

5. Contemporary India : Good Governance

In this chapter we will explore the concept of good governance and citizen centric administration which has become an important aspect of changing nature of public administration particularly in the era of globalisation.

Let us begin with few questions. What is government? What is governance? What should be the role of government in civic administration? Should they play any role and how they can play that role?

We as citizens come in contact with the government's administrative machinery on a daily basis. For instance, you may need a birth certificate, death certificate, Aadhar Card, PAN Card, Ration Card etc. We may have complaints against the local government for not repairing or maintaining roads, clearing the garbage, etc.. How the government's administrative agencies respond to these various demands, need and requirements of citizens will determine the success or failure of the government administration.

Since early 1980s there has been an increasing focus on the performance of the public administration institutions. To ensure performance it is necessary that values like accountability, responsibility, transparency and citizen's feedback need to be introduced in the realm of public administration.

What is the role of the State towards its citizens? In the 11th standard we saw the role of public administration. We saw that there was a 'narrow' role described as POSDCORB and a broader role that included all the three branches of the government.

We also saw how the concept of development administration brought in changes in this traditional role. We noted that in development administration the citizens play an important role in public administration.

Today, besides the government, various non-state actors (Non-Governmental Organisations and Voluntary Organisations) play an important supportive role in public administration. The word used to describe this cooperative effort of the government and non-governmental bodies in public administration is 'governance'. This is a broader view of public administration. Thus governance is broader than government. It includes not only the formal institutions of government (E.g. Legislature, Executive, Bureaucrats, etc.) but also informal institutions (E.g. NGO's, Civil Society Organisations, Private sector organisations). The concept of governance also aims to improve the performance of public institutions with a focus on citizens.

Do this.

Identify NGO's that are working in your Area/City/State. Look at the issues and work done by them. In which NGO would you like to work?

Evolution and Meaning

Several changes took place in the world in 1990s. These changes include the following:

- (i) **Globalisation of the world economy :** Globalisation had several dimensions: (a) The technological revolution in the sector of communication brought in the internet, mobile communications, TV, etc. These developments and the growth of social networking brought in instant connectivity and transparency in the administrative system. (b) International economic relations changed, trade and investment became an important economic issue. This made international funding agencies more influential.
- (ii) **International Institutions :** There is a

growing influence of international funding agencies like International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund etc.: These donor agencies now influenced the policies of the Third World countries. They wanted reforms in the traditional administrative setup of the countries that were seeking aid.

(iii) Non-state actors : Voluntary Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations started to play a greater role in public administration.

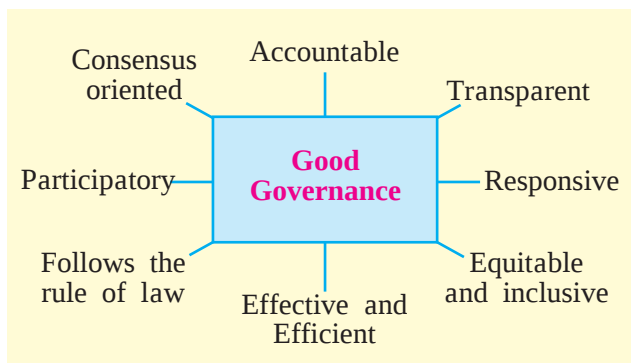
These changes brought in a rethinking in approaches to public administration. It was felt that the traditional approaches of public administration would not satisfy the requirements of the citizens. This brought in a shift from public administration as an approach to governance. Governance approach is a break from the traditional model of public administration.

These reforms sought to revamp the traditional, archaic, elephantine sized public administration riddled with delays, red tape, and corruption. It aimed to replace these old systems with responsive, responsible, participative, equitable public administration. The new model is popularly called as 'Good Governance' model. This model also looks at the inter-linkages between state (government), and civil society. This model wanted to make administration citizen centered and not rule bound.

What is civil society?

Civil society refers to a wide range of organisations. They include community groups, non-governmental organisations [NGOs], labour unions, indigenous groups, charitable organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, foundations, etc. .

Following chart gives us a clear idea of the values that are part of this model



Maharashtra State Good Governance Framework

- Right to Information Act and Rules, 2005
- Maharashtra Public Records Act, 2005
- Maharashtra Prevention of Delay in Discharge of Official Duty Act, 2005
- Maharashtra Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act, 2015

In the following section we try to understand the core values of good governance.

Values of Good Governance:

Participatory:

It is one of the most essential aspects of good governance. Effective functioning of any democratic system requires people's participation. It ensures that voices and choices of people are heard. People get an opportunity to participate in the process of decision making and its implementation.

Rule of law:

The supremacy of the law of the land i.e. constitution, is another core value of good governance. The constitutional values are the guiding posts for the administration. All are treated equally in front of the law. It ensures a just and fair polity where rights of the people are safeguarded.

Transparency

The culture of secrecy has been challenged by the value of transparency. This enables the people to keep the government under public scrutiny. In India since 2005 the Right to Information Act has been giving the citizens the right to seek information related to the functioning of the government.

Responsiveness

Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe. The government is prompt in taking decisions and specially pays heed to the problems and designs the policies accordingly.

Consensus Oriented

There are several view- points in a given society. Good governance requires a dialogue between various segments of the society. This can help to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved. It also requires a broad and long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development.

Equity and Inclusiveness

A society's well-being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it. No one should feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

Accountability

Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organisations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom depends on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organisation or institution. In general an organisation or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

Initiatives for good governance and citizen centric administration in India:

In the post-independence period India adopted a socialist and welfare model of development. The development administration approach had a focus on people's participation. However, despite periodic efforts and programmes, genuine participation of people in the process of governance was not able to be achieved.

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India, looks after administrative reforms in India. Its objectives are to (i) promote administrative reforms in government policies, structures and processes, (ii) Promote citizen-centric governance with emphasis on grievance redressal, and (iii) Conduct innovations in e-governance.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) was set up with a mandate to prepare a blue print for revamping the public administration system in India. It was expected to suggest measures to achieve a pro-active, responsive, accountable, sustainable and efficient administration for the country at all levels of government. One of the main tasks of the Commission was concerned with Citizen Centric Administration.



Do you know?

Jawaharlal Nehru on Citizen Centric Administration

“.... Administration is meant to achieve something, and not to exist in some kind of an ivory tower, following certain rules of procedure and, Narcissus-like, looking on itself with complete satisfaction. The test after all is the human beings and their welfare.”

The commission maintained that governance, in order to be citizen centric, should be participative and transparent. It should be effective, efficient and responsive to the citizens. Furthermore, an ethos of serving the citizens should permeate all government organisations. Government organisations should also be accountable to the people. One of the primary functions of the State is to promote the welfare of its citizens. Therefore an evaluation of the functioning of the institutions of governance will ultimately have to be based on the satisfaction they provide to the citizens. In this regard, prominence would need to be attached to the voice of the citizens themselves.

In particular the Second Administrative Reforms Commission looked at the following issues to revamp the traditional public administration in India:

- (i) **Accountable and Transparent Government:** The focus was on creating a system of accountability and transparency in administration. There was also a need to avoid delays in the service provided.
- (ii) **Make administration more result-oriented:** Various administrative processes were to be simplified made user-friendly.

- (iii) **Citizen centric administration:** Ensure greater involvement of people's representatives and community at large in the conceptualisation and execution of programmes.

Reforms that aimed at changing public administration in India:

There have been a large number of reform measures which have sought to bring administration closer to the people. Broadly these initiatives include:

- (i) Enacting laws giving certain rights to people
- (ii) Setting up of new institutional mechanisms to redress citizens' grievances
- (iii) Improving accessibility to citizens by setting up units closer to people
- (iv) Simplifying procedures to reduce bureaucratic delays
- (v) Using technology to improve internal efficiency
- (vi) Rewarding government employees who perform well
- (vii) Improving discipline within the organisation
- (viii) Reducing regulatory control
- (ix) Holding public contact programmes etc.

Do this.

Find out examples of the reforms that have been initiated for each of the above.

E.g. (i) Enacting laws giving rights to people: Reform initiated - Right to Information (2005).



Administrative Reforms in India: Dialogue with citizens in a District Collector's Office at the Janata Darbar



Administrative Reforms in India : Corrections in Aadhar Card being made at a District Collector's Office

Administrative Reforms in India

Let us discuss some of the specific programmes that aimed at bringing good governance in India.

1) Lokpal and Lokayukta

The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 came into force in 2014. The Act provides for the establishment of a body of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States. This office would inquire into allegations of corruption against public functionaries. It shows the Government's commitment to clean and responsive governance.

The concept of Lokpal has been taken from Sweden where the office is called the

Ombudsman. The typical duties of an ombudsman are to investigate complaints against government officials and attempt to resolve them.

The State of Maharashtra was the first and pioneer State in India to introduce the concept of Lokayukta. The Maharashtra Lokayukta Institution came into being in 1972. The Lokayukta can investigate allegations or grievances arising out of the conduct of public servants including political executives, legislators, officers of the State Government, local bodies, public enterprises and other instrumentalities of Government. A member of the public can file specific allegations with the Lokayukta against any public servant for enquiry. The Lokayukta can also initiate suo-moto inquiry into the conduct of public servants. The Government of India appointed Pinaki Chandra Ghose as the first Lokpal in 2019.



Do you know?

Suo moto is a Latin term. It means 'on its own motion'. It is used where a government agency acts on its own.

2) Citizens' Charters

Citizens' Charter is based on the premise that the Citizen is "King" and government organisations exist to serve the citizens. In order to ensure that both, the service providers as well as citizens realise that public agencies are meant to provide service, each organisation should spell out the services it has to perform and then specify the standards/norms for these services. Once this is done then the organisation can be held accountable if the service standards are not met. Government of India commenced the exercise to formulate Citizens' Charters in 1996.



नागरिकांची सनद

नोंदणी व मुद्रांक विभागातर्फे नागरिकांना देण्यात येणाऱ्या सेवांबाबतची सनद

अ. क्र.	सेवेचा तपशील	अर्ज कोणत्या कार्यालयात सादर करावा	अर्ज मंजूर करणारे/ निर्णय घेणारे अधिकारी	सेवा पुरवण्यास लागणारा कालावधी
दुय्यम निबंधक कार्यालयामार्फत पुरवण्यात येणाऱ्या सेवा				
१.	दस्त नोंदणी करणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	30 मिनिटे
२.	दस्ताच्या सूचीची प्रमाणित नक्कल देणे. (अ) फेब्रु. 2002 नंतरच्या दस्ताबाबत (ब) फेब्रु. 2002 पूर्वीच्या दस्ताबाबत	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	5 दिवस 15 दिवस
३.	दस्ताची प्रमाणित नक्कल देणे. (अ) फेब्रु. 2002 नंतरच्या दस्ताबाबत (ब) फेब्रु. 2002 पूर्वीच्या दस्ताबाबत	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	5 दिवस 15 दिवस
४.	शोध उपलब्ध करणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	त्याच दिवशी
५.	नोटीस ऑफ इंटिमेशन फाईल करून घेणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	2 तास
६.	जुना मूळ दस्त नोंदणी करून परत देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	5 दिवस
७.	मुद्रांक शुल्क भरण्याचे प्रयोजनार्थ मूल्यांकन अहवाल देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	3 दिवस
८.	दस्त नोंदणी संदर्भात गृहभेट देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	3 दिवस
९.	विशेष कुलमुखत्यारपत्राचे अधिप्रमाणन करून देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	त्याच दिवशी
१०.	मृत्युकर्त्याच्या मृत्यूनंतर मृत्युपत्र नोंदणी करणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	दुय्यम निबंधक	त्याच दिवशी
सह जिल्हा निबंधक कार्यालयामार्फत देण्यात येणाऱ्या सेवा				
११.	नोंदणी झालेल्या दस्तविषयक अभिलेख दुरुस्तीस परवानगी देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	14 दिवस
१२.	दस्त नोंदणीस सादर करण्यासाठी किंवा कबुलीजबाब देण्यासाठी झालेला विलंब क्षमापित करणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	30 दिवस
१३.	दस्त नोंदणीदरम्यान खोटे निवेदन किंवा तोतयेगिरी संदर्भातील तक्रारीवरील कार्यवाही करणे.	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	45 दिवस
१४.	दस्त नोंदणी नाकारण्याच्या आदेशाविरुद्ध अपिलावरील कार्यवाही करणे.	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	45 दिवस (सुनावणीनुसार)
१५.	सह जिल्हा निबंधक कार्यालयात नोंदणी झालेल्या दस्ताची/त्या दस्ताच्या सूचीची प्रमाणित नक्कल देणे.	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	15 दिवस
१६.	दस्त नोंदणी न केलेल्या प्रकरणांमध्ये, ई-पेमेंट पद्धतीने भरलेल्या नोंदणी फी चा परतावा देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	22 दिवस
१७.	नोंदणी झालेल्या दस्तास जादा भरलेल्या नोंदणी फी चा परतावा देणे.	दुय्यम निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	30 दिवस
१८.	मृत्युपत्राचा सीलबंद लखोटा जमा करणे, परत घेणे किंवा उघडणे.	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	सह जिल्हा निबंधक	त्याच दिवशी
मुद्रांक जिल्हाधिकारी कार्यालयामार्फत देण्यात येणाऱ्या सेवा				
१९.	दस्ताचे मुद्रांक शुल्काबाबत अभिनिर्णय करणे.	मुद्रांक जिल्हाधिकारी	मुद्रांक जिल्हाधिकारी	45 दिवस
२०.	मुद्रांक शुल्काचा परतावा देणे.	मुद्रांक जिल्हाधिकारी	मुद्रांक जिल्हाधिकारी	35 दिवस

- नागरिकांच्या सविस्तर माहितीसाठी सनदेची संपूर्ण प्रत सह जिल्हा निबंधक यांच्याकडे पाहणीसाठी उपलब्ध आहे.
- 'नागरिकांची सनद' व 'सारथी' ही पुस्तके www.igrmahhelpline.gov.in या वेबसाईटवर उपलब्ध आहेत.
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नोंदणी महानिरीक्षक व मुद्रांक नियंत्रक,
महाराष्ट्र राज्य, पुणे

Can you find out?

Go onto the websites of the Government of India and Government of Maharashtra and look at the Citizen Charters. Discuss the contents in class

3) E-Governance

Revolution in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has the potential of elevating the governance process to new levels. That is the reason why countries around the world are increasingly opting for 'e-Governance'. Governance has become more complex and varied in the last few decades. Citizens' expectations from government have also increased manifold. ICT facilitates efficient storing and retrieval of data, instantaneous transmission of information, processing information and data faster than the earlier manual systems. This helps in speeding up governmental processes, taking decisions expeditiously and judiciously, increasing transparency and enforcing accountability. It also helps in increasing the reach of government – both geographically and demographically.

Over the years, a large number of initiatives have been undertaken by various State Governments and Central Ministries to bring in an era of e-Government. Efforts have been made at various levels to improve the delivery of public services and simplify the process of accessing them. e-Governance in India has evolved from computerisation of Government Departments to such initiatives in Governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency.

The objective of the National e-Governance Plan of the Government of India is to bring public services closer home to citizens. This is to be achieved by building a countrywide infrastructure reaching down to the remotest of villages and large-scale digitisation of records to enable easy, reliable access over the internet. Today application for a birth certificate, death certificate, PAN card or even a Passport can be done online. This has brought administration closer to people.

Can you find out?

Find out E-governance initiatives of Government of Maharashtra.

The screenshot shows the Sarathi portal for applying for a Learner's Licence (LL). The header includes the Sarathi logo, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India, and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Application for Learner's Licence (LL)'. It asks the user to select an appropriate choice from a dropdown menu. Below this, there are three radio button options: 'Applicant does not hold Driving/ Learner Licence', 'Applicant holds Driving Licence, Enter DL Number', and 'Applicant holds Learner Licence, Enter LL Number'. There are input fields for 'DRIVING LICENCE NUMBER' and 'LEARNER'S LICENCE NUMBER', and two 'Date of Birth' fields with 'DD-MM-YYYY' format. At the bottom, there are 'Submit', 'Refresh', and 'Cancel' buttons. A note at the bottom left explains how to enter licence numbers with spaces, providing two examples. The footer includes the National Informatics Centre logo and the India.gov.in logo.

Website of the Regional Transport Office (RTO).

4) Right to Information

Right to information is one of the most important aspects of good governance. It provides access to information about public policies and actions. It is the key to strengthening participatory democracy and ushering in people centred governance. Transparency in government organisations makes them function more objectively, predictably and also enables citizens to participate in the governance process effectively. In a fundamental sense, right to information is a basic necessity of good governance. The Right to Information Act, 2005 has enabled citizens to seek important public information from the government.

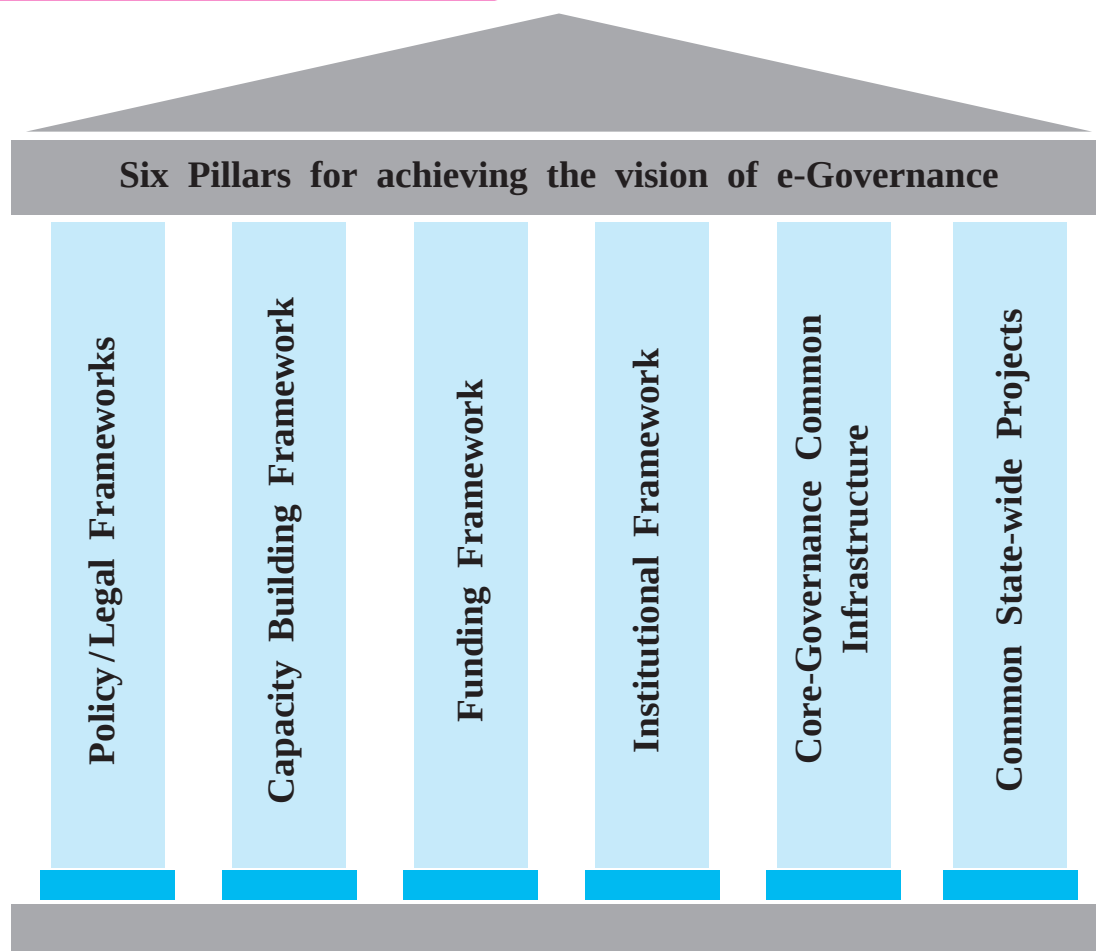
Do this.

Find out how an application for the Right to Information is prepared. Prepare a sample application for getting information from a government office.

5) Citizen participation

Citizen participation in governance is seen as contributing to a healthy democracy. It enhances and improves upon the traditional form of representative democracy to transform it into more responsive and thus a participative democracy.

All the above programmes ensure citizens participation in governance. Citizens are not to be considered as recipients of development but as participants in the development process. It is essentially a 'bottom- up' approach and not a 'top- down' approach. It refers to the modalities by which citizens can influence and take control over resources and decision making about development. It accepts that the citizens have a legitimate right in making decisions about their future.



Six pillars of e-governance

The Government of Maharashtra has identified six priority pillars to use e-governance so as to become proactive and responsive to its citizens' needs.

Pillar 1 : Establishment of Policy/ Legal Frameworks: Legal Framework has to be updated regularly with changing times and technologies.

Pillar 2 : Develop Strong Capacity Building Framework: Capacity Building of employees is necessary.

Pillar 3 : Facilitate abundant Funding: Ensure mechanisms for provision of adequate and timely funds.

Pillar 4 : Institutional Framework: Develop administrative structures that are capable of envisioning and guiding the e-Governance programs.

Pillar 5 : Build Core e-Governance Common Infrastructure: Develop the core e-Governance infrastructure like Data Centre, Common Service Centres and State Wide Area Network etc.

Pillar 6 : Develop Common State wide Projects: Develop applications like e-Tendering, e-Office, SMS gateway, payment gateway etc. that are common to majority of state departments to ensure coordination.

Can you find out?

The Consumer Protection Act was passed in 1986 to protect the interest of the consumers. Have you heard or read about the Consumer Courts? Find out how the Consumer Court functions. Will you go to a Consumer Court if a shopkeeper cheats you? Discuss in the classroom.

Special Institutional Mechanisms

The benefits of good governance must be available to all the sections of the society. The constitution provides for socio-economic and political safeguards to certain disadvantaged sections of the society. Besides the safeguards provided for them the government has created several commissions to safeguard the rights of different sections of the society. These include the following:

- (i) **National Commission for Scheduled Castes :** Deals with matters related to the safeguards provided under the constitution and inquire into specific complaints relating to deprivation of rights of the Scheduled Caste community.
- (ii) **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes :** Deals with matters related to the safeguards provided under the constitution and inquire into specific complaints relating to deprivation of rights of the Scheduled Tribe community.
- (iii) **National Human Rights Commission :** It deals with protection of rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity guaranteed by the constitution.
- (iv) **National Commission for Women :** This was created to facilitate the redressal of grievances and accelerate socio-economic development of women.
- (v) **National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights :** It seeks to protect, promote and defend child rights in the country. The Commission defines a child as a person in the 0 to 18 years of age group.



Do you know?

The National Commission for Minorities recognises the following religious communities as minority communities: Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Parsis and Jain.

(vi) **National Commission for Backward Classes** : The focus is welfare of socially and economically backward classes.

(vii) **National Commission for Minorities** : It monitors the working of the safeguards for minorities provided in the Constitution and by laws enacted by the Parliament and the State Legislatures.

(viii) **National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission** : This provides for a consumer disputes redressal mechanism.

Discuss :

Discuss the organisation and role of any one of the above commissions.

The Indian constitution has laid down the framework of good governance through the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Based on these the government has tried to develop an institutional framework for good governance. The core of good governance is a citizen centric approach to administration. It creates an environment wherein all classes of people can develop to their full potential. A responsive, accountable, sustainable and efficient administration for the country is what India seeks to achieve.

See the following website for additional information:

1. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
<https://meity.gov.in/divisions/national-e-governance-plan>
2. Citizen Centric Administration (12th Report), 2009, Second Administrative Commission: Reports. Department of Administrative Reforms and Grievances, Government of India
<https://darpg.gov.in/arc-reports>
3. Government of Maharashtra, E Governance Policy, 23 September 2011
https://www.maharashtra.gov.in/PDF/e_governance_policy.pdf

Exercise

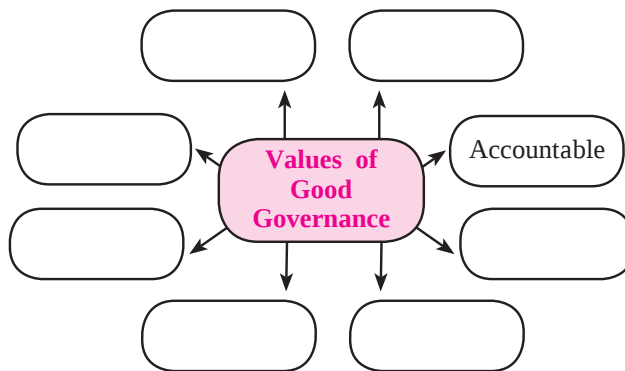
Q.1 (A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements.

- (1) The concept of Lokpal has been taken from
(Finland, Sweden, Norway, Germany)
- (2) Right to information is one of the important aspects of
(Good governance, democracy, decentralisation, development)

(B) State the appropriate concept for the given concept.

Person investigating complaints against government officials -

Q.2 (A) Complete the concept map.



(B) State whether the following statements are true or false with reason.

- (1) Lokayukta can investigate complaints against political executives.
- (2) Good Governance aims at efficient use of natural resources.

Q.3 Explain co-relation between the following.
Good Governance and E-Governance.

Q.4 Express your opinion.

- (1) E-governance speeds up governmental processes.
- (2) E-governance brought administration closer to people.

Q.5 Answer the following in 80 to 100 words.

Explain various institutions protecting rights of different sections in India.

Q.6 Answer the following question in detail with help of given points.

Explain in detail the following values of Good Governance.

- (a) participation (b) transparency
- (c) responsiveness (d) accountability

Activity

- (1) Find out the information regarding state level commissions working for safeguarding rights of various sections of society.
- (2) Find out information on Ombudsman.

