

Apurva Chandra

Former Secretary, Government of India

Email: apurvachandra.ias@gmail.com | Phone: +91 98186 72326

Professional Summary

Apurva Chandra is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the 1988 batch of the Maharashtra cadre. He superannuated from service on 30.09.2024. With over 36 years of experience in public administration, policy formulation, and industrial development, he has served in various high-profile roles in the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra. His key areas of expertise include Petroleum and Natural gas, Defence acquisitions, Labour reforms, Industrial policy, Healthcare, and Media and Broadcasting. He has played a pivotal role in regulatory reforms, ease of doing business initiatives, and promoting innovation across sectors.

Key Leadership Roles

Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Tenure: 2024

- **Key Achievements:**

- Led policy initiatives that resulted in a 25% increase in the National Health Mission budget (Rs.8,000 crore) to focus on primary healthcare.
- Launch of U-WIN portal to digitize vaccination records for 30 million mothers and 27 million children born annually. In future the records will be linked to Anganwadi records (Poshan portal) and School health records to give a continuance of Digital Health records.
- Eased the import process for life-saving drugs from developed regulatory regimes without requiring local clinical trials.
- Spearheaded the expansion of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, providing Rs. 5 lakh medical cover for citizens above 70 years without any income limit.
- Implemented significant changes in the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS), streamlining diagnostic referrals and rationalizing medical procedure costs.
- Conceived the Medicity Scheme to increase private-sector hospital beds and boost Medical Value Travel by creating Integrated medical townships with common facilities to be managed by a SPV.

Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

Tenure: 2021-2023

- **Key Achievements:**

- Established the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) National Centre of Excellence and formulated the AVGC policy, leading to job creation in the sector.
- Launched the Broadcast Sewa Portal, integrating approval processes with the Department of Telecom and Home Ministry to streamline approvals for broadcast channels.
- Fully computerized the Press Registrar General's office and the Central Bureau of Communications, reducing periodical registration times from months to days and making billing paperless and timely.
- Shifted government media campaigns from traditional platforms (Newspapers and TV) to social media, increasing campaign effectiveness.

Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment

Tenure: 2020-2021

- **Key Achievements:**

- Formulated the Rules for the four labour codes passed by Parliament, modernizing India's labour regulations.
- Launched the Aadhaar based e-Shram portal to register over 30 crore unorganized workers, making it the largest database of its kind.
- Updated occupational safety and fire safety guidelines in the construction and manufacturing sectors after 50 years.
- Introduced a scheme for COVID-19 victims, providing 90% wages for life to the families of ESIC workers.
- Scheme formulated to provide social security to gig workers after extensive consultation with e-platform providers.

Director General (Acquisition), Ministry of Defence

Tenure: 2017-2020

- **Key Achievements:**

- Oversaw capital acquisitions for the Indian Armed Forces, including high-profile procurements like Rafale fighter jets, S-400 missile systems, Apache attack helicopters, Chinook helicopters, MH-60 helicopters, Naval frigates and submarines.

- Promoted domestic manufacturing under the “Make in India” initiative, leading to the local procurement of bulletproof jackets, hand grenades, and light bulletproof vehicles and Towed gun artillery systems as well as local manufacture of C-295 Aircraft.
- Negotiated joint ventures with Russia for the domestic manufacture of AK-203 assault rifles.
- Formulated the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020, which emphasized indigenization and ‘Make in India’ after extensive consultation with Armed forces and Industry both domestic and foreign.
 - New chapters introduced for acquisition of Electronics and IT systems, Leasing and Post contract management.
 - RFP and standard contract documents revised.
 - Procurement of innovative products on single vendor basis allowed which has led to a flourishing Defence startup ecosystem.
- Reforms in offset and Custom Duty regime of defence imports to reduce costs.

Principal Secretary (Industries), Government of Maharashtra

Tenure: 2013-2017

• Key Achievements:

- Positioned Maharashtra as a top destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), attracting investments from global firms such as Fiat Chrysler, Mercedes, General Electric, LG, Haier and Goodyear
- Spearheaded the development of the Aurangabad Industrial City (AURIC), India’s first greenfield Industrial Smart City under the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC). AURIC is the finest industrial infrastructure in the country today.
- Formulated key industrial policies, including the Electronic Policy, Retail Policy, IT Policy and Single window policy aimed at boosting investment in Maharashtra.
- Organized the Maharashtra Investment Seminar during the 2016 Make in India Summit at Mumbai, securing MoUs worth INR 8 lakh crore and generating 30+ lakh potential jobs.
- MAITRI established with officers of all relevant departments to provide a one stop solution for any issues faced by any industrial establishment.
- Mini Cluster Scheme for MSMEs launched to improve productivity with high end equipment and infrastructure.
- Led the push to improve the “Ease of Doing Business” country rankings published by the World Bank (based on the cities of Delhi and Mumbai) from 142 to 60.

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

Tenure : Two Stints, 7 years in total

- **Key Achievements:**

- Played a crucial role in key reforms such as Administered Price Mechanism (APM) dismantling, introduction of bidding for oil exploration blocks under NELP and coal bed methane, deregulation of marketing, introducing ethanol blending program and linking Aadhaar with LPG distribution to curb pilferage.
- Led the scheme to provide free LPG gas connections to poor households, significantly improving access to clean cooking fuel. The scheme is now popularly known as Ujjawala covering 10 crore households.
- Oversaw the establishment of common carrier infrastructure for gas pipelines and the development of LNG terminals.
- Framing and implementation of policy for allocations of Natural gas to economically strategic sectors.
- Oversaw the marketing operations of IOC, BPCL, HPCL and Gas marketing of ONGC and OIL.

Commissioner (Sugar), Government of Maharashtra

Tenure : 2004-2006

- First projects under PPP for establishment of bagasse based cogeneration power plants. Today installed capacity of Maharashtra sugar industry is 2250 MW.
- First ethanol manufacturing units for blending in petrol.

International Roles

- **Chair**, Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing leadership in addressing global labour issues. (2020-21)
 - **Chair**, Committee A at the World Health Assembly, for finalising Global health policies for the year 2024-25.
 - **Head**, Indian delegations in arms procurement with USA, France, Russia and Israel during tenure at the Ministry of Defence. (2017-20)
-

Board Positions Held

- GAIL (India) Limited
 - Petronet LNG
 - Mahanagar Gas Limited
 - MOIL Limited
 - Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC)
 - SICOM Limited
 - Maharashtra Airport Development Corporation
 - Maharashtra Maritime Board
-

Educational Qualifications

- **Master's in Structural Engineering**, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
 - **Bachelor's in Civil Engineering**, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
 - **Diploma in Business Finance**, Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India
 - **Accountancy Certificate**, London School of Economics
-

Notable Contributions

- **Ease of Doing Business:**
Played a crucial role in simplifying procedures across multiple sectors, promoting transparency, and improving regulatory frameworks for industries.
- **Promoting Innovation and Investment:**
Led initiatives across Government ministries to foster innovation, attract private sector investments, and support domestic manufacturing through policies that encourage "Make in India."
- **Labour and Employment Reforms:**
Modernized labour laws, improved worker safety standards, and expanded social security for gig and informal sector workers through key reforms and digital initiatives.
- **Public Health Initiatives:**
Spearheaded the expansion of healthcare access, introduced digital healthcare initiatives, and improved regulatory frameworks for the import of life-saving medicines.
- **Industrial Development:**
Contributed to the development of large-scale industrial infrastructure projects and facilitated Maharashtra's emergence as a preferred investment destination.

