

State not ready to bear pay hike burden

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad: The Gujarat government has told the Sixth Pay Commission that it cannot bear the extra burden which might be thrust upon it as a result of its recommendation of pay hike.

Chaired by Justice B N Srikrishna, the Government of India-appointed commission was here on Wednesday to seek opinion on the pay scale revision of Central government employees and its repercussion in states.

Chief Minister Narendra Modi is learnt to have told the commission that the state would have to face a "huge burden" once its recommendations are put into force. "You should come up with some alternatives," he told Justice Srikrishna, who is a retired Supreme Court judge. A few months ago, Modi had told the Central government it should bear nearly 50 per cent of the total burden arising out of the Sixth Pay Commission burden on the state exchequer.

PAY COMMISSION

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SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

A somewhat different view was expressed at the meeting of the commission with chief secretary Sudhir Mankad. Even as the CM stressed on the need to link salaries to performance, a senior official said, "It is time the commission realised that the state IAS officials do not work for profit. Hence it is impossible to measure their pay scales as they do it in the private sector. The very fact that IAS officials have got good offers from the private sector

shows what they are worth."

Earlier, the commission heard representation from the state IAS Associations, where it was insisted that the trend of IAS bashing should stop and "necessary respect" should be given by bringing about parity in pay scales. Senior bureaucrat Ravi Saxena, representing the association, said the IAS cadres are "groomed to perform certain changes in society, and its role in decision-making and nation-building should be properly understood."

Anita Karwal, who represented the women officers, said, "The government should adopt a gender approach so that women do not let go of opportunities. There should be extension of the maternity leave from four-and-a-half months to six months and it should be available in parts." Speaking for the younger officers, Mamta Verma said much requires to be done to improve their service conditions by "defeudalising the service." Collectors earn less salary against the work they do in whole districts.