

The Hitavada

10 out of 15 posts of Caste Certificate Scrutiny Committee chiefs vacant

Implementation of various schemes relating to welfare of backward classes and especially the task of caste certificate scrutiny are affected due to wide-spread vacancies in State. As many as 10 out of total 15 posts of Chairpersons of Caste Certificate Scrutiny Verification Committees in State are vacant, it has come to fore.

As per the official data available with Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Research and Training Institute (BARTI), as on August 18, 2016, one-third of key posts of Caste Certificate Scrutiny Verification Committees in State are vacant. These include 10 out of total 15 posts of Chairpersons, and five out of total 15 posts of Research Officer and Member Secretary. Of a total 15 posts of Chairpersons, eight were already vacant and two more vacancies were created following the promotion of two Revenue Department officers to IAS cadre and their appointments to Kalyan Dombivali Municipal Corporation and Shikshan Shulka Samiti.

Social Justice Department required, and still requires, more posts to be created. "However, instead of heeding to the department-specific needs of new posts for different ranks, the Government succumbed to pressure exerted by Revenue Department. This resulted in creation of district-level committees. The decision benefited Revenue Department officials of the rank of Additional Collector. Still, many of them did not join. A couple of those who joined got promoted to IAS. As the posts were not created at required levels, the functioning of the department is getting affected," said an officer of Social Justice Department on condition of anonymity. Recently, court ordered to scrap district-level new committees, which left only 15 committees in State as was the case previously.

According to this officer, Revenue Department employees are reluctant to join Caste Certificate Scrutiny Verification Committees (CCSVC). Similar is the case with Police Department staffers. For 15 existing committees in State, there are 15 posts of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP). However, of these, only four are filled. Of a total 43 posts of Police Inspector, only 26 are filled. Of total 11 vacant posts of DySP in State, four are in Vidarbha -- Akola-II, Nagpur-I, Chandrapur-II, and Nagpur-III. Similarly, of total 17 vacancies of Police Inspectors in State, 11 are in Vidarbha with the same committees as in case of vacancies of DySP.

“Despite these vacancies, Social Justice Department officials are discharging their duties efficiently and clearing 80 per cent of the cases of caste certificate scrutiny. Remaining 20 per cent cases require verification for which these vacancies need to be filled,” said the officer. As far as Nagpur Division is concerned, Chairperon of a CCSVC is having additional charge of two more committees. Besides, three posts of DySP and nine posts of Police Inspector are vacant.

In Maharashtra, there are total 95 posts of District Social Welfare Officers including 36 with State Department, 36 with Zilla Parishad, 15 to take care of caste certificate validity issues, and eight at the level of Social Welfare Directorate and Backward Classes Commission. Of these also, 25 are vacant. With 20 of these existing officers likely to get promoted to the rank of Deputy Commissioner, vacancies of District Social Welfare Officers may increase further to 45. “Vacancies are badly affecting the functioning of Social Justice Department in spheres like implementation of scholarship schemes, hostel admissions, schemes of individual benefits, extending financial assistance to backward classes etc,” said an officer.