

941/931

The Hindustan Times

P-8

15-01-2015

Govt proposes raising retirement age of scientists from 60 to 65

Brajesh Kumar

brajesh.kumar@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The government has proposed raising the retirement age of scientists working in all ministries, departments and autonomous institutions from 60 to 65 years.

In a draft cabinet note that has been circulated to all ministries, the science and technology ministry has argued that such a move will help attract scientific manpower and that all institutions would be able to harness the expertise of scientists for a longer duration.

"Most of the scientists at 60 would be leading productive research groups and are involved in mentoring students and young scientists. It is therefore necessary to make use of the productive age of the scientists beyond 60 years so that the effective scientific strength and correspondingly the scientific wealth of the country get enhanced," the draft note said.

The decision will also bring in parity in service conditions including the retirement age of research scientists work-

THE NOTE OBSERVED SCIENTISTS ACROSS THE WORLD WORK AS LONG AS THEY ARE PRODUCTIVE AND THE GLOBAL AVERAGE AGE OF TOP SCIENTISTS WAS 70

ing in different arms of the government. While scientists working for Indian Council of Agricultural research (ICAR) and Indian Council of Medical Research retire at 62, those in other research institutions under the government retire at 60.

Again, the decision would do away with disparity between academicians, who retire at 65 and scientists working in R&D.

The note said that most research scientists across the world worked as long as they were productive and the global average age of top scientists is 70.

In October last year, the former science and technology minister Jitendra Singh had said the government was considering raising the retirement age of scientists working under his ministry from 60 to 62.

Lack of money, men led to DRDO delays

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: While the government claims its decision to sack Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chief Avinash Chander does not merit controversy, the Centre had, last August, slammed the organisation over delays and cost overruns in key military programs.

The DRDO has come under repeated criticism from the government regarding delays. A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence report had flayed DRDO for chronic inefficiency.

HT took a look at the report and found ten projects with a combined sanctioned cost of ₹16,860 crore, were delayed by at least 5 years. Prominent reasons for delays include lack of infrastructure and technology, non-availability of indigenous raw material etc.

In 2009-10, the DRDO received 6.98% of the total defence budget, but it was reduced to 5.37% in 2013-14. As per government orders in 2001, the DRDO was sanctioned a strength of 7,932. The committee observed that as DRDO's projects grew, there was no increase in sanctioned manpower — around 7,809 scientists currently work in the organization.

Despite these setbacks, the organisation has achieved a lot, it was observed. With approximately \$14 billion spent in a decade (2002-12) DRDO developed various missiles, drones, radar systems and carried out research. In contrast, USA's unmanned aerial vehicle projects, cost \$14.18.

The committee suggested remedial steps including raising the budgetary provision, outsourcing development activities, close monitoring by stakeholders and changing the phased development approach to concurrent approach.

copy to -

1. Directorate office
2. Jt-Director (Ext.)
3. Dean/Jt-Director (Edu.)
4. Incharge PPT
5. Incharge OSI
6. Incharge CATAT

Dr. V. Anupam
15/1/15
I/c Periodical & DNA section