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Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions

Union Cabinet approves setting up of National Recruitment Agency

Common Eligibility Test to replace multiple examinations for recruitment to Central Government Jobs

Examination to be held in 12 Indian languages

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Union Cabinet : New Delhi | 19 August 2020

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi today approved the proposal to set up the **National Recruitment Agency (NRA)**, marking a paradigm shift in government recruitment.

At present, candidates seeking government jobs have to appear for separate examinations conducted by multiple recruiting agencies for various posts. Candidates have to pay fee to multiple recruiting agencies and also have to travel long distances for appearing in various exams.

Approximately 1.25 lakh government jobs are advertised every year for which 2.5 crore aspirants appear in various examinations. A common eligibility Test would enable these candidates to appear once and apply to any or all of these recruitment agencies for the higher level of examination.

The NRA will conduct the Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to non-gazetted posts in government and public sector banks. This test aims to replace multiple examinations conducted by different recruiting agencies for selection to government jobs advertised each year, with single online test.

Salient features.

- The Common Eligibility Test will be held **twice a year**.
- There will be different CETs for graduate level, 12th Pass level and 10th pass level to facilitate recruitment to vacancies at various levels.
- The CET will be conducted in **12 major Indian languages**. This is a major change, as hitherto examinations for recruitment to Central Government jobs were held only in English and Hindi.

- To begin with CET will cover recruitments made by three agencies : viz. Staff Selection Commission, Railway Recruitment Board and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection. This will be expanded in a phased manner.
- CET will be held in 1,000 centres across India in a to bid remove the currently prevalent urban bias. There will be an examination centre in every district of the country. There will be a special thrust on creating examination infrastructure in the 117 aspirational districts.
- CET will be a first level test to shortlist candidates and the score will be **valid for three years**.
- There shall be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate to appear in the CET subject to the upper age limit. Age relaxation for SC/ST and OBC candidates as per existing rules will apply.

Advantages for students

- Removes the hassle of appearing in multiple examinations.
- Single examination fee would reduce financial burden that multiple exams imposed.
- Since exams will be held in every district, it would substantially save travel and lodging cost for the candidates. Examination in their own district would encourage more and more women candidates also to apply for government jobs.
- Applicants are required to register on a single Registration portal.
- No need to worry about clashing of examination dates.

Advantages for Institutions

- Removes the hassle of conducting preliminary / screening test of candidates.
- Drastically reduces the recruitment cycle.
- Brings standardization in examination pattern.
- Reduces costs for different recruiting agencies. Rs 600 crore savings expected.

The Government also plans to provide outreach and awareness facility to assist candidates in rural and far flung areas to familiarize them with the online examination system. 24x7 helpline will be set up for answering queries, complaints and queries.

National Recruitment Agency will be a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act. It will be headed by a Chairman of the rank of the Secretary to the Government of India. It will have representatives of Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance/Department of Financial Services, the SSC, RRB & IBPS. The Government has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1517.57 crore for the National Recruitment Agency (NRA). The expenditure will be undertaken over a period of three years. It is envisioned that the NRA would be a specialist body bringing the state-of-the-art technology and best practices to the field of Central Government recruitment.

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