

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 25.4.2013 addressed by **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Dr. Manmohan Singh**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is reproduced below:

"I am writing to you in the light of a letter received from the Union Public Service Commission indicating that the Government of India has approved "in principle" the change in method of induction of State Service Officers into the All India Services and calling for a meeting to finalize the syllabus for the Common Written Examination on 26th April, 2013. It is indeed surprising that, on a matter of great import which can impact Centre-State administrative relations such as the mode of recruitment into the All India Services, there is no formal communication to the States from the Ministry of Personnel, which functions directly under you. We have to learn that an "in principle" decision has been taken, from the UPSC ex post facto, and ostensibly for the purpose of endorsing and operationalising the unilateral decision. I understand that the Second Administrative Reforms Commission had recommended such a common examination for induction of State Civil Service and other officers into the All India Services.

The Indian Administrative Service Recruitment Rules, 1954, provide for recruitment into the Service by three methods, namely, by a competitive examination as the primary method; through the promotion of members of State Civil Services; and by selection, from the holders of gazetted posts in the State Government. In the case of the Indian Police Service and Indian Forest Service, apart from the open competitive examination, recruitment is permitted by promotion from the State Police and Forest Services. All the three rules accord an important role to the State Government in the process of recruitment by promotion or selection. In our view, these methods of recruitment have served the Country and the State of Tamil Nadu well over the past several decades.

The prospect of promotion and selection to the All India Services based on performance in the State Services has served as a powerful incentive to such officers to perform effectively in their jobs and to serve the State and its people. Further, the members of the State Services are selected through a rigorous and highly competitive examination conducted by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission. They have also been selected on the basis of the state specific reservation policy, the sanctity of which is also preserved when they are inducted into the All India Services.

In this context, Tamil Nadu strongly opposes the short-sighted recommendation of the second Administrative Reforms Commission to have a common competitive examination conducted by the Union Public

Service Commission for the induction of State Service officers into the All India Services. An open competitive examination is an appropriate method of recruitment of officers from a large pool of talent whose abilities require to be tested. In a situation where the pool of talent is relatively small and whose administrative capabilities are already known to the State Government through periodic Performance Appraisal Reports (PARs), conducting a common examination is an irrational and pointless mechanism. In fact, it would only demotivate State Service officers and would also result in these officers focusing more on examination preparation rather than on performing their official duties, besides devaluing the experience in service such officers have gained in State Service. **Such a mode of recruitment would also upset the existing administrative seniority and hierarchy and the state specific reservation pattern.**

The ARC has also recommended that the age limit for eligibility for induction into the All India Services may be reduced from 54 years to 40 years. This is a retrograde recommendation which will badly undermine the aspirations of officers who have served the State with dedication in the expectation of promotion or selection to the All India Services. The Government of Tamil Nadu strongly reiterates that the age limit for induction into the All India Services by promotion/ selection should be retained as it is.

This is yet another example of the Central Government trying to unilaterally overturn a good working arrangement that is time-tested and effective in which State Governments have been given a significant role and is usurping that role through the back door. This has to be viewed only as a sinister design to undermine the federal nature of our polity.

If the intention is to address the lack of uniformity in the quality of inductees into the All India Services from the State Services in other parts of the country, rather than adopting such a ham-handed, one-size-fits-all approach of a common examination, the experience of States like Tamil Nadu, where the current system has functioned well should have been studied and measures taken to improve the state-specific process of recruitment, performance appraisal and training of civil servants.

Hence, I strongly oppose these ill considered half-baked reforms and urge you to reconsider the so-called "in principle" approval accorded to the change in the method of recruitment. The existing pattern of induction into the All India Services should be retained, and the Union Public Service Commission may be directed not to proceed further with the preparatory work for such a common examination."

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