

**Reply to the Calling Attention tabled by S/Dr. Chandrakant Shetye,
Michael Lobo, Smt. Delilha Lobo, MLA's under Rule 63 of Rules of Procedure
and Conduct of Business of
The Goa Legislative Assembly**

Calling Attention"

“fear and anxiety in the minds of parents and the commuting students, to the various aided and government schools, due to sudden stoppage of Bal Rath services, as the Bal Rath service employees have threatened to go on indefinite strike due to unfulfilled demands. The measure the Government has taken in the matter. ”

Reply by Dr. Pramod Sawant – Hon’ble Minister for Education

Sir,

The United Balrath Employees Union vide their letter dated 29/06/2023 had given Notice of Indefinite Strike of Balrath Employees stating their various Demands; out of which their main demands are –

- a) The service of Balrath Bus staff rendering more than five (05) years be regularized.***
- b) As an interim relief to them, their monthly remuneration be enhanced from Rs.10,000/- to Rs.20,000/- per month for drivers and from 5,000/- to Rs.14,500/- per month to attendants.***
- c) That their salaries must be paid directly through Bank in their personal account leaving no scope for corruption without causing any delay.***
- d) Insurance cover and accidental cover.***

Sir, initially, the BalRath Scheme was implemented by the Directorate of Social Welfare to provide transport facilities to the children of the ST/SC & OBC students, whose residential places in the remote areas in the State of Goa during the year 2009-10 onwards. The said Scheme was transferred to Directorate of Education from Directorate of Social Welfare in the year 2012-13 to provide facilities to all the students of Aided High Schools, Higher Secondary Schools and Special Schools in the State of Goa.

At present the Government is giving grants to 316 aided institutions in Goa with 409 BalRath Buses. Similarly, this Department has provided 87 KTCL buses to the students of Govt. High Schools & Higher Secondary Schools by implementing the "Scheme to provide Transport facilities to the students of Government High Schools/Higher Secondary Schools 2013 in the State of Goa". This Department is releasing Rs.3.00 lakhs per bus per academic year i.e. Rs.2.00 lakhs as 1st instalment and Rs.1.00 lakh as 2nd instalment every year to KTCL. At present, there is no such proposal for supply of new Buses to any schools in Goa.

The Government was releasing Rs.3.00 lakhs per bus/per academic year for their day-to-day recurring expenses towards repairs & maintenance grants of Buses, diesel and salary of Drivers/Attendants etc. up to 2017-18 and thereafter, from academic year 2018-19, this Department has enhanced the grants from Rs.3.00 lakhs to 3.66 lakhs, wherein the drivers and attendants are appointed by the concerned institutions of their own, on contract basis, for a period of ten **(10) months** with the monthly honorarium Rs.10,000/- which was enhanced to Rs.11,000/- and Rs.5,000/- to 5,500/- to Drivers and Attendants respectively. From this academic year, w.e.f June 2023-2024, the Government has increased the salaries of Drivers & Attendant from Rs.11,000/- to Rs.12,000/- & Rs.5,500/- to Rs.6,000/- respectively **for eleven (11) months** which comes under maintenance grants and the total Grants increased from 3.66 lakhs to 4.17 lakhs.

The entire grant of Rs. 4.17 lakhs will be released in a single instalment for the academic year 2023-24. The driver/cleaner will be paid by the Institution every 1st/2nd of the month. On completion of 11 months of attendance in the previous year, a remuneration of 5% addition to the pay will be released to them.

In view of the above, there should not be any **fear and anxiety in the minds of parents and the commuting students, to the various aided and government schools, due to sudden stoppage of BalRath services, as the BalRath service employees have threatened to go on indefinite strike due to unfulfilled demands.**

ANNEXURE -I

Honorarium paid to Driver	Rs.12,000/- per month
Honorarium paid to Attendant	Rs.6,000/- per month
For repairs & maintenance of BalRath Bus	Rs. 50,000/- per academic year per bus.
For yearly insurance of BalRath Bus.	Rs. 50,000/- per academic year per bus.
For Diesel up to ceiling of 300 litres per month or actual whichever is less.	