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MP: Blame it on Vyapam for teacher crunch, says Minister

The Madhya Pradesh government has blamed the cash-for-jobs Vyapam scam for the worst scenario of school education in the state, where 17,874 schools have one teacher each.

Minister of state for school education Deepak Joshi said, “A large number of teachers were found guilty in the Vyapam scam. There is a vacancy of 40,000 teachers but the scam delayed the recruitment.”

“The MP Professional Examination Board is conducting online exam for fair selection. We are hoping that all the posts will be filled by December.”

His comment comes days after union minister of state for human resource development Upendra Kushwaha tabled a report in Parliament on schools having one teacher. The report said there were 105,630 schools across the country where there was one teacher.

Madhya Pradesh is the worst performing state followed by Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

In the Vyapam scam, 175 people were arrested for clearing the Contractual School Teachers Eligibility Test of Grade-2 and Grade-3 conducted in 2011.

The Professional Examination Board (PEB) fraud — also known as the Vyapam scam from the board’s Hindi acronym — involved multiple rackets that helped candidates rig the examinations for money, including employing imposters to write test papers, manipulating sitting arrangements as well as supplying forged answer sheets.

The Supreme Court has asked the CBI to probe the multi-crore scam. Experts, however, said there was a problem in the government policy and it has nothing to do with the Vyapam scam.

Vikas Samvad’s MP convener Sachin Jain said, “The Vyapam scam broke out a few years ago but the problem of shortage of teachers is 25 years old. An attempt to take education towards privatisation is the reason behind this shortage.”

“The quantitative decisions related to school education are the second priority of the government. The crises are being created to give advantage to private institutes,” he said.

He said school teachers should be free from deputation.

Teachers also feel that there was an urgent need of using teachers only for educational purpose.

A teacher, on the condition of anonymity, said, “Due to shortage of teachers, especially in rural areas, we are overburdened. Many times, we get involved in different works like promoting any scheme of the government and election duties. Due to shifting of focus, students suffer hard.”