

The Hindu

TASMAC staff concerned about job security

Employees on the rolls of The Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation Ltd., (TASMAC) have expressed concern about their jobs and said that the salary increase announced by the State government does not mean much to them.

“Rather than announcing hikes, the government should have come out with a long-term strategy if all liquor shops were closed in the State,” said a TASMAC salesman who works at an outlet in Royapettah.

Earlier this week, Prohibition and Excise Minister P Thangamani announced in the State Assembly that salaries of supervisors, salesmen and assistant salesmen would be hiked by Rs. 500, Rs. 400 and Rs. 300 (per month) respectively. According to a TASMAC Union member, a supervisor at present earns Rs. 7,000 a month, while salesmen and assistant salesmen take home Rs. 5,200 and Rs. 3,900 respectively. A supervisor who works at a TASMAC shop in Anna Nagar, said, “The Chief Minister has given a firm commitment to wind up all shops in a phased manner. So they should slowly start accommodating eligible staff from here in other government departments in a phased manner. Tasmac has more than 25,000 employees so there should no be last minute alarm bell for us,” he said.

As on June 30, 2016, TASMAC has 7,204 shop supervisors, 15,677 salesmen and 3,753 assistant salesmen working in the retail vending shops on contract/consolidated pay basis. TASMAC had suspended operations of 500 retail vending shops from June 19, 2016. In its policy note for 2016-17, the corporation said, “Employees of the 500 shops have been redeployed in suitable positions within the corporation and no employee has been retrenched from service.”

“The real heat would be felt during the second phase of closure. We are concerned about our jobs on long term than the meagre salary hike that was announced,” said an employee working in an Anna Salai outlet.

He pointed out that TASMAC gives a ‘sales incentive’ for its employees.

“Why have sales incentive when the whole idea is to wind up all shops,” he asked.

One of the employees, who works at a shop near Tambaram, said, “If you look back, in 2003 a supervisor was paid Rs. 2,000 a month and salesmen were given Rs. 1,000.

In December 2003, the State increased this amount to Rs. 3,000 for supervisors and Rs. 2,000 for salesmen.” He added, “The salary growth has not been promising. The government should, in the coming months, work on a long-term action plan to accommodate TASMAL employees elsewhere.”

As on June 30 2016, TASMAL has 38 district manager offices, 43 Indian Made Foreign Spirits depots, 6,200 retail vending shops and 3,139 bars attached to the shops. Out of 43 IMFS depots, 29 are functioning in the godowns of TASMAL.