

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:255
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2001
EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF BUREAUCRACY
MANSUKHBHAID. VASAVA

Will the Minister of PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister emphasized the need to make changes in the working of the bureaucracy during the meeting with Administrative Officers and Secretaries; and

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Government to make the bureaucracy more responsible and public oriented?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS. (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a)&(b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) & (b) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No. 255 FOR ANSWER ON 8 AUGUST, 2001.

(a)&(b): No, Sir. The Prime Minister did not address any such meeting of Administrative Officers and Secretaries. However, the Government have taken several steps in the recent past to improve the accountability and efficiency of the bureaucracy as also the quality of the public service delivery. Some of these steps are listed as follows:

(i) The Government have taken up simplification of laws, rules and procedures to improve efficiency. The Government had set up a Commission on Review of Administrative Laws in May, 1998 to make recommendations for repeal/amendment of laws to improve service delivery and transparency in the functioning of the Government. The Commission submitted its report in September, 1998. Important recommendations of the Commission include repeal of almost 50% of Central Laws (1382 out of 2500), documentation of Administrative Laws by all Ministries/Departments etc. Most of the Ministries have initiated action to bring about suitable amendments/modifications in or repeal of Administrative Acts and Laws being administered by them. 33 Acts, including three Ordinances, have been repealed so far.

(ii) A large number of Ministries/Departments/Organisations with considerable public interface have introduced Citizen's Charters indicating broadly the quality of service the people would be entitled to within a specified time-frame. So far, 68 Citizen's Charters have been formulated by various Ministries/Departments etc. Information & Facilitation or Help Counters have been set up by 71 Ministries/Departments/Central Government organisations to provide information on procedures, programmes and schemes of the concerned organisations as well as to access information pertaining to the status of individual cases.

(iii) A High Powered Committee has been set up with the specific objective of improving administrative efficiency by using Information Technology in Government. Action has been taken, inter alia, to designate a Joint Secretary level officer as IT Manager in every Ministry/Department. 72 IT Managers have so far been appointed/nominated in various Ministries/Departments. The Ministries/Departments have been asked to implement a Minimum Agenda for e-Governance which includes setting up of LAN, 100% training to all staff who have access to computers, setting up of Learning centers for decentralised training in computers, institution of websites etc.

(iv) The Freedom of Information Bill, 2000 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 25, 2000.

(v) Steps have also been taken in the recent past to make the vigilance machinery more effective. These include strengthening the institution of Central Vigilance Commission.

2. The Department of Personnel & Training organizes regular programmes for training of the officers of the Government of India and State Governments as also the Public Sector Undertakings with a view to upgrade their knowledge and skills.