

OHeraldO

Contract workers threaten to move court against recruitment of linemen

VASCO: As many as 453 contract workers, presently serving with the State Electricity Department, have decided to approach the court seeking a stay on the recruitment of new linemen by ignoring them. Alleging that the department has recruited candidates having no proper knowledge of the line helper work, the contract workers have challenged the department to take fresh physical and practical test along with the serving contract workers to ascertain who is fit for the job -- the serving contract workers or the new recruits.

The workers told the reporters on Tuesday that they have been serving the department for the last several years with the hope that they would be absorbed as permanent employees as and when vacancies arose or new posts are created. "However, when new posts were created, Power Minister Milind Naik recruited 641 candidates and that too most of them from his home constituency, by playing vote bank politics," the workers alleged adding, that the minister "ignored 85 percent of the serving contract workers." "At the time of creating the new posts, 490 contract workers were serving the department, of whom only 37 have been absorbed and the remaining 453 workers have been unjustly and unfairly ignored," they claimed.

"When we joined the department as contract workers, we were assured that within two years or at least after completion of five years of services we would be regularized. However, without giving any justification, the department filled the 641 line helper posts, denying the opportunity to serving 453 contract workers. All these years we have slogged, and at time even without salary for months together, hoping that our services would one day be regularized. But we were wrong as department after using us has filled the posts with new people as line helpers," said a contract worker.

Earlier, the workers met Power Minister Milind Naik at his residence at Bogda, Headland Sada on Tuesday morning, to convey him their grievances. Thereafter, they spoke to the reporters.

The workers said that the meeting with Naik did not yield any result as such they would move the court against the new recruitments.