

Lokayukta in India: A Watchdog Against Corruption

Lokayukta is an anti-corruption ombudsman institution in India, established to investigate and address grievances related to corruption and maladministration in state governments. The concept of Lokayukta was inspired by the Ombudsman model in Scandinavian countries.

Structure and Appointment:

- Lokayukta: A statutory body appointed by the Governor of a state, typically a retired judge or a senior bureaucrat.
- Uplakayukta: Some states have Uplakayukta, who assist the Lokayukta.
- Tenure: The Lokayukta typically holds office for 5 years .

Powers and Functions:

- ***Investigate Complaints***: The Lokayukta investigates complaints against public servants, including ministers, MLAs, and bureaucrats.
- **Inquire into Corruption**: The Lokayukta inquires into allegations of corruption, abuse of power, and maladministration.
- **Recommend Action**: The Lokayukta recommends action against errant officials, including prosecution or disciplinary action.
- **Public Hearings**: Some Lokayuktas conduct public hearings to ensure transparency .

Variations Across States:

- Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013: The Act provides for the establishment of Lokpal at the Centre and Lokayukta in states.
- State-specific Laws: Some states have their own Lokayukta Acts, with varying powers and structures .

Challenges and Limitations:

- Limited Powers: Lokayuktas often face limitations in investigating and prosecuting corruption cases.
- Lack of Autonomy: Lokayuktas may face interference from state governments.
- Awareness and Accessibility: Many citizens are unaware of the Lokayukta's role and powers .

The Lokayukta plays a crucial role in combating corruption and promoting accountability in India. Strengthening this institution can enhance transparency and trust in governance.