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Q9

The ethos of civil service in India stand for the combination of professionalism with nationalistic consciousness - Elucidate.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS I · 10 marks · World's Physical Geography

Salient features of world's physical geography.

Core demand of the question

- State professionalism as competence, neutrality and procedure
- State nationalistic consciousness as loyalty to the Constitution and the republic, not to a faction
- Elucidate how the two are supposed to combine in the Indian civil service, with strain from politicisation

Revision summary

Professionalism in the service means competence, procedure and political neutrality in the file.

Nationalistic consciousness means the constitutional oath, not loyalty to a faction or a crowd.

Patel's all-India services were meant to hold both together after 1947.

Punishment postings and partisan pressure tear the combination.

The district is where the ethos is proved, in flood, poll and the speaking order.

Introduction

- **The Indian civil service was built to be a steel frame:** people who could run a district by the book. The independence movement then asked those same people to feel the **nation**, not only the file. The ethos in the question is that combination. Professionalism without country becomes a clever clerk for whoever sits in the chair. Nationalism without profession becomes a slogan that breaks the law.

Body

Professionalism

Professionalism means **knowing the Act**, writing a speaking order, staying within the **GFR**, and treating the citizen of the other party as a citizen. It is the **Sardar Patel bargain after 1947: keep an all-India service that is competent and, as far as flesh allows, politically neutral**. Training at Mussoorie, the idea of a **permanent executive**, and the **Conduct Rules** all speak that language. A professional officer can disagree in the file and still implement a lawful decision.

Nationalistic consciousness

Nationalistic consciousness, in a constitutional republic, is not ethnic chest-thumping. It is loyalty to **unity, integrity and the Constitution** - the oath the officer actually takes. It is the

ICS man who stayed after 1947 and the young recruit who still goes to a famine or a flood because the **state must show up**. It is also **linguistic and regional fairness**: the service is all-India so that a Tamil officer can serve in Assam as a trustee of one country.

The combination, and the strain

The ethos stands for **both at once**. Patel wanted national purpose **inside** a professional cadre, not a spoils system. **Mission Karmayogi** today talks of competence; the older language talked of **service**. Strain is obvious. Frequent **punishment postings**, a demand for **pliable notes**, and social-media nationalism that wants the officer to be a party worker all pull the two halves apart. Exam leaks wound the professional half. Communal conduct wounds the national half.

To elucidate the quote is to say that the Indian service was never meant to be a colonial machine with the Union Jack swapped for the tricolour, nor a revolutionary cadre that skips procedure. It was meant to be **skill plus a public creed**. When either half dies, the district notices first.

Flow diagram

Civil service ethos -> Professionalism
Civil service ethos -> Nationalistic consciousness
Professionalism -> GFR file neutrality
Nationalistic consciousness -> Constitutional unity
Faction posting leak -> Civil service ethos

Conclusion

Professionalism is lawful competence and neutrality. Nationalistic consciousness is loyalty to the constitutional nation. The Indian civil service ethos is their union. Politicisation and sloppiness are how that union is lost.

Facts & figures

Patel on the steel frame

Sardar Patel defended an all-India professional service as necessary to hold the new republic together.

Conduct Rules

Service rules that demand political neutrality and forbid using office for party or private gain.

Mission Karmayogi

A recent capacity-building programme that restates professionalism as competency, not only seniority.