

AG to review contract posts

Scores of casual and contract appointments made in government departments, public sector undertakings and other autonomous bodies over the years would come up for a thorough scrutiny of the Accountant-General (AG) soon. The AG (Economic and Revenue Sector Audit) has apprised the State government of its proposal to review the transparency, fairness and regularity of the system in vogue for engaging such employees.

The Finance Department has directed all heads of departments and others concerned to promptly furnish the records sought by the audit team and warned of stringent action against those refusing to comply with the directive. The first Cabinet meeting held on May 25 had directed all officers to report the vacancies in 10 days, but a majority of them have not responded to it, sources said.

Violation of norms

The audit is likely to expose the gross violation in norms in recruiting such employees and the delay of the authorities in reporting vacancies to the Public Service Commission. For instance, the lukewarm response of the authorities of the 13 universities in reporting vacancies, in spite of repeated reminders, had come in for criticism.

There were complaints that appointing authorities fill up vacancies with temporary employees, extend their tenure at will and refuse to furnish the details of the vacancies to the PSC, sources said. Rules have it that all appointments should be made only against sanctioned posts and through a transparent procedure, complying with reservation norms.

Contract employees do not have any claim for regularisation and it should be included as a term in the contract. Such contracts would expire once a regular employee joins duty. The contractual amount should not exceed the minimum basic pay of the post.

But it was found of late that there was no uniformity in the appointment and fixation of salary for such employees, mainly in institutions availing themselves of government aid and also autonomous bodies and they were allowed to continue in service by renewing their contract for years. The previous government had offered to revise the salary of those who working in contract for a fixed tenure, but such proposals are unlikely to be pursued, sources said.