

The Telegraph

Assam to regularise teacher jobs

Guwahati: The Assam government today announced regularisation of jobs of 11,278 TET-qualified contractual teachers by the year end.

The announcement was made by education minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at his official residence here this afternoon, saying the process will start on Wednesday and end by December.

“We will be issuing newspaper advertisements on August 31 for regularisation of 5,144 posts in the ME (middle english) and 6,144 posts in LP (lower primary) sections. In July we had regularised 7,234 posts. Regularisation of TET-passed candidates will be done on the basis of merit and against vacancies,” Sarma said.

Clearing the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) is mandatory for getting teaching jobs in government schools. Around 38,000 TET-qualified teachers are working under Sarba Siksha Abhijan in Assam on contract. Middle english covers Classes VI to VIII while lower primary means Classes I to V. The regularisation of posts will not cover the Sixth Schedule autonomous council areas — Karbi Anglong, Dima Hasao and the Bodoland Territorial Council.

“They will be announcing their own schedules very soon,” Sarma said, adding that steps have been taken in accordance with the decision of the first cabinet meeting under chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, held soon after he took charge on May 24 , on phasewise regularisation of jobs.

Sarma, who is also handling the finance portfolio, said it is their commitment to absorb all TET-passed candidates in the government sector but appealed for patience on part of the candidates. “It’s a commitment we have made in the budget. But I appeal for patience. The budget is till March. You can ask us how much we have achieved or not in April,” Sarma said.

The minister presented the first full budget (Rs 2,880.91 crore deficit budget) of the new government on July 26 and it was notified on August 23. With this round of regularisation, a total of 18,000-plus TET candidates will be permanently absorbed in government schools. “If we include the Sixth Schedule areas the number will go up by another 4,000 to 5,000,” Sarma said.

The minister's announcement came within hours of the All BTAD LP and Upper Primary Contractual TET Teachers' Association demanding that the BTC immediately pay them their salaries for the past 15 months and regularise their posts.

A total of 3,311 teachers were appointed for lower primary and upper primary classes through TET in the BTAD on February 10 last year. The BTC had appointed these teachers on contractual basis and they were paid a monthly salary of Rs 8,000. However, these teachers received salaries for only the first three months, after which they have been working without pay.

Around 800 teachers from among these have been transferred out of the BTAD and have been receiving salaries.

"We were appointed on a contractual basis and our contract was to be renewed every six months. While our contract has been renewed for the third time now, we have not received our monthly salaries for the past 15 months. We had approached the BTC to solve this problem. But it said our salaries are paid from the development funds of the council and at present it lacks sufficient funds. The BTC will pay us once it has the funds," said Sanjay Sutradhar, a teacher and general secretary of the association, in Guwahati.

The association threatened to stage a protest at Kajalgaon in Chirang on September 5 if the state government and BTC do not respond to their demands.

"How long will we continue this way? We had even approached state education minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and he said he would take up the matter with the BTC. Since the BTAD is a part of the state, the state government should intervene so that we receive our pending salaries and our posts are also regularised," Sutradhar said.