

100 Years of UPSC

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100 Years of UPSC : Building India's Administrative Backbone

Context:

The **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** will celebrate its **centenary year** from **1 October 2025 to 1 October 2026**, marking **100 years of transparent and merit-based recruitment** for India's civil services. This milestone highlights the institution's enduring role in building a **competent, impartial, and ethical administrative system** for the nation.

Introduction

The **UPSC** is India's premier **constitutional authority** for recruiting top-level officers through a **fair, competitive, and transparent examination process**.

It was **established on 1 October 1926** based on the recommendations of the **Lee Commission (1924)** and the provisions of the **Government of India Act, 1919**.

Its primary mission is to ensure **meritocracy** and maintain the **highest standards of integrity and competence** in public administration.

Objectives

- Ensure **fairness and equality of opportunity** in recruitment.
 - Select candidates through **rigorous examinations and interviews**.
 - Uphold **transparency and impartiality** in the selection process.
 - Maintain a **highly professional and ethical civil service**.
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Historical Evolution of Civil Services in India

Pre-1854 - Patronage System

- Civil servants of the **East India Company** were nominated and trained at **Haileybury College (London)**.
- No competitive examination system existed.

1854 - Macaulay Reforms

- Introduced **competitive examinations** for the **Indian Civil Service (ICS)**.
- Exams held in **London** from 1855.
- **First Indian to qualify:** *Satyendranath Tagore* (1864).

1922 - Exams in India

- Civil Service examinations began in **Allahabad** and later in **Delhi**.
- London examinations continued alongside Indian centres.

1926 - Establishment of the Public Service Commission

- **First Chairman:** *Sir Ross Barker*.
- Initially comprised **four members and a chairman**.
- Functioned under the **Public Service Commission (Functions) Rules, 1926**.

1937 - Federal Public Service Commission

- Created under the **Government of India Act, 1935** for the Federation of India.

1950 - Union Public Service Commission

- Came into existence with the **Constitution of India**.
- Powers and functions defined in **Articles 315-323**.

Conclusion

The UPSC has been a cornerstone of India's administrative framework for a century, ensuring that **competence, merit, and ethical conduct** remain central to public service. Its evolution mirrors the transformation of governance in India, from colonial administration to a **democratic, accountable, and professional civil service system**.



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