

The Indian Express

Filling of physically handicapped backlog: Ball now in government's court

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: AS the PSC has stated that it has no problem in acting as per the government directive on filling the Physically Handicapped (PH) backlog and on the Supreme Court-directed roster system of 1, 34 and 67, the matter has reached the government.

Though the Supreme Court had issued a directive to fill the backlogs as per the Persons with Disability (PWD) Act of 1996, some officials in the Social Justice Department (SJD) are either adamant in confounding the confusion or ignorant of the spirit of the Supreme Court ruling directing the government to fill all the backlogs by ensuring 3 per cent quota.

But once again leaving the hapless PH candidates on tenterhooks, the SJD has claimed before the Kerala Administrative Tribunal (KAT) in a statement that the PWD Act has given the government the freedom to decide on the roster points. The SJD has stated before KAT that since the date of commencement of the PWD Act - February 7, 1996, onwards, the 3 per cent reservation for PWD candidates had to be made on the total number of vacancies which were reported from the date of commencement of the Act irrespective of the fact of commencement of the post.

Moreover, it claims that the State Government had regularised several otherly abled persons who have temporarily worked under the government for six months and selected through Employment Exchanges during the year 2013 -14 and regularised 2,677 such persons under the scheme.

However, it has told KAT that complying with the roster point of 1, 34 and 99 as directed by the apex court is being examined and identifying the backlog and filling it along with the consultation of the PSC and the final decision has not been taken yet.

Another aspect challenged was roster points.

The Government of India has reserved 1, 34, 67 on every 100 point roster to persons with disability. But the State Government's roster system is 33, 66 and 99 and a section of the officials were trying to maintain the status

quo as if they had a vengeance against the job-seekers among the PH candidates.

However, when contacted, SJD Principal Secretary A Shajahan told Express that what had been said in the statement before KAT was based on the current rules. He said as the PSC has stated that the government could take a decision, the file would be forwarded to the Chief Minister.

“If the Chief Minister asks for placing it in the Cabinet, it will be done after getting it vetted by the Law Department. SJD has no problem in changing the roster point or filling the backlog as directed by the Supreme Court,” he said.