

9. Village Secretariat Programme in AP

Prelims: Governance

Mains: GS-II- Important aspects of Governance, Transparency and accountability, e-governance- Applications, Models, Successes, Limitations, and potential; Citizens Charters, Transparency & Accountability and Institutional and Other Measures.

Why in News?

- ▶▶ The Andhra Pradesh government launched its Village Secretariat programme, under which 1.26 lakh new government employees will begin working.

Village Secretariat Programme:

- ▶▶ Under the new system, the AP government, one Village Secretariat has been set up for every population of 2,000, with each one comprising close to a dozen village officials from various departments like police, revenue, etc.
- ▶▶ The idea behind it is to ensure that its services reach people on the ground, and also to strengthen the existing Panchayat Raj system.
- ▶▶ The cost of hiring about 1.26 lakh new employees is going to be roughly about ₹2,200 crore a year for the AP government.
- ▶▶ Aside from this, the state has also hired another two lakh Village Volunteers, with each of them being paid ₹5,000 per month.
- ▶▶ Their job will to assist people in availing government services (each volunteer to look after 50 households).

Shift from e-Governance:

- ▶▶ The system is in complete contrast to the earlier trajectory of the state, which had been pushing for e-governance or online services instead under the former chief minister.
- ▶▶ The previous government had launched the e-Pragati platform, bringing many of the state government's services online, in partnership with EY Consultancy.
- ▶▶ The e-Pragati programme enabled citizens to avail over 745 services from 34 departments and 336 autonomous organizations of the AP government online.
- ▶▶ Prior to that in 2017, Real Time Government Service at the state secretariat at Amaravati was started. It was launched with the Real Time Governance Society as its functional arm, which directly reported to the then Chief Minister.