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**Public Grievances Redressal**

Introduction of a new administrative paradigm in disposal of public grievances is necessary so that redressal of grievances is dealt at various levels with effort to analyze the causes of grievances and formulate systemic solutions of lasting nature. The institutional dimensions of a systematic and holistic arrangement calls for a Reforms Ombudsman with administrative powers so that the factors causing grievances are reasonably eliminated through streamlining of policies and systems. Grievances of recurring nature arise due to following reasons:

- (i) Faulty policies, procedures
- (ii) Lack of delegation of powers
- (iii) Lack of citizens' awareness
- (iv) Lack of a regular mechanism to invent lasting solutions
- (v) Grey areas owned by none and lack of enabling powers
- (vi) Lack of a proper mechanism to fix individual's accountability

The focus on redressal of grievances and administrative reforms has to be institutionalized at three levels, namely (i) administrative level in the government; (ii) departmental level; and (iii) district level. While the problematic issues of generic nature need to be studied at government level so that the solutions are applied with mutatis-mutandis changes across the various departments, the complaints which are typically departmental in nature should be sorted out by introducing appropriate changes at the departmental level. At the district level, it is necessary to improve the district level redressal mechanism by sharing and adopting the best practices.

Training programmes need to be launched in a big way so that all employees are motivated to contribute to the solution-finding process and empathize with the suffering people. This will greatly help in eliminating administrative deficiencies and acts of negligence. Developing a suitable grievance redressal mechanism should find priority with all government departments, particularly those have a direct public interface.

Priority for grievances redressal has already been dovetailed by the Institute in the Results Framework Document prepared for District Administration, and it also needs to be incorporated simultaneously in the RFD of Departments as well. Linking of grievances redressal to administrative reform and training is the best way of achieving excellence in public administration.

There should be a law – Public Grievances Redressal and System Reforms Act to examine the etiology of the recurrent grievances and suggest suitable policy and procedural reforms to eliminate such causes of grievances. The law will also confer powers to award relief to the aggrieved persons and impose fine for gross negligence on the defaulting employees.

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