

QUOTA BILL TODAY ■ Now NDA objects to proposal sparing minority institutions

Pvt quotas: BJP allies join protest

VARGHESE K GEORGE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 19

AS the Government announced that the Constitution amendment Bill seeking to provide reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students in unaided educational institutions would be introduced in its "present form" in the Lok Sabha tomorrow, the entire NDA decided to oppose it.

Though the BJP had already declared its opposition to the Bill, the Government was counting on support from other NDA constituents to muster the required two-third majority for its passage in the Lok Sabha.

But after a NDA meeting today, JD(U)'s Prabhunath Singh said the alliance had taken a decision to oppose the proposal in the amendment exempting minority institutions from the ambit of the Bill.

The NDA also demanded that quotas for Dalits Muslims be included in the draft. "Most of the so called minority institutions are commercially-run and reservations should be applicable to them too," Singh said. BJP's V K Malhotra too said: "It should be applicable to all institutions and we have unanimously agreed that the clause exempting minority institutions should not be there."

Later, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Priya Ranjan Dasmuni told reporters he was hopeful that the Bill would be passed. He said the Government would talk to the Opposition parties, including BJP.

Told about the NDA decision, Dasmuni said that whatever would the fate of the measure, the message would go loud and clear as who was for providing protection to the SC, ST and OBCs.

The Bill's introduction was deferred last week because of the concerns raised by OBC MPs and the CPI(M).

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Bill on quota in colleges runs into hurdles

BJP, Left parties have raised doubts over aspects of the legislation

Neena Vyas

14/12
NEW DELHI: The Constitution Amendment Bill seeking to provide reservation to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and other socially and educationally deprived groups in unaided private, professional educational institutions seems to have run into hurdles.

The Bharatiya Janata Party and the Left have raised doubts over different aspects of the legislation.

The Bill is to be introduced in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Priyaranjan Dasmuni told reporters here on Tuesday. The nodal Human Resource Development Ministry would clear doubts raised by the BJP and Left. The government would wait for some time before moving the Bill for consideration and passage.

CPI (M) stand

CPI (M) Polit Bureau member Sitaram Yechury said his party had no problem with the Bill, which would keep minority institutions out of its purview. But the government should plug loopholes, which would allow "fake" minority institutions to use the Bill as an "escape route" out of their obligations to provide reservation to socially and educationally deprived groups.

The Rajya Sabha MP said his party leaders were talking to HRD Minister Arjun Singh and was hopeful of some solution being found.

The party categorically said it had no problem with keeping "genuine minority institutions"

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out of the purview of the Bill.

Sushma Swaraj, who represented the BJP at the all-party meeting called by the HRD Minister, said her party wanted "all minority institutions" brought under the Bill.

They too must give reservation to the socially and educationally deprived groups including those within their own communities.

Consensus

On August 12, when a seven-judge Supreme Court Bench abolished all quotas in unaided private, professional educational institutions, the immediate reaction of all parties was that reservation must be restored. In fact, the government claimed that a consensus was arrived at at an all-party meeting.

However, the BJP has claimed that the Government gave in to pressure from the minorities and decided to keep minority institutions out of the purview of the Amendment Bill, while the CPI (M) is afraid that all kinds of institutions would claim minority status on false pretences and thus deprive socially backward groups their constitutional right to reservations.

While the government seems optimistic that the hurdles will be removed and the Bill passed before the winter session ends in 10 days, the BJP seems determined not to support a Bill, which will make special allowances for minority institutions.

The government argues that it is an enabling legislation.

It is up to the States to define the socially and educationally backward groups and communities, which will qualify for reservation.

রাজনীতি ও ছাত্রস্বার্থ

সুপ্রিম কোর্ট এ বার কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্র ইউনিয়নের নির্বাচন পরিচালনা লইয়াও নির্দেশ দিয়াছে। বহু ক্ষেত্রেই এই নির্বাচনে অর্থ ও পেশি শক্তির যথেষ্ট ব্যবহার হইয়া থাকে এবং অপরাধীরাও ছাত্র-প্রতিনিধি হইয়া ইউনিয়ন আলো করিয়া থাকেন, এমন অভিযোগের প্রতিবিধান কল্পেই শীর্ষ আদালতের এই হস্তক্ষেপ। যাহাতে এই অনিয়ম না হয়, সে জন্য প্রাক্তন মুখ্য নির্বাচন কমিশনার জে এম লিংদোর নেতৃত্বে একটি কমিটিও নিযুক্ত হইয়াছে। যেখানে দেশের হাইকোর্টগুলিতে ৩৬ লক্ষ মামলা অমীমাংসিত এবং নিম্ন আদালতগুলিতে আড়াই কোটির বেশি মামলা নিষ্পত্তির অপেক্ষায়, সেখানে ছাত্র ইউনিয়নের মতো ব্যাপারে সুপ্রিম কোর্টের মাথা ঘামানো লইয়া প্রশ্ন উঠিতেই পারে। ইহা বিচারবিভাগের অতি-সক্রিয়তার আর একটি দৃষ্টান্ত হিসাবে শনাক্ত হইতে পারে। কিন্তু সুপ্রিম কোর্ট এ ক্ষেত্রে অন্তত স্বতঃপ্রণোদিত হইয়া বিষয়টি হাতে তুলিয়া লয় নাই। কেরল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের একটি আবেদনের ভিত্তিতেই শীর্ষ আদালতের এই রায়। ওই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন কলেজগুলি প্রথা ও নিয়ম ভাঙিয়া নিজেদের মতো করিয়া ছাত্র ইউনিয়নের ভোট করিতেছিল।

শীর্ষ আদালতের রায়ে সবচেয়ে অখুশি সি পি আই এমের ছাত্র শাখা এস এফ আই, পশ্চিমবঙ্গের অধিকাংশ কলেজে আজ যাহার আধিপত্য। সংগঠনের রাজ্য সভাপতি ইহাকে সরাসরি অবাস্তিত হস্তক্ষেপ আখ্যা দিয়াছেন। এ রাজ্যের ছাত্র ইউনিয়নগুলিতে একদা কংগ্রেসের ছাত্র পরিষদের প্রভাব ছিল, এখন বামফ্রন্টের জমানায় এস এফ আইয়ের। ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচন উপলক্ষ করিয়া ব্যাপক গোলমাল, মারপিট, ভীতিপ্রদর্শন এখানে নৈমিত্তিক। প্রার্থীরা সকলেই রাজনৈতিক দলের কর্মী বা অনুগত, অনেকেরই অধ্যয়নের সহিত কোনও সম্পর্ক থাকে না, বছরের পর বছর বিভিন্ন কোর্স পাল্টাইয়া এই ছাত্রনেতারা কলেজ ইউনিয়নেই গত্যবান হইতে থাকেন, যতক্ষণ না দলীয় প্রার্থী হিসাবে কাউন্সিলর কিংবা বিধায়ক হইবার ডাক না পড়ে। এই প্রবণতা ছাত্র রাজনীতিকে কলুষিত করে, বহিরাগত সমর্থক ও বাহুবলীদের আমদানি করে এবং ভোট জেতার জন্য অর্থও ছড়ানো হয়। ইউনিয়ন দলীয় ছাত্র সংগঠনের হাতছাড়া হওয়ার উপক্রম হইলে প্রতিপক্ষ দলের সমর্থকদের সহিত খণ্ডযুদ্ধ বাধিয়া যায়, প্রায়শ পুলিশ ডাকিতে হয়। রাজনৈতিক দলগুলি কলেজে ছাত্র-সংসদ জেতাকে মর্যাদার প্রশ্নে পরিণত করায় অবস্থা জটিল হইয়া দাঁড়ায়।

সুপ্রিম কোর্ট নিযুক্ত কমিটিতে চার্চার্ড অ্যাকাউন্ট্যান্ট নিয়োগের লক্ষ্য ইউনিয়নের হিসাবনিকাশ পরীক্ষা তথা ভোট কিনিতে মুঠো-মুঠো টাকা ছড়ানো বন্ধ করা। তবে কমিটির সুপারিশের মধ্যে সর্বাপেক্ষা লক্ষণীয় হইল, ছাত্র সংসদকে দলীয় রাজনীতিমুক্ত করার প্রস্তাব থাকিবে কি না। যত দিন দলীয় আনুগত্যের ভিত্তিতে ছাত্র সংগঠনগুলি নির্বাচন লড়িবে, তত দিন নিছক ছাত্রছাত্রীদের ইউনিয়নে নির্বাচিত হওয়ার কিংবা পঠনপাঠন উন্নত করা বিষয়ে ইউনিয়নগুলির ভাবিত হওয়ার সম্ভাবনা দূরপর্যায় হইতে থাকিবে। এস এফ আই, ছাত্র পরিষদ, ন্যাশনাল স্টুডেন্টস ইউনিয়ন কিংবা অখিল ভারতীয় বিদ্যার্থী পরিষদ, সবই রাজনৈতিক দলের পেটোয়া সংগঠন। এ ধরনের দলপরিচয়যুক্ত সংগঠন বা তাহার প্রতিনিধিদের প্রার্থী হওয়া নিষিদ্ধ করা দরকার। তবেই স্বাভাবিক নেতৃগুণসম্পন্ন ছাত্রছাত্রীরা তাঁহাদের জনপ্রিয়তা ও কৃতবিদ্যার জোরে নির্বাচিত হওয়ার সুযোগ পাইবেন। নির্বাচিত হইয়া শিক্ষার মান, পরিকাঠামো, পরিবেশ উন্নত করার চেষ্টা করিতে পারিবেন। অন্যথায় ছাত্র ইউনিয়ন দলীয় রাজনৈতিক প্রভাব বিস্তারের এবং হবু দলীয় নেতা বানাইবার সূতিকাগার রূপেই থাকিয়া যাইবে। এই ধরনের সুপারিশ ছাড়া কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্রস্বার্থ রক্ষার ধারায় মৌলিক কোনও পরিবর্তন হওয়া সম্ভব নয়। সংস্কার তখনই অর্থপূর্ণ হয়, যখন তাহা মৌলিক সংস্কার।

SC sets up panel on students' union polls

New Delhi: The supreme court on Tuesday directed the constitution of a six-member committee headed by former chief election commissioner J M Lyngdoh for streamlining university students' union elections across the country which in recent times have been influenced by the use of money and muscle power.

Directing the ministry of human resource development to issue notification within three weeks on constitution of the committee, a bench comprising Justice Arijit Pasayat and Justice S H Kapadia said it would recommend its view for keeping criminal elements out of stu-



J M Lyngdoh

dents' election, financial transparency and eligibility criteria for standing in polls.

The committee, also consisting of Prof Zoya Hasan, Prof Pratap Bhanu Mehta, both of JNU, Dyanand Dongaonkar, secretary general of Association of Indian Universities and two members to be nominated by HRD Ministry, was asked to submit the report with suggestions within four months from the date the notifica-

tion was issued.

The bench said one of the member nominated to committee by the Centre should be an eminent financial analyst, preferably a chartered accountant. Dongaonkar will be the convenor of the committee, it said.

Besides giving suggestions for maintaining discipline in the students' election which had been affected due to the interference of political parties, the bench said "the Committee will also focus on modes to ensure true democratic election so that undesirable elements do not enter elections affecting academic environment." Agencies

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THE HINDU

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

Pvt institution quota to be restored

Cabinet Clears Amendment To Constitution, Battlelines Drawn With SC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved a proposal to amend the Constitution and restore reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and socially and educationally backward classes in unaided private professional educational institutions.

The Bill will also help the state regulate admission and fees in such institutions.

"The Constitution Amendment Bill 2005 would be introduced in the current session of Parliament," parliamentary affairs minister Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi told reporters.

The amendment would enable states to reserve seats for SC/STs and backward categories in unaided private professional educational institutions with the exception of minority institutions. The states would enact their own laws according to their own requirements, Dasmunsi said.

Observing that there was a "comprehensive consensus and total unity" among political parties on the issue, he said the government expected that the bill would be passed in this session itself. He said the meas-

ure need not go to the parliamentary standing committee in view of the unanimity as well as due to the delay it would cause to the fresh admissions scheduled soon.

Asked whether the cabinet decision would go against the SC order on reservation, Dasmunsi said, "We are not questioning the judgment of the supreme court but Parliament is competent to legislate. Parliament is supreme in this matter". To a question on the exclusion of minority institutions, he said the rights of minority institutions were

guaranteed by the Constitution and they already enjoy the status.

In yet another decision, the Cabinet gave its approval to introduce the States Reorganisation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2005 by amending the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2000 for the inclusion of Chattisgarh in the proviso to article 164(1) of the Constitution.

The Bill has also sought a similar amendment in the Bihar Reorganisation Act, 2000 to provide for the inclusion of Jharkhand.

The amendment bills are likely to be introduced in the Parliament during the ongoing winter session.

EXECUTIVE VS JUDICIARY

Foreign varsity, Indian campus

CHETAN Chauhan
New Delhi, December 9

YALE, STANFORD or Georgia Technology — pick the university of your choice. There's a good chance they might open their own campuses in India next year.

The three universities had backed out from opening offshore campus after showing initial interest last year. The broad reason: they were not allowed to function independently. But this time, the government does not want to give them — or any other foreign university with similar intentions — a reason to complain.

The universities can decide their own syllabus, faculty, fee structure and the final degree — and the government will respect all of it. But they will have to abide by the quota rules for backward class students in the state where they set up their campus.

The HRD ministry will formulate a separate policy for foreign education providers rather than clubbing them with private educational institutes. "The ministry will have a separate legislation for foreign education providers which will be different from that for private institutes," a senior ministry official said. Earlier, the ministry had included the foreign education providers in a bill on regulation of fee structure in private educational institutions.

Also, the ministry plans a separate regulatory body for the foreign universities. "Foreign education is a totally different field and we don't want the UGC or the AICTE to deal with it. A specialised body will justify a different educational mode," the official said.

The ministry is preparing a draft legislation to set up the regulatory body. "We want a level playing ground but at the same time people should have a forum to redress their grievances. Also, the regulatory body will prevent fly-by-night operators," the official said. Foreign institutions, including the existing ones (which work through private players), will have to register themselves with the regulator.



Campus changing
A Delhi University college

Minority quota mooted in IITs and IIMs

By Akshaya Mukul/TNN

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New Delhi: The standing committee of the National Monitoring Committee for Minorities' Education (NMCME), a high-profile body under the HRD ministry, has recommended reservation for minorities in premier institutions like IIMs, IITs and the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade.

The NMCME is headed by HRD minister Arjun Singh and former UP minister Zafar Ali Naqvi is the chairman of the standing panel.

The report, to be discussed at the NMCME meeting on Thursday, has also said the "de-recognition of AMU from minority status is an unfortunate development and not in the best interests of the minority community". "It is necessary to appeal against the court decision, so that many other minority institutions with similar history are not deprived of their minority status," the re-

port says. *18/11*

The committee has also felt the need for an "over-arching legislation encompassing the entire range of educational rights enshrined in Article 30(i). "Such a legislation can spell out the details of the right to

The National Monitoring Committee for Minorities'

Education's standing committee slammed the AICTE for its 'insensitivity' to the needs of minority institutions and asked the HRD ministry probe its functioning

establish and administer educational institutions of their choice."

But there is criticism of ministry's programmes and affiliates also. For instance, it clearly says that minority communities are not benefitting from the high-profile Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in states like UP and Bihar.

খিড়কি দিয়া ক্ষমতায়ন

শিক্ষাক্ষেত্র বিস্তীর্ণ এক ভূমি, সন্দেহ নাই, কিন্তু তাহার ভিতরেও স্তরাস্তর আছে। ভারতীয় শিক্ষাজগতের সেই উচ্চাচড়ায় আই আই টি কিংবা আই আই এম-এর ন্যায় শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থান উচ্চতম ধাপে। সেই সর্বোচ্চ শিক্ষাসত্রে যদি বর্তমান সংরক্ষণের বাহিরেও সংখ্যালঘু জনগোষ্ঠীর জন্য আরও কিছু সংরক্ষণ প্রবর্তন করিবার সুপারিশ করা হয়, তখন বাস্তবিকই প্রমাদ গনিতে হয়। অস্বস্তির হেতু ইহা নহে যে সংখ্যালঘু জনগোষ্ঠীর জন্য সংরক্ষণের সুপারিশ করা হইয়াছে। সত্যি, সমাজ-বাস্তবতা মানিলে ইহা দিবালোকের ন্যায় স্পষ্ট যে স্বাধীনতা প্রাপ্তির প্রায় ছয় দশক উদযাপনের সম্মুখে আসিয়াও ভারতের সংখ্যালঘু জনগোষ্ঠী এখনও যথাযোগ্য উন্নয়নের সড়কে পৌঁছাইতে পারে নাই। ইহাও সত্য যে আই আই টি বা আই আই এম-এর ন্যায় শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংখ্যালঘু জনগোষ্ঠী হইতে আগত ছাত্রের সংখ্যাও লক্ষণীয় ভাবেই স্বল্প। সুতরাং, এই সব প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংখ্যালঘু শিক্ষার্থীর সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পাক, এই চাহিদা খুবই সঙ্গত। প্রশ্ন হইল সেই সঙ্গত চাহিদাটি পূরণের জন্য সংরক্ষণের ন্যায় খিড়কি দুয়ার বাছিয়া লইতে হইবে কেন? বলা হইতেছে, সংরক্ষণের সমান্তরাল সরণি না থাকিলে সাধারণত দুর্বলতর শিক্ষা-প্রেক্ষিত হইতে আগত সংখ্যালঘু ছাত্রেরা ওই সব প্রতিষ্ঠানে কোনও দিনই যথেষ্ট সংখ্যায় আসিতে পারবে না। এই যুক্তির ভিতরেই প্রতি-যুক্তিটি নিহিত। সংরক্ষণের ছিদ্র গলিয়া না হয় 'দুর্বলতর' শিক্ষার্থীরা ঢুকিয়া পড়িল, কিন্তু সেই 'দুর্বলতা' লইয়া ওই সব প্রতিষ্ঠানের উচ্চতম শিক্ষা-প্রণালীর সহিত তাহারা যুঝিতে পারিবে তো?

তর্ক উঠিতে পারে, আই আই টি বা আই আই এম-এর ন্যায় প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংখ্যালঘুদের জন্য সংরক্ষণ সংশ্লিষ্ট জনগোষ্ঠীগুলির ক্ষমতায়নের প্রশ্ন। সত্য, শিক্ষাগত ক্ষেত্রে সংখ্যালঘু জনতার যোগ্য ক্ষমতায়ন জরুরি। কিন্তু সংরক্ষণের অছিলায় ভারতের শ্রেষ্ঠ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে একটি আসন উপহার দিবার প্রক্রিয়া কোনও ভাবেই ক্ষমতায়নের সহায়ক নহে। বরং, সেই সব ছাত্র যাহাতে ওই ধরনের শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে মেধার ভিত্তিতে আসন পাইবার এবং তৎপরে পরীক্ষায় ভাল ফল করিবার ক্ষমতাপ্রাপ্ত হইয়া উঠে, সেই বিষয়টি নিশ্চিত করিলেই ক্ষমতায়নের প্রক্রিয়া যথার্থ দিশা পাইবে। সেই মর্মে বৃত্তির ব্যবস্থা করা যাইতে পারে, নিছকই অর্থাভাবে কোনও মেধাবী শিক্ষার্থী যাহাতে পঠন-পাঠনের সুযোগ হইতে বঞ্চিত না হয়, সেই ব্যাপারে ব্যবস্থাগ্রহণও কাম্য। কিন্তু যে সব শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান আক্ষরিকই 'সেন্টার অব এক্সেলেন্স', যেখানে ক্ষুরধার মেধাই যোগ্যতার একমাত্র প্রমাণ, যে সব প্রতিষ্ঠানের শিক্ষার্থী বিশ্বের সর্বত্র সাদরে বৃত, সেই সব শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংরক্ষণের দোহাই দিয়া কিছু নিম্নমেধার শিক্ষার্থীকে আনিয়া ফেলিলে শিক্ষার্থীর সংকট তো বটেই, পরিণামে প্রতিষ্ঠানের গুণমানে হানি ঘটাবার সম্ভাবনাও উড়াইয়া দিবার নহে।

বাস্তব পরিস্থিতি অনুযায়ী, শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রে নিম্ন স্তরে সংখ্যালঘুদের জন্য সংরক্ষণের এক প্রকার যথার্থ্য বিদ্যমান। নিতান্ত প্রাথমিক স্তরে কোনও শিশু যাহাতে শিক্ষার নূনতম সুযোগ হইতে বঞ্চিত না হয়, তাহা নিশ্চিত করিবার জন্যই সেই সংরক্ষণটি জরুরি। তাই বলিয়া শিক্ষার সর্বোচ্চ স্তরেও যদি একই যুক্তিতে সংরক্ষণ প্রবর্তনের কথা বলা হয়, তাহা কোনও ভাবেই সমর্থনযোগ্য নহে। বস্তুত, এই সব শিক্ষালয়ে সংরক্ষণ বস্তুটিই এক অর্থে অবাঞ্ছিত। অবস্থার পরিবর্তন হয়তো রাতারাতি ঘটিবে না, কারণ সংরক্ষণের মাধ্যমে উন্নয়নের একটি মানসিকতা এই সামাজিক-রাজনৈতিক প্রেক্ষাপটের গভীরে নিহিত। ইহাই প্রমাণ করে, বাজার অর্থনীতির পথে যাত্রা শুরু করিবার এক যুগের অধিক অতিক্রান্ত হইলেও এই অর্থনীতিতে নিহিত প্রতিযোগিতামূলক মনোভাব এই দেশে এখনও শিকড় গাড়িতে পারে নাই। কিন্তু, যারে হইলেও অবস্থার পরিবর্তন জরুরি। সেই জরুরি কর্মটি না করিয়া আই আই টি বা আই আই এম-এ সংরক্ষণের পথে হাঁটিলে সস্তা হাততালি তথা কিছু ভোট মিলিলেও মিলিতে পারে, কিন্তু সেই ক্ষুদ্র রাজনৈতিক স্বার্থে 'সেন্টার অব এক্সেলেন্স'গুলির ক্ষতিসাধন কাম্য কি?

New NCERT syllabus will spark debate

By Akshaya Mukul/TNN

Education
Culture

New Delhi: Call it a paradigm shift or successful straddling of various ideological and intellectual worlds, the new NCERT history syllabus — claiming to have stepped out of polarities with emphasis on oral tradition, contemporary accounts and case studies — will be hotly debated for a long time.

As Shahid Amin of Delhi University says, the syllabus should not be seen as an ideological war between “rootless cosmopolitans and foundationalists”, but something which has foundation and yet straddles.

First the highlights of history. For the first time post-independence, Indian history would have no divisions of ancient, medieval and modern period. Instead, from class VI, when history is introduced as a component of social studies, the subject would be taught as ‘Our Pasts’. In class VI it would be mainly the ancient past with an inquisitive “when, where and how” as the introductory chapter. In class VII ‘Our Pasts II’ introduces new themes like ‘social change: mobile and settled communities’ in which there would be a discussion on tribes, nomads and itinerant groups. Amin welcomes it: “At least we would know that the world of the Indian farmer was bigger than the bullock cart.” In class VII other new highlights are teaching of popular beliefs and religious debates. In every section there is emphasis on case study.

In class VIII, new themes on women, caste system, education and post-independence India has been introduced.

As a student progresses to class IX, history syllabus becomes choice-based. Students can choose from the French Revolution, Russian Revolution and Rise of Nazism. But the big change is the introduction of the theme of ‘Culture, Identity and Society.’ Under this sports and politics with emphasis on cricket and clothes and cultures would be taught.

Live shells in NCERT history books

ANURADHA Mukherjee
New Delhi, October 26

THE NCERT's new history syllabus for Classes VI to XII is out. But it comes loaded with enough ammunition to erupt into a full-fledged war between its framers, Left-leaning historians and social scientists of the country.

The curriculum, which seeks to teach "students to think historically" and not treat "history simply as a set of facts about the past", includes the "diverse histories" of the country's various regions and groups. In fact, the modules, to be taught as part of the social sciences from Classes VI to VIII, have been ti-

tled "Our Past I, II, III", "XVI", "XVII" and "XVIII". In the upper primary classes, the focus is on Indian history with topics like "Earliest Societies" and "First Cities" and linked case studies of the Deccan and the Harappan civilisation.

In Class IX and X, the focus becomes somewhat more global, exploring, for instance, the rise of Nazism, trade, globalisation, culture, identity and society and the role played by the print culture. It's only in Class XI and XII that the teaching of history gets really intensive.

But while the curriculum includes chapters on tribal societies, women, reforms and the challenge posed to the caste system (Class VIII), the na-

tionalist movement, hitherto a core area in any school textbook, has been dealt with sporadically. And this is where historians like Irfan Habib and Arjun Dev disagree.

NCERT director Krishna Kumar asserted that the Left's concerns were due to "a misunderstanding which will be cleared once the textbooks are out".

But Dev felt that the nationalist movement had been underplayed in a major way. "It has been treated as only one of the things that happened. There are merely three chapters devoted to the topic in Classes VIII, X and XII. No continuous history of the Indian freedom movement is part of the syllabus. There is no

reference to communal politics during the nationalist movement — an aspect crucial to our history. Till you don't talk of communalism and its negative effect, how can you speak of secularism? It's dealt with only once in Class XII in the chapter titled 'Partition through Oral Sources'," he said.

Habib, on his part, felt, "History cannot be taught on the basis of regional case studies. Breaking up history into miscellanies would be unfortunate. Looking at the history of a specific region or province cannot give you a holistic picture. How will you explain concepts like the drain of wealth if you just look at the agrarian system of one region?"

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NCERT makes learning less stressful for schoolchildren

ANURADHA Mukherjee
New Delhi, October 25

THE NEW NCERT syllabi are ready. And if its creators are to be believed, the NCF recommendation that the burden on students be reduced and the teaching of subjects like maths, science and social sciences be made more hands-on and project-based has been taken care of.

The final draft of the new syllabi for Classes I to XII was presented to Union human resource development minister Arjun Singh on Tuesday. "The syllabi have been designed in a way to make sure that they can be completed in 140 periods for primary and upper primary students. The syllabi for secondary and higher secondary students can be tackled on an average in 180 periods. Earlier, they were too vast to be tackled in even 200 classes," NCERT director Krishna Kumar told *HT*.

The new syllabi have been approved by a monitoring committee appointed by the HRD ministry and co-chaired by Prof Mrinal Miri and Prof G.P. Deshpande. Once the ministry ratifies the new syllabi, they will come into force in three phases.

For Classes I, III, VI, IX and XI, the new syllabus will become applicable from April 2006. For Classes II, IV, VII, X and XII, the new syllabus will be taught from April 2007. The new curriculum for Classes V and VIII will be applicable from April 2008.

"The mathematics, social science and science curricula have been given a special focus. In science, for instance, we realised that the existing course needed to be pruned by at least 20 per cent to 25 per cent to allow for classroom discussions and reflection on the lessons," Kumar said.

Discounting fears expressed by leading historians and academics like Bipan Chandra and Irfan Habib over "non-inclusion" of some aspects of Indian history such as the nationalist movement and concepts like communalism, Kumar said all aspects of Indian history had been integrated in the new curriculum. "In fact, from classes VI to VIII, the focus is entirely on Indian history. In Classes IX and X, political scientists, economists and historians draw on the relationship between India and the world," he added.

MATHS



Primary & upper primary
Stress on learning outside class. For Classes I & II, workbooks using cartoons, comic strips; questions based on stories.

Secondary and higher secondary
For Classes IX to XII, two areas: mathematical proof and maths modelling. Statics/dynamics, commercial maths won't be taught as separate chapters.

SCIENCE

Lessons will progress in linear fashion. From Classes III to X, course will address seven themes: food, materials, the world of living beings, how things work, moving things, natural phenomena and natural resources. In Classes III to V, science will be taught in an integrated fashion as part of environmental studies (EVS). The focus will be on the child's immediate surroundings. Lessons on the structure of the atom will start only in Class X

Council eye on textbooks

OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Oct. 19: The Centre will introduce legislation to set up a Textbook Council that will vet controversial textbooks published by organisations propagating religious fundamentalism.

The human resource development ministry is drawing up the framework for the legislation, which will follow recommendations made by a sub-committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education.

Textbooks published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) will, however, not come under the legislation.

The board sub-committee, headed by political scientist Zoya Hasan, went through several textbooks published by private organisations. It found a string of glaring distortions.

"A national textbook council should be set up to monitor textbooks (before they reach classrooms). The council should be fully autonomous and should represent genuine civil society and academia," the sub-committee said.

The textbook controversy has been raging for more than a decade.

In 1993, the human resource development ministry set up a committee, which included historians Romila Thapar and Bipan Chandra, to scan books being taught in the

classrooms of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. All three states were then ruled by the BJP.

The Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan — close to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh — runs as many as 14,000 schools in the country. These schools have prescribed a textbook with a set of questions and answers on the Ram Janmabhoomi controversy for Class VII students. (See chart)

Civil rights bodies have argued that several textbooks

TEST CASE

Questions and answers in a textbook prescribed by the Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan

● How many Rambhakts lost their lives between 1528 and 1992?

340,000

● When did the shila puja for the construction of the temple begin?

September 30, 1989

● Which Mughal invader destroyed the Ram Mandir?

Babar

studied in Gujarat schools contain inflammatory and distorted lessons.

The board sub-committee came across history textbooks glorifying Hitler without mentioning a word about the genocide of Jews. Hitler is portrayed as a nationalist who wanted the Germans to have a "place in the sun".

According to the sub-committee, madarsas in Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have "found a new focus of hostility since 9/11. Their teachings are obscurantist".

10-a-year too few for the IITs?

ANURADHA Mukherjee
New Delhi, September 28

NOT MANY second-divisioners make it through the tough IIT-JEEs. But not many Indians win anything at the Olympics at all. Is that reason enough to throw India out of the Olympics or prevent it from participating in the world's toughest sporting competition?

That exactly is the fate of second-divisioners now. They stand barred from IIT only because their school exam results are taken to mean they don't make the cut and they will never be able to cope with the exacting course. IIT has found out that at least 10 of the 5,000 students who clear the IIT-JEE every year — for the past three years at least — are second-divisioners. S. Santhakumar, dean, academic studies, IIT Madras, says, "We even have a student who scored 45 per cent in his board exams."



Aspirants demonstrate outside IIT Delhi.

Deepak, a fourth-year B/Tech student at IIT Delhi, says: "Scoring 60 per cent may not be a big deal for city kids, but IITs get students from even far-flung areas. I had a friend who had only 47 per cent marks in boards, but got electrical engineering in IIT. He came from a backward village in

Bhagalpur." Deepak himself managed 64 per cent.

Santhakumar, however, believes these are exceptions. And such exceptions cannot make the rule, he believes, as does the IIT establishment and the Human Resource Ministry, which has barred second-

divisioners from coming anywhere near an IIT exam centre.

But is it fair to deny even 10 students a chance of going to IIT? Aspirants have been agitating that this rule to be struck down and the number of attempts to be restored to four. The reason for these changes were — as cited by the IITs and the ministry — to reduce stress on aspirants and the system. "We take in only the top 2.5 per cent students, but this year 1.98 lakh applied for the IIT-JEE. The number keeps growing," says D.K. Tiwari, chairman, JEE Cell, Kharagpur.

Fair enough. But why cut off a huge chunk of students who are not able to get a first division in board exams? One reason: even if the second-divisioners make it, they are unable to cope with the course. Vinayak, a B/Tech student at Delhi IIT, says: "IITs have their own exams. Why club it with something entirely different like board exams?"

29 SEP 2005

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20 SEP 2005

Now, court trains guns on college polls

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 19.

THE SUPREME Court, taking note of the "unrest unleashed" on campuses across the country in the name of students' union elections, on Monday suggested that guidelines be drawn to prescribe the eligibility criteria and expenditure limits for the candidates.

"This is happening all over the country in student union

elections. Let there be some control over eligibility criteria and financial limits on the spending of candidates," said a Bench, comprising Arijit Pasayat and G.P. Mathur.

The court referred to the "huge expenses" made by candidates during college union elections. Some students enrol in one course after another so that they can prolong their stay on the campus for this, it noted.

The Bench also quoted in-

stances of rowdy behaviour of union office-bearers.

As the first step towards having a regulatory framework, the Bench suggested the creation of a committee, headed by a retired Supreme Court judge, to frame the necessary guidelines to regulate elections to student bodies in educational institutions. The committee could include two academicians, a representative of the UGC and a former election commissioner as well, the

Bench suggested.

The court asked additional solicitor-general Gopal Subramaniam, who was present, to submit the government's views on the issue by October 3. Subramaniam was also asked to suggest names for inclusion in the court-proposed high-level committee.

The order came during a hearing on a special leave petition, filed by the Kerala University, against a high court order:

The June 24, 2004, order of the HC had held that since the by-laws under which the college unions were created had no statutory force, directions issued by the Kerala University regarding the manner in which such elections should be conducted had no authority.

The Kerala University guidelines were challenged before the high court by the Association of Principals of Kerala Colleges.

ছাত্র সংসদ নির্বাচনেও নিয়ন্ত্রণ চায় সুপ্রিম কোর্ট

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নবদিল্লি ও কলকাতা, ১৯ সেপ্টেম্বর: বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্র সংসদ নির্বাচনও এখন মাথাব্যাথা সুপ্রিম কোর্টের।

এই সব নির্বাচন ঘিরে যে গুণ্ডগোল হয় তা ঠেকাতে নিয়ন্ত্রণ জারির প্রস্তাব দিয়েছে শীর্ষ আদালত। আজ এ ব্যাপারে কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের মতামতও চেয়েছে তারা। তবে ছাত্র নেতাদের মতে, এটা আদালতের জনহিকার চর্চা ছাড়া আর কিছুই নয়। আদালতের ডুমিকা নিয়ে আপত্তি রয়েছে কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষেরও।

দেশের বিভিন্ন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচন ঘিরে গুণ্ডগোল নতুন নয়। ছাত্রদের মধ্যে মারামারি থেকে শুরু করে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কর্মী, এমনকী উপাচার্যকে হেরাও করে রাখার মতো ঘটনা ঘটেছে। ছাত্র সংসদের দখল পেতে প্রতিপক্ষের আর্থিকে প্রাণে মারার হুমকি পর্যন্ত দেওয়া হয়েছে।

ছাত্র সংসদ নির্বাচনের খোলনলটে বদলাতে সম্প্রতি উদ্যোগী হয় কেরল। একটি নির্দেশিকা জারি করে বলা হয়, প্রতিনিধি নির্বাচনের ক্ষেত্রে রাজনীতি নয়, ছাত্রছাত্রীদের মেধা এবং অন্যান্য

তবে ছাত্র-ছাত্রীরা নির্বাচনে দাঁড়াতে পারবেন। নির্বাচনে কত টাকা খরচ করা যাবে। এবং সর্বেপরি নির্বাচনে হিংসা রুখতে কী ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। এই গাইডলাইন তৈরির জন্য একটি কমিটি গড়ার প্রস্তাব দিয়েছে সুপ্রিম কোর্ট। বলা হয়েছে সেই কমিটিতে সুপ্রিম কোর্টের এক জন প্রাক্তন বিচারপতি, দু'জন বিশিষ্ট শিক্ষাবিদ এবং নির্বাচন কমিশন ও ইউজিসির এক জন করে প্রতিনিধি থাকবেন।

ক্ষেত্রের অতিরিক্ত সালিসিটর জেনারেলকে দশ দিনের মধ্যে এ ব্যাপারে মতামত জানাতে বলেছেন বিচারপতিরা। পরবর্তী সন্ধানির দিন ঠিক হয়েছে ৩ অক্টোবর।

সুপ্রিম কোর্টের এই প্রস্তাবের বিরুদ্ধে অবশ্য এককোটি এসএফআই-তৃণমূল ছাত্র পরিষদ। রাজনীতির ময়দানে বিরোধ যতই থাক, সিপিএমের ছাত্র সংগঠনের রাজ্য সম্পাদক অর্পূ চট্টোপাধ্যায় এবং তৃণমূলের ছাত্র শাখার সভাপতি বৈশাণর চট্টোপাধ্যায় এক সুবে বলেছেন, ছাত্রদের ব্যাপারে আদালতের হস্তক্ষেপ অভিস্রোত নয়।

অপূর্ববাবুর মতে, এই প্রয়াসের আসল

উদ্দেশ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় চত্বর থেকে রাজনীতিকে দূরে সরিয়ে দেওয়া। তিনি বলেন, “ছাত্রদের নিয়ন্ত্রণ করতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষ যথেষ্ট সক্ষম। সুপ্রিম কোর্টের অবাচিত হস্তক্ষেপের প্রয়োজন নেই।” তাঁর পাশ্চাত্য প্রপ্ন, শিক্ষার শেষে ছাত্রেরা যাতে কাজ পায়, সে ব্যাপারে আদালত কেন্দ্রকে কিছু সুপারিশ করেছে না কেন।

আর বৈশাণরবাবুর মতে, সুপ্রিম কোর্টের উদ্যোগ গণতন্ত্রের পক্ষে শুভ নয়। ছাত্রদের প্রতিনিধি কে হবেন, তা ঠিক করার অধিকার ছাত্রদের, এই মন্তব্য করে তিনি বলেছেন, “আদালত বা উপাচার্য এ ব্যাপারে নাক গলান, এটা আমরা চাই না।”

বিষয়টিকে তাঁদের এজিয়ারে হস্তক্ষেপ হিসাবে দেখছেন কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষও। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সহ-উপাচার্য (শিক্ষা) সুরঞ্জন দাস বলেছেন, “এটা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অভ্যন্তরীণ বিষয়। এবং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় স্বাধীনতা সংস্থা। সুতরাং আদালত এ ভাবে তার স্বাধীনতায় হস্তক্ষেপ করতে পারে না। সেটা গণতান্ত্রিক প্রক্রিয়ার পরিপন্থী।”

20 SEP 2009

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

No rollback of IIT-JEE new format

But some concessions made for
2005 & earlier Plus II students

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, September 17

STUDENTS WHO have cleared their Class XII board exams till 2005 will get one last chance to appear for the IIT entrance test in 2006 irrespective of the marks they've scored at the secondary level or the number of attempts. The new format for the IIT-JEE — the criterion is 60 per cent marks at the Board exam and only two attempts allowed — will be applicable for those who are due to appear for their Class XII exams in 2006 and thereafter. This was decided at the Joint Admission Board (JAB) meet comprising directors of all seven IITs on Saturday.

Prof M.S. Ananth, director of IIT Madras, told reporters after the meeting, "If a student has not crossed 25 years then he can appear for the IIT-JEE 2006 for the last time irrespective of the marks they have secured in the Class XII exam and the number of attempts they have already made to clear the hurdle."

Explaining the logic behind the 60 per cent marks criterion for the IIT-JEE from 2006, an official of the

JAB told *Hindustan Times*, "We have analysed the results of the admission tests from 2003 and have found that students who have taken the help of coaching centres and cracked IIT-JEE haven't performed too well. On the other hand, those who haven't attended any special classes have done better. S.K. Dube, director of IIT Kharagpur, added, "We need students with knowledge of the basics of science, not robots who can solve the IIT-JEE question paper."

Around two lakh students appear for the IIT entrance examination every year and only 4,000 get to study in these premier institutions. JAB has done a detailed study of the admission procedure and found that while nine per cent of students from urban areas get to crack the test, seven per cent come from rural schools who have no access to coaching centres. "The IITs need such raw talent," said another JAB official.

From 2006, there's going to be a sea change as far as the entrance test format is concerned. The questions will be of Plus II standard and will have objective type queries on maths, physics and chemistry. The IIT-JEE for 2006 will be held on April 9 and results will be out by the middle of May. "We will give provisional admission to the successful candidates. If they fail to get 60 per cent in the Class XII Board exams, we will ask them to leave," Prof Ananth told reporters.



The change Students who've got 60 per cent in Class XII exams will be allowed to take the IIT-JEE test.

How this will help Students will henceforth concentrate on the Class XII course. IITs gain by way of inducting "raw, intelligent and talented students".

The change Single-screening; preliminary exams dropped

How this will help Pressure will be less on students. Syllabus will be equivalent to that of Class XII Board exams. No need for special coaching.

The change Two attempts allowed.

How this will help IITs will get younger students.

The change IIT students cannot appear for the test.

How this will help No seats will go vacant in the second year.

JEE gets tougher: No first division, no chance in IIT

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 12

GETTING INTO an IIT will become tougher from next year.

Only a first division or equivalent at Plus-2 level will make a student eligible, the HRD ministry decided on Monday. SC and ST students, however, will get a relaxation of 5 per cent marks.


So far, clearing Class XII was the sole criterion for admission to IITs. The government felt the format was creating undue stress on students.

The format of the question paper will also change, becoming a level tougher than the CBSE's Class XII exam. The JEE will be a single exam, with screening done away with. The paper will ask for short write-ups on various topics, followed by objective-type questions based on the write-up. This will test the comprehension as well as the analytical ability of the students.

Students will get only two chances to take the test. One will be in the year they appear for Class XII, and the second in the next year. Those who join IITs will not be allowed to sit again. "We want students to take up their Class XII examination more seriously. That's why we have linked JEE with the Class XII examination," a ministry official said.

"Students meeting the criteria and clearing the exam will be eligible for admission to IITs, which is done on the basis of

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ONLY THE BEST

- **Class XII:** Must score 1st div or equivalent; 5% less for SC/ST
- **JEE:** Single exam, no screening; paper with short write-ups and objective questions
- **Now or never:** 1st chance after Class XII, 2nd chance next year. Once already in IIT, no more chances

merit in JEE," an official said.

The procedure will be reviewed after JEE 2006.

The changes were recommended by a special task force constituted by IIT directors to evaluate the process. The minister approved the reforms that the task force suggested.

The ministry believes that these measures will reduce the influence of coaching classes on students and give them a chance to establish their competence and intelligence.

13 SEP 2005 THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Child abuse: Schools can't escape blame

New Delhi: School authorities and teachers beware! If any of your students falls victim to sexual abuse inside the institution, you could end up spending six months in jail.

In a significant ruling aimed at ensuring that a school guarantees the security of its wards, the juvenile justice court here has said the management and teachers cannot escape liability if any of their wards suffers any form of mental or physical abuse.

It has asked the police to act tough in all such cases.

In two recent incidents where a kid was sodomised by an attendant in a playschool and a boy was sexually abused by three of his classmates, juvenile justice board principal magistrate Santosh Snehi Mann ordered the arrest of authorities and teachers under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act.

Section 23 of the act says, "Whoever having actual charge or control over a juvenile or child exposes or wilfully neglects the juvenile or causes him to be assaulted in a manner which is likely to cause unnece-

sary mental or physical suffering to the child shall be punished for six months".

Raising apprehension about the safety of children in playschools, a five-year-old son of a lawyer was sexually abused by a Nepali boy who was employed to look after the kids in a East



Delhi creche.

The errant juvenile was soon arrested and booked under section 377 (unnatural offences) of IPC. On the directions of the court, Vivek Vihar, SHO, incorporated section 23 of JJ Act in the FIR and arrested Rajesh Kathuria, owner of the creche.

"Certain violations ap-

pear to have been committed by the employer of the juvenile," the court said.

In the other case, a seven-year-old boy in a school in Mukherjee Nagar was sodomised for the past one year in a bathroom. The victim also told the court that his teacher beat him up when he complained about the torture and also threatened him against speaking up.

The court directed the police to take action against the school, in which a teacher sodomised a child, under the JJ Act and asked police to file a separate FIR against the teacher under IPC. The Mukherjee Nagar SHO has to file the compliance report before the court on September 9.

Remanding the delinquents, the court said the contents of the victim's statements show that the teacher and school authorities were also at fault.

"In school, a child is in the actual charge of the teacher and school authorities. There appears to be wilful neglect on their part resulting in sexual abuse of the child," the magistrate said. TNN & Agencies

13 SEP 2005

THE TIMES OF INDIA

National curriculum framework & the social sciences

Romila Thapar

GIVEN THE centrality of a curriculum for school education, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) could have been more extensively discussed in public. A curriculum framework has to address educational programmes as well as acquainting society with what the next generation is being taught and why. At the present point in the history of India, this particular NCF has a more than routine relevance. It has to concern itself with how we can prevent the hijacking of the curriculum of the kind that we experienced under the previous government.

Inasmuch as there has been a public debate on the NCF, the more widely publicised aspect has been on textbooks in history. This is a predictable continuation of the earlier debate on re-writing history. There has, however, been less concern with other constituent subjects of the social sciences, namely the input of geography, politics, economics, and sociology. Is this public apathy due to the social sciences being seen by the public as non-utility subjects, therefore less important than the sciences, which is the complaint of the NCF? That the approach of the social sciences is relevant to scientists as part of integrated knowledge needs emphasising. In addition to textbooks, two other aspects of the curriculum require immediate attention — the training of teachers and the reorganisation of the examination system. These are recognised in the NCF but in a somewhat limited manner.

Textbooks are not the only source of knowledge in school nor the only way of encouraging the development of a critical mind, although if sufficiently sensitively written (and this is rare), they can perform both functions. The accepted function of textbooks is to provide a framework for the student to access knowledge in a particular subject. We generally don't remember textbooks triggering off creative ideas in our school-going youth. We do remember a particular teacher or a particular book outside the curriculum.

A textbook in history should provide the infrastructure of the subject: reliable information about the past, an explanation of how this information can be analysed, and what this tells us implicitly or explicitly about aspects of the society in which we live. The range selected would vary according to the syllabus requirement. As more data become available and causal connec-

Textbooks should certainly be child-friendly but it is equally necessary that the schoolteacher should be made child-friendly. Teachers need a more intensive exposure to social science concepts, changes in data and methods in history, and critical enquiry.

tions are enlarged, the analyses can change.

The debate on history textbooks to be published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has run into something of an impasse. Some are demanding a return to the original NCERT textbooks, published in the mid-1960s and later. Others favour the writing of new textbooks based on a different set of historical concerns from those incorporated in the old textbooks. The old textbooks are critiqued, as being heavy and dull and therefore diverting students from history, and for being concerned with developmental issues. Development as such may be out of fashion these days, but the issues with which these older textbooks were concerned are still with us. They will have to be addressed in whatever textbooks are used, issues such as the causes of economic inequality, the continuity of social privilege, the intervention of religious institutions in civic life, and the use of religious ideologies for political mobilisation. Indian society in its history has experienced considerable achievements but has also had to grapple with inequality, injustices, and violence. These are of significance in understanding the present.

According to the NCF, the old textbooks should give way to books with a child-centred pedagogy. Textbooks should certainly be accessible to the young readers for whom they are intended. However, there is some fear that the emphasis on pedagogy may erode the disciplinary orientation of the subject. Each of the social sciences has its specific take on knowledge and students should be made familiar with these. To pose normative issues in the polity such as equality, justice, and dignity as alternatives to developmental issues hints at avoiding the question of why poverty, illiteracy, casteism, and communalism have come about. How secular-

ism, democracy, and human rights became a concern in Indian society are themes significant to the social sciences. If the argument is that all this is implicit in the NCF, then it needs to be made more visible.

The document says that the social sciences will explain diversities in Indian society with references to local conditions so that the existence of variants can be understood by children in their local context. One hopes that the social sciences will also explain how diversities came or come into being, why there is an inequality among diverse groups, and how attitudes supporting this inequality are constructed. Furthermore, how diversities can be a source of enrichment to some cultures, but can also in some other cases become agencies of oppression. Local conditions and surroundings can be more purposefully studied if they are also seen in the context of a larger national perspective. A 'national' framework assumes this perspective.

The impasse over the history textbooks can be resolved since historians work within the structures of the social sciences. Discussions among those who authored the original textbooks, those who are proposing to write new ones together with a few other historians and schoolteachers, are in any case a necessary procedure. Such a group can either modify the old textbooks where possible or hammer out a new treatment in some other cases. Intensive discussion of a detailed syllabus will in itself be a helpful exercise, particularly in the debate on the structures of knowledge.

Textbooks should certainly be child-friendly but it is equally necessary that the schoolteacher should be made child-friendly. It is not enough to encourage participative discussions between teachers and students in class. An extensive programme of familiarising schoolteachers both

with changes in the methods and concepts of the social sciences and with child-centred pedagogy will help. Without this, there will be no essential change in either the approach to the subject or the pedagogy. Children will still be required to memorise sections of the new or old textbook and reproduce these for the exam. Instant workshops for history teachers are not going to make a dent. Teachers need a more intensive exposure if they are to understand the concepts of the social sciences, the changes in data and methods that disciplines such as history have undergone in the last fifty years, and to realise the significance of critical enquiry to education, which is said to be the aim of the NCF.

Many universities now have refresher courses for teachers in under-graduate colleges. Similar courses, with minor adjustments, could be organised for schoolteachers. This is where further reading around the textbook can be discussed. Courses by the Open University on various subjects can be yet another source of orienting teachers to new knowledge. The creation of an educational channel on TV for both students and teachers remains an untapped resource for the social sciences.

The NCF favours a plurality of textbooks. We seem to forget that such a plurality already exists in the textbooks being used in state and private schools. The plurality runs the gamut from quality textbooks to a complete negation of quality. Currently being used as textbooks are the old NCERT history books, the BJP-NCERT books, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) books in Delhi, the books used in the States such as those used in Gujarat, and the books used in a variety of private schools as well as mission schools, Madrassas, Shishu Mandirs, and such like. Some teach good quality history; others have replaced history by fantasy, with pernicious implications. If all these books claiming to be textbooks are currently prescribed, then who is to judge the legitimacy of these books, specifically as textbooks?

Clearly this needs a rational answer. Suggestions were made a while back that there should be a regular assessment of samples of textbooks in each category of schools. But we are still waiting to hear if this is being done. Can it be that there is a hesitation to intervene in private schools that have political clout? Is this matter already beyond redemption? The use of a single textbook does not preclude consulting other books. A quality textbook would suggest further reading. But books that claim to be textbooks, irrespective of who publishes them, if they are treated as reliable in the knowledge they convey, must be vetted by a committee of professional scholars in the particular subject and such as are respected by their peer group. Such a committee would be responsible to the public and to the educational system for clearing the disciplinary content of textbooks. Otherwise, textbooks will become like the Internet where anything goes.

If the learning of sections of the textbook by rote and repeating the text in the exam are to be avoided, then the examination system needs to be revamped. This would begin with reorganising the board of examinations as has been suggested in passing by the National Curriculum Framework. Paper setters and examiners will also have to be retrained to understand the changes required in setting and evaluating examination questions. Evaluating critical thinking and logic based on reading beyond the textbook at the high school level will need an altogether different training for examiners, used as they are to answers repeating what is said in the textbook. Examiners will have to judge whether an answer that differs from that of the textbook shows initiative and further reading, or merely reflects a lack of understanding the question, or worse. One has heard so often from school students about their anxiety as to which historical interpretation to quote in an answer to an examination question, the fear being that one does not know which view is favoured by the examiner. Critical thinking would make such a dilemma relatively redundant, but only if the examiner is sensitive to critical thinking.

If the plea against largescale change is that such change requires finances, structural co-ordination and bureaucratic efficiency, none of which is readily forthcoming, then one wonders how we are going to organise an unmanned flight of an Indian spacecraft to the moon, in order to prove that India is a superpower.

(The writer, an eminent historian of early India, is Professor Emeritus of History at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.)

CARTOONSCAPE



NCERT revises National Curriculum Framework; draft unveiled

4/9 Education & Culture H-10-10

Attempt made to address concerns raised by critics: NCERT director

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Under fire from a section of the academic community for drafting a curriculum that "lacked a firm commitment against a sectarian and narrow vision of education," the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has revised the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 ahead of next week's meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE).

The revised draft was unveiled here on Saturday by NCERT Director Krishna Kumar who said an attempt had been made to address the concerns raised by the critics of the NCF-2005 by elaborating on the issues in question. The NCF was put up for CABE clearance in June this year but the members decided to allow States more time to counter the charge that the Government was trying to push through the new curricu-

- CABE meet next week
- Seeks to make secular democracy a robust idea
- Fifth guiding principle added

lum in haste without consultation.

The new document, according to Prof. Kumar, seeks to make secular democracy a robust idea. Academics under the banner of Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust and Communalism Combat had accused the NCERT of "toeing a politically correct line" while drafting NCF-2005. Another charge was that it did not address the contentious issues that had dominated discourse in educational circles during the six years of National Democratic Alliance rule.

While the first draft proposed four guiding principles to ad-

dress distortions in educational aims and quality, the revised document has added a fifth that seeks to nurture "an identity soaked in caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country." This guiding principle of an "overriding national identity," Prof. Kumar said, was a suggestion made by the Bihar Government.

As for the controversial suggestion of board examinations being made optional at the Class X level for those who wish to continue to Class XI, the revised document clarifies the position. "Boards should consider, as a long-term measure, making Class X examination optional, thus permitting students continuing in the same school [and who do not need a board certificate] to take an internal school exam instead," it said.

About the charge that linking education to the child's surroundings could give rise to obscurantism, Prof. Kumar and

Prof. Yashpal — who chaired the entire exercise of curriculum revision — said the concept had been elaborated upon in the revised document. "The document recognises India's diversity as its strength.

By stressing on local knowledge, the aim is to help the student critically engage and negotiate with what he sees around him. However, all forms of local knowledge must be mediated through Constitutional values."

Also, Prof. Kumar said there was no basis in the charge that NCERT had no authority to begin drawing up the syllabus and preparing the textbooks.

At the CABE meeting in June, the Human Resource Development Minister, he said, had asked NCERT to go ahead with the task of text-book making with the caveat that it would be subject to the changes made by the Board in the draft curriculum.

04 SEP 2007

THE HINDU

Draft curriculum framework gets NCERT's nod

HTC & Agencies
New Delhi/Aligarh, August 31

THE NCERT'S national steering committee has approved the draft National Curriculum Framework 2005 to be placed before the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) during its two-day meeting, beginning from September 6.

The committee set up by the NCERT held its seventh meeting in New Delhi to discuss the revised draft of the framework. Suggestions from chairpersons and member-secretaries of National Focus Groups as well as National Steering Committee's members — which were made in the last joint meeting in July — had been incorporated, said an NCERT spokesman.

As per the CABE's decision taken in the June meeting, state governments were requested to discuss the framework's draft and send their suggestions to the NCERT by July 30. The draft was translated into all major Indian languages to ensure that it reaches the maximum number of people, the spokesman said.

The revisions had been effected in subjects like languages, social sciences, science, mathematics as well as early childhood education, examination reforms, vocational education & training, work and education, and habitat and learning syllabi.

The framework has failed to impress many even after that. Labelling the framework a "dubious enterprise", Marxist historian Ir-

No homeworks

THE CHAIRMAN of the CBSE has suggested that children should not have homework till class two and asked the NCERT to consider alternatives to homework for classes three and above. He was speaking at the meeting of the NCERT's National Steering Committee here on Tuesday.

HTC, New Delhi

fan Habib on Tuesday said the document would be disastrous for scientific and secular education in India if implemented. He was speaking at the national seminar on 'Women and Education' at Aligarh Muslim University inaugurated by National Commission for Women chairperson Girija Vyas.

"Throughout the document (framework) there is no statement that religion should not be allowed to colour teaching and that it should not be the business of schools to spread values attributed to any religion," Habib said.

The historian also criticised the proposal that envisioned children "creating their own versions of knowledge", saying this would result in "glorification of primitive beliefs" in contrast with scientific concepts as it would open the gates to all kinds of superstition.

01 SEP 2005

Tanvir team on Gaur blacklist

RASHEED KIDWAI

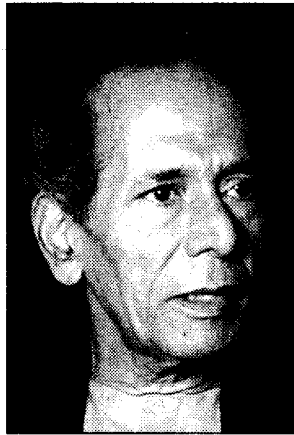
Bhopal, Aug. 29: The Babulal Gaur government in Madhya Pradesh has blacklisted Habib Tanvir's group Naya Theatre, accusing him of misappropriation of state grants.

The 76-year-old doyen of theatre has been at loggerheads with the BJP and the Sangh parivar over his stringent opposition to the Hindutva ideology.

Two years ago, Tanvir had staged his play *Ponga Pandit* across the state, drawing the wrath of the BJP. The party's activists disrupted the play wherever it was staged, alleging that it portrayed Hinduism and its customs in bad light. The actors were targeted with eggs, tomatoes and stones.

Around this time, Tanvir received a grant of Rs 600,000. According to Pawan Jain, the state secretary in the culture department, "two years have passed but Tanvir's group has failed to submit accounts of expenditure of the grant to the state government. Hence, it has been blacklisted".

Tanvir was reluctant to comment, only saying that he was in the process of submitting bills. He cited health and family reasons for not settling



Tanvir: Grant cloud

the accounts yet.

Tanvir's detractors in Bhopal could, however, barely hide their glee. "Here is a man who used to be a picture of honesty, decency and civil society. Tell me, since when has embezzling government grant been added to the so-called secular profile?" Devendra Rawat, the Bhopal district VHP chief, asked sarcastically.

Jain said that according to the government order, Naya Theatre will not receive any grant or help from the state.

Ajay Singhwa, a member of the theatre group, defended Tanvir, saying the matter was an excuse for the Gaur govern-

ment to settle political scores.

"Everybody knows that the BJP is strongly against us," he said, adding the government should have shown sympathy towards the theatre veteran. "His wife died recently. Tanvir was also recently injured in an accident in Delhi."

Other associates of Tanvir said he was in the habit of "forgetting" to submit bills. "You do not expect an artiste of Tanvir's stature to be a financial wizard. When Arjun Singh was human resource development minister in the Narasimha Rao regime, Tanvir had got into a similar problem," said one of them, requesting anonymity.

He said Gaur and Jain had failed to recognise Tanvir's contribution. "In any culture and in any age, it is rare for a person to become a legend in his or her own lifetime. Tanvir has attained this."

Singhwa said things have become tougher for Tanvir since the BJP came to power in December 2003. For several years, Naya Theatre had been operating from a bungalow provided by the state. But a few months ago, Gaur's government asked Tanvir to cough up the rent, which he could not afford and the artistes were evicted, Singhwa said.

30 AUG 2009 THE TELEGRAPH

শিক্ষায় সংরক্ষণ নিয়ে বৈঠক স্থগিত

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নয়াদিল্লি, ২৭

অগস্ট: বেসরকারি মেডিক্যাল ও ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং কলেজ এবং অন্যান্য পেশাদারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলিতে সরকারের নিয়ন্ত্রণ বাড়াতে রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের সঙ্গে পূর্বনির্ধারিত বৈঠক পিছিয়ে দিল কেন্দ্র। সংসদের শীতকালীন অধিবেশনে এ ব্যাপারে একটি সার্বিক বিল আনার স্বার্থেই আজকের বৈঠক পিছিয়ে দেওয়া হল।

বিষয়টি নিয়ে কিছু দিন আগেই সমস্ত রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের সঙ্গে বৈঠক করেছিলেন কেন্দ্রীয় মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়নমন্ত্রী অর্জুন সিংহ। 'বেসরকারি পেশাদারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তি ও ফি নিয়ন্ত্রণ' নামে একটি খসড়া বিল তখন রাজ্যগুলিকে বিবেচনার জন্য দেওয়া হয়। কিন্তু আজ অর্জুন সিংহ বলেন, এ ব্যাপারে সুপ্রিম কোর্টের সাম্প্রতিক পর্যবেক্ষণের পর ওই খসড়া বিলটি অপ্রাসঙ্গিক হয়ে গিয়েছে। অধিকাংশ রাজ্যেরও তাই মত। তাদের বক্তব্য, সর্বোচ্চ আদালতের রায়ের প্রেক্ষিতে বরং আইনের খসড়া নতুন করে তৈরি করা হোক। অর্জুন জানান, রাজ্যগুলিকে তাদের পরামর্শ ১৫ সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে পাঠাতে বলা হয়েছে।

উল্লেখ্য, সম্প্রতি সুপ্রিম কোর্ট এক রায়ে জানিয়েছে, বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে আর্থ-সামাজিক দিক থেকে অনুন্নত শ্রেণির ছাত্রছাত্রীর জন্য সংরক্ষণের প্রয়োজন নেই। ইউ পি এ এবং এন ডি এ জোটের শরিক ও সমর্থক সব রাজনৈতিক দলই এতে তীব্র আপত্তি জানায়। সুপ্রিম কোর্টের

ওই রায়কে আইনি পথে মোকাবিলা করার জন্য দ্রুত নয়া আইন প্রণয়নের প্রস্তাব ওঠে। এ ব্যাপারে গত ২৩ অগস্ট সর্বদলীয় বৈঠকে ঠিক হয়, রাজনৈতিক দলগুলির প্রতিনিধিদের নিয়ে এ জন্য একটি কমিটি গড়া হবে। ওই কমিটির সুপারিশগুলি নিয়ে বেসরকারি পেশাদারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তি, অনুন্নত শ্রেণির ছাত্রদের ভর্তির ক্ষেত্রে সংরক্ষণ, পাঠ্যক্রম ও ফি কাঠামো নিয়ন্ত্রণের উদ্দেশ্যে কেন্দ্র নয়া খসড়া বিল তৈরি করবে।

শীর্ষ আদালতের রায়ের প্রেক্ষিতে বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংরক্ষণের প্রশ্নটি এ ভাবে মাথাচাড়া দেওয়ায় পুরনো খসড়া বিলটি অপ্রাসঙ্গিক হয়ে পড়ে। অথচ সেই খসড়ার উপরেই আজ রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের বৈঠকটি নির্ধারিত ছিল। এ জন্য বিভিন্ন রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রী বা রাজ্যের প্রতিনিধিরা আজ দিল্লিতে হাজিরও হন। পশ্চিমবঙ্গের উচ্চশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী সত্যসাধন চক্রবর্তীও দিল্লি এসেছেন। সত্যসাধনবাবু জানান, বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলিতে ভর্তি, সংরক্ষণ, পাঠ্যক্রম ও ফি কাঠামোর ওপর নিয়ন্ত্রণের জন্য সি পি এমের মত কী তা সীতারাম ইয়েচুরি আগেই জানিয়ে দিয়েছেন। পাশাপাশি রাজ্য সরকারের তরফ থেকেও তাঁরা ১৫ সেপ্টেম্বরের মধ্যে সুপারিশ পাঠাবেন। সংসদের শীতকালীন অধিবেশনের আগে রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের ফের বৈঠক হবে। কেন্দ্র চাইছে শীতকালীন অধিবেশনেই বিলটি পাশ করাতে।

১৯৯৫ ANADABAZA KATEWA

Quota: law in winter session likely

Be cautious
of call
HD-1
28/8

Give proposals within 15 days on reservation issue, States told

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Arjun Singh said on Saturday that all efforts would be made to bring in legislation in the winter session of Parliament to address the situation arising out of the Supreme Court order abolishing reservation of seats in private unaided professional educational institutions. However, he did not indicate whether it would take the shape of a Constitutional amendment or Central legislation.

The Minister was addressing a meeting of the State Education Ministers convened here to discuss the draft central legislation – “The Private Professional Education Institutions (Regulation of Admission and Fixation of Fee) Bill 2005.” This was prepared by the HRD Ministry after various State Governments sought one as recommended by the Supreme Court in the T.M.A. Pai case in 2002. However, with the draft legislation becoming redundant in view of the recent Supreme Court judgment, Mr. Singh suggested that State Governments formulate their response.

The T.M.A. Pai judgment had held that it would be open to the Centre or the State Governments to enact legislation to prevent commercialisation of professional education, and to provide reservation. States such as Kerala and Karnataka enacted their own laws providing for

quotas in such colleges and they are pending adjudication before the Supreme Court. All the affected States had urged the Centre earlier this year to enact a comprehensive law to regulate admissions and fees in private professional institutions.

State Governments have now been asked to come up with their response within 15 days. During this time, the Ministry will put in place the multi-party committee – proposed at last Tuesday’s all-party meeting – to evolve a political response. At Saturday’s meeting, the Minister said that since a consensus had evolved on the issue, it was now for the States to formulate their reply.

The State Governments’ proposals will be referred to the multi-party committee after which a draft legislation will be drawn up by the Ministry. There will be another round of consultations with States ahead of the winter session to give a final shape to the proposed law. Though some States had come prepared with a fresh formulation, none of them was taken up for discussion on Saturday as the meeting was wound up.

The HRD Ministry has learnt that some private unaided engineering institutions in Tamil Nadu have approached the State Government offering a certain percentage of their seats for reservation. Their contention was that they are conscious of the need for factoring in social justice but do not want quotas thrust on them.

28 AUG 2005

THE HINDU

Justice throws up hands

Shut us down, SC tells govt

R. VENKATARAMAN

New Delhi, Aug. 23: Close down all the courts in the country and do whatever you want, the chief justice told the government today in a stunning outburst.

The tongue-lashing, which caps a string of face-offs starting with the Jharkhand trust vote, came during the hearing of a petition on reservation for Dalit Christians.

"Why are we told time and again by the government that it is not taking a confrontationalist attitude? Who is taking a confrontationalist attitude?" asked chief justice R.C. Lahoti demanded to know.

The immediate provocator was attorney-general Milton Banerjee's "thank you" after the court granted him six weeks to reply to the PIL. Banerjee, who had asked for four months, said he was "grateful" the court did not "precipitate" this matter.

The court, at the receiving end of much criticism over its recent order that private unaided colleges need not reserve seats for SC/STs, erupted. Stopping short of saying the government had not understood the order, the bench that included Justices G.P. Mathur and P.K. Balasubramanyam said: "When we said, 'please come with a legislation,' you are talking about confrontation."

The judiciary and the legislature have been locked in a turf war on other occasions too. The court's order in March advancing the Jharkhand trust vote had drawn angry cries for a debate on separation of powers, but the government said it wanted to avoid a "confrontation".

Since the PIL seeking quo-

tas for Dalit Christians was taken up, the Centre has held that this is a policy matter in which the judiciary should not interfere. The PIL should be thrown out, it said.

"It is purely a policy and legislative matter for the government to consider and the court should keep out of it," Banerjee argued.

But the Supreme Court, which settles all constitutional issues, insisted that it has the mandate to examine the legality and constitutionality of granting reservation to Dalit Christians. In April, it asked the Centre to reply and fixed August 23 for final hearings.

The PIL had sought quotas in jobs and education for Dalit Christians on the ground that such reservation existed for Dalits among Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists.

Banerjee's argument was that "any amendment to the Presidential order of 1950 including communities within the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes category was not justiciable in the court, which cannot add or subtract communities to the list through any order or decision or judgment or direction".

The attorney-general had earlier told the court that the BJP-led NDA government in 2002 had refused to grant SC category to Dalit Christians. He recalled that the Supreme Court had earlier ruled that the courts could not alter the list of entries in the SC/ST category.

But the judges said: "It is a crucial issue and we would examine the legal side of the issue on the basis of the rulings cited by the petitioner and the attorney-general."

THE LONG LASH OF THE LAW

The players: The Centre for Public Interest Litigation vs the Union of India

The case: Reservation for Dalit Christians

Centre's stand: The judiciary should not interfere in such policy matters

Tuesday: Final hearing. Attorney-general Milton Banerjee seeks four months

Six weeks. Only a short time will be given

We (the government) are grateful to the court for not precipitating this matter (also)

(An obvious reference to an earlier seven-judge bench judgment quashing state quota in private unaided institutions)

You are talking about confrontation. If that is so, let us do our duty and you do your duty... please come out with a legislation (on reservation)

Judiciary's interference in such policy matters...

Let's do our duty. You must first advise your people (the government) to exercise self-restraint. The 11-judge bench and the five-judge bench said the same (no quota in private educational institutions). When this judgment (the seven-judge bench's) goes out, you say it is confrontation. Why are you telling day in and day out that 'we (the government) are not taking a confrontationalist attitude'?

We are not talking this...

Tell your client (the government) to close down all the courts in the country and do whatever you want to. If we (the judiciary) are told that we are confrontationalist, we will do our duty. You do yours

No, my lords...

Should you not tell your client (the government) to give the respect the courts deserve? When we know what's the attitude of the government, we do our duty

FLASHPOINTS

Jharkhand

SC advances trust vote called by the Shibu Soren government in March and orders video recording of proceedings. Tells governor and Speaker to send reports to the court. Speaker and the Left demand a debate on separation of powers. But Centre defuses situation

Bihar

SC admits petitions challenging the dissolution of the Assembly. The matter is still being heard. At stake are the powers of the governor and the judiciary's jurisdiction. If elections are stayed, it would be a first

Quotas

SC exempts colleges that receive no government aid from state quotas. Left forces the Centre to consider a law to bypass the ruling

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Aug. 23: The court is angry but the government is determined.

The Centre and party leaders set their minds on a law that they have been planning on to counter the Supreme Court's recent order freeing unaided private educational institutions from government control.

The decision to press ahead came at a meeting this evening after the government was ticked off by the court earlier in the day for "unwanted criticism" of its order scrapping quotas in such institutions.

At the scheduled meeting, party leaders discussed legal options before them. After the meeting, human resource development minister Arjun Singh said he has been authorised to form a "small political committee" that will draft a central law to ensure "social justice" and eliminate "commercialisation of education".

The leaders said there was consensus on the need for a law. "We all want social justice," said CPM Lok Sabha MP Basudev Acharya.

"Reservation quota must be restored," said Telugu Desam leader Yerran Naidu.

The overwhelming opinion is for a Constitution amendment bill to widen the scope of Article 19. The article gives individuals freedom to carry on any "occupation, trade or business" but has a rider that empowers the Centre to impose "reasonable restrictions". The Centre, sources said, might consider broadening the ambit of "reasonable restrictions".

At a meeting with Left leaders after the apex court order,

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had suggested amending the article. The amendment would require approval of two-thirds of Parliament. The government has two other options — a separate bill or a clause in a bill it has drawn up to control private colleges.

"Nothing is sacrosanct," Congress spokesperson Anand Sharma said on today's criticism by the court. "Court rulings are overturned. Court orders cannot gag parliamentarians who are people's representatives."

Sharma said his party does not have a view of its own. "We head the UPA government.

YOUR VOICE

TODAY'S QUESTION
Q: Is a clash between government and courts inevitable?

Options: a - Yes, b - No
SMS your reply to 8243

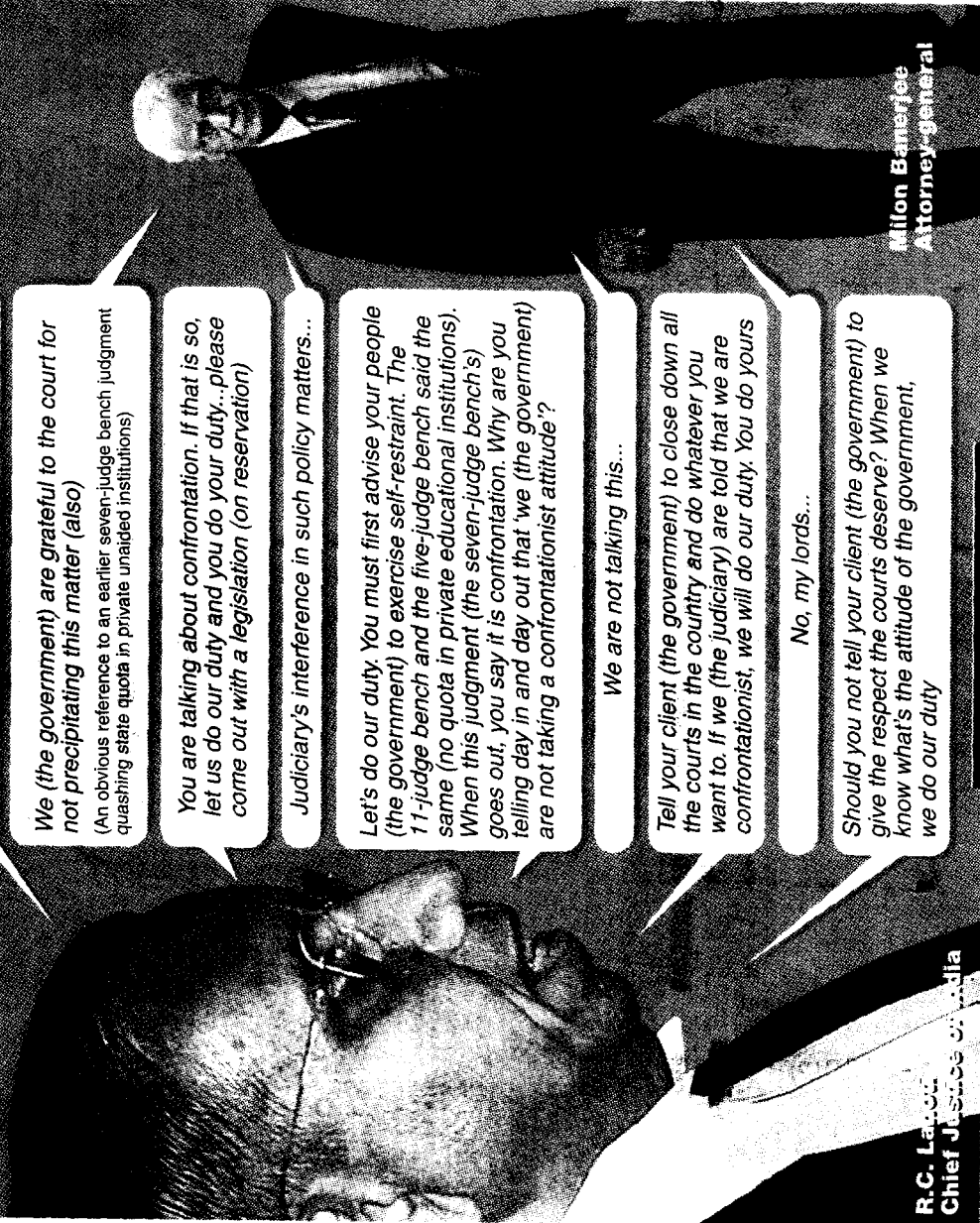
YESTERDAY'S RESULT
Q: Has mobile phone made life more complicated?
Yes 36% No 64%

Available to Hurch, Airtel, Tata Indicom and Reliance subscribers

There will be a collective opinion on the matter."

Law minister H.R. Bhardwaj was, however, upset with Arjun Singh for publicly saying that the Centre would enact a law to bring quotas back in private institutions. He said it was a "delicate" issue and the minister should not have made public the government's intention without cabinet approval.

At a news conference last week where he had announced today's meeting, Arjun Singh had said the Centre would explore legislative possibilities to bring back seat quotas. The minister, however, said the government did not want a confrontation with the judiciary.



R.C. Lahoti, Chief Justice of India

Milton Banerjee, Attorney-general

24/8

Quota unquote

Freedom from shackles of state control

The government's wings have been clipped, and the reaction of the chattering class verges on contempt. Last week's Supreme Court ruling has come as a tremendous relief to private, unaided educational institutions. At one stroke, it will have a two-pronged effect. The government has been shackled from meddling in the affairs of such institutions; and the private colleges have been unshackled in such vital matters as admission and the fee structure — "they have unfettered fundamental right to choose the students and the procedure". The striking feature of the Supreme Court judgment — the third clarification to be sure — is that both the Centre and the states have been barred from enforcing admission quotas in private colleges. Even the listed classes will have to try their luck in the state-sponsored centres of learning. However, the doors will be open to what the Bench refers to as non-minorities. Financially, the colleges stand to gain substantially; a 15 per cent reservation has been introduced for NRIs who will be charged higher fees.

With respect, certain ambiguities need to be cleared. The Bench has ruled that the NRI fees will be utilised for the benefit of the poor students. This is a well thought-out move with one rider however — the number of students from the "economically weaker sections" remains indeterminate. Neither is it clear as to who will form the committees to monitor admissions. Still more vague must be their composition. A possible attempt by the government to have its nominee will lead to remote control and will run counter to the thrust of the court order. Another aspect that calls for clarification is the admission procedure. A free hand implies that private colleges will have to devise their own system. In West Bengal, the state-controlled joint entrance exam is still the gateway for entry to the private engineering colleges.

Post-verdict, the government has its back to the wall and is reportedly girding its loins — a Bill to regulate private institutions is said to be on the anvil. And for once, it can count on Left support. Both the CPI-M and CPI want a law to circumvent the court. Prakash Karat looks for a "way to get around the ruling". And AB Bardhan wants Parliament to pass a law to make private colleges meet "their social and economic obligations". All very fine in terms of socialist rhetoric, but they run the risk of being accused of contempt.

21 AUG 2005

THE STATESMAN

Schools flout quota

Sanjay Singh
in New Delhi

Aug. 18. — While the Centre is gearing up to bring a legislation on reservation in private unaided professional institutes after the Supreme Court verdict banning it, unaided public schools in the country are flouting state government notifications on reservation of seats for economically weaker sections.

Many state governments have given land to these unaided public schools at a "highly subsidised rate",

19/8 55-5
besides giving them affiliation to state boards, CBSE or ICSE and other benefits. Public schools in many states have moved court against the governments' orders to provide reservation.

Public schools in Delhi which were asked to ensure 20 per cent reservation to poor children and fee concession for weaker sections of society moved the court against the government's decision. This is despite the fact that the Delhi government was only complying with the High Court order in this

regard.

Many states like Bihar, Chattisgarh and Orissa have not taken any stand. These states issued orders for reservation of seats in public schools, but the governments showed no interest in getting the orders implemented.

A senior member of the National Council for Teachers Education said: "It was easy for the UPA government to build up an all-party consensus against the Supreme Court's directive for professional unaided institutes, but every second minister or

MP has a small or big public school. Will they ever let similar action be taken for schools too?"

A senior HRD ministry official pointed out that if the government can claim to have the best professional institutions in engineering, medicine, business management and other streams, why not have the best government schools in the country. "We already make two different classes of people, right from school — one from government schools and the other from public schools," he added.

THE STATESMAN

শিক্ষায় সংরক্ষণ নিয়ে আইন বদলাতে চায় কেন্দ্র

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার, নয়াদিল্লি, ১৭
অগস্ট: বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে
সংরক্ষণ নিয়ে সুপ্রিম কোর্টের রায়ের
পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে শীত অধিবেশনেই নতুন
আইন বা সংশোধনী আনার কথা
ভাবছে কেন্দ্র। প্রধানমন্ত্রী মনমোহন
সিংহের সঙ্গে আজ দেখা করে বাম
সাংসদদের একটি দল। প্রতিনিধিদের
মধ্যে ছিলেন সীতারাম ইয়েচুরি, ডি
রাজা, এ বি বর্ধন, অবনী রায় ও
দেবব্রত বিশ্বাস। পরে ডি রাজা বলেন,
“প্রধানমন্ত্রী আশ্বাস দিয়ে বলেন, সুপ্রিম
কোর্টের রায় পাল্টানোর জন্য আইন
প্রণয়ন বা আইনে সংশোধনী আনা হতে
পারে। না হলে কী ভাবে সম্ভব তা
খতিয়ে দেখে সরকার সিদ্ধান্ত নেবে।”
এ নিয়ে পরের শিক্ষাবর্ষের আগেই
সিদ্ধান্তে পৌঁছতে চান প্রধানমন্ত্রী।

সুপ্রিম কোর্ট ১২ অগস্ট একটি
রায়ে জানিয়েছিল, বেসরকারি
শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানে অর্থ-সামাজিক দিক
থেকে অনুন্নত শ্রেণির ছাত্রছাত্রীদের
জন্য সংরক্ষণের প্রয়োজন নেই। রাজ্য
সরকারের এই নিয়ে অধিকার থাকবে
না বলেও ওই রায়ে জানানো হয়। এই
রায় নিয়ে ক্ষোভ ছড়ায় বাম দলগুলির
মধ্যে। লোকসভার অধিবেশনে এই

নিয়ে অসন্তোষ প্রকাশ করেন দল
নিবিশেষে অধিকাংশ সাংসদই।
তফশিলি জাতি, উপজাতি ও অন্যান্য
অনুন্নত শ্রেণি এবং সংখ্যালঘুদের জন্য
সংরক্ষণ প্রথা রাখতে হবেই বলে দাবি
ওঠে সব দলের তরফ থেকেই। তবে
বামেরা এই নিয়ে সবচেয়ে বেশি সরব
হন। জবাবে মানব সম্পদ উন্নয়ন মন্ত্রী
অর্জুন সিংহ বলেন, শীর্ষ আদালতের
রায় নিয়ে ক্ষোভ দেখানো ঠিক নয়।
তবে ইউপিএ সরকার সাংসদদের
মনোভাবকে শ্রদ্ধা করে এবং সেই
অনুযায়ীই সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়া হবে।

অর্জুন বলেন, “সুপ্রিম কোর্ট এমন
একটি রায় দিয়েছে, যা অনেক ভাবে
সামাজিক অধিকারকে খর্ব করবে।”
সরকার সংরক্ষণের নীতি যে কোনও
মূল্যে ধরে রাখবে বলেও সভায় জানান
অর্জুন। তিনি এ-ও বলেন, সুপ্রিম
কোর্টের ওই রায় নিয়ে আলোচনার
জন্য ২৭ অগস্ট দিল্লিতে সব রাজ্যের
পেশাগত শিক্ষাবিষয়ক মন্ত্রীদের একটি
বৈঠক হবে। এ ছাড়া, চলতি অধিবেশন
শেষ হওয়ার আগে সব রাজনৈতিক
দলের নেতাদের সঙ্গেও এই নিয়ে
বিশদে আলোচনা করে তাঁদের মতামত
জানা হবে বলে মন্ত্রী জানিয়েছেন।

18 AUG 2005

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

Left takes college quota cry to PM

MONOBINA GUPTA

New Delhi, Aug. 17: The Prime Minister has assured Left leaders that the Centre could consider bringing in a law to amend the Constitution, if necessary, to bypass the Supreme Court order freeing private unaided colleges of the need to reserve seats for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students.

CPI general secretary A.B. Bardhan and CPM politburo member Sitaram Yechury met Manmohan Singh this afternoon to discuss the options available to the Centre.

According to the Left leaders, the Prime Minister said the government could bring in an amendment bill to broaden the scope of restrictions under Article 19 of the Constitution.

The court in its recent order described the opening of private colleges as an "occupation". Article 19

guarantees freedom to citizens to "carry on any occupation, trade or business" without government interference.

However, Article 19 has a rider that empowers the Centre to impose "reasonable restrictions" on the agencies carrying on business in the "interest of the general public".

Human resource development minister Arjun Singh told the Lok Sabha today that his government is going to table a bill — the Private Professional Educational Institutions (Regulation of Admissions and Fixation of Fee) Bill — in the winter session of Parliament to make private colleges fall in line with the govern-

ment's "philosophy" not only regarding their fees but admissions as well. This may also take care of quotas for SC/STs.

The Centre has two routes to counter the court order.

One way would be to incorporate the reservation quota in the private professional educational institutions bill for which the law ministry has already drawn up the draft.

The second option could be to bring a constitutional amendment bill as the Prime Minister suggested.

Left leaders have suggested an all-party meeting to the Prime Minister to discuss the matter.

The Left, however, cautioned the

Prime Minister that the exercise should not convey the impression that the Centre was bullying the states.

Education is on the concurrent list and there should be no suggestion of the government exercising more and more control over private educational institutions.

The UPA's common minimum programme is categorically committed to safeguarding the autonomy of higher education institutions.

Former HRD minister Murli Manohar Joshi of the BJP had earned flak from all quarters for his interference with the functioning of the Institutes of Management.

But the bill could trigger another row over fees in private colleges. The Left has told Singh that the government should not fix the exact fee but should definitely draw "parameters" within which the fees can be fixed.



Singh: Remedy promise

18 AUG 2005

THE TELEGRAPH

18 AUG 2006

THE STATESMAN

Split syllabi finalised

Education & Culture

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Aug. 17. — It surely is no manna from heaven but students and teachers can heave a sigh of relief as the Higher Secondary Council today finalised its separate syllabi for Classes XI and XII.

The council said that these would reach the schools by the first week of September through a special issue of its journal, the Sansad Parichiti.

The split became necessary after the HS Council had announced last month that, from 2007, Higher Secondary examinations would be held on the basis of the Class XII syllabus. Experts in all the 54 subjects began deliberations in the first week of this month on the bifurcation.

The council today said that there had been no other changes in the syllabus.

"The separate syllabi will reach the schools in the first week of September through our own journal. Meanwhile, teachers can deal with the fundamentals of a subject as given in the initial chapters of the relevant book as these will surely be in the Class XI syllabus," said the council secretary, Mr Debashis Sarkar, on being queried about the delay.

The academic session began in July and the classes will continue for three more weeks without the syllabus being available.

The council, however, today released the syllabi for English A and B and Bengali A and B for both



the classes along with that of alternative English at a press conference.

But even the syllabi given to the media were piecemeal.

Only the literary pieces

The new course

Class XI

English-A

Novel: Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe. Or Short stories and non-fiction

The Mirrors of Power: Essays by Raymond Williams

The Middle Order: Essays by Raymond Williams

The Story of Woburn by J.S. Wood

The Earth by H.E. Johns

East and West by Rabindranath Tagore

Harry and Ranvijay by J.P. Singh

Mar's environment by Anshu

I Walked the Other Way by H. Keller

The Man of Right by Anshu

Reveries of Pankaj by Anshu

When I Have Fears by Anshu

The Oracle's vision by Anshu

The Marble Gild by Anshu

English B

Prose

Jacking by Jerome K. Jerome

Our Culture, Their Culture by Rabindranath Tagore

The Struggle Against Mahatma Gandhi

The School I Would Like

School Children (fiction)

Prose

My Life by H. Keller



Bengali A

Prose (20)

Isparat Maye by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay

Totakahini by Rabindranath Tagore

Stutree Jagaran by Swami Vivekananda

Prose (20)

Pudmajati Bibharsangal by Syed Alau

Amabilep by Rabindranath Tagore

Nabhat by Rabindranath Tagore

Barnamali Anar Dakshin

Barnamali by Sakshur Rahaman

Prose (10)

Pap-Pap by Rabindranath Tagore

Jhansabasi by Seeh Juddha by Toppi

Prose (10)

Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

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Shiksha by Rabindranath Tagore

have been mentioned in the English A and B syllabi. In Bengali A, details of the history of literature or grammar courses were not provided. The syllabi for Hindi, Urdu

and Nepali were not given either. "It is true that we have not been able to provide the complete syllabi for even English and Bengali. This is because the details have been sent

out for printing," said Professor Gopa Dutta, president of the council. The council said that the second volumes of text books would be available in September.

The council's syllabus committee has drawn up the guidelines for HS questions in accordance with the new syllabi. Model question papers will be available in a later issue of the council's journal.

Abolition of quota in unaided private colleges justified

Supreme Court reiterates ruling in T.M.A. Pai Foundation case

17/8
AD-12
Prosecution
Vallu

J. Venkatesan

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has justified the abolition of quota and reservation of seats in unaided private colleges stating that institutions which did not receive aid from the State, could not be compelled to implement the reservation policy.

In its judgment on August 12, a seven-judge Bench, headed by Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti reiterated the ruling of a 11-judge Bench of the apex court in October 2002 in the T.M.A. Pai Foundation case that unaided colleges, whether run by minorities or non-minorities should have unfettered rights.

The Court did not approve of the interpretation in the Islamic Academy case to the extent that it allowed the States to fix a quota for seat sharing between management and the state government on the basis of "local needs" of each state. The court noted that in the Pai Foundation case, it had been held that

State regulation should be minimal and only to maintain fairness and transparency in admission procedure

unaided professional institutions should be given greater autonomy in admission procedure and fee structure. It said that State regulation should be minimal and only to maintain fairness and transparency in admission procedure and to check exploitation of the students by charging exorbitant fees or capitation fees.

The seven-judge Bench said that that in the Pai Foundation case, the apex court had not found any justification for imposing seat-sharing quota by the State on unaided private colleges and reservation policy of the State or State quota seats or

management seats. It was only observed that private unaided institutions could have consensual arrangements with the state. This could not be construed as empowering the states to fix the quotas and enforce reservation.

"We find great force in the submission made on behalf of the petitioners that the states have no power to insist on seat sharing in the unaided private professional educational institutions by fixing a quota of seats between the management and the State," the Court said. The judges said that compelling the colleges to give a share of the seats to the candidates chosen by the state would amount to nationalisation of seats, which had been disapproved in the Pai case.

The Court agreed with the submissions of the petitioners that reasonable restrictions envisaged under Article 19 (6) of the Constitution could not apply to educational activities.

17 AUG 2005

THE HINDU

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2005

Moving to protect students' interests

By ruling against State government quotas in private unaided professional colleges, whether run by minorities or non-minorities, the Supreme Court has eliminated a major contradiction in the realm of higher education. The unanimous judgment of the seven-member Constitution Bench delivered by Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti has settled, at least for the present, the fundamental question of the role of the state vis-à-vis the private sector in professional education. The Bench has taken the reasonable view that there must be no encroachment on the right to start institutions or curbs on functional autonomy, when no aid is sought; state-administered quotas that take away a part of the intake capacity are therefore untenable. At the same time, the Court has, for the benefit of the student community, reinforced state supervision, through appropriate regulatory measures, of academic standards, and of merit and transparency in the admissions process. In the absence of strong legal instruments for oversight and redress, several private institutions violate with impunity the conditions set for affiliation. The latest judgment has reaffirmed the Apex Court ruling in the T.M.A. Pai Foundation case, striking down quotas, while retaining from the Islamic Academy order, the scheme to hold a Common Entrance Test and to create quasi-judicial committees to monitor the fee structure and conduct of the CET. The State and Central Governments must enact speedily, as suggested by the Court, a comprehensive law to check profiteering by private managements and offer to students a widely-accepted CET.

The removal of government quotas in private, unaided professional institutions has presented political parties with an unexpected crisis, as it eliminates reserved seats as well in such colleges in one stroke. Few parties can hope to win plaudits, however, for pursuing enlightened policies on higher education while in power over the past two decades. After virtually abandoning state leadership in expanding higher education, governments exercised the convenient option of appropriating a part of the intake capacity in unaided institutions. For too long, the States have focussed on instituting bureaucratic controls over private colleges rather than on the maintenance of standards or on curbing the exploitation of students. The Centre and the States must now set their foundering education policy on a firm footing and move to open more government colleges to provide opportunities to the disadvantaged sections. At the same time, the States and affiliating universities must seize the opportunity given by the Court to clean up education in the private sector. Many self-financing institutions lack well-qualified faculty, inflate investment and running costs, collect huge capitation fees, and do not account for all the funds that students remit. Such exploitative teaching shops do a disservice to education and the earlier the Centre and the State Governments rein them in the better it will be for the credibility of the system.

THE HINDU

RS wants Bill on quotas

Statement News Service

NEW DELHI, Aug. 16. — Cutting across party lines, Rajya Sabha members today called for a Bill or Ordinance to be introduced to help set aside the Supreme Court judgement removing reservation in private higher education institutions.

Congress member Mr AK. Antony first voiced concern when he raised it as a matter of urgent public interest. "It is against all principles of social justice," Mr Antony said, noting that the poor from all communities would not be able to get admission at any private institution under the order.

Making a statement, the parliamentary affairs minister, Mr Suresh Pachauri, assured the House that the government was studying the judgement in great detail and would soon take a decision on it.

The members were concerned that the judgment would have a far-reaching impact on the downtrodden scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. Moreover, it would encourage capitation fees and not merit, they felt. Member

after member wanted an amendment Bill to be brought in the current session itself so that the Supreme Court's orders could be countered.

While Mr Narayanswami of the Congress felt the Supreme Court order would promote "ultimate commercialisation of professional education," TDP members maintained that several minority institutions, especially in southern India, would be affected and several students deprived of quality education.

Mr Ravi Shakar Prasad of the BJP and Mr Sharad Yadav of the JD-U urged the government to come out with a mechanism in this session itself to answer all the concerns raised by the judgment.

Mr Ramnath Kovid, also of the BJP, regretted that on the one hand the government was talking of 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' while the SC came out with this judgement.

Rajya Sabha chairman, Mr Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, wound up the discussion by saying the government had been apprised of the sentiments of the House and would take an appropriate decision for further action.

A 3

AUG 2005 THE HINDUSTAN

পরীক্ষা সংস্কারে কেন্দ্রের সব সুপারিশই খারিজ করল রাজ্য

দেবীদাস আচার্য

প্রাথমিকে আগেই উঠেছে, এ বার স্কুলের অন্য ক্লাসেও পাশ-ফেল তুলে দেওয়ার সুপারিশ। রাজ্যের 'না'।

পড়াশোনায় যারা এগোতে চাইবে, তাদের জন্য মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা। অন্যেরা ওই পরীক্ষা দেবে না, স্কুল থেকে সার্টিফিকেট নেবে। রাজ্যের 'না'।

প্রশ্নপত্রে ৭৫ শতাংশ পর্যন্ত হোক 'মাল্টিপল চয়েস'। রাজ্যের 'না'। ইংরেজি প্রাথমিকে নয়, তার পরে। রাজ্যের 'না'।

এগুলি তো বটেই, আরও একগুচ্ছ 'না' জানিয়ে কেন্দ্রকে চিঠি দিচ্ছে রাজ্য। কারণ কিছু নয়, ঠেকে শেখা। প্রাথমিক স্তর থেকে ইংরেজি তুলে দেওয়া রাজ্য সরকারের পক্ষে ব্যয়ের হাট হয়েছিল। একেবারে প্রথম শ্রেণি থেকে ইংরেজির পাঠ চালু করতে হয়েছে। পাশ-ফেল তুলে দেওয়ার পরীক্ষাও পুরোপুরি সফল হয়নি। ফলে বিশেষজ্ঞেরা যা-ই বলুন বা অন্য রাজ্য যাই মত দিক, পশ্চিমবঙ্গের পক্ষে ওই সুপারিশ না-মানার প্রেক্ষিতটি ভিন্ন।

পাশাপাশি, কেন্দ্রের গড়া বিশেষজ্ঞ কমিটির পরীক্ষা সংস্কার সংক্রান্ত প্রায় কোনও সুপারিশই রাজ্য মানবে না। রাজ্যের মতে, সুপারিশগুলি শুনতে ভাল হলেও বাস্তবসম্মত নয়।

ক্ষমতায় এসেই কেন্দ্রের ইউ পি এ সরকার স্কুলের পাঠ্যক্রম ও পরীক্ষা পদ্ধতি পর্যালোচনার জন্য এন সি ই আর টি-র মাধ্যমে অধ্যাপক যশপালের নেতৃত্বে কমিটি গড়ে। কমিটির সুপারিশ কেন্দ্রীয় শিক্ষা উপদেষ্টা পর্ষদের সভায় পেশ হয়। পর্ষদের সিদ্ধান্ত অনুযায়ী কমিটির প্রতিবেদন সব রাজ্য সরকারের কাছে পাঠানো হয় মতামতের জন্য। উপদেষ্টা পর্ষদের

পরবর্তী বৈঠকে এ বিষয়ে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার কথা। তার আগেই রাজ্য এই ব্যাপারে মত জানিয়ে দিচ্ছে কেন্দ্রকে।

প্রাথমিক স্তরে পাশ-ফেল ব্যবস্থা তুলে দেওয়ার ফল যে পুরোপুরি ভাল হয়নি, রাজ্য এখন তা মানছে। তাত্ত্বিক দিক থেকে ওই সিদ্ধান্তের গুরুত্ব যা-ই হোক, পরিণাম আশানুরূপ হয়নি। স্কুলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী কান্তি বিশ্বাস নিজেই এ কথা মানছেন। বিশেষত, রাজ্যে স্কুলশিক্ষার পরিকাঠামো যা, শিক্ষক-ছাত্র অনুপাত যা, তাতে পাশ-ফেলের বিকল্প ব্যবস্থা সফল করা যে সহজ নয়, রাজ্য এখন তা বুঝেছে। সম্ভবত সেই অভিজ্ঞতা থেকেই মাধ্যমিক স্তরে পাশ-ফেল তুলে দিয়ে ধারাবাহিক মূল্যায়নের পক্ষপাতী নয় রাজ্য। কান্তিবাবু বলেন, "বাস্তব পরিস্থিতি যা, তাতে এটা করা যাবে না।"

একই ভাবে প্রাথমিকে ইংরেজি না-পড়ানোর যে সুপারিশ যশপাল কমিটি করেছে, রাজ্য সরকার তার পক্ষে মত দিচ্ছে না। প্রাথমিকে ইংরেজি তুলে দিয়েও ঠেকে শিখেছে রাজ্য। পরিস্থিতির চাপে ধাপে ধাপে একেবারে প্রথম শ্রেণিতেই মাতৃভাষার পাশাপাশি ইংরেজি পড়ানোর সিদ্ধান্ত নিতে হয়েছে। ফলে কমিটি প্রাথমিকের পরের ধাপে ইংরেজি পড়ানোর সুপারিশ করলেও রাজ্য এই ব্যাপারে আপত্তি জানাবে। রাজ্যের বক্তব্য: প্রাথমিক থেকে যখন ইংরেজি তুলে দেওয়া হয়েছিল সেই সময়, আর বর্তমান সময় এক নয়। পরিস্থিতি এতই বদলে গিয়েছে যে, এখন গোড়া থেকেই ভাল ভাবে ইংরেজি শেখা দরকার।

আলোচিত সমস্ত বিষয়ের মধ্যে পরীক্ষা পদ্ধতিকে কমিটি সর্বাধিক গুরুত্ব দিলেও এই সংক্রান্ত সুপারিশের প্রায় কোনওটাই যে তাদের সায়

নেই, কেন্দ্রকে লেখা চিঠিতে তা স্পষ্ট জানাচ্ছে রাজ্য। মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকে পরীক্ষার্থীদের চাপ কমাতে এবং সাফল্যের হার বাড়াতে কমিটি একগুচ্ছ সুপারিশ করেছে। এমনকী, বলা হয়েছে, দশম শ্রেণির পরে যারা উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক পড়তে চায় না, তাদের মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা দেওয়ার দরকার নেই। তারা স্কুল থেকে একটি সার্টিফিকেট পেয়ে যাবে। পরীক্ষায় প্রশ্নপত্রে ২৫ থেকে ৪০ শতাংশ এমন প্রশ্ন থাক, যাক উত্তরে কিছু লিখতে হবে। বাকি ৬০ থেকে ৭৫ শতাংশ হোক 'মাল্টিপল চয়েস' প্রশ্ন। কান্তিবাবু বলেন, "উপদেষ্টা পর্ষদের বৈঠকে শুধু আমি নয়, অন্য রাজ্যের শিক্ষামন্ত্রীও এই ব্যাপারে আপত্তি জানান। সবাই মনে করছেন, এই ব্যবস্থা ছাত্রছাত্রীদের লেখার ক্ষমতাই গড়ে উঠবে না। পরে কর্মক্ষেত্রে অসুবিধায় পড়তে হবে।"

মাধ্যমিক-উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকে একটি বা দু'টি বিষয়ে অসফল পরীক্ষার্থীদের জন্য ফল প্রকাশের ঠিক পরেই ফের পরীক্ষা নেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করার পক্ষপাতী কমিটি। কিন্তু রাজ্যের মতে, এই প্রস্তাব বাস্তবসম্মত নয়। কারণ, পরীক্ষার্থীর সংখ্যা দিন দিন যে ভাবে বাড়ছে, তাতে চাইলেই এমন ভাবে পরীক্ষা নেওয়া সম্ভব নয়। তা ছাড়া, অল্প সময়ের মধ্যে পরীক্ষা নিলে পরীক্ষার্থী প্রস্তুতির জন্য যথেষ্ট সময় পাবে না। ফলে আবার ব্যর্থ হওয়ার সম্ভাবনা বাড়ে। স্কুলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রীর মতে, কমিটি পাঠ্যক্রম বিষয়ে যে সব সুপারিশ করেছে, তার মধ্যে কিছু হয়তো মানা সম্ভব। সেগুলি নিয়ে পরবর্তী কালে রাজ্য স্তরে আলাপ-আলোচনাও হতে পারে। কিন্তু পরীক্ষা নিয়ে যে সব সুপারিশ করেছে, তার প্রায় কিছুই মানা যায় না।

Unaided college admissions only by entrance test

*In Benches in
& Culler
K.D.-12
13/8*

Professional educational institutions may join together and hold a common test: Supreme Court

Legal Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday held that admissions to unaided minority and non-minority professional educational institutions should be made only on the basis of a common entrance test.

A seven-judge Bench, headed by Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti, referred to the plea made on behalf of the All-India Medical and Engineering Colleges Association for holding a national-level entrance test.

It said, "There is nothing wrong in an entrance test being held for one group of institutions imparting same or similar education."

The Bench agreed with the association's submission that a candidate had to purchase admission forms from several institutions and appear for tests at different places on the same or different dates, and there might even be a clash of dates.

The judges said, "If the same candidate is required to appear in several tests, he would be subjected to unnecessary and avoidable expenditure and inconvenience."

Twin objects

To prevent such a situation "institutions situated in one State or in more than one State may join

The single-window system will not cause any dent in the right of minority unaided colleges to admit students of their choice

together and hold a common entrance test or the State may itself or through an agency arrange for [the] holding of such test. Such an agency must be one enjoying the utmost credibility and expertise in the matter. This would better ensure the fulfilment of [the] twin objects of transparency and merit. [A] CET is necessary in the interest of achieving the said objectives and also for saving the student community from harassment and exploitation."

The Bench made it clear that admissions should be done through a single-window system. Such a regulation would not cause any dent in the right of minority unaided institutions to admit students of their choice.

Further, if the admitting agency failed to satisfy the conditions, the State itself could conduct such a

test for these colleges.

State-level panels will stay

Until the government framed regulations, the committees (headed by retired High Court judges) functioning in the States could oversee admissions to ensure that merit did not become a casualty.

The court upheld the constitution of such State-level committees, holding that they were aimed at protecting the interest of students as a whole and also the minorities themselves in maintaining the required standards of education on non-exploitative terms.

Rejecting the demand for abolition of these committees, the court said, "Unless the admission procedure and fixation of fees are regulated and controlled at the initial stage, the evil and unfair practice of granting admission to available seats guided by the paying capacity of the candidates would be impossible to curb."

Other issues for regular Benches

All other issues left untouched might be dealt with by regular Benches, which would take up all the over 100 individual petitions seeking relief.

No quota in unaided private colleges

Ruling applicable from next year: Supreme Court

J. Venkatesan

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday held that unaided minority and non-minority institutions had absolute rights to admit students of their choice in medicine, engineering and other professional courses without government interference.

A seven-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti, also abolished the State quota and reservation in unaided, private minority and non-minority colleges.

The judgment would be effective from the next academic year and all admissions made during 2005-2006 through court orders and directions of State committees would not be disturbed.

"Serious encroachment"

The Bench said imposition of the State quota or enforcing reservation policy in unaided professional institutions constituted a serious encroachment on their right and autonomy.

Mr. Justice Lahoti, writing the unanimous judgment, said, "Merely because the resources of the State in providing professional education are limited, private educational institutions, which intend to provide better professional education, cannot be forced by the State to make admissions available on the basis of [the] reservation policy to less meritorious candidates."

In 2002, an 11-judge Bench in the T.M.A. Pai Foundation case laid down broad guidelines. As different High Courts interpreted them differently, a five-judge Bench gave clarifications in 2003 but further

chaos and confusion occurred in admissions.

In view of this, the seven-

Highlights of judgment

- Unaided minority and non-minority institutions have absolute rights to establish, administer and admit students of their choice
- These institutions can have their own admission procedures
- 'No' to capitation fees
- 15 per cent quota for NRI students

judge Bench was constituted to reinterpret the two judgments.

The judges said, "Neither the policy of reservation can be enforced by the State nor any quota or percentage of admissions can be carved out to be appropriated by the State in a minority or non-minority unaided educational institution."

Over 100 petitions

The Bench, which included Justice Y.K. Sabharwal, Justice D.M. Dharmadhikari, Justice Arun Kumar, Justice G.P. Mathur, Justice Tarun Chatterjee and Justice P.K. Balasubramanyan, was dealing with over 100 petitions filed by All-India Medical and Engineering Colleges Association president T.D. Naidu, individual colleges, the Centre, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Reiterating the ruling given in the T.M.A. Pai Foundation case, Mr. Justice Lahoti said, "Unaided institutions, minority or non-minority, as they are not deriving any aid from State funds, have unfettered fundamental

right to choose students and the procedure, subject to its being fair, transparent and non-exploitative."

Minority status

The Bench said, "Minority institutions would be free to admit students of their own choice, including students of non-minority community as also members of their own community from other States, both to a limited extent only and not in a manner and to such an extent that their minority educational institution status is lost. If they do so, they lose the protection of Article 30 (1) of the Constitution (relating to minorities)."

The Bench recommended that the admissions be regulated by a centralised common entrance test either at the State or national level and single window procedure. It put a complete ban on collection of capitation fees and profiteering by colleges. It said though every institution was free to devise its own fee structure, it could be regulated in the interest of students.

The Bench allowed a 15 per cent quota for non-resident Indian students in private colleges and permitted them to charge higher fees.

Such seats should be utilised only for bona fide NRIs and for their children and merit should not be given the go-by. The amount collected from NRI students should be utilised for students from weaker sections.

The court suggested that legislation be enacted to prevent misutilisation of such quota or any malpractice referable to NRI quota seats.

Entrance test needed: Page 12

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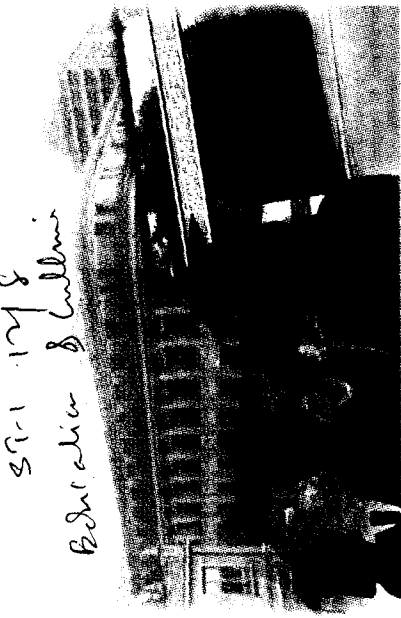
THE HINDU

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Three more colleges add to CU 'burden'

of the higher education department says that CU is responsible for 156 general-degree colleges. Last year, two private colleges were given affiliations by the varsity and now, another three grant-in-aid colleges have been added to the list. The report says the number of colleges (general-degree or otherwise) under CU is 177. BU has 95 colleges affiliated to it and VU, 39. Kalyani University is responsible for 40 and North Bengal University, 68.

A CU official said: "This is an example of unbalanced growth. More so, when Jadavpur University remains a university university."



Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya, Helencha, are the three colleges to be affiliated to CU. The other institutions are Santhal Bidroho Satardha Mahavidyalaya, Goaltore (Vidyasagar University), Sukumar Sengupta Mahavidyalaya (VU), Poldba Mahavidyalaya (Burdwan University), Pandabeshwar College (BU) and Lalgola College. All begin their academic runs this year. Two more colleges may also be set up.

Prof. Satya Sadhan Chakraborty. The Kanti Biswas Committee report on autonomy for higher educational institutions previously observed that though CU was modelled on its London counterpart, it was saddled with

Anindita Chowdhury in Kolkata
 Aug. 11. — Higher education department has given the go-ahead to for eight grant-in-aid colleges across the state, including three under Calcutta University. This comes barely six weeks after a committee headed by school education minister Mr Kanti Biswas had pointed out that the varsity had far too many colleges in its care for its own good. Staff members of the new colleges, all offering general degrees, would be paid according to government scales. Hingaganj Mahavidyalaya, Kultoli BR Ambedkar Mahavidyalaya and Dr BR Ambedkar

higher education minister. "It is true that it's been a long time since we set up grant-in-aid colleges. But we realised that students, particularly from rural areas, were facing trouble getting admitted," said higher education minister.

0 5 AUG 2005

HRD pulls up three varsities over scheme funds

Anindita Chowdhury
Kolkata

programme's funds. The three are Calcutta University, Jadavpur University and the Bengal Engineering and Science University.

JU and BESU have also been warned that this slow pace could adversely affect their chances of being upgraded to IIT status, that is under the ministry's consideration. The warning came dur-

ing two successive meetings, the first between ministry officials and representatives of JU and BESU on their upgradation to IIT status and the second on 30 July at Calcutta University to review Teqip. This was attended by representatives of all three universities.

"But this came as a stray remark. While discussing our proposals

submitted for upgradation to IIT status, the officials told us that if we are unable to spend the Teqip funds how can we spend Rs 950 crore subsidies?" said Prof. NR Banerjee, BESU vice-chancellor who represented his institution at the meeting. JU was represented by its pro-VC, Prof. Shyamal Sanyal.

"At the review meeting, ministry officials said if we do not gear up in spending our Teqip funds it will adversely affect upgradation of JU and BESU to IIT status," said Prof. Niladri Chakraborty, an executive council member of JU. Teachers blame the delay on the change in the Centre's policy as conditions for the grant

changed considerably after the UPA government came to power. The state government, too, was undecided due to the inherent distrust within the CPI-M over accepting World Bank funds under Teqip. JU says it is already in the process of spending Rs 4 crore and its faculty development project is in full swing having sent

nearly 30 teachers for training. "Since there have been reports of misuse of foreign funds in other states we have been particular about being transparent in dealing with Teqip funds," said Prof. Chakraborty. However, BESU VC defends saying, "We have already spent Rs 1.47 crore, the budget sanctioned for last year. It is

only in case of foreign equipment which is taking up time."

Under Teqip the World Bank loan will be received by the central government and then passed on to the state government and finally the various universities will receive it as a grant which will be used for upgradation of technological education.

STATE KNOWS BEST

^{AlS} ^{Pr 18}
The last socialist bastion is a pathetic faith in the state. A bizarre manifestation of this faith is the formation, at the direct initiative of the prime minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, of something called the Knowledge Commission, which was launched on its aimless journey on Tuesday. Most of the members of the commission, despite its token bow to the left, are very eminent people. It is difficult to imagine them advocating the position that the pursuit of knowledge can be driven by the state. Knowledge has advanced not because of the state but despite its presence. The state has a natural propensity to regulate, to monitor and to control. The pursuit of knowledge strives to free itself from shackles of any kind. These are irreconcilable positions. But in India the belief persists that the state can directly participate in the advancement of knowledge. This participation goes far beyond the funding of educational and research establishments. The attempt to control these institutions is common to all governments in India, irrespective of their ideological orientation. Indira Gandhi did it with great aplomb. The Bharatiya Janata Party during its short tenure in power in New Delhi, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) during its long tenure in West Bengal have done the same with crudeness. The state's involvement in educational and research institutions only makes knowledge a victim of patronage-mongering.

The new Knowledge Commission has a brief that goes far beyond previous attempts to set up state-sponsored research bodies and institutions. The commission has the task of working out strategies for promoting excellence in education, knowledge creation and intellectual generation. The subtext was delivered by Mr Singh at the launch. He asked the commission to put forward "bold proposals" to help India achieve excellence in research and the teaching of science, technology and mathematics. In other words, branches of knowledge considered useful and utilitarian by the state have priority. This is not the pursuit of knowledge, but of utility. It is significant that the commission has no theoretical physicist, no classicist, no historian and no one from the field of the languages and linguistics. But this thrust towards utility is not surprising since the state is setting the agenda for knowledge.

The pursuit of knowledge *qua* knowledge has no notion of what is useful. Knowledge is a believer in equality. From the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar to Shakespeare's short lines to the complexities of the Black Hole — all are as important and as valid spheres of knowledge as any other. The state should leave knowledge alone if it wants knowledge to flourish. Scholars in their own fields will set their own agenda. Knowledge is power, but it is also an enemy of state power. //

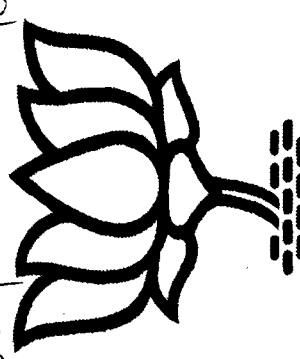
04 AUG 2005 THE TELEGRAPH

Cong fumes at lotus in school text

Statesman News Service

BHOPAL, Aug 1. — The Congress today alleged that the BJP government had been trying to "saffronise education by using its lotus symbol" in social science text-books of sixth standard.

Opposition leader Mrs Jamuna Devi told the House that the national flower, lotus, has been deliberately replaced with the BJP's symbol in school text-books by the Madhya Pradesh



Pathya Pustak Nigam.

She said the matter was serious, and that the Speaker should allow it to be discussed

in the House. When the Speaker insisted taking up the day's agenda first, most Opposition legislators started shouting slogans against the government and later all Opposition members staged a walk-out.

Faced with vociferous protests, the CM told the House that it was "their narrow-mindedness that prompted them to make such allegations".

The Opposition, however, tried to bring up the matter again but the Speaker did not allow a discussion. Mrs Jamuna Devi later

When the Congress would complain to the Election Commission.

The state Congress President, Mr Subhash Yadav said the BJP government had crossed all limits in its bid to saffronise education. Congress

spokesperson Mr Sajjan Singh Verma and Samajwadi Party legislator Mr Sunilam alleged that the Speaker, Mr Ishwardas Rohani, today acted as a "partisan" by not allowing discussion on two important matters listed for the day.

2- Education & Culture

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THE STATESMAN

UGC lists fake varsities

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9- Education & Culture

47-3

THE UGC released an updated list of 20 fake universities on Monday, a practice it has been following for close to a decade.

A formal statement issued by the commission states that the 20 universities were functioning in contravention of the UGC rules and do not have the right to grant any degrees. It further advised students not to pursue any higher educational courses with such "self-styled universities". The 20 fake universities are: Maithili University/ Vishwavidyalaya, Darbhanga, Bihar; Mahila Gram Vidyapith/ Vishwavidyalaya (Women's University), Allahabad, UP; Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Varanasi, UP; Commercial University Ltd, Daryaganj, Delhi; Indian Education Council of UP, Lucknow, UP; Gandhi Hindi Vidyapith, Allahabad, UP;

National University of Electro Complex Homoeopathy, Kanpur, UP; Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose University (Open University), Aligarh, UP; DDB Sanskrit University, Trichi, Tamil Nadu; St John's University, Kishanttam, Kerala; United Nations University, Delhi; Vocational University, Delhi; UP Vishwavidyalaya, Kosi Kalan, Mathura, UP; Maharana Pratap Shiksha Niketan Vishwavidyalaya, Pratappgarh, UP; Raja Arabic University, Nagpur, UP; Kesarwani Vidyapith, Jabalpur, MP; Delhi Vishwa Vidyapeeth, Delhi; Badaganvi Sarkar World Open University Education Society, Belgaum, Karnataka; ADR-Centric Juridical University, Delhi; UP; Handwriting University India, Bangalore, Karnataka.

PTI, New Delhi

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Board splits HS syllabus, teachers livid

By B. D. Chatterjee

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, July 27

IT'S OFFICIAL. Students taking the HS examination will be tested henceforth only on their syllabus for Class XII. The exam split, announced by the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education on Wednesday, drew cheers from students but flak from teachers and publishers.

The new arrangement will apply to all students who have got admission to Class XI this year and will take the HS exam in 2007 and subsequent years. Till now, HS students have been tested at the end of Class XII on an integrated course (Classes XI & XII) of 1,200 marks.

Under the new system, they will



Two-tiered test

AFTER CLASS XI 600-mark annual exam. Council sets papers, schools check answer scripts, marks go to Council

AFTER CLASS XII 700-mark Council exam. Five compulsory subjects, one additional subject and one compulsory paper on environmental science

have to take a 600-mark annual examination at the end of Class XI. After Class XII, they will have to take a 700-mark examination. The answer scripts for the Class XI exam will be evaluated by the schools and the marks will be sent to the Council.

"Taking a final exam of 1200

students. Many schools will not be able to maintain the quality of education," ABTA general secretary Shibaprasad Mukhopadhyay said. "There will be loopholes in the process and children will suffer," said Ratan Lashker, general secretary of the Secondary Teachers' and Employers' Association.

Publishers too are wary. They were scheduled to deposit the Paper II books on July 30. "We were given no indication of what should be there in the books for Class XI and Class XII. Unless we print the books, how will the students study? If the Council wants further changes, we will need at least a year's time; if the Council disagrees, we will be forced to launch an agitation," a publisher said.

happy. "The split will not be good for

Beware, headless schools

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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for by letter
Calcutta, July 25: The government today threatened to stop financial assistance to schools if their managing committees delayed filling up headmaster and headmistress posts.

School education minister Kanti Biswas said in the Assembly that the posts of institution heads were vacant in over 900 schools across the state.

These schools are now being run by teachers-in-charge. The minister said: "We do not encourage schools without heads as their academic activities suffer."

In most schools, the vacancies could not apparently be filled up because the managing committees did not send their applications to the district inspectors of school despite several reminders. An application from the committees is a must before the government starts the process of recruiting a new headmaster or headmistress in a state-aided institution, Biswas said.

The government, the minister added, has observed that the "senior teacher who performs the schools head's duties in his or her absen-

ce often does not want to get the post filled up". In most cases, these teachers lack the qualification to make it to the post officially and do not submit their own resume.

Biswas accused the managing committees of failing to act against teachers assuming the headmaster or headmistress's role.

A candidate should have a Master's degree and at least 10 years' teaching experience to apply for a school head's post.

The School Service Commission recruits heads for the 11,000-odd state-aided secondary and higher secondary institutions. But a panel of candidates to fill up the vacant posts is prepared only on the basis of applications from the managing committees.

The Congress's Abdul Mannan pointed out that in many schools senior teachers perform the duties of the head without the pay that should come with the post. But the minister ruled out introducing a system of paying an additional allowance to the teachers-in-charge.

The School Service Commission will soon announce tests for recruiting heads of schools that have already submitted their applications.

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THE TELEGRAPH

Govt nod for HS exam on Class XII syllabi

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta, July 20: The state government has cleared a proposal that seeks to limit higher secondary examination to the syllabi of only Class XII.

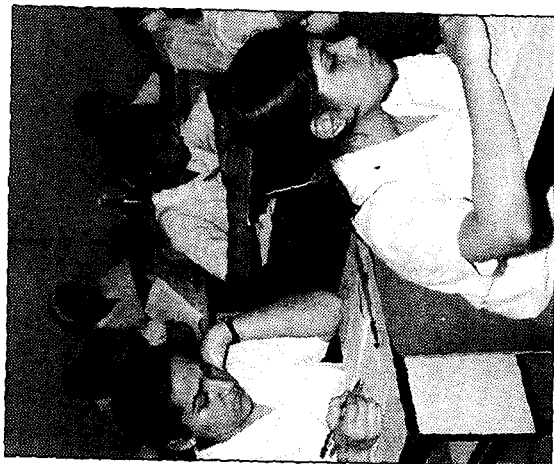
Once the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education ratifies the plan, the government will notify the change.

Under the present system, the higher secondary examination covers the syllabi of both classes XI and XII. The proposed recast will not only reduce students' stress but also speed up the publication of results.

The Supreme Court had recently ruled that the results of the Class XII examinations should be announced latest by June 10 every year and mark sheets distributed by June 15.

Till last year, the Bengal council published the higher secondary results later than most other boards.

If the examination is held only on the basis of Class XII syllabi — now tests for both classes are held together by the end of the second



BURDEN TO EASE

9-Ed. Cuts on 8-ullu

year — it will sharply reduce the number of answer scripts. This will enable the council to speed up the process of publishing the results.

School education minister Kanti Biswas held a meeting today with teachers' bodies and officials of school boards and the education department to hear their final opinion on splitting the higher secondary syllabi.

"Representatives of all the teachers' bodies who met us today have agreed to hold the higher secondary examinations only on the basis of the Class XII syllabi," Biswas said after the meeting.

"We have now referred the matter to the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education. The council will place the proposal before its executive committee as early as possible for ratification after which the government will be able to make the official notification," Biswas added.

The minister had told the Assembly last week that the final decision would be taken this month.

Students who will appear for the higher

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secondary examinations in 2007 will become the first batch under the new system. There are over 6,000 higher secondary schools across the state.

Council officials said a revamp would be required to implement the new system.

"For instance, we need to increase the number of teaching days in Class XII," said Amiya Basu, the leader of a teachers' body associated with the CPI.

Under the existing system, there can be no more than 120 to 135 teaching days in classes XI and XII. But a degree of flexibility was there as unfinished work could be carried over to the next year.

"We must have a minimum of 180 teaching days in both Class XI and Class XII if we have to hold the higher secondary examinations only on the basis of Class XII," a spokesperson for another Left union said.

The government is considering a proposal to begin the higher secondary academic session from May 1, replacing the existing system under which the session starts from June 1.

ধর্মীয় গন্ধ মুছতে মাদ্রাসা গড়া বন্ধ করছে রাজ্য

দেবীদাস আচার্য

রাজ্যে আর কোনও মাদ্রাসা গড়বে না বামফ্রন্ট সরকার।

সংখ্যালঘু-প্রধান এলাকায় মাদ্রাসা গড়লে সংখ্যালঘুদের প্রতি সুবিচার করা হবে বলে মনে করছে না তারা। স্কলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী কান্তি বিশ্বাস বরং উল্টোটাই মনে করেন। তাঁর মতে, চাকরি বাজারে, বিশেষত বেসরকারি ক্ষেত্রে মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষিত তরুণ-তরুণীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেওয়া হয় না, এটাই বাস্তব। মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষার গায়ে এখনও কিছুটা ধর্মীয় গন্ধ আছে বলে অনেকে মনে করেন। কান্তিবাবু বলেন, “রাজ্য সরকার আর মাদ্রাসা গড়বে না। তার বদলে সংখ্যালঘু অধ্যুষিত অঞ্চলে প্রয়োজনে সাধারণ স্কুল গড়া হবে।” তবে প্রথাগত সাধারণ স্কুল গড়ার সঙ্গতি যে সরকারের নেই, তা মনে নিয়ে মন্ত্রী জানান, প্রয়োজনে ওই সব জায়গায় শিশুশিক্ষা কেন্দ্র, মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা কেন্দ্র গড়া হবে।

জেলায় জেলায় বেসরকারি প্রায় ৫০০ টি মাদ্রাসার প্রায় ৬০০ মাদ্রাসা সরকার শিক্ষকদের আর্থিক উন্নতিও হয়েছে তথা মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা পর্যায়ের স্বীকৃতির অপেক্ষায় আছে। সেগুলির সংগঠকেরা সরকারের এই সিদ্ধান্তে হতাশ হবেন। পশ্চিমবঙ্গ মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষক সমিতি এই সিদ্ধান্তের প্রতিবাদ জানিয়েছে।

সরকার মাদ্রাসা গড়বে না কেন? কান্তিবাবুর পাল্টা প্রশ্ন, “কেন মাদ্রাসা গড়বে? সংস্কৃত কলেজ যখন তৈরি হয়, রামমোহন রায় তখন আপত্তি জানিয়ে বলেছিলেন, সংস্কৃত শিক্ষা নয়, আমাদের দরকার ইংরেজি শিক্ষা। আমাদের যদি এখন থাকতেন, তিনিও প্রশ্ন করতেন, মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষা কেন?”

ক্ষমতায় আসার পরে অবশ্য মাদ্রাসা সম্পর্কে বামফ্রন্টের এই মনোভাব ছিল না। বরং এই জমানাতেই রাজ্যে মাদ্রাসার সংখ্যা দ্বিগুণেরও বেশি বেড়েছে। দেশ ভাগের পরে পশ্চিমবঙ্গে মাদ্রাসা ছিল ৯৯টি। ১৯৭৭-৭৮ সালে ছিল ৩৩৭টি। এখন

আছে।” ২০০১ সালের বিধানসভা নির্বাচনের আগে প্রকাশিত বামফ্রন্টের ইজাহারে বলা হয়েছে: “মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষাকে আধুনিক, যুগোপযোগী এবং কর্মসংস্থানমুখী করে তোলার লক্ষ্যে কার্যকর ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। হাই-মাদ্রাসায় মাধ্যমিকের মতোই সব বিষয় আছে এবং মোট নম্বর ৮০০। তবে বাড়তি হিসাবে আছে ইসলামি ধর্মতত্ত্ব। সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসায় পাঠ্যতালিকায় ধর্মতত্ত্ব ২৫০ নম্বরের। সেটাই আপত্তির জায়গা কি না, সরকার তা স্পষ্ট করেনি। সম্ভ্রতি এ বি টি এ এই ব্যাপারে তাদের আপত্তির কথা জানিয়েছে। মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষক সমিতির অভিমত, ধর্মতত্ত্ব অংশটি না-থাকলে সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে যোগ থাকে না।

২০০২ সালের গোড়ায় মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বৃন্দেব উইচাঁর্যের এক মন্তব্যের জেরে মাদ্রাসা নিয়ে গোরগোল হয়। মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বলেছিলেন, রাজ্যের কিছু মাদ্রাসায় “অবেধ কাজ কর্ম” চলছে। পরে অবশ্য নির্বাচনী ইজাহারেই এই ব্যাপারে বলা

২০০১ সালের বিধানসভা নির্বাচনের আগে প্রকাশিত বামফ্রন্টের ইজাহারে বলা হয়েছে: “মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষাকে আধুনিক, যুগোপযোগী এবং কর্মসংস্থানমুখী করে তোলার লক্ষ্যে কার্যকর ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। হাই-মাদ্রাসায় মাধ্যমিকের মতোই সব বিষয় আছে এবং মোট নম্বর ৮০০। তবে বাড়তি হিসাবে আছে ইসলামি ধর্মতত্ত্ব। সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসায় পাঠ্যতালিকায় ধর্মতত্ত্ব ২৫০ নম্বরের। সেটাই আপত্তির জায়গা কি না, সরকার তা স্পষ্ট করেনি। সম্ভ্রতি এ বি টি এ এই ব্যাপারে তাদের আপত্তির কথা জানিয়েছে। মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষক সমিতির অভিমত, ধর্মতত্ত্ব অংশটি না-থাকলে সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে যোগ থাকে না।

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২০০২ সালের গোড়ায় মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বৃন্দেব উইচাঁর্যের এক মন্তব্যের জেরে মাদ্রাসা নিয়ে গোরগোল হয়। মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বলেছিলেন, রাজ্যের কিছু মাদ্রাসায় “অবেধ কাজ কর্ম” চলছে। পরে অবশ্য নির্বাচনী ইজাহারেই এই ব্যাপারে বলা

২০০১ সালের বিধানসভা নির্বাচনের আগে প্রকাশিত বামফ্রন্টের ইজাহারে বলা হয়েছে: “মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষাকে আধুনিক, যুগোপযোগী এবং কর্মসংস্থানমুখী করে তোলার লক্ষ্যে কার্যকর ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। হাই-মাদ্রাসায় মাধ্যমিকের মতোই সব বিষয় আছে এবং মোট নম্বর ৮০০। তবে বাড়তি হিসাবে আছে ইসলামি ধর্মতত্ত্ব। সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসায় পাঠ্যতালিকায় ধর্মতত্ত্ব ২৫০ নম্বরের। সেটাই আপত্তির জায়গা কি না, সরকার তা স্পষ্ট করেনি। সম্ভ্রতি এ বি টি এ এই ব্যাপারে তাদের আপত্তির কথা জানিয়েছে। মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষক সমিতির অভিমত, ধর্মতত্ত্ব অংশটি না-থাকলে সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে যোগ থাকে না।

২০০১ সালের বিধানসভা নির্বাচনের আগে প্রকাশিত বামফ্রন্টের ইজাহারে বলা হয়েছে: “মাদ্রাসা-শিক্ষাকে আধুনিক, যুগোপযোগী এবং কর্মসংস্থানমুখী করে তোলার লক্ষ্যে কার্যকর ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। হাই-মাদ্রাসায় মাধ্যমিকের মতোই সব বিষয় আছে এবং মোট নম্বর ৮০০। তবে বাড়তি হিসাবে আছে ইসলামি ধর্মতত্ত্ব। সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসায় পাঠ্যতালিকায় ধর্মতত্ত্ব ২৫০ নম্বরের। সেটাই আপত্তির জায়গা কি না, সরকার তা স্পষ্ট করেনি। সম্ভ্রতি এ বি টি এ এই ব্যাপারে তাদের আপত্তির কথা জানিয়েছে। মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষক সমিতির অভিমত, ধর্মতত্ত্ব অংশটি না-থাকলে সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে যোগ থাকে না।

Syllabus split, SFI with Council

By News Service

KOLKATA, July 19. — On the eve of the meeting on restructuring of Higher Secondary examinations the Higher Secondary Council today received support from an unexpected quarter, the Students' Federation of India which is opposed to the stand of the CPI-M teachers' body, the All Bengal Teachers' Association.

The meeting between the school education minister, Mr

Kanti Biswas, and various teachers' organisations on the issue of splitting up the class XI and XII syllabi and holding public exams based only on the class XII syllabus, is scheduled for tomorrow.

The ABTA is firm on its stand that in case of restructuring the class XI exams should be held by the HS Council and the marksheets should exhibit both scores.

But the SFI made it clear, "We do not want the results of class XI to be included in the

HS marksheets," said Mr Apurba Chatterjee, SFI state secretary.

Mr Biswas said that the proceedings of tomorrow's meeting would be sent to the HS Council which would then send its final recommendations to the government.

"The final decision will be announced within a week," he said.

Meanwhile, the SFI, which is holding a two-day education convention on 22 and 23 July on school education, higher

education and professional education, is also demanding exam restructuring at the Madhyamik level and shifting of session from May to January, again in direct opposition to the ABTA's stand.

In case of undergraduate level, the SFI has extended support to restructuring of the exam system by Calcutta University but is opposed to division of marks.

We are demanding that two honours papers should be examined in the first year itself

and this model should be adopted by all state universities," said Mr Chatterjee.

In addition, the SFI is also demanding that the fee-structure in schools as well as for professional courses should be fixed.

It also wants faculty improved in case of professional colleges.

The convention will be attended by the state education ministers, vice-chancellors of the state universities along with 250 SFI delegates.

জাত-ধর্মের বিকৃত ব্যাখ্যা বাম বঙ্গ ও

পার্শ্বসারথি সেনগুপ্ত • নয়াদিল্লি

১৮ জুলাই: বামপন্থী পশ্চিমবঙ্গের ইতিহাস পাঠ্যপুস্তকেও ছায়া হিন্দু-মুসলিম সাম্প্রদায়িক নেরকরনের। ভারতের ইতিহাসের ব্যাখ্যায় পাঠ্যপুস্তকে এই অতিসরলীকরণ ঘটছে বুদ্ধদের ভূতচার্যের রাজ্যে। এমনকী, জাতি ও বর্ণের ব্যাখ্যায় নিম্নবর্ণের উপর 'শোষণ'-এর প্রসঙ্গটিও উহা থাকছে। বাংলা ও ইংরেজি, ভাষাশিক্ষার বইও কোনও কোনও ক্ষেত্রে সাম্প্রদায়িক প্রবণতা থেকে মুক্ত নয়। ইংরাজির পাঠ্যবইয়ে আবার 'ঔপনিবেশিকতার' গন্ধ। পাঠ্যপুস্তকে 'অবহেলিত' মহিলারাও। 'বাম প্রগতিশীল' সরকার টানা ক্ষমতায় থাকা সত্ত্বেও রাজ্যে মাধ্যমিকের পাঠ্যপুস্তক যে ধর্মনিরপেক্ষতার মাপকাঠিতে পুরোপুরি উত্তরোত্তে পারেনি, তা সাফ জানিয়েছে ইউপিএ সরকার।

মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়ন মন্ত্রকের আওতাধীন কেন্দ্রীয় শিক্ষা উপদেষ্টা পর্ষদের সদা-অনুষ্ঠিত বৈঠকে পেশ হয়েছে এই সংক্রান্ত রিপোর্ট। দিল্লিতে বৈঠকে যোগ দিয়েছিলেন পশ্চিমবঙ্গের স্কুল শিক্ষামন্ত্রী কান্তি বিশ্বাস। এদাউডি জমানায় নানা ক্ষেত্রে পাঠ্যক্রমে সাম্প্রদায়িক বিকৃতি এবং আদর্শগত 'অসঙ্গতি' ঘটান অভিযোগ থাকায় দেশ জুড়ে পাঠ্যপুস্তক শোধরানোর অভিযান চালাচ্ছেন মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়নমন্ত্রী অর্জুন সিংহ। তিনি এখনও বামদের মিত্র বলেই পরিচিত। কিন্তু 'শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থায় নিয়ন্ত্রণ' শীর্ষক রিপোর্টটিতে শেষ পর্যন্ত অর্জুন সিংহের মন্ত্রকই চোখে আঙুল দিয়ে দেখিয়েছে যে,

সাম্প্রদায়িকতার বিচারে গলাদা রয়েছে বামদের পশ্চিমবঙ্গের পাঠ্যক্রমেও। রিপোর্টে শুধু পশ্চিমবঙ্গ নয়, অন্য রাজ্যগুলিরও পর্য্যালোচনা করা হয়েছে।

পশ্চিমবঙ্গে নমুনা হিসাবে ১৬টি বিদ্যালয়ের ইংরেজি, বাংলা ও ইতিহাসের পাঠ্যপুস্তক যাচাই করা হয়েছে। এগুলির মধ্যে ৪টি সরকারি স্কুল, ৪টি সরকারি সহায়তা প্রাপ্ত এবং ৪টি কেসরকারি। আর বাকি ৪টি বিদ্যালয় ধর্মীয় ও সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠান দ্বারা পরিচালিত। এগুলি অকণ্য পুরনো পাঠ্যক্রমের বই। নয়া পাঠ্যক্রমের আওতায় ২০০৫ সালের জুন থেকে যে পাঠ্যপুস্তকগুলি এসেছে, সেগুলিও যাচাই করছে কেন্দ্র।

ইতিহাসের

পাঠ্যপুস্তকে 'নেতিবাচক' দিকগুলি কী কী?

রিপোর্ট অনুযায়ী: •

ইতিহাসের বহু পাঠ্যপুস্তকে ভারতের ইতিহাস ও হিন্দুত্বের বিবর্তন সামন্তরাল ধারা হিসাবেই দেখানো হয়েছে। • বিশেষ কোনও সাম্প্রদায়িক সংগঠনকেই যাবতীয় বিপত্তির জন্য দায়ী করা হয়েছে। অন্য সাম্প্রদায়িক সংগঠনগুলির নেতিবাচক ভূমিকা লঘু করা হয়েছে। • মুক্তি আন্দোলনের ব্যাখ্যার ক্ষেত্রে কংগ্রেস ও মুসলিম লিগের সম্পর্ক প্রায়শই আবিভক্ত ভারতের হিন্দু ও মুসলিম সাম্প্রদায়িক মধ্যে বোঝাপড়ার প্রয়াস বা সংঘাতের ইতিবৃত্ত হিসাবে দেখানো হয়েছে। অর্থাৎ, কংগ্রেস মাত্রই হিন্দুদের সংগঠন আর লিগ মুসলিমদের— এই সরলীকরণে দৃষ্ট এই সব পাঠ্যপুস্তক।

রাজ্যে জাতপাতের সমস্যা নেই বলে যতই দাবি করুক সিপিএম, গ্রাম-বাংলায় জাতের বাংলাই নিয়ে হালকিলা একাধিক ঘটনার ইদিশ মিলেছে। কেন্দ্রের অনুযোজ্য, পশ্চিমবঙ্গের পাঠ্যপুস্তকে 'দলিত'দের উপরে নিপীড়ন বা শোষণের প্রসঙ্গটি প্রায় উহাই থাকছে। বাংলার পাঠ্যবইয়ে দেশপ্রেমের মোড়কে হিন্দু-মুসলিম সংঘাত বড় করে দেখানো হয়েছে। স্বাধীনতা সংগ্রামের ইতিবৃত্তে সব ধর্মের মানুষের ভূমিকা যথাযথ ভাবে প্রতিফলিত হয়নি। ইংরেজি-বাংলা-ইতিহাসের পাঠ্যপুস্তকে সংখ্যালঘু সাম্প্রদায়িক বিষয়টিও অবহেলিত হয়েছে। অর্জুন সিংহের মন্ত্রক থেকেই কিছু দিন আগে অভিযোগ করা

হয়েছিল, পশ্চিমবঙ্গে শিক্ষক নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রেও 'সাম্প্রদায়িক' দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি দূর হওয়া উচিত। আরও গুরুতর অভিযোগ যে, ইতিহাসের পাঠ্যপুস্তকে তুল তথ্য রয়েছে। কোনও কোনও ইতিহাস বইয়ে মানচিত্রেও কিছু কিছু ক্রটি রয়েছে।

ইতিহাসবিদ সুমিত সরকার অবশ্য মনে করেন, এটা হতে পারে। তাঁর ব্যাখ্যা, "আসলে একটি বাম সরকার দীর্ঘদিন ক্ষমতায় থাকলেই সব কিছু बदলে যায়, এটা মনে করা উল। এমনকী, বামদের যাঁরা ভোট দেন, তাঁদের মধ্যেও নানা ধরনের চিন্তাভাবনা লক্ষ করা গিয়েছে। তবে এই রিপোর্টটি তো আমি নিজে দেখিনি। তাই রিপোর্ট সম্পর্কে কোনও মন্তব্য করা থেকে বিরত থাকছি।" রিপোর্টেও অবশ্য পরিষ্কার

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বলছে কেন্দ্র

এ বার চোখ বোলানো যাক, অর্জুন সিংহের মন্ত্রকের রিপোর্ট অনুযায়ী পশ্চিমবঙ্গ ছাড়া অন্য রাজ্যগুলিতে কী ধরনের সাম্প্রদায়িক বিকৃতি ঘটেছে? উদাহরণ দেওয়া যেতে পারে হুজীসগড়ের। যে রাজ্যে সংস্কৃতির উপরে সাধারণ জ্ঞানের পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্ধারিত পুস্তকে প্রশ্ন: ১৫৮-২ থেকে ১৯৯২ সাল পর্যন্ত কত জন রামভক্ত রামানন্দির নির্মাণে প্রাণ বিসর্জন দিয়েছেন? উত্তর: সাত্‌ তিন লক্ষ। আবার রাজস্থানের পাঠ্যপুস্তকে গম্বীর আকারে বলা হয়েছে যে, বাম মনোভাবাপন্ন সরকারি স্কুলের ছাত্র সনাতনী শিক্ষাব্যবস্থায় শিক্ষিত তার বন্ধুর কাছে বিতর্কে পরাস্ত হন। প্রথম জন মনে নেয়, নাস্তিক হওয়াটা মোটেই কাজের কথা নয়। এবং 'সেফুলারিজম' নেহাতই গল্পকথা। আবার উত্তরপ্রদেশের বিদ্যালয়ে পটনা থেকে প্রকাশিত চতুর্থ শ্রেণির ইতিহাসের যে বই পড়ানো হচ্ছে, তাতে হিন্দু রমণীদের সম্মান রক্ষার জন্য হিন্দু রাজাদের প্রশংসা করা হয়েছে।

অন্য দিকে, রামকৃষ্ণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়ের 'পশ্চিমবঙ্গ' শীর্ষক রিপোর্টে পাঠ্যপুস্তকের মানোন্নয়নে কিছু প্রস্তাব রয়েছে। যেমন, মাধ্যমিক পর্ষদের উচিত পাঠ্যপুস্তকগুলির পাণ্ডুলিপি ভাল ভাবে খতিয়ে দেখতে মাঝেমাঝে কর্মশালায় আয়োজন করা। পাঠ্যপুস্তকের পর্য্যালোচকদের কর্মশালায় সামিল করা। 'অসং' প্রকাশকদের বিরুদ্ধে কড়া ব্যবস্থা নেওয়ার ক্ষমতা যে পর্ষদের থাকা উচিত, সে কথাও বলা হয়েছে এই রিপোর্টে।

States drag feet on literacy for kids

5/13
19/7

RC Rajamani
in New Delhi

July 18. — The two-day meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (Cabe) in the Capital ended without finding a consensus on its main agenda — funding of universal elementary education that is to be made a fundamental right through a piece of legislation. The proposed Bill, originally to be brought during the coming monsoon session of Parliament, has also been put off till a consensus is arrived at.

A committee headed by the science and technology minister, Mr Kapil Sibal, had prepared a draft legislation to fulfil the constitutional commitments under Article 21(a) of Fundamental Rights. It has a proposal for reserving 25 per cent seats for underprivileged children aged between six and 14 both in aided and unaided schools without admission tests.

State governments will have to compensate private schools, which will have to foot the remainder by restructuring the fee structure. A whopping Rs 80,000 crore will be needed for implementation of the legislation. The state governments told the HRD minis-



ter, Mr Arjun Singh, that they were in no position to contribute to the annual demand of an additional Rs 67,000 crore needed to implement the reforms. The legislation leaves out Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navyug schools from its purview.

The Cabe set up a committee on the subject of "Girls Education and the Common School System" under the chairmanship of Assam chief minister Mr Tarun Gogoi and another on the universalising of secondary education

under the chairmanship of Mr Ghanshyam Tiwari, education minister of Rajasthan.

The Cabe is now studying a draft Bill to strengthen control over private professional educational institutions. The Private Professional Education Institution (Regulation and Fixation of Fee) Bill has been sent to the various circles concerned for their comments. The current indication is that the gov-

ernment would be able to pass the legislation in time for implementation from the next academic session.

According to the draft Bill, in unaided professional minority educational institutions, the management would have a quota of minimum 50 per cent seats while in aided institutions, the quota would be only up to 50 per cent of seats. In unaided non-minority professional institutes, the management can have 50 per cent seats in its quota which becomes 15 per cent in case of aided institutes.

Fifteen per cent of the general quota would be open to the students from all over the country. Besides, all the institutes can also allot 15 per cent to foreign students, above their total intake.

Members of Cabe and all state governments have been given a month to convey their views on the draft Bill. The HRD ministry is hopeful of passing the legislation for implementation from the next academic session.

A significant Cabe decision was the formation of three committees — on inclusive education for children and youth with special needs, literacy and adult education, and holistic development of children.

ভাবিয়া করিয়ো কাজ

বিপদ কখন যে কোন রূপ ধরিয়া সম্মুখে উপস্থিত হয়, তাহা কেহ বলিতে পারে না। সম্প্রতি বিশিষ্ট শিক্ষাবিদ পবিত্র সরকার মহাশয় সরকার এবং বিবিধ সরকারি-বেসরকারি কর্মীর ক্রোধের মুখে পড়িয়াছেন। ঘটনাটির সূত্রপাত নিতান্তই একটি স্কুলপাঠ্য পুস্তক হইতে। পবিত্রবাবু মাধ্যমিক স্তরের জন্য লিখিত তাহার নূতন বাংলা ব্যাকরণ বইটিতে কিছু বিষম উদাহরণ দিয়াছেন, যেমন, 'টুটো জগন্নাথ' বলিতে মন্ত্রীদেবের নাম করিয়াছেন, বিক্রয় কর আধিকারিকদের 'রাঘব বোয়াল'-এর প্রকৃষ্টতম উদাহরণ ঠাউরাইয়াছেন— অল্প কথায় বলিলে পবিত্রবাবু রাষ্ট্রীয় অপদার্থতার মৌচাকে একটি জবরদস্ত ঢিল ছুড়িয়াছেন। ইহার ফল তাহার পক্ষে বিশেষ সুবিধার হয় নাই, শিক্ষামন্ত্রী খানিক কড়া ভাষায় তাহাকে বকুনি দিয়াছেন। তাহার প্রদত্ত উদাহরণে শিক্ষকদের ঘুরাইয়া ব্যবসায়ী বলা হইয়াছে, ইহার প্রতিক্রিয়ায় প্রধান শিক্ষক সমিতি হইতে তাহার রুচি সম্বন্ধে যাহা বলা হইয়াছে, তাহা শ্রীসরকারের পক্ষে খুব শ্লাঘার নয়। কমার্শিয়াল ট্যাক্স এমপ্লয়িজ অ্যাসোসিয়েশন হইতে মানহানির মামলার ছমকি পর্যন্ত দেওয়া হইয়াছে। মাত্র একটি ব্যাকরণ বই লিখিয়া এমন আতান্তরেও মানুষ পড়িতে পারে, গ্রন্থকার বোধ হয় ভাবেন নাই। তিনি হয়তো এখন ভাবিতেছেন যে, বড় ভুল হইয়া গিয়াছে। নিন্দুক বলিবে: উহা যেমন-তেমন ভুল নয়, পবিত্রবাবু গোড়ায় গলদ করিয়াছেন, তিনি এ বামরাজ্যে প্রচলিত পরস্পর পৃষ্ঠকণ্ঠনের মিথোজীবী ব্যাকরণের প্রথম পাঠেই ভুল করিয়াছেন, অনর্থক কিছু সত্য বলিয়া ফেলিয়াছেন। নিন্দুকের কথা থাকুক, গ্রন্থকার তড়িঘড়ি ভুল স্বীকার করিয়াছেন, বাজার হইতে সেই বই তুলিবার প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়াছেন। তাহাতে আপাতত হয়তো আশ্বরক্ষা হইবে, তবে তিনি তাহার পরবর্তী ব্যাকরণ গ্রন্থে 'অপরিণামদর্শিতা'র উদাহরণে নিজের কথা লিখিবার চিন্তা করিবেন কি?

বৈয়াকরণের বিপদের কথা থাকুক। স্কুলপাঠ্য বইয়ে এই উদাহরণ লইয়া কর্তাদের আপত্তির প্রধান কারণ— তাহা শিশুরা, কিশোরেরা পড়িবে। অর্থাৎ, নিষ্পাপ শৈশবে, কৈশোরে তাহাদের এই প্রকার ঘোর তমসার সম্মুখীন করা চলিবে না। বেশ। পাঠ্যপুস্তক সরকারি অঙ্গুলিহেলনে পাল্টাইয়া ফেলা যায়, যাহা কিছু অপ্রিয় সত্য, তাহাদের উদাহরণ মুহূর্তে মুছিয়া ফেলা চলে। কিন্তু, মন্ত্রিমহোদয় এত সহজে প্রচলিত ধারণা ও বিশ্বাস পাল্টাইতে পারিবেন কি? ছাত্রদের ব্যাকরণ গ্রন্থে 'সমস্ত মানুষ সৎ', 'শিক্ষক মাত্রেই মহান', 'মন্ত্রী হইলেই কর্মপটু' লিখিলেই বাস্তবিক তাহা হইবে তো? পবিত্রবাবু তাহার সাহসী বইটিতেও বোধ হয় এমন কিছু উদাহরণ দিতে পারেন নাই, বাসে-ট্রামে, রাস্তা-ঘাটে সাধারণ মানুষ যাহা আকছার বলিয়া থাকে— যেমন, 'আঠারো মাসে বৎসর'-এর উদাহরণ সরকারি দফতর, 'বাঘে ছুঁইলে আঠারো ঘা'-এর উদাহরণ পুলিশ ইত্যাদি। যে সুকুমারমতি ছাত্রদের মানসিক আঘাত আটকাইতে মন্ত্রী-আমলারা পবিত্রবাবুর বইটিতে আপত্তি জানাইয়াছেন, তাহারা পথে-ঘাটে, সদর মফসসলে এই দৃষ্টান্তগুলি শুনিতে পায় না বলিয়াই কি তাহারা বিশ্বাস করেন? বোধ করি, তাহারা নিজেদের যাহা মনঃপূত, রাজ্যবাসীকে সেইটুকুই শুনিতে দিতে বদ্ধপরিকর। স্কুলপাঠ্য ব্যাকরণ কি ইতিহাস বই হোক, অথবা গবেষকপাঠ্য 'প্রামাণ্য' রিপোর্ট, কর্তাদের যাহা পছন্দ, তাহাই সাধারণ মানুষ পড়িতে পারিবে। অবশ্য, মানুষ তাহা মানিয়াও লইয়াছে, 'তাই সত্য, যা রচিবে তুমি' বলিয়া বামফ্রন্টসম্মত ইতিহাস, ব্যাকরণ বা উন্নয়নের খতিয়ান পড়িতেছে। কিন্তু বাস্তব তাহাতে পাল্টায় নাই। অসত্যতার কথা না লিখিয়া তাহাকে দূর করা যায় না। অন্তত, পাঠ্যবই বদলাইয়া জনমনে সঞ্চিত ধারণা বদলানো যায় না। রাজ্যের বামপন্থী নেতারা যদি এই সহজ সত্যটিকে বুঝিয়াও না বুঝিবার ভান করিতে থাকেন, পবিত্রবাবু তাহার পরবর্তী ব্যাকরণ গ্রন্থে 'ভাবের ঘরে চুরি'র উদাহরণস্বরূপ তাহাদের এই আচরণের উল্লেখ করিবেন কি?

2 JUL

HS, Madhyamik to test one year less

Statesman News Service

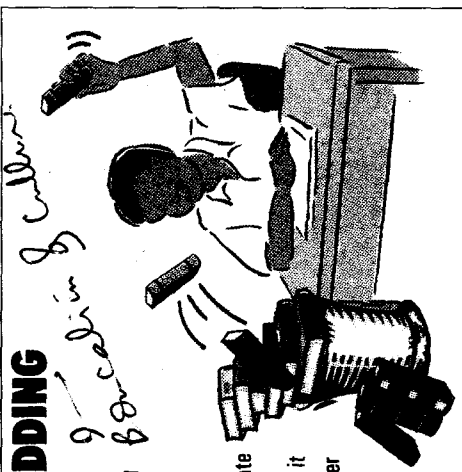
KOLKATA, July 11. — The school education minister, Mr Kanti Biswas, said today that the state was contemplating a change in the pattern of examination at the higher secondary level. He said his department was considering a proposal to test students in the higher secondary examination only on the basis of the Class XII syllabus. This is in line with the proposal mooted by the Higher Secondary Council as reported by The Statesman. Similarly, for the Madhyamik examination,

the school education department is considering a proposal to test students only on the Class X syllabus. Mr Biswas told the Assembly that a decision would be arrived at only after holding a meeting with various teachers' organisations on 20 July. He said the department was also keen on introducing grades and added that discussions with universities regarding this would take place "soon". The proposal would be implemented if the universities both within the state and outside agree to accept grades.

Trinamul MLA and educationist Mr Saugata Roy said that the school education department was being guided by the CPI-M state secretary Mr Anil Biswas. The decision to change the

LOAD SHEDDING

- Move to help lessen course burden on students preparing for entrance tests
- Quality of evaluation unlikely to be affected as 11 state and national boards have already adopted it
- Final decision after 20 July. Hinges upon universities agreeing to accept grades instead of marks



system of examination at the higher secondary level had already been taken, he said. Now the minister is trying to get teachers' organisations on board, he added. Mr Roy pointed out that the proposal to change the system of examination had not been mooted by either teachers or educationists in the state. Earlier, Mr Biswas said his department would also implement the proposals put forward by Ramaranjan Mukhopadhyay Committee for the improvement of Sanskrit teaching. He said that as a minister he had profound respect for this ancient language and steps

would be taken to improve the quality of teaching.

The school education minister also said in the Assembly that the state had introduced lifestyle education for adolescent students in schools.

The main purpose of lifestyle education was to resolve all queries of adolescent boys and girls about the changes in their body and mind and to help them overcome hurdles to live life with confidence, Mr Biswas said.

Lifestyle education was being treated as a supplementary subject and not a subject for examination.

দশম, দ্বাদশের পাঠ্যক্রমেই মাধ্যমিক-উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক

প্রসূন আচার্য ও শ্যামলেন্দু মিত্র

রাজ্যের লক্ষ লক্ষ ছাত্রছাত্রী ও অভিভাবকদের জন্য সুখবর।

পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা করতে এ বার থেকে কেবল দশম শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রমের উপরেই মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা হবে। এখন যারা নবম শ্রেণিতে পড়ছে, তারাই এই সুযোগ পাবে। শুধু তাই নয়, উচ্চ-মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষাও হবে কেবল দ্বাদশ শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রমের উপরেই। ২০০৭ থেকে এই নতুন পরীক্ষা-ব্যবস্থা চালু করছে সরকার।

মুখামন্ত্রী বৃদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্যের সঙ্গে সি পি এমের রাজ্য সম্পাদক অনিল বিশ্বাস ও স্কুলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী কাণ্ডি বিশ্বাসের বিস্তারিত আলোচনার পরেই এই সিদ্ধান্ত গৃহীত হয়েছে। অনিলবাবু জানিয়েছেন, “অন্য রাজ্যে এই ভাবে পরীক্ষা নেওয়া শুরু হয়েছে। দুই কেন্দ্রীয় বোর্ড সি বি এস ই এবং আই সি এস ই-তেও এই ভাবে পরীক্ষা

নেওয়া হচ্ছে। তাই সারা দেশের শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থার সঙ্গে সঙ্গতি রাখতেই এ কাজ করা হচ্ছে।” সরকার যে এই সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছে তা স্বীকার করে কান্ডিবাবুও জানিয়েছেন,

“কবে থেকে চালু হবে, এখন তা নিয়ে আলোচনা হচ্ছে। তবে, ২০০৬ সালে যারা মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা দেবে তাদের

কিন্তু নবম-দশম শ্রেণির মিলিত পাঠ্যক্রমের উপরেই পরীক্ষা দিতে হবে।”

স্কুল শিক্ষা দফতর সূত্রে জানানো হয়েছে, রাজ্যে প্রতি বছর প্রায় ৬ লক্ষ ছাত্রছাত্রী

মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা দেয়। উচ্চ-মাধ্যমিক দেয় ৪ লক্ষেরও বেশি। এই সংখ্যা ক্রমেই বাড়ছে। এর আগেই সারা দেশের শিক্ষাব্যবস্থার সঙ্গে সঙ্গতি রেখে এ রাজ্যেও পাঠ্যক্রম পরিবর্তন করা হয়েছে। অনেক নতুন নতুন বিষয় সংযোজন করা হয়েছে। একই সঙ্গে দু'বছরের পাঠ্যক্রমের উপর প্রশ্নপত্র হওয়ায় ছাত্রছাত্রীদের উপরে চাপও পড়ছে বেশি। সি বি এস ই, এই সি এস ই

পাঠ্যক্রমের সঙ্গে সঙ্গতি রাখতে গিয়ে পঠনপাঠনের চাপ বাড়ালেও এতদিন কিন্তু পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা করা হয়নি। এবার রাজ্য সরকার সোদিকেও নজর দিচ্ছে।

প্রাথমিক স্তরে ইংরেজি ফেরাতে রাজ্য সরকারকে প্রায় ২৫ বছর অপেক্ষা করতে হয়েছিল। ইংরেজি

হালকা হচ্ছে পরীক্ষার বোঝা

ফেরানোর ব্যাপারে জ্যোতি বসু আগেই দলকে প্রস্তাব দিলেও নানা বাধায় তা তিনি কার্যকর করতে পারেননি। কারণ, সি পি এমের একাংশের প্রবল আপত্তি ছিল। বৃদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্য মুখামন্ত্রী হওয়ার পরে অনিল-বুদ্ধদেব যৌথ সিদ্ধান্তে প্রথম শ্রেণি থেকে ইংরেজি পড়ানোর বিষয়ে সরকার সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়। কিন্তু তত দিনে বহু ছাত্রছাত্রীর ইংরেজির ভিত দুর্বল হয়ে গিয়েছে।

মাধ্যমিক উচ্চ-মাধ্যমিকে পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা করার সিদ্ধান্ত নিতেও রাজ্য সরকারের ব্যথেষ্ট সময় লাগল। কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার পাঁচ বছর আগেই এই প্রস্তাব

দিয়েছিল। সি বি এস ই, আই সি এস ই তা মেনে নেয়। মানে অন্য বেশ কয়েকটি রাজ্য। কিন্তু নিজেদের গৌভাষি

বজায় রাখতে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার তা মানেনি। নাহলে আগেই ছাত্রছাত্রীদের পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা হয়ে যেত।

কেন এত দেরি হল? তার জবাবে অনিলবাবু বলেন, “বেশি দেরি হয়নি। মাত্র কয়েক বছর

আগেই অন্য বোর্ড পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা করেছে। অন্ধ্রপ্রদেশ তো গত বছরে সিদ্ধান্ত নিল। আমরাও সারা দেশের শিক্ষাব্যবস্থার সঙ্গে তাল মিলিয়ে এই সিদ্ধান্ত নিচ্ছি।” অনিলবাবুর মতে, “নতুন ব্যবস্থা চালু হলে সবভারতীয় জয়েন্ট এন্ট্রান্স পরীক্ষায় পশ্চিমবঙ্গের ছাত্রছাত্রীদের সুবিধা হবে। কারণ, ওই পরীক্ষা হয়

কেবলমাত্র দ্বাদশ শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রমের উপরে ভিত্তি করেই। কিন্তু আমাদের রাজ্যের ছাত্রছাত্রীদের দ্বাদশ ও একাদশ শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রম মিলিয়ে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা দিতে হয়। তাই জয়েন্টের প্রস্তুতির ব্যথেষ্ট সময় পায় না।” স্কুলশিক্ষা দফতরের এক মুখপাত্র বলেন, “সরকার

মাধ্যমিকেও পরীক্ষার বোঝা হালকা করতে চায়। তাছাড়া, নবম শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রমে একবার পরীক্ষা দিয়ে পাশ করার

পর এক বছর পরে আবার কেন তাকে ওই একই পাঠ্যক্রমে পরীক্ষা দিতে হবে? এই প্রশ্নই উঠে এসেছে।”

নবম শ্রেণির ফাইনাল পরীক্ষা নেবে সংশ্লিষ্ট স্কুল। যদিও প্রশ্নপত্র তৈরি করবে মধ্যশিক্ষা পর্ষদ। একই ভাবে একাদশ শ্রেণির ফাইনাল পরীক্ষাও নেবে সংশ্লিষ্ট স্কুল। কিন্তু এক্ষেত্রেও প্রশ্নপত্র তৈরি করবে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা সংসদ। ওই দুই পরীক্ষার নম্বর মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ-মাধ্যমিকের মার্কশিটে উল্লেখ থাকলেও তা চূড়ান্ত নম্বরের সঙ্গে যোগ হবে না।

History textbooks: the need to move forward

Sumit Sarkar

THE MEASURES taken or being considered concerning school education are among the more promising of the initiatives of the United Progressive Alliance Government during its 13 months in office. The necessary weeding-out from key posts of academic nonentities, distinguished only by loyalty to the *Sangh Parivar*, is being followed up by moves towards far-reaching reform. Crucial here is the new National Curriculum Framework designed to replace the retrograde and undemocratically enforced Framework of 2000 and recently placed before the Central Advisory Board of Education with its State Government representatives. In sharp contrast to the BJP style, every step is being taken through wide and open academic discussion. The National Curriculum Framework is based on the work of 21 National Focus Groups, five regional seminars, and a national conference of rural teachers.

Predictably, the BJP is unhappy, and its Ministers recently staged a walkout from the CABE, forcing a two-month delay in adoption of the NCF, to give more time to States. As always, history courses and textbooks are given central place in this attack. Given the total discrediting of the previous educational regime, this at present is not much cause for worry. But sadly, there are signs of a most unfortunate intra-secular rift. Two prominent secular historians have criticised plans for new middle and high school textbooks. They suggest instead a simple return to the old NCERT history texts ('old' meaning here 30-40 years or more), with at most the insertion of one or two new themes, gender for instance.

Demands for retention or restoration of the old books had been natural in the polemics over the BJP texts, for nothing better was possible

The biggest problem concerns not political costs or the need to upgrade content, but questions of accessibility and appropriateness for young people.

under that regime. But in today's utterly changed situation, a simple restoration would be disastrous both academically and politically. It would feed into the sense, cynical but quite widespread even among many secular people, that each regime brings in its train its own entourage of academics, and so the labels of 'secular' and 'communal' become no more than the pursuit of factional interests. It is surely significant that the recent BJP walkout from the CABE meeting was partly on the ground that old books were being restored, displaying a wilful ignorance about the ongoing discussions about new syllabi and texts: They no doubt realised that here was an argument with some appeal, pitting the 'new' against the old.

Actually the BJP books had been far more outdated, for the 1970s texts had tried to incorporate, for the first time in school education, something of the shifts in Indian historical thinking over the 1950s and 1960s. But today many more changes have been happening, and their part-inclusion cannot be purely additive. The dominant narratives would need to be modified to recognise complications and cross-currents. It is no longer helpful, for instance, to look upon modern Indian history simply in terms of colonial versus anti-colonial.

The biggest problem, however, concerns not political costs or the need to upgrade content, but questions of pedagogy, accessibility, appro-

priateness for young people. Even when the secular books were very much in place, there was a growing disquiet, often particularly among teachers with secular sympathies, that humanities and social sciences, and history in particular, had become the least popular options, for the books were often excessively heavy and sometimes frankly dull. In that context, the most promising of the recent developments has been the new and sophisticated attention given to pedagogical methods throughout the New Curriculum Framework. Chapter 2, 'Learning and Knowledge,' calls for a "child-centred pedagogy," the fostering of the "active and creative capabilities" of children, moving away from insistence on acceptance of the teacher's words as authoritative knowledge towards more interactive and dialogic methods, a rejection of "rote methods" of teaching and assessment. At this level, secular and BJP textbooks had not really differed all that much.

Such problems have been most acute in history and the other social sciences and humanities. Unlike the natural sciences, where children in laboratories can test with their own hands the validity of many relationships or predictions, history-teaching perpetually runs the danger of forcing children to learn a mass of 'facts,' without explaining why and to what degree of certainty these are 'facts' worth remembering. At best, an initial listing of 'sources' is attempted,

and maybe some discussion of different interpretations: detached from the rest of the narrative, these become just more things to memorise. And rote-learning has been vastly enhanced by the adoption of objective-type or short-answer formats at the two crucial rites of passage for aspirants to higher education or to jobs, the school-leaving CBSE examinations, and then the utterly ridiculous NET. For good marks in the CBSE, often not just the points but their precise order need to be reproduced. The method might just do for the less advanced levels of mathematics or natural sciences, but is disastrously inappropriate for subjects like literature or history, for what gets squeezed out is the awareness, indispensable here, of the need often for multi-sidedness and ambiguity, the understanding that simple yes/no, right/wrong answers are often not possible, as in life itself.

The biggest problem of all is the assumed obligation to be 'comprehensive,' to 'cover' as much as can be packed in, never mind the burden and the boredom. In history, particularly, many facts come to acquire a peculiar aura or mystique. Leaving any of them out opens one to charges of being insufficiently patriotic, maybe even 'anti-national.' The assumption is that the main 'purpose' of history in schools is to inculcate 'correct' values, stimulate national unity, integration, pride: a special burden imposed on no other subject.

Imaginative effort

We do have some examples already of the possibility of much more imaginative textbooks, once the logic of trying to be 'comprehensive' is abandoned. I am thinking of two sets of books: the Ekalavya ones, now unfortunately withdrawn, and the recent Delhi Government texts, both formulated after intense discussion with school-teachers. The Delhi Ancient India book (Class VI), for instance, begins with drawings of different kinds of stone tools, some of them on display at the National Museum. A class discussion would then be initiated about what could (or could not) be inferred from them, leading children up to more general formulations about the kind of society possible at that level of technology in a manner much more meaningful than any abstract definition of social formation. Its Modern India counterpart (Class VIII) does not begin with a definition of colonial modernity, but foregrounds the theme of many-sided transformation by asking students to imagine what they think could have been the school experiences of children like them in 1720, and how a merchant's journey from Surat to Delhi would have been different then. At a later stage, they are asked to imagine themselves in Kashmiri Gate during the 1857 siege. Included also are some details about the coming of the numerous physical components of today's everyday life: not just railways, but print, newspapers, clocks, post offices, public hospitals, electric lights, underground water supply, gramophones, films, radio. Surely it is facts like these that can make history come alive for children, far more than musty masses of information about forgotten kings, wars, or even each and every detail of anti-British struggle.

Such books develop some new ways of making history come alive for children, and also introduce what to my mind is the most important potential of the subject. This is a sense that everything changes, nothing is eternal, sacred, or 'natural' since the social world is made by human beings and therefore open to transformation. The past in many ways was a different country (the best answer, really, for countering the charge that 'sentiments' are getting hurt, much heard in BJP times but not confined to them). Religious communities, nations, etc., do not have absolutely continuous histories, and so blaming the present generation for the misdeeds of some of their forefathers is no more than racism.

(The writer is Retired Professor of History, Delhi University.)

CARTOONSCAPE



রামকৃষ্ণ মিশন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ভর্তি এ মাসেই

B. Dulal Chandra

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার: রাজ্যের প্রথম বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় যাত্রা শুরু করল। রামকৃষ্ণ মিশন বিবেকানন্দ এডুকেশনাল অ্যান্ড রিসার্চ ইনস্টিটিউট নামের ডিমড বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আপাতত কাজ শুরু করছে একটি পাঠ্যক্রম দিয়ে। চলতি মাসেই ছাত্র ভর্তি, অগস্টের গোড়ায় ক্লাস আরম্ভ।

সোমবার রামকৃষ্ণ মিশন পরিচালিত এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আনুষ্ঠানিক উদ্বোধন করেন রামকৃষ্ণ মিশনের প্রেসিডেন্ট স্বামী গহনানন্দ। অসুস্থতার জন্য কেন্দ্রীয় মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়ন মন্ত্রী অনুষ্ঠানে হাজির হতে পারেননি। তবে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরি কমিশনের মাধ্যমে এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে দশম যোজনার মেয়াদের মধ্যে খরচের জন্য দু'কোটি টাকা অনুদান দেওয়ার কথা চিঠি মারফত ঘোষণা করেছেন তিনি। এই দিনই উত্তর কলকাতায় স্বামী বিবেকানন্দের পৈতৃক ভিটেয় বিবেকানন্দ রিসার্চ সেন্টারের উদ্বোধন করেন রামকৃষ্ণ মিশনের অন্যতম ডাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট স্বামী গীতানন্দ।

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপাচার্য স্বামী আশ্বপ্রিয়ানন্দ জানান, আপাতত ডিসেবিলিটি ম্যানেজমেন্ট অ্যান্ড স্পেশ্যাল এডুকেশন পাঠ্যক্রম দিয়ে পঠনপাঠন শুরু হচ্ছে। পড়া যাবে মিশনের কোয়র্সবুকের কেন্দ্রে। আগামী বছর থেকে আরও তিনটি পাঠ্যক্রম এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে পড়া যাবে বলে উপাচার্য জানান। সেগুলি হল ইন্টিগ্রেটেড রুরাল অ্যান্ড ট্রাইবাল ডেভেলপমেন্ট, ইন্ডিয়ান স্পিরিচুয়াল অ্যান্ড কালচারাল হেরিটেজ অ্যান্ড ভ্যালু এডুকেশন এবং ডিজাস্টার ম্যানেজমেন্ট ইনক্লুডিং রিলিফ অ্যান্ড রিহ্যাবিলিটেশন।

বিবেকানন্দ রিসার্চ সেন্টারে কাজ হবে কনসাসনেন্স স্টাডিজ নিয়ে। আর পদার্থবিদ্যা, গণিত ও কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞানের ক্ষেত্রে ডাক্তিক গবেষণা ওই কেন্দ্রে হবে বলে উপাচার্য জানান।

05 JUL 2005

ANADAR...
...

Making education reforms more meaningful

By Krishna Kumar

FEW CAN distinguish between the terms 'curriculum' and 'syllabus.' The tendency to view both in the context of examinations is rampant. For teachers, the prescribed textbook serves as the *de facto* curriculum. As for the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), hardly anyone outside the limited world of professional pedagogues and planners can recall what role the National Policy on Education (1986) intended to assign to this invention. It was designed to bring systemic coherence and parity in quality standards across the country. It is widely misconceived as an instrument of uniformity; in reality, it was meant to serve as a reminder of core national values and priorities around which diversity and flexibility in curriculum and syllabus could be structured to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding system.

The 1986 policy stressed the need to make education child-centred. Nearly two decades after the policy was approved by Parliament, the school-going child's life continues to be afflicted by rote methods and the chronic fear of doing badly in examination. Yes, there are plenty of people who feel unmoved by this reality. But R.K. Narayan did succeed in touching the nation's heart when he made his maiden speech in the Rajya Sabha in 1991, inspiring the Ministry of Human Resource Development to set up a committee under Professor Yash Pal to prescribe remedies. Its 1993 report gathered dust while the problem got increasingly worse. One terrible symptom is the increasing number of children who contemplate or actually commit suicide during examination time.

The 1986 policy assumed that India would universalise elementary education before the end of the century. That did not happen. Today,

Nearly two decades after the National Policy on Education was approved by Parliament, the school-going child's life continues to be afflicted by rote methods and the chronic fear of doing badly in examination.

as high a proportion as 53 per cent of our children are eliminated by the system before Class 8. That terrible figure should drown the nation in embarrassment, triggering emergency measures, but we all have got used to it. When I mentioned the number at a recent TV show on the National Curriculum Framework, no one responded, as if it was irrelevant to the discussion. Most of the show time was spent on allegations about the lack of participation in the NCF revision process. Not many could recall that the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had set up a large steering committee, chaired by Professor Yash Pal, and as many as 21 National Focus Groups. It also invited public opinion through advertisements in 28 national and regional dailies, organised regional seminars, and meetings for consultation with the States and rural teachers. And now the document is with CABE (Central Advisory Board of Education), where the previous NCF was never discussed.

This recent history of eight months of intensive nation-wide deliberation among professionals and other stakeholders appears to have been drowned by weightier subjects such as Ambedkar's inheritance, Jinnah's role in Partition, and the difficulties in tracking black buck shooters. Suicide by farmers arouses no one's in-

terest. So why should we be surprised that Gokhale's move to make primary education free and compulsory evokes no awkward memory or enthusiasm 94 years later? The children that Gokhale's legacy asks us to worry about are poor and mostly rural. Their high dropout rate, as it is officially called, is a key symptom of the system's inability to reform itself. If an intrinsic urge for reform is a measure of systemic quality — as a recent UNESCO report suggests — then we deserve to be rated poorly. Indeed, resistance to reform is so high that you are forced to wonder why the system attracts any criticism at all.

The new NCF discusses quality in terms of the resources available for infrastructural needs, professional training of teachers, and provision for monitoring. It relates quality to the experiences provided to children to enable them to construct knowledge. This approach calls for the recognition of children's creativity and motivation to learn. The belief that every child has a personality and a unique potential is fundamental to the development of a democratic system of schooling.

Four decades have passed since the Kothari Commission recommended a common school system. That vision is a shambles today and cannot be resurrected magically in the middle of sharp socio-economic contradictions. What is

possible and important is to initiate long-range reforms, starting with steps to improve systemic efficiency and accountability.

The new NCF focusses attention on two sets of challenges for reform: pedagogic and systemic. The first set includes rational designing of syllabi and textbooks, teacher training and examination procedures. The second set calls for more resources for school infrastructure, and a change in roles and power relations from the ground level upwards. Both sets of reforms have been appreciated for long, and in stray pockets — usually with NGO involvement — have been successfully tried out. Numerous innovative projects have established that school functioning can be improved with community involvement. NCF recommends that the approach used in such experiments be mainstreamed. Among pedagogic reforms, an important one recommended is the involvement of school teachers in the preparation of textbooks, not merely in reviewing them after they are written.

The most urgently needed pedagogic reforms are those related to teacher training and examinations. Institutional structures available for these two sectors need to be strengthened, which means that the National Council for Teacher Education and the various examination boards need to be given considerable academic support. NCF proposes delinking competitive entrance tests from school-leaving examinations. A nodal agency is suggested for the former so that children are saved from the ordeal of endless entrance tests and to discourage coaching. In Tamil Nadu, the Government has already taken an important step towards reducing the role of coaching in children's lives. Hopefully this step will lead to greater consensus on ways to select the most creative, rather than the most expensively coached, for professional courses.

In the context of examinations taken at the end of Classes X and XII, the NCF suggests many radical remedies for reducing stress and importance of rote memory and speed. As for work-related knowledge and skills, the NCF asks us to recognise out-of-school agencies capable of providing 'work benches', using local resource persons and practitioners of heritage crafts. The new NCF also recommends art in different forms to be made a necessary part of children's education. NCF 2005 is firmly grounded in the Constitutional vision of India as an egalitarian and secular society, committed to self-transformation towards social justice in all its dimensions, covering gender and caste disparities.

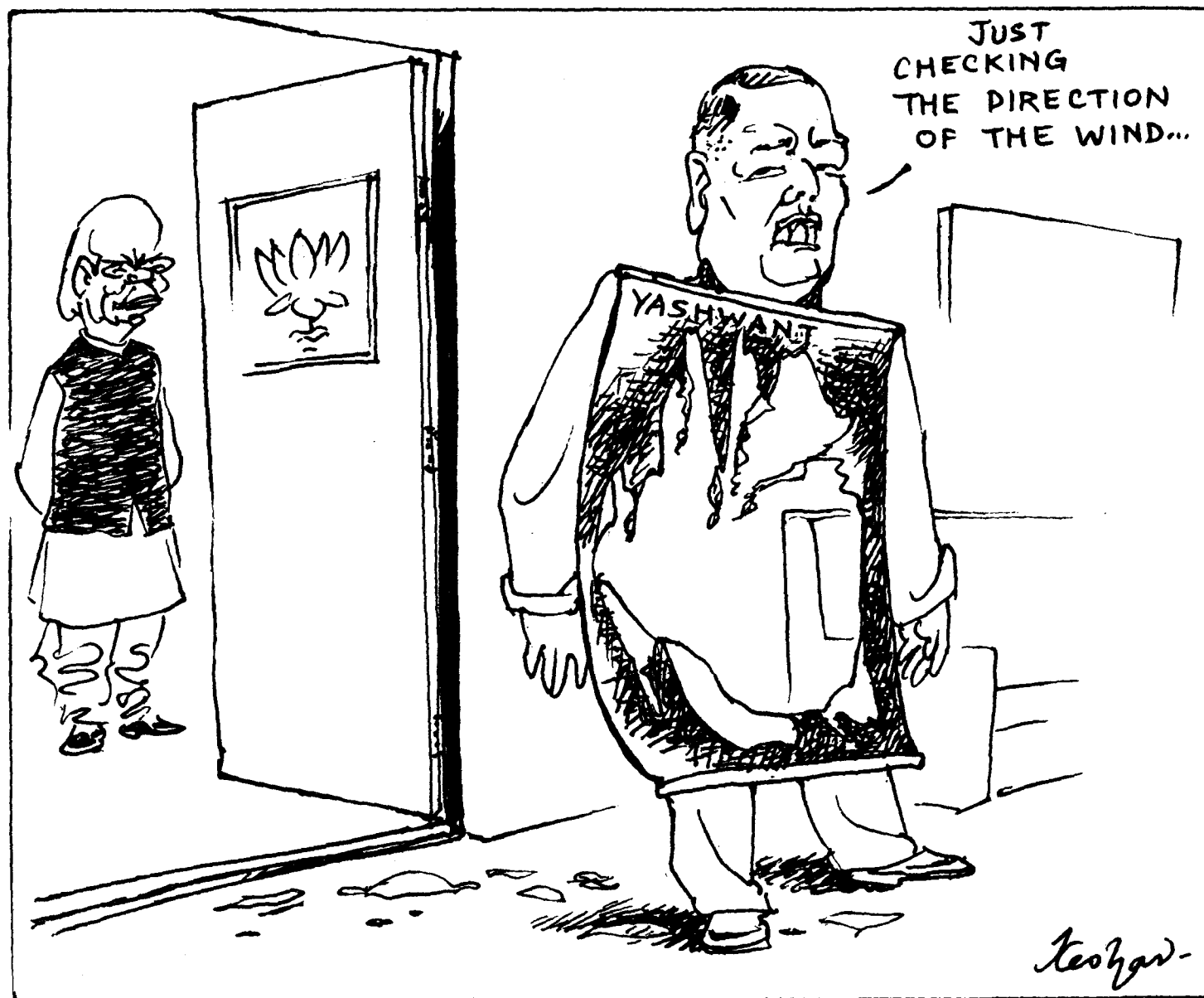
In the grip of negativity

Today, the entire system of education is in the grip of negative and cynical feelings. The dignity of teaching has been violated, provision for health and education in villages has reached minimalist levels. At least one State has declared career teachers a 'dying cadre'; contractual appointments are being made in other States as well, and training has been turned into a transparent ritual. Civil society seems determined to ignore the health and education of rural children. Voices like those of Jean Dreze and P. Sainath are far too few to make an impact. Professor Yash Pal's idea that we should cultivate a child-inspired, and not merely a child-centred, approach deserves political attention across ideological boundaries. There are plenty of cynics who say nothing much can be done, that all the ideas recommended in the new document have been discussed earlier, that the system is far too complex and sick to be reformed, and so on and so forth. Then there are people who associate quality with private initiative and have no faith in the state's ability to sustain a long-term reform effort.

Add one more section — which smells politics in everything — and you get a panoramic view of the crowd which does not want to believe that NCF 2005 might mark a beginning of something positive. As Professor Yash Pal says in his foreword to the NCF, India's educational adversity is self-imposed, and it can be overcome if we learn to appreciate children's own capacities. Once that message begins to sink, a lot of things will show signs of change.

(The writer is Director, National Council of Educational Research and Training.)

CARTOONSCAPE



School No. 2 with fake BEd

P-17
OUR LEGAL REPORTER

Calcutta, June 28: The assistant headmaster of a Purulia school resigned from his post today after it was proved in the high court that his BEd certificate was fake.

Going through the documents furnished by Burdwan University, Justice Aniruddha Basu asked police to take appropriate action against Ram Ranjan Chatterjee, who held the post since 1998.

The judge also asked the education department to appoint Hrid Baran Mahato, who stood second in the interview and fought a legal battle for over seven years to justify his claim to the top slot, in place of Chatterjee.

In 1996, Sreekrishna Vidya-pith of Jhalda, about 260 km west of Calcutta, issued an advertisement to fill the vacant post. Both Chatterjee and Mahato were interviewed in Aug-

Burdwan University
ust 1997. But after Chatterjee's appointment was announced, Mahato approached the school management alleging that he had got the job by submitting forged MSc (from Ranchi University) and BEd certificates.

When the school authorities declined to act on the basis of his plea, Mahato lodged a complaint with the local police station. The police arrested Chatterjee and he spent a fortnight behind bars. But the school did not go back on its decision to appoint him. Mahato then moved the high court.

Burdwan University informed the court that Chatterjee had failed in its BEd exam.

Education department officials said over the past year, about 50 schoolteachers have been caught working on the basis of fake mark sheets. However, they could not immediately recall any assistant headmaster being caught having furnished false credentials.

Now, new-look HS

OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta, June 20: The package of subjects being offered in the higher secondary course this year has gone through a student-friendly makeover.

Under the revised system, the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education has dropped four subjects — zoology, botany, physiology and public administration.

Secretary Debashis Sarkar said: "Examining students' demands, we found that there was no need to teach these subjects separately as electives at the Plus II level."

The revised package will be put into effect from the session beginning in July. Successful examinees of the 2005 secondary examinations, who are now seeking admission to Class XI in 6,000-odd state-aided higher secondary schools, will be able to choose subjects from the new assortment.

The new course is divided into nine groups that comprise 55 subjects from all three streams — science arts and commerce (see box).

Students will have to

FRESH ARRIVALS

Group I: Physics, nutrition, education, business organisation and management

Group II: Biology, home science and home nursing, business economics, including business math

Group III: Chemistry, history and accountancy

Group IV: Political science, sociology and geology

Group V: Anthropology, economics, fine arts and crafts and music

Group VI: Psychology, economic geography and geography

Group VII: Statistics, classical languages, modern foreign languages and agronomy

Group VIII: Mathematics and philosophy

Group IX: Computer science and modern computer-application

ON WAY OUT

Botany, zoology, physiology and public administration

choose three elective and one optional subject from any of the nine groups.

Since the HS council was set up in 1975, this is the sec-

ond time the subject combination package has been revised. In 2004, minor changes had been introduced.

"The alterations we made last year were not sufficient to meet the requirements of modern students. Moreover, there were certain lapses in the old system that needed immediate change," an official said.

Explaining the disadvantages in the old system, he said earlier there was no scope for humanities students to pick an elective subject that could help them score high marks. This aspect has been kept in mind while framing the new package.

The official added that in the old system, there were three categories of laboratory-based subjects in which the total marks for practicals varied between 40 and 110. The choice of subjects was such that a student could pick two having 110 marks for practical in each.

The new package has been designed in such a way that a student will be able to opt for only one such subject — which has 110 marks on the practical examination.

21 JUN 2005

THE TELEGRAPH

Autonomy push for IITs, IIMs

17/6/06
4/17
Bharatiya
Kutumbi
Stateman News Service

NEW DELHI, June 16. - Undoing an NDA decision, the UPA government today decided to restore a measure of functional and financial autonomy to prestigious institutions of higher learning such as IIT and IIM with the Union Cabinet approving a modified block grant scheme for funding these institutions.

The information and broadcasting minister, Mr S Jaipal Reddy, who briefed the media on the Cabinet decision, alleged that the autonomy of these institutions was adversely affected during the NDA rule. "We are seeking to augment the financial and functional autonomy of these prestigious institutions".

The continuance of the block grant scheme of funding, with some modifications, was approved on the basis of the experience of its implementation in IITs, IIMs and the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

Besides the five IITs, three IIMs and IISc, the modified block grant scheme would also be extended to two new IITs at Guwahati and Roorkee, three IIMs at Lucknow, Indore and Calicut, Indian School

of Mines (Dhanbad), School of Planning and Architecture (New Delhi), National Institute of Industrial Engineering (Mumbai) and National Institutes of Technical Teachers Training and Research at Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai and Kolkata.

The scheme would be implemented in all these institutions with the stipulation that the level of corpus may be allowed up to Rs 100 crores in the case of IITs and IISc and Rs 50 crores in respect of other institutions, Mr Reddy said.

The Cabinet also approved the proposal to give powers to institutes that are not dependent on non-plan budgetary support to create academic posts and make appointments in them on contract basis for fixed but renewable tenures.

These measures, Mr Reddy said, would provide further functional and financial autonomy to these institutions and encourage them to generate more internal resources, promote innovation and enable them to improve standards of education and research.

The pattern of funding would be applicable from 2005-06 onwards for a period of five years and its review would be taken up in 2010-11, he said.

17 JUN 2006

THE STATESMAN

BJP-ruled states to ban new NCERT books

1576
Education
& culture

PRESS Trust of India
Raipur, June 14

ALL BJP-ruled states have decided to ban the new NCERT books, as the proposed syllabus prepared by the UPA government at the Centre would "divide" the society, Chhattisgarh education minister Rajesh Munat said on Tuesday.

The facts have been 'twisted' in the books by the UPA government, and it would have a strong repercussion on society, he alleged. "Hence BJP ruled Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Orissa have decided to ban the books," he said adding that the books would be allowed in the state if the controversial references were dropped.

"Since the UPA government had decided before hand on the issue and only wanted the education ministers to put their approval on the syllabus, we stro-



Raman Singh
'No going back'

ngly opposed that at the June 7 meeting of education ministers in Delhi," he said.

Chief minister Raman Singh said, "It's a sensitive matter. The UPA should not distribute books which could divide society."

"We wanted to cooperate with the Centre, but they have to incorporate the facts and not the wrong things about Sikhs, Jains or Jats," Munat said. The new

books, meant for next academic session, contain chapters in which Lord Mahavir has been described as a 'misguided person', Jats as looters. Also wrongthings have been attributed to Guru Govind Singh, he added.

HRD minister Arjun Singh has even changed the education policy introduced by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Munat said adding that instead of experts some NGO workers had written the NCERT books.

He also alleged that the Centre had released NCERT books of 1986 as 2005 after only changing the cover page. "The Congress and Left Parties should not do such things," he said.

On whether the decision would affect students, Munat said about five to 10 per cent of Chhattisgarh students follow NCERT books but the state was helpless, "because of the Centre's adamant attitude".

15 JUN 2009

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Learn to Change

Debate the NCERT draft,
don't disrupt discussion

E DUCATION has always been a contested field in India. But since the 90s, when the NDA government came to power, it has become a battlefield of ideologies to influence young minds. The youth wing of the BJP has now taken it to the extreme. On Tuesday, a bunch of ABVP activists barged into a meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education in the capital to discuss the draft National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and disrupted the proceedings. Last Friday, Murli Manohar Joshi who was Union human resources development minister in the NDA government had announced the BJP's reservations towards the UPA government's education policy and education ministers from BJP-ruled states skipped Tuesday's meeting. People have the right to debate and disagree in public with the government on policies, but that has to be done with the civility of democratic discourse. What is being done at present is to politicise everything from textbooks to exam reforms in the crudest possible manner. The draft NCF deserves better treatment since it seeks to achieve a paradigm shift in the manner in which our children learn and are taught.

The NCERT draft suggests that curriculum development should connect knowledge to life outside the school, end learning by rote, take the process of learning beyond textbooks, and reform the exam system. It looks at teaching as a means to strengthen our democratic way of life which is possible only "when it responds to the presence of first generation schoolgoers". It wants to encourage a plurality of textbooks which will help the states to draw from local pools of knowledge and traditional knowhow so that children relate to what they learn. Exams are to be of shorter duration with the focus more on problem-solving skills rather than memorising the text. These are good suggestions. But its emphasis on teaching in the child's mother tongue, while promoting the three-language formula, is contentious. However persuasive be the logic, a majority of people cutting across rural-urban divides look forward to English as the language of deliverance from real and imagined miseries. It is no colonial hangover but a reflection of market reality. This obviously is the challenge before the NCERT: How do we connect our education system to the needs of a liberalising political economy without compromising quality and quantity? The debate would be served better if those who differ on the NCERT draft join the discussion instead of rudely disrupting it.

Kolkata tops in HS

9/6
Statesman News Service

those securing third division has decreased by three

sons to celebrate with as many as three of its students on the list of the top 10. The government-school topper, Abhisek Malakar, is from Hindu School.

KOLKATA, June 8.— This year's Higher Secondary examinees have performed exceedingly well. The percentage of candidates who have passed is as high as 67.56 and the number of those securing star marks and first divisions has increased too. Reversing the previous trend, Kolkata has surpassed the districts with Mithun Chakraborty of South Point High School emerging first.

After being humbled by the districts in both the Madhyamik and JEE, Kolkata this time beat them also in terms of individual scores. The overall pass percentage has shot up from 62.6. Unlike last year, when a two per cent dip in the pass percentage was attributed to a large number of failures in English, officials refused to attribute this year's success to a good performance in a particular subject. The first divisions have increased by nearly 4 per cent. The number of second divisions has come down by nearly one per cent, while the number of



Mithun Chakraborty (Top) and Ananda Roy.
— The Statesman

per cent. The number of stars has also increased from 5,700 to 7,508.

South Point High School has multiple rea-

Mithun Chakraborty (979) and Ananda Roy (978) of South Point High School, Raja Basak (978) of Raiganj Coronation HS School, Debatraya Pal (977) of Chatra Nandalal Institution, Hooghly, Subhadip Sarkar (972) of Krishnanath Collegiate School, Behrampore, Sourav Chakraborty (971) of Sagarbhanga High School, Aritra Banerjee (967) of Kalyani Experimental School, Himadri Samanta (966) of Garalgachha High School, Hooghly, Abhisek Malakar (965) of Hindu School, Abhirup Ghosh (964) of Bishnupur High school in Bankura and Dhrubojyoti Roy (961) of South Point High School are among the top scorers.

The results, of 95 subjects, were published within 38 days, two days ahead of the Supreme Court's deadline.

See Kolkata Plus I

09 JUN 2005

THE STATESMAN

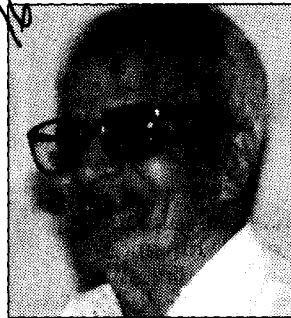
Exit Mansingh, enter Mirdha

OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, June 7: Dancer Sonal Mansingh's controversial reign at the helm of Sangeet Natak Akademi ended today with the Centre replacing her with Ram Niwas Mirdha, former Union minister and Congress leader.

Mansingh had almost sparked a revolt in the pivotal cultural organisation with leading artistes quitting their posts in protest against her alleged autocratic ways and saffron sympathies.

Mirdha, who will be the new chairman, had handled various portfolios in the governments headed by Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi and led the joint parliamentary committee that probed the securities scam in the 1990s. He was chairman of the Congress's central election authority till a few months ago



Mansingh, Mirdha

and has been associated with the field of arts for long.

Mansingh, who had canvassed votes for Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi through signed advertisements in the NDA's India Shining campaign, has been accused of trying to "politicise, personalise and trivialise" the Akademi.

Those who put in their papers in protest included three of the five government nomi-

nees — vice-chairman Kavalam Narayana Panicker, Carnatic musician Balamuralikrishna and Savitri Heisnam.

They and other leading music, dance and theatre personalities — such as Raja and Radha Reddy, M.K. Raina, Nadira Babbar, G.S. Channy, Mohan Maharishi, Kamal Tiwari, N.K. Sharma and Dolly Ahluwalia — submitted a six-page list of complaints against

Mansingh to President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

The resignations, however, were put on hold by Union culture minister S. Jaipal Reddy, who declined to accept them until a final decision was taken on Mansingh.

Her critics cite how the dancer refused to call meetings of the executive board's general council and how she unilaterally ended the golden jubilee programme in January 2004, 11 months ahead of schedule.

They accuse her of producing CD-Roms on the Akademi's behalf for "self-promotion", citing one on Indian dance that makes no mention of contemporary greats, such as her guru Kelucharan Mahapatra. It begins with a speech by her and ends with excerpts from her dance recitals with some remarks by Vajpayee thrown in-between.

Second chance hope for secondary failures

Director of Culture 5-13 6/6

**MITA MUKHERJEE
AND DEBASHIS
CHATTOPADHYAY**

Calcutta, June 5: Madhyamik examinees may not have to lose a year if they fail in a subject or a particular group but manage to score qualifying marks in the aggregate.

The Centre is planning to ask state governments to make arrangements so that secondary-level examinees failing in a subject or a group are able

to seek admission to Class XI and clear the failed papers the following year.

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) recently held a meeting with representatives of various state education boards to discuss the proposal.

If implemented, the system will have to be followed by all states conducting Madhyamik or equivalent exams.

According to the proposal, if a student fails in, for exam-

ple, the science group, but scores pass marks in the aggregate, he/she will be able to seek admission to Class XI with other successful examinees.

The student can write the science papers the next year while studying for plus II.

Under the existing system, an examinee who fails in even one subject or a group but scores pass marks in total has to wait till the next year. Not just the papers in which the student had failed but all the papers

Compulsory papers in the Madhyamik course are divided into three groups — the language group comprising first and second languages, the science group with mathematics, physical science and life science and a third group for history and geography.

"We cannot arrive at a conclusion before discussing the Centre's proposal thoroughly with the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and also the teachers. The board is ex-

amining it," said school education minister Kanti Biswas.

The government has two options — holding a supplementary examination a month or two after the announcement of the Madhyamik results or allowing such students to enter Class XI and permit them to clear their backlog in next year's Madhyamik. The board, sources said, is expected to make an announcement on its stand in the next two weeks.

There is a long-standing

demand among students, guardians and teachers that the government introduce supplementary examinations for Madhyamik candidates.

The board used to conduct supplementary examinations till the early 1980s. They were stopped as it did not have adequate infrastructure and manpower for holding two examinations in a single year. The teacher's opinion on the issue is essential as they will have to evaluate the papers twice.

MADHYAMIK

- Compulsory subjects - 8
- Pass marks - 34
- Language group - 102
- Science group - 102
- History & geography - 68
- Aggregate pass marks - 272
- Examinees - 6.25 lakh
- Average pass percentage - 68-71

for eight subjects have to be written again.

হেডমাস্টারের বয়স ১৩, স্কুল চলছে তরতরিয়ে

অনল আবেদিন • বেলাডাড়া
(মুর্শিদাবাদ)

'হেড স্যার' বাবর আলি। বয়স ১৩। সহকারী প্রধান শিক্ষক আশুতোষ ঘোষ। বয়স ১৪। তৃতীয় শিক্ষক হাসানুজ্জামান। তারও বয়স ১৩ বছর।

মস্করা না যাত্রাপালা? কোনওটাই নয়। বছর তিনেক আগে স্কুল যখন তৈরি হয়, 'প্রিন্স কমরেডস' তখন পঞ্চম মার্কশিস্ট এনে গভীর মুখে ছাত্রদের মার্কশিস্ট তৈরি করেছে। ছাত্র পাশ করছে। মাস্টারও পাশ করছে। বেলাডাড়ার গঙ্গাপুর-ঘোষপাড়া গ্রামের তিন খুন্দের 'আনন্দ নিকেতন' তিন বছর ধরে তরতরিয়ে চলছে।

এই বয়সেই মাস্টার। নিজেরা পড়ে কখন? হাফ প্যান্ট আর স্যাঁতো গঞ্জি গায়ে প্রধান শিক্ষক বাবর আলি বেশ গভীর। কড়া অনুশাসনের মধ্যে ছাত্রদের রাখেন। এমনকী রবিবারেও

হুজিটাই বালাই নেই। রবিবার নিজেদের স্কুল নেই বলে ছাত্রদের পিছনে অনেকটা বেশি সময় দিতে হয়। বাবর বলে, "শুধু বাড়-জল হলে স্কুল ছুটি। তখন কী যে খারাপ লাগে। এতগুলি ছেলের ডবিষাং বলে কথা!"

তা তো বটেই। তা ভবিষ্যতে ছেলেপুলেগুলোর কিছু হবে, নাকি গোলায় যাবে? আঁতে যা লাগে শিক্ষকদের। চোখমুখ আরও গভীর করে পরিসংখ্যান নিয়ে বসে বাবর। সে বলে, "শুন, আমাদের স্কুলের ১৭ জন ছাত্র এ বার হাইস্কুলে ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় মোটা তালিকার উপর দিকে ছিল। আরও বহু ছেলে এখান থেকে পাশ করছে। বেশ কিছু পরিবারের ছেলে আমাদের স্কুল না-হলে প্রাথমিকের চৌকাঠ ডিঙাতে পারত না।"

বাবর আলি ও আশুতোষ। — আশিস বাগচী



তেরি হয়েছিল। সেই স্কুলে প্রথম শ্রেণি থেকে পঞ্চম শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত এখন ৮-৭ জন পড়ে। সামনের বার আরও বাড়বে। বাড়বে মাস্টারও। আমাদের আরও তিন বন্ধু পড়াবে বলেছে।" শীতে জাফর শেখের বাড়ির সামনে ফাঁকা মাঠে আর গ্রীয়ে আমির হোসেনের আমবাগানে চলে তাদের স্কুল।

কিন্তু স্কুল তৈরির ভূত চাপল কী করে? গঙ্গারামপুরের মির হোসেন ছাগলের ব্যাপারি। গাঁ-গঞ্জ থেকে ছাগল কিনে তিনি বেলাডাড়ার হাটে বেচেন। যা আয় হয়, কোনওরকমে চলে যায়। কিন্তু ছেলেমেয়েগুলো লেখাপড়া শিখছে না বলে মনটা খচখচ করে। তিনিই বাবরকে বলেন, "তুই আর রফু (আশুতোষ) তো লেখাপড়ায় খুব ভাল। তোরা যদি ওদের দেখিয়ে দিস, তো একটা হিলে হয়।" আর এক প্রতিকৌশলী ময়না বিবিও একই অনুরোধ করেন। তার পরেই তিন বন্ধু মিলে প্রতিকৌশলী লোকসার শেখের বাগানে

বাবরের বাবা মহম্মদ নাসিরুদ্দিন ও আশুতোষের বাবা চৈতন্য ঘোষ ছেলেদের মাস্টারিতে বেজায় খুশি। তাঁরা বলেন, "যুরে না-বেড়িয়ে ওরা যে ছাত্র পড়াচ্ছে এ তো খুব ভাল কথা। তবে কী, সামনেই তো ওদের মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা। নিজেদের দিকে তো নজর দিতে হবে।"

বাবাদের উৎকণ্ঠাকে পাস্তাই দিচ্ছে না বাবর, আশুতোষেরা। কথার ফাঁকেই তারা হাঁক পাড়ছে, দুই একে দুই...! আম, শিশু, করমচার ডালে সকাল-বিকাল ঝরে পড়ছে খুন্দের ধারাপাত।

Burden off your kid's shoulder

HRD ministry proposes radical changes in syllabus for schools

NANDINI R. Iyer
New Delhi, June 2

YOUR KID could get marks in school for learning Bharatratnam or Kathak from a guru, children may not have to study in English medium — even in public schools — for the first 3 years of their school lives, and their syllabus load overall could be substantially lower. The stress, instead, will be on greater interaction between teacher and student and the child's learning outside a classroom.

These are some proposals the HRD ministry will place before the Central Advisory Board on Education for approval on June 7 at a meeting called to dis-

cuss changes in the National Curriculum Framework — on which school syllabuses and textbooks are designed — of the NCERT.

Lots of changes have been suggested by the National Steering Committee of the NCERT to give Indian education a global shape. The recommendations focus on self-learning. "Children now separate learning from life and learning from school. Segregated knowledge is useless", a member of the National Steering Committee said. Syllabus reductions will impact mathematics, the languages, natural sciences and social sciences. The three-language norm will continue, but with a shift in emphasis on

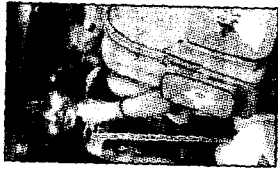
multi-lingual proficiency beginning with the mother tongue. In about three or four years' time, parents of elementary school students in the southern and northeastern states won't have to panic about their child sitting for a Hindi or English examination in Class II.

Science will be recast creating local variants of the Science Congress in each class, so that students are encouraged to analyse everyday experiences in the context of classroom learning.

For music, dance, arts and vocational skills, students could acquire knowledge from any accredited institution outside school and be graded with marks allotted by that institution.

Some proposals

- Drastically reduce volume of syllabus
- Focus on self-learning
- Continue with three-language norm with stress on multi-lingual proficiency
- Put in place a system whereby students acquiring knowledge from an institution outside school are graded with marks allotted by that institution

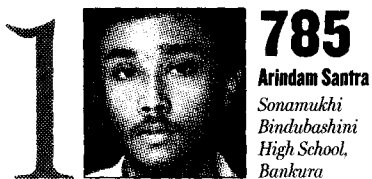


03 JUN 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DISTRICT SWEEP

9 out of 10 Madhyamik toppers are from small-town schools



HT Correspondent

Kolkata, May 31

BETTER-LIT CLASSROOMS don't necessarily produce brighter students. The district schools sent out this message on Tuesday morning, virtually making a clean sweep of the Madhyamik merit list.

The lone candidate from Kolkata making it to the top 10 came only seventh. As many as nine of the 10 top scorers were from schools outside the city limits, with backward Bankura recording a truly astounding performance. Kolkata's only consolation was that the average result was better than last year's.

"The students from Bankura, Malda, Birbhum and Midnapore have done remarkably well," secondary board president Dibyendu Hota acknowledged.

Much to his own surprise, Arindam Santara of Sonamukhi Bindubashini Jubilee High School outscored everyone else, recording a grand total of 785 marks. Arindam said he had expected to do well, but not this well. "I always take one stride at a time. I will concentrate now on the HS exam. I am not thinking beyond this," he said.

Ahana Pradhan of Bankura Mission Girls High School came first among the girls and second in the overall ranking. "I didn't expect such high marks. I studied only five hours a day. Now I will concentrate on my HS. I will study science. As for what I want to do next, I will think about it when the time comes," she said.

Rajesh Madan of Ramhari Ramakrishna Mission High School, Bankura,



SUBHANKAR CHAKRABORTY/HT

South Point's Upashona Mukherjee (centre) being congratulated by her classmates after the Madhyamik results were declared. She stood first among girls in the city.

came third. "It came as a pleasant surprise. I want to study maths and become a school teacher," Rajesh said.

In Kolkata, Tamoghna Biswas of Nava Nalanda School did better than other city candidates, obtaining 778 marks. The other schools, which did well, were Jadavpur Vidyapith, South Point High School and Narendrapur Ramakrishna Mission.

But is Kolkata falling behind in the race? School education minister Kanti Biswas denies this. "Most of the toppers this time are from the districts. But that needn't be a reflection on the standards of school education in Kolkata. There are meritorious stu-

dents everywhere. What matters is the overall pass percentage. This has been uniformly good across the whole state."

Academics feel the districts have a distinct advantage. "The students there come mostly from poor and lower-middle class families. They have a greater stake in doing well in life," Loreto Day School (Sealdah) principal Sister S. M. Cyril said.

Prof. Balai Pada Santra, father of this year's topper Arindam, believes, "Students in the districts have everything their Kolkata counterparts have by way of books, libraries and so on. But they have fewer distractions."

01 JUN 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

স্নাতকোত্তর বাৎসরিক পরীক্ষার নিয়ম চালু, ফল ৬০ দিনে

আজকালের প্রতিবদন: চলতি শিক্ষাবর্ষ থেকেই কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় স্নাতকোত্তরে (অনার্স ও পাস) তিন ভাগে পরীক্ষা নেবে। এ জন্য কোন কোন বছরে কত নম্বরে পরীক্ষা তার তালিকাও তৈরি। নম্বরের ভাগ এমনভাবে করা হয়েছে যাতে পড়ুয়াদের ওপর চাপ সৃষ্টি না হয়। এবং প্রতি বছর পরীক্ষা দিয়ে পাস করতেই হবে, না হলে দ্বিতীয় বা তৃতীয় বর্ষের পরীক্ষায় বসা যাবে না। এই উদ্যোগের ফলে ২০-২৫ দিন অতিরিক্ত ক্লাস অধ্যাপকরা নিতে পারবেন। প্রতি বছর জুনের শেষে পরীক্ষা নেওয়া হবে প্রথম বর্ষের। বি এ, বি এসসি অনার্সের ক্ষেত্রে (প্রথম বছর) দুটি আবশ্যিক পত্রের ২০০ নম্বর এবং বাংলা, ইংরেজি ও পরিবেশ ৫০ নম্বর করে মোট ৩৫০ নম্বরে পরীক্ষা হবে। পার্ট-২ তে অনার্সের চারটি পত্রের ১০০ নম্বর করে ৪০০ নম্বর এবং দুটি আবশ্যিক পত্র ২০০ নম্বর করে ৪০০, মোট ৮০০ নম্বরে পরীক্ষা হবে। এবং তৃতীয় বছরে শুধু অনার্সের ৪০০ নম্বরে পরীক্ষা হবে। বি এ, বি এসসি পাসের ক্ষেত্রে প্রথম বছর ৪৫০ নম্বর, দ্বিতীয় বছর ৬০০ এবং তৃতীয় বছর ৩০০ নম্বরে পরীক্ষা হবে। বি কম অনার্সের ক্ষেত্রে প্রথম বছরে ৪৫০ নম্বর, দ্বিতীয় বছর ৭০০ নম্বর, তৃতীয় বছর ৪০০ নম্বরে পরীক্ষা হবে। পরিবেশবিদ্যা বি এ, বি এসসি, ও বি কমের ক্ষেত্রে ৫০ নম্বর করে প্রথম বছরেই পরীক্ষা নেওয়া হবে। এ জন্য সিলেবাসও ইতিমধ্যেই তৈরি করা হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছে ৬০ দিনের মধ্যেই পরীক্ষার ফল প্রকাশ করবে। সর্বভারতীয় প্রেক্ষাপটের দিকে তাকিয়েই এ রাজ্যের বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ও এই শিক্ষাবর্ষেই এভাবেই পঠনপাঠন ও পরীক্ষা নেওয়ার কাজ করবে। প্রশ্নপত্রের বোঝা কমাতে এবং পরীক্ষার চাপ কমাতেই এই পদ্ধতি নেওয়া হয়েছে বলে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সূত্রে জানানো হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষ চান, প্রতি বছর বাৎসরিক পরীক্ষা নিয়ে প্রশ্নের চাপ কমানো। অন্যদিকে, খাতা দেখার বোঝাও যাতে পরীক্ষকদের ওপর না বাড়ে, তাই বাৎসরিক পরীক্ষা। প্রতি বছর পরীক্ষা দেওয়ার পরই ছাত্রছাত্রীরা পরের ক্লাস করতে পারবে। একটি পত্রে যদি ফেল করে, তাহলেও বছর নষ্ট হওয়ার ভয় নেই, একই সঙ্গে দ্বিতীয় বর্ষের পরীক্ষায় প্রথম বছরে ফেল করা পত্রের পরীক্ষা দিতে পারবে।

AMU defends its quota policy

9- Education & Culture
28-5-2115

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

FACED with criticism from BJP and Sangh Parivar outfits, Aligarh Muslim University today said that reserving 50 per cent seats for Muslims in 43 courses was within the ambit of the Constitution. It pointed out that the NDA government had approved such a step in Delhi's Jamia Hamdard University.

"The new admission policy under which 50 per cent seats would be reserved for Muslims is in keeping with the aim with which the university was established, to promote the cultural and educational advancement of Muslims of India, and is as per article 30(1) of the Constitution," AMU vice-chancellor Naseem Ahmed told reporters here today.

Article 30 of the Constitution permits minorities,

whether based on religion or language, to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Ahmed said the decision was in keeping with the Supreme Court judgment in the Tma Pai foundation case, in which it permitted minorities to reserve seats. "There is nothing communal about the move. The proportion of Muslim and non-Muslim students is going to remain the same. The difference is that we will get Muslim students from all over the country and not just those from among the internal students, most of whom are from Bihar and UP, which will enhance its national character."

Reacting to criticism by BJP and Sangh Parivar outfits, Ahmed said that the NDA government had approved 50 per cent reservation for Muslims in Jamia Hamdard University.

24 MAY 2005 INDIAN EXPRESS 5

পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ রুখে দিল হাইকোর্ট

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: রাজ্য সরকার এখন থেকে কোনও পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করতে পারবে না বলে জানিয়ে দিয়েছে কলকাতা হাইকোর্ট। সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযানের অঙ্গ হিসাবে প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক স্কুলে রাজ্য সরকার এক ও দুই হাজার টাকা মাসিক বেতনে পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করছিল। ওই নিয়োগ নিয়ে হাইকোর্টে বেশ কিছু মামলা হয়। শুক্রবার বিচারপতি কল্যাণজ্যোতি সেনগুপ্ত রায় দেন, পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ সম্পূর্ণ বেআইনি। আইন পরিবর্তন না-করে ওই নিয়োগ করা যায় না। তাই আইন পরিবর্তন না-হওয়া পর্যন্ত কোনও পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করা যাবে না।

সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযানে স্থির হয়, স্কুলে শিক্ষকের সংখ্যা কম থাকায় পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করা হবে। ওই শিক্ষকদের নিয়োগ করবে স্কুলের ম্যানেজিং কমিটি। তাঁদের যোগ্যতা হবে স্থায়ী স্কুলশিক্ষকদের মতোই। কিন্তু তাঁরা বেতন পাবেন প্রাথমিকে মাসিক এক হাজার এবং মাধ্যমিকে দু'হাজার টাকা। নিয়োগ নিয়ে বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলে বিভিন্ন প্রশ্ন দেখা দেয়। মামলা চলাকালীন বিচারপতি বলেন, ওই শিক্ষকদের যে-বেতন দেওয়া হচ্ছে তা ন্যূনতম মজুরির চেয়েও কম। এটা করা যায় কি না, তা জানতে চান তিনি। রাজ্য সরকারের বক্তব্য, ওই শিক্ষকেরা স্থায়ী শিক্ষকের মতো সারা দিন ক্লাস নেবেন না। তা ছাড়া এই পরিকল্পনা কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের। রাজ্য সরকার সেই পরিকল্পনা অনুযায়ী কাজ করছে।

বিচারপতি এ দিন বলেন, প্রাথমিক স্কুল কাউন্সিল ও স্কুল সার্ভিস কমিশন স্কুলে শিক্ষক নিয়োগ করে। এটাই আইন। এ ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষক নিয়োগ করছে ম্যানেজিং কমিটি। কাজেই এই নিয়োগ সম্পূর্ণ বেআইনি। সোসাইটি রেজিস্ট্রেশন আইন অনুযায়ী এই নিয়োগ করা হচ্ছে। কিন্তু আইন সংশোধন না-করে ওই আইনে স্কুলশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করা যায় না। সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযান শুরু করার জন্য কোনও পুরস্কারমো তৈরি করা হয়নি। তাই পরিকাঠামো তৈরি করার পরেই শিক্ষক নিয়োগ করা যাবে।

বিচারপতি আরও বলেন, এক স্কুলে একই যোগ্যতার সম্পন্ন দু'জন শিক্ষকের বেতনের আকাশ-পাতাল ফারাক, এটা হতে পারে না। রায়ের আগে পাঠশিক্ষক হিসাবে যারা নিযুক্ত হয়েছিলেন, ইতিমধ্যে তাঁদের মেয়াদ শেষ হয়ে গিয়েছে। হাইকোর্টের অন্তর্ভুক্তি স্থগিতাদেশ থাকায় নতুন পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ করা যাবে না। কাজেই আপাতত রাজ্যে পাঠশিক্ষক নিয়োগ বন্ধ হয়ে গেল।

14 MAY 2005

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

পিছু হটল পর্ষদ, বাতিলও হতে পারে শিক্ষকদের পোশাক-বিধি

দেবীদাস আচার্য

কার্যকর করার আগেই পোশাক-বিধি নিয়ে পিছু হটতে হচ্ছে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ মধ্যশিক্ষা পর্ষদকে।

শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকা এবং শিক্ষক সংগঠনগুলির চাপের মুখে পর্ষদ-কর্তৃপক্ষ গেজেট বিজ্ঞপ্তি সংশোধনের সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছেন। ওই সংশোধনের মাধ্যমে পোশাক-বিধি বাতিল করা হতে পারে বলেও পর্ষদ সূত্রের খবর।

সরকার নিয়ন্ত্রিত বেসরকারি স্কুলের শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের জন্য রাজ্য সরকারের নির্দেশে পর্ষদ যে-আচরণবিধি তৈরি করেছে, চলতি শিক্ষাবর্ষেই তা চালু হওয়ার কথা। ওই বিধিকে আইনি মান্যতা দিতে সরকারি অনুমোদনের পরে গেজেট বিজ্ঞপ্তির আকারে তা প্রকাশ করা হয় গত ২০ জানুয়ারি। কিন্তু এই নিয়ে বিতর্ক বাধলে মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশে সমস্যা হতে পারে ভেবে পর্ষদ ওই বিধি কার্যকর করেনি। কিন্তু পোশাক-বিধির কথা প্রকাশিত হয়ে যাওয়ায় পর্ষদ-কর্তৃপক্ষকে বিতর্কে বিদ্ধ হতে হচ্ছে।

পর্ষদের পোশাক-বিধিতে বলা হয়েছে, শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকারা বলমলে, জমকালো পোশাক পরে স্কুলে যাবেন না। পোশাক যেন কোনও ভাবেই অসংযত না-হয়। দেখে যেন মনে না-হয় যে, তিনি টাকা বা সম্পদ জাহির করছেন। আর এই ব্যাপারে এলাকার

ভাবাবেগকে গুরুত্ব দিতে হবে।

বেসরকারি স্কুলগুলির পরিচালন সমিতির গঠন যা এবং সেখানে এতটাই রাজনীতির অনুপ্রবেশ ঘটেছে যে, আপাতনিরীহ এই সব নির্দেশের জেরে অনেক ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের হেনস্থা হতে পারে। পর্ষদকর্তারাও তা অস্বীকার করেন না। পর্ষদ-সভাপতি দিব্যেন্দু হোতা জানান, কেবল ডান হাতে ঘড়ি বাঁধায় ডায়মন্ড হারবার অঞ্চলের এক স্কুলশিক্ষিকাকে সাসপেন্ড করা হয়। সরকারি স্কুলে শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের পোশাক-বিধি নেই। হঠাৎ বেসরকারি স্কুলে তার প্রয়োজন হল কেন, সেই প্রশ্নও উঠেছে। ইতিপূর্বে পোশাক-বিতর্কে ব্যক্তি-স্বাধীনতার পক্ষে দাঁড়ানো রাজ্য সরকারই বা কী করে এই বিধি অনুমোদন করল, প্রশ্ন উঠেছে তা নিয়েও।

পর্ষদ-সভাপতি স্বীকার করেন, শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের পোশাক-বিধির কথা সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশিত হওয়ায় শিক্ষক সংগঠনগুলি এই ব্যাপারে আপত্তি জানাতে শুরু করেছে। সি পি আইয়ের স্কুলশিক্ষক সংগঠনের নেতা অমিয় বসুর দাবি, অবিলম্বে ওই বিধি বাতিল করতে হবে। তিনি বলেন, “কোথাও কোনও ঘটনা ঘটলে তা নিয়ন্ত্রণের ব্যবস্থা পর্ষদের আইনে আগে থেকেই রয়েছে। পোশাকের ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকারা কি এতই উচ্ছ্বল হয়ে পড়েছেন যে, তা নিয়ন্ত্রণের জন্য

বিধি তৈরি করতে হল?”

প্রধান শিক্ষক সমিতিও পর্ষদের এই কাজে অসন্তোষ প্রকাশ করেছে। সংগঠনের সভাপতি পৃথীশ বসু জানান, এই ব্যাপারে তাঁদের আপত্তির কথা লিখিত ভাবে পর্ষদে পাঠানো হচ্ছে। আচরণবিধি নিয়ে তাঁদের কিছু বক্তব্য আছে এবং পর্ষদকে তা শীঘ্রই জানানো হবে বলে মন্তব্য করেছেন এ বি টি এ-র সাধারণ সম্পাদক শিবপ্রসাদ মুখোপাধ্যায়। অভিজ্ঞতায় দেখা গিয়েছে, পোশাক-বিতর্কের ধাক্কা সামলাতে হয় ছাত্রী বা শিক্ষিকাদের। রাজ্য মহিলা কমিশনের সদস্য শ্যামশ্রী দাসের মতে, ছাত্রছাত্রীদের কথা খেয়ালে রেখে যে-পোশাকে তাঁরা স্বচ্ছন্দ বোধ করবেন, শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকারা তা-ই পরতে পারেন। পোশাক নিয়ে কোথাও যদি সমস্যা হয়ে থাকে, তবে তাকে বিচ্ছিন্ন ঘটনা হিসাবেই দেখা উচিত। সমস্যাটা মোটেই এমন হয়নি যে, ঢালাও ভাবে শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের জন্য পোশাক-বিধি তৈরি করতে হবে।

কর্তৃপক্ষ ইতিমধ্যেই মনস্থ করে ফেলেছেন, পোশাক-বিধি সংশোধন করতে হবে। শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকাদের প্রতিবাদ জোরালো হলে ওই সংশোধনের মাধ্যমে পোশাক-বিধি বাতিলই করে দেওয়া হবে বলে জানান এক পর্ষদকর্তা। জুনের মধ্যে এই বিতর্কে ছেদ টানতে চায় পর্ষদ।

10 MAY 2005

1 MAY 2005

10 MAY 2005

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

No politics for students, rules High Court

"Some of the students seek admission only to contest elections... Similarly some teachers do not teach.... They should not be paid their salaries...."

7/5

B. Education & Culture

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: A Division Bench of the Rajasthan High Court has asked the State Government to do away with elections to the students' unions of the universities, colleges and other educational institutions. The Court has also ordered a similar ban on elections to the associations and unions of teaching and non-teaching staff. The teachers who play truant should not be paid their salaries, the Court directed.

In a landmark order here, the Division Bench comprising Justice Shiv Kumar Sharma and Justice K. S. Rathore ordered that only students who had secured the maximum marks in the previous year's examinations should be made members of the students' union. The president, the vice-president and secretaries could be nominated from among such students, it said.

"The political parties have di-

vided the student community. The students are now totally engrossed in politics. The Government must protect the right to education but unfortunately education is not receiving the priority from the Government," the Court observed.

Lamenting the decline in the standards of education in Rajasthan, the Court said the degrees of the universities were being looked upon as "degraded documents".

"Some of the students seek admission only to contest elections. They are not serious about education. Similarly some teachers do not teach, nor they study. They are not interested in creating standards of education," it observed.

"Elections to student unions often lead to law and order problems. There is misuse of money and education as during the election period teaching almost stops. The walls of the educational institutions get plastered

with coloured posters. Not only the educational institutions but the whole town gets into the election mode," the judges said in their order.

The High Court had taken up the matter *suo motu* back in September 2003 following observations by R. D. Gujjar, Principal of Rajasthan College here, on the absence of a conducive atmosphere for learning in educational institutions due to the role played by some teachers who shirked work and students who got involved in politics. The Court of Mr. Justice Ashok Kumar Parihar then had taken up the matter making Prof. Gujjar also an applicant in the case.

"I welcome the High Court order. Education in politics is okay but politics in education cannot be tolerated," said K. L. Sharma, Vice-Chancellor of Rajasthan University, reacting to the Division Bench order.

"It will help both the universities as well as the students. Ex-

tra-curricular activities should be kept in the periphery. Teaching and learning should be the priority area," Prof. Sharma said even while admitting that he was making enemies for himself on the campus. Rajasthan University also had made submission in the case during the hearing.

"This is a very important decision regarding the educators as well. I am all for democracy but teachers unfortunately take no interest in teaching or research these days, Prof. Sharma, formerly of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, noted. "I went around many colleges only to find that the teachers are not in the classrooms. I warned them, sent notices, but nothing changed," he said.

"My observations stand vindicated," said Prof. Gujjar, who created the storm, reacting to the Court decision. "There are teachers in this university who will not be recognised by the students whom they are supposed

to be teaching."

The Court order also calls for necessary amendments to Clause 11(A) of Section 21, Sub-section 1 of the Rajasthan University Act, 1949, which provides for elections to the teachers' associations. In the case of the student union elections and the polls to the bodies of the non-teaching staff an amendment by the State Assembly is not required as these are not mentioned in the Act.

The Court order has vested additional powers in the Chancellors (State Governors) of the universities by empowering them to take action against absentee teachers without consulting with the University Syndicate. The Court has suggested forfeiting the salaries of teachers who are found guilty of not holding classes.

See also Page 5

After Nestle, it's Ford Foundation!

GOINGS-ON AT RED BASTION JNU

May 5. — Could a multi-lateral organisation, Ford Foundation, which has funded several projects in JNU, be accused of propagating “neo-liberal policies of privatisation of education” and put at par with a Nestle cafe outlet?

On Friday, the general body meeting of students belonging to JNU's School of Arts and Aesthetics will decide whether there should be any further association of Ford Foundation with their department.

If the GBM does decide

to break ties with Ford Foundation, JNU's students' union will press for ending the funding programme of the foundation.

At present, Ford Foundation provides grants and visiting faculty to School of International Studies, School of Social Sciences and Centre for Study of Law and Governance.

On 26 April, the students' GBM of the School of Arts and Aesthetics protested the alleged corporatisation of education, comparing Ford Founda-

tion's association with SAA to “educational encroachment”. Students decided that they would take forward their “struggle” and ask the university to end all funding and tie-ups.

JNUSU president Mona Das said: “Such funding lacks transparency and public scrutiny. And to ensure basic democratic and cultural freedom of the students, JNUSU has taken an ideological stand on this issue.”

The Ford Foundation started funding the SAA in

2003. The contract will end in July. Some SAA faculty members share the students' views.

However, the Dean of SAA, Prof. Jyotindra Jain, said: “The school is not dependent on any external grants, but if a grant is offered by some external funding agency it always helps us.” He kept alive the chances of a change in the students' decision, saying: “Things would become clear tomorrow”.

— Hem Lata Verma in New Delhi

06 MAY 2005

THE STATESMAN

IIT-JEE to be made less taxing

Likely changes

- Questions to be limited to +2 syllabus; currently they are of higher standard
- All topics covered in IIT-JEE course to be vetted by CBSE, ICSE representatives
- Panel will study if current 2-tier system — objective-type questions in prelims, subjective in finals — should be replaced with uniform system
- Panel to work out better schedule; currently candidates take physics, chemistry, maths exams in 6 hrs in 1 day in finals



By Jhimli Mukherjee
Pandey/TNN

Kolkata: IIT JEE-2006 might be easier to crack. Holding that the examination is too tough and causes tremendous stress to candidates, the Union human resources development ministry has formed a committee of IIT teachers and representatives of the CBSE and ICSE boards to simplify the pattern of the joint entrance examination.

According to sources, the first change could be that questions will be set only from the Plus-II syllabus. "The HRD ministry feels that many of the IIT-JEE questions are based on topics that are not taught in Plus-II and are in fact of a far advanced standard. This forces candidates to start preparing at least three years in advance—from Class IX. They overload themselves and this leads to depression, which sometimes ends in suicide," IIT-Kharagpur director S K Dubey told TOI.

Dubey and IIT-JEE chairman V K Tewari are on the committee that is expected to submit its suggestions by July. The changes

could be rung in for the examination as early as next year. The Centre believes that the tougher syllabus forces aspirants to neglect their board exams for IIT-JEE. They also end up spending a lot on coaching classes that claim to be tailor-made for the make-or-break exam, said Dubey.

So, the committee is singling out topics that are not taught in Plus-II anywhere in the country. Every topic that is now included in IIT-JEE will be vetted by the representatives of CBSE and ICSE.

The committee will also take a fresh look at the present two-tier exam system —where candidates are given objective-type questions in the prelims and subjective ones in the finals—and see whether it should be replaced with a single-entry system.

Again, in the finals, candidates have to take three papers—physics, chemistry and mathematics—in a gruelling six-hour session on a single day. The HRD ministry believes it is taxing and has asked the committee to work out a better "fatigue and rest cycle".

NCERT move to check book piracy

MANDINI R. Iyer
New Delhi, May 2

WONDERING WHETHER a school textbook you're looking at is a genuine NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) publication? Just hold it up against the light and check if the pages have a watermark of the NCERT logo — three swans inside a circle, with their necks interlocked. Above the circle are the words *Vidhya* and *Mritamashnute* in Hindi, separated by a Roman 'S', and, below it, the alphabets NCERT in Hindi and English.

The logo — or a part of it — should be visible on every page, say senior NCERT officials who are quite kicked about the new series of textbooks that have hit the

market for this session, as all the books are printed on the water-marked paper.

The NCERT prints textbooks on a non-profit basis to fulfil the government's social commitment to providing education for all and has been worried about cheap quality pirated books that had been flooding book shops for the past few years. Most of the pirated copies were of textbooks for classes IX-XII, since these are printed in two colours.

"Books for the lower classes cost more to duplicate since they have four-colour printing and there is a price ceiling of Rs 30 for every book", said a senior official.

NCERT sources told HT, "Two weeks ago, a consignment of pirated textbooks, which would have sold for Rs 10 lakh, were seized in



Arjun Singh

Shimla. Earlier this year, about Rs 30 lakh worth of pirated books were seized from a godown in Naraina, Delhi. Last year, too, books valued at several lakh rupees were seized in Ambala.

While officials have no difficul-

ty in identifying pirated books by the torn pages, blurred photographs, typographical errors and, of course, poor quality of paper, laymen did not have the same advantage. Last year, the council decided to invest in better quality paper, which would make it difficult to duplicate the textbooks.

In the book piracy business, textbooks especially those of the NCERT, are favourite since these have an assured market. Till last year, the problem was compounded by the lack of distributors in smaller towns and districts, as a result of which genuine NCERT textbooks were not available.

Those who print pirated books offer greater margins to retailers in small towns, who are unable to distinguish the real from the fake, said a senior official.

School trips teacher in *burqa*

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Behrampore, May 2: A teacher has sparked a debate by going to school in a *burqa*, similar to the headscarf heat that singed Singapore and France recently.

On her first day in school on April 25, Susmita Mondal, who converted to Islam at the time of her marriage, wore a *burqa* and was told by senior teachers and the administration of Amtala Anadamani Girls' High School to follow tradition by sticking to the sari.

"I shall take classes wearing a sari if they can prove that the *burqa* is offending," said Susmita, whose husband is also a teacher.

On marriage, her name changed to Sumaiya Parveen, but the papers recognising the

alteration are not in hand yet.

A Masters in English from Burdwan University who got her job through the School Service Commission, Susmita said she had tried to reason with the teacher-in-charge, Gouri Ghosh, but without success.

Ghosh, however, said: "It is compulsory for all our teachers and even students above Class IX to wear a sari to school. We have only requested Susmita to follow a 34-year-old tradition."

If Susmita does not accede to the request, the school — in the small town of Naoda near here, about 210 km from Calcutta — will approach the district magistrate of Murshidabad and the board for guidance, Ghosh added.

School education minister Kanti Biswas said: "The school authorities have been

asked not to do anything rash and instead find out from Susmita's husband and in-laws whether they insist on her taking classes wearing a *burqa*, whether they would mind her wearing a sari."

"I have to be convinced that I am violating the code of conduct that has been put into operation by the board of secondary education," said Susmita, who wants to be allowed to take classes in a *burqa* with the veil removed.

Susmita explained that she went to university, wrote her examinations and even appeared before the interviewers for the teacher's job in a *burqa* without encountering any objection.

A similar row had broken out recently in Singapore and France and the governments in both countries ruled agai-

nst girls wearing a headscarf, as stipulated by religion, to school. France does not allow the turban in schools, too.

In Britain, however, Shabina Begum, a 15-year-old, got the court to rule that her school at Bedfordshire had discriminated against her by not allowing her to wear the head-to-toe dress, the *jilbab*.

Susmita alleges that since she joined the school, her colleagues had not been cooperating as she had refused to switch over to a sari. The school management had called a meeting on April 27 to discuss the issue.

"We cannot stop a teacher from wearing a *burqa* as there is no such provision in the rules of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. But we are trying to find a solution to the dispute," the school said.

03 MAY 2005

THE TELEGRAPH

More resign at Sangeet Natak Akademi

Kumkum Chadha
New Delhi, April 25

IT IS not yet curtains on the Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) drama. The spate of resignations in protest against chairperson Sonal Mansingh continues. G. S. Channi, Punjab government nominee in SNA, sent his resignation to President Kalam and Culture Minister Jaipal Reddy on Monday afternoon. Besides Channi, vocalist Ajoy Chakravarty and theatre personality Parvez Sethi have also put in their papers.

Theatre director Nadira Babbar, Kannada actress B. Jayashree, Chandigarh SNA chairman Kamal Tewari and musician Nukul Satyanarayana confirmed they would follow suit.

Meanwhile, the Culture Ministry has woken up to eminent sitarist Ravi

Shankar's suggestion on the propriety of appointing an active performing artiste as SNA chairperson. When Mansingh's name for SNA chairperson was doing the rounds, Ravi Shankar wrote to President Abdul Kalam cautioning him not to appoint "any professional performing artiste".

Officials told HT that the ministry would have a re-look at the existing policy which is silent on performing artistes. One of the charges against Mansingh is that ever since she took over as chairperson, her visibility has increased. The ministry, however, will tread with caution. "The dust must settle before we do anything," said an official who conceded that it was Mansingh's "PR abilities" which came to her rescue. Reddy told HT the ministry was "actively examining" the matter. "It is a

premier academy. Each of the dramatis personae are eminent artistes whose feelings have to be handled very sensitively," he said.

Confirming his resignation, Channi said he did not want to be part of an institution where its chairperson uses members as a "rubber stamp". Nadira Babbar said her main grouse was against the manner in which the SNA funds were misused.

Musicologist and former SNA executive board member Dr N. P. Seshadri has asked for a CBI inquiry against Mansingh. Seshadri had earlier written to then culture minister Jagmohan about the arbitrary manner in which SNA has been disbursing funds.

B. Jayashree said she was against SNA's politicisation. Mansingh refused to entertain calls from HT.

SONAL STUNG



BHUPEN HAZARIKA

■ I don't want to be part of an institution where its chairperson uses members as a rubber stamp. I do not want to be part of a racket.

G. S. Channi, Punjab's nominee in SNA

■ Till December, whatever money was used for dance. When they woke up to the need to exhaust funds before the financial year, they indiscriminately organised festivals and workshops

Nadira Babbar, theatre personality

■ She should be removed immediately... as the SNA will be isolated due to her insensitivity and cruelty.

Bhupen Hazarika, Mansingh's predecessor

■ I am opposed to Mansingh's consistent attempts to subvert elections and reduce it to selection of her handpicked nominees

Parvez Sethi, theatre personality

What crisis? asks Sonal

OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, April 24: A day after theatre artiste K.N. Panicker resigned as vice-chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi protesting against chairperson Sonal Mansingh, the danseuse today said there was no crisis in the organisation and declared that she would not step down.

"What is the big crisis? We had a meeting all day yesterday in which we very animatedly discussed the calendar of events of the Akademi and finalised the budget allocation. I do not know what happened in three hours after the meeting for Mr Panicker to resign," Mansingh said.

She met Union information and broadcasting minister S. Jaipal Reddy this evening. "We have placed concrete facts before the minister about the situation and it is now up to him to decide (the) course of action," she said after the meeting that lasted about 40 minutes.

Panicker had put in his papers last night in protest against the "unconstitutional, unethical functioning of the Akademi under her (Mansingh)" and also to express solidarity with Carnatic maestro Balamuralikrishna, who had earlier quit the executive board of

the organisation.

Mansingh said: "A handful of people are vocal in criticising me but they were unable to give a single thread of evidence."

Had she made any mistakes, she would not have hesitated to apologise, the danseuse added. "The artistes, who are now speaking against me are the ones who had been enjoying advantages before my time. I stopped these practices," she said, adding this was the main reason behind the vilification campaign against her.

Dancer Raja Reddy, who is spearheading the campaign against Mansingh, said the resignation by the two noted artistes from the executive board had made it clear that the mandate was not in her (Mansingh's) favour and "she should now gracefully resign".

In Thiruvananthapuram, Panicker today said he had been kept in the dark on important developments in the Akademi, including the resignation of Balamuralikrishna from the executive board.

"It is almost one month since he resigned. As vice-chairman, I should have been told. At least the executive should have been informed. I came to know about it from Jaipal Reddy's office," Panicker said.



Mansingh with an Akademi executive board member after meeting Jaipal Reddy. (PTI)

On alleged political leanings of Mansingh, he said: "I did not say anything on that but some organisations in Delhi had reportedly made such complaints. Criticism is that

she works for the BJP. I don't know to which party she belongs. My feeling is that when a person occupies an important position, he or she cannot work for any political party."

25 APR 2005

THE TELEGRAPH

Centre mulls doing away with exams

Effort to make life less stressful for kids

Nandini R Iyer
New Delhi, April 14

IF THE Union HRD ministry has its way and some kind of consensus is hammered out among the various state-level boards, the examination system in the country could be in for a major change from as early as the next academic session. The ministry has already sounded out the CBSE, the ICSE and state authorities on its proposal of doing away with the present system of mid-term and yearly school examinations and replacing them with weekly and monthly evaluations.

What has triggered the rethink among Union HRD ministry mandarins is the alarming rise in suicide rates among students just before major examinations. The unanimous view seems to be that the present evaluation system is just too stressful for the young minds. "The kids need to take less tedious examinations. The tension within the student community is a cause for worry. We need to and are taking a critical and clinical look at depression. It is more common than most people realise and it is an issue that needs to be addressed urgently," Union higher education secretary B.S. Baswan told *Hindustan Times*.

From all indications, HRD

minister Arjun Singh is dead serious on the matter. On March 24, he chaired a brainstorming session with representatives of all major education boards and asked them to work out a strategy to deal with the stress factor among students. Ministry sources said that if the changes can be implemented successfully at the school level, the spotlight would be on the college and university levels in the next phase of the revamp.

The ministry is also keen to get premier higher education institutions to simplify competitive examinations by allotting more time to write the answers in a less stressful environment. The Council of Indian Institutes of Technology has apparently assured the minister that IIT entrance tests would henceforth be only as tough as Class XII exams and students need no longer take specialised coaching classes.

As a beginning, the government has decided that schools would not be allowed to prevent students who fail pre-board examinations from appearing for the board finals and all students would be allotted examination centres close to their homes. These proposals are now with the education wing of the HRD ministry and could get the nod any time.

The proposals



- ✓ Mid-term and yearly exams in schools to be replaced by weekly and monthly evaluations. This will be done by the schools themselves
- ✓ This system could later be extended to colleges and universities
- ✓ Schools cannot debar students who fail pre-board exams from appearing for the board test
- ✓ Exams to be conducted in less stressful environments
- ✓ Simplified procedure to be adopted for competitive exams. Students need not take coaching classes to appear for such tests
- ✓ Exams centres for board exams should be close to the homes of the students

13 APR 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

SC directs state to admit 65 NRI medical students

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, April 11. — A Division Bench of the Supreme Court (coram: Sabharwal and Dharmadhikari, JJ) today directed the West Bengal government to admit the 65 ousted NRI students to the MBBS course in the 2005-06 academic year. The court, however, clarified that this should not be treated as a precedent. It ruled that the 65 NRI students shall be distributed in all the nine state medical colleges.

West Bengal's chief secretary, Mr Asok Gupta, said the government would implement the order and the students would begin their first year MBBS classes from the academic session beginning August.

Counsel for the affected students had submitted that as a special case such candidates should be considered for admission to the MBBS course in 2005-06 and the requisite number of seats should be reserved for admission from the total number of MBBS seats in the state.

The Bench, however, set aside the main issue of the validity of NRI quota in government colleges. This will be decided at the time of final hearing of the SLPs by the court.

The state government held a special examination for NRI quota students in 2003 and admitted 99 students in 2004. However, successful JEE candidates challenged the move in Calcutta High Court and on 29 September 2004 the court ruled that the admission of all NRI quota students be scrapped. It directed that counselling should be started for those seats among students on the JEE merit list.



An appeal against the High Court order was filed in the Supreme Court by the NRI-sponsored students to which the state government became a party. While the case was being heard a contempt petition was filed by the JEE students against the government for not implementing the Calcutta High Court's order.

The Supreme Court then directed the state government to admit 69 JEE students "in place and instead of" the NRI-sponsored students who were ousted. However, it allowed 30 NRI-sponsored students to remain admitted to the course; later, two NRI-sponsored students were disqualified on technical grounds. And two other NRI-sponsored students, who had also qualified through the JEE merit list, were admitted as bonafide JEE-qualified students, leaving 65 students ousted from the course.

The court asked all states to evolve a strategy to maximise utilisation of the 50 per cent all-India quota seats in post-graduate medical courses, and to strictly restrict admission of students to their quota seats only.

Another report on Kolkata Plus IV

12 APR 2005

THE STATESMAN

IIMs to boycott B-school surveys

Directors Say Most Ratings Are Unscientific And Misleading

By Mathang Seshagiri/TNN

Bangalore: The elite Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) have pulled themselves out of the ratings race this year. All the six IIMs have taken a conscious decision not to take part in any of the surveys that rank business schools.

The decision to stay away from B-school rankings was taken during the recent IIM directors' meet at Kozhikode. The participants felt the surveys did little service to society and the methodology adapted was largely unscientific.

IIM-Bangalore director Prakash G. Apte said, "All the directors were unanimous on not being part of the surveys. The methodology is mostly unscientific and only confuses students. We will not voluntarily participate in any survey this year, until further notice."

Not all IIMs have been participating in the surveys though. IIM-Indore, for instance, con-



One survey says a particular institute is No 1, while the same institute is ranked No 18 by another study. We will be doing a lot of good to society by staying away from these surveys

—IIM-Indore director S P Parashar

sciously stays away from being ranked. "Do you have any idea what is the methodology they follow? How are you supposed to trust them? One survey says a particular institute is No 1, while the same institute is ranked No 18 by another survey. We will be doing a lot of good to society by staying away from these surveys," IIM-Indore director S P Parashar said.

Interestingly, despite staying away from domestic surveys, the IIMs could still find their

names in the top list. "Market agencies and magazines are free to use the data available on our websites and brochures to rank IIMs. Voluntarily, we will not furnish any information to agencies which want to rank business schools," Apte told TOI.

The move to shun ratings, IIM directors said, was also to send out a message to the agencies to streamline their methodology, make it accurate and authentic. "We have decided to stay away from surveys for a year so that these market agencies know that their scale of ranking is inaccurate and needs to be rectified. There's a strong message which we want to send out this year," Parashar added. Private B-schools feel the move of the IIMs will affect the credibility of the surveys. "Participation of IIMs in B-school surveys is critical because most other schools benchmark themselves against the IIMs," MATS School of Business and IT dean N V H Krishnan said.

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Higher-education set for complete makeover

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, April 2. — A major restructuring of India's higher-education structure, including 'flexible hiring' of professors and higher tuition fees in the Central universities is being envisaged in government circles. That is one way India can have 20 world-class universities by 2020, officials said.



India is looking to be a developed country and to get there, the university system has to be reformed. The present situation, where under-graduates get a good education but post-graduates a largely mediocre one, has to change, believe senior government officials. In fact, the current trend of falling standards needs to be reversed and a change in the way professors are recruited would be the first priority. The Planning Commission is looking at this issue and could be placing it before the Knowledge Commission, the creation of which has been announced by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh. Currently, there is no incentive for first-rate academics to teach in an Indian university. For, who joins has to join as a lecturer and promotions are time-bound and 'bureaucratized.'

"As a result, most people would rather teach in a

third-rate American university than in India," a senior official said. If the structure changes and good people can come at higher levels and at higher salaries, there could be an improvement. Professors also have to be accountable and if students have to pay more for their lessons, they may be keen on better teaching standards.

Fund is the other issue. "Currently, college fees are less than in secondary schools.

University students will have to pay more and it would make more sense for the central universities to raise fees rather than ask the states to do so," an official said. This issue is mentioned in the Planning Commission's mid-term assessment report, likely to be released shortly and the discussions with the HRD ministry could start after that.

To ensure that students from weaker sections of the society are not affected, a scholarship programme will be worked out when fees are raised, the official added. But the percentage of costs covered by fees will have to rise. "In 1960, fees covered 20 per cent of the costs. Now, it is about 5 per cent," an official said.

The government is thinking of a system when bright young people with PhDs, many of whom have gone abroad, can be attracted for university jobs. That way, some of them can be brought back. But the system is so hierarchical; professors already there will ask why people have come above them.

03 APR 2005

THE STATESMAN

পরীক্ষা ছাড়া চতুর্থ শ্রেণির সবাইকে নিতে হবে পঞ্চমে

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: চতুর্থ শ্রেণি থেকে উত্তীর্ণ বা অকৃতকার্য, দু'ধরনের ছাত্রকেই ভর্তি-পরীক্ষা ছাড়া স্কুলের পঞ্চম শ্রেণিতে নিতে হবে বলে রায় দিয়েছে কলকাতা হাইকোর্ট।

বিচারপতি অরুণ মিত্র রায় দিয়ে জানান, চতুর্থ শ্রেণিতে কোনও পাশ-ফেল নেই। তাই কৃতকার্য বা অকৃতকার্য বলে কোনও প্রশ্ন উঠতে পারে না। হাইকোর্ট আগে যে-রায় দিয়েছে, তার উল্লেখ করে বিচারপতি বলেন, একই স্কুলের প্রাথমিক থেকে মাধ্যমিকে ভর্তি হওয়ার জন্য কোনও রকম ভর্তির পরীক্ষা নেওয়া চলবে না। বর্ধমান সি এম এস খ্রিস্টান মিশনারি সেকেন্ডারি স্কুলের অভিভাবক লক্ষ্মীনারায়ণ দাস-সহ ১১৭ জন অভিভাবক কলকাতা হাইকোর্টে মামলা করেন।

অভিভাবকদের আইনজীবী হারাধন বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় জানান, স্কুল-কর্তৃপক্ষ ৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি এক বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারি করে বলেন, ১ থেকে ৭ মার্চ পঞ্চম শ্রেণিতে ভর্তির জন্য পরীক্ষার ফর্ম দেওয়া হবে। পরীক্ষা হবে ৩ এপ্রিল। অভিভাবকেরা জেলা স্কুল পরিদর্শকের কাছে অভিযোগ জানান, হাইকোর্ট জানিয়ে

দিয়েছে, এটা করা যায় না। স্কুল জানায়, দু'টি স্কুল আলাদা, ম্যানেজিং কমিটি আলাদা। তাই পরীক্ষা ছাড়া পঞ্চম শ্রেণিতে ভর্তি করা যাবে না। স্কুল পরিদর্শক তদন্ত করে জানিয়ে দেন, দু'টি স্কুল আলাদা নয়, একই।

তার পরেও স্কুল পরিদর্শক নির্দেশ দেন, ক বা খ বিভাগে পাশ করেছে, চতুর্থ শ্রেণির এমন ৫০ জনকে ভর্তির পরীক্ষা ছাড়া ভর্তি নেওয়া যাবে। অবশিষ্ট ১৬০ জনকে ভর্তি হতে হবে পরীক্ষা দিয়ে। হারাধনবাবু জানান, অভিভাবকেরা তখন বাধ্য হয়ে হাইকোর্টে মামলা করেন। যেখানে স্কুল পরিদর্শক বলছেন, দু'টি স্কুল আলাদা নয়, সেখানে কোনও মতেই চতুর্থ শ্রেণি থেকে পঞ্চম শ্রেণিতে ভর্তির জন্য পরীক্ষা নেওয়া যেতে পারে না।

বিচারপতি দু'পক্ষের বক্তব্য শোনার পরে জানিয়ে দেন, ক কিংবা খ, এ-সব কোনও প্রশ্ন নয়। যে-সব ছাত্র চতুর্থ শ্রেণিতে পড়ত, তাদের প্রত্যেককে ভর্তির পরীক্ষা ছাড়াই পঞ্চম শ্রেণিতে নিতে হবে। ম্যানেজিং কমিটি আলাদা হলেই স্কুল আলাদা হবে, এমন কোনও নিয়ম নেই বলে জানান তিনি।

শিক্ষা নীতির পরীক্ষা

সম্প্রতি কেন্দ্রীয় মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়ন মন্ত্রক, এন সি ই আর টি, সি বি এস ই, আই আই টি এবং আই আই এম-এর প্রতিনিধিগণ এবং দেশের তাবড় শিক্ষাবিদরা দেশের শিক্ষা নীতি লইয়া এক গুচ্ছ প্রস্তাবে উপনীত হইয়াছেন। প্রস্তাবগুলি পরীক্ষা সম্পর্কিত। তাঁহাদের মতে, অতঃপর কোনও বিদ্যালয় তাহার দশম এবং দ্বাদশ শ্রেণির বিদ্যার্থীদের বোর্ডের পরীক্ষা দেওয়া হইতে বিরত করিতে পারিবে না, ছাত্রটি বিদ্যালয়ের 'স্টেট পরীক্ষা'য় অনুত্তীর্ণ হইলেও নহে। আই আই টি সহ বিভিন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রতিযোগিতামূলক নির্বাচনী পরীক্ষার পাঠক্রম এবং প্রশ্নপত্র সংশ্লিষ্ট বোর্ডের সমতুল হইতে হইবে। বিদ্যালয়ের সকল ছাত্রছাত্রীর একই পরীক্ষাকেন্দ্রে পরীক্ষা দেওয়াও আবশ্যিক হইবে না, বাসস্থানের নিকটবর্তী কেন্দ্রে তাহাদের পরীক্ষা লইতে হইবে। এবং কোনও কারণেই পরীক্ষার দিন পিছাইয়া দেওয়া চলিবে না।

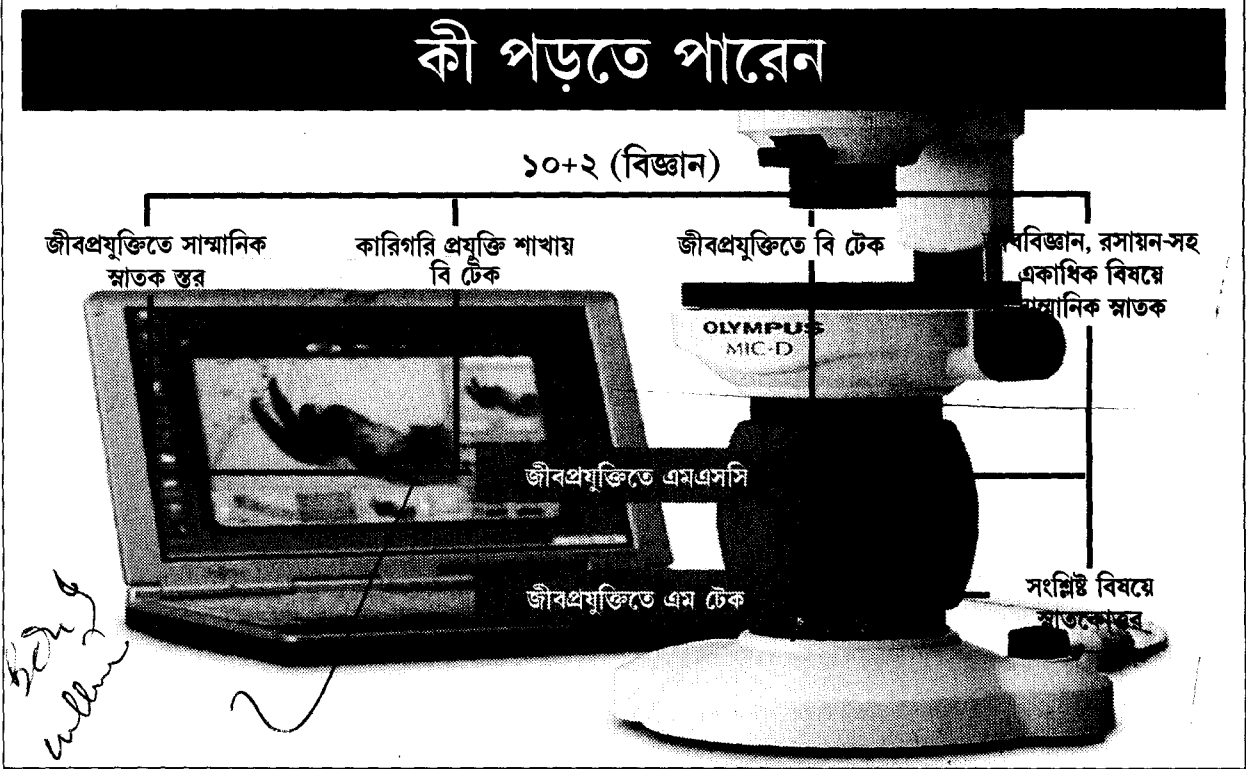
সন্দেহ নাই, প্রাথমিক দৃষ্টিতে চারটি প্রস্তাবই যুগোপযোগী এবং শিক্ষার্থীদের প্রতি সহানুভূতিশীল বলিয়াই বিবেচিত হইবে। শেষ দুইটি প্রস্তাব নিঃসন্দেহে ছাত্রস্বার্থ রক্ষাও করিবে। কিন্তু এই দুইটি সিদ্ধান্ত গুরুত্ব বিচারে তুলনামূলক ভাবে গৌণ। যে দুইটি প্রস্তাব প্রকৃতপক্ষেই দেশের শিক্ষানীতির নির্ধারক দিকচিহ্ন হইতে পারে, অর্থাৎ প্রথম দুইটি প্রস্তাব, তাহাদের যথার্থতা এবং ফলাফল সম্পর্কে একটি সুবৃহৎ প্রশ্নচিহ্ন রহিয়া যায়। প্রথমত স্বীকার করা উচিত, বিভিন্ন বিদ্যালয়, বিশেষত তথাকথিত নামী বিদ্যালয়গুলি তাহাদের প্রাক-বোর্ড পরীক্ষাটির প্রশ্নের মান বোর্ড পরীক্ষার তুলনায় যথেষ্টই কঠিন রাখে এবং সেই পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হইবার জন্য ছাত্রছাত্রীদের 'প্রয়োজনের অধিক' পরিশ্রম করিতে হয়। পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হইতে না পারিলে বোর্ডের পরীক্ষায় বসিবার ছাড়পত্র না জুটিবার ঘটনাও বিরল নহে। কিন্তু এই ঘটনাটিকে সম্পূর্ণ ছাত্রস্বার্থ-পরিপন্থী ঘোষণায় চমক দিবার ইচ্ছা ও অববেচনা রহিয়াছে, বিচক্ষণতা নাই। মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক কোনও ছাত্রের জীবনে প্রথম দুইটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ পরীক্ষা এবং বর্তমান পরীক্ষাসর্বস্ব সমাজে এই দুইটি পরীক্ষার ফলাফলের গুরুত্ব অনস্বীকার্য। বিদ্যালয়গুলি যদি কোনও প্রস্তুতিহীন ছাত্রকে এই পরীক্ষায় বসিবার সুযোগ দিতে বাধ্য হয়, এবং ছাত্রটির ফলাফল আশানুরূপ না হয়, তাহা হইলে ছাত্রটির অনুজ্জল ভবিষ্যতের দায়িত্ব কি বিদ্যালয়গুলির উপর আসিয়া পড়ে না? স্মরণ রাখা প্রয়োজন, পশ্চিমবঙ্গে সুকুমারমতি ছাত্রছাত্রীদের বোঝা লাঘব করিতে সরকারি বিদ্যালয়ে প্রাথমিক স্তরে পাশ-ফেল প্রথা এবং ইংরাজি পঠনপাঠন উঠাইয়া দেওয়ার ফলাফল কিঞ্চিৎ বিষম হইয়াছিল। অর্থাৎ উপকার করিবার ইচ্ছা থাকাই যথেষ্ট নহে, সেই ইচ্ছা প্রকৃতার্থে উপকার করিবে কি না, সে বিষয়ে সম্যক ধারণা থাকাও সমান প্রয়োজন। দ্বিতীয়ত, আই আই টি প্রভৃতি প্রবেশিকা পরীক্ষার পাঠক্রম বোর্ডের সমতুল করিবার প্রয়াসটি সাধু, কিন্তু প্রশ্নপত্রের মান এক করিবার ইচ্ছাটি যুক্তিযুক্ত নয়। বোর্ড এবং আই আই টি পরীক্ষার উদ্দেশ্য ঘোষিত ভাবেই পৃথক, ফলে দুইটি পরীক্ষার প্রশ্নপত্র এক ধাঁচের হইলে দ্বিতীয় পরীক্ষাটির যথার্থতা হ্রাস পাওয়া সুনিশ্চিত, যে সকল ছাত্র অন্যদের তুলনায় অগ্রসর, তাহাদের সহিত সাধারণের প্রভেদ ঘুচিয়া যাওয়ার সম্ভাবনাও প্রবল। ইহার দীর্ঘকালীন ফল অশুভ, কারণ দেশের উন্নয়নের কাজে সেরা ছাত্রদের বাছিয়া লইবার পথ সূচনাতেই রুদ্ধ করা হইতেছে।

দেশের শিক্ষা নীতি পরিবর্তনের ইচ্ছা এবং প্রয়োজনীয়তা নূতন নহে। এবং বেশ কিছু পরিবর্তন ইতিমধ্যে করাও হইয়াছে। কিন্তু শিক্ষা নীতির দিক সংক্রান্ত আলোচনায় একটি দার্শনিক প্রশ্নের সম্মুখীন হইতে হয়। শিক্ষা বলিতে কেবল পরীক্ষা বুঝায় কি? নচেৎ শিক্ষা নীতির যে কোনও প্রশ্নই শেষ পর্যন্ত পরীক্ষা-সংক্রান্ত নীতিতে পর্যবসিত হয় কেন? প্রয়োজন শিক্ষাব্যবস্থার সমূল মূল্যায়ন এবং তাহার ভিত্তিতে নীতিগত পরিবর্তন, যুগোপযোগী পাঠক্রম ইত্যাদি। সমগ্র শিক্ষাব্যবস্থা যাহাতে কেবল পরীক্ষাভিমুখী হইয়া না থাকে, তাহা নিশ্চিত করাও অবশ্যকর্তব্য। পরীক্ষা ব্যবস্থার বিকেন্দ্রীকরণের বিষয়টিও গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। এই সকল বিষয়ে মনোনিবেশ না করিয়া কেবল পরীক্ষাব্যবস্থার বহিরঙ্গে কিছু জনমোহিনী চমকপ্রদ পরিবর্তন আনিলে লোকমনোরঞ্জন হইতে পারে, প্রকৃত উন্নয়ন হওয়া দূরহ।

28 MAR 2005

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বিষয়: জৈবপ্রযুক্তি



কৌলিক ঘোষ

উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক দিচ্ছেন? বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ? তথ্য প্রযুক্তি পড়তে চান না? ডাক্তারি পড়ার জন্য জয়েন্টও দেননি? কী করবেন তা হলে? ইচ্ছে আছে বায়োটেকনোলজি পড়ার। পড়লে কী সুবিধা? কোথায় কোথায় চাকরি আছে? অন্ত সব জানি না। তবে শুনেছি, এখন নাকি ওই বিষয়ের দারুণ চাহিদা। পড়লে নাকি কেউ বেকার বসে থাকে না।

সত্যিই কি তাই? ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, আইন, এমনকী ডাক্তারি পাস করার পর কর্মসংস্থানের নিশ্চয়তা যেখানে নেই, সেখানে এমন বিষয়ও আছে যা নিয়ে পড়লেই চাকরি নিশ্চিত! না, বায়োটেকনোলজি বা জৈব প্রযুক্তিকে অতটা ভরসা না করাটাই ভাল। চটজলদি চাকরির জন্য যারা এ বিষয় নিয়ে পড়তে চান, তাঁরা সতর্ক থাকুন। স্নাতক হওয়ার পর কোনও সংস্থা মোটা মাইনে দিয়ে আপনাকে চাকরি দেবে এমনটা ভাববেন না। তবে হ্যাঁ, স্নাতক হওয়ার পর স্নাতকোত্তর, তার পর গবেষণা। এই সব দীর্ঘমেয়াদি পরিকল্পনা নিয়ে যদি কেউ জৈব প্রযুক্তি নিয়ে পড়তে আসতে চান, আসতে পারেন।

কোথায় পড়বেন, কী পড়বেন:

বায়োটেকনোলজি বিষয়টি স্নাতক স্তরে পড়া যায় দু'ভাবে। বায়োটেকনোলজিতে বি টেক এবং বায়োটেকনোলজিতে সাম্মানিক স্নাতক (অন্যান্য বিজ্ঞান শাখার বিষয়ের মতো)। বি টেক পড়ানো হয় রাজ্যের বেশ কয়েকটি বেসরকারি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং কলেজে।

এর মধ্যে কয়েকটি হল: হলদিয়া ইনস্টিটিউট অব টেকনোলজি, আই টি এম ই। ১০+২-এর পর জয়েন্ট এন্ট্রান্স পরীক্ষা দিয়ে এই সমস্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানে চার বছরের বি টেক কোর্সে ভর্তি হওয়া যায়।

স্নাতক স্তরে বিজ্ঞানের শাখা হিসেবে বিষয়টি মুম্বইয়ে প্রতিষ্ঠানেই পড়ানো হয়। রাজ্যের মধ্যে কল্যাণী, বর্ধমান বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অনুমোদিত কয়েকটি কলেজে তিন বছরের স্নাতক পাঠ্যক্রম হিসেবে বায়োটেকনোলজি পড়ানো হয়।

তবে কর্ণাটক, অন্ধ্রপ্রদেশ বা মহারাষ্ট্রে বহুসংখ্যক

প্রতিষ্ঠানে স্নাতক স্তরে বিষয়টি পড়ানো হয়। চোখ বন্ধ করে এই সব প্রতিষ্ঠানের দিকে কখনওই পা বাড়াবেন না। ভাল করে খোঁজখবর নিন। তার পর ভর্তির কথা। আসলে, ছেলেমেয়েদের মধ্যে যে উৎসাহ আছে, তা জানে প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলি। চমক দিয়ে ছাত্র টানার প্রবণতা তাই তাদের প্রচণ্ড। দেখবেন, এলেবেলে প্রতিষ্ঠানে জৈব প্রযুক্তি পড়ে পরে না পস্তাতে হয়।

স্নাতক স্তরে যদি জৈব প্রযুক্তি পড়ার সুযোগ না পান: কোনও চিন্তা নেই। এখনও বায়োটেকনোলজি পড়ার প্রচুর সুযোগ খোলা আপনার সামনে। বলা যায় রসায়ন, জীববিজ্ঞান বা বিজ্ঞানের অন্য কোনও শাখায় শিক্ষালাভের পর জৈব প্রযুক্তি পড়ার সুযোগ মেলে দেশের প্রথম সারির প্রতিষ্ঠানে। কলকাতা ও উত্তরবঙ্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে বায়ো-টেকনোলজিতে এম এসসি করতে পারেন। আবার, বিজ্ঞানের কোনও শাখায় এম এসসি করে যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে নিতে পারেন এম টেক ডিগ্রি।

জওহরলাল নেহরু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্রবেশিকা পরীক্ষার কথা জানেন তো:

জওহরলাল নেহরু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্রতি বছর একটি প্রবেশিকা পরীক্ষার আয়োজন করে। এই পরীক্ষাটিতে উত্তরালে দেশের একাধিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে এম এসসি, এম টেক কোর্সে ভর্তি হতে পারেন বায়োটেকনোলজিতে।

এই পরীক্ষার মাধ্যমে বায়োটেকনোলজিতে এম এসসি কোর্সে ভর্তি হতে পারেন নিম্নলিখিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে:

- ১) ইলাহাবাদ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ২) আম্রামলাই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ৩) বেনারস হিন্দু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ৪) পুণে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ৫) উত্তরবঙ্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ৬) জওহরলাল নেহরু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ৭) এম এস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, বরোদা
- ৮) দেবী অহল্যা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ইন্দোর
- ৯) ধাপার ইনস্টিটিউট অব ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং অ্যান্ড টেকনোলজি
- ১০) লখনউ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

এ ছাড়া রয়েছে আরও ১৯টি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়। প্রশ্ন হল, কারা এই প্রবেশিকা পরীক্ষাটি দিতে পারবেন? ভৌতবিজ্ঞান, জীববিজ্ঞান, কৃষিবিজ্ঞান, মৎস্য ও প্রাণী-চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞান বা কারিগরি-প্রযুক্তি শাখায় বা চিকিৎসাশাস্ত্রে ৫৫ শতাংশ নম্বর-স্নাতকরা এই পরীক্ষা দিতে পারবেন। পরীক্ষাকেন্দ্র কলকাতাতেও হয়। মে মাস নাগাদ পরীক্ষাটি অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।

ধরা যাক, কোনও কারণে এম এসসি বায়োটেকনোলজি পড়া সম্ভব হয়নি আপনার, রসায়ন বা জীববিজ্ঞান নিয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর উদ্ভীর্ণ হয়েছেন। এ বার আগ্রহ দেখা দিচ্ছে জৈব প্রযুক্তি পড়ার।

কী করবেন?

এখনও সুযোগ প্রচুর। যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে এম টেক করতে পারেন। ৫ হাজার টাকা করে স্টাইপেন্ড পাবেন এ ক্ষেত্রে। তবে স্নাতকোত্তর স্তরে (বিজ্ঞানের ছাত্রছাত্রীদের ক্ষেত্রে) ৬০ শতাংশ নম্বর থাকতে হবে।

জে এন ইউ-এর পরীক্ষা না দিয়ে এম এসসি

কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে তো বটেই, রাজস্থানের বনস্থলী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, মাদ্রাজ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রায়পুরের পণ্ডিত রবিশঙ্কর শুল্লা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রুরকি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, তিরুচিরাপল্লির ভারতী দর্শন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে এম এসসি পড়া যেতে পারে জৈব প্রযুক্তিতে। আই আই টি-তে (নয়াদিল্লি, খড়্গপুর) রয়েছে সাড়ে পাঁচ বছরের ইন্টিগ্রেটেড এম টেক পাঠ্যক্রম।

কাজ কোথায়:

জৈব প্রযুক্তিতে স্নাতকোত্তর পর্ব মিটে যাওয়ার পর কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ ঘটেতে পারে বিভিন্ন ধরনের শিল্পসংস্থা বা গবেষণাকেন্দ্রে। যেমন, খাদ্যশস্যের মানোন্নয়নের জন্য প্রযুক্তি প্রয়োগ করা হয় যে সব সংস্থায়, সেখানে কিংবা কোনও ওষুধ প্রস্তুতকারক সংস্থাতেও আপনি কাজ পেতে পারেন। কিন্তু আগেও বলা হয়েছে, আবারও বলা হচ্ছে— তড়িঘড়ি চাকরি যাঁদের লক্ষ্য, এ বিষয় তাঁদের জন্য নয়। যদি প্রকৃতই আপনার উচ্চশিক্ষার লক্ষ্য থাকে, তবেই আসবেন জৈব প্রযুক্তি পড়তে।

Teacher rips off tuft of 5-year-old's hair

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, March 16

SPARE THE hair, spoil the child! Despite periodic court strictures against the practice, corporal punishment in schools is alive and kicking.

Five-year-old Varnika Gupta of nursery section A, at Our Lady Queen Of The Mission School in Salt Lake, had a tuft of hair uprooted by class teacher Ruma Pal yesterday because she had forgotten to bring a plastic carry bag to school. The teacher had told Varnika and her classmates that they must bring a bag each to carry back home some artwork assignments.

It was Varnika's bad luck that she had forgotten this all-important bag. Pal, who saw it as a sure sign of intransigence, flew into a rage and decided to teach the kid a lesson she would remember for ever. To make it doubly certain she also made her keep standing in the classroom through the entire period.

Pal was arrested tonight, but only after a sustained campaign by Varnika's parents to get the teacher booked.

As soon as Varnika told her what had happened in school, mother Sapna Gupta, after consultations with husband Hitesh and elders in the family, visited the school for an explanation from the authorities. When the school refused to entertain enquiries, the Guptas lodged a complaint with the police.

"Aunty pulled out my hair and threw it into the litter bin," a sobbing Varnika told the police. Hitesh said, "Mary Sebastian, principal of the school, told us to take my daughter to some other school and offered to issue a transfer certificate. Somehow, she had the decency to call the class teacher, who admitted to the incident.

"But the principal refused to give an undertaking that such 'punishments' wouldn't be repeated on any child in future. That is



Varnika at her home on Wednesday.

what made us go to the police."

But will the teacher be punished?

School education minister Kanti Biswas said, "We have no law governing the code of conduct for teachers. The school managing committee will decide what punishment should be meted out to the teacher. The administration won't interfere."

Father Francis Fanthome, CEO, ICSE, was equally non-committal: "If a teacher is charged with undesirable conduct, the managing committee of the school and the state administration will decide what to do. We are concerned only with examinations, not the day-to-day administration of schools."

Coded textbooks for HS schools

ben & culture

ASTAFFREPORTER

Calcutta, March 15: The West Bengal Council for Higher Secondary Education today asked schools across the state to adhere to its guidelines on the use of textbooks from the next academic session when a new syllabus will be introduced at the plus-two level.

"We have already published our book lists for the new syllabus and issued circulars to all schools on this score. We will initiate measures against schools that do not follow our guidelines," said Gopa Dutta, the president of the council.

Its secretary Debasish Sarkar said that for the first time, all textbooks recommended by the council are being given code numbers so that students and teachers identify the genuine from the fake. "It will help us maintain a uniform

policy regarding use of textbooks," he added.

On the kind of action the council would take against schools flouting its guidelines, Dutta said: "We will first prepare a list of such schools and decide what can be done. But we believe that all the schools will abide by our guidelines."

The council has released a list of textbooks on 27 subjects and sent it to all schools.

Sarkar said special measures were taken while printing the textbooks. Publishers had sent books written according to the new syllabus, which were scrutinised by reviewers appointed by the council.

Some books were sent back to publishers for modifications. The books that met the council's satisfaction were marked with a code.

The council's guidelines came in the wake of a string of

complaints that several schools in the districts were not using textbooks recommended by it. "This was possible so far as all our textbooks did not have code numbers," said Sarkar.

Dutta said 1,69,157 girls and 2,34,072 boys would be appearing for this year's higher secondary exams, beginning on Tuesday.

She added that the council has forbidden use of mobile phones, pagers and digital diaries inside the examination hall. "We have also urged the police to keep Xerox counters located near the centres closed during the examination."

A control room has been set up at the council headquarters in Salt Lake, which can be contacted on phone numbers 23374945 and 23374984 if candidates face problems on exam days.

‘সম্পাদিত’ গান্ধীকে নিয়ে হইচই ঘরে-বাইরে

সন্দীপন চক্রবর্তী

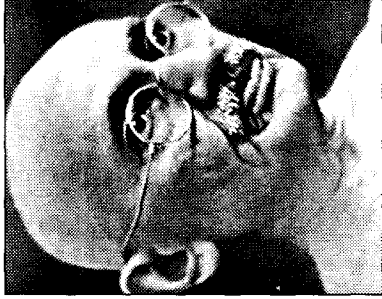
শিক্ষয় গৈরিকীকরণের তুরি তুরি অভিযোগ ছিলই। এ বারের খোদ মোহনদাস করমচাঁদ গান্ধীর রচনার উপরে কাঁচি চালানোর অভিযোগ সামনে এসে পড়েছে। এবং কাঠগড়ায় ফের অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ীর প্রাক্তন সরকার।

এ যাত্রায় অবশ্য মুরলীমোহর জোশীর মানবসম্পদ উন্নয়ন মন্ত্রক নয়, অভিযোগের তির তথা, সম্প্রচার ও সংস্কৃতি মন্ত্রকের দিকে। এনডিএ জমানায় তথ্য মন্ত্রকের অধীন প্রকাশনা বিভাগ মহাত্মা গান্ধীর রচনা সংকলনের সংশোধিত সংস্করণ প্রকাশ করেছিল। একশো খণ্ডের সেই নয়া সংস্করণ এবং সি ডি-রম নিয়েই গোল বেবেছে। দেশের বিভিন্ন সংগঠন এবং বিধে-মহলে থেকে রাশি রাশি প্রতিবাদ এসে পৌঁছেছে বর্তমান তথ্য মন্ত্রকে। নতুন সংস্করণে মূল রচনার বহু অংশ যুক্তিহীন ভাবে ছেঁটে ফেলা হয়েছে এবং বহু অংশে বিরাট রদবদল ঘটানো

হয়েছে বলে মন্ত্রকের কাছে অভিযোগ জমা পড়েছে।

গান্ধীজির লেখায় কারিকুরি করা হয়েছে বলে রাজধানীতে হইচই শুরু হওয়ার পরে ব্যাপারটা সংসদ পর্যন্তও গড়িয়ে গিয়েছে। নীতকালীন অধিবেশনে বসিরহাট ও হাজারিবাগের দুই সিপিআই সাংসদ অজয় চক্রবর্তী এবং ভুবনেশ্বর প্রসাদ মৌচাঁ এই বিষয়ে ইউপিএ সরকারের বক্তব্য জানতে চেয়েছিলেন। বর্তমান তথ্য ও সম্প্রচারমন্ত্রী জয়পাল রেড্ডি তখন জানান, দেশের তো বটেই, বিদেশি প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকেও অভিযোগ এসেছে।

দিল্লিতে যোগাযোগ করা হলে সাংসদ অজয়বাবু বলেন, “সরকারে তখন ইঙ্গিত দিয়েছিল, নতুন করে সংস্করণ প্রকাশ করা হবে। সংসদে আর নতুন করে প্রসঙ্গটা তোলার সুযোগই পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না।” কেন্দ্রীয় তথ্য মন্ত্রক সূত্রের খবর, আমদাবাদের সর্বরমতী আশ্রম সংরক্ষণ ও স্মারক অছি, দিল্লির ‘গান্ধী পিস ফাউন্ডেশন’ ও গান্ধী স্মারক নিধির মতো দেশের বহু নামী প্রতিষ্ঠান



থেকে প্রতিবাদ এসেছে। মন্ত্রককে চিঠি দিয়েছে আমেরিকার অ্যালবার্ট আইনস্টাইন ইনস্টিটিউশনও।

তথ্য ও সম্প্রচারমন্ত্রী জয়পাল রেড্ডির বক্তব্য, “তথ্যসচিব বিষয়টি দেখছেন। নতুন সংস্করণের ভুল শোধরানোর কাজটা ধাপে ধাপে করা গেলে বাজেট বরাদ্দ পেতে সুবিধা হয়, কাজটাও মসৃণ হয়। এই জন্য একটি কমিটি গড়ার কথা ভাবা হচ্ছে।”

তথ্য মন্ত্রকের কাছে আসা চিঠি এবং গান্ধী গবেষণায় যুক্ত প্রতিষ্ঠান সূত্রে জানা যাচ্ছে, সংশোধিত সংস্করণে নিবিচারে বহু অংশ ‘সম্পাদনা’ করা হয়েছে। রাজেন্দ্র প্রসাদ ও জওহরলাল নেহরুর লেখা ভূমিকা বাদ দিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। গান্ধীর লেখা বহু চিঠির ভাষা এমন ভাবে বদলে ফেলা হয়েছে, যাতে অন্য অর্থ দাঁড়িয়েছে। তৃতীয় খণ্ড থেকে আশু সাত-সাতটি ছবি ও দুটি মানচিত্র উড়িয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। এমন উদাহরণ রয়েছে তুরি তুরি। যেমন, একটি নির্দিষ্ট চিঠির কথা বলা যায়। প্রথম সংস্করণ অনুযায়ী ঘনশ্যামদাস বিড়লাকে লেখা সেই চিঠিতে তাঁকে গান্ধী সম্বোধন করেন ‘ভাইব্রী ঘনশ্যামদাসজি’ বলে। নতুন সংস্করণে তা দাঁড়িয়েছে ‘ভিয়ার ঘনশ্যামদাস’ এবং প্রথম বাক্যটাই পুরো আলাদা।

গান্ধীর রচনাবলির উপরে এই ‘সম্পাদনা’র ঘটায় স্বভাবতই ক্ষুব্ধ ইতিহাসবিদ ও গান্ধী গবেষক মহলে। কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ইতিহাস বিভাগের আশুতোষ অধ্যাপক এবং

রাজ্য লেখ্যাগারের অধিকর্তা বাসুদেব চট্টোপাধ্যায় যেমন বলাছেন, “গান্ধীজির মতো কোনও ঐতিহাসিক ব্যক্তিত্বের লেখা সম্পাদনার অধিকার কেউ আত্মসাৎ করতে পারে না। যদি সত্যিই এটা হয়ে থাকে, তা হলে অত্যন্ত নিপনীয় হয়েছে।” ব্যারাকপুরের গান্ধী স্মারক সংগ্রহালয়ের নির্দেশক সুপ্রিয় মুন্সীর কথায়, “যদি রাজনৈতিক অভিপ্রায় থেকেও থাকে, এটা করে লাভ কী? গবেষণার কাজ এতে বিঘ্নিত হবে।” গান্ধী গবেষক ত্রিদীপ সুহৃদ আরও পরিকার লিখেছেন, “গান্ধী রচনাবলি পুনর্সম্পাদনার সিদ্ধান্ত নিশ্চয়ই নিচু তলার আমলারা নেননি। তা হলে কি গান্ধীযানা নতুন করে লিখতে রাজনৈতিক উদ্দেশ্যপ্রণোদিত সিদ্ধান্ত এটা?”

খোঁজ করতে গিয়ে কেন্দ্রীয় তথ্য মন্ত্রক দেখেছে, কারা ওই সংশোধিত সংস্করণের কাজ করলেন, তাঁদের নামধাম কোথাও নেই। আড়ালে থেকে কারা এই কাজ করল, সেটাও রয়ে গিয়েছে আড়ালেই।

Wage hike for teachers

SHANKAR MUKHERJEE

Calcutta, March 9: The state government has raised the salary of college teachers on contract by a whopping Rs 12,000 a month.

The government hopes the hike will help fill up the over 200 posts of college teachers that are lying vacant across the state.

"We realised that the good and deserving candidates are refusing to take up the job of teachers because of the poor pay packet. This is why we decided to offer Rs 14,000 per month to the teachers on contract," higher education secretary Jawhar Sircar said.

"Nowadays, a person who has completed his postgradu-

ation can easily earn at least Rs 10,000 per month through private tuition. So, why should he chase the job of a contractual college teacher for Rs 2,000? We discussed the matter with senior officials and academics and decided to hike the pay to Rs 14,000."

The amount is the minimum a permanent college teacher gets.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) appoints government college teachers. Officials said 242 posts are lying vacant across the state.

The government's action has come in the wake of increasing student resentment over absence of teachers. "It is a fact that students are suffering. We have asked the

PSC to prepare a panel of candidates to fill up the vacant posts but it will take time to complete formalities. We have decided to appoint teachers on contract basis immediately so that classes are not hampered," Sircar said.

"In the first phase, we will appoint 71 teachers and we have already initiated the process," he added.

Candidates will be selected after an interview for a six-month contract. "If the government fails to fill up the vacant posts with permanent teachers, the contracts may be renewed. Those joining as contract teachers will get preference when the PSC prepares the panel of permanent teachers," an official said.

Saffron vs detox no debate for NCERT

Statesman News Service

HYDERABAD, March 8. — The three-day meeting on Curriculum Framework Review, undertaken by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), has skirted the issue of saffronisation of school textbooks.

“There is no such thing. Nobody talked about it. It is not even on our agenda”, the chairman of the national steering committee on CFR, Prof Yashpal, said in reply to a question at a press conference at the conclusion of the meeting. “We are not guided by political

slogans or opinions. We are here to create a proper education system,” Prof Yashpal said, disapproving of the use of the words “saffronisation” and “de-saffronisation” and said the NCERT’s current approach is not in that direction.

The meeting was attended by the 30-member committee and chairpersons of 21 national focus groups and deliberated on educational reforms, curriculum changes, among others.

The present examination system is faulty as it does not require the understanding of concepts and this amounted to “cheating chil-

dren and ourselves”, Prof Yashpal said. He faulted the present system, especially the rush for coaching classes, for the decline of the educational system.

The broad consensus at the meeting was to evolve a curriculum that is inclusive, which helps the child understand and relate different things instead of memorising useless information. The review exercise would be completed this month and the committee’s recommendations would be submitted to NCERT’s executive committee and its general council for approval, he said.

Question pattern set for overhaul

New-look 2007 for Madhyamik

OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta, March 1: The question pattern for Madhyamik papers will undergo a string of changes.

The first students to taste the new set would be those appearing for the examination in 2007, the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education said today while unveiling plans to upgrade the system in keeping with directives from the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

Board president Dibyendu Hota said: "We have already held the first round of meetings with the NCERT authorities. We will implement the revised system from the 2007 Madhyamik examination."

Among the changes, sources in the board said, the most significant is a suggestion to reduce the choice of questions in every paper.

Under the existing system, the official said, "too many" questions are asked and the examinees have to select only a few to answer.

Sources said the NCERT found this system "defective" and asked the board to abolish it immediately. It also suggested a system where the number of alternative questions offered was "minimum".

The present system, NCERT officials are believed to have reasoned, reduces the

scope of examiners to properly evaluate a student's merit. "If every student attempts a different question, it becomes difficult for the examiner to make the right assessment," Hota admitted.

The other NCERT suggestion being considered is to lay greater emphasis on objective-type questions.

The board will organise a series of workshops to be attended by senior teachers and experts to prepare the draft of the proposed changes.

The initiative assumes extra significance as demands for an overhaul of the system had been long pending. Students, guardians and teachers had wanted the state's secondary examination to be on a par with tests like the ICSE and the CBSE, which students of over 300 schools across Bengal take.

Hota said the Madhyamik examination system also needed to be revamped because of the recent revision of the syllabi. The new courses are being introduced from the academic session beginning May.

Both the Delhi boards have already adopted the NCERT suggestions and structured their systems accordingly.

The NCERT suggestions came to the Bengal board over three years ago.

A workshop with teachers and experts was held in Calcutta last year to discuss the suggestions, but there was little progress beyond that.

Cheating plea

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Basirhat, March 1: Unruly scenes more readily associated with the examination system marred by rampant cheating in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were enacted at a Madhyamik centre where 16 external candidates were taking the history test today.

The girls urged invigilators at Purnachandra Majumder Girls' High School in North 24-Parganas, 80 km from Calcutta, to allow them to copy from books and other materials supplied to them by outsiders as soon as the test began. Some of them had already started copying.

The invigilators protested and snatched away the answer scripts of all 16. Violence seemed imminent when the people slipping in chits through windows tried to enter the hall. But the police at the centre pushed them back.

All the examinees, barring one, later submitted blank answer scripts.

Dibyendu Hota, the president of the board of secondary education, described it as a stray incident, but said: "We are taking it very seriously and will conduct an inquiry."

3 varsity V-Cs mull joint degrees

Anindita Chowdhury
in Kolkata

Feb. 20. — As vice-chancellors of three of the country's oldest universities meet in the city on Tuesday to finalise the draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) on collaborative plans to celebrate 150 years of their institutions, they will also discuss another crucial proposal — awarding

joint degrees.

The three universities — Calcutta, Mumbai and Madras — founded at the same time in 2007. When the three vice-chancellors recently met members of the Planning Commission, they were advised to come up with joint programmes to mark the event.

Proposals include collabora-

tive research, faculty and student exchange programmes and most importantly, awarding of joint degrees. "For instance, a student studying in our university may opt for a special paper which is not taught by us but in Madras or Mumbai. In that case, both the universities will award him joint degrees," an official of Calcutta University said.

Prof. SP Thyagarajan and

Prof. Vijay Khole, vice-chancellors of Madras and Mumbai universities, respectively, will be in the city on Tuesday to discuss the issues related to "post-centenary golden jubilee celebrations" with members of the Calcutta University syndicate and the deans.

If the proposal is accepted, then this will be the first time Calcutta University will award joint degrees with any other

university.

Calcutta University, which so far has not shown any warmth to such proposals, is ready to go along this time.

"We feel that all the three universities have a similar standard. All have been accredited five-star status by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. So, awarding joint degrees will not be a problem," said Calcutta University

vice-chancellor, Prof. Asis Kumar Banerjee.

However, teachers and university officials feel this will be a long-drawn process.

"First the universities will have to identify their respective areas of strength. It will be a difficult task with each university having different curricula and sets of examinations," a Calcutta University teacher said.



(Left) Members of Bajrang Dal and VHP burn an effigy symbolising Valentine's Day to protest the intrusion of Western culture in Amritsar on Monday; A Shiv Sena supporter in Kolkata. PTI photos

V-Day: 40 Shiv Sainiks arrested in Indore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 14

ABOUT 40 Shiv Sainiks were arrested today in Indore while opposing Valentine's Day celebrations which remained subdued in Madhya Pradesh in view of warnings sounded by the saffron brigade and police vigil.

"About 40 Shiv Sainiks were arrested in the Anna-purna area where they had gathered to hold protest

against Valentine's Day," Indore district Superintendent of Police Adarsh Katiyar.

Police patrolled the streets and rounded up people attempting to create a ruckus," he said adding that the situation was by and large peaceful. Restaurants and hotels did not hold functions or float schemes on the occasion, especially in Bhopal.

"Since no public function related to Valentine's Day was organised, the day passed off peacefully," Ashutosh

Even teenagers refrained from venturing to public places since popular joints on the upper lake and several parks were virtually kept out of bound by the police.

Mishra, president of Bajrang Sena, which had sounded warning against the celebrations, said.

Even teenagers refrained from venturing to public places since popular joints on the upper lake and several parks were virtually kept out of bound by the police.

Bajrang Dal activists formed groups to keep a check on celebrations in schools, colleges and other youth joints. The activists took out a rally in Balaghat in

protest against the celebrations, while reports of minor skirmishes were received from Gwalior.

In Chhindwara, saffron brigade outfits allegedly ransacked the local Congress office during a protest rally as they linked the presence of some women party workers to the celebrations, police sources said. Several Congress workers later gheraoed the local police station demanding action against the miscreants, police added.

NCERT books on Net

Shruti Maheshwari
New Delhi, February 11

NO MORE standing in queues or waiting for delayed publications to hit the stands. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will soon be putting its textbooks on the Internet for unlimited access to students and teachers across the country.

As many as 150 textbooks for Classes IX-XII will be put on the Net by March end this year, said Dr Utpal Malik, head of the Department of Computer Education & Technological Aids at NCERT. Texts for other classes will follow suit, as will NCERT publications in Hindi and Urdu.

This mammoth exercise will be accomplished in partnership with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which has already assisted Karnataka in putting up their textbooks on the Internet, Malik said.

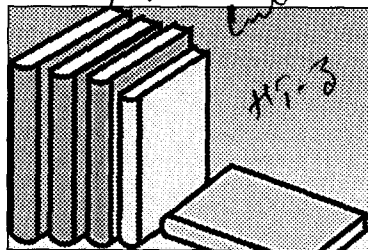
While the additional cost incurred by the Council on this exercise hasn't been calculated yet, officials say this won't be "a very expensive" exercise. "In any case, we don't think we should be making money at the cost of children," said Council director Prof Krishna Kumar.

Does the council lose out in terms of lesser sales since students now have the option of downloading texts instead of buying them? Council officials disagree.

"A student is unlikely to use the Net version as a substitute," they said. "This exercise is primarily meant to

benefit students and teachers who don't have access to NCERT books formally," said Malik.

Another advantage is that if publication is delayed, schools can download the texts from the Net and make copies for teachers so teaching doesn't suffer.



TARGET

- 150 textbooks for classes IX-XII to be available on Net by March end

HELPING HAND

- Easy reference for those who don't have access to NCERT books
- Studies won't suffer in case of delayed publications

NO WORRY

- Students unlikely to stop buying books, so sales won't suffer

Lucknow schools ban V-Day celebrations

HT Correspondent
Lucknow, February 11

THIS VALENTINE'S Day, it won't be roses and cards for children in Lucknow schools. Most city schools, starting with the City Montessori School (CMS), have decided to ban celebrations on February 14.

If things go really bad, CMS students may even have to sit through a hymn: "Pavitra man rakho, pavitra tan rakho, pavitrata hi manushyata ki shaan hai (a patronising prayer on maintaining 'purity' of body and soul).

In a letter to principals of all CMS schools, founder-manager Jagdish Gandhi wrote on Wednesday: "There have been heartbreaks, rapes, murders and heinous crimes among children who have been misguided by the fad of Valentine's Day. Co-educational institutions are more prone to be affected by this fad."

There's more: "You (all principals) are requested to kindly hold a teachers' meeting and discuss how to educate students on the ill effects of celebrating Valentine's Day," Gandhi wrote. Other schools are taking the advice seriously. Modern School founder Rakesh Kapoor said: "We do not allow or encourage Valentine's Day. But we celebrate Rakshabandhan. School is where boys and girls should have brotherly and sisterly feelings (sic)."

Supreme Court declares 112 private universities in Chhattisgarh illegal

480-1
12/2

J. B. D. & C. L. B.

By J. Venkatesan

NEW DELHI, FEB. 11. The Supreme Court today declared as unconstitutional a provision in the Chhattisgarh Private Sector Universities Act, 2002 permitting establishment of private universities for higher education. The court declared as null and void establishment of 112 such private universities under this law.

A three-Judge Bench, comprising the Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti, Justice G.P. Mathur and Justice P.K. Balasubramanian, quashed Section 5 of the Act under which the State Government had issued notifications allowing the setting up of private universities.

The Bench held that all pri-

vate universities established in the State (with branches in other places in the country) under the law would cease to exist. But to protect the interest of thousands of students of these universities, whose registration had been cancelled, the Bench directed affiliation of these institutions to universities that existed prior to the enactment of legislation.

The famous Rai University, Amity University, Mangalmay University, Lovely University, Global University, Supreme University, Manav Rachna University, Apple International University, Dolphin University, Crystal University, Aptech University and ICFAI Vishwavidyalaya are among the 112 universities

The Bench was acting on a petition filed by Prof. Yashpal, former Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), questioning the legality of Section 5 of the legislation which gave a go-by to the role of the Commission which was vested with the sole authority to examine the infrastructure available with colleges and the courses prescribed by an institution before being conferred with a deemed university status.

"Teaching shops"

Prof. Yashpal contended that under this law the control of the UGC over the private universities had been done away with. They were nothing but teaching shops, some of them

even functioning in shopping complexes. The guidelines issued by the UGC on the courses and award of degrees had been ignored by these universities. "Thus, it has led to degrees like 'Member of the International Institute of Medical Sciences' and 'Fellow of the International Institute of Medical Sciences' being offered by the universities."

He said the State Government had been establishing universities by issuing notifications in an indiscriminate and mechanical manner without having regard to the available infrastructure and as a result many universities had been established in Delhi, Bihar, Punjab, Mumbai, and other places under the Chhattisgarh law.

THE HINDU 12 FEB 2005

Board on test

sf-b 20/1
Deadline for HS results raises hopes
education & culture

At a time when the Supreme Court points to the many loopholes in governance, it is not surprising that school boards are told to strictly follow deadlines for publishing examination results so that students proceeding for higher studies are not inconvenienced. The 10 June deadline ought to have become the accepted practice across the country but states like West Bengal have consistently defaulted. It is not acceptable that the Higher Secondary Council in the state merely promises to make amends. Enough damage has been caused by delays in publishing results — last year they were one and a half months later than published elsewhere. There is also the question of maintaining standards in evaluating answer scripts. It is one thing for the school education minister to declare with contrived earnestness that the deadline will be observed this year itself despite year's respite granted by the Supreme Court; it is something to maintain standards. The hackles in recent years have brought the entire system into question.

The teachers' response has not been inspiring. For one thing, examination dates may have to be brought forward and there will be pressure to complete courses in time. What teachers are not willing to acknowledge is the additional pressure they must accept and the need to improve teaching skills. There is also the ticklish issue of private tuitions which are banned but which a large section of the teaching fraternity supports through the Left unions. The minister's confidence is not justified by the board's and teachers' record. Which is why meritorious students with no political interests still keep their fingers crossed as to whether or not the West Bengal board will ever deliver.

বিদেশি সহযোগী নিতে পারবে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

আন্তর্জাতিক চুক্তির জেরে

উচ্চশিক্ষার দরজা পুরোদস্তুর খোলার আগেই রাজ্যের বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলিকে বিদেশি সহযোগীর খোঁজে নেমে পড়ার সবুজ সঙ্কেত দিয়েছে রাজ্য সরকার। বিদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে এ দেশের মাটিতে সরাসরি হাজির হতে দেওয়ায় বামপন্থীরা নারাজ। তবে এখানকার কোনও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের হাত ধরলে তারা স্বাগত। রাজ্যের মনোভাব বুঝে বিশ্বায়নের বাজারে নিজেদের ভিত শক্ত করতে কলকাতা ও যাদবপুর — অগ্রণী দুই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ইতিমধ্যেই এ পথে কয়েক কদম এগিয়ে গিয়েছে।

গবেষণার ক্ষেত্রে দেশি-বিদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দু'টি বিভাগের সহযোগিতা উচ্চশিক্ষায় নতুন ব্যাপার নয়। কলকাতাই হোক, বা যাদবপুর— বেশ কিছু বিভাগেরই সহযোগিতার সম্পর্ক রয়েছে। ভিনদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সংশ্লিষ্ট বিভাগের সঙ্গে। কিন্তু বিশ্ব বাণিজ্য চুক্তির প্রেক্ষিতে সমঝোতা ও সহযোগিতার ক্ষেত্র বাড়াতেই হচ্ছে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলিকে। এখন আর এক-আধটি বিভাগের জন্য নয়, পুরোদস্তুর

চুক্তি হবে দেশি ও বিদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের মধ্যে।

আন্তর্জাতিক অংশীদার বা সহযোগী খোঁজার কাজে উন্নত দেশের বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলি স্বভাবতই ইতিমধ্যে অনেক এগিয়ে গিয়েছে। ভারতে উচ্চশিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রটি আয়তনের দিক থেকে যথেষ্ট বড় হওয়ায় উন্নত দেশের নামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ও এখানে আসার জন্য আগ বাড়িয়ে আগ্রহ দেখাতে শুরু করেছে। হামবুর্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় যুগ্ম ভাবে ডিগ্রি দেওয়ার সমঝোতা চেয়ে প্রস্তাব পাঠিয়েছে কলকাতাকে। অন্যদিকে, ইয়র্ক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রতিনিধি দল আগামী ১৮-১৯ জানুয়ারি যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে আসছেন এক লগুে তাদের ১১ টি বিভাগের সঙ্গে সম্পর্ক গড়তে চেয়ে। যাদবপুরের উপাচার্য অশোকনাথ বসু বলেন, “এই উদ্যোগ ওই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সঙ্গে পুরোপুরি সহযোগিতা বা অংশীদারিত্বের চুক্তিতে যাওয়ার মুখবন্ধ বলা যেতে পারে।” কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপাচার্য আশিস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন, “হামবুর্গের মতো বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কাছ থেকে প্রস্তাব আসায় ভাল লাগছে।

এর পর পাঁচের পাতায়

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

প্রথম পাতার পর*

শীঘ্রই আমরা ওদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করব।” ইয়র্ক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রতিনিধি দল কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েও আসবেন বলে আশিসবাবু জানান।

রাজ্যের উচ্চশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী সত্যসাধন চক্রবর্তী জানান, বিদেশের যে কোনও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের জন্য দরজা খোলায় তাদের আপত্তি রয়েছে। আবার বিদেশের কোনও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের এদেশের মাটিতে সরাসরি উপস্থিতিতেও তাঁরা নারাজ। তবে তিনি বলেন, “আমরা চাই, বিদেশের ভাল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলি এদেশে আসুক। তবে সরাসরি নয়, এখানকার বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের হাত ধরে।” তাঁর কথায়: যাদের উপস্থিতিতে দেশ বা রাজ্য লাভবান হবে, কেবল তাদেরই স্বাগত জানানো হবে। যেখানে নিজেদের ঘাটতি রয়েছে, পরিকাঠামো গড়ে তোলার সংস্থান কম, সেই সব ক্ষেত্রে বিদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সঙ্গে রাজ্যের বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের চুক্তি যে তাঁরা স্বাগত জানাচ্ছেন, মন্ত্রী তাও স্পষ্ট করেই জানান। সি পি এম নেতৃত্ব এই ব্যাপারে মনস্থির করার পরে সত্যসাধনবাবু ব্যাঙ্গালোরে শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের সম্মেলনেও রাজ্যের এই মত জানিয়ে এসেছেন।

রাজ্য সরকারের মন বুঝে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলিও পরিবেশ-পরিস্থিতি খতিয়ে দেখতে শুরু করেছে। কলকাতা ও যাদবপুরের উপাচার্যেরা স্বীকার করেন, বিদেশের বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলি যেহেতু ইতিমধ্যেই মাঠে নেমে পড়েছে। আশিসবাবু জানান, হামবুর্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিল্লি, মুম্বই এবং মাদ্রাজ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সঙ্গেও যোগাযোগ করেছে। এই পরিস্থিতিতে তাই এদেশের যেসব বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এখনই তৎপর হবে, তাদের পক্ষে দক্ষ আন্তর্জাতিক সহযোগী পাওয়া সহজ হবে। সামনের কিছু দিন হবে একে অন্যকে ভাল করে জানার, পরখ করে নেওয়ার পাল্লা। যারা আগে শুরু করবে, নিশ্চিতভাবেই তারা সুবিধাজনক অবস্থায় থাকবে।

KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRY

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Need To Deal Severely With Menace Of Fake Degrees

Of late, getting a degree without slogging for it is easier than burning mid-night oil. Little knowledge, they say, is a dangerous thing. But if it is disguised with a fake degree, it becomes a profitable proposition, at least until it is revealed.

Profit apart, the state of our education system is such that thousands of jobless and semi-literate youths in our country have no option but to buy the stamp of education, if not for prestige then just for earning a livelihood. Indeed, there are thousands of "highly-qualified" degree holders who are employed but who have never seen a college. How many employers actually take the trouble of verifying the authenticity of their employees' educational qualifications — be it a certificate, a diploma or a degree that gets the latter a job in the first place?

Lawyers and doctors

Things went well for many practising lawyers possessing fake marksheets till the Kolkata Bar Council lodged a complaint on 24 September 2004 with Jorasanko police station against those who had used fake marksheets. Earlier, on 24 May the Calcutta University Registrar lodged a complaint with the same police station against a first-year student of RG College, Champahati, whose HS certificate from the Bihar Intermediate Council was fake. Very recently it came to light that the racket in forged marksheets had spread as far as Bihar. One may recall that the vice-chancellor of the LN Mithila University in Bihar was arrested on charges of having amassed a huge amount of money by selling degrees. Also, the withdrawal of PhD degree from a biochemist by the Rajasthan University after it was discovered that he had submitted a fake thesis may well reveal the extent of dishonest practices in manipulating higher degrees. An official of the Indian Council of Social Sciences Research was found to be indulging in the business of obtaining PhD degrees for his researchers from other universities through unfair means.

There are even reports of truant and irresponsible medical practitioners having fake degrees earning a fast buck. This was brought to light recently by a Delhi court verdict. The Medical Council of India revoked the licences of as many as 12 doctors having fake certificates.

In 1978, the department of the Controller of Examinations, Calcutta University had to look into the alleged issue of forged mark-

The author is Reader in the Department of English, Gurudas College.

By AK GHOSH

sheets to students of degree courses between 1972 to 1975. Two education ministers of Bihar had to resign because of their direct involvement in the fake degree scandal in 1999. One of them kept on absconding to avoid arrest for having made huge money along with his education commissioner by selling fake BEd degrees. Recently, the vice-chancellor of Visva Bharati was arrested in the fake marksheet racket. The BN Mandal University in Bihar has been reported to have sold post-gra-

They are neither universities established by a central or state act, nor deemed to be universities under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, and, therefore, not empowered to award degrees under Section 22 of the Act. The degrees, diplomas or certificates awarded by them are not treated as valid for academic or employment purposes. Moreover, these 18 universities black-listed by the UGC are only a fraction of the "degree shops" around the country.

Even if a bogus university is

have received sufficient funds to increase their size and raise the levels of operations in the field of higher education. Further, certain affiliating-cum-teaching universities have grown, but the colleges affiliated to them could not get the attention they really deserved.

We know both the Union and state governments can legislate in the field of education which is a concurrent subject under the Indian Constitution. True, a legislation of the government of India will prevail over any law passed by the state legislature, but this does not mean that Parliament can prevent a state legislature from functioning within its own sphere. That will be ultra vires and the Supreme Court may strike down any such legislation as unconstitutional.

UGC Act lacks teeth

Taking advantage of the situation, the state of Chattisgarh passed the Private Universities Act in 2002 and began to grant recognition to private state universities in a way quite prejudicial to higher education. Over one hundred private universities sprang up within a short time in the state without having any infrastructure worth the name. It must be remembered that for recognition of a university by the UGC, the university must have 10 years of proven record of excellence, a corpus fund of Rs 10 crores, the built-up area of 4,000 sq metre, books worth Rs 5 lakh and five professors.

Private universities mushrooming in Chattisgarh add to the confusion. Also, the state universities sometimes contribute to the decline in academic standards. It is learnt that Gujarat University conducted the examinations of students of a pharmacy college for some years without the mandatory approval of the Pharmacy Council of India and/or AICTU. Under such circumstances, the smooth running of fake institutions seems to be natural.

That the UGC Act lacks teeth in the absence of deterrent provision is not refutable. It is common knowledge that the degree racket flourishes only because of the connivance of the local authorities. What is needed is to strengthen the hands of the UGC by making the running of such institutions a cognisable offence. We can no longer afford to put up with the gimmicks of the fake degree mafia and non-serious promoters of education who are bent on minting money by exploiting the innocent. If the ethical and legal issues are still ignored, higher education in India may end up as a knowledge industry with all its evils.



duate degrees in science. Also, the credibility of the prevalent examination system has always been under a cloud. There are reports of leakage of examination papers of many important examinations, including AIIMS entrance papers.

Degree dealers

The rise in fake certificate exposure has prompted the Council of Boards of School Education to sound a warning bell to the state about mushrooming fake boards. The CBSE has provided the member state boards with a list of four fake boards and requested them for information about other fake boards to "forward to ministry of HRD for laying down procedure and rules and regulations to set up educational boards so that fake boards are not able to operate and misguide the parents and their children".

Parliament was informed in 1993 that there were as many as 27 bogus educational institutions in the country issuing fake degrees. More recently, the UGC drew up a list of 18 "self-styled" universities which have been advertising that they award degrees, when they are not empowered to do so. All the states were asked to make inquiries and stop these institutions from awarding any more fake degrees.

detected, all that the UGC can do is to issue a notice warning them and asking them not to use words like university, vidyapith, viswavidyalaya, viswavidyapeeth etc and not to confer degrees under these names. Such notices are issued by other agencies, too, so as to make the masses conscious. The NCTE provides detailed guidelines. The Association of Indian Universities also offers information through its University Handbook and other publications.

But who cares? It is learnt that the self-styled vice-chancellor of the Maithili University lords over his university's vast network spread over not only across the country but also in some neighbouring countries. Like its Bihar counterpart, the Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya in Varanasi, too, has flourished as a prolific degree-dealer. The registrar of a similar degree dealer, the Indian Education Council, Lucknow, was reportedly charged and arrested for awarding fake degrees.

All that this reflects is a general erosion of basic values even in our institutions of higher learning where academic standards and norms have been sacrificed. Not to speak of fake universities, recognised ones cannot be categorised as first rate universities as per NAAC norms. Experience has it that certain universities

সুপ্রিম কোর্টের নির্দেশ, ১০ জুনের মধ্যে ফল চাই উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের

স্টাফ রিপোর্টার: প্রতি বছর ১০ জুনের মধ্যে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশ করতে দেশের সব রাজ্যকে নির্দেশ দিল সুপ্রিম কোর্ট। ১৫ জুনের মধ্যে মার্কশিট পৌঁছনো চাই সব পরীক্ষার্থীর কাছে।

দেশের বেশির ভাগ রাজ্যেই পরীক্ষা-নিয়ন্ত্রক সংস্থাগুলি ওই সময়ের মধ্যেই ফলপ্রকাশ করে। বড় রাজ্যগুলির মধ্যে ব্যতিক্রম পশ্চিমবঙ্গ। সুপ্রিম কোর্টের নির্দেশের কথা জানার পর রাজ্যের স্কুলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী কান্তি বিশ্বাস জানিয়েছেন, সর্বোচ্চ আদালতের বেঁধে দেওয়া সময়সীমার মধ্যেই উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশ করা হবে। এর জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় সব ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া হবে। উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা সংসদের সভাপতি গোপা দত্ত জানান, কোর্ট এই নির্দেশ দিতে পারে আন্দাজ করে সংসদ ওই সময়ের মধ্যে ফলপ্রকাশের প্রস্তুতি শুরু করে দিয়েছে। তিনি বলেন, “আমরা নিশ্চিত

যে, কোর্টের বেঁধে দেওয়া সময়সীমার মধ্যেই ফল প্রকাশ করতে পারব।”

সুপ্রিম কোর্টে এই মামলার সূত্রপাত মেডিক্যালের ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত অভিযোগের ভিত্তিতে। আদালত আগেই ১০ জুনের মধ্যে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশের কথা বলে এ বিষয়ে বিভিন্ন রাজ্যের মত জানতে চেয়েছিল। ওয়াই কে সাভরওয়ালের নেতৃত্বে তিন বিচারপতিকে নিয়ে গড়া সুপ্রিম কোর্টের এক ডিভিশন বেঞ্চ বুধবার তাদের নির্দেশে শেষ পর্যন্ত উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশের জন্য ওই মেয়াদই বেঁধে দিল সব রাজ্যের জন্য। ২০০৪ সালের পরিসংখ্যান বলছে, দেশের ছোট-বড় অন্তত ২২ টি রাজ্য বা শিক্ষা সংস্থা মে-জুনের মধ্যে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল প্রকাশ করেছে। এই ব্যাপারে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ রাজ্যগুলির মধ্যে পশ্চিমবঙ্গই বলতে গেলে সবার পিছনে। এই রাজ্যে গত বছর উচ্চ মাধ্যমিকের ফল বেরোয় ২৭ জুলাই।

ফি বছর ফল প্রকাশে দেরির জন্য রাজ্যের বহু ছাত্রছাত্রীই উচ্চশিক্ষার জন্য ভিন্ন রাজ্যের শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তির সুযোগ পান না।

পরীক্ষা পদ্ধতি এবং শিক্ষাক্রমে সংস্কার ঘটিয়ে অনেক রাজ্যই ফল প্রকাশে দ্রুততা আনলেও পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সে পথে হাঁটেনি। অনেক রাজ্যেই মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা হয় শুধু দশম ও দ্বাদশ শ্রেণির পাঠ্যক্রমের ভিত্তিতে। কিন্তু এই রাজ্যে তা না-হওয়ায় ফল প্রকাশে সময় বেশি লাগে। সুপ্রিম কোর্টের নির্দেশের প্রেক্ষিতে স্কুলশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী এখন মানছেন, গোটা বিষয়টি নিয়ে চিন্তা-ভাবনার প্রয়োজন রয়েছে। তিনি বলেন, এ বছর সময় মতো ফল প্রকাশের পাশাপাশি ভবিষ্যতের প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা নিয়েও শীঘ্রই আলাপ-আলোচনা শুরু করতে হবে। পরীক্ষা পদ্ধতি বা শিক্ষাক্রমে কোনও পরিবর্তন দরকার কি না, তা-ও আসবে আলোচনার পরিধির মধ্যে।

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

13 JAN 2005

SC asks states to declare class XII result by June 10

5/11
18/11
Secretary of Education

New Delhi: In an omnibus order benefiting lakhs of students, the supreme court on Wednesday directed all states and Union territories to declare 10+2 examination results by June 10 every year so as to allow them enough time to compete in entrance examinations for professional courses.

A bench comprising Justice Y K Sabharwal, Justice D M Dharmadhikari and Justice Tarun Chatterjee also asked the education boards concerned to supply the marksheets to the students by June 15.

Propounding a 15-point guideline to streamline admissions into medical and other professional colleges, the bench asked them to strictly adhere to the time schedule for admissions by completing counselling in time and said there was a "complete no" to mid-stream admissions, admissions in excess of the total seats or carrying forward the unfilled seats to the next academic year.

Propounding a 15-point guideline to streamline admissions into medical and other professional colleges, the bench asked them to strictly adhere to the time schedule for admissions by completing counselling in time and said there was a "complete no no" to mid-stream admissions, admissions in excess of the total seats or carrying forward the unfilled seats to the next academic year.

Asking the states to conclude the first round of counselling for government medical colleges positively by July 25 every year, the bench asked the concerned chief secretaries to inform the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) about the vacancy position for the 15 per cent all-India quota seats by July 26 so that it could start its counselling.

In another significant direction, the bench accepted the suggestion of Medical Council of India

(MCI) to order that if any private medical college exceeded admissions to management quota seats in one year, then such seats for the next academic year would be reduced by the number of excess admissions made earlier.

This order came on a petition filed by Mridul Dhar and other students who had protested the delay in conducting counselling by the state governments resulting in 15 per cent of all-India quota seats

"Declare 10+2 results by June 10 so as to allow students enough time to compete in entrance exams for professional courses"



lapsing to the states' kitty.

The court, while pronouncing the guidelines, warned the chief secretaries and health secretaries that any violation of the time schedule for admission to professional courses would attract penal measures. It also sought an affidavit from the DGHS by January 31 directing it to respond to suggestions to conduct counselling for the all-India quota seats through video-conferencing to save candidates from far-flung areas to come to Delhi for this purpose and also increasing the percentage of seats for all-India quota from the existing 15 to 20 per cent.

Regarding admissions to post-graduate medical courses, the court, while directing adherence to the time-table, ordered that the merit of the candidates should not be "tinkered with" by introducing "board percentage" or "interview percentage" marks.

The court, after pronouncing the judgement, posted the matter for further hearing to third week of January. PTI

548 ✓ Mid-day meals

12/1
We must build a movement around these

If all schools were to offer nutritious mid-day meals from tomorrow, its effects would be revolutionary. The elegance of such an approach to poverty reduction is that it attacks several problems at once. It tackles the problem of child malnutrition — 40 per cent of the country's kids are estimated to be malnourished — a crying shame. It would also take us nearer to the goal of universal literacy, as a prime reason for high dropout rates from school is that poor children need to work for the daily meal. And if children from all castes and communities were to attend the same schools where a uniform, non-sectarian syllabus is taught, that would work wonders in mitigating the multitude of caste and community conflicts — the bane of a civilised existence in this land.

Since we are a poor country, the government cannot afford social security that many developed countries have — a cheque in the mail for all socially disadvantaged. But mid-day meals in schools should be within its powers to organise, even in a country where successive governments have displayed appalling indifference to the plight of children. For all these reasons the Supreme Court recently stepped in and ordered states and union territories to provide free mid-day meals to all children.

Any revolution will, of course, encounter entrenched resistance, and this one is no exception. Having children of all castes eat together, with perhaps a lower-caste cook preparing food for upper-caste children, is an attack on caste prejudice. There have been instances of upper caste rage in parts of the country, and they won a small victory in Midnapur West, when authorities allowed replacement of Adivasi cooks in Hossainpur primary school with upper caste cooks.

Authorities need to handle all such cases firmly and ~~not~~ unhesitatingly with lower castes — if upper caste guardians threaten to pull their wards out of schools, they should be free to do so and set up their own schools, freeing state resources for lower caste kids. There are also, as in most government welfare activities, problems of leakage and maladministration. Schools may not provide meals despite the Supreme Court directive; materials will be diverted; the meals provided may prove inedible.

Despite all this, having midday meals on the statute books will go some way towards generating awareness, and authorities who withhold midday meals, will encounter public resistance. Its benefits will be more widespread than present panaceas, such as reservation of government jobs for lower castes which have helped only a tiny minority. In case government agencies cannot provide meals, there is a case for farming out responsibility to NGOs with a good track record — they will be happy to help, and some of them are well funded. Instead of mouthing abstract anti-poverty slogans both government and civil sector groups should focus energies on concrete programmes with tangible and specifiable targets. Mid-day meals are a good enough candidate.

মাউস-এর মূষিক প্রসব

সেই সুদূর উনিশ শতকে বাবু বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায় আক্ষেপ করিয়াছিলেন, সাহেবরা পক্ষী শিকার করিতে যাইলেও তাহার ইতিহাস রচা হয়, বাঙালি তাহার মহৎকীর্তিও ইতিহাসবদ্ধ করিতে চাহে না। কাল অতিক্রান্ত হইয়াছে, বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের দিন গিয়াছে, নয় নয় করিয়াও বাঙালির জাতীয় জীবন লইয়া নানাবিধ ইতিহাস রচনা করা হইয়াছে। কিন্তু বাঙালি ইতিহাস হইতে শিক্ষা গ্রহণ করে নাই। এই ঔদাসীন্য কেবল সাধারণ বাঙালিবৃন্দই দেখান নাই, বাঙালি জাতির পুরোভাগে থাকিবার দায়ভার যঁহারা গ্রহণ করিয়াছেন তাঁহারাও দেখাইয়াছেন। সম্প্রতি বাংলাভাষা মাধ্যম শিক্ষা লইয়া নানা তর্কবিতর্ক উত্থাপিত হইয়াছে। মাতৃভাষায় বিদ্যালয় ছাত্রছাত্রীবৃন্দকে শিক্ষাদানের পবিত্র উদ্যোগ সরকার নিয়ন্ত্রিত শিক্ষাপর্ষদগুলি উৎসাহী চিত্তে গ্রহণ করিয়াছেন। এই উৎসাহী উদ্যোগের মধ্যে গণতোষী তাৎক্ষণিক পরিকল্পনা রহিয়াছে বটে, কিন্তু বিবেচনাবোধ ও দূরদৃষ্টি নাই। থাকিলে মাতৃভাষাবাদীবৃন্দ ইতিহাস হইতে শিক্ষা লইতেন।

মাধ্যমিক স্তরের ছাত্রছাত্রীবৃন্দের কম্পিউটার বিদ্যাচর্চার নিমিত্ত শিক্ষা পর্ষদ 'কম্পিউটার প্রয়োগ' নামে দু'খণ্ডের একটি গ্রন্থকে অনুমোদন দিয়াছেন। মাতৃভাষায় কম্পিউটার শিক্ষাদানের এই সাধু উদ্যোগ পারিভাষিক শব্দের বঙ্গীকরণ প্রচেষ্টায় বিচিত্র রূপ লাভ করিয়াছে। বঙ্গভাষায় রচিত কম্পিউটার শিক্ষাগ্রন্থটিতে মাউস অর্থে মূষিক, মাউস প্যাড অর্থে মূষিক ঘর্ষণ গদি, সার্ভার অর্থে সেবক, রিসাইকল বিন অর্থে ফিরে পাওয়ার ভাণ্ডার ইত্যাদি রূপান্তর লক্ষণীয়। পর্ষদের সংশ্লিষ্ট অধিকর্তা জানাইয়াছেন, দ্রুততার সহিত গ্রন্থটি প্রস্তুত করিতে হইয়াছিল বলিয়াই এরূপ বিপত্তি দেখা গিয়াছে, নিকট ভবিষ্যতে বিষয়টি সংশোধন করা হইবে। ইংরাজি পারিভাষিক ও প্রায়োগিক শব্দের বঙ্গীকরণের সমস্যাটি নূতন নয়। উনিশ ও বিশ শতকে যে সকল মনীষী বঙ্গভাষায় শিক্ষাপ্রচারে ব্রত হইয়াছিলেন তাঁহারা প্রায় সকলেই এই সমস্যার দিকে দৃষ্টিপাত করিয়াছিলেন। হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী মহাশয় 'বঙ্গদর্শন' পত্রিকার জ্যেষ্ঠ ১২৮৮ সংখ্যায় 'নূতন কথা গড়া' নামে একটি প্রবন্ধে লিখিয়াছিলেন '...observatory-র তর্জমা করিয়া নাম রাখিলেন, পর্যবেক্ষণিকা। কেহ বুঝিল না।... অনেকে আবার শুদ্ধ তর্জমা করিয়াই রাখিয়া দেন, ... He seconded my proposal, আমার প্রস্তাব দ্বিতীয় করিলেন... অতঃপর তাঁহার বক্তব্য, ইংরাজিতে এক এক দল সৈন্যের নাম column, বঙ্গভাষায় সৈন্যসুত্ত তর্জমা করিলে হাস্যকর হইবে। বঙ্গভাষাবাদী মনীষীবৃন্দ সকালেই তর্জমা সমস্যার সমাধান উপলক্ষে শব্দকল্প গ্রহণের পক্ষপাতী ছিলেন। এই সাধারণ তথ্য বোধ করি শিক্ষাবিদগণের অজানা। তাই কম্পিউটার শিক্ষার নিমিত্ত বাংলা গ্রন্থ রচনাকালে তাঁহারা অনায়াস দক্ষতায় মূষিক প্রসব করিয়া থাকেন। মাউস, মাউসপ্যাড, রিসাইকল বিন বাংলা ভাষায় কৃতকল্প শব্দ হিসাবে ব্যবহার করিলে মাতৃদুগ্ধবৎ মাতৃভাষার অশুদ্ধ হইবার কারণ নাই। বাংলা ভাষায় কৃতকল্প শব্দের বিপুল ভাণ্ডারের কথা কাহারও অজানা নহে।

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

12 JAN 2005