

Naeem: Rs. 436 crore salaries released for SSA teachers

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Jehlum Post News/Srinagar/June 3, 2015/In a significant move, the Education Department has released ` 436 crore to reimburse the pending salaries of the teachers under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). "We have received ` 396 crore from the Centre under SSA and with the State share of Rs 40 crore, a total amount of ` 436 crore has been made available for reimbursement of the pending salaries of teachers," Education Minister, Naeem Akhtar said Wednesday. Pertinently, the Education Minister had raised the issue of pending salaries of SSA teachers including ReTs with the Union Human Resource Development Minister, Ms Smriti Irani, during his recent visit to New Delhi. He had sought early release of funds from the Centre for the purpose as thousands of teachers were without salaries for the past several months.

The Central Government, according to SSA officials, had withheld the funds following non-submission of the requisite utilization certificates by the previous government. Out of ` 1100 crore central share of funds under SSA for the financial year 2014-15, the Government of India had released only Rs 504 crore withholding the remaining ` 600 crore following complaints of deviation of norms by the previous regime in the State. Akhtar said the Education Department has almost cleared the mess left behind by the previous regime with regard to SSA funds and there would be no hiccups in the future as an appropriate system is being put in place to ensure regular flow of funds from the Centre and its proper utilization as per norms, "which was not a case in the past." "I want to assure the teachers and other workforce in the education department that there will be no such problems in future and I now expect them to give in their best to transform the education sector in the State so that our schools turn out to be institutions of excellence in academics," he said.