

The Morung Express

ANPSTA writes letter to Department of School Education on shortage of teachers

Kohima (MExN): Members of the All Nagaland Pre-Service Teacher Association (ANPSTA) from Kohima, Dimapur, Mokokchung, Wokha, Zunheboto, Phek and Peren districts have written to Nagaland's Commissioner & Secretary, Department of School Education (DoSE) and the Director of DoSE registering their protest against "back door appointments" of teachers as well as highlighting the need for recruitment of teachers through "open competitive exams."

These teachers stated that they have all passed the Nagaland Teacher Eligibility Test (N-TET) conducted in the years 2013 and 2016, and are eligible to be appointed as primary teachers in any school in Nagaland.

The letter, signed by the ANPSTA Action Committee Convener Bendangsunep Longkumer and Vice-Convener Avi Ringa, asserted that despite having passed the N-TET, no selection process for recruiting any from among them as primary school teachers has been done nor have any of them been appointed on the basis of merit to the said post. This has been apprised to the authorities on several occasions, it was informed.

Noting that "Many of the schools in our State are languishing due to shortage of teachers especially in the villages," the Action Committee of the ANPSTA stated that "No examinations to fill up many vacancies caused by the retirement of teachers in the Primary Schools has been conducted which is detrimental to public interest and the same compromises with the educational future of our nation in general, and our state in particular."

Backdoor appointments

The Action Committee of the ANPSTA alleged that over the "last several years" the DoSE has been appointing primary teachers "back-door on contract/adhoc/temporary basis in various schools in Nagaland without following the N-TET Guidelines and/or without conducting any selection process."

The teachers noted that such "pick and choose policy" has denied them the right to equal opportunity as enshrined in Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India. In that, the teachers called for "all such

appointments” to be “immediately cancelled/terminated” and recruitment made as per the provisions of the Constitution of India.

The body reminded that the DoSE had “frozen” the filling of posts falling vacant due to retirement, death, resignation, termination etc. from May 1, 2013. Such posts were notified to be transferred to deficit schools till such time the required Pupil Teacher Ratio (25:1) is attained in all schools in Nagaland. The recruitment to these would be made through the N-TET.

However, the ANPSTA alleged that the above mentioned notification was used as a means to “facilitate the rampant back-door appointments” by DoSE.

It demanded for all “back-door appointments” and “regularization” attempts of such appointees since 2013 be “set aside” and recruitment be conducted as per law.

The Action Committee also stated that if the representation to the DoSE is not considered within a period of 15 days, the ANPSTA will have to seek redressal before an appropriate court of law.