

Untrained teachers get 2 years to qualify

The Lok Sabha on Friday passed a Bill that offers untrained teachers teaching in schools time till March 31, 2019, to acquire B.El. Ed (Bachelor of Elementary Education) or D. El. Ed. (Diploma in Elementary Education) qualifications to hold their jobs as teachers.

This was done through an amendment to the Right to Education Act, 2009, as a last chance to such teachers not to lose their jobs. The Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017 Bill will now have to pass muster in the Rajya Sabha — and get presidential assent after that — to become an Act.

Last chance: Minister

Explaining the rationale for the Bill, Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar said many new schools had come up in the days of educational expansion under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the RTE, and many teachers who were hired did not have requisite degrees, some having studied only till school. They were given five years to train themselves, and many did, but 5-6 lakh private schools teachers and 2.5-lakh government school teachers still did not have the requisite degrees, the Minister added. “As a last chance, another two years are being given to them with this amendment,” he said.

The qualifications are deemed necessary to ensure that teachers are well-qualified to ensure quality of education. He said that with the Swayam portal — part of massive open online courses — and 32 free DTH educational channels, these teachers — who already had experience — could acquire theoretical knowledge and then pass the exam to retain their jobs. State governments would also offer them annual training, Mr. Javadekar said.

During the debate, Bhartruhari Mahtab of the BJD suggested that the cut-off date be left to the States, as it was not advisable to bring every extension back to Parliament. He also suggested a separate budget allocation for RTE.

Mr. Javadekar said all States had different conditions. “Ninety per cent untrained teachers are from eight States. We will make a task force for them,” he said.

Mr. Javadekar mentioned ways that State governments had put in place steps to ensure better teacher attendance, like Rajasthan pasting photographs of all teachers in a school on the notice board with the caption “our respected teachers” and Manipur using a tab that would mark attendance only within 50 feet of the school.

Detention Bill soon

Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar told the Lok Sabha on Friday that the government would soon introduce a Detention Bill.

“Detention Bill is also about to come. We should not have the situation that the Pratham report on students from Classes 5 to 8 shows. For this, learning outcomes that are expected of students in each of the classes have been defined,” he said. “There will be exams in March for Classes 5 and 8. If the student fails in March, he will be given another chance to pass in May. For the student who fails in May too, we will soon have a Bill to provide for detention.”

The UPA government had introduced a no-detention policy till Class 8 and the Bill seeks to change the law.

Says BJP will campaign against corruption, law and order problems and lack of development work in Himachal Pradesh

The process of holding the requisite Board Meetings and Shareholder Meetings has been completed in phases in September 2017.

Ruben George is staying at Ram Nath Kovind's house at Kalyanpur, near Kanpur

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