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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Other State Matter

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 11/6/21

Andhra changes service rules of IAS, IPS officers

Puts All Under CM Scanner

Gopi.Dara@timesgroup.com
11/6/21

Vijayawada: In a major move that would put the career prospects of IAS and IPS officers directly under the control of a politician, the AP government on Saturday issued orders changing the service rules of the All-India Service Officers. With this, the chief minister now has the authority to accept annual performance appraisal reports. So far, the chief secretary was the accepting authority for appraisal reports of IAS and IPS officers. This is perhaps the first

time in the country that a state government has come out with orders granting the power of "accepting authority" to the chief minister. Under the new orders, the chief secretary is the "reviewing authority" of annual appraisal reports of All-India Service Officers, while the heads of departments are the "reporting authority". The final decision whether or not to accept the appraisal reports rests with the chief minister.

Sources, however, said the validity of these orders is doubtful and the Department of Personnel and Training in the central government, which controls All India Service officers, may not accept this if anyone challenges the orders.



In the orders (GORT No 726 dated April 10), the state government said that the changes have been made to "ensure uniformity and control of the executive over the administration for effective public service delivery."

The GO further said the "government hereby prescribe the reporting, reviewing and accepting authorities for writing of performance appraisal reports of all the All India Service Officers of AP cadre". It then described which cadre official should report to whom. In all these cases the accepting authority, however, is the chief minister.

As per the GO, heads of departments and the chief secretary will review the performance reports while the chief

minister will have the accepting power. However, the secretary to the governor is exempted from the reporting and reviewing authority. The appraisal of the secretary to the governor will be accepted by the governor.

District collectors are now put under the chief commissioner of land administration (CCLA), while the others, including heads of departments are kept under the control of the respective department secretary. Former bureaucrats, however, are divided over whether the GO would stand to legal scrutiny. Some fear that the administration will weaken from inside as IAS and IPS officials may not honour the hierarchy as their appraisal would be cleared by the chief minister himself.