



EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION — KEY ELEMENT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Whether it were the kings of ancient times or the sovereign nations working within the framework laid down by the constitution in the present times, the system of governance is considered to be a necessary and essential element to govern the state. The basic duties of the administrative system are to implement the policies of the government within the framework of laws and regulations. In general, the administrative system has a hierarchy and the functions and duties of everyone working in this hierarchy are assigned. The people working in this system are working on terms and conditions of service and there is uniformity in their work. In general, we see a straight slope from class one to class four in the administrative system. This slope is like a pyramid. The success of the government and the overall development process depends on how efficiently and effectively the administration implements its policies, plans and programmes.

Efficiency is a term associated with work, which refers to the maximum number of goals or objectives achieved in a given time. It is not difficult to measure this efficiency in a private company that makes plastic molds for cars. This is because the efficiency of the labor supervisor and the manager can be ascertained immediately from the target set for making the mold and the finished plastic mold. This is true in the case of goods as well as in case of services. If fifty life insurance policies were sold by one agent in one month, it would be possible to measure efficiency there as well. But measuring every task and duty performed in an administrative system is complex and intricate. Also, it is not always possible to check the efficiency of every operation. For example, law and order, protocol, seniors' visits, disaster operations, inter department coordination, advice and guidance, providing various types of information, meetings, etc.

Officers who work well and fast have to deal with depression after a while, the officers and employees who are on duty are frustrated, the citizens get angry at the administration for not doing their work on time and the overall image of the administration is tarnished. Since the issue of checking performance from time to time and reviewing it is not so popular in the administration, seniors do not prefer this way and even juniors do not insist on it. Just as the freight train travels slowly, so it travels at its own pace and in its own way. New appointments, promotions and retirements are a timely and ongoing process in the administration. A new venture is being implemented somewhere. It is copied, applauded, and after a few days, the activity expires.

Governments are always striving to increase the efficiency of the administration. Various government decisions and circulars are issued accordingly. However, once such circulars are issued, the implementation of those circulars is seldom reviewed. So the administrative system does not move as per the requirement and up to set standards.

Training is also an important part of increasing efficiency. Training is expected to enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes. State Training Policy and Training Programmes are implemented accordingly. However, the training needs of officers and staff are not analyzed. Most of time it is seen that training is required for one and given to another. Since the training is done only vertically to increase the overall efficiency, it does not percolate to the extent that it is at present. Efficiency should be enhanced through "training proficiency". If the training needs assessment of any officer and staff, it could be done on the basis of artificial intelligence, then there will be no bias in the selection of officers and staff for training. If the right staff is trained by the right trainer, at the right time, efficiency and effectiveness will definitely increase.

Efficiency in administration is related to performance but effectiveness is related to proper change brought about by efficient service delivery. Although the number of days after the application of Social Assistance Scheme is approved by the beneficiary related to efficiency, the effectiveness depends on the extent to which the monthly honorarium changes the standard of living or meeting the needs of the beneficiary on time. Of course, efficiency and effectiveness are mutually exclusive. Effectiveness can be measured by the extent to which it is achieved through efficient work or service. But it seems that we are generally focusing on measuring efficiency. It is not possible to see how much effectiveness has been achieved. In real good governance, the administration is expected to focus on efficiency as well as effectiveness for inclusive growth and progress.

Efficiency also depends on the availability of resources. Resources include staff, funding, materials, knowledge, skills, experience, leadership and vision. The combined effect of these eight factors is efficiency. Although training is a key factor in enhancing administrative efficiency, interpersonal relationships, teamwork and leadership skills are very important. If we measure the efficiency of one and the combined efficiency on the basis of the measurement bar, then of course mutual cooperation and coordination makes the combined



efficiency right. Therefore, proper planning of work, proper division of work and decentralization of authority are important in terms of administrative efficiency.

In order to increase the administrative efficiency, the visitor's work should be done in maximum of three office visits. First visit for submission of application, second visit for discussion on application or hearing and third visit for decision. Citizens have a reasonable expectation that the administration will decide on their application, whether they are positive or negative. However, if government officers lack knowledge, skills and experience, decisions are not made quickly and administrative efficiency is drastically reduced. If you do not take decisions early, it is a waste of time for the citizen and on the contrary, the entire administrative system gets entangled in many such tasks.

If you want to be careful that the same visitors do not come to the office frequently, it is a good option to keep an entry register at the entrance. But it is not that much popular in administrative offices located at rural areas. The head of the office has to be vigilant to ensure that the people under him do the work of the citizens effortlessly and quickly. Administration as a whole is a collective term that includes everyone from the peon to the officer in that office. Of course, not everyone's responsibility or accountability can be avoided, and if it is avoided, it creates a defect of objectivity.

The Compilation Register and the Worksheet are two important records for enhancing administrative efficiency. If the head of the office reconciles the total correspondence received in the previous week and the records of each branch, the pending correspondence can come out immediately. In addition, it is important to review at least three hours a month at the branch employee's table, not just by coordination. Office head comes to the table and checks the record this can be an important factor to increase efficiency.

Too often we insist that employees should not take leave and come to the office on time to work late so that efficient administration can take place. Although this is true to some extent, I will not confirm it. By focusing on the actual assigned tasks and the speed with which they are completed, the officers maintain flexibility in the work so that the employees start working with double enthusiasm and also increase their efficiency.

Another important thing to increase efficiency is the praise, appreciation and encouragement you get from employers. Man is hungry for praise; and admiration. As a result, if you compliment them on the right work at the right time, the speed of work will definitely surge and efficiency will thereby increase further.

Maintain a good atmosphere and cleanliness in your office. Administrative efficiency also means that the meeting facilities of the employees are neat, there is cupboard for them to keep their files, there are meeting arrangements for lunch, there are clean sanitary facilities, there is tree planting and gardening in the premises, there is no garbage in the office premises.

The head of the office needs to pay special attention to this. Awareness among the officers-staff as well as the citizens about the provisions of the Right to Information Act and the Right to Service Act as a whole has helped in enhancing the administrative efficiency. But what is needed is a stage of administrative efficiency. We are still a long way from that. Therefore, we need to increase the efficiency of our administration by embracing the available resources and some innovations. All it takes is a strong will and a positive attitude. Efficient governance should not be imposed on anyone, but leadership skills, team building and accountability to the citizens will make the administration strong and efficient.

AUTHOR



Raju Sitaram Nandkar

(The Author is Deputy Collector, Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra.)