

MAKING OF CORRUPTION FREE UNITED INDIA

AFTER 75 YEARS

AS PROGRESSIVE AND WELFARE STATE

(First Edition)

By

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(Prefixing of Major/Lt Col (Retd.) with the name of author discontinued)

After 'Governance and Development of Rural India' published in 2014/2025, this is the second comprehensive, action-plan oriented research study project undertaken by the author with a holistic approach based on lifelong personal experience and experiment which helped to study in-depth the existing inefficiency and corruption in public services. As a result, the present status of political, economic and civic governance in India after 75 years has been documented for analysis and necessary recommendations have been made for structural, functional, legal and administrative reforms in all departments/sectors under government of India at all level to ensure corruption free governance for the welfare of the citizens, economic development of the country and delivery of public services with transparency and accountability. Truly speaking, this study project report should be accepted as a policy framework by stakeholders including institutes teaching about good governance to make India corruption free, progressive and welfare state.

Making of Corruption Free United India After 75 Years (As progressive and welfare state)

(Conceptual framework of the first comprehensive and action- plan oriented research study project ever undertaken by any individual or institute is due to be published soon with very fair and positive overview by AI)

By D S Bisht

Introduction

Making of Corruption Free United India After 75years (As progressive and welfare state), is the first comprehensive and action- plan oriented research study project ever undertaken by any individual or institute in the country so far. The conceptual framework of the research study project is given in the succeeding paragraphs.

Let us start with the 'History of Corruption in India' by Shalini Bharti and Rochna Mittal published in International Journal of Political Science and Governance (2025). Abstract of research paper is as follows. – "This manuscript traces the historical evolution of corruption in India, from Vedic age to post liberalization era in India. Corruption is an inbuilt system in the human mind, and it has persisted since civilization started. Corruption was accursed in texts like the Rigveda as a societal evil linked to poverty and deprivation. Though Kautilya's Arthashastra has no mention of the word 'corruption', it is the most comprehensive and detailed text about various forms of corrupt official practices, detailing 40 types of embezzlement and proposing stringent penalties for each of them. Medieval India, under the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire, struggled with corrupt revenue systems, aggravated by decentralized governance and Jagir Dari abuses. The colonial era under the British Raj institutionalized corruption through rigid administrative practices crafted especially to exploit the wealth of India and lay the foundation for systemic irregularities. Post-independence, the License Raj fostered bureaucratic corruption. Post-1991 liberalization, crony capitalism became apparent. India is still struggling to counter this system, which is deeply rooted in politics, society, and administration in various forms."

In another research paper 'Corruption in historical perspective: A case of India', published in International Journal of Political Science (2007), Arun Kr. Agrawal said- "One begins to wonder whether we are the same who rode to freedom with truth and sacrifice as our motto. By adopting a holistic approach and by co-opting all the principal actors in the process of anti-corruption reform, a country or community can enhance its capacity to curtail corruption to manageable levels. But none of this can be tackled without enlightened and determined political leadership, without high levels of public awareness and support, and without a motivated and well-led private sector. In many countries, the most difficult element in the equation is that of developing a vibrant civil society willing and able to play a meaningful role in shaping its environment."

Keeping in view the historical background of corruption in India, the comprehensive research study project in hand was undertaken which is purely empirical based on factual information about governance with over forty years of personal and practical experience of public administration and experiment in delivery of public services at the grass root level both in urban and in rural (real) India. Briefly, the aim of the project was to examine the present status of political, economic and civic governance in India and to suggest necessary legal, administrative, structural and functional reforms to ensure that India is not allowed to slip back into divided states due to rising corruption, inequality, distribution of wealth, increasing economic distress and neglect of rural India. The conceptual framework of the research study project has been broadly stated in the following paragraphs.

It is well established now that the problem of corruption varies from country to country which is directly related to historical background, culture, traditions and the existing political structure and governance of the country concerned. Instead of routine research papers on corruption including index of corruption or cover stories on a particular incident of corruption/scam etc. holistic and practical approach has been adopted in this research project to study the existing status of political, economic and civic governance in India today at all level and in all allied branches/sectors of the government with reference to present status of structure, composition, role, manpower management, level of performance/efficiency as per rules/procedures, if any, laid down and the capacity to deliver public services to all category of citizens as per their legal entitlements with or without corruption.

The study project used all relevant information and data which has been in public domain during last 40-50 years for study and analysis to come to final conclusion and to suggest action plan to ensure corruption free governance with sharp focus on inefficiency, corrupt practices reported and known in each sector/department of the government. The study project has been able to identify the impact of inefficiency in governance which had adversely affected the performance of civil administration to deliver the public services to the citizens of the country without corruption at all level. The study project report is likely to serve as a valuable reference and guide book on governance to help people in power to ensure best possible political, economic and civic governance for the welfare of the people in a democratic and a welfare state like India through existing system of parliamentary democracy and in accordance to the constitution of India.

It is proposed to bring out revised and an updated edition of this study project report periodically till such time we are able to see visible improvement in corruption free political, economic and civic governance in India. Large number of relevant research papers on 'Corruption in India and the world' published during 1997-2024, have been received by the author of this project by e-mail during last one year which have also been studied. Research papers are only for theoretical study of corruption in general. This research study project has gone into the present status of corruption in each department/sector in India today and to what extent poor political, economic and civic governance has failed to check corruption in India. The study project succeeded in identifying the mode and specific reasons of corruption in each sector

covered in 17 sector specific Sections. Sector/department specific conclusion have been drawn and necessary recommendations have been recorded at the end of each Section. Common recommendations to improve civic governance applicable to all departments for structural, functional, legal and administrative reform have been included in the Executive Summary of Findings to improve performance of civil services to make India corruption free in due course of time.

The world is also presently facing the problems arising due to military conflicts for domination of one region or other. The conventional war has now turned into arms race for unconventional war to acquire latest technology to conduct air warfare with latest aircraft, missile, drone, cyber technology and use of satellite etc. Besides pandemic and climate change, it is bound to further aggravate, communalize and criminalize both international and national politics around the world. Internationalization of corruption and criminalization of politics will also affect adversely the peace and prosperity in this planet earth. Therefore, eradication of corruption, poverty and economic backwardness may not get the required attention till such time normalcy is established in this planet. However, delivery of minimum essential public services to the citizens as per their legal entitlement/human rights without corruption can still be ensured by improving civic governance with transparency and accountability in the country.

Origin and background of the study project

During national agitation for 'India against corruption', an article by me on this subject then titled 'Corruption & Lokpal Bill' was published on 19 November, 2011 in a local weekly 'Garhwal Post' in Dehradun. Since then, corruption has increased manifold. Today politicians, bureaucrats and others are being reported/arrested on a daily basis under MLPA and for holding unaccounted money/ wealth running into crores of rupees. Now even the bank and treasury officers have been arrested for pocketing public money including misappropriation of public funds without any fear. In other words, demonetization and Lokpal has neither helped to check growth of black money nor corruption.

The one- point agenda i.e. passing of Lok Pal Bill will neither eradicate nor reduce corruption in India. In a country of India's size with population over 140 crore living in 35 states/union territories governed by different political parties who are totally independent to manage the affairs in their respective states, it will be difficult to put up a united front to eradicate corruption when no one government is free from corruption. Therefore, the present exercise to enact Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta bill and appointment, thereafter, has so far not given any positive results. In fact, the offices of Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta are becoming a parallel center of governance with additional burden on the state exchequer. The issue of corruption is being raised to malign the ruling party both at the center and states by the opposition parties only to gain political advantage during election and not for eradication of corruption. Whether the Prime Minister and the Judiciary is brought under Lok Pal or not, will not solve the problem of day- to- day corruption faced by the ordinary citizens of the country. Number of cases involving middle and lower-level government employees are regularly caught and reported with unaccounted money and wealth running into crores of rupees which should be the main issue for those interested to eradicate corruption in the country.

It is often forgotten that 73 per cent of India's population continue to live in villages located in varying agroclimatic conditions where they have been practicing fair and co-operative means for their livelihood and survival from time immemorial. It is only the 20 per cent of the 27 per cent population (the lower middle class) mostly living or working in urban or semi urban areas who are facing the brunt of corruption in public services on the one hand and uncertain opportunities in employment, wages and inflation on the other. Unfortunately, some of the political organizations give more importance to community interest and linguistic brotherhood rather than national interest or supremacy of law of the land. Obviously, corruption is not an important issue for many organizations and political parties. Rural population in each state has their own occupational and cultural practices who are now facing the problems created by new culture of corruption spreading in rural/tribal areas due to urbanization and the role being played by multiple agencies of the central, state government and local bodies to implement welfare and rural development program in the country without any accountability.

Over a period, we have innovated various forms of corruption in the country. There are ordinary cases of bribery or collusive bribery where the bribe giver and bribe taker together take advantage and deprive the honest citizens of their fundamental rights. The other forms of corruption adopted by the so-called literate and the rich people are: tax evasion by collusion, managing government work orders including advertisements and execution of sub-standard works, corruption by government officials while buying goods and services (public procurement), illegal exploitation of natural resources like mining and forest, production of spurious drug / food injurious to health and violation of safety norms to earn fast and easy money. The most important issue that is being over looked is the corruption within government machinery. Bribery for recruitment, payment of salary, posting, promotions/appointments and for payment of dues at the time of retirement. Therefore, the problem can be addressed only by undertaking necessary structural, functional, administrative and legal reforms to check corruption in each sector and departments of the government at various level.

Governance issues identified to check corruption in India

Administrative and legal reforms should aim at strengthening existing law enforcement authorities vertically from top to bottom. The existing authorities and law include Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Comptroller and Auditor General of Accounts of India, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) etc. which are good enough to check corruption at all level involving multiple authorities and departments of the government such as CWG and Adarsh building

society scam etc. Corruption can also be checked if prompt action is taken under existing Prevention of Corruption Act which includes (a) public servant taking gratification other than legal remuneration in respect of official act (b) taking gratification by corrupt or illegal means in order to influence public servants (c) taking gratification for exercise of personnel influence with public servants.

Similarly, corruption in delivery of public services by various departments/agencies of Central/State government can be checked by strengthening and enforcing Civil Service Conduct rules/Classification Control and Appeal (CCA) rules etc. already in existence. Unfortunately, rules are there in the statutory books and amended from time to time but not updated and honestly enforced to regulate the conduct of government employees. Since government employees themselves remain ignorant of service rules, the number of court cases between government employees and the government continue to rise in various tribunal and courts in the country. Hence, day to day corruption in public services is overlooked and delivery of public services is either delayed or denied till such time one is willing to grease the palm of service providers.

Beside strengthening existing laws, corruption can be checked by simply making each head of office, exercising administrative powers, directly responsible to check corruption in his own office and subordinate offices under his control. The head of the office should either take action against the employees indulging in corrupt practices or report the matter directly to anti-corruption department/ vigilance authorities of the state for further action. If head of the office fails to do his duty, then action can be taken against Head of the office under civil service conduct rules which can also be amended accordingly.

The scope and form of corruption vary from department to department and profession to profession and therefore needs different regulating mechanism in each department or profession. This cannot be done by the existing Ministry of Personnel but needs an independent ministry to regulate and monitor eradication of corruption in each sector/department under govt of India. The new ministry, if ever created, will have to undertake structural, functional and administrative reforms of all anti-corruption agencies including departmental vigilance organizations responsible for prevention of corruption. The people are generally ignorant of existing mechanism such as internal audit of accounts, vigilance wing under each department and police vigilance who can be made more effective and accountable after necessary reforms. This could check corruption at the lowest level and provide immediate relief to poor and helpless people living both in urban and rural India.

Making of corruption free welfare state like India

Now, that the issue of corruption has come to center stage, it will not die till such time concrete steps are taken to eradicate corruption in all walks of life which may take at least 5-10 years. How best this can be done systematically without disturbing political stability, national security, day to day public administration, existing legal system and development of the country- is the key question before the government and civil society which have been studied in-depth in this comprehensive research study project to make India corruption free for the welfare of the people.

The aim of corruption free welfare state like India should be that the citizens are well aware of their fundamental rights, duties on the one hand and are given equal opportunity to progress depending upon their knowledge and skills in their profession irrespective of the caste, color, creed or religion. At the same time corruption free country also means that economically weaker section of the society and those living below the poverty line including disabled are not exploited in any manner by those in power or living above the poverty line and are given adequate security in terms of job, food, shelter, medical facilities and education without discrimination or bribe. This will be possible only when well trained, honest, dedicated and committed civil servants are deployed to deliver the public services at the lowest level both in urban and rural areas.

No comprehensive study as such has been carried out so far with particular reference to corruption in India. The issue has now drawn the attention of all countries in the world after the study was conducted by Transparency International in 2005 and recorded that more than 62% of Indians had at some point or another paid a bribe to a public official to get a job done. In 2008, another report showed that about 50% of Indians had first-hand experience of paying bribes or using contacts to get services performed by public offices. However, in 2020 their Corruption Perceptions Index ranked the country 86th out of 180, reflecting steady decline in perception of corruption among people. Transparency International report broadly recorded various factors which contribute to be the reasons for corruption in India. Major corruption cases reported in the media included Indians stashing millions of rupees in Swiss Banks and Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) having accepted that undeclared assets of Rs.20,078 crore have been identified by their office in India and abroad following the investigation till June 2021.

This study project report also contains in-depth study of the existing status of economic policies and development of the country in a welfare state like India. The estimates of GDP growth, increasing problem of inequality and distribution of wealth and its impact on human development index have been analyzed and findings with recommendations have been recorded accordingly in Part-B of this project report. In addition, the existing status of public services which include mainly health sector, education sector and land laws applicable to regulate land ownership and land transfer have been studied in detail and the findings have been recorded in Part-C of the study project report. The existing status of planning and implementation of welfare schemes and program drawn by the government for the welfare of citizens and delivery of common public services both in rural and urban areas have also been recorded and conclusion drawn with recommendations have been made accordingly.

National approach to check corruption in India today

This study project was formulated keeping in view all aspects of political, economic and civic governance for in-depth study for necessary reform to realize the dream of making India corruption free in the near future. People have more or less accepted the corruption as part of life which is not a good sign for the future of any country. If not checked now, it can even break the unity of the country and end parliamentary democracy. The symptoms are clearly visible. The people are seen taking law into their own hand and force the government agencies accept their demand or entitlement which is denied to them under the existing laws due to corruption and inefficiency in the concerned department. Government machinery fails to spot the corrupt practices within the government departments due to poor quality of civic governance, vigilance and action is only taken when the matter is reported in the media.

It should be a matter of concern that mostly the educated, rich and responsible people inside as well as outside the government machinery are found to be indulging in high level corruption today. Once the corruption cases are exposed, the rich people manage to employ experienced advocates to defend themselves and may even get acquitted after long drawn legal battle. The rest of the population remains neglected who have no choice but to bribe at various level to get all kinds of legal entitlements. The resolution was passed by Parliament some years ago i.e. (a) every government department adopt a citizen's charter which will ensure time bound rendering of public services (b) Lok Ayukta to be set up on the lines of Lok Pal and (c) the lower bureaucracy be made accountable to the citizens through Lok Pal or any other mechanism. But no visible impact could be seen on the ground because no structural and functional reform of the govt departments has been undertaken to implement the resolution on the ground at the grass root level.

AI overview of the research study project report

It was a first opportunity for the author of this study project report to avail the services of AI platform which is now available for fair evaluation of research study project report etc. without any bias and loss of time. The draft study project report (375pages) was submitted to three different AI platform for evaluation and the conclusion drawn by the AI servers are given in the following paragraphs.

AI server-I Chat GPT: This project can be best understood as a serious, experience-driven governance reform manifesto, not a strictly academic research study. The research study is valuable for policy makers and administrators (specially at state/district level), civil service aspirants (for broad understanding of governance issues), and think tank working on governance reforms. The final insight of the AI server- I says, the project that stands out most is the author's core belief i.e. corruption in India is less about lack of laws and more about failure of systems, enforcement, and accountability culture. That insight is both valid and important. The challenge is translating this wide-ranging diagnosis into prioritized, implementable reforms.

AI server- II Google: Research project titled "Making of Corruption Free United India After 75 Years as Progressive and Welfare State," is a comprehensive, action-oriented study authored by D. S. Bisht, a Research Scholar and Director of Central Himalayan Institute, Dehradun. It serves as a policy framework intended for stakeholders to reform political, economic, and civic governance in India. The project is an ambitious attempt to provide a "holistic and practical approach" rather than a purely theoretical academic exercise. Overall, the document provides a detailed, evidence-based roadmap for reform, positioning itself as a "valuable reference and guide book" for those in power to transition India into a corruption-free welfare state.

AI server Z-III: The third AI server in conclusion has described the project "Making Corruption Free United India" to be a substantial and serious attempt to diagnose the rot in the Indian administrative system. It moves beyond the rhetoric of "anti-corruption" slogan and looks into nuts and bolts of service delivery, recruitment, and administrative lethargy. By focusing on "Civic Governance"- the point where the state meets the citizen- the project identifies the most critical frontier for reform. While the recommendations for new Ministry might be debated, the core argument that existing laws and conduct rules need strict enforcement rather than just new legislation, is pragmatic and valuable insight. It serves as a policy frame work document that highlights the urgent need for structural reforms to preserve the unity and democratic fabric of the nation.

Conclusion

Briefly, the study project succeeded in identifying the existing status of political, economic and civic governance in India today and its ability or inability to ensure corruption free governance for the development of the country on the one hand and welfare of the people including delivery of public services in urban/rural areas on the other hand with a view to keep everybody at least above poverty line and to maintain human development index at the required level. Beside historical background, existing level of corruption in each sector/ department of the government has been covered in five parts under 17 Sections. The exact mode of corruption with examples and the reasons have been identified to suggest structural, functional, legal and administrative reform with particular reference to recruitment of manpower, deployment, training facilities, service conditions, pay and allowances of the employees to ensure corruption free functioning of the government department to deliver public services efficiently in national interest

While the bigger scams take time to reach final conclusion, the high level administrative and universal corruption can be dealt with speed through fast-track court to produce its impact instantly in the society. Appointment of Lok Pal or Lok Ayukta by itself is not going to solve the problem of corruption. Lok Pal/ Lok Ayukta or CVC may be necessary at district/regional/state and national level who should not only be responsible to deal with complaint about

corruption but also take action to prevent corruption by constant vigilance and issue advisory in advance to the concerned authorities for necessary administrative action before actual corruption is allowed to take place.

There is a need to record all corruption cases decided by various courts during last ten years, status of cases under trial in various courts and status of cases under investigations. This will help Government and all other stakeholders including media to adopt more constructive approach to eradicate corruption in India. Lastly but not the least, corruption in the Armed and Para Military forces and law enforcement authorities, who are responsible for national and internal security, should not be accepted at any cost. Therefore, anyone found indulging in corrupt or undesirable activities within Armed Forces or law enforcement authorities must be punished promptly and severely in the larger interest of the country.

The outcome of this research study project will help educate the people about the scale and volume of corruption prevailing in the country in all walks of life and to what extent it can harm the very existence of the country in future. Once the people are well informed about the corrupt activities of the people in power- the authorities responsible for good political, economic, civic and corporate governance can be made accountable and answerable. The importance of strict anti-corruption laws can be understood in correct perspective and the offenders can be punished severely through the court of law and black listed to hold any public office in future.

On completion of the project, I feel fully satisfied that the aim of the project i.e. to make it action plan oriented, has been achieved. The AI overview by three different servers is very positive, constructive and encouraging which have been reproduced in Part-G and minor observations made by AI have been clarified for the benefit of stakeholders. Part-G of the study project report contains “Formulation of action plan framework for stakeholders” covered in 13 chapters to make India corruption free in 5-10year time. It is necessary to quote here what former West Bengal Governor M.K. Narayanan said on September 27, 2013 during his interaction with research scholars at the Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy in Chennai. He said, research into sensitive issues should go beyond finding facts or offering diagnosis and come up with solutions that can pave the way for reforms which could not be expected from academic think tanks.

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C O N T E N T S

Preamble

Part – A

POLITICAL GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION IN INDIA

Section-I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND CORRUPTION IN INDIA

Section-II

REVIEW OF CORRUPTION IN INDIA AND THE WORLD

1. Introduction
2. Index of corruption in India and the world
3. Universal public corruption in India
4. Political approach to deal with corruption
5. Prevention of universal corruption
6. High level administrative corruption in India
7. Corruption due to nexus between public -private sector
8. Conclusion

Section-III

WORKING OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

1. Development of political governance
2. Making of Indian constitution
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Fundamental values that shaped India
 - 2.3 Key amendments in the constitution since independence
3. Reform, remedies and Indian constitution
 - 3.1 Freedom of trade and commerce within India
 - 3.2 The executive's law-making power
 - 3.3 States with special status
 - 3.4 Constitutional recognition of languages
 - 3.5 The abolition of titles
 - 3.6 Delimitation of constituencies
 - 3.7 Pendency of cases before constitution bench of the supreme court
4. Constitution and role played by governors and speakers since independence

Section-IV

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

1. National scenario as per National Human Development Report-2001
2. Present scenario of parliamentary democracy in India
 - 2.1 Violation of the basic structure of the constitution
 - 2.2 Caste casteism and oppression of ST/SC
 - 2.3 Democracy- preaching and practice
 - 2.4 Parliament opposition and the media
3. Constitution and expectations of the people
 - 3.1 Indian constitution is the source of unity and spirit of India
 - 3.2 Constitution is a product of self governance and dignity
 - 3.3 Role played by the judiciary to ensure good governance as per constitution
 - 3.4 Expectation of the people from political leadership
4. Indian Constitution and working relationship of Central and State government
 - 4.1 Role played by national leadership after independence
 - 4.2 The constitution and features of federal polity
 - 4.3 Weak political alliance and its impact on governance
 - 4.4 Financial disputes between central and state government
5. National issues where federalism has failed to govern effectively
 - 5.1 Tragedies and costs of prohibition
 - 5.2 Inter-State river water disputes
 - 5.3 National commission for women (NCW)
 - 5.4 Reform with or without consultation
 - 5.5 Enforcement of fundamental duties
 - 5.6 The question of national language in a multilingual country
 - 5.7 Smaller states for better governance and development
 - 5.8 Feasibility of Uniform Civil Code

- 5.9 Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and citizenship law
- 6. Importance of free media for healthy and functional democracy
- 7. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 7.1 Federalism and political governance in India
 - 7.2 Examples of different approach to strengthen federalism

Section- V

STATUS OF ELECTORAL POLITICS AND CORRUPTION

- 1. Existing status of electorate and elections
 - 1.1 Voters rights and participation
 - 1.2 Bribery cases and privileges of legislatures
 - 1.3 Qualification and criminalization of politics with money power
- 2. Funds raised by political parties by unfair means
 - 2.1 Preview
 - 2.2 Seizures of unaccounted money during elections
 - 2.3 Election funding after SC struck down electoral bond scheme
- 3. Electoral reforms for free and fair elections in India
 - 3.1 Banning contestant charged with criminal offences
 - 3.2 Corruption cases against politician
 - 3.3 No law to cancel religious name and symbol used by political parties
 - 3.4 Misuse of public funds for false publicity and advertisement
- 4. Model code of conduct and funding of election promises
- 5. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 5.1 Defection after free and fair election
 - 5.2 Corruption and criminality in the political system
 - 5.3 False affidavit by candidates contesting election
 - 5.4 Status of anti-defection law and political corruption
 - 5.5 Disqualification of elected members convicted for an offence
 - 5.6 Necessity of independent election commission of India
 - 5.7 For and against one nation one election
 - 5.8 Free and fair elections, is the need of the hour

Part – B

ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT AND CORRUPTION

Section -VI

ECONOMIC POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

- 1. Economic survey and sustainable development goals
- 2. Economic policies and program
- 3. Inequality and distribution of wealth in India
- 4. Contribution of rural and farm sector in economic development
 - 4.1 Present status of rural economy and farm sector
 - 4.2 Farmers demand and Swaminathan commission report
 - 4.3 Role of government and management of farm sector
 - 4.4 Future prospects and development of farm sector
 - 4.5 Conclusion and recommendations
- 5. Infrastructure and economic development of India
 - 5.1 Role of Indian Railways and economic development
 - 5.2 Power sector and renewable energy for economic development
 - 5.3 Telecom sector and economic development
- 6. Poverty employment opportunities and economic development
 - 6.1 Estimating poverty line and multidimensional poverty in India
 - 6.2 Poverty and hunger challenge in India
 - 6.3 The Job guarantee and direct benefit schemes for the rural poor
 - 6.4 Government budget and industrial policy for employment generation
 - 6.5 Social justice with growth for eradication of poverty
- 7. Policy decisions taken by GoI to improve human development Index
 - 7.1 Statistics and employment data mechanism
 - 7.2 Accurate audit needed for stability
 - 7.3 Government should be realistic in its budget estimates
 - 7.4 Non-payment of unclaimed dues to legal heirs
- 8. Inefficiency in local bodies and corruption in urban development
 - 8.1 Importance of planned urban development for India
 - 8.2 Planning and execution of new city projects
 - 8.3 Problem of encroachment illegal construction and demolition

- 8.4 Construction repair and maintenance of roads in urban areas
- 8.5 Inefficiency and corruption in local bodies
- 8.6 Delivery of public services by local bodies/municipal corporations
- 8.7 Administrative reform required for urban development in India
- 9. Corruption in construction of roads, highways and bridges
- 10. Natural resources, violation of laws and economic development
 - 10.1 Over exploitation of degraded land
 - 10.2 Illegal mining and its impact on ecology and environment
 - 10.3 Violation of National Green Tribunal (NGT) Act and illegally felling trees etc.
 - 10.4 Physical and monetary value of natural resources
 - 10.5 Management of water and conservation of water resources
 - 10.6 Concluding remarks
- 11. Existing status of economic development
 - 11.1 Economic policies and development
 - 11.2 Status of poor population in India
 - 11.3 Filling data vacuum in the country
 - 11.4 Status of unsecured loans in the bank portfolios
 - 11.5 Neglecting the rural and farm sector
 - 11.6 The status of infrastructure development in India
 - 11.7 Status of local bodies and urban development
 - 11.8 Status of state level finances and the finance commission
- 12. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 12.1 National level economic management
 - 12.2 State level planning and economic development
 - 12.3 Present status of economic development in various states
 - 12.4 Implications of unplanned urbanization for economic development
 - 12.5 Food wastage and poverty in India
 - 12.6 Human Development Index (HDI) in India
 - 12.7 Food security and free food distribution schemes
 - 12.8 Publicity as against actual performance and achievement of the states
 - 12.9 Concluding remarks

Section-VII

TAX EVASION BANKING SERVICES BLACK MONEY AND CORRUPTION

- 1. Status of tax evasion and money laundering
 - 1.1 Direct taxes and tax evasion
 - 1.2 Indirect taxes and tax evasion
 - 1.3 Common methods used for tax evasion
 - 1.4 Goods and services tax (GST) and tax evasion by bogus firms
 - 1.5 Report by Tax Justice Network (JTN)
 - 1.6 Prevention of money laundering
 - 1.7 Tax evasion and money laundering cases detected in the recent past
 - 1.8 International laws and economic offences
- 2. Inefficiency and corruption in banking services
 - 2.1 Loan defaulters rising in India
 - 2.2 Fraud cheating and loan
 - 2.3 Example of fraud cases and action taken by ED
 - 2.4 Training and performance of bank officers/employees
- 3. Generation of black money and related economic offences
 - 3.1 Purpose and impact of demonetization
 - 3.2 Recovery of black money and black money Act
 - 3.3 Status of undisclosed income of Indian in foreign banks
 - 3.4 Violation of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) by NGO's
 - 3.5 ED's Pandora probe and role played by offshore companies
- 4. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 4.1 Separate rights from freebies
 - 4.2 Tax evasion and GST
 - 4.3 Impact of growing economy of India today
 - 4.4 The governance issues faced by banking sector
 - 4.5 Prevention on fraud in loans granted by bank
 - 4.6 Embezzlement of money in government treasuries

- 4.7 Estimating poverty
- 4.8 Status of black money
- 4.9 Illegal occupation of forest and government land
- 4.10 Urban development and violation of building bye-laws
- 4.11 Losses suffered by the government due to illicit markets
- 4.12 Prohibition liquor trafficking and excise Act
- 4.13 Corruption free economic development of the country

Part – C

CIVIC GOVERNANCE CORRUPTION AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Section -VIII

PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN INDIA

1. Present status of health services and government hospitals
2. Corruption in health services
3. Manpower planning and management of health services
4. Status of Indian Public Health Standards
5. Implementation of health insurance schemes
6. Planning and management of epidemics
7. Other related issues affecting health services
 - 7.1 General policy to improve delivery of health services in India
 - 7.2 Status of health sector and corruption
 - 7.3 Grass root level problems in health sector
 - 7.4 National medical commission (NMC), State medical council and NCAHP Act
 - 7.5 Status of medical colleges and medical graduates
 - 7.6 Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Anganwadi workers
8. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 8.1 General policy to improve delivery of health services in India
 - 8.2 Review-status of health sector and corruption
 - 8.3 Grass root level problems in health sector
 - 8.4 National medical commission v/s State medical council and NCAHP Act
 - 8.5 Status of medical colleges and medical graduates
 - 8.6 Integrated child development scheme (ICDS) and Anganwadi workers
 - 8.7 Concluding remarks
9. Corruption cases recently reported

Section-IX

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION SECTOR

1. National education policy program and future prospects
2. Management of primary and secondary education
 - 2.1 Present status of primary education
 - 2.2 Recruitment training and service conditions of teachers
 - 2.3 Inefficiency and corruption in school administration
3. Management of college and university education
 - 3.1 Present status of higher education
 - 3.2 Control and regulation of higher education
4. Planning and management of IIT and IIM
 - 4.1 Present status
 - 4.2 Problem of delayed graduation of IIT/IIM students
5. Other related issues affecting education sector
 - 5.1 Inefficiency in management of school education
 - 5.2 General status of education sector
 - 5.3 Status of infrastructure for primary and higher secondary education
 - 5.4 The governance issues affecting higher education
 - 5.5 Flip flop on IIM's autonomy
 - 5.6 Appointment of faculty members or director in IITs
 - 5.7 Prevention of paper leak scam
 - 5.8 Online education through open and distance learning (ODL)
6. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 6.1 Preview
 - 6.2 Inefficiency in management of school education
 - 6.3 General status of education sector
 - 6.4 Status of infrastructure for primary and higher secondary education
 - 6.5 The governance issues affecting higher education
 - 6.6 Flip flop on IIM's autonomy

- 6.7 Appointment of faculty members or director in IITs
- 6.8 Prevention of paper leak scams
- 6.9 Online education through open and distance learning (ODL)
- 6.10 Concluding remarks

Section-X

LAND REVENUE ACT AND CORRUPTION IN LAND TRANSFER

- 1. Status of land revenue Act and laws in various states
- 2. land records and encroachment on government and private land
- 3. Administrative corruption in management of private and government land
- 4. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 4.1 Preview
 - 4.2 Administrative corruption in land transfer etc.
 - 4.3 Registration of illegal sale, purchase and transfer of land by the revenue officers
 - 4.4 Prevention of corruption through digitization of land record
 - 4.5 Concluding remarks

Section - XI

WELFARE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

- 1. Preview
- 2. Failure of Panchayati Raj till to date
- 3. Implementation of village development program
- 4. Delivery of common public services in rural areas
 - 4.1 Preview
 - 4.2 Housing safe drinking water and sanitation
 - 4.3 Food security and food for all
 - 4.4 Power supply for all
 - 4.5 Delivery of public service documents at doorstep
- 5. Common social welfare program for workers
 - 5.1 Building and other construction workers welfare board
 - 5.2 National food security Act
 - 5.3 Common ration card for workers in unorganized sector
 - 5.4 Prohibition policy and hooch tragedies
 - 5.5 Problem of human trafficking in India
 - 5.6 National health mission
- 6. Planning and implementation of welfare schemes drawn by government
 - 6.1 Welfare schemes drawn by government of India
 - 6.2 Parallel welfare schemes drawn by state governments
 - 6.3 Implementation of NREGS in rural areas
 - 6.4 Status of malnutrition and poverty
 - 6.5 Status of welfare program for disabled
 - 6.6 Status of insurance for all and regulatory authorities
 - 6.7 Status of scholarship schemes
 - 6.8 Status of labor welfare and child labor concerns
- 7. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 7.1 National data governance framework policy
 - 7.2 National data and analytic platform (NDAP)
 - 7.3 Digital India and rural development
 - 7.4 Inefficiency corruption and delivery of public services in rural areas
 - 7.5 Unclaimed amount of money lying with life insurance companies and banks
 - 7.6 Civic governance and delivery of corruption free public services to citizens
 - 7.7 Planning and implementation of welfare program for social security

Part - D

STATUS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES IN INDIA

Section-XII

STATUS OF EXISTING LAWS AND MECHANISM TO PREVENT CORRUPTION IN INDIA

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)
 - 2.1 Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003
 - 2.2 Jurisdiction of Central Vigilance Commission
 - 2.3 Commission activities during -2016
 - 2.4 Non-compliance of Commission's advice and other areas of concern
- 3. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
 - 3.1 Evolution of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- 3.2 Definition of 'Beneficial Ownership' changed to strengthen PMLA
- 3.3 CBI's action as part of global operation against drug trafficking
- 3.4 Supreme court on the role and power of CBI, CVC and the state government
- 4. Directorate of Enforcement
 - 4.1 History of Enforcement Directorate
 - 4.2 Statutory functions of the Directorate of Enforcement
 - 4.3 Selected statistics and performance of ED as on 30.1.2023
- 5. Internal audit and Controller General of Accounts (CGA)
- 6. Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)
- 7. Conclusion and recommendations

Section-XIII

STATUS OF JUDICIARY AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN INDIA

- 1. Preview of judicial system in India today
- 2. Administration of justice in India today
- 3. Status of pending cases in the court
 - 3.1 Current trend of cases disposed in the SC/HC and lower courts
 - 3.2 Government litigations in courts
 - 3.3 Steps taken by the government for expeditious settlement of pending cases in the court
- 4. Standard and accountability of judiciary Bill
 - 4.1 Appointment of judges in the SC/HC
 - 4.2 Service conditions of judges
 - 4.3 Corruption cases against judiciary
- 5. Procedural reform undertaken to improve justice system in the country
- 6. Role played by the Judiciary and the Bar to give historic judgement by the court
- 7. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 7.1 Preview
 - 7.2 Competent legal services for weaker sections of the society
 - 7.3 Manpower management for judicial services
 - 7.4 Independence of judiciary is necessary for vibrant democracy
 - 7.5 The Mediation Act, 2023
 - 7.6 India Justice Report-2025.
 - 7.7 Present status of Law and Governance in India

Section-XIV

STATUS OF LAWLESSNESS AND POLICING IN INDIA

- 1. Law and order in general as per NCRB of India
 - 1.1 Preview
 - 1.2 Status of crime as per NCRB report-2021
 - 1.3 Status of crime in various states
- 2. Existing laws to empower women and to end violence against women
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Data available about violence against women
 - 2.3 Existing laws of the land to protect the interest of the women
 - 2.4 National Commission for Women Act, 1990
- 3. Violence and protection of children under POCSO Act
- 4. Status of crime against SC/ST community
- 5. Policing against organized crime
- 6. Investigation of fast increasing cybercrimes in India
- 7. Status of crime related to sale and consumption of drugs etc.
- 8. Regulation for road safety and prevention of accidents
 - 8.1 Status of motor accidents in India
 - 8.2 Prevention of road accidents
- 9. Existing status of Jail administration
 - 9.1 Status of existing occupancy in jails in the country
 - 9.2 Legal reform undertaken to improve jail administration
- 10. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 10.1 Introduction
 - 10.2 Performance of Indian Police Force
 - 10.3 Investigation of crime and action against criminals
 - 10.4 Status of existing laws and judicial intervention
 - 10.5 Specialist police force to deal with cyber crime
 - 10.6 Status of crime and corruption within police organization

- 10.7 Administrative reform to improve efficiency in police organization
- 10.8 Recommendation with regard to NCRB Annual Report
- 10.9 Urgent action required to address increasing number of motor accidents in India
- 10.10 Status of online transfer of money leading to more frauds and financial corruption in India

Section-XV

EXISTING LAWS AND MECHANISM TO PROTECT LAW ABIDING CITIZENS

1. National human rights commission
 - 1.1 Preview
 - 1.2 Enactment of protection of human rights Act, 1993 in India
 - 1.3 Present status of human rights commission in India
2. Redressal of public grievances in India
 - 2.1 Public grievance redress mechanism in central government departments/organizations
 - 2.2 Status of grievance redressal mechanism, if any, at the level of state
 - 2.3 Redressal of public grievances by autonomous bodies
3. Right to Information Act, 2005
 - 3.1. Preview
 - 3.2 Present status of RTI in India
4. Anti- corruption ombudsman Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta
 - 4.1 Preview
 - 4.2 Lokpal and judicial intervention by the court
 - 4.3 Present status of Lok Ayukta in the states
5. Consumer protection Act
 - 5.1 Status of consumer cases in the country
 - 5.2 Examples of consumers claims decided in the recent past
6. Conclusion and recommendations

Part-E

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Section-XVI

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR CORRUPTION FREE INDIA

1. Socio-economic indicators of India in 2023
2. HRD and expanding middle class in India
3. Job creation and job opportunities in India
4. Status of jobs in private and organized sector
5. Job for women tribal and poor population
 - 5.1 Job opportunities for women in India
 - 5.2 Economic development of tribal population
 - 5.3 Wages and security of women and domestic workers
6. Skill development to increase income and employment
7. Importance of MGNREGS for rural workers
8. Paper leak and recruitment scam in government sector
 - 8.1 State level paper leak and recruitment scam
 - 8.2 National level paper leak and recruitment scam
9. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 9.1 Political manifestoes and HRD
 - 9.2 HRD and multidimensional poverty
 - 9.3 Job creation and job opportunities in India
 - 9.4 Lower income group and HRD in India
 - 9.5 Higher income group and HRD in India
 - 9.6 Other factors affecting employment in various states of India
 - 9.7 Role of education sector and HRD
 - 9.8 Wastage or utilization of human resource for security and development in border states
 - 9.9 Role of religious places and HRD in India
 - 9.10 Concluding remarks

Section-XVII

STATUS OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Definitions
 - 1.2 Impact of biodiversity loss and climate change
2. Conservation of water and forest to prevent disaster

- 2.1 Present status of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- 2.2 Existing water management and conservation plans
- 2.3 Prevention of pollution in river Ganga etc.
- 2.4 Prevention of forest fire for conservation of forests
- 2.5 Concluding remarks
3. National green tribunal to control illegal mining etc.
 - 3.1 Preview
 - 3.2 Enforcement of laws by National Green Tribunal
 - 3.3 Environmental issues and regulation of mining sector
4. Disaster management in the Himalayan region
 - 4.1 Preview
 - 4.2 Prevention and precaution against natural disaster
 - 4.3 Disaster management related to construction of roads tunnels and bridges
 - 4.4 Disaster due to floods and landslides in the Himalayan region
5. Disaster and pollution free development of urban India
 - 5.1 Present status and future of urban development in India
 - 5.2 Present status and performance of local bodies or municipal corporations
 - 5.3 Status of safety precautions and prevention of fire hazards in urban India
 - 5.4 Status of pollution control waste management and urban development
 - 5.5 Administrative reform within municipal corporations
6. Future shocks due to climate change and global warming
 - 6.1 Introduction
 - 6.2 Global emergency of climate change and progress made so far by COPs
 - 6.3 Climate change and citizen's right
 - 6.4 Impact of climate change in the Indian sub-continent
7. Conclusion and recommendations
 - 7.1 Role of national and international agencies involved in disaster management
 - 7.2 Relevant issues applicable to India for disaster management
 - 7.3 Man-animal conflict resulting into loss of human life
 - 7.4 Prevention of wild forest fire
 - 7.5 Illegal mining resulting into environmental degradation and landslides
 - 7.6 Concluding remarks

Part-F

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Preview of political system and public administration in India
2. Corruption free political governance
 - 2.1 Corruption and criminalization of politics
 - 2.2 Present approach to deal with corruption
 - 2.3 Political governance existing laws and mechanism to prevent corruption
 - 2.4 Electoral reform is the need of the hour
 - 2.5 Importance of free media for healthy functional democracy
 - 2.6 Caste based atrocities and uniform civil code
 - 2.7 Conclusion and recommendations
3. Lessons to be learnt from past history to improve political governance in India
 - 3.1 Importance of rich historical heritage of India
 - 3.2 Dealing with present day world and the neighboring countries
 - 3.3 Unity in diversity is the need of the hour
 - 3.4 Free and fair elections necessary for the survival of the parliamentary democracy
 - 3.5 Increasing role of law and governance in India today
 - 3.6 Autonomy of the states is necessary to strengthen federalism and national unity
 - 3.7 Freedom of expression is necessary for the survival of democracy
4. Present status of economic governance development and corruption in India
 - 4.1 Economist and economic development of India
 - 4.2 Economic survey policies and potential growth rate
 - 4.3 Tax evasion economic offences and black money
 - 4.4 Regulatory lapses and corruption
5. Present status of national data framework policy with or without census report
 - 5.1 Preview
 - 5.2 Public perception about statistics and development
 - 5.3 Why census report is important
 - 5.4 Present status of National Population Register (NPR)
 - 5.5 Natural Resources Data Management System (NRDMS) and statistics

- 5.6 Importance of data collection through census/survey
- 5.7 Conclusion and recommendations
6. The status of existing mechanism to check corruption in public administration
 - 6.1 Vigilance at the level of state and below
 - 6.2 Importance of audit and ATR to check corruption in India
 - 6.3 Administrative action suggested to check corruption in public services
 - 6.4 Analysis and recommendations to strengthen anti- corruption mechanism
7. Review of public administration in India today
8. Changing role of civil administration after independence
 - 8.1 As explained by K. Subramaniam
 - 8.2 An alternative view as explained by Amarjit Sinha
9. Implementation of administrative reform suggested so far
 - 9.1 Civic governance as per National Human Development Report-2001
 - 9.2 Achievement of Shree Atal Bihari Bajpayee government to promote good governance
 - 9.3 Administrative reform undertaken by UPA government to improve efficiency
 - 9.4 Proposals made by former civil servants to improve civic governance in India
 - 9.5 Conclusion
10. Present status of administrative reform to improve delivery of public services in India
 - 10.1 Preview
 - 10.2 Conclusion and recommendations
11. Status of administrative laws and inefficiency in civil services
 - 11.1 Preview
 - 11.2 Source of administrative laws
 - 11.3 Constitutional and administrative laws in India
 - 11.4 Conclusion
12. Status of recruitment training and service rules applicable to civil services
 - 12.1 Status of service rules for civil services
 - 12.2 Status of service rules for group A, B, C, D employees of the government
 - 12.3 Implementation of service rules applicable to all government employees
 - 12.4 Status of recruitment and training of civil servants
 - 12.5 Existing system of examination for civil services in India
13. Status of inefficiency and corruption in civil services
 - 13.1 Preview
 - 13.2 Compilation of data by all states for eradication of corruption in civil services
 - 13.3 Status of corruption cases reported against all category of government employees
 - 13.4 Corruption due to systemic failure of civil administration
 - 13.5 Analysis and recommendations to ensure corruption free public services
14. Redressal of grievances of all government employees
 - 14.1 Preview
 - 14.2 Examples of grievances pertaining to civil servants
 - 14.3 Analysis and recommendations
15. Administrative laws judicial intervention and efficiency of civil services
 - 15.1 Preview with examples
 - 15.2 Judicial intervention for compliance of administrative laws by the executive
 - 15.3 Conclusion and recommendations
16. Training performance report and promotion policies applicable to civil services
 - 16.1 Recruitment and training for civil services
 - 16.2 Performance report of the employees
 - 16.3 Merit based promotions to maintain efficiency
 - 16.4 Assured career progression scheme
 - 16.5 Analysis and recommendations
17. Non-availability of updated rule/regulations to regulate service conditions of government employees
 - 17.1 Acts, rules and regulations applicable to government employees
 - 17.2 Service conditions of government employees and development of rural India
 - 17.3 Office management manpower and personnel management of govt employees
 - 17.4 Analysis and recommendations
18. Status of litigations related to government employees
 - 18.1 Present status of litigations related to govt employees
 - 18.2 Status of pending cases in SC with govt as party
 - 18.3 Conclusion and recommendations based on observations made by SC/HC
 - 18.4 Importance of law and governance in India today
19. Redress of public grievances in the country
 - 19.1 Present status of public grievances redressal system
 - 19.2 Public grievances redressal in the state
 - 19.3 Analysis and recommendations
20. Failure of administrative reform undertaken so far
 - 20.1 Preview
 - 20.2 Analysis and recommendations

21. Present status of planning welfare program/schemes in India
 - 21.1 Introduction
 - 21.2 Present status of government of India welfare schemes
 - 21.3 Implementation mechanism for welfare schemes
 - 21.4 Challenges in implementation of welfare schemes
 - 21.5 Economic growth and welfare of citizens
 - 21.6 Implementation of welfare program with example
 - 21.7 Non-payment of unclaimed insurance claim by insurance companies
 - 21.8 Empowerment of women and security of children
 - 21.9 Welfare of workers in organized/unorganized sector
 - 21.10 Analysis and recommendations
22. Planning and implementation of social welfare program/schemes at national level
 - 22.1 World view on social security and sustainable goals (SDG)
 - 22.2 Present status of social security program in India
 - 22.3 Welfare schemes drawn for women empowerment and child development
 - 22.4 Welfare schemes drawn by Social welfare department
 - 22.5 Welfare schemes for workers in organized/unorganized sector
 - 22.6 Mismanagement of Employees Provident Fund (EPF)
 - 22.7 Analysis and recommendations
23. Implementation of welfare program drawn for community development and protection of human rights
 - 23.1 Preview
 - 23.2 Data compilation for community development at the grass root level
 - 23.3 Welfare schemes and protection of human rights at the grass root level
 - 23.4 Analysis and recommendations
24. Administrative reform to rectify systemic failure in civil administration
 - 24.1 Preview
 - 24.2 Functioning of political and civil executives
 - 24.3 Civil service reform for public administration is unlike corporate management
 - 24.4 Analysis and recommendations
25. Systemic changes required to reduce administrative corruption in India
 - 25.1 Preview
 - 25.2 Examples of administrative corruption cases reported at the grass root level
 - 25.3 Examples of corruption cases involving state administration
 - 25.4 Examples of cases reported involving central government administration
 - 25.5 Corruption cases reported in charitable trusts etc.
 - 25.6 Role of civil society and prevention of administrative corruption in India
26. State government level structural and functional reforms recommended
 - 26.1 Preview
 - 26.2 Performance of few selected states
 - 26.3 State level reform to improve governance for the welfare and development of rural India
 - 26.4 Structural reform for redressal of public grievances
 - 26.5 Structural and functional reform required in all departments of the state
 - 26.6 Importance of employment generation in rural areas to control migration
 - 26.7 Financial management at the level of state
 - 26.8 Review of recommendations made by NHDR-2001
 - 26.9 Importance of annual performance report by each department to ensure corruption free delivery of public services with transparency and accountability
 - 26.10 Decentralization of departmental roles for the welfare of citizens and development of rural India

Part-G

FORMULATION OF ACTION PLAN FRAMEWORK FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO MAKE INDIA CORRUPTION FREE IN 5-10 YEAR TIME

1. Conclusion drawn for formulation of action plan framework
 - 1.1 Background information
 - 1.2 Political governance and administration of justice in India
 - 1.3 Formulation of policy program for making India corruption free
 - 1.4 Importance of statistics for eradication of corruption in India
2. Structural and functional reform of govt departments to improve governance in India
3. Political governance and corruption in India
4. Economic governance development and corruption
5. Civic governance corruption and delivery of public services

6. Status of law enforcement authorities in India
 7. Strengthening of existing legal aid services for protection of human and legal rights in India
 8. Human resource development and disaster management
 9. Public awareness program for making India corruption free progressive and welfare state
 10. AI overview and evaluation of study project report
 11. Clarification on observations made in AI overview
 12. Anti-corruption campaign in China and lessons for India
 - 12.1 Present status of anti-corruption campaign in China
 - 12.2 Power politics in China and lessons for India
 - 12.3 India's plans and policies in nut-shell to deal with internal and external affairs
 13. Recommendations to draw action-plan framework to improve the performance of civil services
 - 13.1 Review of the final outcome of the study project report
 - 13.2 Present status of administrative training institutes
 - 13.3 Conclusion and recommendations
- Annexure-I, II & III Bibliography