

EMPOWERING CITIZENS: AN OVERVIEW OF INDIA'S RIGHT TO PUBLIC SERVICE ACT

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ABSTRACT:

India's Right to Public Service Act, 2011, is a significant piece of law designed to ensure that citizens receive public services in an effective and transparent manner. The statute affirms that every citizen has a right to timely, fair, and reasonable service from the government. It requires all public authorities to keep a citizen's charter on file that details the services they offer, how quickly they can supply those services, and the channels for individuals to file complaints. Numerous Indian states have put the act into effect, which has aided in streamlining government operations, lowering corruption, and enhancing the effectiveness of public services. The act encourages transparency and accountability in the public sector and gives citizens the ability to hold public authorities responsible for their acts. Additionally, it gives citizens the ability to file complaints and request compensation for delays or subpar services, and it imposes sanctions on public employees who fail to perform services within the allotted time range. The creation of appropriate infrastructure, resources, and training for government entities are important for the act's efficient execution. In order to guarantee adherence to the act's requirements, a strong monitoring and assessment framework is also necessary. The act is a critical step in developing a more responsive and responsible government in India that satisfies the demands and aspirations of its people. In conclusion, it establishes consequences for public officials who fail to provide services within the allotted time limit and recognises the right of every citizen to receive services from the government in a fair, reasonable, and time-bound way. The government, civil society, and the citizens themselves must all work together and be committed to the act's efficient implementation. The act is a critical step in developing a more responsive and responsible government in India that satisfies the demands and aspirations of its people.

KEY WORDS: Rights, Public Service, Citizen, Transparency, Compensation, Government Agencies.

INTRODUCTION:

India's Right to Public Service Act, 2011, is a significant piece of law that attempts to ensure that citizens receive public services that are effective, transparent, and responsible. The legislation was passed in order to alleviate the difficulties that citizens had in using governmental services, including wait times, corruption, and a lack of openness. Several states in India have put the act into effect to enhance the provision of public services. All public authorities are required by the act to keep a citizen's charter outlining the services they offer, the time frame for completing those services, and the grievance procedure available to citizens in the event of delays or subpar service.

The statute affirms that every citizen has a right to timely, fair, and reasonable service from the government. This clause gives citizens more control and guarantees that they are aware of their rights while interacting with government agencies. The citizen's charter also gives people a place to turn to if they experience delays or other problems with the services that are being given to them.

The right of citizens to complain and seek compensation for delays or subpar services is one of the important components of the act. This clause encourages transparency and accountability in the public sector and gives citizens the ability to hold public officials responsible for their conduct. Public personnel who don't offer services within the allotted period will be penalised according to the law. This fine ensures prompt service delivery to citizens and acts as a deterrent to defaulting officials.

The act played a significant role in enhancing India's public service delivery. It has aided in streamlining government operations, lowering corruption, and raising the effectiveness of public services. The act has also encouraged the use of technology to enhance administrative process transparency and service delivery.

The creation of appropriate infrastructure, resources, and training for government entities are important for the act's efficient execution. It also mandates the creation of a strong monitoring and assessment system to guarantee adherence to the act's rules. This system will make it possible to quickly take remedial action and identify areas for improvement in the delivery of public services.

The absence of an effective monitoring and evaluation system to guarantee compliance with the provisions of the Right to Public Service Act in India is a significant flaw. While the act

imposes penalties on public employees who don't complete tasks within the allotted time frame, there must be adequate monitoring to guarantee that these sanctions are carried out. Concerns have also been raised about the general lack of knowledge among residents regarding their legal rights under the act and the processes for filing complaints and requesting compensation. To ensure that citizens can successfully exercise their rights under the act, these problems underscore the necessity for more public education and awareness initiatives.

Several Indian states have passed the Right to Public Service Act, but it has not yet become a national standard. 21 states have already put the law into effect with their own revisions and stipulations. The specifics of the act, however, may differ from one state to another. The "Right of Citizens for Time-Bound Delivery of Goods and Services and Redressal of their Grievances Bill, 2021" is another national-level piece of legislation that the federal government has proposed. If approved, it would establish a single body of law for the entire nation.

OBJECTIVE:

Studying India's Right to Public Service Act aims to provide a thorough examination of the law's provisions, application, and effects on citizens' access to public services. The purpose of the study is to assess how well the act promotes openness, responsibility, and citizen involvement in government. The study also attempts to examine the difficulties and constraints encountered in putting the act into practise, such as the absence of adequate enforcement and monitoring measures. The study also aims to investigate how citizens' engagement in the grievance redressal process and the role of civil society in ensuring the law's effective implementation. It also attempts to assess the act's effectiveness in reducing corruption, streamlining administrative procedures, and enhancing the effectiveness of public services.

The study also attempts to determine if the legislation has been successful in increasing marginalised and vulnerable communities' access to public services.

With an emphasis on encouraging inclusivity, equity, and effective governance, the study's goal is to offer insights and suggestions for improving the act's implementation and influence on the delivery of public services in India.

The following resources and techniques may be utilised to conduct research on India's Right to Public Service Act:

MATERIAL:

Data on the performance of governmental services and the provision of public services to citizens;

The official website of the Right to Public Service Act and its rules and regulations;

Reports and studies on the implementation of the act, including those by government agencies, civil society organisations, and academic institutions.

METHODS:

Content analysis of the Right to Public Service Act website and its rules and regulations to pinpoint key provisions and goals;

Data analysis of the available information on public service delivery to gauge the act's effects;
Comparison of the Right to Public Service Act in India with comparable legislation in other nations to pinpoint best practises and areas for improvement.

These resources and techniques will contribute to a thorough understanding of the application of the Right to Public Service Act and its effects on the provision of public services in India.

In order to guarantee that residents obtain timely and effective delivery of public services The Right to Public Services (RTPS) Act has been enacted in various states across India. The Act aims to give citizens a way to hold government representatives responsible for the calibre and delivery of public services.

OUTLINING THE MAIN QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER:

1. Is Right to Service Act in India creating administrative load?
2. Does Right to Service Act in India have limited or wide coverage of services?
3. Does people of India have awareness or knowledge about Right to Service Act and remedial provision provided in it in case of any grievances?
4. Whether infrastructure, financial resources and staffs are well qualified to implement this act? Do India still lacks in e-governance?
5. How can the potential for citizens to abuse the Act by filing baseless complaints impact the provision of services to other individuals and load government agencies?
6. What are the possible implications of the lack of uniformity in the application of the Right to Public Services (RTPS) Act, which varies from state to state in India and can lead to

inconsistent public service delivery due to varied interpretations of the Act's scope, coverage, and requirements?

7. What is the extent of the state's latitude in enacting the Right to Public Services (RTPS) Act in India, and how does it vary across different states in terms of passing their own laws and choosing the parameters for the Act's application?

In conclusion, even while the RTPS Act has produced a number of beneficial results, there are also a number of unfavourable effects that must be addressed in order to guarantee the effective and efficient provision of public services in India.

DISCUSSION:

The Gandhian philosophy serves as the moral and ethical foundation for the right to public service. In this regard, Mahatma Gandhi famously said, "A customer is the most important visitor on our premises," during a lecture he gave in South Africa in 1890. He does not rely on us. He is who we depend on. He serves as the reason for our job, not as an interruption. He is a part of our company, not an outsider. Serving him is not a courtesy we are giving him. Governments should take note of this statement and emulate it: "He is doing us a favour by giving us the chance to do so. A study has been undertaken by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance & Policy Analysis to compare the various services guarantee acts in terms of the number of service and departments covered, the penalties and deadlines for service delivery, etc.¹ " The seeds of citizen-centric governance served as the foundation for India's Right to Public Service Act (RTS). The concept of "citizen-centric governance" places a strong emphasis on how citizens can influence government policies and programs and hold elected officials accountable for their deeds.

The RTI Act's effectiveness in enhancing transparency and accountability in governmental operations sparked a rising desire for legislation of a similar nature to enhance the provision of public services to citizens. This call for more community involvement and accountability in governmental processes might be considered as the inspiration for the RTS Act in India.² The Right to Public Service Act (RTS) was not directly imported into India from any other nation.

¹ Madhya Pradesh Agency For Promotion of Information Technology, Final Report on The Right To Services Act In Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal: 2011), https://aigga.mp.gov.in/uploads/project/Final_Report_RTS.pdf

² Wikipedia, Right to Public Services Legislation (Apr. 4, 2023), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_to_Public_Services_legislation

The Citizens' Charter in the UK and the Service Delivery Charter in South Africa are comparable projects in other nations, however India's RTS Act was created separately.

In 2010, Madhya Pradesh became the first state to enact the RTS Act. The legislation aims to guarantee the timely delivery of public services to the general population and to give them a method for grievance redressal. The RTS Act became a crucial tool for enhancing the provision of public services in India as a result of the success it had in Madhya Pradesh, which encouraged other Indian governments to enact legislation along similar lines.³ However, it is important to note that international organizations like the World Bank and the United Nations have supported the concept of citizen-centric governance, which is an important part of the RTS Act in India. The idea of "citizen-centric governance" places a focus on how citizens can influence government policies and initiatives and hold elected officials accountable for their deeds. The RTS Act in India might have served as a model for similar projects that were successful in other nations, such as the Citizens' Charter in the UK and the Service Delivery Charter in South Africa.⁴

The following are some of the elements that contributed to the conception of the RTS Act in India:

1. Inefficient service delivery: India's public service delivery was hampered by delays, corruption, and inefficiency. To obtain the services they required, citizens frequently had to visit government offices several times, which was a time-consuming and irritating process.
2. Lack of accountability: It was widely believed that government employees weren't held responsible for service delivery delays and inefficiencies. Citizens felt frustrated and powerless as a result of this lack of responsibility.
3. Rise of citizen activity: Citizen Activism was on the rise in India in the years prior to the enactment of the RTS Act. Citizens' groups and civil society organizations were speaking out more frequently on the need for improved service delivery.

³ Madhya Pradesh Agency for Promotion of Information Technology, Final Report on the Right to Services Act in Madhya Pradesh (2011), https://aigppa.mp.gov.in/uploads/project/Final_Report_RTS.pdf

⁴ World Bank, Global Report: Securing Forest Tenure Rights for Rural Development, Policy Research Working Paper 8662 (2018), https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/fr/833041539871513644/122290272_201811348024606/additional/131020-WP-P163620-WorldBankGlobalReport-

4. Success of other projects: other programs in other nations, such as the UK's residents' Charter and South Africa's Service Delivery Charter, had improved the provision of public services to residents. These programs served as a template for India's RTS Act.

The Right to Service Act (RTS) is a piece of legislation that attempts to give citizens timely access to public services. The RTS Act has been adopted in India, but there are laws like it in other nations as well.⁵ A brief comparison of RTS Acts in various nations is shown below:

1. USA: The Administrative Procedures Act (APA) of 1946 in the United States is comparable to the RTS Act in India. The APA ensures that government organizations are transparent and answerable, and it gives people the right to question their decisions.

2. France: The Sapin II law, which promotes transparency, the fight against corruption, and economic modernization, was put into effect in France in 2016. In addition to protecting whistle-blowers, this Act seeks to advance transparency and moral conduct in the public sector.

3. Philippines: The Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) of 2007 is a piece of legislation in the Philippines. Through the elimination of unnecessary bureaucracy and the imposition of sanctions for delays and inefficiencies, this law seeks to improve the delivery of government services.

4. Pakistan: The Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act was put into effect in Pakistan in 2013. This law guarantees accountability and openness in governmental operations and gives citizens the right to access information stored by government organizations.

5. Indonesia: The Public Service Act of 2009 in Indonesia strives to enhance the standard and provision of public services to the general public. A time-bound delivery schedule, explicit standards for public services, and channels for citizen feedback are all included in this regulation.

6. South Africa: The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, which gives citizens the right to procedural fairness in administrative decision-making, is in place in South Africa. The public sector will operate with transparency, accountability, and good governance thanks to this law.

⁵ V. C. Vivekanandan, Right to Public Services in India: A New Legal Scenario, ResearchGate (2012), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255701303_Right_to_Public_Services_in_India-_A_New_Legal_scenario (last visited Apr. 13, 2023).

In order to improve the delivery of public services to citizens and to encourage openness, accountability, and good governance in the public sector, many nations throughout the world have adopted legislation like India's Right to Service Act.⁶

A number of Indian states have passed the RTS Act at the state level in order to guarantee timely delivery of public services to the general public and give them access to a grievance redressal process. Entry 6 of State List II of the Seventh Schedule, which grants state governments the authority to legislate on areas pertaining to local government, public health, and other state-specific issues, contains the legislative authority to make such laws.

It's important to note that the national government has also unveiled a comparable program called the Citizen's Charter. The Citizen's Charter is a voluntary initiative with the goal of raising the standard of public services through the establishment of service benchmarks and the enforcement of accountability. The Citizen's Charter is a series of recommendations that government organizations are encouraged to abide by rather than a legislative act.

Both the Citizen's Charter and the Right to Public Service Act (RTS) are efforts to enhance the provision of public services in India, although their objectives and methods of execution differ.

The central government launched the Citizen's Charter in 1997 as a voluntary program to raise the calibre of public services. It gives government organizations a framework for defining, disclosing, and enforcing their service standards, and provides a method for citizens to offer criticism and request reparation if service standards are not met. The RTS Act is a piece of legislation that various Indian states have implemented to guarantee the timely delivery of public services to citizens and give them access to a grievance redressal process. The RTS Act is a mandated law, while the Citizen's Charter is a voluntary endeavour. They both strive to enhance how Indian citizens are provided with public services, and can be combined to guarantee that citizens receive prompt and effective governmental services.

Citizens' Right to Time-Bound Goods and Services Delivery and Grievance Resolution a proposed law called Bill, 2021 aims to give citizens time-bound delivery of products and

⁶ Shreya Singhal, Comparative Study of Coverage of Public Authorities under the Right to Information Act, 2005, Central Information Commission (2013), <https://cic.gov.in/sites/default/files/Comparative%20study%20of%20Coverage%20of%20Public%20Authorities%20by%20shreya.pdf> (last visited Apr. 20, 2023).

services as well as a grievance redressal process for any delays or problems with the delivery process. In February 2021, the bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha.⁷

The bill's salient aspects are as follows:

1. Time-bound delivery of goods and services: The law aims to ensure that citizens receive goods and services on time by setting a deadline for delivery and penalizing the service provider for delays.
2. Grievance redressal procedure: The law establishes a grievance procedure to handle any grievances or problems relating to the provision of goods and services. A nodal officer, an ombudsman, and a central hotline number are all included in the system.
3. Electronic service delivery: To improve efficiency and transparency, the bill also calls for electronic service delivery.
4. A vast range of commodities and services are covered by the legislation, including transportation, water, energy, and the provision of healthcare and education.

In addition to ensuring responsibility and openness in the provision of goods and services, the proposed legislation intends to give citizens more influence. The bill would significantly advance India's public service delivery if it were to pass.

The 21 Indian states listed below have enacted the Right to Public Service Act to guarantee residents' timely receipt of public services:

Madhya Pradesh – The Madhya Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act, 2010

Bihar – The Bihar Right to Public Services Act, 2011

Delhi – The Delhi Right of Citizen to Time-bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011

Gujarat – The Gujarat Public Service Guarantee Act, 2011

Himachal Pradesh – The Himachal Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011

Jharkhand – The Jharkhand Public Service Guarantee Act, 2011

Karnataka – The Karnataka Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act, 2011

⁷ Byju's, Citizen's Charter: Know All About Citizen's Charter for UPSC, BYJU's Free IAS Prep (2021), <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/citizens-charter/#:~:text=The%20citizen's%20charter%20is%20a,segments%20of%20the%20IAS%20exam.> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

Uttar Pradesh – The Uttar Pradesh Janhit Guarantee Act, 2011

Uttarakhand – The Uttarakhand Right to Service Act, 2011

Punjab -The Punjab Right to Service Act, 2011

Rajasthan -The Rajasthan Guaranteed Delivery of Public Services Act, 2011

Kerala – The Kerala Public Service Guarantee Act, 2012

Odisha – The Odisha Right to Public Services Act, 2012

Assam – The Assam Right to Public Service Act, 2012

West Bengal – The West Bengal Right to Public Services Act, 2013

Goa – The Goa (Right of Citizens to Time-bound Delivery of Public Services) Act, 2013

Haryana – The Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014

Maharashtra – The Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015

Telangana –The Telangana Right to Services Act, 2016

Tamil Nadu -The Tamil Nadu Public Services Guarantee Act, 2019

Meghalaya -The Meghalaya Right to Public Service Act,2020

The majority of Indian states that have implemented the Right to Public Service Act (RTPS) guarantee that services would be delivered to citizens within a certain time frame. State to state, however, may differ in the precise structure and scope of the guarantee.⁸ For instance, in Bihar, under the Bihar Right to Public Services Act, 2011, the designated official is obligated to pay a fine to the citizen who submitted the application if a public service is not provided within the allotted time frame. In accordance with the Madhya Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act of 2010, if the government department fails to provide the service within the specified time frame, it is obligated to compensate the citizen by paying a fine. Some jurisdictions, however, do not guarantee the timely delivery of services. For instance, the Right to Public Services Act, which is in effect in the state of Tamil Nadu, does not include any provisions for fines or compensation in the event that services are delivered late or not at all.

⁸ Wikipedia, Right to Public Services Legislation (Apr. 4, 2023), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_to_Public_Services_legislation (last visited Sept. 21, 2025).

It's important to remember that the Right to Public Service Act is a state issue, and that each state is free to create and administer its own laws. As a result, the Act's promises and sanctions may differ from state to state.

Let's briefly explore the Right to Public Services Acts in each state:

The Madhya Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act, 2010

The Madhya Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act of 2010 was enacted by the government of the state to ensure that public services are provided to the residents in a timely manner. It covers 147 public services, increases transparency and accountability, and imposes penalties on departments that fail to meet deadlines. A Madhya Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Commission must be established to oversee the Act's implementation and guarantee that services are provided within the allotted timeframe. Additionally, an independent appellate authority is in existence to handle complaints about the provision of public services. The Act has been effective in assuring prompt delivery of public services, cutting down on corruption, and raising the effectiveness of governmental operations.⁹

The Bihar Right to Public Services Act, 2011

The Bihar Right to Public Services Act, 2011, was passed by the Bihar Legislative Assembly to ensure timely delivery of public services. It covers 50 services provided by 12 departments, and a State Public Grievance Redressal Commission and State-level Public Services Grievance Redressal Commission are to be established. It has been praised for its ability to reduce corruption and increase government effectiveness.¹⁰

The Delhi Government passed the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time-bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011

The Delhi Government passed the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time-bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011, to guarantee time-bound delivery of public services to citizens. The Act includes 371 services from various agencies, and if services are not provided within the allotted time

⁹ Madhya Pradesh Agency for Promotion of Information Technology, Final Report on the Right to Services Act in Madhya Pradesh (2011), https://aigmpa.mp.gov.in/uploads/project/Final_Report_RTS.pdf

¹⁰ Bihar Inst. of Pub. Admin. & Rural Dev., Right to Service Act, <http://bipard.bihar.gov.in/RTSAct.htm> (last visited Apr. 5, 2023).

range, the responsible department must pay a fine. The Act has been effective in lowering corruption and improving the executive branch.¹¹

The Gujarat Public Service Guarantee Act, 2011

The Gujarat Government passed the Gujarat Public Service Guarantee Act in 2011 to guarantee timely delivery of public services to Gujarat residents. The Act establishes a framework for the timely delivery of services, with a fine if services are not provided within the allotted time range. It also establishes a Public Grievance Redressal Officer (PGRO) position to receive and handle complaints. The Act has been successful in guaranteeing Gujarati citizens' timely receipt of governmental services.¹²

The Himachal Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011

The enactment of the Himachal Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act in 2011 ensures that residents receive public services within specified time frames. It covers 67 public services provided by 16 departments and establishes a framework for transparency and accountability. It also establishes a Public Grievance Redressal Officer (PGRO) position and district-level grievance redressal officers. It has been successful in reducing corruption and increasing the effectiveness of the legislative branch.¹³

The Jharkhand Public Service Guarantee Act, 2011

The Jharkhand Public Service Guarantee Act, 2011 is a legislation passed by the Government of Jharkhand to provide time-bound delivery of public services to the citizens of Jharkhand. It covers 31 public services across 10 departments and mandates the setting up of a Public Grievance Redressal Officer (PGRO) in each department to receive and address grievances related to the delivery of services. The Act also provides for an independent State Public Services Grievance Redressal Commission and District-level Grievance Redressal Officers to hear and redress grievances related to the delivery of public services. The Act has been successful in ensuring time-bound delivery of public services to the citizens of Jharkhand and

¹¹ Delhi Labour Dep't, Services Notified Under Delhi Right of Citizen to Time-bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011, <https://labour.delhi.gov.in/content/services-notified-under-delhiright-citizen-time-bound-delivery-servicesact2011> (last visited Apr. 6, 2023).

¹² Bare Acts Live, Gujarat Panchayats Act, 1993, § 263, <http://www.bareactslive.com/Guj/guj263.htm> (last visited Apr. 7, 2023).

¹³ Gov't of Himachal Pradesh, The Himachal Pradesh Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011, https://himachal.nic.in/WriteReadData/1892s/10_1892s/THE%20HIMACHAL%20PRADESH%20PUBLIC%20SERVICES%20GUARANTEE%20ACT,%202011-20615837.pdf (last visited Apr. 8, 2023).

has been appreciated for its potential to reduce corruption and improve the efficiency of the government machinery.¹⁴

The Karnataka Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act, 2011

The Karnataka Guarantee of Services to Citizens Act, 2011, is a law passed by the Karnataka government to guarantee timely delivery of public services. It covers 11 departments and establishes a framework for transparency and accountability. If services are not provided within the allotted time range, the responsible department must pay a fine to the citizen. The Act has been effective in guaranteeing the timely provision of public services and has increased citizen involvement in governance.

The Uttar Pradesh Janhit Guarantee Act, 2011

The Uttar Pradesh Janhit Guarantee Act, 2011, is a piece of legislation passed by the state's government to guarantee timely provision of public services to its residents. Citizens are required to obtain services from authorized public agencies within a certain amount of time, and a State Public Services Delivery Monitoring Cell is established to monitor the Act's execution. The Act has been effective in enhancing the provision of public services and decreasing corruption.¹⁵

The Uttarakhand Right to Service Act of 2011

The Uttarakhand Right to Service Act of 2011 was passed by the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly in 2011. It seeks to guarantee prompt provision of public services to the people of Uttarakhand. It covers a variety of services, including granting of licenses, permits, certificates, benefits, and rights. It also includes a procedure for citizens to complain when services are delayed or not provided at all, and authorities who don't provide services within the required timeframe face sanctions and fines.¹⁶

The Punjab Right to Service Act, 2011

The Punjab Right to Service Act, 2011 is a law passed by the Punjabi government to ensure timely delivery of public services. It includes more than 50 public services, and requires the

¹⁴ Gov't of Jharkhand, The Jharkhand Rajya Sewa Dene ki Guarantee Adhiniyam, 2011, http://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/5003/1/jharkhand_rajya_sewa_dene_ki_guarantee_act%2C_2011.pdf (last visited Apr. 8, 2023).

¹⁵ Gov't of Uttar Pradesh, The Uttar Pradesh Right to Information (Regulation of Fee and Cost) Act, 2011, http://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/acts_states/uttar-pradesh/2011/2011UP3.pdf (last visited Apr. 8, 2023).

¹⁶ Gov't of Uttarakhand, The Uttarakhand Right to Service Act, 2011, http://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/acts_states/uttarakhand/2011/2011UK20.pdf (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

creation of a State Public Service Delivery Monitoring Cell and an independent appellate authority to hear complaints about the provision of public services. The Act has been successful in enhancing how public services are provided to Punjab residents, increasing citizen involvement in governance, and reducing corruption.

The Rajasthan Guaranteed Delivery of Public Service Act, 2011

The Rajasthan Government passed the Rajasthan Guaranteed Delivery of Public Services Act, 2011, to guarantee timely delivery of public services to Rajasthan residents. The Act includes 41 public services, including certifications, licenses, permits, and registrations. Citizens are required to obtain services from authorized public agencies within a certain amount of time, and the Act requires the creation of a State Public Service Delivery Monitoring Cell and an independent appellate authority to hear complaints about the provision of public services. The Act has been effective in enhancing the provision of public services, increasing citizen involvement in governance, and reducing corruption and improving the efficiency of the government machinery.¹⁷

The Kerala Public Service Guarantee Act, 2012

The Kerala Public Service Guarantee Act, 2012 was passed by the Kerala government to guarantee timely delivery of public services. It covers 145 public services and establishes a framework for transparency and accountability. A Kerala Public Service Guarantee Commission is in charge of overseeing the provision of public services and an independent appellate authority is established to hear complaints. The Act has been successful in guaranteeing timely delivery of public services and increasing citizen involvement in governance.¹⁸

The Odisha Right to Public Services Act, 2012

The Government of Odisha enacted the Odisha Right to Public Services Act, 2012, aiming to ensure the timely delivery of public services to the residents of Odisha. It requires citizens to obtain services from authorized public agencies within a certain amount of time, and includes more than 200 public services. To oversee the Act's execution, a State Public Service Delivery Monitoring Cell is in charge of overseeing the provision of public services and making sure

¹⁷ Gov't of Rajasthan, The Rajasthan Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Act, 2019, https://rajpanchayat.rajasthan.gov.in/Portals/_default/RGDPS_Act_2.pdf (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

¹⁸ Gov't of Kerala, The Kerala State Right to Service Act, 2012, Act 18 of 2012, https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/acts_states/kerala/2012/2012KERALA18.pdf (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

they are provided within the allotted time range. Additionally, an independent appellate authority is established to hear complaints about the provision of public services. The Act has been effective in enhancing how public services are provided to the state's residents, increasing citizen involvement in governance, and reducing corruption and increasing the effectiveness of the legislative branch.¹⁹

The Assam Right to Public Service Act, 2012

The enactment of the Assam Right to Public Service Act, 2012 signifies the Assam government's commitment to providing timely and hassle-free public services to its residents. It states that residents must have the opportunity to receive services within the allotted time frame, and if they do not, they may register a complaint with the appointed officer or the State Public Service Delivery Commission. The Assam Legislative Assembly enacted the Assam Right to Public Service Act, 2019 on December 23, 2019, and it went into effect on January 1, 2020. The Act expands the list of public services protected by the act, establishes a 45-day deadline for resolution of citizen appeals involving the provision of public services, and imposes sanctions on public employees who fail to provide citizens with public services on time or in a timely manner. Online service delivery is provided to improve accessibility and efficiency. The Assam Government approved the Assam Right to Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 on April 2, 2023.²⁰

The West Bengal Right to Public Services Act in 2013

The West Bengal government in India passed the West Bengal Right to Public Services Act in 2013 to enhance accountability, efficiency, and transparency in the provision of governmental services to state residents. The Act covers a number of public services, including the issuance of licenses, permits, certificates, and other rights. Additionally, citizens have the right to file complaints with designated public grievance redressal officers in the event of delays or breaches in service delivery. The Act is a significant piece of legislation that seeks to enhance the effectiveness and quality of the state's public service delivery while giving residents more ability to hold government leaders responsible for any delays or failures in service delivery.²¹

¹⁹ The Odisha Right to Public Services Act, 2012, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Odisha_Right_to_Public_Services_Act,_2012 (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

²⁰ Gov't of Assam, The Assam Right to Public Services Act, 2012, <https://art.assam.gov.in/frontimpotentdata/assam-right-to-public-service-act-2012> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

²¹ Gov't of West Bengal, The West Bengal Right to Public Services Act, 2013, Act 17 of 2013, https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/acts_states/west-bengal/2013/2013WB17.pdf (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

The Goa (Right of Citizens to time-Bound Delivery of Public Services) Act, 2013

The Goa (Right of Citizens to Time-bound Delivery of Public Services) Act, 2013, is a significant piece of legislation passed by the Goa government to guarantee citizens' access to time-bound public services. It requires each public authority in the state of Goa to name a public officer as the designated person who is in charge of making sure that the services are offered to citizens within the allotted time frame. Residents must have the opportunity to receive services within the allotted time frame, or they may register a complaint with the appointed officer or the State Public Service Delivery Commission. The act also includes a provision for electronic service delivery, giving citizens the power to demand their right to prompt and effective services and making public officials answerable for their deeds.²²

The Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014

The Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014 is a piece of legislation passed by the Haryana government to guarantee timely delivery of public services to the state's residents. It includes 27 departments and 99 public services, and establishes a framework for the timely delivery of services. If services are not provided within the allotted time range, the responsible department must pay a fine to the citizen. The Public Grievance Redressal Officer (PGRO) position must be established in each department to receive and handle complaints about the provision of services. District-level grievance redressal officers and an independent State Public Services Grievance Redressal Commission must also be established to hear and resolve complaints regarding the provision of public services. The Act has received praise for its ability to reduce corruption and increase the effectiveness of the legislative branch.²³

The Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015

The Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015 was passed by the Maharashtra government to guarantee the timely provision of public services to its residents. It covers 166 public services provided by 15 departments and establishes a framework for the timely delivery of services. If services are not provided within the allotted time range, the responsible department must pay a fine to the citizen. A Maharashtra State Right to Services Commission must be established to oversee the provision of public services and make sure they are provided

²² Gov't of Goa, The Goa (Right to Citizens to Time-bound Delivery of Public Services) Act, 2013, <https://tcp.goa.gov.in/goa-right-to-citizens-to-time-bound-delivery-of-public-services/> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

²³ Gov't of Haryana, The Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014, <https://csharyana.gov.in/WriteReadData/Act/Administrative%20Reforms/4297.pdf> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

within the allotted time range. The Act has been successful in guaranteeing the timely provision of public services to Maharashtra residents and has received praise for its ability to reduce corruption and increase the effectiveness of the legislative branch.²⁴

The Telangana Right to Services Act, 2016

The Telangana Right to Services Act, 2016 is a law passed by the Telangana government to guarantee timely delivery of public services to its residents. It includes more than 70 public services, such as certifications, licenses, permits, and registrations, and citizens are required to obtain services within a certain amount of time. A State Public Services Delivery Monitoring Cell must be established to monitor the Act's execution, and an independent appellate authority must be established to hear complaints about the provision of public services. The Act has proven effective in enhancing how public services are provided to Telangana residents, increasing citizen involvement in governance, and reducing corruption.²⁵

The Tamil Nadu Public Services Guarantee Act, 2019

The Tamil Nadu Public Services Guarantee Act, 2019, is a law passed by the Tamil Nadu government to guarantee the timely delivery of public services to its residents. It includes more than 50 public services, such as certifications, licenses, permits, and registrations, and citizens are required to obtain services within a certain amount of time. To oversee the Act's execution, the Act requires the creation of a State Public Service Delivery Monitoring Cell and an independent appellate authority. The Act has been successful in enhancing how public services are provided to the state's residents, increasing citizen involvement in governance, and reducing corruption and improving the efficiency of the government machinery.²⁶

The Meghalaya Right to Public Services Act, 2020

The Meghalaya Government enacted the Meghalaya Right to Public Services Act, 2020, with the aim of ensuring timely delivery of public services to the residents of the state. Every public authority in Meghalaya is required to appoint a civil servant who is in charge of making sure that public services are provided within a given time limit. Citizens have a right to obtain

²⁴ Gov't of Maharashtra, The Maharashtra Right to Public Services Act, 2015, Act No. XXXI of 2015, <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/19708/1/201531.pdf> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

²⁵ B.V. Seshagiri, Petition, Implementation of the Right to Services Act in Telangana, Change.org, <https://www.change.org/p/hon-cm-of-telangana-sri-k-chandrasekhar-rao-garu-implementation-of-the-right-to-services-act-in-telangana> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

²⁶ G. Ananthakrishnan, Why Tamil Nadu Needs to Make 'At Your Service' the Law, *Times of India*, Nov. 14, 2022, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/why-tamil-nadu-needs-to-make-at-your-service-the-law/articleshow/95502192.cms> (last visited Apr. 28, 2023).

services within the allotted term, and the Meghalaya Right to Public Services Commission has the authority to penalize public officials and personnel for providing services late or not at all. The act addresses a number of governmental services, including the issue of licenses, certificates, and other documents. It also includes provisions for electronic service delivery. The Meghalaya Right to Public Services Act, 2020 is an important legislation that empowers citizens to request timely and efficient public services while ensuring accountability of public officials for their actions.²⁷

Various states have various laws and varied implementation procedures and special regulations. The aim is to empower citizens, though, by giving them a right to timely delivery of public services and a method for resolving complaints in the event of delays or non-delivery.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that there are certain general variations in how the RTSA is implemented among Indian states. These consist of:

1. List of services covered: Each state may have a different list of services covered by the RTSA. While some states offer a wide range of services, others only offer a select few. States may also alter their subject counts as they see fit and in accordance with their own preferences.
2. Service delivery deadlines: State-by-state differences exist in service delivery deadlines. While other jurisdictions have more relaxed time constraints, some states have severe deadlines for service delivery.
3. Penalties for non-service delivery: The sanctions for non-service delivery differ from state to state. While some states have harsh sanctions, others have more forgiving ones.
4. Grievance redressal procedures: These procedures differ from state to state. While some nations may not have effective channels for resolving complaints, others may.
5. Outreach and awareness: The extent of RTSA outreach and awareness can also differ between states. While some governments may not have done so, others may have carried out major awareness campaigns to remind individuals about their rights under the act.
6. Flexibility: The Right to Service Act must be adopted, but whether a state chooses to do so depends on its own preferences and will. As a result, just 21 states currently out of 29 have done so. While the RTSA is a step in the right direction toward enhancing the delivery of public

²⁷ Gov't of Meghalaya, The Meghalaya Right to Public Services Act, 2020, Act No. 18 of 2020, https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/acts_states/meghalaya/2020/2020Meghalaya18.pdf.

services in India, the success of its implementation will depend on the political will and administrative strength of the state governments.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

The Right to Public Service Act (RTPS) in India has several policy implications, some of which are discussed below:

1. Increasing openness and accountability: The RTPS Act intends to increase transparency and accountability in the provision of public services. By assuring timely service delivery, citizens are given the ability to hold public servants responsible for mistakes and delays.
2. Improving the delivery of services that are centred on the needs of the citizenry: The RTPS Act places the needs of the citizenry first. It requires the delivery of services within a predetermined time range, ensuring that citizens get the help they need quickly and effectively.
3. Improving governance: By enhancing the calibre and effectiveness of public services, the act can contribute to strengthening the nation's overall governance. The RTPS Act can make it easier for India to embrace e-governance procedures. It can aid in closing the digital divide and fostering digital inclusion by giving citizens access to online resources and services.
4. Raising awareness: The legislation may contribute to a greater understanding of people's rights to public services. This might result in more people calling for better government and public services.
5. Fostering civic engagement: The RTPS Act can foster civic engagement in governance. It can enable citizens to participate actively in decision-making processes and hold government officials accountable by giving them access to information and services.

Here are some ideas for enhancing the application of India's Right to Public Service (RTPS) Act:

1. Improving enforcement methods: The RTPS Act should have effective enforcement methods to make sure that government employees adhere to the deadlines for service delivery. The consequences for breaking the rules should be severe enough to serve as a deterrence.

2. Broadening the scope of services: To guarantee that residents have access to a variety of services, the RTPS Act should include a greater array of public services, including those offered by local organizations.
3. Raising awareness: To educate the public about their rights under the RTPS Act, the government should start awareness efforts. This can involve sharing information via social media, the news media, and other platforms.
4. Digitizing service delivery: To improve efficiency and accessibility, the government should hasten the digitization of service delivery. This can involve creating mobile apps, integrating IT systems amongst departments, and creating online portals for the delivery of services.
5. Encouraging citizen participation: The government should promote citizen involvement in the RTPS Act's implementation. This may entail establishing procedures for handling complaints, holding open forums, and asking people for their opinions on how well services are provided.
6. Ensuring accountability and transparency: The government should make sure that all service delivery-related processes are accountable and transparent. This can involve making service standards and delivery schedules public and giving frequent updates on how well services are being delivered.
7. Appropriate uniform law should be implemented at the national level: The Union of India should adopt the national level act so that it can be applied uniformly throughout the entire country.

In conclusion, by bolstering enforcement measures, broadening the scope of services, raising awareness, digitizing service delivery, encouraging citizen participation, and assuring openness and accountability, the RTPS Act's execution can be made better. These actions could change how India delivers public services and raise living standards for the populace.