in government process.
 - Information given to citizens enables their participation in governance.
 - It is a tool of people's empowerment.
- 3) Your answer should include the following points:
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an obligation on the part of corporates to invest in socio-economic activities that can lead to societal betterment.
 - It makes corporates integrate social and business operations and involve stakeholders in their activities.

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