**Will the reshuffling work?**

[Muhammad Omar Iftikhar](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/muhammad-omar-iftikhar/)

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The social media was abuzz when the news broke out of Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad receiving the post of Federal Minister for Interior. It was the reshuffle that took the country by storm. Azam Swati became the Federal Minister for Railways and Dr. Hafeez Shaikh was given the coveted post of Minister of Finance. Perhaps Rasheed Ahmed’s experience and wit may neutralize the possible clash and conflict that may arise in the upcoming Lahore jalsa by Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). He will play an instrumental role in diluting any verbal attacks that will be hurled at the government.

The appointment of Brigadier (retd) Ijaz Shah as the Federal Minister for Narcotics Control was done upon his request. Shah was serving as the Federal Minister for Interior and was unable to do justice with the job because of his health issues. Moreover, the untimely death of his two brothers recently also had a major impact on his life.

Such a rearrangement in the federal cabinet’s structure can signal various outlooks. The Prime Minister wants to ensure that the new cabinet ministers perform their duties with diligence and provide the results the people of Pakistan have been waiting for. However, it may also be part of a broader game plan to confuse the opposition. The opposition is also not a rookie and understands the tactics being employed by the Prime Minister. It may also be that perhaps Imran Khan has finally chosen the right people for the job. Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad was always eyeing to work as the Minister for Interior ever since PTI came into power in 2018. However, the equation did not work in his favor. Now that the change has been made, Sheikh Rasheed may be able to live his dream and just might be good at this new official position. Furthermore, the Minister of Interior should be a person who knows how to handle the media, the opponents, and reply to questions diplomatically while sharing information on a need-to-know basis. Sheikh Rasheed, among all the possible choices, was the one having the acumen to achieve such goals. Time will tell if he can withstand the pressure from the opposition, and the one arising while working at such a delicate position while creating a synergy between other members. The decision to choose Azam Swati as the Federal Minister for Railways could prove to be a decent move. Reports state that Swati has smooth ties with some officials from the Chinese government. This will facilitate Pakistan and the PTI government to pursue and complete projects related to the railway that come under the umbrella of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This includes the rehabilitation and up-gradation of the Karachi-Lahore-Peshawar (ML-1) Railway Track that runs for nearly 1,872 km.

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The focus at the moment will be on three cabinet ministers; Sheikh Rasheed, Azam Swati, and Dr. Hafeez. Pakistan must have a sharp eye on internal affairs to counter security challenges. This is where Sheikh Rasheed will come into perspective. A robust mechanism is required to tackle challenges and implement plans in various sub-divisions of the Minister of Interior including FIA, National Crises Management Cell, NADRA, National Police Academy of Pakistan, Exit Control list among others. A change in leadership signals a rearrangement of strategies and tactics to pursue objectives. The role of Azam Swati as the Minister for Railways cannot be ignored. He must bring effective modifications to the railway system and the overall mechanism. There is an urgent need to overhaul the trains, for passengers and cargo, while ensuring the journey of passengers is safe. This will happen when the rail tracks are repaired and maintained continuously. While the safety of passengers is of the utmost concern, Swati also needs to focus on developing the train stations and crossings. They must be equipped with proper machines, signals, professionals, and an effective communication mechanism whereby connecting them with other railway stations and with emergency services such as the fire brigade, ambulance, and the police. As people commonly use train services to journey through Pakistan, especially during Eid, festive occasions, and holidays, the railway system must overcome any bottlenecks for growth while leading to an increase in revenue and services while providing ease and satisfaction to the passengers.

The Ministry of Finance, under Dr. Hafeez Sheikh, needs to immediately make plans and take corrective actions to provide relief to the people. Dr. Hafeez should work with a competent team to brings positive results in agriculture, manufacturing, capital markets, trade, transport, energy, health, population, education. The objective must be to reduce inflation and create a positive balance of payments.

*The writer is an independent researcher, author and columnist*