

Assam Regularizes Jobs of 7,234 Teachers

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government in Assam used computerised lottery to post 7,234 teachers across 10 districts.

The appointment letters for these teachers will be uploaded on the websites of education or associated departments from where they can download and join their assigned schools on June 27.

The selected 7,234 teachers were among 38,000 candidates who passed the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET). They were selected on the basis of their marks and on whether were passing or appearing for their Bachelor/Diploma of Education (B Ed/D Ed) exams, a must under the Right to Education Act.

Education minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said six leading educationists oversaw the lottery, conducted on Saturday, as neutral observers. “The lottery was done at least twice for these 10 districts to offset any technical or human error. In the case of (western Assam’s) Barpeta district, the lottery was done four times,” Sarma said on Sunday.

The highest number of teachers — 2,619 — was posted in western Assam’s Dhubri district, bordering Bangladesh. The least, 48, was in north-central Assam’s Darrang district. “The entire process was video-recorded, and anyone who has doubts can obtain the footage through RTI,” he said.

Officials said the district from where a candidate applied was taken into consideration when the computerised lottery was conducted. At least 30% of the appointed teachers were women, as per norms.

Sarma said 30,000 posts of teachers are vacant in Assam, but they cannot be filled up as the state does not have enough candidates with a B Ed degree or diploma.

“We can, in keeping with our pre-poll promise, appoint the remaining 30,700 TET-passed candidates temporarily working under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan... We are making arrangements so that they can acquire the [B Ed/D Ed] degree through distance learning,” Sarma said.

Appointment and regularisation of teachers was one of the saffron party’s election promises. This was the second major step since Sarbananda Sonowal’s BJP-led alliance government took charge on May 24.

Last week, the education department made college and higher education free for students belonging to families whose combined annual income was less than Rs 1 lakh. This took effect from the current academic session.

“The response in rural and semi-urban areas has been so tremendous that private colleges have sought a similar scheme for them as they are not getting enough students,” Sarma said.

The government, he said, has also decided to make education from higher secondary to university level free for differently-able students from the current session.

“There is no family income ceiling for such students. They will also be given the benefit irrespective of their academic performance,” Sarma said.