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EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUND OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION
(Recognised)

Bhavishya Nidhi Bhawan, G.S. Road, Near Bharalu Bridge,
Bhangagarh, Guwahati – 781 005. (Assam)

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MP (Rajya Sabha)

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Time to Act: An Appeal

Dear EPF Officers,

Recently a letter was written by the Association pointing out that two posts of ACC are vacant. Now the number has grown to 4 – more than a quarter of the total strength. Such large vacancy at highest level is unprecedented and DPC is not being held though two of our officers fulfill all eligibility conditions.

Despite the recommendation of DPC, promotions are not being allowed to RCs.

Whole entry level cadre APFC is almost emptied of direct recruits. Every person in government, I speak of express utter surprise on the absence of recruitment for so long that no DRs are left in the entry cadre that constitutes 70 odd percentage of the total cadre strength.

No work norm is in place that can be compared *vis-a-vis* work load (based on the assessment of number, strength

and spread of establishments e.t.c.) to arrive at the strength of each cadre right from SSA onwards. Within Group 'A' actual structure has gross mismatch with the model cadre pyramid recommending relative strength of officers at different levels. D.o.P.T. O.M. and Cabinet Secretary's letter on mandatory cadre review every five year is completely ignored. A humble proposal made recently in this regard is so badly mutilated by Fin Min that it's not possible to ascribe any meaning to it. Vigilance action is selective and indiscriminate at the same time. Yardstick of accountability being practiced in EPFO is so excessively inappropriate, expanding and also ridiculous – in comparison to what applies in other departments - that it has incentivised inaction and corruption. Compared to <0.5% of cadre strength of other services under charge sheet, it's 10 times higher at 5% (40 odd Group 'A' officers) in EPFO.

Human resource is the iron frame of any Organisation. Everything – not preparing Annual Recruitment Plan (ARP), not holding DPC for highest level posts of ACCs, defying the recommendations of DPC by not issuing orders of promotions for the crucial functionaries (RCs) – possible is being done to sap the human resource of the Organisation of its vitality and strength and the same is going unopposed.

Another important aspect is the non-revision of the **wage ceiling of Rs. 6,500/-** or the present or revised limit being made compulsory even for high wage earners. Non-revision of the wage limit has effectively made the compliance to the Act a voluntary exercise by the employers. This was never envisioned by the lawmakers that a provision in the Scheme (wage ceiling linked exclusion) will drain the Act itself of its mandatory content. Here again the C.B.T. is not bothered by this alarming situation though, as pointed out in the previous communication to the C.B.T. by the Association, the Parliamentary Committee on Labour has taken strong notice of it in its Report.

A D.O. letter has already been issued by the Fin Min to Labour Minister suggesting that EPS may be grandfathered. Move is also afoot to take all exempted establishments beyond the purview of the Act and to bring them within NPS. This will then be repeated with un-exempted ones. There are a host of other issues – IAS-2, routine HR functions of CBT being controlled by Ministry for harassment and arbitrariness, absence of serious issues affecting EPFO and its officers from the agenda of CBT, absence of a regular CEO, arbitrary debarment from holding sensitive posts, frivolous vigilance cases and the like - which are holding us back.

We all are aware of these developments and also aware of their emasculating effect on the survival of the Organisation. It is therefore exhorted that all of us should put our heads together to find the ways to ensure that EPFO gets a lease of life. Once we come to some agreement on the future course of action, the Association shall seek an appointment with the Chairman, CBT to raise these issues with force. We can also examine the legal options to be set into motion within a fixed time frame say before the end of the current financial year.

Shortly we will have a meeting of the Central Executive of the Association. Its date, time and venue shall be notified sufficiently in advance where too officers may join to deliberate on these issues.

Thought of the moment:

The cycle of life is dependent on each one of us giving back more than we receive. - Bhagvad Geeta

Regards



Date: January 10, 2013
Place: Guwahati

Sudarshan Kumar
Secretary General
E.P.F. Officers' Association