



Cabinet Reshuffle - The Highlights

Why in news?

\n\n

The PM has effected a reshuffle of his council of ministers.

\n\n

What are the major happenings?

\n\n

- \n
- The reshuffle has been perceived as a clear attempt to improve the capability quotient by bringing in new people with proven administrative experience.
\n
- **Bureaucrats** - Of the 9 new ministers of state, 4 were former bureaucrats and significantly three of them have been given independent charge of important ministries straightaway.
\n
- Two of them - Hardeep Singh Puri and Alphons Kannanthanam, are not even MPs.
\n
- Their mandate will be to single-mindedly focus on results without having to worry about nurturing a political constituency.
\n
- This is indicative of Mr Modi's desire to address concerns over talent deficit in his party to fill in key portfolios.
\n
- **Age Criteria** - The dropping of Kalraj Mishra is an indication that PM Modi is serious about the below 75-years cutoff.
\n
- **Benefit of Doubt** - Former railway minister Mr.Suresh Prabhu, who offered to resign in the wake of several rail accidents is now in charge of commerce and industry.
\n
- He has been given the benefit of doubt & it is hoped that he will bring a

more positive approach to trade issues and will be able to use exports as a genuine engine for domestic growth.

\n

- **The Gainers** - The PM has also rewarded the performance of a few of his existing ministers by promoting them to Cabinet rank or by giving additional responsibilities.

\n

- The biggest surprise was the elevation of Ms.Nirmala Sitharaman as defence minister.

\n

- She now becomes part of the Cabinet Committee on Security, along with External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, making it the first time that two women are on the top decision-making body.

\n

- Ms.Sitharaman takes over at a time of complex challenges for the ministry, notably the border tensions & the awaited big ticket purchases.

\n

\n\n

What are the criticisms?

\n\n

\n

- It is hard to understand why the vacated portfolios were treated as adjuncts - Skill development has been clubbed with the ministry of petroleum and water resources with road transport and shipping.

\n

- Strangely, the coal ministry has been grouped with railways, but the mines portfolio has been packaged with the rural development ministry.

\n

- There was also a hint of some political compulsions in the reshuffle with a clear eye on the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Business line

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT

Information is Empowering

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative