

Morung Express

Fate of over 10,000 Tripura government teachers remains uncertain

The Supreme Court on Monday deferred hearing in the case relating to 10,323 government teachers of Tripura, who are set to lose their jobs on December 31 following an apex court order, prolonging uncertainty regarding their fate.

The Tripura government school teachers have demanded continuation of their jobs beyond December 31. They have launched intermittent agitations, including road and railway line blockades in the state, from December 7 to press their demand.

The Supreme Court deferred hearing of three cases related to the issue, including the state government petition on the services of 10,323 government teachers, to December 14, an education department official said here quoting the apex court directive.

The Supreme Court, comprising Justices Adarsh Kumar Goel and Uday Umesh Lalit, postponed the hearing after clubbing the three cases together.

Education and Law Minister Tapan Chakraborty said the state government had filed a petition before the Supreme Court urging it to extend the termination deadline for one more year (beyond December 31).

The state government had also filed another petition – to vacate the stay on recruitment of 12,000 non-teaching staffs. The third case had been filed by two graduate teachers seeking review of the Supreme Court order passed on March 29.

The Supreme Court on March 29 had upheld the Tripura High Court verdict terminating the jobs of 10,323 government teachers citing some indiscretion.

In an apparent move to circumvent the apex court order, the Tripura government in May announced the recruitment of 12,000 non-teaching staff in the Education Department. This was to ostensibly “accommodate” the teachers facing the axe following the court verdict.

On October 24, a division bench of the Supreme Court ordered that the ban enforced on October 4 on recruitment of 12,000 non-teaching staff would remain in force until the next hearing.

An unemployed youth from Tripura had filed a contempt petition before the Supreme Court, alleging that the state government had violated its order by trying to redesignate the posts of sacked teachers as well as by initiating the process to recruit 12,000 non-teaching employees in the education department.

The state also faces a huge dearth of eligible candidates to fill up around 16,000 teachers' posts.

Ahead of the February 2018 Assembly elections, the issue of termination of 10,323 government teachers' jobs and recruitment of 12,000 non-teaching staffs is set to become a major political issue.