

For Rs 20k, get a fake BEd degree and a job

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RANCHI/BOKARO: The busting of a fake BEd degree scam in Bokaro district has surprised few in Jharkhand. It's widely known that getting fake university certificates and obtaining government jobs on the basis of that is common practice in the state.

Recently, 43 para teachers, who were recruited on basis of

fake certificates, were identified following an inquiry conducted by deputy superintendent of education of Bokaro district, Purendra Vikram Sahi. The teachers have been served show-cause notices and the administration is planning to lodge an FIR once it gets their replies. The district education department is now set to check the certificates of all 4,624 para teachers posted in 1,764 government schools.

However, academicians and officials are not shocked at the rampant use of fake degrees and mark-sheets. "You name any university and the gangs will produce its certificate. Since there were many vacancies for para teachers and Jharkhand does not have many BEd colleges, the racketeers produced fake certificates of Utkal University for some candidates and helped them land jobs as para teachers in Bokaro district," said a former vice-chancellor of Ranchi University (RU). He added that a fake certificate can be obtained by paying anything between Rs 20,000-Rs 50,000. The amount depends on whether the gang would help the candidate later at the time of verification by his employers.

Sahi, who supervised the investigation of the fake BEd certificates in Bokaro, said the gang seems to have good clout in Utkal University. When some Jharkhand block education officers tried to get the certificates verified from Utkal University, they received a statement saying that all the certificates were authentic. "When I started the investigation, I kept the matter confidential. I sent officials to Odisha and, during verification, it was found that all the certificates were fake. The officers directly met the controller of examinations, handed him the list of candidate names and requested verification of their documents. It was found that none of them had enrolled for the course," said Sahi.

Former deputy registrar-cum-spokesman for RU, S S Akhtar, said the CBI has investigated a case of fake certificate there some years ago. It involved an Andhra Pradesh government employee, whose MSc Botany degree -- purportedly awarded by RU -- turned out to be a fake. An investigation revealed that the person had never registered with any college in Ranchi varsity. Former pro-vice chancellor of RU, Anand Bhusan, who is now the chairman of Jharkhand Academic Council, said by introducing bar codes on mark sheets in 2004-05, the university has tried to curb fake certificates. "Our efforts have definitely helped but no one can claim that the racket of fake certificates is over yet," said Bhusan.

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