

Civil service should not downsize
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Setting the civil service optimum size is a daunting task due to the manpower increase in every sector, said outgoing Public Service Department (PSD) director-general Tan Sri Ismail Adam.

Brushing aside a perception that the public sector should downsize, he said the definition of civil service should be viewed with an open mind as it was not limited to about 250,000 employees in each ministry.

He said the 1.2 million civil servants accounted for 10 per cent of the country's total workforce of about 11 million.

"Teachers alone made up 38 per cent of 1.2 million workforce, and this does not include other public sectors like the police, soldiers and healthcare services," said Ismail who will be retiring tomorrow.

"My successor will inherit and face similar challenges in setting the civil service optimum size," he said at the meet the media session in Putrajaya today.

He will be replaced by Defence Ministry secretary-general Abu Bakar Abdullah from Thursday.

Ismail, 59, began his career in the public sector in 1972 as assistant director (commercial) at the International Trade and Industry Ministry.

In an effort to obtain a suitable size for the civil service, Ismail said it could be done by changing the training system, using new technologies and adopting a rotation system like in the public section of the police force.

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