

Chapter Four

EXECUTIVE

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What is an Executive?

An executive is one of the three primary branches of government in a democratic system, alongside the legislative and judicial branches. The executive branch is responsible for implementing and enforcing the laws, policies, and decisions made by the legislative branch. It is a crucial component of the government's functioning and plays a pivotal role in the governance of a country. Here are some key points about the executive branch:

1. **Head of State and Government:** In many democratic countries, the executive branch consists of two key roles: the head of state and the head of government. The head of state represents the country symbolically and

ceremonially, while the head of government is responsible for the day-to-day administration and policy-making.

2. **Leadership:** The executive branch is typically led by the President, Prime Minister, or a similar title, depending on the country's specific political system. This leader is usually elected by the people or appointed by a legislative body.
3. **Cabinet:** The executive branch includes a team of government ministers or secretaries who head various ministries or departments. They are responsible for specific areas of government, such as finance, defense, education, and healthcare.
4. **Implementation of Laws:** The executive branch is tasked with executing and enforcing the laws passed by the legislative branch (parliament or congress). This includes the day-to-day administration of government services, law enforcement, and the regulation of various sectors.
5. **Policy Formulation:** The executive branch is often involved in the formulation of policies and the preparation of budgets, which are then presented to the legislative branch for approval.
6. **Foreign Affairs:** The executive branch is responsible for managing a country's relations with other nations. This includes diplomacy, international treaties, and foreign policy decisions.
7. **Emergency Powers:** In times of crisis or emergency, the executive branch may be granted additional powers to respond swiftly and effectively to the

situation. However, these powers are typically subject to checks and balances to prevent abuse.

8. **Accountability:** In a democratic system, the executive branch is accountable to the legislature and, ultimately, to the citizens. It must regularly report on its activities and decisions and can be subjected to scrutiny and oversight by the legislative branch.
9. **Separation of Powers:** The executive branch operates alongside the legislative and judicial branches, each with its distinct roles and responsibilities. The separation of powers ensures a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful.

Here are some different types of executives found in different countries:

Presidential Executive:

- In a presidential system, the executive branch is led by a President who is both the head of state and the head of government.
- The President is typically elected independently of the legislature and serves a fixed term.
- The President has significant powers, including the authority to veto legislation, appoint government officials, and conduct foreign affairs.

Parliamentary Executive:

- In a parliamentary system, the executive branch is headed by a Prime Minister who is the head of government.
- The Prime Minister is usually the leader of the majority party or coalition in the legislature (parliament).
- The executive's legitimacy is derived from the support of the legislature, and the Prime Minister can be removed through a vote of no confidence.

Monarchic Executive:

- In constitutional monarchies, the executive branch includes a monarch (king or queen) who serves as the symbolic head of state.
- The real political power is vested in an elected or appointed head of government, such as a Prime Minister or Chancellor.
- The monarch's role is largely ceremonial, and governance is carried out by elected representatives.

Collective Executive:

- Some countries have a collective or collegial executive, where power is shared among multiple individuals or a council.
- For example, in Switzerland, the Federal Council consists of seven members who jointly serve as the executive.

- Decisions are made collectively, and no single member holds significantly more power than the others.

Single-Party Executive:

- In some authoritarian or one-party states, the executive is controlled by a single political party or a dominant ruling party.
- The leader of the party, often with the title of President or Chairman, holds significant power and authority.
- Elections may be limited in competitiveness, and opposition parties may have limited influence.

Federal Executive:

- In federal systems, such as the United States and India, there is an executive branch at both the national (federal) level and the state or regional level.
- The national executive oversees federal matters, while state executives manage state-level affairs.
- Federal executives may have specific powers, such as defense and foreign affairs, while state executives handle matters like education and healthcare.

Here's a short overview of the semi-presidential executive system in Sri Lanka:

1. President:

- The President of Sri Lanka is the ceremonial head of state and is elected directly by the people.
- The President's role is largely symbolic, and they represent the unity and sovereignty of the nation.
- While the President has certain constitutional powers, they primarily exercise these powers on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

2. Prime Minister:

- The Prime Minister is the head of government and is appointed by the President.
- The Prime Minister is typically the leader of the majority party or coalition in the Parliament.
- Unlike the President, the Prime Minister plays a more active role in the day-to-day administration of the country, including policy formulation and governance.

3. Cabinet:

- The Cabinet is composed of ministers appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister.
- Cabinet ministers are responsible for overseeing various government ministries and departments, each dealing with specific policy areas, such as finance, defense, health, and education.

- The Cabinet collectively makes decisions on major policy matters and government actions.

4. Executive Powers:

- While the President has certain executive powers, including appointing the Prime Minister and dissolving Parliament, these powers are often exercised based on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.
- The Prime Minister and the Cabinet have more significant authority in day-to-day governance and policy implementation.

5. Parliament:

- Sri Lanka's Parliament is a unicameral legislature known as the Parliament of Sri Lanka (or the National State Assembly).
- It consists of Members of Parliament (MPs) who are elected by the people.
- The Parliament plays a critical role in the semi-presidential system by forming the government through majority support for the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

6. Balance of Powers:

- Sri Lanka's semi-presidential system is designed to strike a balance between the ceremonial role of the President and the active governance role of the Prime Minister.
- This system is aimed at ensuring both stability and accountability in the country's governance.

Parliamentary Executive in India

India follows a parliamentary system of government where the executive branch is closely tied to the legislative branch, reflecting the principles of parliamentary democracy.

Here's a short overview of the parliamentary executive in India:

1. Prime Minister:

- The Prime Minister is the head of government and holds the highest executive office in India.
- The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party or coalition in the Lok Sabha (House of the People), the lower house of India's Parliament.
- The President of India appoints the Prime Minister, who is usually the leader of the political party or coalition that commands the confidence of the Lok Sabha.

2. Council of Ministers:

- The Prime Minister appoints members of the Council of Ministers, including Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State, to assist in the administration of the country.
- Each minister is responsible for a specific government department or ministry, such as finance, defense, health, or education.

3. Collective Responsibility:

- The Council of Ministers collectively bears responsibility for all government policies and decisions.
- If the government loses the support or confidence of the Lok Sabha, the entire Council of Ministers must resign, leading to a potential change in government.

4. Lok Sabha (House of the People):

- The Lok Sabha is the lower house of India's Parliament and consists of Members of Parliament (MPs) who are elected by the people in general elections.
- The Lok Sabha plays a central role in the parliamentary system as it forms the government by giving its majority support to the party or coalition led by the Prime Minister.

5. Rajya Sabha (Council of States):

- The Rajya Sabha is the upper house of Parliament, and its members are not directly elected by the people but are chosen by the elected members of State Legislative Assemblies.
- While the Rajya Sabha can revise and scrutinize legislation, it does not have the same role in government formation as the Lok Sabha.

6. Collective Decision-Making:

- Major policy decisions and legislative initiatives are made collectively by the Council of Ministers.

- Cabinet meetings serve as forums for discussing and deciding on crucial matters.

7. No Fixed Tenure:

- The tenure of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers is not fixed and depends on maintaining the confidence of the Lok Sabha.
- They can be removed through a vote of no confidence or by the Prime Minister's resignation.

8. Role of the President:

- The President of India is the ceremonial head of state and performs specific constitutional functions, including the appointment of the Prime Minister.
- The President's role is largely symbolic, and executive decisions are made by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.

Power and Position of the President of India

In India, the President is the ceremonial head of state and occupies a prominent constitutional position. However, the President's powers and functions are largely defined and limited by the Constitution. Here's a short overview of the power and position of the President of India:

1. Ceremonial Head of State:

- The President of India is the highest-ranking dignitary in the country and serves as the ceremonial head of state.

- The President represents India in diplomatic and ceremonial matters, both domestically and internationally.
- Various state functions and ceremonies, such as the Republic Day parade, are presided over by the President.

2. Executive Powers:

- The President plays a crucial role in the formation and functioning of the executive branch.
- The President appoints the Prime Minister, who is usually the leader of the majority party or coalition in the Lok Sabha (House of the People).
- The President also appoints other key officials, such as Governors of states, judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, and the Attorney General.

3. Legislative Powers:

- The President has a role in the legislative process, including the enactment of laws.
- Bills passed by Parliament must receive the President's assent to become law. The President can give assent, withhold assent, or seek clarifications on a bill.
- In practice, the President usually acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers led by the Prime Minister.

4. Diplomatic Functions:

- The President receives and entertains foreign dignitaries and ambassadors in India.
- While the President does not engage in active diplomacy, they play a ceremonial role in hosting state visits and fostering diplomatic relations.

5. Emergency Powers:

- The President has special powers during emergencies, as outlined in the Constitution.
- During a national emergency, the President can exercise additional powers, such as suspending fundamental rights and dismissing state governments.

6. Pardoning Powers:

- The President can grant pardons, reprieves, and remissions of punishment to individuals convicted of certain offenses.
- This power is exercised based on the advice of the Council of Ministers or on the recommendation of the judiciary.

7. Non-Partisan Position:

- The President is expected to maintain a non-partisan and neutral stance in political matters.
- While the President is elected by an electoral college, the position is largely devoid of direct political involvement.

8. Limitations:

- The President's powers are not absolute. Many functions, such as granting assent to bills, are performed on the advice of the Council of Ministers.
- The President's role is largely symbolic, and significant executive authority rests with the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.

Discretionary Powers of the President of India

The President of India, while largely ceremonial and bound by the Constitution, does possess some discretionary powers. These powers allow the President to act independently in certain situations.

Here's a short overview of the discretionary powers of the President:

1. Appointment of the Prime Minister:

- One of the significant discretionary powers of the President is the appointment of the Prime Minister.
- After a general election, the President invites the leader of the majority party or coalition in the Lok Sabha (House of the People) to become the Prime Minister.
- Although this appears to be a mere formality, the President has the discretion to decide whom to invite in case of uncertainty or a hung Parliament.

2. Sending Back Advice for Reconsideration:

- The President can, in some cases, send back the advice or recommendations of the Council of Ministers for reconsideration.

- This power is rarely used but allows the President to seek clarifications or express reservations about a particular decision.

3. Reserving Bills for the President's Consideration:

- The President has the discretion to reserve certain bills passed by Parliament for their consideration.
- These reserved bills are not enacted into law until the President gives their assent.
- This power is used sparingly and is generally employed when the President seeks clarification or has reservations about the bill.

4. Emergency Powers:

- In cases of national emergency, the President can exercise discretionary powers to suspend fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.
- This extraordinary power allows the President to take decisive action during emergencies.

5. Pardoning Powers:

- While the President's power to pardon, grant reprieves, or remit sentences is subject to the advice of the Council of Ministers, the President can exercise these powers independently in certain cases.
- This discretionary power allows the President to show clemency or mercy to individuals convicted of certain offenses.

6. Appointing Judges:

- The President appoints judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts on the advice of the Chief Justice of India and the collegium.
- Although this is largely a constitutional duty, the President's discretion comes into play when considering issues such as appointments and transfers within the judiciary.

7. Diplomatic Functions:

- While diplomatic functions are primarily ceremonial, the President's discretion may influence diplomatic interactions and engagements with foreign dignitaries.

The Vice President of India

The Vice President of India holds a significant constitutional position in the country's governance structure. Here is a short overview of the Vice President's role and responsibilities:

1. Constitutional Role:

- Article 63 of the Indian Constitution establishes the office of the Vice President of India.
- The Vice President is the second-highest constitutional office in the country, next only to the President.

2. Election and Term:

- The Vice President is elected by an electoral college composed of members of both houses of Parliament (Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha).
- The term of the Vice President is five years, and there is no limit to the number of terms one can serve.

3. Presiding Officer of Rajya Sabha:

- The Vice President serves as the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of India's Parliament.
- In this capacity, the Vice President presides over the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha, maintains order, and ensures the smooth functioning of debates and discussions.

4. Casting Vote:

- In the event of a tie on any matter being voted upon in the Rajya Sabha, the Vice President has a casting vote.
- This means that the Vice President can exercise their vote to break the tie and make a final decision.

5. Acting President:

- In case of a vacancy in the office of the President of India due to resignation, death, removal, or otherwise, the Vice President temporarily assumes the role of the Acting President until a new President is elected.

6. Other Duties:

- The Vice President may also perform various ceremonial functions and represent India on official visits abroad.
- While the Vice President does not have executive powers, they play a crucial role in maintaining the decorum of the Rajya Sabha.

7. Independence from Political Affiliation:

- The Vice President is expected to maintain a neutral and non-partisan stance while presiding over the Rajya Sabha.
- Unlike the President, who is elected through a similar electoral college, the Vice President's role is explicitly linked to the functioning of Parliament.

Vice President of India is a key figure in the country's parliamentary system and plays a critical role as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. While the Vice President's powers are limited compared to the President, the office is important for upholding the principles of parliamentary democracy and ensuring the effective functioning of the upper house of Parliament, the Rajya Sabha.

Prime Minister and Council of Ministers in India

In the parliamentary system of India's government, the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers hold pivotal roles. Here is a short overview of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers:

Prime Minister:

1. **Head of Government:** The Prime Minister is the head of the government and holds the highest executive office in India.
2. **Leader of the Majority Party:** The Prime Minister is usually the leader of the political party or coalition that commands the majority of seats in the Lok Sabha (House of the People), the lower house of India's Parliament.
3. **Appointment:** The President of India appoints the Prime Minister, and this appointment is largely a formality, as the President invites the leader of the majority party or coalition to form the government.
4. **Executive Powers:** The Prime Minister exercises significant executive powers, including policy formulation, decision-making, and the administration of government.
5. **Council of Ministers:** The Prime Minister appoints and leads the Council of Ministers, which includes Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State.

Council of Ministers:

1. **Cabinet Ministers:** These are senior members of the Council of Ministers who head various government departments or ministries. They are responsible for specific policy areas, such as finance, defense, health, and education.
2. **Ministers of State (MoS):** Ministers of State assist Cabinet Ministers and are often in charge of specific aspects within a ministry.
3. **Collective Responsibility:** The Council of Ministers collectively bears responsibility for all government policies and decisions.

4. **Policy Formulation:** Cabinet meetings serve as forums for discussing and deciding on crucial policy matters and government actions.
5. **Parliamentary Accountability:** The Council of Ministers is accountable to the Lok Sabha (the elected lower house of Parliament), where they must answer questions, participate in debates, and seek approval for various legislative and policy matters.
6. **Resignation:** If the government loses the confidence or support of the Lok Sabha, the entire Council of Ministers, including the Prime Minister, must resign, potentially leading to a change in government.
7. **Departments and Ministries:** Each minister is responsible for overseeing specific government departments or ministries, ensuring the efficient functioning of government services and policy implementation.

In India's parliamentary democracy, the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers play a vital role in the country's governance. They are responsible for formulating policies, implementing laws, and addressing the needs and aspirations of the citizens. The functioning of this executive branch is subject to democratic norms and parliamentary oversight, ensuring accountability and transparency in government actions.

The size of the Council of Ministers

In India, the size of the Council of Ministers, including the Prime Minister, is not fixed by the Constitution. It is determined by the Prime Minister and can vary

based on several factors, including the political party or coalition in power, the need for efficient governance, and the allocation of ministerial portfolios.

However, there are certain constitutional provisions and guidelines related to the size of the Council of Ministers:

1. **Article 75 of the Indian Constitution:** This article specifies that the Council of Ministers, headed by the Prime Minister, should not exceed 15% of the total number of members in the Lok Sabha (House of the People). This provision ensures that the Council of Ministers does not become disproportionately large.
2. **The Anti-Defection Law:** The Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, also known as the Anti-Defection Law, places restrictions on the number of ministers who can be appointed from among those who were elected as members of Parliament or state legislatures. If a legislator defects from their political party, they may lose their ministerial position.
3. **Political Considerations:** The size and composition of the Council of Ministers are often influenced by political considerations. The ruling party or coalition may expand or reduce the Council of Ministers to accommodate key allies, maintain political stability, or address regional and political interests.
4. **Efficiency and Governance:** The Prime Minister typically aims to create a Council of Ministers that can efficiently manage various government departments and ministries. The allocation of portfolios is done to ensure effective governance and policy implementation.

5. **Administrative Capacity:** The Prime Minister may also consider the administrative capacity of the government and the need for expertise in specific areas when determining the size and composition of the Council of Ministers.

The size of the Council of Ministers in India has varied over the years. While there is a constitutional limit on its size as a percentage of the Lok Sabha's membership, the actual number of ministers can change with each government's formation and reshuffling. It is important to note that the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha and can be held accountable for its performance and decisions.

Permanent Executive: Bureaucracy in India

In the context of Indian governance, the permanent executive, often referred to as the bureaucracy, plays a crucial role in the administration and implementation of government policies and decisions. Here is a short overview of the permanent executive or bureaucracy in India:

1. Definition and Role:

- The term "bureaucracy" refers to the administrative machinery of the government, consisting of civil servants, administrative officials, and public servants.
- The primary role of the bureaucracy is to assist the political executive (elected representatives and ministers) in the formulation and implementation of government policies, programs, and services.

2. Structure:

- The Indian bureaucracy is organized into various central and state government departments, ministries, and administrative bodies.
- It includes the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Revenue Service (IRS), and other specialized services, each with its own area of expertise and responsibilities.

3. Recruitment and Training:

- Bureaucrats are recruited through competitive examinations such as the Civil Services Examination, conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for central services and by state public service commissions for state-level services.
- Newly recruited officers undergo extensive training at specialized institutes like the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) to prepare them for their roles.

4. Roles and Functions:

- **Policy Implementation:** Bureaucrats are responsible for translating government policies and decisions into action. They ensure that government programs are executed efficiently and effectively.
- **Advisers:** Bureaucrats provide expert advice to the political executive based on their domain knowledge and experience.

- **Regulatory Functions:** Bureaucracy enforces laws, regulations, and government orders to maintain law and order, collect revenue, and protect public interests.
- **Service Delivery:** Bureaucracy manages public services such as education, healthcare, public infrastructure, and more.
- **Decision-Making:** Senior bureaucrats participate in the decision-making process through consultations and policy discussions.

5. Characteristics:

- **Permanence:** Bureaucrats have a permanent and stable career in the civil services, irrespective of changes in political leadership.
- **Hierarchy:** Bureaucracy is organized in a hierarchical structure with clear lines of authority.
- **Impartiality:** Bureaucrats are expected to act impartially, without bias, and in the public interest.

6. Accountability:

- Bureaucracy is accountable to the political executive and, indirectly, to the citizens. Bureaucrats are responsible for the efficient use of resources and the implementation of government policies.
- The bureaucracy is also accountable to parliamentary committees, which oversee various government functions.

7. Challenges:

- Bureaucracy often faces challenges related to bureaucracy-politician relations, red tape, corruption, and inefficiency. Efforts are continually made to reform and modernize the bureaucratic system to address these issues.

The Indian Administrative Service (IAS)

The Indian Administrative Service (IAS) is one of the most prestigious civil services in India. It is a part of the All India Services, which also include the Indian Police Service (IPS) and the Indian Forest Service (IFoS). IAS officers hold various positions in the government, both at the central and state levels, and they are responsible for the administration, policymaking, and implementation of government programs.

Here is an overview of the various posts held by IAS officers, starting from the highest to the entry-level positions:

Chief Secretary: The Chief Secretary is the highest-ranking IAS officer in a state government. They are the principal adviser to the Chief Minister and the head of the state bureaucracy. The Chief Secretary is responsible for the overall administration of the state.

Additional Chief Secretary: Additional Chief Secretaries are senior IAS officers who assist the Chief Secretary in managing the state administration. They may oversee specific departments or functions.

Principal Secretary: Principal Secretaries are responsible for the administration of specific government departments or ministries. They play a crucial role in policy formulation and implementation.

Secretary: Secretaries head individual departments or ministries within the government. They are responsible for the day-to-day functioning of their respective departments and report to the Chief Secretary or Additional Chief Secretary.

Special Secretary: Special Secretaries assist Secretaries in their functions and may take charge in the absence of the Secretary. They are typically senior IAS officers with expertise in a particular field.

Director: Directors manage specific directorates or autonomous organizations under a department. They are responsible for policy implementation and departmental coordination.

Joint Secretary: Joint Secretaries are senior-level bureaucrats who assist Secretaries and Special Secretaries in policymaking and implementation. They often handle critical portfolios.

Deputy Secretary: Deputy Secretaries assist Joint Secretaries and play a role in departmental administration and policy formulation.

Under Secretary: Under Secretaries are mid-level bureaucrats responsible for various administrative tasks, including record-keeping, correspondence, and coordination within the department.

Assistant Secretary: Assistant Secretaries are entry-level IAS officers who work under the guidance of higher-ranking officers. They handle administrative tasks and gain experience in government functioning.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM): SDMs are entry-level positions at the sub-divisional level in the district administration. They are responsible for law and order, revenue administration, and development activities in their respective sub-divisions.

Assistant Collector: Assistant Collectors are junior officers in the district administration. They assist the District Collector and handle various administrative and developmental functions.

These are some of the key positions held by IAS officers at different levels of government. IAS officers may also serve in various specialized roles and

departments, including finance, education, health, urban development, and more. Their responsibilities evolve as they gain experience and seniority in the civil services.

Indian Police Service (IPS)

IPS officers are responsible for law enforcement, maintenance of public order, and the administration of police forces in India.

Here are some of the key posts held by IPS officers, starting from the highest to entry-level positions:

1. **Director-General of Police (DGP):** The DGP is the highest-ranking police officer in a state or union territory. They are responsible for the overall administration and functioning of the state police force.
2. **Additional Director-General of Police (ADGP):** ADGPs are senior officers who assist the DGP and oversee specific areas or departments within the police force.
3. **Inspector General of Police (IGP):** IGPs head police ranges or zones within a state. They are responsible for maintaining law and order in their respective areas.
4. **Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG):** DIGs assist IGPs and manage law enforcement and administrative functions in their designated zones or areas.

5. **Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP)/Superintendent of Police (SP):** SSPs or SPs are in charge of police districts and are responsible for maintaining law and order, crime prevention, and investigations.
6. **Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP):** DSPs are junior officers who assist SPs in district-level administration and policing.
7. **Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP):** ASPs are entry-level officers who receive training and experience in various aspects of policing, including law enforcement, investigations, and public order maintenance.

Indian Forest Service (IFoS)

The Indian Forest Service (IFoS) is another prestigious All India Service responsible for the management and conservation of forests and wildlife. IFoS officers play a vital role in preserving India's rich biodiversity. Here are some key posts held by IFoS officers, from the highest to the entry-level positions:

1. **Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF):** The PCCF is the highest-ranking forest officer in a state or union territory. They are responsible for overseeing forest management, conservation, and wildlife protection.
2. **Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (APCCF):** APCCFs assist the PCCF and often oversee specific areas within the forest department, such as wildlife conservation or forest development.
3. **Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF):** CCFs manage forest divisions and are responsible for implementing forest policies and conservation programs.

4. **Conservator of Forests (CF):** CFs head forest circles within a division and are responsible for the administration, protection, and development of forests.
5. **Divisional Forest Officer (DFO):** DFOs are responsible for managing individual forest divisions, including forest protection, wildlife conservation, and timber extraction.
6. **Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF):** ACFs are entry-level IFoS officers responsible for various field-level activities, such as forest management, conservation, and enforcement.

The Indian Foreign Service (IFS)

The Indian Foreign Service (IFS) is one of the most prestigious civil services in India, responsible for representing the country's interests abroad, conducting diplomacy, and managing India's relationships with other nations and international organizations. IFS officers are trained to handle various aspects of foreign affairs.

Here are some of the key posts held by IFS officers, starting from the highest to entry-level positions:

Foreign Secretary: The Foreign Secretary is the highest-ranking IFS officer in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and serves as the administrative head of the Indian Foreign Service. They advise the government on foreign policy matters and oversee the functioning of the entire service.

Secretary (West/East/Economic Relations): These are senior-level positions within the MEA, responsible for specific geographical regions or economic relations. They play a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy toward these areas.

Ambassador/High Commissioner: Ambassadors represent India in foreign countries, while High Commissioners represent India in Commonwealth countries. They are the chief diplomatic representatives and are responsible for promoting India's interests, maintaining bilateral relations, and conducting diplomatic negotiations.

Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM): DCMs serve as the deputy heads of missions in Indian embassies or high commissions abroad. They assist the Ambassador/High Commissioner in managing the mission's operations.

Minister/Deputy Chief of Mission: Ministers are senior diplomats posted in embassies and high commissions. They handle specific portfolios such as political affairs, economic affairs, or cultural affairs.

Counsellor: Counsellors are experienced diplomats responsible for providing advice and guidance to the Ambassador/High Commissioner and managing specific areas of diplomacy.

First Secretary: First Secretaries are mid-level diplomats who play a role in implementing diplomatic initiatives, representing India's interests, and conducting negotiations.

Second Secretary: Second Secretaries are entry-level diplomats who assist in various diplomatic activities, including reporting, protocol, and visa-related services.

Third Secretary/Attaché: Third Secretaries and Attachés are the most junior diplomats and often handle administrative tasks, visa processing, and support services in Indian missions abroad.

Under Secretary: Under Secretaries work in the MEA's headquarters in New Delhi and handle specific portfolios related to foreign policy, diplomacy, and administration.

Desk Officer: Desk Officers are responsible for specific regions or issues within the MEA and are involved in policy planning and coordination.

Attache: Attaches are junior officers who assist in administrative and support functions within Indian missions.

Probationer: Probationers are newly recruited IFS officers who undergo training before being assigned to their first postings abroad.



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