

Summary

- A strong database enumerating the levels and trends of a nation's material and social resources has always been a requisite for the formulation of government policies. India has a federal structure of Government and the Indian Statistical System functions within the overall administrative set up of the country. India has a long tradition of both data collection and dissemination, made even more extensive by the requirements of planned economic development. Sound statistics lead to informed decision-making and effective formulation and monitoring of public policies.
- The Indian Statistical System functions within the federal structure of the Government of India. Responsibility for administration is divided between the central government and the provincial or state governments. Under the Indian Constitution, duties are divided according to a three-fold classification of all subjects to the Union List, the State List or the Concurrent List. The Concurrent list represents the subjects where both the Union and State Governments can operate, and it includes the subject Statistics.
- A further division of responsibility at the central and state levels, by subjects or groups of subjects is among the different central ministries and among the state government departments respectively. The Indian Statistical System, therefore, may be treated as both decentralized and centralized system.
- The main features of the Indian Statistical System can be thus summarized as:
 - (a) The Administrative Statistics System is its major component;
 - (b) It is laterally and vertically decentralized;
 - (c) In it, not only data collection but also compilation, processing and preparation of results are carried out by the states for most of the sectors; and
 - (d) It is the State-wise results, which flow to the Centre, and statistics at the all-India level are obtained as the aggregates of State-level statistics.
- India had a head start in statistics over many other countries—both developed and developing. India does not lack in expertise or in understanding. All that is needed is to integrate and consolidate the

available expertise and resources to initiate concerted action. Indian Statistical System is still very unresponsive to data demands of non-government organisations. Though the data situation in India is improving, the rapidity of change needs to be further increased to meet the challenges of the constantly evolving situation.