

## **Devaswom Jobs only for Hindus in Kerala**

Recruitment by PSC to be confined to temple-administration related jobs

The recruitment to Devaswom, as proposed to be carried out by the Kerala Public Service Commission (PSC), will be restricted to Hindus and confined to Karayma (temple administration) jobs. The Oorayma (services related to the temple rituals) will remain exclusively in the domain of families who are traditionally engaged in the rituals.

The PSC is awaiting the government nod for conducting the recruitment following an announcement from the Devaswom Minister even as the Nair Service Society (NSS) has objected to it. For Devaswom jobs, only Hindus can apply. Candidates should produce certificates stating that they follow Hindu religion and believe in temple rituals.

The campaign that non-Hindus would be recruited for temple jobs was wrong and baseless, said K.S. Radhakrishnan, chairman, PSC.

Reservation norms

While recruiting, 68 per cent of the vacancies would be available in open quota and 32 per cent would be set apart for Hindu Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and the other eligible communities. Non-Hindu candidates cannot apply.

The PSC would pick suitable hands for the temple administration jobs such as clerks, engineers, doctors, accountants, and security personnel.

The Oorayma jobs would remain untouched. Staffing by PSC would ensure a free and fair recruitment process and ensure adequate reservation to eligible sections, he said.

The agency had been recruiting hundreds of employees to the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department in Malabar till recently without giving room for any complaints.

Draft rules

Once the government approved the draft Special Rules drawn up for the recruitment to Devaswom, which contained all details, including the necessary qualification for the candidates, the process would kick start, he said.

Incidentally, the previous UDF government, which had approved the draft rules, backtracked from the decision just before the agency notifying it. For Wakf Board, only Muslims would be eligible to apply. Recently, the board and the State government had decided to leave the recruitment to the PSC.

The agency was equipped for such specialised jobs. Being a constitutional body, only PSC could ensure the principles of social justice enshrined in the constitution in the recruitment process, he said.

The PSC, which recently took up the assignment of recruiting to universities, would issue advice memo to 450 candidates in first week of August, he said.