



INTERNATIONAL LAW
JOURNAL

**WHITE BLACK
LEGAL LAW
JOURNAL**
**ISSN: 2581-
8503**

Peer - Reviewed & Refereed Journal

The Law Journal strives to provide a platform for discussion of International as well as National Developments in the Field of Law.

WWW.WHITEBLACKLEGAL.CO.IN

DISCLAIMER

No part of this publication may be reproduced or copied in any form by any means without prior written permission of Editor-in-chief of White Black Legal – The Law Journal. The Editorial Team of White Black Legal holds the copyright to all articles contributed to this publication. The views expressed in this publication are purely personal opinions of the authors and do not reflect the views of the Editorial Team of White Black Legal. Though all efforts are made to ensure the accuracy and correctness of the information published, White Black Legal shall not be responsible for any errors caused due to oversight or otherwise.

WHITE BLACK
LEGAL

EDITORIAL **TEAM**

Raju Narayana Swamy (IAS) Indian Administrative Service **officer**



Dr. Raju Narayana Swamy popularly known as Kerala's Anti Corruption Crusader is the All India Topper of the 1991 batch of the IAS and is currently posted as Principal Secretary to the Government of Kerala . He has earned many accolades as he hit against the political-bureaucrat corruption nexus in India. Dr Swamy holds a B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering from the IIT Madras and a Ph. D. in Cyber Law from Gujarat National Law University . He also has an LLM (Pro) (with specialization in IPR) as well as three PG Diplomas from the National Law University, Delhi- one in Urban Environmental Management and Law, another in Environmental Law and Policy and a third one in Tourism and Environmental Law. He also holds a post-graduate diploma in IPR from the National Law School, Bengaluru

and a professional diploma in Public Procurement from the World Bank.

Dr. R. K. Upadhyay

Dr. R. K. Upadhyay is Registrar, University of Kota (Raj.), Dr Upadhyay obtained LLB , LLM degrees from Banaras Hindu University & Phd from university of Kota.He has succesfully completed UGC sponsored M.R.P for the work in the ares of the various prisoners reforms in the state of the Rajasthan.



Senior Editor

Dr. Neha Mishra



Dr. Neha Mishra is Associate Professor & Associate Dean (Scholarships) in Jindal Global Law School, OP Jindal Global University. She was awarded both her PhD degree and Associate Professor & Associate Dean M.A.; LL.B. (University of Delhi); LL.M.; Ph.D. (NLSIU, Bangalore) LLM from National Law School of India University, Bengaluru; she did her LL.B. from Faculty of Law, Delhi University as well as M.A. and B.A. from Hindu College and DCAC from DU respectively. Neha has been a Visiting Fellow, School of Social Work, Michigan State University, 2016 and invited speaker Panelist at Global Conference, Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute, Washington University in St.Louis, 2015.

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi,

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja completed her LL.M. from the Indian Law Institute with specialization in Criminal Law and Corporate Law, and has over nine years of teaching experience. She has done her LL.B. from the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. She is currently pursuing Ph.D. in the area of Forensics and Law. Prior to joining the teaching profession, she has worked as Research Assistant for projects funded by different agencies of Govt. of India. She has developed various audio-video teaching modules under UGC e-PG Pathshala programme in the area of Criminology, under the aegis of an MHRD Project. Her areas of interest are Criminal Law, Law of Evidence, Interpretation of Statutes, and Clinical Legal Education.



Dr. Navtika Singh Nautiyal

Dr. Navtika Singh Nautiyal presently working as an Assistant Professor in School of law, Forensic Justice and Policy studies at National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. She has 9 years of Teaching and Research Experience. She has completed her Philosophy of Doctorate in 'Intercountry adoption laws from Uttranchal University, Dehradun' and LLM from Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.



Dr. Rinu Saraswat

Associate Professor at School of Law, Apex University, Jaipur, M.A, LL.M, Ph.D,

Dr. Rinu have 5 yrs of teaching experience in renowned institutions like Jagannath University and Apex University. Participated in more than 20 national and international seminars and conferences and 5 workshops and training programmes.

Dr. Nitesh Saraswat

E.MBA, LL.M, Ph.D, PGDSAPM

Currently working as Assistant Professor at Law Centre II, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Dr. Nitesh have 14 years of Teaching, Administrative and research experience in Renowned Institutions like Amity University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Jai Narain Vyas University Jodhpur, Jagannath University and Nirma University.

More than 25 Publications in renowned National and International Journals and has authored a Text book on Cr.P.C and Juvenile Delinquency law.



Subhrajit Chanda

BBA. LL.B. (Hons.) (Amity University, Rajasthan); LL. M. (UPES, Dehradun) (Nottingham Trent University, UK); Ph.D. Candidate (G.D. Goenka University)

Subhrajit did his LL.M. in Sports Law, from Nottingham Trent University of United Kingdoms, with international scholarship provided by university; he has also completed another LL.M. in Energy Law from University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, India. He did his B.B.A.LL.B. (Hons.) focussing on International Trade Law.

ABOUT US

WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal providededicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

CORRUPTION AND BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE IN INDIA

AUTHORED BY - SOUMYA RANJAN MUDULI
B.A.LL.B., KIIT School of Law, Bhubaneswar, India

ABSTRACT

Corruption and bureaucratic red tape are huge barriers to governance and development in the entire world. These matters are especially relevant for the country of India, which is aspiring for strong economic development and equal social advancement. Corruption, which is basically the misuse of given power to personal gain, undermines the very base of trust in a society and destabilizes the fabric of democratic institutions. In its forms in India, it is manifested in many ways and targets different spheres of the economy and society. At the same time, the bureaucratic red tape marked by the overarching regulations and strict adherence to formal rules tends to complicate the decision-making processes and complicate the administrative processes in a needless way.¹ Even though different in the form, corruption and bureaucratic red tapes are usually two sides of the coin, and many times, one becomes the driving force for the other, forming a negative cycle which could hamper India's developmental mission a lot. It is important to understand the complicated nature and interdependence of these challenges to develop efficient policy measures that can promote transparency and a consequent efficient development in India. This report is an attempt to conduct a complete analysis about corruption and bureaucratic red tape in India which covers definition, causes, consequences and measures being taken to curb it.

KEYWORDS: Corruption, Bureaucratic Red Tape, Personal Gain, Democratic Institutions, Policy Measures, Transparency.

¹ Transparency International. (n.d.). *What is corruption?* Retrieved May 14, 2025, from <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>

INTRODUCTION

Corruption and bureaucratic red tape are two issues, which haunt development in India. Bureaucracy, having complicated procedures and levels of abstruse approvals, may become barriers on the way of citizens requesting services or permits. It is this very complexity that opens room for corruption whereby some officers may ask for bribes in order to speed up the processes or to ignore rules and regulations.² This may adversely affect the poor and those that are not familiar with the system, and prevent them from obtaining basic needs and economic welfare.

DEFINING CORRUPTION

Transparency International reports that corruption implies the abuse of power that has been entrusted for private gain. This covers a broad spectrum of activities, from public officials asking or soliciting money or favours in return for services to politicians diverting public money and corporations bribing officials for juicy deals. Depending on scale and effects, corruption can be grouped into different levels such as grand corruption where high level government officials and enormous amount of money are involved. petty corruption (that is everyday abuse of power on the part of lesser officials) and political corruption (where politicization of policies and institutions for private benefit is involved). This trend is not restricted to a particular sphere, but rather spreads across government, business, the judiciary, civil society, affecting health and education; infrastructure and sports, among other things. Transparency International offers corruption measurement tools and understanding, and this includes the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB). The CPI places nations in order depending on the perceived levels of corruption in the public sectors, according to experts and executives in businesses. In 2024, India had the CPI of 38, which means that there was a high level of perceived corruption.³ In turn, the GCB surveys the public in order to collect firsthand data on their experiences and perception of corruption. Number of people in India who believe that the government corruption is a major issue, is too large (89%), as findings from the GCB have revealed.

² PMFIAS. (n.d.). *Red tapism*. Retrieved May 15, 2025, from <https://www.pmfias.com/red-tapism/#:~:text=and%20ethical%20accountability,-.Red%20Tapism%20and%20Bureaucratic%20Inefficiency,inefficient%20and%20eroding%20public%20trust.>

³ Transparency International. (n.d.). *How CPI scores are calculated*. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/en/news/how-cpi-scores-are-calculated>

MANIFESTATIONS AND FORMS OF CORRUPTION IN INDIA

There are varied manifestations of corruption in the Indian state in different sectors. Briberies are a rampant issue, and people tend to present coercions to various officials to hasten the basic services like police protection, school admission, water availability, and issuance of licenses/permits. There are also numerous cases of land and property scandals, where officials are accused to have illegally acquired and disposed off state property in cahoots with politicians and property developers. Manipulation of tendering processes and awarding of contracts is another big area of corruption.⁴ Not even such areas as science and technology have escaped being touched up by such egregious actions as the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) being criticized for having become too bureaucratic and not having meritocracy. Moreover, the method of receiving one's driver's license in India has been declared as extremely vulnerable to bribery, where agents tend to issue licenses to unqualified drivers. India has also experienced a lot of grand corruption with high ranking government officials, where huge amounts of money are involved.⁵ Examples are not a few from the scandal of 2G spectrum scandal, coal gate scandal and the commonwealth games scam. These scandals combined have had huge loss to the public exchequer. The petty corruption, that is the everyday misuse of the entrusted power for the benefit of low-level officials, influences the everyday routine of common citizens who are frequently forced to bribe for receiving necessary services. Associated political corruption, whereby, policies, institutions and rules are guided for personal or partisan gains to the public detriment, makes a bad situation even worse; as witnessed in the circus surrounding electoral fraud and misuse of funds, and nepotistic appointments.⁶

THE ROOTS OF CORRUPTION IN INDIA

The prevalence of corruption in India is underpinned by a complex interplay of political, economic, social, and systemic factors.

Political causes: The enormous cost of election campaigns in India often compels politicians to resort to corruption to raise the necessary resources. This political funding dependence on unaccountable sources has the potential to generate obligations and interests, forcing politicians to engage in corrupt activities. Moreover, political interference in bureaucratic affairs has a

⁴ KKC. (n.d.). *Corruption in India*. Retrieved from <https://kkc.com/corruption-index/corruption-in-india/>

⁵Epitome Journals. (n.d.). *Research paper*. Retrieved from https://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/56_Research_Paper.pdf

⁶Lawful Legal. (n.d.). *Corruption: One of the biggest problems the Indian legal system faces*. Retrieved from <https://lawfullegal.in/corruption-one-of-the-biggest-problems-the-indian-legal-system-faces/>

tendency to significantly undermine the autonomy of government institutions, as political leaders will at times compel officers to engage in corrupt activities for party or personal interests.⁷ Moreover, political weakness in effectively enforcing anti-corruption laws is a factor in the corruption plague, as the existence of what seems to be lifeless anti-corruption departments can embolden corrupt officers to act with impunity.

Economic Factors: Due to the Licence Raj years, when government rules dominated the Indian economy, corruption is still present in many areas. As a result of this system, there was less competition in the market and bribes became more common for people and companies attempting to deal with red tape.⁸ Having all control of some sectors under government umbrellas is considered a cause for higher corruption. On top of that, lower pay for civil servants in lower-ranking jobs may lead them to take bribes to supplement their earning, which may cause corruption to continue.

Social and Cultural Norms: In some situations in India, people have come to see corruption as just a normal way that things operate or a necessary step in making things happen. If people accept this way of thinking, it can easily lead to others acting corruptly, feeling better about it because they conclude everyone does it ultimately. The huge differences in wealth and opportunity in India allow people in power to use their position in corrupt ways to access special treatment.⁹ The way Britain and the Mughals affected India in history has also contributed to the current problem, because routinely stating "baksheesh" during the era of the Mughals allowed people to accept small forms of corruption.

Systemic Factors and Institutional Weaknesses: One important reason India has corruption is that government processes, decisions, and administration lack transparency. Public officials may engage in corruption freely, as there's not much risk of them being caught due to the lack of transparency. Also, several of India's agencies in charge of law enforcement and oversight lack strength or suffer from corruption. Such groups may be made less effective when political officials interfere with their activities.¹⁰ Another reason for the issue is that there is no personal

⁷iPleaders. (n.d.). *Analytical study of political corruption in India: Last 10 years*. Retrieved from <https://blog.ipleaders.in/analytical-study-political-corruption-india-last-10-years/>

⁸Testbook. (n.d.). *Corruption*. Retrieved from <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/corruption>

⁹Jebamani, A. (n.d.). *Social order and the culture of corruption in India*. Retrieved from https://academicworks.cuny.edu/context/gc_etds/article/3104/viewcontent/Social

¹⁰Chahal Academy. (n.d.). *Corruption in India*. Retrieved from <https://chahalacademy.com/corruption-in-india>

accountability, because many corrupt officials go unpunished as anti-corruption measures appear to be ineffective.

BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE: DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS

Defining Bureaucratic Red Tape: When too many rules and procedures are required, it becomes bureaucratic red tape and makes it difficult to reach decisions.¹¹ As a result, governments and other large organizations must deal with unneeded paperwork, delays in approval and complex processes. In short, red tape consists of adhering strictly to set rules that slow down making and implementing decisions.¹² Many people use the terms bureaucracy, compliance rules, formal processes and regulatory red tape interchangeably.

What Red Tape Looks Like in India: Due to its strict hierarchy, the Indian bureaucracy may suffer from delays and less efficient decisions despite the order in which decisions are made. A lack of expertise in specific roles could result in extra delays in the system.¹³ Being strict with rules and regulations is a main trait of the Indian bureaucracy; these efforts sometimes lead to unfortunate outcomes, a remnant of the country's colonial period. If decisions in the bureaucracy are centralized, it can cause challenges by slowing down responses to the needs of various regions. A lack of enough diversity in the bureaucracy may also result in less creativity and smaller variety of ideas. On the whole, there have been many asks that the Indian bureaucracy operates slowly and does not carry out changes fast¹⁴.

Backgrounds for the Current Situation: During British colonial times, much of India's bureaucratic structure was based on creating a highly ordered set of levels and power centres to run the country. After India gained independence, the hierarchy, stress on bureaucratic paperwork and the leaders making all important decisions remained part of the Indian

¹¹ PMF IAS. (n.d.). *Red tapism*. Retrieved from <https://www.pmfias.com/red-tapism/#:~:text=and%20ethical%20accountability,Red%20Tapism%20and%20Bureaucratic%20Inefficiency,in%20efficient%20and%20eroding%20public%20trust>.

¹² ForumIAS Blog. (n.d.). *Answered: What is red tapism? Discuss its consequences and suggest some measures to reduce it*. Retrieved from <https://forumias.com/blog/answered-what-is-red-tapism-discuss-its-consequences-and-suggest-some-measures-to-reduce-it/>

¹³ Marg Compusoft. (n.d.). *The Indian bureaucracy*. Retrieved from <https://margcompusoft.com/m/the-indian-bureaucrac/>

¹⁴ Debata, A. (2023, May 21). *Prevalence of colonial influence in India's bureaucracy: Unraveling the legacy*. Times of India Readers' Blog. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/beyond-the-headlines/prevalence-of-colonial-influence-in-indias-bureaucracy-unraveling-the-legacy-54081/>

bureaucracy. In the years after independence, the government imposed strict regulations over the Indian economy which led to more bureaucratic paperwork.¹⁵ During this period, competition among companies in the market was not allowed and gaining licenses and permits became necessary which led to many bureaucratic issues and delays.

DRIVERS OF BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE IN INDIA

Many different things result in continuing bureaucratic red tape in India.

Difficult and challenging regulations: Many strict rules and criminal laws in India often impose a heavy burden on small businesses. As many central and state laws commonly clash, this adds more confusion to the system. By resolving the unclear points in these rules and laws and limiting the free reign of bureaucrats, red tape can be minimized.¹⁶

Insufficient transparency and accountability exist: Lack of transparency in many government tasks and decisions plays a major role in forming red tape. Because of this lack of clarity, there may be delays and the growth of complicated processes. Since there are not many strong ways to review and hold officials accountable, ineffectiveness and old, inappropriate processes can continue unnoticed.¹⁷ The broad authority that is trusted to bureaucrats can be a cause of red tape.

Poor and antiquated ways of working or organizing processes: Old laws and inflexible choices in the Indian bureaucracy prevent new ideas and the proper reaction to changing problems. Many government departments have also made it harder for themselves, as they continue to perform most processes manually and resist using new technologies. Since colonial times, using file noting has resulted in delays that could have been avoided.¹⁸ If there is not enough effective coordination between government departments, it can lead to paperwork and delays.

¹⁵ Dutta, R. (2024, February 20). *An objective analysis of urban corruption in India – Working with, not around.* The Wagner Planner. <https://wp.nyu.edu/wagnerplanner/2024/02/20/an-objective-analysis-of-urban-corruption-in-india-working-with-not-around/>

¹⁶ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (n.d.). *Chapter 15: Understanding the business environment.* In *An India economic strategy to 2035*. Australian Government. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/trade-and-investment/india-economic-strategy/ies/chapter-15.html>

¹⁷ TUI Staff. (2024, April 6). *Unmasking transparency: The unending battle against corruption in India.* The United Indian. <https://theunitedindian.com/news/blog?b=206&c=3&corruption-in-India=>

¹⁸ Indian School of Public Policy. (2025, March 28). *Reforms for the Indian bureaucracy in the 21st century.* <https://www.ispp.org.in/reforms-for-the-indian-bureaucracy-in-the-21st-century/>

History and Tradition from the Colonial Period: The way government operates in India is thanks to how the British administration set up a system that focused on control and not efficiency. Because of this background, there is a strong focus in the bureaucracy on sticking with the rules and maintaining ranks which can stop efforts to succeed. A lack of proper ethical education for authorities may result in a mindset that keeps bureaucratic problems from getting solved.¹⁹

THE VICIOUS CYCLE: INTERPLAY OF CORRUPTION AND BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE

In India, corruption and excessive bureaucracy help each other and usually go hand in hand.

Red tape coincides with and serves to allow corruption: Sometimes, officials use tedious paperwork to try to make people pay them bribes. Manipulating administration in a certain way, bureaucrats can lead people to pay for rapid assistance or for ignoring certain regulations. Often, it is dealt with by agents who help facilitate corruption by moving individuals or businesses past the difficult bureaucracy in return for a fee that may include bribery.²⁰ Red tape which hides certain information, makes it simple for corruption to thrive and appear in public life.

The Problem of Red Tape Reinforcing Corruption: Too many complex official rules and regulations in bureaucratic red tape frequently lead individuals and businesses to consider bribery as a much simpler choice. Picking up a bribe can seem easier and quicker than dealing with the crazy red tape. As more red tape appears, public officials must interact more frequently, providing more chances for others to try to make corrupt requests. Because government procedures sometimes take much longer than expected, people are often forced to pay bribes for quicker service.

Overviews and Debates about the Link: Academic writing provides several views on how red tape can relate to corruption. It is suggested by some theories that red tape helps to separate eligible or deserving candidates from those who are not. On the other hand, even a little

¹⁹ NITI Aayog. (n.d.). *Initiating culture change through government process review: Learnings from India and UK's Red Tape Challenge*. <https://www.niti.gov.in/initiating-culture-change-through-government-process-review-learnings-india-uks-red-tape-challenge>

²⁰ Duvanova, D. (2014). Economic regulations, red tape, and bureaucratic corruption in post-communist economies. *World Development*, 59, 298–312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.01.028>

corruption on the part of bureaucrats can make it easier for them to use red tape to extort money and rewards. A number of models suggest that some bureaucrats invent more complicated system ideas, making bribes easier to request and their position more beneficial. Some authors think that, in a few limited conditions, a small amount of corruption can allow a slow system to function more efficiently, though most believe that corruption tends to make the bureaucratic barrier taller than it should be. If bureaucrats act in collusion, it can create additional difficulties when trying to set proper amounts of red tape.

IMPACT OF CORRUPTION AND BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE ON INDIA

Widespread corruption and endless paperwork hurt almost all aspects of the national development process in India.

Contribution to Better Economic Growth and Development: The rise of corruption is blocking India's hopes for economic improvement and progress. It restricts both domestic and international investment since the business circumstances are questionable and unappealing. Thanks to corruption, the efficiency and optimal use of resources are kept from reaching their potential when the market is distorted. Unnecessary bureaucracy causes major delays in important clearance and administrative work, adding to economic troubles by driving up prices, cutting production and reducing new ideas.²¹ Corrupt actions can cause a big drop in tax income, so the government is unable to offer key services and infrastructure for citizens.

World politics has an effect on international investment: Because of a lot of corruption and time-consuming red tape, India is seen unfavourably by many would-be foreign investors who often decide against investing here. Complying with India's strict and sometimes lengthy regulations is a major challenge for any business, especially for those unfamiliar with India's rules. The large amount of bureaucracy means businesses have to spend more money and time before they begin their activities.²²

Changes in Public Services: Access to and quality of public services in India are seriously affected by corruption. Should public services' resources be kept from their intended purpose

²¹ Testbook. (2025, May 1). *Major causes, impact & status of corruption in India*. <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/corruption>

²² Kumar, R., & Singh, A. (2017). A study of the effect of magnetic field on the performance of a solar still. *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 1859, 020011. <https://doi.org/10.1063/1.4981951>

by corruption and if officials put their own desires first, the services will not be as good as they should be.²³ Extra procedures in government processes further add to the issue by making it take more time and effort to provide key services in healthcare, education and infrastructure. Problems such as corruption in schools often reduce how effective education is and excessive regulations can prevent people from getting needed healthcare.

How citizens are affected by the government's decisions: Corruption and the unnecessary rules in government make life harder for poor and marginalized Indian people. As a result, access to important public services is seriously blocked, making it necessary for people to give bribes or obstacle themselves with complicated and lengthy steps. Besides, as corruption spreads everywhere, it makes people feel uncomfortable about the government and reduces their desire to take part in public life.²⁴ In very extreme circumstances, corruption and poor leadership can create conflicts and unrest in a society.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO COMBAT CORRUPTION

To fight the widespread corruption in India, the government has developed a thorough institutional and legal framework.

Important Anti-Corruption Laws Indian-style: The foundation of India's anti-corruption campaigns is several fundamental laws. Provisions in the Indian Penal Code, 1860 punish criminal misbehaviour by public servants. With criminalizing bribery and other related offenses, the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 is the main law especially targeted at preventing corruption by public servants.²⁵ Targeting the proceeds of crime—including those resulting from corruption—the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 penalizes money laundering activities. Aiming to reduce corruption by forbade transactions whereby property is held in the name of someone else than the beneficial owner, the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 calls for the creation of ombudsman offices at the federal and state levels to investigate claims of corruption directed

²³ GAN Integrity. (n.d.). *India country risk report*. <https://www.ganintegrity.com/country-profiles/india/>

²⁴ Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). *Governance in India: Corruption*. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/governance-india-corruption>

²⁵ PRS Legislative Research. (n.d.). *Corruption laws in India*. https://prsindia.org/files/parliament/discussion_papers/1302844978_PRS%20Note%20on%20corruption%20laws.pdf

against public officials.²⁶ At last, the Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014 aims to protect those who expose instances of corruption from possible reprisals.

Anti-Corruption Bodies and special initiatives: A number of bodies and programs are mandated to have these statutes implemented and challenge corruption. The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is the highest integrity institution handling corruption cases of the government departments and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).²⁷ The CBI is the country's premier investigative agency in which cases of corruption involving central government employees and Union Territories are probed. The RTI Act (2005) has been a potent instrument for fostering transparency in that it allows the citizen to ask government by way of information. E-government initiatives and the computerization of services are among others increasingly contributing significantly in limiting human interventions in the delivery of services and minimising on the potential for bribe subversion. Government has also put in place a National Anti-Corruption Strategy to serve as a holistic framework for fighting corruption.²⁸

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING CORRUPTION AND BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE

In order to address the issues of bureaucratic dysfunction and corruption in India, it is necessary to take more far-reaching steps and to do so in a collaborative and robust manner.

Strengthening Institutions and Compliance: One avenue to obtain more regulatory independence for anti-corruption organizations like the CVC and CBI would be to provide for increased resource or capacity levels. A priority should be to enhance independence and the strict, consistently enforced functioning of anticorruption laws without any interference from the political agenda. The undertaking to speed up the litigation in good cases of corruption, while identifying the weak and ineffective resolutions that have great consequences is heavily needed.²⁹ Once again, strict sanctions for acts of corruption have to be supported by an effective

²⁶ Legal Partners. (n.d.). *Breaking down India's anti-corruption laws*. <https://www.ourlegalpartners.com/anti-corruption>

²⁷ Reddy, A. (2024, June 21). *Corruption: One of the biggest problems the Indian legal system faces*. Lawful Legal. <https://lawfullegal.in/corruption-one-of-the-biggest-problems-the-indian-legal-system-faces/>

²⁸ King Stubb & Kasiva. (2024, January 4). *Anatomy of anti-corruption in India: Analyzing frameworks, impacts, and solutions*. <https://ksandk.com/regulatory/anatomy-of-anti-corruption-in-india/>

²⁹ Vajiram & Ravi. (2023, November 29). *Q2. What are the factors responsible for the corruption in India? What strategies can be implemented to reduce the prevalence of corruption in India given its complex socio-political reality?* Vajiram and Ravi Student Portal. <https://vajiramias.com/mains-daily-questions/q2-what-are-the-factors-responsible-for-the-corrup/656626c19f336305a3fcae96/>

and robust whistle-blower protection legislation, which enables to report corruption without fear of reprisal.

Increasing Transparency and Accountability: The coverage and provisions of the RTI Act, and its actual utilization should be strengthened in order to increase transparency. If the windows of visibility for government operations and decision making are opened, accountability can be introduced. There is a provision for bureaucrats and public officials on resource utilization, again accompanied by standards for performance, and standards of accounting, as part of the control systems that may reduce waste on bureaucratic behaviours and unethical practices.³⁰ Requiring public officials to declare and publish asset disclosure statements, may diminish the unethical practice of enhancing illicit wealth accumulation.

Streamlining Bureaucratic Processes and Lessening Red Tape: Simplifying bureaucratic processes through digitization and online platforms will lessen red tape and improve processes. The revising obsolete laws and regulations, with sunset clauses that allow for periodic review to establish relevance, is key as well. Implementing a single-window clearance system for businesses and government services can remove significant regulatory burdens. Raising the quality of skills through training and equipping staff will improve efficiency and create reductions in timelines. Including state-level governance in the administrative simplifying process is as important as many regulatory pressures originate at that level.³¹

Addressing Underlying Causes: Activities helping to reduce income inequality and improving access to essentials supports addressing some of the underlying socio-economic conditions promoting corruption. Encouraging ethical leadership and a culture of integrity in the bureaucracy through rigorous training and proper incentives will improve integrity levels.³² Electoral reforms aimed at reducing the influence of money in politics will help stave off political corruption. Political corruption can have a cascading effect on other spheres of governance.

³⁰ Transparency International. (n.d.). *What is corruption?* Transparency.org. Retrieved May 22, 2025, from <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>

³¹ Indian School of Public Policy. (2025, March 28). *Reforms for the Indian bureaucracy in the 21st century*. <https://www.ispp.org.in/reforms-for-the-indian-bureaucracy-in-the-21st-century/>

³² TUI Staff. (2024, April 6). *Unmasking transparency: The unending battle against corruption in India*. The United Indian. <https://theunitedindian.com/news/blog?b=206&c=3&corruption-in-India=>

CONCLUSION

Corrupt practices and bureaucratic red tape pose significant and interrelated stumbling blocks before India's development. Both the spheres of governance and areas of society suffer from these problems and witness their working toward obstructing economic advancement, scaring away foreign investment, putting to great quality public service, and reducing the welfare of the common man. Though India has set up its own legal and institutional framework to curb corruption, in many instances, its enforcement and efficacy have been compromised by operational hindrances, political will, and solemn systemic issues. Overcoming such hurdles surely needs a continuous and on-going attempt involving all parties-the government, civil society, and citizens. A stronger lens is needed on institutional capacity building, transparency, and accountability; statutory simplifications; and addressing the root causes of corruption so that India can work towards the establishment of an efficient, transparent, and corruption-free governance system. This would further translate into a stage for economic prosperity while advancing social welfare and earning public trust in institutions of the nation, thereby unfolding new paths for an equitable and sustainable tomorrow for India.

REFERENCES

1. Transparency International. (n.d.). *What is corruption?* Retrieved May 14, 2025, from <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>
2. PMFIAS. (n.d.). *Red tapism*. Retrieved May 15, 2025, from <https://www.pmfias.com/red-tapism/#:~:text=and%20ethical%20accountability,-.Red%20Tapism%20and%20Bureaucratic%20Inefficiency,inefficient%20and%20eroding%20public%20trust>
3. Transparency International. (n.d.). *How CPI scores are calculated*. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/en/news/how-cpi-scores-are-calculated>
4. KKC. (n.d.). *Corruption in India*. Retrieved from <https://kkc.com/corruption-index/corruption-in-india/>
5. Epitome Journals. (n.d.). *Research paper*. Retrieved from https://www.epitomejournals.com/VolumeArticles/FullTextPDF/56_Research_Paper.pdf
6. Lawful Legal. (n.d.). *Corruption: One of the biggest problems the Indian legal system faces*. Retrieved from <https://lawfullegal.in/corruption-one-of-the-biggest-problems-the-indian-legal-system-faces/>

7. iPleaders. (n.d.). *Analytical study of political corruption in India: Last 10 years*. Retrieved from <https://blog.ipleaders.in/analytical-study-political-corruption-india-last-10-years/>
8. Testbook. (n.d.). *Corruption*. Retrieved from <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/corruption>
9. Jebamani, A. (n.d.). *Social order and the culture of corruption in India*. Retrieved from https://academicworks.cuny.edu/context/gc_etds/article/3104/viewcontent/Social
10. Chahal Academy. (n.d.). *Corruption in India*. Retrieved from <https://chahalacademy.com/corruption-in-india>
11. PMF IAS. (n.d.). *Red tapism*. Retrieved from <https://www.pmfias.com/red-tapism/#:~:text=and%20ethical%20accountability.,Red%20Tapism%20and%20Bureaucratic%20Inefficiency,inefficient%20and%20eroding%20public%20trust.>
12. ForumIAS Blog. (n.d.). *Answered: What is red tapism? Discuss its consequences and suggest some measures to reduce it*. Retrieved from <https://forumias.com/blog/answered-what-is-red-tapism-discuss-its-consequences-and-suggest-some-measures-to-reduce-it/>
13. Marg Compusoft. (n.d.). *The Indian bureaucracy*. Retrieved from <https://margcompusoft.com/m/the-indian-bureaucrac/>
14. Debata, A. (2023, May 21). *Prevalence of colonial influence in India's bureaucracy: Unraveling the legacy*. Times of India Readers' Blog. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/beyond-the-headlines/prevalence-of-colonial-influence-in-indias-bureaucracy-unraveling-the-legacy-54081/>
15. Dutta, R. (2024, February 20). *An objective analysis of urban corruption in India – Working with, not around. The Wagner Planner*. <https://wp.nyu.edu/wagnerplanner/2024/02/20/an-objective-analysis-of-urban-corruption-in-india-working-with-not-around/>
16. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (n.d.). *Chapter 15: Understanding the business environment*. In *An India economic strategy to 2035*. Australian Government. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/trade-and-investment/india-economic-strategy/ies/chapter-15.html>
17. TUI Staff. (2024, April 6). *Unmasking transparency: The unending battle against corruption in India*. The United Indian. <https://theunitedindian.com/news/blog?b=206&c=3&corruption-in-India=>

18. Indian School of Public Policy. (2025, March 28). *Reforms for the Indian bureaucracy in the 21st century*. <https://www.ispp.org.in/reforms-for-the-indian-bureaucracy-in-the-21st-century/>
19. NITI Aayog. (n.d.). *Initiating culture change through government process review: Learnings from India and UK's Red Tape Challenge*. <https://www.niti.gov.in/initiating-culture-change-through-government-process-review-learnings-india-uks-red-tape-challenge>
20. Duvanova, D. (2014). Economic regulations, red tape, and bureaucratic corruption in post-communist economies. *World Development*, 59, 298–312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.01.028>
21. Testbook. (2025, May 1). *Major causes, impact & status of corruption in India*. <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/corruption>
22. Kumar, R., & Singh, A. (2017). A study of the effect of magnetic field on the performance of a solar still. *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 1859, 020011. <https://doi.org/10.1063/1.4981951>
23. GAN Integrity. (n.d.). *India country risk report*. <https://www.ganintegrity.com/country-profiles/india/>
24. Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). *Governance in India: Corruption*. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/governance-india-corruption>
25. PRS Legislative Research. (n.d.). *Corruption laws in India*. https://prsindia.org/files/parliament/discussion_papers/1302844978_PRS%20Note%20on%20corruption%20laws.pdf
26. Legal Partners. (n.d.). *Breaking down India's anti-corruption laws*. <https://www.ourlegalpartners.com/anti-corruption>
27. Reddy, A. (2024, June 21). *Corruption: One of the biggest problems the Indian legal system faces*. Lawful Legal. <https://lawfullegal.in/corruption-one-of-the-biggest-problems-the-indian-legal-system-faces/>
28. King Stubb & Kasiva. (2024, January 4). *Anatomy of anti-corruption in India: Analyzing frameworks, impacts, and solutions*. <https://ksandk.com/regulatory/anatomy-of-anti-corruption-in-india/>
29. Vajiram & Ravi. (2023, November 29). *Q2. What are the factors responsible for the corruption in India? What strategies can be implemented to reduce the prevalence of corruption in India given its complex socio-political reality?* Vajiram and Ravi Student

Portal. <https://vajiramias.com/mains-daily-questions/q2-what-are-the-factors-responsible-for-the-corruption/656626c19f336305a3fcae96/>

30. Transparency International. (n.d.). *What is corruption?* Transparency.org. Retrieved May 22, 2025, from <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>
31. Indian School of Public Policy. (2025, March 28). *Reforms for the Indian bureaucracy in the 21st century*. <https://www.ispp.org.in/reforms-for-the-indian-bureaucracy-in-the-21st-century/>
32. TUI Staff. (2024, April 6). *Unmasking transparency: The unending battle against corruption in India*. The United Indian. <https://theunitedindian.com/news/blog?b=206&c=3&corruption-in-India>

