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Mission Karmayogi

What It Means for India's Future Civil Servants

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India today stands at an important moment in its development journey. The country has articulated an ambitious national vision of becoming a developed nation by the year 2047, marking one hundred years of independence. Achieving the goals of *Viksit Bharat 2047* will require sustained economic growth, strong institutions, and effective governance across sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, digital economy, and social welfare. At the heart of this transformation lies a crucial question. Do our public institutions and the officials who run them possess the capabilities required to manage the complex challenges of the twenty-first century?

Recognising the central role of competent public officials in national development, the Government of India launched *Mission Karmayogi*, formally known as the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building, in 2020. The initiative represents a systemic effort to strengthen the capabilities of India's public officials to meet the demands of modern governance. For young Indians aspiring to become civil servants, understanding *Mission Karmayogi* offers a valuable insight into how the expectations from future civil servants are changing.

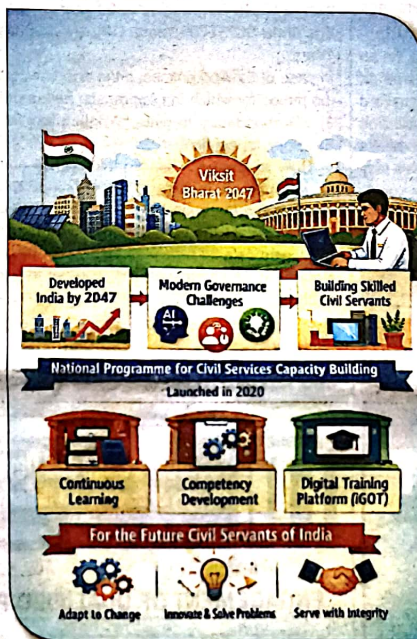
To appreciate the significance of the mission, it is useful to understand the context in which it was introduced. India's administrative system is one of the largest in the world, with lakhs of public officials working across the Union and State Governments and local bodies. These officials are responsible for designing and implementing policies that affect the lives of over 140 crore citizens on a daily basis. At the same time, the nature of governance itself has been undergoing rapid change.

Advances in artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies are transforming how governments design and deliver services. Citizens are increasingly connected and informed, and they expect public services to be transparent, efficient, and responsive. Development challenges are becoming more complex and interconnected. Issues such as climate resilience, digital regulation, urbanisation, and economic competitiveness require coordinated responses across multiple institutions.

For example, India's Aspirational Districts Programme has demonstrated how data driven governance and continuous monitoring can improve development outcomes in districts that were historically underserved. Similarly, the success of Digital Public Infrastructure such as Aadhaar and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has shown how technological innovation can dramatically expand access to public services and financial inclusion. The rollout of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system has also highlighted the importance of administrative capacity in delivering welfare benefits efficiently and reducing leakages.

These examples underline a simple but powerful insight - policies and programmes succeed when public officials possess the skills and tools required to design and implement them effectively. Strengthening the capabilities of civil servants therefore becomes an essential component of governance reform.

Traditionally, civil servants in India received training at the beginning of their careers and through occasional mid-career programmes. While these training initiatives played an important role, they often functioned as isolated events rather than part of a continuous learning



ecosystem. In a rapidly changing policy environment, this approach had significant limitations.

Mission Karmayogi seeks to address this challenge by transforming the way civil servants learn and develop throughout their careers. The mission envisions a shift from episodic training to continuous capacity building, where public officials can update their knowledge and skills regularly as the demands of governance evolve.

A key feature of this reform is the introduction of a competency-based capacity building framework. In simple terms, competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required for performing a particular role effectively. Instead of offering generic training programmes, the new approach identifies the specific competencies required for different roles in government and aligns learning opportunities accordingly.

Under this framework, competencies are broadly categorised into three groups:

- **Domain competencies** relate to expertise in specific sectors such as finance, agriculture, health, or infrastructure.
- **Functional competencies** refer to administrative abilities such as project management, policy analysis, or financial management.
- **Behavioural competencies** include leadership, communication, ethical conduct, and the ability to work collaboratively.

This shift reflects a deeper change in how the role of civil servants is understood. In earlier decades, public administration often focused on regulatory oversight and procedural compliance. Today, civil servants are expected to function as problem solvers, policy designers, and facilitators of development. They must interpret data, engage with stakeholders, coordinate across departments, and adapt quickly to emerging challenges.

Consider the example of the Swachh Bharat Mission, where large scale behavioural change campaigns and community participation played a major role in improving sanitation outcomes. Similarly, initiatives such as CoWIN during the COVID-19 vaccination drive required public officials to combine technological systems, logistical planning, and citizen engagement at an unprecedented scale. Such experiences highlight how modern governance increasingly requires analytical thinking, technological literacy, ethical decision making, and effective communication.

Mission Karmayogi aims to nurture these competencies among civil servants through a structured and continuous learning ecosystem. One of the most important innovations introduced under the mission is the *iGOTKarmayogi* digital platform.

iGOT, which stands for Integrated Government Online Training, serves as a digital learning platform for public officials across India. The platform hosts courses, learning modules, and knowledge resources developed by training institutions, universities, and subject experts. Civil servants can access these resources online and pursue learning opportunities that are relevant to their current roles and future responsibilities. The platform makes learning more flexible and accessible. Instead of relying

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only on classroom-based training programmes, officials can engage with learning materials whenever required. So far, over 1.5 crore public officials have already been onboarded on *iGOT* and it has witnessed over 8 crore course completions across over 4500 competency-linked courses. Over time, *iGOT* will become the backbone for a culture of continuous professional development within the civil services.

Mission Karmayogi is also supported by an institutional framework designed to guide and implement the reform. The Capacity Building Commission plays a key role in driving the competency-based approach, coordinating with central Ministries, Departments and States, and strengthening the overall capacity building ecosystem of the government. The digital infrastructure, including the *iGOTKarmayogi* platform, is managed by *Karmayogi Bharat*, which operates and expands the learning ecosystem for public officials.

Together with civil service training institutions and departmental capacity building units, these institutions form an integrated system aimed at supporting the professional development of civil servants across their careers.

For future civil servants, *Mission Karmayogi* is an important topic to understand not only because it

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