

> IMPROVING THE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Raise the standards for civil servants

NST- 19/1/2007

THE Chief Secretary to the Government's strident, no-nonsense approach of rewarding only the deserving, regardless of seniority, and punishing the wrongdoers and the corrupt in the civil service augurs well for the betterment of the civil service ("The good, the bad and the ugly sides of civil servants" — NST, Jan 14).

Generally speaking, most civil servants are "good" in the sense that they do not fall

within the small percentage of "rotten apples" in the service who deserve to be punished. On the other hand, neither can they be considered talented nor motivated enough to fall within the top five per cent or so who stand a fighting chance to qualify for the limited promotional posts.

Many in this middle category (who form the bulk of the civil servants) are content to maintain a standard of efficiency that does not fall below

the minimum level of efficiency that is acceptable or tolerated by the department to qualify for the normal annual increment.

Some in this category may even consider it a more viable proposition for better financial security during retirement than chasing after limited promotional posts that they consider out of their reach.

To substantially improve the efficiency of the delivery system of government depart-

ments, the minimum baseline standards of efficiency tolerated by the department has to be raised.

Those who do not buck up to meet the new minimum standards of efficiency should not be tolerated by the department, otherwise they would cause standards to backslide and set a lower benchmark for others to follow.

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