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No. KLA/LibAppt-HSS/2015 – 17/ REP 7

To

**The Hon'ble Minister for Education
Government of Kerala
Thiruvananthapuram**

9 January 2017

Sir

Sub: Appointment of Professional Librarians in the Higher Secondary Schools

Ref:

1. GO(P) No. 331/2001/ GEdn dated 09.11.2001
2. GO (Ms) No. 79/2003/ GEdn dated 28.03.2003
3. GO (Ms) No. 134/2004/GEdn dated 14.05.2004
4. Common Judgement dated 05.09.2013 of the Hon'ble High Court in WP (C) No. 29618/2015, 5835/2013, 7385/2013 & 7881/2013
5. GO (Ms) No. 220/2015/ G Edn dated 17.08.2015
6. A.C.D. C1/40106/16/ HSE dt. 01.09.2016
7. Various representations submitted by KLA (No. KLA/LibAppt-HSS/2015 -17)

As the premier professional body in the Library & Information Science domain in the state, Kerala Library Association (KLA) has always been in the forefront, playing its role as a facilitator, to enhance the quality and standard of education and research by enhancing the quality and standard of libraries and library professionals.

We at KLA have always been strong advocates for an efficient and effective school library system as a strong basis for further education and learning. With reference to the GO cited above (Ref no. 5), we would like to bring the following to your kind attention and further action:

- 1 With the Plus Two (former Pre-degree) having brought under school sector under General Education in the state, the students in higher secondary have been denied proper knowledge support system by way of libraries. Pre-degree students had access to a college library system to prepare them for higher education courses. This is now denied to the higher secondary students since no government higher secondary / high school in Kerala has a school library worth its name with qualified librarians running it.

2. It should be pointed out here that though other appointments were made in due course (Ref 2&3), even after more than a decade, librarians' posts were neither sanctioned nor were they appointed. KLA has been repeatedly giving representations to the government in this regard and our Annual General Body Meetings have been submitting resolutions to this effect for the last few years. KLA's 44th Annual General Body Meeting held on 2 August 2015 had also passed a resolution, demanding an immediate intervention by the government in this matter. A copy of the same is also attached herewith for your information.
3. Now, after 14 years, we understand that complying with a Common Judgement (Ref 4), the Government of Kerala has taken a positive step (Ref 5) which may breathe new life into the almost extinct school libraries. The cited order sanctions the creation of posts of LD Clerk, FT / PT Menial and Librarian Grade IV in higher secondary schools.
4. As individuals concerned with the future of the younger generation and also as library professionals, we are dismayed to find that the order mentions only the appointment of Grade IV Librarians (Item 6 in Ref 5, the latest order).
5. Besides items 6 (ii) and (iii) seem to have some anomaly. 6 (ii) states that Librarian Grade IV will be appointed in the 2nd phase and that too only in those schools having a library as per the criteria of the State Library Council and further stipulates that such a library should have at least 10,000 books. On the other hand, 6 (iii) says that librarians will be appointed as per the stipulations in the Special Rules which mentions appointment of librarians, both in the Grades III & IV.
6. **A recent circular, issued by Joint Director (Academic), on Higher Secondary Library guidelines, (Ref 6), details a 13-point action plan for the functioning of higher secondary libraries. But we are both surprised and pained to see that there is no mention of a professionally qualified librarian in the library!**

Under the above circumstances KLA would like to put forward the following for your kind consideration and action:

1. **We wish to reiterate that developing the school library system is to be given highest priority in the present-day knowledge-dominated world and this has to be treated with utmost seriousness. Qualified librarians are a must and there should be no dilution in this regard.**
2. **All schools should have libraries managed by professionally qualified librarians. A beginning can be made with Higher Secondary Schools.**
3. **Special Rules of 2001 should be strictly adhered to, in the case of appointment of librarians.**
4. **The clauses of Special Rules with regards to the mode of appointment and qualification should be strictly followed and there should be both Grade III & Grade IV librarians.**
5. **School libraries are no more places for the storage, issue and return of books. They have to serve as veritable information centres capable of meeting the information needs of both the students and teachers. In the digital era where information is available in so many formats, they have to function as learning resource media centres. For achieving this purpose, the services of a professional librarian who has the equal competence of the higher secondary school teachers are very much necessary. This is especially so because the librarians have to serve as teachers of information literacy skills for the students and teachers alike. This aspect demands the appointment of Grade III librarians in schools.**
6. **The library practices followed in CBSE / Navodaya schools should be adopted in our schools as well.**
7. **The Circular of 01.09.2016 is to be modified so as to include professionally qualified librarians in the higher secondary libraries. Suitable posts have to be created accordingly.**

When our society is becoming more and more quality conscious and when tremendous changes are taking place in every sphere of life, we will be doing great disservice to our future generation if we neglect school libraries.

We had earlier represented the matter before the higher authorities in the government. Unfortunately not much seems to have come out of it. Hence this appeal once again and Kerala Library Association requests the concerned authorities to consider our suggestions positively and take appropriate steps to establish an effective school library system with professionally qualified librarians which can serve as a model for other states to emulate.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

DrLalitha M
General Secretary, KLA

Copy to:

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Director, Higher Secondary Education, Kerala