

President gives national awards to 314 teachers

President Pratibha Devisingh Patil Wednesday gave away national awards to 314 primary and secondary school teachers in recognition of their meritorious public service on the occasion of Teacher's Day.

The awardees for 2005-06 included 88 lady teachers, 11 Sanskrit teachers, three Arabic teachers, and 12 teachers for promoting education of children with disabilities.

The award carries a silver medal, a certificate and Rs.25,000 in cash.

Praising the public service of teachers, Patil exhorted all present at the function at Vigyan Bhawan here to continue with their endeavour to educate future citizens of the country.

Beside state boards, the award also covers teachers of Sainik Schools, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE), Central Tibetan Schools Administration (CTSA) and schools run by the Atomic Energy Education Society.

Thirty-three Special Awards were earmarked for teachers who involved in the inclusive education of children with special needs.

In order to be eligible for the award, a regular classroom teacher should have at least 15 years of continuous service on the date of consideration. For principals and headmasters the eligibility is 20 years.

The process of selection begins at the district level under a committee headed by the district education officer or district inspector of schools. Based on their recommendations, a state award committee under the director of education examines the district awardees' lists and passes on the recommendations to the centre based on a quota.

The national award-winning teachers had met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at his official residence Tuesday.

Commending the teaching community for their vital role in building the nation, Singh stressed on the need for better educational facilities for children.

Speaking to the teachers, he said: 'I am now in politics but I am a teacher by profession. I have taught in the universities of Punjab, Delhi, Oxford and Cambridge and my heart is still for the teaching profession.'

The National Award for teachers was instituted in 1958. Since the mid 1960s, the awards have been officially given on Teacher's Day, which is observed in honour of former president of India S. Radhakrishnan, a renowned philosopher and teacher.

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