**Subject**

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Govt. to reform decades old Civil Service structure

ISLAMABAD: The government has covered another milestone by reforming the decades-old Civil Service structure with the objective to transform it into a merit-based, depoliticized cadre of professionals.

The Civil Service (Retirement from Service) Rules, 2020, to review the performance of civil servants had also been finalized which entailed mandatory performance review of all civil servants after twenty years of service. In addition, regular reviews will be done even after 20 years of service. The government will have the option to retire civil servants after 20-year service after following the prescribed procedure. In the retirement rules, it said Section 13 of the Civil Servants Act envisages that civil servants shall retire after twenty years of service, as may be directed by the competent authority and where no such direction is given, on reaching sixty years of service.

The option of retirement after 20 years of service had never been exercised by the government, resulting in an assured career path to 60 years, discouraging initiative and competition. Moreover, there was a tendency of PAS/PSP officers to stick to one province for years at length, virtually becoming provincial service which resulted in a lack of variety of experience and loss of impartiality and neutrality. This concept of All Pakistan Services has been seriously compromised and to overcome this issue, a new rotation policy was being introduced.

Under these reforms, the first allocation of all officers would be made outside the province of domicile and there would be no transfer from the province of the first allocation on any ground. It was made mandatory to stay outside the home province in BS 17 & 18 (males 5 years, females 3 years). For the promotion to BS 19, the conditions are two years’ service in hard areas essential for promotion to BS 20 which would not be applicable to female officers and these hard areas would be notified by the Establishment Division. Presently, Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan have been notified as the hard areas. Under these reforms, no PAS/PSP officer would be allowed to serve for more than ten years continuously in a province/Islamabad, while transfers to other provinces or Islamabad would be made on completion of ten years.

# Questions:

1. How much of a difference will it actually make in the performance of Civil servants after implementation of these reforms, if any?
2. In your opinion what are the positive and negative points in these reforms, please state? Suggest any changes you prefer in these reforms to make them more effective.

# Answer 1

These new reform will bring immense changes in performance of civil servants , after this reform civil servant shall be retired after 20 year of their service and with complete review of their performance. This reform is to introduce a system of internal accountability to promote competent officers and weed out inefficient people.

This new introduction of system will impact the performance of civil servants as they have to become more competent and efficient or else they will be at risk, under these reforms the civil servant would have to work outside of their province domicile for some time. Performing in their own province domicile is not that much challenges due to their social influence and political support, while working outside of their province domicile is much challenging than working in their province. This reform is to discourage political support and encourage merit based job.

* The difference in performance of civil servants would be that they will work in new workforce diversity which will enhance their competencies. New workforce mean new set of personalities and competencies, in a diverse workforce there is great chance for civil servants to learn or observe different skills as there are different mind sets and different way of performing efficiently.
* The civil servants would perform their duties with full commitment as they have to be assessed by their supervisors after completion if their service time which will make them eligible for promotion
* Working in hard states will help them in their developmental stages and train them for future work.
* Working for a specified period of time will bring a sense of responsibility and accountability as they will be reviewed after completion of their service time, as these reviews will matter in their promotion so they will try their best to perform to get a satisfactory review.
* The objective of civil servants would be to get promoted as under these reforms promotion will be done after serving in hard areas means mostly under develop areas , where civil servants will face many challenges and face hard time , for which every civil servant will try hard to get through every hard time in front of him/her.
* Before the implementation of reform there was no evaluation of civil servants, there was lack of versatility in workforce, lack of experience and training and developmental stages but after implementation of this reform there will be variety of skills, new experienced people among them which will be helpful for civil servants to acquire new set of knowledge, experience, and social developments in them.

# Answer 2

In my opinion the positive side of these reforms is that there will be a depoliticized cadre of professional, there will be a new system design on merit based where every civil servant would be selected based on merit and performance. The main plus side of this reform is that the civil servants will work for only 20 years with complete review rather than working for 60 year straight , which will change the perception of civil servant they will become more devoted toward their work . Due to transfer into another province the civil servants will go through many changes as they will face new challenges and situation which will make them adjustable in any situation. This reform will make a civil servant learn many new set of skills and enhance their performance due to hard work. The main focus over here is to put a civil servant work for short time (20 years) to give an efficient output.

The drawbacks are that due to rotation of jobs the civil servants who might be fit for a position or job will be changed to another position as according to their time limit of service so there is no guarantee that what new incumbent is capable of either the new position is fit for him/her. New place and new job will make a civil servant nervous for some time till he/she gets adjust in that environment which might disrupt the efficiency of work as he/she might don’t have that much experience for performing as old one. This reform will weed out people who are inefficient but there is chance of turnover ratio as they don’t feel secure , when an employee is not secure at job he/she might don’t give the expected result as they already knew the consequences. Giving a secure job might decrease this problem. This reform will bring versatility but there might be issue of experience which matters a lot for giving an efficient result.

# Suggestion

* Giving salary according to their performance rather than their scale.
* Providing a security of job for civil servants which will make them feel safe in turn which will make them committed to their job with passion.
* Weeding out inefficient employees is good step but in return provide training and development to them would be more good , because they already knew their job description and working way just enhancing them will provide better result.
* Working in another province is important but making sure to select the right person for right place of transfer , sometime people work efficient in their comfort zone but putting them in different place will make them distracted as they will need time to get adjust in their new place first.
* Training and development programs should be encouraged to work on those weak areas of employees which is essential for their work.
* Performance review is important as they will get feedback for their work done but providing right guidance and leadership is also important to make sure that employee are on right path of track.