

**Increase pay but less corruption please**  
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I refer to the malaysiakini report Up to 35% pay hike for civil servants.

The prime minister's announcement that the government will accede to a pay rise increase as requested by Cuepacs is music to the ears of the 1.2 million civil servants. The timing couldn't be more perfect. With the coming general election around the corner, the civil servants and their families will surely be inclined and indebted to vote for their political masters who increased their pay.

The private sector will have to follow suit, and businessmen will take advantage of the pay hikes to increase the price of the foodstuff, transport and fuel. Inflation will rear its ugly head again and the poor and downtrodden will suffer more to put food on their table for their families to eat.

Those who live on the outskirts of towns like the farmers, fishermen and odd-job workers and those who doesn't have fixed monthly incomes will have to tighten their belts with rising inflation once the price of goods and services increase after the pay hike for civil servants takes place.

The public as a whole can understand why the lower levels in the government service with their deserve a pay rise. But does it commensurate with better delivery systems and fewer leakages in government funds as what is happening right now?

With better IT technologies, one is surprised how our government service is not up to mark as compared to other developed countries. The civil service should be trimmed off its fat to make it more lean and mean like its private sector counterparts. This will make them competitive in the global market that we are living in.

Numerous complaints in the newspapers about unfriendly frontline civil servants when dealing with public, inordinate delays in getting jobs done in government offices and palms that have to be 'greased' in order for files to move faster are still being talked about by the public. We have also heard of senior government officers not being accountable for their lack of supervision when big government projects or building suffer defects due to shoddy workmanship.

Surely accountability and responsibility start from the top and these top officers should be ultimately responsible if their underlings don't do their job properly within government budgets and procedures. The auditor-general's yearly reports have consistently stated how government funds are being drained due to the carelessness of those responsible for supervising big projects.

Surprisingly, no one is held accountable for their misdeeds.

We, the public, who pay the salaries of government servants via our taxes can only hope that with the increase in their salaries, the civil servant's work productivity will be increase and there will be less corruption and abuse of power. Government servants need to work like their private sectors counterparts - the latter do not have the former's security of tenure until retirement age. The former should know how lucky they are working in government service and should give their best when doing their work

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