

A HURRIED AFFAIR

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Executive: Structure, Organization & Functioning ; Ministries and Departments of the Government

The process of reallocating employees of different categories to new local cadres that comprise seven zones and two multi-zones that were created after the reorganisation of districts in Telangana is turning out to be a controversial process. The employees are complaining that the process, being done in a hurried manner, has long-term implications for them. The government has initiated the process for reallocation three years after the Presidential Order — the Telangana Public Employment (Organisation of Local Cadres and Regulation of Direct Recruitment) Order — came into effect in 2018.

A study of the Presidential Order indicates that emphasis has been laid on nativity. But the government has drawn flak for considering seniority over nativity. The Presidential Order of 2018, which replaced the old one of 1975, elaborates on the measures that should be followed for choosing local cadres. It says there should be “preference of the persons concerned for allotment to any local cadre where feasible...”, whereas the Government Order of December 6, 2021, directs the heads of departments to prepare lists of all the allocable employees as per seniority in each of the erstwhile local cadres for new local cadres. Close to two lakh employees, other than those working in the Secretariat and in the offices of the heads of departments like commissionerates/directorates, are likely to be affected by the reallocation process.

Several employees were given posting on an ‘order to serve’ basis consequent to the creation of 33 new districts in place of the 10 that existed at the time of the bifurcation of united Andhra Pradesh. There is no clarity on whether they will be allocated to the new local cadres based on seniority or nativity. Moreover, transfer of the employees to the new cadres is also likely to affect the local status of their children as they would be considered non-locals in the new districts.

Most of the employees showed a preference for Hyderabad and districts like Ranga Reddy, Medchal Malkajgiri and Vikarabad. Several have opted to work in urban centres like Karimnagar, Khammam and Nizamabad if they fail to secure posting in the State capital or surrounding areas. This will lead to a saturation of employees in these areas and will leave no scope for recruitment in the near future as vacancies will arise only in the remote areas. Moreover, reallocation of employees to different districts, zones, and multi-zones is tantamount to issuing fresh appointment orders to them and not transfers, which would give them scope to return to their native places at least at some point in the future.

“The preferences of employees are not being considered. Any appeal can be made only after they join duty in the new posting. Where is the guarantee that the government will consider employees’ pleas once they give their joining reports,” asked A. Padma Chary, honorary chairman of the Telangana Udyogula Sangam. He requested the government to appoint a political committee to hear the pleas of employees and resolve them before going ahead with the reallocation process.

The Opposition parties have charged the government with harassing employees rather than solving their issues. BJP State president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who staged a protest in support of the agitating employees, was arrested and sent to remand but was subsequently released. Telangana Congress president A. Revanth Reddy has also expressed his displeasure at the government and extended his support to the employees’ cause. It is over to the government now.

rajeev.madabhushi@thehindu.co.in

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