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TET confusion to affect 3k teachers

CHENNAI: The teacher eligibility test (TET) has put the prospects of about 3,000 teachers in jeopardy as they may lose their jobs in educational institutions across Tamil Nadu.

An order issued by the Tamil Nadu government in 2011 had provided five years for these teachers to pass the TET, failing which they would lose their jobs by November 2016. However, teachers argued that the test hadn't been conducted in Tamil Nadu for about three years due to an impending court case and it was unfair on them.

Moreover, they pointed out that they were appointed on the basis of a seniority list given by employment exchanges and their certificates were verified between May 2010 and February 2011. "Based on the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) notification, those teachers who underwent certificate verification after August 23, 2010 are required to compulsorily take up the TET. But the verification process had already begun for many of the teachers before this date even though the completion took time," said a teacher of a government school in Chennai.

"Both the NCTE and our Tamil Nadu Recruitment Board (TRB) say that if the appointment process has been started before August 23, 2010, passing TET is not necessary. The appointment process like issuing GOs, notification of vacancies, and asking for a list of eligible teachers according to seniority started very well before August 23, 2010.

Certificate verification however was done on several dates between May 2010 and Feb 2011 while for some, it even took place in August 2011," said Murugan, district secretary of the Tamil Nadu Graduate Teachers' Association, Madurai.

According to the association, a total of 3,100 teachers stand to lose due to lack of clarity with the TET issue - this includes nearly 1,000 government school teachers and 200 plus teachers in minority institutions, with the remaining in aided schools.

The Madras high court recently exempted teachers of minority institutions from the test.

However, no government order has been passed following the high court ruling which has led to apprehension among teachers.

"We need some clarity on the order otherwise our job is at stake. It is very worrisome. We demand that all teachers who were on the seniority list be exempted from the test," said a government teacher who wished to remain anonymous.