

The Hindu

16 years on, NGO moves HC again as 26,000 school teacher posts lie vacant

Sixteen years after the Delhi High Court directed the government and the municipal agency to recruit teachers for their schools in a time-bound manner to ensure zero vacancy at the commencement of each academic year, at least 26,000 posts of teachers are still lying vacant still.

Social Jurist, an NGO, through advocate and activist Ashok Agarwal has moved the High Court once again demanding action against the government and the three municipal corporations for “sitting over the recruitment process”.

The petition seeks action against government officials responsible for “deliberate and intentional disobedience” of orders of a Division Bench of the High Court to ensure zero vacancy at the commencement of each academic year in schools.

‘Failure of government’

“Failure on the part of the government of Delhi and the MCD to provide adequate number of teachers adversely affects more than 21 lakh students and is a violation of their fundamental right to education,” the petition says.

In 2001, on a petition filed by Social Jurist against the Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board, the Delhi government and the Municipal Corporation, the High Court had set a schedule for appointment of teachers to ensure that all posts are filled by beginning of July every year.

In 2010, on a contempt petition, the court had said the recruitment process is slow but appointment of teachers was taking places anyway. It, had, however, granted liberty that if the State does not recruit teachers, the court can be approached again.

In figures

Now, Social Jurist has sought revival of its contempt petition saying the State and its agencies are not slow in the recruitment process but are “actually sitting over it”.

“It is submitted that as many as 15,40,691 students are studying in 1,011 schools run by the government of N.C.T. Delhi, 3.29 lakh students are studying in 719 primary schools run by North Delhi Municipal Corporation, 2,86,000 in 579 primary schools run by SDMC and 3.50 lakh students are studying in 387 primary schools run by East Delhi Municipal Corporation. Thus, a total of 25,05,691 students are studying in 1,977 schools run by the government of Delhi and three MCDs.

“26,031 (this does not include 9,000 posts created by the Delhi government) vacant posts of teachers in Delhi government and three municipal corporation-run schools result in depriving these students of their fundamental right to receive quality education,” it said.