

SEMESTER 6-POLITICAL SCIENCE HONS SESSION 2023-24

NAME OF THE PROJECT: History of Indian administration

PAPER-ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC POLICY IN INDIA-CC 14

History of Indian administration: It traces its earliest known form to the monarchical system. Since the earliest times, the monarchical system was used in public administration in the execution of governmental functions. In the long history of Indian administration, a number of administrative organizations rose and fell.

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a Parliamentary form of government which is federal in structure with unitary features. There is a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head to advise the President who is the constitutional head of the country. The present administrative system in India originated during the British rule. This period is divided into two parts: East India Company's rule up to 1857 and British government rule from 1858 to 1947.

The unitary features of Indian administration, such as single citizenship, emergency provisions, residuary powers, appointment of governors, and uniformity in fundamental rights, reflect the strong centralization of power in the hands of the central government.

History of Indian administration traces its earliest known form to the monarchical system. Since the earliest times, the monarchical system was used in public administration in the execution of governmental functions. In the long history of Indian administration, a number of administrative organisations rose and fell. However, there are two basic features of the Indian administrative system which continued right down the ages- the importance of the villages as a primary unit and co-ordination between the two opposite trends of centralisation and decentralisation. To put it in a nutshell the present administration is a developed since from Vedic period.

Abundant sources are available to get a clear picture of the history of Indian administrative system. A lot of information regarding the organisation and functions of Indian administration is obtained from Vedic literature, Buddhist treatises, Jain literature, Dharmasastras, Indian Puranas, Ramayanas, Mahabharata, Manu Smriti, Sukra Niti and Arthashastra.

During the Vedic period the king was assisted in his work by many officers. He was surrounded by a circle of his friends and principal officers. There is a reference regarding this in the two epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. A similar reference is also to be found in Manu Smriti and Sukra Niti. In Kautilya's Arthashastra is obtained a detailed account about the offices of the state for the first time in the history of India.

It can be said that the present Indian administration is the result of a rich legacy and continuity. It is true to say that the steps of its evolution are somehow or the other connected with the past. However, the existing administrative system in India may be said to be the contribution of the British government.

India became independent in August 1947 with the end of the British rule. A new Constitution was framed and adopted on January 26 1950 and India became a republic. The pertinent question is what was the new republic like, and what was handed over by Britishers along with the power? The answer of these questions can be found easily during the period Britishers governed the country by establishing various institutions. Though Indians were very happy to get rid of the colonial rule it was soon realised that the governmental system and administrative apparatus developed by the Britishers was capable of meeting all the needs of the country therefore, the same administrative system was maintained even after independence of course, with some changes as per the requirements of the time. The main features of the British governmental and administrative system, like parliamentary form of government; Federal structure, Governors in the states, Secretariat system, Central and State administration.

The federal structure of the Indian Constitution has its roots in the Government of India Act of 1935. The Constitutional history of India shows, that the Act of 1919 mentioned 'transferred' subjects which were entrusted to ministers of provinces accountable to elected provincial legislatures, and 'reserved' subjects meant for

officials under the Governors. Thus, a 'dyarchy' system was the main characteristic of the Act of 1919, sowing the seeds of division of subjects between provinces and centre. The Government of India Act 1935, added three contributions to the political development in the country: these were: first, it established a full responsible government in the provinces, second, it contained a list of division of powers between provinces and the centre, third, it established a Federal Court. The Act of 1935 provided in its 451 clauses, a model for the Indian Constitution of 1950. Thus, the type of federation we have adopted in our Constitution is a British legacy.



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