

**ALL INDIA NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA STAFF ASSOCIATION (AINVSA)**

(Regd No: 492/94)

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SMT K MANJULA

F.No: AINVSACEC-/2012-13/March

Date: 05 - 03 - 203

To  
The Hon'ble Commissioner  
Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti  
B-15, Institutional Area,  
Sector-62,  
NOIDA-201307,

Sub: Treating the 10-day long strike period as duty period – Reg

Respected sir,

The teaching and non-teaching staff working in the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas across the country went on a nation-wide Indefinite Strike from 06-02-13 to 15-02-13 demanding the granting of the CCS Pension, sanctioning of 10% Special Allowance and resolution of other long-pending demands like defining of working hours, increasing the allowance of HMs/AHMs, etc. The strike was called off, following the intervention of Shri Shashi Tharoor, Ministry of State for HRD, Govt. of India on the evening of 15-02-13 and his assurance to us to resolve the problems in a time-bound manner. The salary for the strike period has been withheld as per the directions of Hon'ble Commissioner till further orders. Under these circumstances, the AINVSA appeals to the Hon'ble Commissioner to condone the 10-day strike period of the staff and also treat the suspension period of the staff as duty period, and arrange for the quick disbursement of the salary withheld along with the payment of salary for the month of March 2013.

We appeal to the Hon'ble Commissioner to recall the devoted services of the teaching and non-teaching staff in their two-decade long service and penalizing them by withholding their strike period salary. We would like to enumerate a few of their outstanding services for your favourable consideration and necessary remedial action.

1. Since the inception of the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, the teaching and non-teaching staff literally worked day and night. As the schools are residential, the staff shouldered on themselves the arduous responsibilities like looking after the children who were put up in temporary buildings lacking in minimum facilities, procurement of provisions and other essentials, cooking food, arrangement of along with imparting academic instruction in classrooms not-so-conducive to such work. A good chunk of staff who went on Indefinite Strike worked amidst such unfavourable and testing conditions. They shared their rooms as well as toilets with children, suffered along with them whenever the weather gods were hostile and laboured uncomplainingly. It was because of those uncelebrated and selfless sacrifices by these staff during those decisive years that the NVS today stands out as a unique organisation. It is sad to see the NVS lavishly celebrating the percentages and percentiles but forgetting the dedicated services of its teaching and non-teaching staff who laboured to make a sound foundation in its toughest earliest times. These senior staff literally gave their sweat and blood to carve a special niche for the JNVs. They worked late beyond their academic instructional hours and performed innumerable duties that have never gone into the records of the NVS. All the senior officers in the NVS were witnesses to their work. Condoning of the 10-day strike period may not fully compensate their hard work in the past but it will at least not rub salt into their wounds.
2. The teaching and non-teaching staff who joined the NVS in late 1990s also played a huge role in the success story of the Navodaya Vidyalayas. The fact that NVS grew in its stature as a prestigious organisation put them into tremendous pressure right from Day 1 of their service in the organisation. The academic benchmarks revised year after year gave these staff no time to settle. They too worked extra hard to fulfil them in addition to working hard to meet the increasing safety and security challenges posed by the residential system. Like their senior brethren they too carried out all the duties and shouldered the responsibilities despite the payment of barest minimum allowance. They too sacrificed

their precious weekends and gazetted holidays. The services of the staff who joined after 2004 are equally precious. This new generation too have suffered no less as they too laboured for longer hours unlike their counterparts in KVS and have foregone their holidays like their seniors in the organisation. Their participation in the strike is also voluntary as they see the NVS management disregarding the genuine demands of the teaching and non-teaching staff. If such diligent staffers are victimised for raising their voice for justice, the NVS will definitely have no sympathisers and supporters when it appeals us to rededicate ourselves and strive hard for better academic results in the days to come.

3. Since the inception of the NVS, extracting work from the teaching and non-teaching staff even on Sundays and gazetted holidays has never been a difficult issue. No eyebrows have ever raised. Even panel inspections were conducted on holidays simply offering a few words of apology for the 'inconvenience' caused. Elaborate meetings till late evening hours during panel inspection times and officers' visits were common. Some of the officers were even impudent enough to openly remark that the staff were deemed to work extra hours for students as they were provided with free quarters and food. Any staff who has completed a minimum 10 years of service in the Samiti is sure to have foregone a minimum of 25 holidays per year by working on Sundays and other listed holidays. Hence, condoning 10-day strike period shouldn't be an issue for the Samiti.
4. Shri O.N.Singh , former Commissioner, NVS, in his letter to the VI CPC narrated how the Navodaya Vidyalaya staff worked for over 17 hours each day. The teachers are compelled to work from 05 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. when they are acting as MODs. In a calendar year each teacher works for 20 days as MOD. The reports of the Parliamentary Standing Committees and all other such reports show how stressed the teaching and non-teaching staff of NVS have been for years. Even the VI CPC identified the extra hours of service rendered by the NVS staff. In fact this is history of productive work generated by the hardworking staff that has won the NVS its present reputation. We believe that the NVS will only be undoing the injustice partially by condoning the strike period in the light of the services rendered by the staff in the past.
5. On numerous occasions the teaching and non-teaching staff played their humanitarian role in quite an appreciable manner. Besides the staff nurse, the HM/AHM attend to the children who are admitted to a hospital in case of an emergency. Many an untoward incidents on the campus are averted just because the staff are magnanimous in rendering their services even during their supposedly duty free time in the service of their wards. Quite often they give even less time to their family members. They spend more time for conducting a house-meeting of their ward or a counselling sessions to deal with problematic students, attending cleanliness duties or mass cleaning programmes at a time when they are supposed to take rest or pay attention to their family members. The staff who discharge such responsibilities should not be punished for demanding attention to their genuine concerns.
6. The number of holidays the essential staff like the Catering Assistants, Cooks, Mess Helpers, Staff Nurses and Drivers have foregone because of their 24x7 duty is staggering. Without their selfless services the Samiti might not have been its present elevated status. Any denial of the salary to these staff on the grounds of their participation in the 10-day long strike is doing them grave injustice.
7. There are innumerable other areas which reflect the industrious nature of the teaching and non-teaching staff. The setting up of Rajiv Smriti Vans is a fine example to prove that the services of the staff not been confined to the classroom instruction only. Every year the NVS organises Cluster/Regional/National games and cultural meets thanks to the services rendered by the teaching and nonteaching staff who spare their precious private time for the success of these official programmes. Celebration of festivals, annual days, alumni meets, organisation of Parent Teachers Council meetings on Sundays, etc and other events are successfully carried out just because the teachers magnanimously forego their holidays and private time. This also speaks volumes of the enormous work culture of the NVS staff.
8. Since their inception the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas always recorded over 220 working days which has been very unique. The vidyalayas run undisturbed even during local or national level bandhs, dharnas and hartals. They also run even on local panchayat/municipal/state legislative/Parliament voting days which are statutory holidays.

9. Over the last 10 years the teaching staff reported three days before the school reopened after the summer holidays as instructed by the Samiti. There are no compensatory holidays for these three summer holidays they are deprived of. It is worth mentioning here that many staff have to start from their native places a day or two days in advance to report on the stipulated date. In addition to these the staff are always deprived of their public holidays and listed holidays whenever they attend a training programme.
10. It is also apt to mention the early morning and late night study hours for achieving better academic results. The teachers have been performing these duties irrespective of their subjects and cadres since late 1990s. Since 1990s, the Post Graduate teachers and the Trained Graduate Teachers who handle classes X and XII have lost nearly half their winter vacation for paltry earned leave benefits to 'perform well' in the CBSE exams and avoid harsh remarks by the NVS officers. The teachers handling class XII regularly lose half of their winter vacation.
11. While appealing on behalf of all the strikers to condone the 10-day long strike period, we also plead the Hon'ble Commissioner to declare the suspension period of the staff including vice-principals and principals who were put under suspension in all regions as duty period on the following humanitarian grounds.
  - (i) The staffs were shortlisted for suspension even as the strike was called off.
  - (ii) No reasons were given for their suspension other than the letter from the Hon'ble Commissioner dated 14-02-13.
  - (iii) The suspension orders were discriminatory in nature. Besides, suspending only a few when thousands agitated for the same demands is nothing but victimization.

In the light of the above submissions, we hope the NVS reconsiders its decision to withhold the strike period salary and, thereby, respects the hard work and selfless services of the teaching and non-teaching staff for the realizations of the objectives as envisaged by the NVS. The staff and their families will be highly thankful the Hon'ble Commissioner for an early favourable consideration of the 10-day long strike period as duty period and due release of their salary.

With kind regards

JAGDISH RAI

L.B.REDDY