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Education dept furious over transfers

No Standard Procedure Followed, Teachers Get Transferred For Frivolous Reasons

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Vadodara: Are the state ministers, who head key departments, allowed to flout rules and regulations blatantly? State education minister Anandiben Patel is doing so, at least when it comes to transfers of primary school teachers. Patel, who is the state education minister, has transferred hundreds of primary school teachers in last four years violating rules and regulations.

Most of the transfers have in fact been done against the will of senior education department officials who had denied the transfers earlier. A query under Right to Information (RTI) Act has revealed that hundreds of primary school teachers were transferred under the 'special case' clause in last four years on the recommendation of Patel.

Majority of primary school teachers had sought transfers. "Patel has violated all the rules while allowing the transfers

of teachers. Despite the section officer of education department stating that most transfer applications didn't meet necessary requirements under 'special case', Patel cleared several applications," said Vipul Patel, who had sought the information under RTI Act.

"No standard procedure has been followed for transferring the teachers, many of them hailing from Patan district, where Patel's constituency falls," Vipul added. "Over 350 transfers have been done under 'special case' clause in last four years."

According to the rules, a transfer application is considered 'special' if the applicant is suffering from some life-threatening disease. Also, if the applicant's wife or parents are suffering from such disease, his case could be considered as special. The applicant has to submit relevant medical certificates and bills to support his case.



VIOLATING NORMS

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Majority of the applications that cited parent's or spouse's illness as a reason for transfer don't have medical certificates attached. TOI has the copy of over two dozen transfer applications — some of them very frivolous — that were endorsed by Patel. One of the applicants Hansa Pa-

tel from Dudhrampura primary school had sought transfer to Patan in 2004 stating that her workplace was far from her home and it was difficult for her to cook food for her family.

Another teacher, Ramesh Patel had sought transfer from Banaskantha to Patan stating that there was no English medium school in Banaskantha where he could admit his children. Many of the applications have also cited difficulties in travelling 'up-down' to the school as the reason.

"Primary school teachers are not allowed to do travel to and fro to their workplace daily. According to rules they have to stay in the village where the school is located," Vipul stated.

"Such cases cannot be considered as special cases. While such transfers were done with immediate effect, several genuine cases are pending for years," stated Vipul who is planning to file a public interest litigation demanding Patel's resignation on the transfers.