

Sarkaria Commission

Various committees and commissions are important for the UPSC IAS exam. They are an important part of the UPSC Syllabus for Indian polity and governance. The Sarkaria Commission has given important recommendations for centre-state relations. In this article, you can learn all about the Sarkaria Commission and its recommendations for the [UPSC exam](#).

Sarkaria Commission – Background

- The clash of interest between the centre and the states has been prevalent for a long span of time.
- This causes a lot of disturbances in the functioning of the democratic machinery.
- With the progress of time, the country has witnessed several social, economic and political developments with emerging tensions and issues.
- Consensus and Cooperation are key elements for the smooth functioning of the Centre and the States.
- In this context, the Parliament proposed to appoint a commission in 1983 under the chairmanship of R.S. Sarkaria who was a retired judge of the Supreme Court.
- The commission was constituted under the notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs in June 1983.
- Shri B. Sivaraman and Dr. S. R. Sen were appointed members of the commission.
- The commission was entrusted to scrutinise and assess the working of existing arrangements between the Union and States pertaining to powers, functions and responsibilities in all spheres and suggest reforms for the better coordination between the centre and states.

Sarkaria Commission Report

- The commission's report consists of two parts with the first part containing the main report and the second part comprising the memoranda provided by the state governments and political parties.
- The inter-governmental relations in the sphere of legislations and administrations have been covered in the report.
- The report highlighted the necessity to establish a standing [Inter-State Council](#) under Article 263 with an objective to ensure better inter-governmental coordination.
- The report includes 247 specific recommendations spread across 19 chapters.

AREAS COVERED UNDER SARKARIA COMMISSION

- Role of Governor
- Emergency Provisions
- Deployment of Union armed forces in a state
- Reservation of state bills for consideration of the President
- All-India Services
- Financial Relations
- Economic and Social Planning
- National Economic and Development Council



Sarkaria Commission Recommendations

The chief recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission are mentioned in this section:

- The Commission recommended the appointment of individuals with considerable years of experience in public service and who have non-partisan attitudes.
- The states must be empowered to look into the development of the people and effective implementation of the welfare schemes.
- It supported the idea of cooperative federalism and put forth an observation that federalism is more a functional arrangement for cooperative action, than a static institutional concept.
- The state governments should be equipped with sufficient financial resources to reduce their dependency on the central government.
- A permanent Inter-State council must be set up to resolve any issue of dispute among the states.
- It suggested the empowerment of All-India Services.
- In matters related to state bills, the states must be communicated while they are vetoed by the President.
- The commission advocates a consultative process between the centre and states whenever there is a necessity to deploy the armed forces in the states.
- It also recommended that the residuary powers to formulate laws in matters related to taxation must remain with the Parliament. Other than the matters of taxation, the residuary field must be categorised under the concurrent list.
- According to the report, the President's rule under Article 356 shall be imposed only under extreme circumstances as a measure of last resort and when it becomes absolutely essential to avert the breakdown of constitutional machinery in the state.

Recommendations with respect to Appointment of the Governor:

- There should be a procedure of consulting the Chief Minister of the State, the Vice-President of India and the Speaker of Lok Sabha in the process of appointing a Governor.
- The State governments must be involved in the appointment of the governor with the formation of panels.
- Governors must be allowed to complete five years of their term in the office.
- The individual is required to be an eminent person.
- It is recommended that an individual appointed as the Governor must be from outside the state of appointment.
- A detached person who has never indulged in active or local politics will be eligible for the post of governor.
- The governor, after demitting the office, shall not be considered eligible for any other appointment or Office of Profit under the government.
- Post-retirement benefits must be ensured to the person who held the position of governor.

Maharashtra: A Case Study

- In 2019, the Maharashtra governor requested for the revocation of the President's rule followed by the administration of oath by the Chief Minister as no political party was in a position to form the government.
- This act invited huge criticism and was declared unconstitutional.
- In accordance with the Sarkaria Commission report on Centre-State relations, it was asserted that the governor, while going through the process of appointment of the Chief Minister, should select a leader who is most likely to command a majority in the assembly.

The Emerging Significance of Sarkaria Commission

- The Sarkaria Commission often gathers prominence whenever the office of the governor is called into question because of several political instabilities dominant within the states.
- In many instances, the Supreme Court has upheld the recommendations of the Commission and emphasised the urgent functioning of those recommendations to restore harmony between the Centre and State.
- With the recent tension in the states of Maharashtra (that experienced the unusual dissolution of the government), West Bengal and Karnataka, the credibility of the office of Governor has been questioned.
- Many experts believe that the country is in dire need to reform the governor's office by bringing into force the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission.
- The Sarkaria Commission report has proven to be a futuristic document that can be applied in many instances that took an attempt to disturb the federalism of the country.
- Therefore, the report of this commission is spelt out often to prevent the highhandedness of the centre over the doctrine of federalism. It remains a document of enormous essence to safeguard the democratic principles of this country and awaits its effective implementation.