

5000 students face uncertain future as institutes are barred from holding exams

BEd courses in 28 colleges illegal

OUR LEGAL REPORTER

Calcutta, June 27: Calcutta High Court today declared illegal this year's BEd courses in 28 colleges that are not affiliated to the National Council for Teachers' Education.

The colleges are affiliated to Calcutta, Burdwan, Kalyani and Vidyasagar universities. The court order makes the future of over 5,000 students uncertain. Without a BEd degree, they will not get permanent teaching jobs.

In April, the court had declared BEd courses of eight

colleges under North Bengal University illegal on the same ground.

Soon after, it passed an interim order barring the 28 colleges from conducting exams or taking new students.

The Bengal government had earlier deferred this year's BEd exam and admission for the 2006-2007 session until the disposal of the case.

There are around 50 BEd colleges across the state. Thirty-six of them have now been barred from teaching the course. After today's order, the government will have to decide

the fate of the students in the other colleges.

The division bench of Chief Justice V.S. Sirpurkar and Justice Anirudha Basu asked the universities to cancel the admission of the students of the "illegal" colleges.

The colleges were asked to pay Rs 5,000 to each student as compensation and return the fees collected.

The university authorities were also directed not to allow the institutions to run BEd courses in the 2006-07 academic year until they obtained the council's approval.

According to the National Council for Teacher Education Act 1995, every teacher training institute has to obtain its approval and follow its guidelines.

The ruling rendering the north Bengal colleges illegal came following a public interest litigation by a Malda businessman, Tulsī Bakshi. Then, high court lawyer Anjan Bhattacharya moved another PIL

saying 28 colleges in south Bengal were also running BEd courses without the approval. The division bench ruled that the petitioner's conten-

tion was correct.

Advocate-general Balai Ray had earlier tried to convince the court that the state had another law empowering the universities to allow the institutions to run the courses, but in vein. He had also said that the government would challenge the validity of the teachers' education act.

A similar problem is dogging 122 Primary Teachers' Training Institutes in Bengal. The court has passed an interim order restraining them from admitting student and holding examinations.

What they don't have

- Student-teacher ratio of 10:1
- Spacious classrooms
- Well-equipped laboratories
- Separate chamber for principal
- Separate common rooms for boys and girls
- Playground

টাকা ফেরত দিতে হবে বেআইনি সব বিএড কলেজকেই

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: রাজ্যের বি এড পড়ুয়াদের দুর্দশা বেড়েই চলেছে। রাজ্য সরকারের উদাসীনতা ও অদূরদর্শিতার ফল ভুগতে হচ্ছে বি এডের হাজার হাজার ছাত্রছাত্রীকে।

কলকাতা হাইকোর্ট মঙ্গলবার বিদ্যাসাগর, বর্ধমান, কল্যাণী ও কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন ২৮টি বি এড কলেজ বেআইনি বলে ঘোষণা করেছে। উত্তরবঙ্গের আটটি বি এড কলেজকে তারা আগেই বেআইনি ঘোষণা করেছিল। মঙ্গলবারের রায়ে রাজ্যে মোট ৩৬টি বি এড কলেজ বেআইনি বলে ঘোষিত হল। ওই সব কলেজ ন্যাশনাল কাউন্সিল অব টিচার এডুকেশন (এন সি টি ই)-এর অনুমোদন নেয়নি। এখন মাত্র ৩৪টি কলেজের আইনি স্বীকৃতি রইল।

হাইকোর্টের প্রধান বিচারপতি বিকাশ শ্রীধর শিরপুরকরের ডিভিশন বেঞ্চ মঙ্গলবারের রায়ে জানিয়েছে, এন সি টি ই-র অনুমোদন না-পাওয়া পর্যন্ত ওই ২৮টি কলেজ কোনও ছাত্রছাত্রীকে ভর্তি করতে পারবে না। কোনও পরীক্ষাও নিতে পারবে না। যারা ২০০৫-'০৬ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ওই সব কলেজে ভর্তি হয়েছেন, তাঁদের কাছ থেকে ভর্তি ও বেতন বাবদ নেওয়া টাকা ফেরত দিতে হবে। সেই সঙ্গে প্রত্যেককে ক্ষতিপূরণ হিসেবে দিতে হবে ৫০০০ টাকা।

এ দিন চার বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের যে-সব কলেজ বেআইনি ঘোষিত হয়েছে, সেগুলি হল: কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন সুরেন্দ্রলাল দাস বি এড কলেজ, জে সি এম কলেজ অব এডুকেশন, ফকিরচাঁদ কলেজ টিচার্স এডুকেশন, গোবরডাঙা হিন্দু কলেজ, নন্দলাল ঘোষ বি টি কলেজ, উলুবেড়িয়া কলেজ, সরিষা বি এড, যাদবপুর বিদ্যাপীঠ, গঙ্গাধরপুর বি এড, রায়দিঘি বি এড। বর্ধমান বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন শালতোড়া বি এড, কালনা কলেজ, রামকৃষ্ণ সারদাপীঠ বি এড, শান্তিনিকেতন বি এড, নিখিলবঙ্গ শিক্ষা মহাবিদ্যালয়, কাটোয়া কলেজ, স্বরাজনগর টিচার্স ট্রেনিং কলেজ ও এথেনা এডুকেশন। বিদ্যাসাগর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন পাঁশকুড়া বনমালী কলেজ, যোগদা সৎসঙ্গ পালপাড়া কলেজ, বিদ্যাসাগর টিচার্স ট্রেনিং কলেজ, প্রভাকুমারী কলেজ, সেবায়তন শিক্ষক মহাবিদ্যালয়, তান্ত্রলিগু মহাবিদ্যালয়, রত্নয়ালি সেকেন্ডারি টিচার্স ট্রেনিং কলেজ ও কবি সুকান্ত টিচার্স ট্রেনিং। কল্যাণী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের একটি কলেজের অধীন প্রভারানি বি এড।

বি এড এবং প্রাথমিক শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ সংস্থাগুলি নিয়ে সমস্যা চলছে দীর্ঘদিন ধরে। বেসরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠান গড়ার তাগিদে রাজ্য সরকার এন সি টি ই-র নিয়মকানুন উপেক্ষা করেছে। সি পি এমের ছাত্র শাখা এস এফ আই-ও মনে করে, শিক্ষায় সাম্প্রদায়িকতার অনুপ্রবেশ রুখতে রাজ্য সরকার যে-ভূমিকা পালন করেছে, শিক্ষার কেন্দ্রীকরণ ও বাণিজ্যকরণের বেলায় তা অনুপস্থিত। যথেষ্ট সময় পেয়েও বি এড কলেজগুলি কেন এন সি টি ই-র নিয়মকানুন মানার জায়গায় পৌঁছতে পারেনি, সেই প্রশ্নও তুলেছে এস এফ আই। রাজ্যে যত বি এড কলেজ এবং প্রাথমিক শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ সংস্থা গড়া হয়েছে, ততগুলির প্রয়োজন নেই বলেও মনে করে তারা। এস এফ আইয়ের বক্তব্য, এই ক্ষেত্রে নজরদারিরও একটি ব্যবস্থা থাকা দরকার।

এন সি টি ই-র অনুমোদন না-থাকলেও তারা কেন ফি-বছর পরীক্ষা নিয়েছে এবং ডিগ্রি দিয়েছে, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়গুলি এর সন্তোষজনক জবাব দিতে পারেনি। উচ্চশিক্ষা দফতর সুত্রের খবর, এই জটিলতা থেকে আপাতত পরিত্রাণ পাওয়ার জন্য রাজ্য সরকার দিল্লির কাছে দরবার করেছে। সেখান থেকে কিছু একটা আশার বাণী না-এলে ছাত্রছাত্রীদের ভবিষ্যৎ যে কী হবে, তা কারও জানা নেই।

Nehru removed from MP textbooks

Statesman News Service

BHOPAL, June 21: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of Madhya Pradesh has removed two chapters related to India's first Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru from textbooks of schools affiliated to the state education board.

The education department of the state has dropped an eight-line long poem- *Chacha Nehru Bana Do Mujhe*, dedicated to Nehru from the Hindi textbook of standard I.

It has also removed a chapter named Kamla, which is memoirs of Nehru on his wife Kamla Nehru, from the Hindi textbook of standard VII.

Angry over the step of the state government, the Congress has alleged that the state government was trying to purge all things from



Jawahar Lal Nehru

the school syllabus related to Nehru.

The Madhya Pradesh government recently came under severe attack last week for removing age-old English rhymes from English books of nursery classes.

"The BJP government of Madhya Pradesh is working on the directions of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and for this reason the chapters related to Nehru have been removed from the syllabus," said spokesperson of the Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee, Mr Manak Agarwal.

"As far as education is concerned, the BJP has got only one aim-to saffronise the whole education system. We will fight against this move of the BJP tooth and nail. We will take every possible step to exert pressure on the state government for re-introduction of the chapters related to Nehru," said Mr Agarwal.

"We will give a memorandum to the governor and also write a letter to the Centre in this regard," he said.

Defending the step of the state government, education minister

Mr Narottam Mishra said: "We have changed the syllabus. Changing syllabus should not be interpreted as removing or dropping a chapter," he said.

"The Centre and the Supreme Court had asked us to change the syllabus which was due for the last five years. And while changing the syllabus we took into consideration the views of all those who are related to education," he said.

"Moreover, we have introduced other writings of Nehru as chapters in the school syllabus," he said.

According to him, one of Nehru's articles on the river Ganges named Akhree Virasat and one of his letters written to his daughter Indira Gandhi have been included in the Hindi textbooks of VII and IV standards respectively.

Burdwan University researchers do a Kaavya

Information & Culture

9/6

ONLY IN
HT

MOHAMMAD Asif & DIWASH Gahatraj
Burdwan/Kolkata, June 3

WHY PICK on Kaavya Viswanathan of *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life* ill fame? Even academicians are not above plagiarism as a shortcut to eminence.

Bikash Mukhopadhyay and Sripati Mukhopadhyaya, professors at Burdwan University, stand accused of copying from a work of Scott Nicholson and Jeffrey Stanton of the Syracuse University in the US, and trying to pass off the content as their own.

The two have lifted chunks, indeed whole pages, from the two US professors' *Gaining Strategic Advantage*

Though Bibliomining: Data Mining for Management Decisions in Corporate, Special, Digital, and Traditional Libraries and planting them in their "own paper" Bibliomining Process For Integrated Library System.

HT is in possession of the two papers and other telltale documents. But despite this blot on his academic integrity, Bikash Mukhopadhyay has joined Jadavpur University as secretary, faculty of council of sciences, a very senior position.

When HT contacted Burdwan V-C Amit Mallik, he said, "This is our internal matter. It won't be proper for me to comment."

The story dates back to May 2003 when the two Burdwan professors got in touch with Nicholson, seeking guidance on their project in bibliomining and so-



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ternet and was aghast to see that it was all his own. He promptly sent a mail to the Burdwan V-C, pointing out that his paper had been copied by the two Mukhopadhyays. "I was surprised to see that most of this article was copied from my own publication without permission or acknowledgement," Nicholson told HT in a mail.

"When the case was taken up by the V-C, the plagiarists created a spurious email ID in Scott Nicholson's name and posing as the US professor, wrote to the V-C, requesting him to drop the matter,"

a university insider said. The mail, dated April 19, 2006 gave the impression that Nicholson was glad to see his paper being used by the Burdwan teachers. When Mallik got back to Nicholson to say that he was dropping the matter as suggested

by him, the Syracuse professor clarified that not only had his paper been copied, his email ID too was a fabricated one.

When contacted, Bikash Mukhopadhyay pleaded ignorance. "I don't know anything regarding this," he said. But Sripati under whose guidance Bikash had been working as a research scholar on data mining, said, "I am unable to say anything on this matter. It will be decided by the V-C now." And Rajat Bandyopadhyay, registrar, Jadavpur University, said he was unaware of the incident.

But Nicholson isn't giving up yet. "I requested a formal apology and explanation, (and) that all plagiarised articles (be) removed and rescinded in both (print) and electronic form, and a citation to the original work be put in their place," he told HT in a mail.

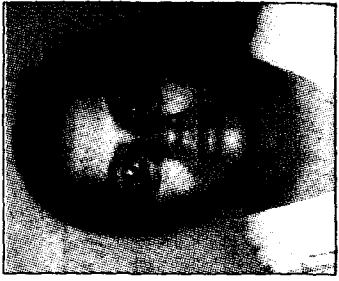
উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে শুভঙ্করের বেকর্ড ১৯৯৯

Education & Culture

শেখরজিৎ-২ ৬/১৫



ফার্স্ট বয়। তুফানগঞ্জের নূপেন্দ্রনারায়ণ মেমোরিয়ালের অহঙ্কার শুভঙ্করকে নিয়ে ছাত্রদের উদ্ভাস স্কুল-গ্রামাঞ্চে। সোমবার। ছবি: দেবব্রত দে সরকার। পাশে, ওপর থেকে ষষ্ঠীয় শুভেন্দু চ্যাটার্জি, তৃতীয় অপিতা পাল, অভিনন্দন ঘোষ। বাকি মেধাবীদের ছবি ২ পাতায়।



বাড়ল পাসের হার, প্রথম বিভাগ, স্টার

সনৎ রায়, ভোলানাথ ঘড়ই

মাধ্যমিকের পর উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে এবারও জেলার জয়জয়কার। কোচবিহার জেলার সন্তোষা প্রথম শুভঙ্কর রায়চৌধুরি তো সজ্জবত সর্বকালীন বেকর্ড করে বসল। তার প্রাপ্ত নম্বর ৯৯৯। কোচবিহারে বেকর্ডধারী এই স্কুলটির নাম তুফানগঞ্জ নূপেন্দ্রনারায়ণ মেমোরিয়াল হাইস্কুল। মেয়েদের মধ্যে প্রথম স্থানও উত্তরবঙ্গের এই জেলাবই দখলে। কোচবিহার সুনীতি আকাশেমির ছাত্রী অপিতা পাল ৯৮৬ নম্বর পেয়ে রাজ্যে সন্তোষা তৃতীয়। দ্বিতীয় স্থানটি ঝগলি জেলার চাতরা নন্দলাল ইনস্টিটিউশন স্কুলের ছাত্র শুভেন্দু চ্যাটার্জির দখলে। তার প্রাপ্ত নম্বর ৯৯০। ২০০৪ সালের মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষায় নজরকাড়া ছাত্রছাত্রীদের মধ্যে ৪ জন জায়গা করে নিয়েছে ২০০৬ সালের উচ্চমাধ্যমিকের সন্তোষা ১০ জনের তালিকায়। দু'বছর আগে মাধ্যমিকে দশম স্থান পাওয়া বিষ্ণুপুর হাইস্কুলের মানসকুমার দাস এবার উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে ৯৮০ নম্বর পেয়ে ষষ্ঠ স্থানে রয়েছে। উত্তরপাড়া গভর্নমেন্ট হাইস্কুলের সম্মুদ্র কুমার ৯৭৮ নম্বর পেয়ে সন্তোষা মেধাতালিকার সপ্তম স্থানে আছে। মাধ্যমিকে তার স্থান ছিল ষষ্ঠ। এবার উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে ৯৭৭ নম্বর পেয়ে অষ্টম স্থান পাওয়া ৩ ছাত্রের দুজনেই ২০০৪ সালের মাধ্যমিকে প্রথম দশের তালিকায় ছিল। নরেন্দ্রপুর রামকৃষ্ণ মিশন মহাবিদ্যালয়ের অভিষেক চক্রবর্তী সেবার পেয়েছিল ষষ্ঠ স্থান। আর বারাসত প্যারীমোহন সরকার গভর্নমেন্ট স্কুলের অতীক চক্রবর্তী মেধাতালিকায় স্থানের কোনও পরিবর্তন হয়নি। সেবার মাধ্যমিকে প্রথম স্থান পাওয়া তিরঞ্জিত দে এবং উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে মেধাতালিকায় স্থান না পেলেও ফল খারাপ করেনি। তার বুলিতে এবার এসেছে ৯৬৯ নম্বর। এ পর্যন্ত পাওয়া খবর অনুযায়ী কলকাতা, উত্তর ২৪ পরগনা, বর্ধমান, মুর্শিদাবাদ থেকেও এমন ফলাফল মিলেছে যারা সন্তোষা সেবা দেশের তালিকায় রয়েছে। সব মিলিয়ে এবারও উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে জেলাবই জয়জয়কার। যদিও শতকরা কৃতকার্যের হিসেবে সেবার সেবা কলকাতা জেলা ৮৪.১৮

এরপর ৫ পাতায়

উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে বাড়ল পাসের হার

১ পাতার পর

শতাংশ। এবার উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে পাসের হার বেড়েছে গতবারের তুলনায়। গতবার যেখানে ৬৭.৫৬ শতাংশ পাস করেছিল, সেখানে এবার পাসের হার ৭১.৮২ শতাংশ। ৪.২৬ শতাংশ বেড়েছে। বেড়েছে প্রথম বিভাগে পাসের হারও। গত বছরের ২৫.১৮ এবার বেড়ে ২৫.৯৩ শতাংশ। ৩ লক্ষ ১৯ হাজার ৭১৮ জন পরীক্ষা দিয়েছিল এবার। পাস করেছে ২,২৯,৫৩৩ জন। প্রথম বিভাগে ৬০,২১৩, দ্বিতীয় বিভাগে ১,১৯,৫৮০ ও পাস বিভাগে ১,০৭,৩৬৮ জন পাস করেছে। স্টার পেয়েছে ১০,৩৯৪ জন। কোনও অসম্পূর্ণ ফল নেই। বিভিন্ন কারণে ফল প্রকাশ করা হয়নি ৮২ জনের। আর অসৎ উপায় অবলম্বন করায় পরীক্ষা বাতিল করা হয়েছে ১৩৭ জনের। শতাংশের হিসেবে এবার ২৫.৯৩ শতাংশ প্রথম বিভাগে এবং ৪৬.১২ শতাংশ দ্বিতীয় বিভাগে পাস করেছে। ২৭.৯৫ শতাংশ পাস বিভাগে পাস করেছে। ছাত্রদের মধ্যে পাসের হার ৭৩.৮২ শতাংশ। ৪.৪৭ শতাংশ বেড়েছে। ছাত্রীদের মধ্যে পাসের হার ৬৯.০৬ শতাংশ। বেড়েছে ৩.৯৫ শতাংশ। ৩.২৪ শতাংশ ছাত্রছাত্রী স্টার পেয়েছে। উচ্চমাধ্যমিকে ভাল ফলাফল হওয়ায় খুশি উচ্চশিক্ষামন্ত্রী সুদর্শন রায়চৌধুরি। তার বাড়তি খুশির কারণ, তাঁর জেলা হুগলির ছাত্রছাত্রীরা অত্যন্ত

ভাল ফল করেছে। তিনি বলেন, 'শিক্ষাকে সর্বস্তরে ছড়িয়ে দেওয়ার জন্যই জেলায় জেলায় এমন ভাল ফল হচ্ছে। ছাত্রছাত্রীদের শুভেচ্ছা জানিয়েছেন তিনি। সোমবার সকালে উচ্চমাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা সংসদের সভাপতি গোপা দত্ত আনুষ্ঠানিক ফল প্রকাশ করে বলেন, পাসের হার যেমন বেড়েছে, তেমনি এ বছর কোনও ফল অসম্পূর্ণ নেই এটাও আনন্দের। ছিলেন সংসদের সচিব দেবাশিস সরকার, উপসচিব (পরীক্ষা) দীনেন্দ্রনারায়ণ মুন্সি ও অন্য পদাধিকারীরা। সুপ্রিম কোর্টের নির্দেশ অনুযায়ী ১০ জুনের মধ্যে উচ্চমাধ্যমিক ফল প্রকাশ করণ ছিল। সময়সীমার মধ্যেই ফলপ্রকাশ সম্ভব হওয়ায় সংসদ সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্মী, শিক্ষক, অশিক্ষক কর্মী ও পরীক্ষকদের ধন্যবাদ জানিয়েছে। নিয়ম মেনে এদিন পরবর্তী উচ্চমাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষার সূচিও ঘোষণা করে দিল সংসদ। একই সঙ্গে এবার একাদশ শ্রেণীর পরীক্ষা হবে সংসদের প্রস্তাপত্র। তাই তারও দিনক্ষণ, সূচি সংসদ ঘোষণা করে দিল এদিন। ২০০৭ সালে একইসঙ্গে নতুন ও পুরনো দুটি সিলেবাসে পরীক্ষা নেওয়া হবে। এ জন্য অতিরিক্ত সতর্কতা নিয়েছে সংসদ। সভাপতি গোপা দত্ত জানান, সংসদের কর্মী, পরীক্ষক, শিক্ষক ও শিক্ষাকর্মীদের ওপর পূর্ণ আস্থা রয়েছে। আশা করি, সঠিক সময় নির্ভরতার পরীক্ষা করে ও ফল প্রকাশ করা যাবে।

Call to ban commercialisation of education

Educationists say privatisation of education cannot be for profit-making purposes

Anita Joshua

NEW DELHI: Even as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is seeking more private investment in higher education, educationists want privatisation to be restricted "to the minimum desirable level." Also, they have called for a tax on the industry to raise resources for higher education.

Such is their angst against privatisation and commercialisation of higher education that the majority view at a recent meeting on the issue — organised by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration — favoured a law banning such commercialisation. "All commercialisation of education, which should be unambiguously defined, should be banned by a suitable act of Parliament." This was one of the recommendations of the meeting of 64 eminent educationists here earlier this week.

- **Private sector not a solution to problems of quantity, quality**
- **It could create imbalance among various streams of learning**
- **Concern over access to the marginalized sections**

However, they are not closed to the idea of private participation. "Private investors in education may be encouraged. However, it must be made clear that this cannot be for profit-making purposes, in however disguised a form. Further, the entry of the private sector cannot be seen as a solution to all the various problems of quantity and quality," the educationists noted in their recommendations submitted to the Government.

One of their grouses against

privatisation was its market-orientation. "Commodification of education may lead to excessive emphasis on skill, employment and corporate-oriented education" at the cost of basic sciences and the vast pool of traditional knowledge, thereby creating an imbalance among various streams of learning.

For holistic development

Given the inevitability of private initiative in the Indian context, they said Article 19(6) of the Constitution should be invoked to ensure a holistic development of higher education, and prevent commodification and profiteering. Article 19(6) allows the State to put "reasonable restrictions" on the exercise of the right to establish and run educational institutions conferred under Article 19(g) — the freedom to practise any profession, carry on any occupation, trade or business.

Another concern was the failure of private institutes to provide access to the marginalised sections. Commercialisation of education "could also mean marginalisation of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, women and vulnerable sections of society." Though not in as many words, their recommendations dwell on reservation — an issue prised open by the proposed move to reserve seats in all central educational institutions for the Other Backward Classes. "It is important to develop effective and implementable ways of increasing the access of socially marginalised groups as well as more needy students to higher education."

Among those who participated in the meeting were the vice-president of the National Knowledge Commission, P.M. Bhargava, and member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council G.K. Chadha.

THE HINDU

07 MAY 2006

Legal hurdle for BEd exam

DEEPAK Prahladka
Kolkata, May 12

THE FUTURE of 5,000 BEd students is at stake for no fault of theirs. The students — of 28 unrecognised colleges affiliated to four universities — might not be able to appear for their examinations next week for the 2005-06 session. Things wouldn't have come to such a pass, if only the state government had bothered to read the law while granting affiliations to the colleges.

State advocate general (AG) Balai Ray told Calcutta High Court on Friday that Calcutta University (CU) would not hold the BEd examinations scheduled to begin on May 19 for 11 unrecognised colleges affiliated to it. These colleges are not recognised by the National Council of Teachers Education (NCTE).

The three other universities — Vidyasagar, Burdwan and Kalyani — are also likely to postpone their examinations for 17 unrecognised BEd colleges affiliated to them.

Chief justice V.S. Sirpurkar and justice Soumitra Sen rapped the state government for making a mess of the education system by granting affiliations to unrecognised BEd colleges. "How did you grant affiliation to unrecognised colleges? Don't you have a legal or law officer who has read the NCTE Act?" the judges asked. The AG candidly admitted the ignorance of the state education officials. "I was shocked and surprised to find that none of the five education secretaries, including the principal secretary, had read the NCTE Act before granting affiliation to these colleges."

It's a pity that they didn't bother to do so. Under the NCTE Act, 1993, no university can grant affiliation to a BEd college that's not recognised by NCTE.

Coming down heavily on the state government for attempting to give false hope to students by seeking the court's permission to hold examinations, the judges said: "Why is the state so keen on wasting time, energy and money by holding examinations for the students of unrecognised colleges?"

The judges also rejected the universities' plea for holding examinations, saying: "Our hands are tied. We are governed by the law. We cannot indirectly allow a breach of the NCTE Act." The judges said that the unrecognised BEd colleges affiliated to North Bengal University (NBU) were just the tip of the iceberg. The AG admitted that he had been misled during the hearing of the PIL against the colleges affiliated to NBU. "I wasn't informed about the unrecognised BEd colleges affiliated to other universities," he said.

The judges adjourned till May 18 the PIL filed by advocate Anjan Bhattacharya for restraining the four universities from conducting examinations for the 28 unrecognised BEd colleges.

On April 20, while disposing of a PIL against the unrecognised BEd colleges affiliated to NBU, the court had restrained the unrecognised colleges from conducting any examination or admitting students. The colleges had been directed to return to each student the fee s/he had paid and compensation of Rs 5,000 within three months.

Education panel need of hour for state: Expert

MOU Chakraborty
Kolkata, May 12

THE EDUCATION scenario in the state is grim and the need of the hour is to set up an education commission to guide the new government in framing the correct policies. So feels professor Bikash Sinha, eminent scientist and director of Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics and Indian Institute Of Science Education And Research (IISER), Kolkata.

Sinha (pic below) plans to write to chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee with a request to set up an education commission. The state, he said, needs a well-defined education policy. "I am not blaming any one government for this but for some reason, the state has never had an education policy. It's high time the government frames one. I will write to the chief minister and request him to form an education commission, which will advise the government in framing policies," Sinha said.

Lamenting over the state of school education, Sinha said: "Primary education and secondary education has been grossly neglected. The government should take stock of the situation."

Sinha wants the education commission to follow the model of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC), which was established in June last year by the Centre. With the country likely to have the largest population of youth in the coming decade, NKC has been assigned the task of framing policies, which would use the knowledge and power of the youth for social and economic empowerment of the country.

The proposed commission, Sinha said, should have representatives from all walks of life. "The commission should have representation from the industry, students, researchers, authors, thinkers and intellectuals. Together, they should make suggestions to the government on new and job-oriented courses. The commission should also advise the government on ways to improve the image and profile of the universities," he said.

Sinha blamed the poor education standard on the random appointment of part-time teachers in schools and colleges. "The commission would address these problems and guide the government to frame policies accordingly," Sinha said. The commission can also be given the task of setting and revising the syllabi and evolving methods of teaching for schools and colleges, he said.



13 MAY 2006

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Arjun rejects relook at quota

J. B. & C. L. 11-1 15/5

New Delhi: Unfazed by street protests over the issue of OBC quota, HRD minister Arjun Singh on Sunday rejected suggestions for a "relook" into the proposals for reservation in elite educational institutions and said it was up to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to decide when to bring the matter to the cabinet.

Singh, projecting himself as the champion of the cause, however, left it to the Union cabinet and parliament to take a decision on the matter. "This is entirely for the cabinet to decide. As soon as the Prime Minister allows it to come in the cabinet, a decision will be taken", he told reporters who wanted to know whether the bill in this regard would come up in the ongoing brief session of parliament.

Singh dismissed as "propaganda" attempts to project the anti-reservation agitation as "Mandal II". "There is no Mandal II, III or IV. It is all propaganda to vitiate the whole atmosphere."

At the same time, the HRD Minister said he was ready to talk to the agitating students. "I will always talk to the protesting students." Slamming the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) headed by Sam Pitroda, majority of whose members have rejected the quota proposal, Singh said "Well, with all due re-



A police officer kicks a protester during a demonstration by students from the medical, engineering and management colleges in Bangalore on Sunday



HRD minister Arjun Singh addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Sunday

spect to the great Knowledge Commission, I must point out to them that they are not above the Constitution. They do not need to speak to any of us. Let them decide and the country will follow them if they are above the Constitution", he said.

The NKC, which directly reports to the PM, continued to be his favourite punching bag as the HRD Minister said he could only "pity them". "They do not know that there is a Parliament and there is a law passed by Parliament also. If they are unaware, then I can only pity them", Singh said.

Asked about the strategy he would follow now in the wake of the agitation, he said there was no strategy and what was needed was understanding. "If there is no understanding in society, no strategy works. The issue can be resolved through talks. If those who did not get anything, they have to be given something, which is to be decided", he said.

The HRD minister sought to buttress his point by saying that no party was against the proposal which had been passed in the Lok Sabha with near unanimity. "If anyone wants to change his stance, they are free to do", he said. Singh parried several questions saying he would give clarifications, if asked, in the cabinet and parliament. "I cannot give outside".

Giving firm indications that he was determined to press the issue of OBC quota despite protests, Singh said "We are a democracy and not a banana republic. You cannot hijack the process and brow-beat me". AGENCIES

Medicos intensify stir, hospitals hit

New Delhi: The anti-reservation stir intensified in the national capital and several parts of the country on Sunday as medical students and junior doctors struck work, disrupting services at state-run hospitals.

About 100 students and resident doctors of five medical colleges began an indefinite hunger strike at the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here and medicos disrupted normal and emergency services in some facilities like RML Hospital. Official sources said emergency services in most hospitals were being run by senior doctors.

The medicos also intensified protests at Amritsar, Ahmedabad and Cuttack, Burla and Berhampur in Orissa, halting work and forcibly shutting OPDs of hospitals to protest the Centre's proposal to introduce a 27 per cent quota for OBCs in elite educational institutions.

Medical and engineering students in Bangalore staged a protest rally while students of the King George's Medical University in Lucknow wore black badges. Some 700 medicos attached to state-run medical colleges in Surat decided to observe a day-long strike on Monday.



Union health secretary P K Hota reviewed the situation in Delhi's hospitals at a high-level meeting and authorities were directed to maintain essential services. "We will issue notices to doctors that they are contractually bound to show up for work. The supreme court has also said hospital workers must not go on strike," Hota said.

Vinod Patro of the AIIMS Resident Doctors Association, said, "We will continue our hunger strike and will not attend our duties." The Indian Medical Association (IMA), which has called a "total medical bandh" in Delhi on Monday. AGENCIES

State orders probe into lathi-charge

Mumbai: Maharashtra government has ordered an inquiry into the lathi-charge on medical students here who were protesting against the Centre's proposal for reservation in institutions of higher learning.

Mumbai police commissioner A N Roy has been asked to conduct the probe and submit a report within a week, chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh told reporters. "From the visuals we have seen on TV screens, it looks like excessive force was used against the agitating students," the chief minister said.

Police had used batons to disperse a group of medical students who blocked roads at busy Walkeshwar near Raj Bhavan in south Mumbai on Saturday. "The students were agitating for their cause. At times like these, precaution should be taken," he said. There would be a "full inquiry" of the incident and action taken against the guilty, Deshmukh said.

"Reservations have existed in the state for a long time", he said. AGENCIES

No UGC-NET for PhD degree holders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 17

THOSE with M Phil and Ph.D degrees will no longer need to qualify the National Eligibility Test (NET) to teach undergraduate courses. However, for teaching postgraduate courses, only PhD-holders have been exempted from NET.

Yesterday, the University Grants Commission decided in-principle to accept the recommendations of interim report of the Mungekar Committee which had asked for exemption from NET to candidates having M.Phil and PhD degrees, UGC chairperson Sukhdeo Thorat said.

AT A GLANCE

- Increase in number of scholarships for Ph.D students, post-doctoral scholars and research associates.
- UGC to provide scholarships for single girl children, socially marginalised group.
- UGC to give financial support to academic associations.

The date of implementation would be decided once the detailed report comes in, he said.

According to Thorat, there were around 1,500 teaching posts lying vacant in central universities and efforts were being made to fill them on a

priority basis. The Commission has also decided to increase the number of scholarships for PhD students, post-doctoral scholars and research associates in science and social science streams. "The total plan allocation for increasing scholarship amount is Rs 60 crore," Thorat said.

The UGC has also decided to give financial support to academic associations in science, humanities and social sciences to help them organise academic conferences on issues related to higher education and to provide feedback to the UGC in their areas of specialisation.

Besides this, the UGC will

also provide scholarships for single girl children, socially marginalised groups and general category students who are university toppers.

Recognising the problems of universities and colleges in utilising grants, it had taken a major initiative to approve its budget in the first week of April 2006, Thorat said.

The budget has been communicated to central and state universities and six regional offices of UGC so that they could plan the utilisation of funds accordingly, he said. The UGC would also begin monthly monitoring of fund use so that institutions are not rushed at the end of the fiscal year.

18 MAY 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

মূল্যায়নের মূল্য বিচার

সপ্তম বামফ্রন্ট সরকার দায়িত্বভার গ্রহণ করিবার অব্যবহিত পরেই ন্যাশনাল অ্যাসেসমেন্ট অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল বা 'নাক' প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজকে 'এ+' মান প্রাপ্ত মহাবিদ্যালয় বলিয়া ঘোষণা করিয়াছে। সপ্তম বামফ্রন্ট সরকারের শপথ গ্রহণ ও প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজের 'এ+' প্রাপ্তি এই বিষয় দু'টির মধ্যে কোনও প্রত্যক্ষ যোগ নাই, তবে সমাপতনটি তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ। বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্যের নেতৃত্বে যে সরকার এফগে দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত, সেই সরকারের ভাবনাচিন্তায় ও সংলাপে 'উচ্চশিক্ষার' বিষয়টি বারে বারে উঠিয়া আসিতেছে। নবনির্বাচিত সরকার উচ্চশিক্ষার দুর্বলতাগুলি দূরীভূত করিতে চাহেন, ইহা অন্তত মৌখিক ভাবে কবুল করিয়াছেন। উচ্চশিক্ষার দুর্বলতা দূরীকরণ ও প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজের 'এ+' প্রাপ্তি এই দুইয়ের মধ্যে যোগ রহিয়াছে।

'নাক' কোনও শিক্ষালয়কে যাচাই করিবার সময় শিক্ষার সার্বিক পরিকাঠামোর দিকটি খেয়াল রাখিতে চায়। শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের পরীক্ষার ফলই তাঁহাদের কেবল বিচার্য বিষয় নহে, গ্রন্থাগার, সংস্কৃতি, খেলাহুলা, ছাত্র-শিক্ষক সম্পর্ক, প্রাক্তন ছাত্রদের কৃতিত্ব, ছাত্রদের সামাজিকতা, এ সবও তাঁহাদের বিবেচ্য। প্রতি ক্ষেত্রের জন্য পৃথক মূল্যমান রহিয়াছে, সব মিলাইয়া প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজ 'এ+' পাইয়াছে। ইহা অস্বীকার করিবার উপায় নাই, 'নাক' প্রদত্ত শিক্ষালয়ের মান পরিমাপক নিক্তিগুলি বহু ক্ষেত্রেই যান্ত্রিক, কোনও কোনও ক্ষেত্রে নিয়ম রক্ষায় পর্যবসিত, তবু এই মূল্যায়ন গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজের ক্ষেত্রে 'নাক' মূল্যায়নের পাশাপাশি ভবিষ্য পদক্ষেপ সম্বন্ধে কিছু সুপারিশও করিয়াছে। এই সুপারিশের মধ্যে অন্যতম হইল প্রেসিডেন্সির স্বশাসন। এই স্বশাসন সুপারিশের বাস্তবায়ন সপ্তম বামফ্রন্ট সরকারের শিক্ষাচিন্তার সহিত সংযুক্ত।

প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজ স্বশাসন লাভ করিলে পাঠ্যসূচি প্রণয়ন, শিক্ষক নিয়োগ প্রভৃতি ক্ষেত্রে কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ও শিক্ষক নিয়োগ পর্যদের আধিপত্য ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিবে। পশ্চিমবঙ্গের শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থায় বর্তমানে সর্বাপেক্ষা বৃহৎ গলদটি ক্ষমতার কেন্দ্রীভবনের মধ্যে নিহিত রহিয়াছে। কেন্দ্রীভূত ক্ষমতা এক স্থিতিশীল মাঝারি মানের শিক্ষাব্যবস্থা কায়ম করিয়াছে। যে শিক্ষাব্যবস্থা কেন্দ্রীভূত ও নির্বাচনের স্বাধীনতার পরিবর্তে কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যবস্থাপনার পক্ষপাতী, সেই শিক্ষাব্যবস্থায় বহুমুখী যোগ্যতার বৈচিত্র ও মর্যাদা স্বীকার করা হয় না। প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজ স্বশাসিত হইলে শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রে যোগ্যতার স্বাধীন পদক্ষেপ সম্ভব হইবে। পাশাপাশি ইহাও ভাবা হইতেছে, বিশিষ্ট প্রাক্তনীদের মধ্য হইতে 'অ্যাডজাংক্ট প্রফেসর' হিসাবে কেহ কেহ এই কলেজের পঠন-পাঠনের সহিত যুক্ত হইবেন। প্রেসিডেন্সির বহু প্রাক্তন ছাত্রই বিদেশে নানা স্থানে শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রে যুক্ত। কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের 'একমাত্রিক' পাঠক্রমের পরিবর্তে স্বশাসিত প্রেসিডেন্সির 'বহুমাত্রিক' পাঠক্রম তাঁহাদের বিবিধ যোগ্যতা প্রদর্শনের অনুকূল হইতে পারে। ইহাতে শিক্ষার সার্বিক মানোন্নয়ন ঘটিবে। প্রশ্ন হইল, প্রেসিডেন্সি কি সার্বিক স্বশাসন পাইবে? এই প্রশ্নের সদর্থক উত্তর রাজ্য সরকারের শিক্ষানীতির সহিত সম্বন্ধযুক্ত। শিল্পক্ষেত্রে পুঁজি আকর্ষণের নিমিত্ত রাজ্য সরকার যেমন নেতিবাচক নিয়ন্ত্রণ শিথিল করিয়া ইতিবাচক পরিকাঠামো নির্মাণে উদ্যোগী হইয়াছে, অনুরূপে শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রেও তাঁহারা যদি স্বাধীন ও বিকেন্দ্রীভূত উদ্যোগের পক্ষপাতী হয়, তাহা হইলে শিক্ষারও মানোন্নয়ন ঘটিবে।

25 MAY 2008

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

Govt has backstabbed us, say striking doctors

New Delhi: Agitating anti-reservation doctors on Wednesday charged they were "backstabbed" by the UPA-Left co-ordination committee's "outrageous" decision to introduce OBC quota from next year and resolved to continue their strike.

"There is no chance of going back. The strike will continue," said Amitasha Sinha, a student of Lady Hardinge Medical College and representative of Youth for Equality which is spearheading the agitation. She alleged the government has "backstabbed" them with its decision to implement the quota for OBCs in the academic year beginning June 2007. "For the past ten days, they have been beating around the bush. The government has been playing with us by assuring an amicable solution and announcing something else," Sinha said.

Another representative of the Forum termed the government decision "outrageous". "The decision is outrageous and audacious," Dr Shashmit Sarangi said. After the UPA-Left announced their decision, the striking doctors went into a huddle to discuss its ramifications. As the medics' strike against the government's reservation proposal entered the

13th day on Wednesday, agitating medics took up the task of trying to thwart the recruitment drive launched by the government to replace them in the strike-affected hospitals.

The interviews at Safdarjung Hospital were postponed as the protesting doctors went to different hospitals trying to convince candidates arriving for walk-in interviews to return. "We have postponed the interviews for resident doctors," Medical Superintendent of Safdarjung Hospital R S Salhan said.

"Three persons had come to Safdarjung Hospital for interview, but we convinced them against it and they have joined us," Dr Kumar Harsh from AIIMS Resident Doctors Association said. A senior government official said interviews were on for recruiting doctors in hospitals like Safdarjung, LNJP, Maulana Azad Medical College and GTB where the services have been badly affected due to the medics' strike.

Meanwhile, no action has been taken by the government towards eviction of the doctors from hostels. The medical students' indefinite hunger strike in the capital entered the 11th day as the protesters planned a march in the AIIMS campus. AGENCIES

Quota for Muslims, Christians in TN

Chennai: Tamil Nadu assembly will pass a resolution during its current session to convey its full support to the Centre in implementing 27 per cent reservation for OBCs in elite educational institutions. A legislation to provide reservation for Christians and Muslims in educational institutions and in government services would also be introduced soon. The government would also bring in a legislation during the session for providing mandatory reservation for Dalits and other backward classes in unaided non-minority self-financing educational institutions, governor S S Barnala announced in the state assembly. TNN & AGENCIES

25 MAY 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

End stir, Court tells students

8-10-1 20/15 9-5-2006 8 10/10/06

Won't stay 93rd Amendment Act, but issues notice to Centre, States on PIL

Siddharth Narrain

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay the 93rd Constitutional Amendment Act, but issued notice to the Central Government, the States and the Union Territories on a public interest litigation (PIL) petition challenging the Amendment's validity.

The Amendment is the basis of the Centre's plans to extend 27 per cent reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in institutions of higher learning.

A two-judge vacation Bench, comprising Justices Arijit Pasayat and Lokeshwar Singh Pant, asked the Centre to explain the modalities for implementing its proposal.

Mr. Justice Pasayat said the anti-reservation protesters should end their agitation as the matter was before the Court. "Now that we are examining this, there is no point in the agitation."

Two petitions

The court issued notice on the PIL petition by educator and business consultant Shiv Khera and on another by Supreme Court senior counsel Ashoka Kumar Thakur, seeking the Court's intervention to ensure that the Centre submitted all relevant reports and data on which it had based its decision.

Mr. Thakur's petition challenged the basis of the Mandal Commission's conclusion that OBCs constituted 52 per cent of the total population. The National Sample Survey Organisation had estimated it as 32 per cent and the National Family Health Survey 29.8 per cent, it said.

The Court issued notice to six Union Ministries — Social Justice and Empowerment, Human

Resource Development, Statistics and Programme Implementation, Science and Technology, Commerce and Industry, and Health and Family Welfare. It also issued notice to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The Court asked the Centre to explain the basis on which it had fixed the norms for determining who belonged to the OBC. "If you are going to implement these provisions [for reservations for the OBCs], what are the modalities you are going to adopt and the rationale for fixing these norms," Mr. Justice Pasayat asked Additional Solicitor-General Gopal Subramaniam.

"It is contended that the adoption of this policy will divide the country on caste basis. This will have ramifications for the social and political fabric of the country, and the Court will consider this issue later," he said.

Mr. Subramaniam said the points raised by the Court were about the question of "creamy layer." Mr. Khera's counsel Prashant Kumar told the Court "the entire youth of the nation were looking to it for protection."

Rejoinder in six weeks

The court gave the Centre six weeks to file a rejoinder.

Mr. Khera pleaded for a direction to the Centre not to implement any law in pursuance of the 93rd Amendment Act while the petition was pending. He challenged the constitutionality of the Act, saying it was discriminatory and violated the fundamental right to equality.

Editorial on Page 10
BJP supports quota: Page 12

30 MAY 2006

THE HINDU

On quota, Congress to wait and watch



Medical students at a protest rally against quotas in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

VARGHESE K GEORGE
NEW DELHI, MAY 2

HRD Minister Arjun Singh has said the Election Commission has "sealed his lips" on the quota question but the Congress is seeing the stalemate as an opportunity to test the waters to see if the issue has political dividends to offer.

Senior leaders say the party would like to see if there is an "appreciation by the OBCs that the party is doing something for them"; it has already seen the backlash from those who believe the proposal will hit their chances for admission at educational institutions. Rather than settling the issue soon, the

Congress would, perhaps, want it to linger, eventually creating a backward-Dalit consolidation. "If we were to do it, there is no point in doing it silently," said a party source.

For now, it is wait and watch. Congress president Sonia Gandhi has said nothing on the issue during her election campaigns in five states. Congress Ministers give confusing statements while the party's official spokespersons give benign responses such as "it is a commitment in the common minimum programme". Rahul Gandhi, who is managing the campaign for his mother Sonia in Rae Bareilly, said last week that the quota issue was "com-

plex" and that both sides of the debate had valid points.

PM Manmohan Singh has tried to give direction to the noises by suggesting in his recent speeches, "excellence and equity together", and requesting industries for "voluntary affirmative action".

The debate has, meanwhile, grown outside the political spectrum. "We hear the voice of the people opposed to quotas. People who benefit from quotas also may have some thing to say," a senior leader told *The Indian Express*.

The bypoll results in Rae Bareilly might also have something to do with the issue. If Sonia's re-election in Rae

Pawar backs Arjun's move

PUNE: Following in the footsteps of Finance Minister P Chidambaram, Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar on Monday came out in support of Union HRD Minister Arjun Singh's proposal on reservations in educational institutes. Pawar said, "Maharashtra Government and educational institutes in the State should take a lead in this direction and set an example for other states."

Saying there was no point in arguing over directives of the Supreme Court on reservation policies, Pawar urged the state government and educational institutes to amend the laws to enable reservations in educational institutions.

"Even if the Centre fails to take initiative, the State government should make its own policies and provide reservations for backward classes," he said. Pawar said the country was not taking enough steps at present to bring into the mainstream those who have been deprived of education. — EMS

Bareilly is spectacular — as the party hopes it will — then it will venture into quota politics in the state. If the party does gain sympathy from OBCs in the heartland of Mandal politics, it will get aggressive on quotas. Otherwise, the issue might get a silent burial.

The big ticket question, however, is not about IITs or IIMs, but reservation in the private sector. On this again, the party has avoided a clear stand so far. The NCMP talks of "affirmative action including reservation".

The Group of Ministers (GoM) on the issue refused to make a firm recommendation, but did not rule out legislation.

03 MAY 2005

Delhi medical students protest against quota

"New 27 per cent reservation plan for OBCs will affect quality of health professionals"

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Over 200 students from five leading medical colleges of Delhi — All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, Lady Hardinge Medical College, Maulana Azad Medical College, University College of Medical Sciences and Vardhaman Mahavir Medical College — held a daylong anti-reservation demonstration in the heart of the Capital on Wednesday.

The students, protesting against the Government's proposed reservation policy for Other Backward Classes in Central universities and institutes of higher learning, were rounded up and packed off in police buses early on Wednesday from Aurobindo Marg when they tried to march towards the residence of Union Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh.

Peaceful rally planned

Carrying banners and placards, the students claimed that they had planned a peaceful rally and wanted to meet the Minister to demand withdrawal of the proposed reservation policy. They claimed that they were roughed up by the police and sent off to Jantar Mantar.

In the evening, the protesters again assembled under the banner of "Youth For Equality" and began marching down the busy Janpath demanding that HRD



UP AGAINST QUOTA: The scene on Parliament Street in New Delhi on Wednesday as police try to stop marching students protesting against reservations, with water cannons in full flow. (SEE ALSO PAGE 13)

Ministry officials hear them out. The police used water cannon and tear gas to disperse them.

Students determined

"The police used force to prevent us from demonstrating in front of the HRD Minister's house and some students from Lady Hardinge Medical College were injured. But we are determined to carry on with the protest till HRD Ministry officials give us a hearing," said Anirudh Lochan, a student of University

College of Medical Sciences.

"The recent recommendation to create a 27 per cent quota for Other Backward Classes will tell on the quality of health professionals in this country. The new policy will further decrease the number of seats available on the basis of merit," argued a student of Lady Hardinge Medical College.

The student representatives claimed that they would now contact their counterparts in other medical and professional

- Scores of students arrested and later released

- They want HRD Minister to hear them

- Tear gas and water cannon used to disperse protesters

institutions across the country to garner support for their cause. Also, they claimed that they would boycott classes from Thursday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Anand Mohan said: "The students were picked up from Aurobindo Marg, some distance away from the HRD Minister's residence, and brought to Jantar Mantar. They later shifted from Jantar Mantar to Janpath where they blocked the road and tried to reach the Minister's house again. We had to use tear gas and water cannon to disperse them."

The students are demanding an apology from the police.

"We were pushed into a bus and brought to Jantar Mantar from Aurobindo Marg. When we shifted to Janpath, the police used tear gas and water cannon. We want to assert that we are doctors who will serve the country and not hooligans," said a protesting student.

শিক্ষার নামে

ছাত্রদের কাছে তুলিয়া মই কাড়িয়া লওয়ার কাজটিতে এ রাজ্যের শিক্ষাব্যবস্থা বেনজির দৃষ্টান্ত স্থাপন করিয়া চলিয়াছে। উত্তরবঙ্গের আটটি শিক্ষক প্রশিক্ষণ কলেজের অনুমোদন বাতিল হইবার ফলে শতাধিক ছাত্র যে দশায় পড়িয়াছে, তাহা দেখিয়া বৎসর খানেক পূর্বের সেই মেডিক্যাল ছাত্রদের কথা মনে পড়িতে বাধা, যাহারা জয়েন্ট এন্ট্রান্স পাশ না করিয়া স্বাস্থ্য দফতর পরিচালিত পরীক্ষায় পাশ করিয়া এম বি বি এস পড়িতে শুরু করিয়াছিল। শিক্ষাপর্ষের মাঝপথে এস এস কে এম এবং মেদিনীপুর মেডিক্যাল কলেজ হইতে বিতাড়িত হইবার পর সেই ছাত্রদের অনশনকরণ মুখ, মুখামন্ত্রী কাছে তাহাদের কাতর অনুরোধ, আজও কেহ বিস্মৃত হয় নাই। আজ সেই একই অনশন-কুশপ্তলিকা দহন-বিক্ষেভ প্রদর্শনের ঘটনাগুলির পুনরাবৃত্তি হইতেছে। সে বারও প্রশাসনিক কর্তারা দায়িত্ব অস্বীকার করিয়া আদালতের দিকে আঙুল দেখাইয়াছিলেন, এ বারও তাই দেখাইতেছেন। সে বারও পাস্ত্রমন্ত্রী, স্বাস্থ্যসচিবের শাস্তি হয় নাই, এ বারও উত্তরবঙ্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপাচার্য অথবা স্বাস্থ্য দফতরের সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্তাদের শাস্তি হইবার কোনও সম্ভাবনা দেখা যাইতেছে না। এমনকী, কাহার দোষে ছাত্রগুলি এরূপ আতান্তরে পড়িল, তাহা তদন্ত করিবার কোনও উদ্যোগও দৃষ্ট হইতেছে না। অথচ উত্তরবঙ্গের ছাত্রদের সহিত যাহা ঘটিয়াছে, তাহা একান্ত আইনবিরোধী এবং অনৈতিক ন্যাশনাল কাউন্সিল অব টিচার্স এডুকেশন (এন সি টি ই) আইনে স্পষ্টই বলা হইয়াছে যে, ১৯৯৫ সালের পর হইতে এন সি টি ই-র অনুমোদন ভিন্ন কোনও কলেজ 'বি এড' বিষয়টি পড়াইতে পারিবে না। উত্তরবঙ্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় তাহা হইলে অনুমোদনহীন কলেজকে কী রূপে স্বীকৃতি দিয়াছে? যদি এক বৎসরের মধ্যে এন সি টি ই-র অনুমোদন পাইবে, এইরূপ শর্তসাপেক্ষে স্বীকৃতি দিয়া থাকে, তাহা হইলে চার বৎসর পরেও কেন স্বীকৃতি বাতিল করে নাই? উপাচার্য সংবাদমাধ্যমের কাছে এন সি টি ই-র অনুমোদন এবং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের স্বীকৃতি, এ দুটিকে পৃথক করিয়া দেখাইয়া নিজের দায় অস্বীকার করিতেছেন। ইহা অর্থহীন এবং বিভ্রান্তিকর। নৈতিক দায় তিনি অস্বীকার করিতে পারেন না। আদালতও ক্ষতিপূরণের নির্দেশ দিয়া নৈতিক দায়বদ্ধতার ইঙ্গিতই করিয়াছে। অবশ্য ছাত্রদের ক্ষতি যাহা হইয়াছে, তাহার সামান্যই ইহাতে পূরণ হইবে। জীবিকা অর্জনের জন্য চার বৎসরের পরিশ্রম এবং প্রস্তুতি সম্পূর্ণ ধূলিসাৎ হইয়াছে, ইহার পর তাহারা কী উপায়ে চাকুরি ক্ষেত্রে প্রবেশ করিবে? যে অমূল্য সময় নষ্ট হইয়াছে, তাহার ক্ষতিপূরণ কোনও টাকার অঙ্কেই সম্ভব নহে।

এই অবস্থা আর চলিতে দেওয়া চলে না। শিক্ষা এমন একটি ক্ষেত্র যেখানে লিপুল পরিমাণ বেসরকারি পুঁজি বিনিয়োগ হইতেছে। ইহা স্বাগত, কিন্তু সেই সঙ্গে ছাত্র-ছাত্রীরা যাহাতে প্রভাবিত না হয়, শিক্ষার মান যাহাতে নিয়ন্ত্রণে থাকে, তাহার দিকে নজর রাখা একান্ত জরুরি। কিন্তু তাহা হইতেছে না। বেসরকারি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং কলেজ লইয়া পূর্বেই নানা সমস্যা দেখা দিয়াছিল। কমপিউটার চালনা এবং তথ্যপ্রযুক্তি শিখাইবার প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলি লইয়াও বিভিন্ন অভিযোগ। বিকল্প চিকিৎসাপ্রণালী শিখাইবার অনুমোদনহীন নানা প্রতিষ্ঠান নানা কাল্পনিক ডিগ্রি দিতেছে। কিছু দিন পূর্বে বিমানসেবিকা প্রশিক্ষণের একটি প্রতিষ্ঠান এরূপ জুয়াচুরির দায়ে ধরা পড়িয়াছে। আদালত বরাবরই এইরূপ 'শিক্ষার বিপণি' খুলিয়া বসিবার কড়া সমালোচনা করিয়াছে। দুঃখের বিষয়, প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলির দোষে বার বারই শাস্তি পাইতেছে ছাত্ররা। তাহাদের অর্থ, উদ্যোগ, সময়, সকলই বিফল হইতেছে। এখন প্রশ্ন, উত্তরবঙ্গের আটটি কলেজে যাহা ঘটিয়াছে, তাহা কি কেবল এই অন্যান্যের আরও একটি উদাহরণ হইয়াই রহিয়া যাইবে? ওই কলেজগুলিকে দৃষ্টান্তমূলক শাস্তি দিতে হইবে, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভূমিকা লইয়াও বিশেষ তদন্ত এখনই হইবে। এই ঘটনা বরং প্রতিকারের প্রথম দৃষ্টান্ত হইয়া থাকুক।

Teachers lose degrees with B Ed college ban

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, April 19

THOUSANDS OF secondary and higher secondary teachers stand to lose their jobs with the Calcutta High Court having derecognised the colleges from where they obtained their B Ed. Hundreds of would-be teachers — students of eight B Ed colleges affiliated to the North Bengal University (NBU) — too stand to lose a year. The court ruled that these colleges (see box) were not recognised by the National Council of Teachers Education (NCTE).

Chief justice V.S. Sirpurkar and justice A.K. Ganguly restrained the derecognised colleges from conducting any examination or admitting students.

"There are over 80 B Ed colleges affiliated to 8 universities in Bengal. But only 31 colleges have the requisite NCTE recognition," said council advocate Asha G. Gutgutia.

The colleges were held accountable for admitting the students. They have been directed to return to each student the fee he/she had paid. They will also have to pay, within three months, a compensation of Rs 5,000 to each student. The colleges had admitted over 100 students per session, charging each Rs 22,000 apart from Rs 20,000 as capitation.

The judges held the students equally responsible. "If they had been careful they wouldn't have joined these illegal colleges. We are aware they are going to lose a year. However, the law must prevail," they said.

After all, the NCTE had in a public notice on October 7 advised students to verify the status of institutes before applying. It had stated that B Ed qualification "obtained from an institution not recognised by NCTE will not be valid for employment under any government, university, college, school or other educational body". The notice had also been sent to universities in the eastern region.

Indicting the universities and unrecog-

The Group of Eight

Gangarampur B Ed College, South Dinajpur

Satish B Ed College, Malda

Raiganj B Ed College, North Dinajpur

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad B Ed College, Itahar, North Dinajpur

Eastern Dooars B Ed Training College, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri

Falakata B Ed College, Falakata, Jalpaiguri

AC Training College, Jalpaiguri

Cooch Behar B Ed College, Cooch Behar

sed colleges for deceiving, depriving and exploiting thousands of students, the judges said: "It is clear that these colleges have acted in flagrant disregard of the NCTE Act. They should not have admitted poor students merely on the basis of affiliation granted by the universities in patent violation of Act."

"If these colleges turn into a teachers' manufacturing industry... the end product is bound to be affected. We cannot imagine such teachers teaching young students... The students who take up admission in B Ed colleges are mostly from the middle or lower middle class families", the judges said in their 40-page judgement.

Tulsi Bakshi, a social activist, had filed a PIL for closure of unrecognised B Ed colleges in North Bengal. The petitioner's advocate, Dipankar Dutta, had said: "These colleges didn't have NCTE recognition to offer B Ed. And some didn't even have required infrastructure." Under NCTE Act 1993, the North Bengal University cannot grant affiliation to any B Ed college not having NCTE recognition, Dutta had said.

PM calls for quota in pvt sector at CII meet

New Delhi: With apparently the controversy on the Narmada dam fresh in his mind, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday made a strong plea for striking a balance between development and rehabilitation and to evolve credible mechanisms so that such issues do "not degenerate into confrontations" between sections of society.

He also spoke on the issue of reservation in private sector asking the business and industry to make the employee-profile broadbased and representative through "affirmative" action.

"I think the time has come to squarely address the issue of development, displacement and environment... We need to quickly evolve credible mechanisms, whereby these issues do not degenerate into confrontations between sections of our society," the PM said addressing the CII national conference.

He wanted development to be done in the most cost-effective, environment-friendly

and least disruptive manner so that it was not perceived as a threat to people's lives and habitats. On the environmental consequences of industrial development, he wanted the industry to pay more attention to the rehabilitation of people displaced by the spread of industrial activity and by urbanisation.

"I think the time has come to squarely address the issue of development, displacement and environment. Expanding the pie through rapid economic development is essential if we have to meet the challenge of eliminating chronic poverty, ignorance and disease," he said.

Singh said the country was frequently faced with situations where developmental activities displaced people from their traditional habitat, vocations and lifestyles.

With the industry and business not very comfortable on the issue of reservation in private sector, Singh told them to give more attention to social and economic discrimination.

Agencies



14/11/2005

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Protecting islands of excellence

The proposal of the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development to extend reservations to the other backward classes (OBCs) in Central educational institutions, including the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Management, has come under sharp focus for the wrong reason — the supposed violation of the model code of conduct by HRD Minister Arjun Singh. Clearly in this case, the Election Commission has overreached itself in asking for an explanation. For quite apart from the fact that there was no announcement of any concession — the Ministry's proposal is still to be considered by the Cabinet — it would be strange if any of the Union Government's activities were to be brought to a standstill during the long run-up to the State Assembly elections. The non-issue raised by the Election Commission has also proved to be distracting, and has stilled a wider democratic debate on the merits of the HRD Ministry's proposal. The move to extend reservations in Central educational institutions to the OBCs comes in the wake of the Constitution Ninety Third Amendment. This enables the state to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of students in "educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than minority educational institutions." This amendment was a reaction to the Supreme Court ruling that the state cannot extend reservations to any private, unaided educational institutions nor can it insist on a government quota in the admissions.

It needs to be noted that the amendment is an enabling provision empowering the state to extend reservations to the OBCs. It does not mandate reservations in any class of institutions, and the question still remains a public policy choice. If the HRD Ministry has now set its eyes on the IITs and the IIMs as institutions where reservations for OBCs to the extent of 27 per cent are to be extended on top of the existing 22.5 per cent for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, it is certainly a matter for concern. The IITs and the IIMs with their uncompromising entrance-examination-based admissions are among the most selective university systems in the world, and their students as well as the quality of training are regarded highly in international academia. It is a tribute to enlightened public policy that it has allowed these islands of excellence to flourish, with their standards uncompromised by the pursuit of even laudable social objectives. Affirmative action and reservations do involve a lowering of the bar in the admissions process, and there are certain areas such as the defence services and higher specialities in medicine and engineering where it has always been recognised that academic merit alone should count to the exclusion of all other criteria. The IITs and the IIMs certainly belong to this critically important category and the larger public interest dictates that they take in the very best and train them to standards that are second to none internationally. Rather than extending OBC reservations to these institutions, the cause of the socially and educationally backward will be better served by programmes to help them prepare and enter in larger numbers after meeting the stringent entrance requirements.

EC notice on quota proposal

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 8. — The controversy over the human resources development minister, Mr Arjun Singh, proposing increased reservation for admission to IITs, IIMs and Central institutions has intensified with the Election Commission holding that the announcement violated the model code of conduct in force for the Assembly polls in five states. And this comes when thousands of students are preparing for the IIT entrance examination tomorrow.

Taking suo motu cognizance of the remarks by Mr Arjun Singh, the EC today served a notice on the Union government to explain the proposed reservation for OBCs in Central educational institutions.

The EC asked the Cabinet secretary to furnish a detailed reply from Mr Arjun Singh and forward it to the Commission before 5 p.m. on Monday. Prima facie considering it a violation of the model code of conduct, the EC said the announcement by Mr Arjun Singh amounts to new concessions to certain sections of the electorate in the poll-bound states.

A senior EC official said it is tantamount to violation of the model code of conduct despite the fact that all the announcements are mere proposals for prestigious education institutions funded by the Central gov-

Poll panel writes to Karat on Subhas

NEW DELHI, April 8. — The Election Commission has justified its action against the West Bengal minister, Mr Subhas Chakraborty.

In a letter to the CPI-M leader, Mr Prakash Karat, the EC said the criminal case against Mr Chakraborty was registered by the CEO in his individual capacity after seeking explanations from the party, the state government and Mr Chakraborty himself. **SNS**

Details on page 4

ernment. The Commission had already instructed the Union government to strictly adhere to the model code of conduct, he added.

In its letter to the Cabinet secretary, the EC has said the model code of conduct is applicable to the Centre as well as the poll-bound states, precluding the possibility of the Union government saying that the reservation was not for the five poll-bound states but for certain Central educational institutes.

"Ideally, the Union government should have avoided making such a statement, or if it was very important it could have consulted the Commission in advance as it did in the case of DA announcement," the EC official said.

NCERT books go online

By Anahita Mukherji
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

SSC Textbooks To Be Revamped

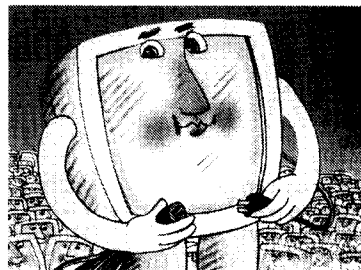
Mumbai: There won't be any need to scramble for new NCERT textbooks this year. For lakhs of students in CBSE schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas and Narodaya Vidyalayas, they are now just a click-of-the-mouse away. NCERT textbooks for the next academic year can simply be downloaded from the internet (www.ncert.nic.in).

With regular availability problems, it's a welcome move say principals of CBSE schools as well as students. "There has always been the problem of availability for NCERT textbooks, especially when there is a change in the syllabus," said Avnita Bir, principal, Ramniranjan Poddar High School, adding that the textbooks often didn't arrive on time.

Besides, putting them online means students and teachers across boards can access the textbooks. "This opens up a whole new range of possibilities. They can be accessed by teachers and students from all the boards. It will encourage students to refer to different textbooks," said Anita Rampal, the ebullient chairperson of the NCERT primary textbook committee.

"This will make studies so much easier," added Samruddhi Rao, a student of DAV school, adding that there are, usually serpentine queues to buy the books. Shradda Pai, a Std IX student from DAV, said she was glad she could start studying for the new academic year right away. "We were all waiting for the new

Mumbai: Taking a leaf out of the new-look NCERT textbooks, the state education department is all set to overhaul SSC textbooks to make them innovative and fun.



"The current textbooks stress primarily on rote learning, instead of encouraging analytical thinking," said education secretary Sumit Mullick, who held a meeting on the issue a few days ago. He plans to set up a committee to improve the textbooks by 2007.

Mullick said the curriculum would be project-based and would aim at encouraging students to ask more questions. He felt that if examination papers were more analytical, it would discourage cheating. "In fact we can also hold open book tests, wherein the answers cannot be lifted straight from the textbook but will require thinking," he added.

Mullick said textbooks do not reflect contemporary issues "such as domestic violence" and therefore they need to be updated. He also felt that the new textbooks should reflect the complexity of certain issues and how people have different perspectives on the same matter. "For example, a farmer and a politician will not see an issue in the same light," he explained. "I welcome the move. The current SSC textbooks are dry and not at all children-friendly, whereas CBSE and ICSE textbooks are much more advanced" said Fr Francis Swamy, principal of Holy Family High School, Andheri. TNN

NET GAIN

textbooks. We can start studying for competitive examinations right away if the Std X textbooks are online,"

she said.

A number of educationists too have spoken out in favour of online textbooks.

"If the entire foreign education system can be found online, then it's high time that a progressive board framework like the NCERT does it too," said M P Sharma, principal, GD Somani High School, an ICSE school. He plans to propose the use of online textbooks for the ICSE

board as well.

"Earlier, CBSE textbooks were confined to students from CBSE schools and their parents. Now everybody can access them," said Vinaya Deshpande, general secretary, Bharat Gyaan Vigyan Samyudyaya, adding that this would add to the democratisation of education. Inspired by the move, the Maharashtra government is seriously considering implementing such a system for the state board.

"We must put all our textbooks online," said state education secretary Sumit Mullick as this will make the system transparent.

07 APR 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

A new kind of history textbook

Sumit Sarkar

A FEW days ago, I came across the three History textbooks just brought out by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), for Classes VI, IX, and XI. I opened the second — *India and the Contemporary World*, from roughly the French Revolution to the mid-20th century — with the idea of just turning over some pages, for it was a very busy day for me. But soon I was engrossed, and could not stop reading till the end, so exciting did it seem, so different from what one expects from school or college textbooks. The other two books proved to be just as interesting. For reasons of space, however, let me dwell mainly on the second book.

What makes the new books such an unexpected pleasure to read — a feeling, I am sure, the students and their teachers will also share? Their physical appearance, first of all. The books are filled with illustrations, most of them in colour: photographs of historical sites, inscriptions, monuments, reproductions of paintings, posters and pages from leaflets: an immense range of visual material going back to the times being described. Thoughtful designing has achieved a sense of space, very different from the usual cramped, breathless impression one gets when reading history books, filled with closely packed text.

The books teach history in creative ways. There are extracts from contemporary documents, many of them of contrasting kinds: the French Declaration of the Rights of Man set beside Olympia de Gouges' feminist alternative, an official Soviet account of collectivisation alongside a letter from a peasant who hated the changes. Students are introduced to the basics of

Books just brought out by the NCERT teach history in creative ways. All themes are sought to be looked at from the angle of everyday life and its changing patterns, bringing history down from the distant skies, as it were.

historical research: both to documents and to understanding how open-ended historical reconstruction is. Every section is accompanied by questions and suggested classroom activities, visualising creative student-teacher interaction in place of enforced rote-learning. After reading about the coming of modern agriculture in England, students are asked to look at the previous, open field system from the points of view of a rich farmer, a labourer, and a peasant woman. An activity suggested after the chapter on Nazi Germany recommends writing one-page histories of it from the points of view of a schoolchild studying there, a Jewish survivor, and a political opponent of the regime. The chapter on the Roman Empire in the Class XI book on "Themes in World History" asks students to imagine the shopping list of a city housewife in those times. Let me add, though, that books like these will require a fundamental transformation also in the pattern of setting questions in CBSE examinations, which so long have been of a so-called 'objective' type, totally unsuitable at least for history, social sciences, and the humanities in general. I do hope that such changes will be brought about as quickly as possible.

What made such textbooks possible? Fundamentally, a simple innovation, pedagogically vi-

tal: the clear break with the earlier dominant assumption that textbooks must be 'comprehensive,' 'cover' all 'relevant' facts. Never mind the overcrowding, sheer boredom, rote-learning — followed by quick oblivion, as those of us who have been teachers at college or postgraduate levels have often encountered. One can anticipate that this will be the line possible critics of the new books will take, and they will find it easy enough to point to much that has been 'left out.' But the point surely is that no book, not just meant for schools but really at any level, can ever cover 'everything,' one always has to be selective. The need is to stimulate interest and curiosity, some understanding about what history today is really about and why it is important. The points or themes of entry here always suggest broader patterns. Some students might be stimulated to read further about them. To take an instance from Class VI, about Ancient India: giving comprehensive lists of archaeological sites relevant for a particular period may place a great burden on memory. Instead, one or two sites or inscriptions have been chosen here, but these are looked at in detail, with profuse illustrations followed by discussions about what can and cannot be inferred from them. Similarly, we have French and Russian Revolutions but not all the

19th century European revolutions; Nazi Germany but not Fascist Italy. These, however, are studied in profuse and interesting detail. An incidental gain is that the burden of dates gets reduced, particularly at lower levels. Time-charts are introduced in Class XI. They are divided according to continents, with an additional one for South Asia. They indicate at a glance that one must not assume a single, linear, pattern of development for all times and places.

But surely history has a special role in schools, its purpose is, above all, the promotion of 'national unity,' 'identity,' 'integration,' pride in one's country? And so should not every region and community be covered at the same level of detail, all prominent figures mentioned? To have all that all would consider important is not possible within any textbook, however voluminous. Moreover, there will always be conflicting political opinions about what is important and what is not. The choice will then depend on the dominant view of political correctness, and not on pedagogical needs or the logic of the subject. We saw some of these problems during Bharatiya Janata Party rule. But even state-of-the-art notions of history or progressive values need to be conveyed in interesting and interactive ways. Otherwise they remain facts and values that are memorised, reproduced, and then speedily forgotten, while the assumptions and stereotypes current in their immediate environment, often retrogressive or obscurantist, live on in the minds of the new generation. The approach of these books is very different. After a searing account of Nazi atrocities and the Holocaust, for instance, a question is posed about whether students have ever encountered stereotypes of other communities among people around them, and how they could have come about. I cannot think of a better way of providing a pointer towards the dangers of narrow identity politics of every kind, and the need for basic secular and human values.

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CARTOONSCAPE



More than trivia

Are not some chapters about 'trivial' things, though — what has a 'serious' history textbook to do with cricket, or the social history of clothing (Class IX)? On the contrary, students are bound to get interested as they discover that these, too, have histories, and so the subject is not about remote and dead matters alone. Both lead on to other themes, including more conventional ones the importance of which no one will deny. The handicrafts that declined under colonial rule, the mills of Lancashire and Bombay, were all inseparable from clothes and changing tastes about them, while at the core of Gandhian mass struggle lay boycott, the wearing of khadi, and the Mahatma's conversion to the loincloth.

The books quietly introduce students to many of the new ways in which history is developing in recent times. There are sections in all three volumes about the lives of hunters, foodgatherers, and pastoralists, and the ways in which their more interactive relations with nature have been disrupted in modern times: themes that recent environmental history foregrounds. Women are central to all the narratives. The section about clothing mentions its relations with social hierarchies: class in pre-Revolutionary France, or caste in South India. Above all, all themes are sought to be looked at from the angle of everyday life and its changing patterns, bringing history down from the distant skies, as it were. The crucial point emerges that literally everything, every kind of relationship, has histories. The social world, as Vico proclaimed in a foundation text of modern history almost three centuries ago, is made by human beings, not divinity or nature, and it can be changed, too, through human endeavour.

In all these ways, these textbooks both respect and enhance the students' imagination and critical thinking.

(The author is an eminent historian of modern India.)

Quota will cover AIIMS, med schools

SANCHITA Sharma
New Delhi, April 7

A FEW years from today, your life may rest in the hands of a doctor whose only claim to medical expertise is that he belongs to one of the other backward classes (OBCs).

The government has confirmed that it will introduce the controversial OBC quota in centrally funded medical institutes, too. OBCs will get 27 per cent of the seats of the MBBS, MD and MS courses, raising the combined reservation from 22.5 to 49.5 per cent.

As with IITs and IIMs, those heading the medical institutes have not openly criticised the move yet. Those who are grumbling include the Indian Medical Association, which plans to write to the

government requesting it not to sacrifice merit to populist politics.

"The quality of doctors churned out has to be maintained. We are talking about people who will be trained to save lives several times a day," said Dr Sanjiv Malik, national president of the IMA.

"They're giving reservations not only for MBBS but also for MD and MS. It's criminal, and stretching it too far," he said. He suggested an alternative: give OBC candidates some extra marks as a concession.

It is doubtful whether the institutes will get extra seats. Central universities are unlikely to, an admission by Union HRD minister Arjun Singh himself, while the health ministry will have to work out a plan for its institutes. IITs and IIMs may get additional seats as the Planning Com-

mission has already sanctioned money.

Kolkata's medical colleges have been spared as none of them is centrally funded. But from the next academic session, nearly half the seats will be reserved at Delhi's AIIMS, Mahavir Medical College (Safdarjung Hospital) and Lady Harding's Chandigarh's PGI, Lucknow's LPGPI and Pondicherry's Jipmer.

"These medical colleges are part of the central government-funded educational institutes and will introduce the quota for OBCs along with IITs and IIMs as proposed by the HRD ministry," health minister A. Ramadoss confirmed.

Health ministry sources said a policy was being formed. "Once that is done, we'll inform the colleges," health secretary Prasanna Hota said.

RESERVATION RULES

INSTITUTES

AIIMS, Mahavir Medical College, Lady Harding, PGI, LGPGI, Jipmer, apart from IITs, IIMs, central universities

KEY PLAYERS

- Arjun Singh dismisses opposition to the move, saying Parliament has passed a law with the knowledge of all concerned
- BJP says the information was released deliberately during election time. But why isn't it criticising the reservation?
- HRD ministry says central universities unlikely to get extra seats. IITs and IIMs might, fate of med schools uncertain

Related reports on Page 3

বুদ্ধের চাপেই বিল, স্বশাসনের পথে প্রেসিডেন্সি

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: মুখ্যমন্ত্রী
বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্য আরও এক ধাপ
এগোলেন।

বিধানসভায় বিল পাশ করে
কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আইনে
স্বশাসিত কলেজের সংস্থান করা হল।
মঙ্গলবার বিধানসভায় ওই বিল পেশ
করে উচ্চশিক্ষা মন্ত্রী সত্যসানন চক্রবর্তী
যা বলছেন, তাতে অচিরেই প্রেসিডেন্সি
কলেজে স্বশাসন পাওয়ার বিষয়টি স্পষ্ট
হয়ে যায়। এর আগে বিধানসভায়
দাঁড়িয়েই সত্যসাননবাবু স্বশাসনের প্রশ্নে
বিভিন্ন বাধার কথা বলেছিলেন। তার
পরেই মুখ্যমন্ত্রী জোরালো ভাবে জানিয়ে
দেন, প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজকে স্বশাসন
দেওয়ার সিদ্ধান্তে তিনি অনড় থাকবেন।
এমনকী এই ব্যাপারে প্রয়োজনে
হস্তক্ষেপ করবেন বলেও জানান তিনি।
মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর সে-দিনের মনোভাবের
জেরেই উচ্চশিক্ষা দফতর কলকাতা
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আইন সংশোধনের
ব্যাপারে জরুরি ভিত্তিতে ব্যবস্থা নেয়।
প্রেসিডেন্সিকে স্বশাসন দেওয়ার
ব্যাপারে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী নিজের মনোভাবের

কথা জানালেও এই ব্যাপারে দীর্ঘকাল
ধরে জোরালো আপত্তি ছিল আলিমুদ্দিন
স্ট্রিটের। সম্ভবত তার জেরেই সরকারি
কলেজ-শিক্ষক সমিতিও প্রেসিডেন্সির
স্বশাসন চায় না। কিন্তু শিক্ষার
ক্ষেত্রে উৎকর্ষকে
মাঝারিয়ানার
উপরে স্থান দিতে
বন্ধপরিকর বুদ্ধবাবু
ক্রমে এই ব্যাপারে
দলকেও সময়ের
প্রয়োজনের কথা
বোঝাতে সক্ষম
হয়েছেন।

এর পরিণতিতে
শিক্ষামন্ত্রীদের
কাউকেই এ বার নির্বাচনে প্রার্থী করেনি
সি পি এম। শিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে রাজ্যে
প্রয়োজনীয় অগ্রগতি যে হয়নি, বুদ্ধবাবু
বারবার স্বীকার করেছেন। তিনি যে
ছবিটা তিনি বদলাতে চান, একসঙ্গে পাঁচ
মন্ত্রীকে টিকিট না-দিয়ে তার ইঙ্গিত
দেওয়ার চেষ্টা করেন মুখ্যমন্ত্রী। ঘনিষ্ঠ
মহলে তিনি জানিয়েছেন, রাজ্যে শিল্প-

পরিবেশের সঙ্গে মানানসই উৎকর্ষ
কেন্দ্র গড়ে তোলার পথে তিনি আর
কোনও বাধাই মানবেন না।

প্রেসিডেন্সি, সেন্ট জেভিয়ার্সের
মতো কলেজের স্বশাসনের ব্যাপারে
মুখ্যমন্ত্রী যে আর
আপস করবেন না,
তা বুঝতে পেরে
উচ্চশিক্ষা দফতর
ছুটির দিনে বৈঠক
করেও কলকাতা
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের
আইন সংশোধন
সংক্রান্ত খসড়া
তৈরির চেষ্টা করে।
বুদ্ধবাবুর ভাষা যে



তার দল পড়তে পেরেছে, তার প্রমাণ
মেলে এ দিন বিধানসভায় উচ্চশিক্ষা
মন্ত্রীর কথায়। বিলটি পেশ করে
সত্যসাননবাবু জানান, প্রেসিডেন্সি
কলেজ স্বশাসন পাবেই। যে-উচ্চশিক্ষা
মন্ত্রী কিছু দিন আগে নানা বাধার কথা
জানিয়েছিলেন, মঙ্গলবার তাঁর কথাতেই
পরিষ্কার যে, মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর হস্তক্ষেপে যে

কাটছে। সত্যসাননবাবু এ দিন জানান,
শুধু প্রেসিডেন্সি নয়, রাজ্যের আরও
কয়েকটি কলেজ স্বশাসন পাবে।

এর আগে অবশ্য মুখ্যমন্ত্রী চাইলেও
আলিমুদ্দিন স্ট্রিট তথা সরকারি কলেজ-
শিক্ষক সমিতির আপত্তি থাকায়
প্রেসিডেন্সি-কর্তৃপক্ষ স্বশাসনের জন্য
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরি কমিশনের কাছে
আবেদনই করেননি। এমনকী কলেজ
যে স্বশাসন চায়, রাজ্য সরকারের কাছে
এমন ইচ্ছাও প্রকাশ করেননি। এই নিয়ে
শিক্ষাজগতের বিতর্ক ক্রমে রাজনৈতিক
মাত্রা পায়। প্রেসিডেন্সির আগেই সেন্ট
জেভিয়ার্স স্বশাসন পাওয়ায় অনেকেই
রাজ্য সরকারের সমালোচনা করেন।

তবে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী দ্ব্যর্থহীন ভাবে বুঝিয়ে
দেন, এই ব্যাপারে দলের অতীতের
অবস্থান থেকে সরে এসে রাজ্য সরকার
প্রেসিডেন্সিকে স্বশাসিত করবেই।
সম্প্রতি প্রেসিডেন্সি পরিদর্শনে এসে
নাক-এর বিশেষজ্ঞদল একে স্বশাসিত
করার প্রয়োজনের উপরে জোর
দেওয়ায় মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর মত আগের তুলনায়
আরও শক্ত জমির উপরে দাঁড়িয়েছে।

IIT Kanpur bags top American honour

NEHA Mehta
Agra, March 4

INDIA AND the US have entered into perhaps their most significant engineering partnership since the 1960s, when a consortium of nine American universities had helped set up IIT Kanpur.

Away from the glare of President Bush's visit, 25 top US engineers met 32 Indian counterparts here for the first Indo-US Frontiers of Engineering (FOE) meet, organised by the prestigious US National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and IIT-K.

The Indo-American Science and Technology Forum will award \$50,000 to two joint projects, conceptualised at the meet, in nanotechnology, wireless technology, natural disaster simulation and mitigation and the interface of biology and medicine.

America has such a partnership with only two other countries — Germany and Japan. Last year, India had become the fourth nation after Germany, Japan and China

to have a Frontiers of Sciences programme with the US National Academy of Sciences.

The FOE meet brought together engineers and scientists from the IITs,

IISc, NCBS, MIT, Harvard, GE and University of California. Most participants were under 45 and hailed as the "faces of tomorrow's technologies". It also marked the first time that an NRI — MIT professor Subra Suresh, one of the few Indians nominated to the NAE — served as the US co-chair of an FOE.

NAE president W.A. Wulf described the IIT graduates he had interacted with as "well-trained, highly motivated and possessing an excellent work ethic".

He said: "There is no distance between the quality of research at the best institutes in India and anywhere else in the world."

IIT-K director Sanjay Dhande said: "The FOE is the start of a trajectory of research collaborations between India and America, which will be very important for both nations in the coming decade."

India's hi-tech edge over US

No. of engineers produced every year by America

75,000

No. of engineers produced every year by India

3.5 lakh

No. of engineers produced every year by China

4.5 lakh

America now has 20 per cent fewer engineers than what it used to have 20 years ago

টাকাই সব নয়, কাজের স্বাধীনতা চাই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: টাকাই সব নয়। চাই মেধা। চাই জ্ঞান অন্বেষণের অনুকূল পরিস্থিতি। আর কাজ করার স্বাধীনতা।

কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে এখন এ সবেই অভাব। বাজেটে ১০০ কোটি টাকা বরাদ্দ হয়েছে বটে, কিন্তু টাকার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে অন্য পরিস্থিতিগুলি না তৈরি হলে দেড়শো বছরের পুরনো এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের পক্ষে আন্তর্জাতিক তো দূরস্থান, জাতীয় স্তরে উত্তরণও প্রায় অসম্ভব বলে মনে করছেন শিক্ষাবিদেরা। রাজনৈতিক নিয়ন্ত্রণ থেকে কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে মুক্ত করা যাবে, কি না তা নিয়েও ধন্দ রয়েছে ওই শিক্ষাবিদদের।

অনুদানের জন্য হা-পিতোশ করে বসে থাকা নয়। শিক্ষাবিদেরা মনে করেন, জাতীয় মানে উঠতে উপার্জনের রাস্তা খুঁজতেই হবে কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে। মাঝারিয়ানায় খুশি হয়ে বসে থাকলে হবে না। যে সব কুতী ছাত্র এখন থেকে পাশ করে আন্তর্জাতিক স্তরে উজ্জ্বল হয়েছেন, তাঁদের সকলকে না হোক, একটা বড় অংশকে টেনে আনতে হবে। শিক্ষাবিদেরা চান, নিজের পায়ের দাঁড়াতে কেন্দ্রের দেওয়া ১০০ কোটি টাকার সদ্ব্যবহার করুক কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়। যাতে কখনও আর কেন্দ্র, রাজ্য কিংবা ব্যক্তিগত অনুদানের দিকে তাকিয়ে থাকতে হবে না তাদের।

ঘুরে দাঁড়ানোর এমন সুযোগ আর কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পাবে না বলেই মনে করছেন শিক্ষাবিদেরা। এঁদের মধ্যে কেউ আন্তর্জাতিক মানের গবেষণা কেন্দ্রের প্রধান, কেউ নিজেই আন্তর্জাতিক খ্যাতিসম্পন্ন গবেষক, কেউ বা আবার এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েরই প্রাক্তন উপাচার্য। ওঁরা সকলেই চান, কেন্দ্রের দেওয়া ১০০ কোটি টাকাকে ভিত্তি করে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কাজের পরিবেশটাকেই পুরোপুরি বদলে দেওয়ার প্রক্রিয়া শুরু হোক। নিজস্ব প্রযুক্তি, গবেষণা বেচে সংগ্রহ করুক আরও অন্তত ১০০ কোটি টাকা। তা হলেই পরিষ্কার হয়ে যাবে দেড়শ বছরের পুরনো এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আর ঘুরে দাঁড়াতে পারবে কি না।

প্রবীণ চিন্তাবিদ শিবনারায়ণ রায় বলেন, “টাকা দিয়ে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের চরিত্র বদলানো যাবে না। দেশের জ্ঞানী, বিদ্বান ব্যক্তিদের সমাবেশ হয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে। এখানে সেই স্তরের লোক কোথায়? ছাত্রছাত্রীদের সঙ্গে সুসম্পর্ক বজায় রাখার দিকটিও এখানে উপেক্ষিত। আমি মনে করি, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে যাঁরা থাকবেন তাঁদের দুটি কাজ হওয়া উচিত। নতুন জ্ঞান অর্জন এবং সেই জ্ঞান নতুন প্রজন্মের কাছে পৌঁছে দেওয়া। এখানে তো লোকে রাজনৈতিক কারণে চাকরি পায়। এখানে সেই স্তরের লোক পাওয়া যাবে কী করে?”

তা হলে উপায়?

শিবনারায়ণবাবুর পরামর্শ, “আমি মনে করি, বহু পণ্ডিত মানুষ এখনও এ দেশে রয়েছেন। বহু পণ্ডিত মানুষ এই আবহাওয়ার জন্য বিদেশে চলে গিয়েছেন। তাঁদের ফিরিয়ে আনা

এর পর ছয়ের পাতায়

টাকাই সব নয়, স্বাধীনতা

প্রথম পাতার পর

দরকার। তবেই একমাত্র এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের মানোন্নয়ন সম্ভব।”

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় চালানোর অভিজ্ঞতার নিরিখে প্রাক্তন উপাচার্য সন্তোষ ভট্টাচার্য মনে করেন, “শুধু টাকা দিয়ে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উন্নতি সম্ভব নয়। উপাচার্য ও সহ-উপাচার্যদেরই স্বাধীন ভাবে কাজ করার ক্ষমতা কম। আর তাঁরা যাদের দিয়ে কাজ করাবেন তাঁদের তো ক্ষমতা প্রায় নেইই। ক্ষমতা থাকাটা খুব জরুরি।” শ্বেষের সঙ্গে তিনি বলেন, “যতই অনুদান বলা হোক, দান খয়রাতি তো হয় না, শর্ত থাকে। যারা টাকা দেয় তারা জানতে চায়, কোন খাতে টাকাটা খরচ হবে। কিন্তু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের হাতে তা রেডিমেড মজুত আছে বলে তো মনে হয় না।”

তবে এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে মেধাসম্পন্ন লোকের অভাব রয়েছে বলে মনে করেন না সন্তোষবাবু। তাঁর মন্তব্য, “বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পরিচালনার অভিজ্ঞতা দিয়ে বলতে পারি, আমার যে সব ছাত্র বিভিন্ন বিভাগে উচ্চপদে রয়েছেন, তাঁরা অনেকেই মেধার ক্ষেত্রে উচ্চমানের। কিন্তু কাজের পরিবেশ না থাকলে ওঁরা কী করবেন? কাজের স্বাধীনতাই তো এখানে নেই।”

তা হলে কি আর মানোন্নয়ন সম্ভব নয় এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের? সন্তোষবাবু তেমন ভাবতে রাজি নন। তিনি জানিয়ে দিয়েছেন, “চাই কাজের পরিবেশ। কাজের স্বাধীনতা। ক্ষমতা। আর একটা ব্যাপার আমি মনে করি, বিরাট সংখ্যক ছাত্র নিয়ে পড়াশোনা কিংবা গবেষণা কোনওটাই ভাল ভাবে হয় না।”

সতেন বসু জাতীয় মৌল বিজ্ঞান গবেষণা কেন্দ্রের প্রধান অভিজিৎ মুখোপাধ্যায় জোর দিয়েছেন প্রকৃত গবেষক খোঁজার বিষয়টিতে। তাঁর সাফ কথা, “যাঁরা বয়সে তরুণ, ভালো কাজ করছেন, তাঁদের বেছে বেছে নিয়ে আসতে হবে। ভালো কাজই হবে গবেষক নির্বাচনের একমাত্র মাপকাঠি। তা হলে আমরা আরও ভালো গবেষক পাব। গবেষণার উন্নতির জন্য টাকা নিশ্চয়ই দরকার। কিন্তু গবেষণা যাঁরা করবেন তাঁদের কাজের দক্ষতার উপরেই নির্ভর করবে সব কিছু।”

বিজ্ঞানী অশেষপ্রসাদ মিত্রের দাওয়াই, কলকাতায় যে বিজ্ঞান গবেষণাকেন্দ্রগুলি রয়েছে, তার সঙ্গে কলকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ‘নেটওয়ার্কিং’ করে নিতে পারলে ভাল কাজ করা সম্ভব। যে ১০০ কোটি পাওয়া গিয়েছে, তার সদ্ব্যবহার করা প্রয়োজন। তিনি এ ব্যাপারে মুখ্যমন্ত্রীকে চিঠি লিখবেন বলেও জানিয়েছেন অশেষবাবু।

Bonanza for Cal Univ

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, February 28

CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY will get Rs 100 crore from the Centre, a decision that bred immediate plans for an international network.

Unlike Lalu Prasad's railway budget, P. Chidambaram's budget has a lot of goodies for Bengal. The state will get a national jute board, a deep-sea port, a superfast expressway between Kolkata and Dhanbad and a Rs 100-crore grant for a special-purpose tea fund.

But the university grant was the icing on the cake. Half of it will arrive immediately and half at the end of the year. "I propose to mark the beginning of the 150th year celebrations of Calcutta University with a grant of Rs 50 crore for a specified research department or a research programme in the university. On the conclusion of the year, I intend to make another grant of Rs 50 crore," Chidambaram said in his budget speech.

The university felt it had hit a jackpot. "We were hoping for some type of special grant for Calcutta, Bombay and Madras universities, all of which turned 150 this year, but never expected such a huge sum. It was a very pleasant surprise after being denied for so long," said Suranjan Das, pro vice chancellor (academic).

The grant revived an old dream.

"Our university has done very good research work but, unlike central universities, we have no national or international presence. This was because of monetary constraints, but now we hope to go global." Das said.

The university can now send teachers, students and scholars to various conferences around the world. It will also bring in experts from the world over for their students. "We will build a guest house of international standards to accommodate international students and experts. Right now, accommodating them is our biggest problem," Das said.

Authorities will meet soon to chalk out a spending plan. "We will first have to see how they want to release the funds and under which heads," Das said. "We can hope to get the grant after April," registrar Samir Banerjee added.

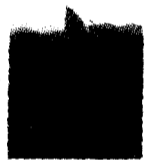
The university plans new courses in emerging areas like biotechnology, molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, genetics and IT. "We will give equal importance to regular subjects, social science and emerging areas of science," said Prof Das.

The university also intends to connect all its 160 colleges through Edusat. Other investment areas include hostel upgradation and a building for the department of controller of exams.

WHAT BENGAL GETS



Calcutta University
Rs 100 crore as 150th birthday gift. Rs 50 crore now, rest at end of year



Tea
Rs 100 crore for special purpose tea fund

Jute
National jute board being set up

Roads
Superfast expressway, Kolkata to Dhanbad

Shipping
Deep-sea port on the lines of Shanghai

01 MAR 2006

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

মেয়েদের জন্য বিশেষ প্রকল্প, জোর সর্বশিক্ষায়

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা, নয়াদিল্লি, ২৮
ফেব্রুয়ারি: প্রধানমন্ত্রী মনমোহন সিংহ
এবং কংগ্রেস সভানেত্রী সনিয়া গান্ধীর
নির্দেশ মেনেই বাজেট তৈরি করেছেন
কেন্দ্রীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী। বাজেট পেশের পরে
সাংবাদিক বৈঠকে সে কথা মুক্তকণ্ঠে
জানিয়েও দিয়েছেন তিনি।

সনিয়া চেয়েছিলেন শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য
এবং মহিলাদের জন্য বিশেষ ভাবে
নজর দেওয়া হোক বাজেটে। শিক্ষা
ক্ষেত্রে বরাদ্দের সময় দলনেত্রীর কথা
তো শুনেইছেন চিদম্বরম, মেয়েদের
জন্য বিশেষ ব্যবস্থাও নিয়েছেন। অষ্টম
শ্রেণির পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হলেই সব
মেয়ের জন্য সরকার তিন হাজার টাকা
করে জমা করবে। ১৮ বছর বয়স হলে
মেয়েরা সেই টাকা ভুলতে পারবে।

উচ্চশিক্ষায় সরকার যে সব
নীতিগত ব্যবস্থা ঘোষণা করেছিল, এ
বারে তার থেকে খুব বেশি এগোনোর
চেষ্টা করেননি চিদম্বরম। কিন্তু প্রাথমিক
স্তরে শিক্ষা বিস্তারের জন্য ব্যয় বরাদ্দ
বাড়িয়েছেন অনেকখানি। এ ছাড়াও
রয়েছে সরকারের বিশেষ প্রকল্প
সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযান। এতে ৭,১৫৬
কোটি টাকা থেকে বাড়িয়ে বরাদ্দ
হয়েছে ১০,০৪১ কোটি। এর ফলে
অতিরিক্ত ৫ লক্ষ শ্রেণিকক্ষ তৈরি করা
সম্ভব হবে। এবং নিয়োগ করা যাবে
আরও দেড় লক্ষ শিক্ষক। শিক্ষা সেস
থেকে পাওয়া ৮,৭৪৬ কোটি টাকা
তিনি প্রারম্ভিক শিক্ষা কোষে পাঠিয়ে
দেবেন বলে চিদম্বরম জানিয়েছেন।
মিড-ডে মিল প্রকল্পে বরাদ্দ ৩,০১০
কোটি টাকা থেকে বাড়িয়ে আগামী
আর্থিক বছরে ৪,৮১৩ কোটি টাকায়
নিয়ে যাওয়া হবে।

টাকা খরচ করেও যে অনেক সময়
কাঙ্ক্ষিত ফল পাওয়া যায় না, তার বহু
উদাহরণ দেশে রয়েছে। কিন্তু সর্বশিক্ষা
অভিযানকে তার ব্যতিক্রম বলেই মনে
করেন অর্থমন্ত্রী। তিনি জানিয়েছেন,
চলতি বছরে নতুন বিদ্যালয় নির্মাণ,
অতিরিক্ত শ্রেণিকক্ষ তৈরি করা এবং
অতিরিক্ত শিক্ষক নিয়োগ— তিনটি
ক্ষেত্রেই সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযানের মাধ্যমে
খুব ভাল কাজ হয়েছে। দেশের ৯৩
শতাংশ শিশু এখন স্কুলে আসে। এবং
স্কুলে না-আসা শিশুর সংখ্যা এখন কমে
১ কোটিতে দাঁড়িয়েছে বলে দু'টি
সমীক্ষায় দেখা গিয়েছে। বাজেট
বক্তৃতায় ওই সমীক্ষাগুলির কথা উল্লেখ
করে অর্থমন্ত্রী জানিয়েছেন, এত ভাল
কাজ হচ্ছে বলেই তিনি বরাদ্দ
বাড়াচ্ছেন।

শিশু কন্যাদের জন্য ২০০৪-এ
সরকার কস্তুরবা গান্ধী বালিকা বিদ্যালয়
চালু করেছিল। এই প্রকল্পে খুব ভাল
কাজ এগোচ্ছে বলেই আসন্ন আর্থিক
বছরে তফসিলি অনগ্রসর ও সংখ্যালঘু
শিশুকন্যাদের জন্য আরও ১০০০টি
আবাসিক বিদ্যালয় তৈরি করা হবে।

ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচনে যুক্তি কী, প্রশ্ন কমিশনের

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচনকে কেন্দ্র করে বিভিন্ন সময়ে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের পরিবেশ তৈরি হয়। প্রচুর খরচও করা হয় নির্বাচন উপলক্ষে। এই অবস্থায় শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভোটের আদৌ যৌক্তিকতা আছে কি না, সেই প্রশ্ন তুলেছে প্রাক্তন নির্বাচন কমিশনার জে এম লিংডোর নেতৃত্বে গঠিত কমিশন।

সুপ্রিম কোর্টের নির্দেশে গঠিত ছয় সদস্যের ওই কমিশন দু'দিনের সফরে সোমবার কলকাতায় এসেছে। কমিশনের সদস্যরা চেম্বাইয়ের বিভিন্ন কলেজ ও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্র সংসদ, উপাচার্য এবং বুদ্ধিজীবীদের সঙ্গে এই বিষয়ে আলোচনা করেছেন। কলকাতা থেকে তাঁদের প্রথমে দিল্লি এবং পরে মুম্বই যাওয়ার কথা।

কমিশনের সদস্যরা রাজ্যের বিভিন্ন ছাত্র সংগঠনের সঙ্গে আলোচনা করেন। কী ভাবে নির্বাচন হবে, তা নিয়ে বিভিন্ন ছাত্র সংগঠনের মধ্যে মতবিরোধ আছে। কিন্তু ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচন নিয়ে আপত্তি নেই কারও। সি পি এমের ছাত্র সংগঠন এস এফ আইয়ের রাজ্য সভাপতি সুদীপ সেনগুপ্ত বলেন, "ছাত্র সংসদের ভোটকে কেন্দ্র করে কয়েকটি বিচ্ছিন্ন ঘটনা ঘটলেও গোটা রাজ্যের তুলনায় তা খুব কম। তার জন্য সামগ্রিক ভাবে ভোটকে দায়ী করা উচিত নয়।" তিনি জানান, ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচন পরিচালনা কলেজ ও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কর্তৃপক্ষের হাতে থাকা উচিত।

ছাত্র পরিষদের সভাপতি সৌরভ চক্রবর্তী বলেন, "এখানে এবং অন্যান্য রাজ্যে ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচনকে ঘিরে যে-গুণগোল হয়, তার পরে নির্বাচন কতটা যুক্তিসঙ্গত, কমিশন সেটাই জানতে চেয়েছে। আমরা জানিয়েছি, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরি কমিশন কিংবা কমিশনের তত্ত্বাবধানে ছাত্র সংসদের নির্বাচন হলে তা নিরপেক্ষ হবে।"

28 APR 2006

ANADABAZAR PATRIKA

Besu frames compromise formula for IIT tag

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, February 22

ONCE A university gets IIT status, the Centre assumes control over it. This fact has repeatedly been resented by the state in connection to the IIT aspirations of Bengal Engineering and Science University (Besu). Now, the Besu authorities are trying to reach a compromise on this regard.

On February 21, the academic council of the college decided in a meeting that, given the option, it would opt for "participatory governance", both by the state and the Centre, if the status is confirmed. Ministry of Human

Resource Development (MRRD) officials are scheduled to meet Besu and state representatives in a meeting on February 23. The result of this meeting would determine whether the university does indeed get the option of participatory governance or not.

The MHRD-summoned meeting would, for the first time, seek the state's view opinion on granting IIT status to Besu as well as Jadavpur University (JU). The spokesperson for the state in this meeting would be higher education principal secretary Jwahar Sirkar. Sirkar, incidentally, was also present at the meeting Besu's academic council had held.

CONTROL FACTOR

The Besu representatives at the February 23 meeting are to be V-C N. R. Banerjee and dean of research prof B. N. Dutta. "We don't know whether the MHRD team will meet us and the state representatives separately. On our part, we are hopeful of an amicable result," said Banerjee.

It, however, is unlikely that the MHRD team will release the results of the meeting on the same day itself. But both JU and Besu

officials are certain that the meeting will act as a catalyst to the announcement of the final decision. "The very reason behind this meeting is that the Centre has something to say for the very first time. And involving the state only increases its importance," said Indranath Sinha, Bcsu registrar.

Moreover, since the duration of the 10th Plan, under which the Centre has set aside Rs 2,000 crore for granting various institutions IIT status, ends on March 31 the time to declare the results has now arrived. "We hope something will be announced by March," said Partha Pratim Biswas, executive council member of JU.

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, February 22

A FOUR-MEMBER National Assessment and Accreditation Council (Naac) peer team is on a two-day visit to Lady Brabourne College to assess the academic and administrative standard of the only government girls' college in Bengal.

On the first day, the team visited all 19 departments of the college and inspected the college building. The members also in-

Naac on trip to Brabourne

teracted with students and asked for their suggestions on improving the college. D. B. Yedekar, vice-chancellor of Maharashtra University in Maharashtra, is the chairman of the peer team. The other members of the team are L. Madhuranath, former principal of APS College of Commerce in Bangalore, Nishi Pandey, director of Academic Staff College, University of Lucknow, and M. S. Shyam-sundar, deputy advisor of Naac.

Though the Naac peer team chose to reserve their comments

till Thursday, when they complete their inspection, one of the members said that they were "happy" with what they had seen so far. On the second day, the team will look into the administration and the audit reports. At the exit meeting, will come suggestions and their assessment.

The college though will know about their grade only after the Naac executive council meeting, which means Presidency College and Brabourne College may expect their Naac grades together.

Govt, schools lock horns over quota for poor kids

CHETAN Chauhan
New Delhi, February 22

THE CENTRE is moving to introduce 25 per cent reservation in schools for backward class students in the 6-14 years age group. It also wants to do away with the practice of pre-admission screening for such students.

A Right to Education bill, incorporating these and other related provisions, is ready for tabling in the budget session of Parliament. The government is determined to push it through despite stiff opposition from unaided schools. The HRD ministry has cleared the draft, revised after objections from states and individuals. "We expect to introduce it before the budget session closes for recess," a ministry source said.

The bill received a shot in the arm after the Group of Ministers, formed to examine the reports from experts and the National Advisory Council on how to finance its implemen-

tation, submitted its recommendations to the PMO. "The finance model has been submitted to the Planning Commission for approval," a source said. The Centre will need Rs 57,000 crore over five years to recruit additional teachers, build 17 lakh classrooms and finance elementary education in government and unaided schools.

But unaided schools have strong reservations about the quota clause. They also oppose the role of local authorities — panchayats and municipal bodies — in the admissions process.

National Progressive School Association (NPSC) chairperson Usha Ram said the association had called a meeting of all unaided schools on February 26 to discuss the bill and pass a resolution.

Springdales School principal Jyoti Bose said there was nothing wrong in the concept but the manner of its implementation was objectionable. "We want the Centre to re-think its implementation methodology," she said.



IIMs finally get govt nod to go global

New Delhi: Relenting on its rigid stance, the Centre on Wednesday gave its nod to Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) to go global after amending their Memorandum of Association and in a quid pro quo they decided to enhance the intake of students, a condition set by the government.

"There is absolutely no conflict between us and the government. The ministry said amend the MoA and go ahead (and set up campuses abroad)," IIM-Bangalore director Prakash Apte said after the nearly 90-minute meeting between the directors of all IIMs and HRD minister Arjun Singh here. Describing the meeting as "productive and cordial", Apte said the minister and the ministry had always been supportive of IIMs.

Although the meeting convened by Singh was to deliberate on issues relating to autonomy and the measures needed to further strengthen the prestigious B-schools, it is understood to have focused on the ministry's denial of permission to IIM-B to set up shop in Singapore. The IIM-B's ambitious plan to open a campus in the Asean nation suffered a jolt on January 11 when the HRD ministry refused it permission and asked it to first cater to

Will Maharashtra be third time lucky? Page 5
President all for IIMs' foreign foray, Page 13

the huge domestic demand.

From taking a policy stand that IIMs should cater to domestic demands to finding fault with their MoAs, Singh at one point had even said these institutions were not corporate entities. Observing that there were certain "legal barriers" in modifying the MoAs, Apte said, "We have to get the board's approval. We have to go carefully. We hope it will be done in three-four months."

Referring to Singh's observation that IIMs should first meet the domestic needs before going global, he said that B-schools continuously expand their activities by introducing new programmes. Apte said IIM-B proposed to increase its intake of students to 280 this year from the existing 250 and take it further to 300 in 2007. Similarly, Shanker Chaudhury, director of IIM-Kolkata, said his institute proposed to increase its intake from the existing 270 to 300 this year. IIM-B is also planning a software enterprise programme which will be taken to Hyderabad this year and Gurgaon and Pune from next year.

Taking the issue of B-schools' ambition of going abroad, Apte said the IIMs had also proposed a joint venture to export the "IIM brand" outside. Agencies

Lok Sabha passes quota Bill

✓
9-6 Education
B.L. 10-11-12
✓
22/12

Reservation in private unaided educational institutions

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Bill providing reservation for the socially and educationally backward classes, besides the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, in private unaided educational institutions.

The Constitution (104th) Amendment Bill, piloted by Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh, first such exercise by the United Progressive Alliance Government, was passed with a majority of the members present and voting. Of the 381 members present, 379 voted in its favour, one member voted against it and one member abstained.

Prior to the passage, the House rejected an amendment moved by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Vijay Kumar Malhotra demanding that the Bill should not exclude minority institutions. While 110 members voted for the amendment, 272 voted against and three members abstained.

Though it pressed for an amendment, the BJP supported the Bill as it was not against reservation, Mr. Malhotra said. His references to the role of the Congress during Partition led to a brief commotion as the ruling coalition benches joined issue. Mr. Arjun Singh, who initially refused to entangle himself, had

the last word, saying the BJP president, during his Pakistan visit, described the person, who was behind Partition, as secular.

Support from all over

Although the debate progressed on party lines, with the BJP and some of its allies opposing the Constitution Amendment and the Shiv Sena members walking out, support came from across the floor.

Many members of the ruling coalition sought legislation to regulate admission and the fee structure, while others stressed that reservation should be provided in minority institutions also.

In his reply, Mr. Singh denied the Opposition charge that the government had not informed the all-party meeting called by the HRD Ministry in August that minority institutions would be kept out of the purview of the Bill.

The Minister said the fundamental right under Article 30 (1) stood the test of time and it was because of the assurance to minorities there were more Muslims in the country than in Pakistan. "Do have a partisan objective but do not project it to a point that it starts harming the country," he said.

Debate on Page 12

President presents his vision for a developed India

2020 odyssey in 45 minutes



President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam inaugurates the CII meet as governor Gopal Gandhi and chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee look on. Picture by Kishor Roy Chowdhury

ASTAFF REPORTER

Calcutta, Jan. 17: President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's Vision 2020 left everyone speechless. To be more precise, the other speakers had little to say after he made a powerpoint presentation for 45 minutes — double the time allotted.

It is difficult to share thoughts on making India a developed country in 15 years in less than that time, so no one was complaining in the end.

"It was a wonderful presentation. CII would greatly benefit from it. We will try to follow what he said," officials

of the Confederation of Indian Industry, the organiser of the event, said.

The annual CII Partnership Summit here opened with the President's address. Chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee was present at the inaugural session, as was governor Gopal Gandhi, but both were happy to leave the stage to Kalam. After the President, Bhattacharjee spoke for barely five minutes, though it could not be confirmed if he had prepared for a longer stay behind the microphone.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ►

President presents vision for 2020

► FROM PAGE 1

It was confirmed, however, that the President had been expected to address the gathering of some 1,000 delegates, consisting of business leaders from India and abroad and several foreign dignitaries, for about 20 minutes.

Titled "Dynamics of Leadership", Kalam's talk focused on achieving a growth rate of 10 per cent if India were to acquire the status of a developed nation.

"Given his erudition, it (the presentation) is not surprising at all. He has a vision for the country and he shared it with industry captains at this appropriate forum," a CII official said.

What business leaders made of the speech could not be ascertained, nor their reaction to the delay in the start of the programme as Kalam reached half an hour beyond time at the venue, a result of the late beginning to the day the President was forced to make because of fog.

"The President was supposed to leave Raj Bhavan for

his flight to Sagar Islands at 8.30. Instead, he left a little over an hour later, at 9.45 am. The fog that had settled on the RCTC (turf club, where the helipad is) ground since the break of dawn stood in the way of pilots taking off for Sagar," said a police officer in charge of VIP movement.

As a consequence, he got delayed for all the engagements in the city — Calcutta University's 150-year celebrations and the address at the Indian Association for Cultivation of Science.

The delay gave the police some anxious moments. Kalam was supposed to return from Sagar by 12 noon and instead landed at the helipad around 1.40, heading to Raj Bhavan from there.

"It was a very difficult time for us. The chief minister had just left (Writers' Buildings) for his lunch at home and the President was returning to Raj Bhavan for his lunch (the two moving in opposite directions)," said a police officer.

Although late by some two hours to arrive at the university event, the President un-

furled another vision — this time for higher education — before academics, former vice-chancellors and other dignitaries.

He proposed a project on tele-education, with Rashtrapati Bhavan as its hub and all major universities and their affiliates linked to it.

Communication technology occupied pride of place in Vision 2020, too, as the President spoke of bridging the digital divide between urban and rural India.

If technology was his obsession in his previous avatar as a technocrat, Kalam appears to be thriving as a communicator as President.

Evidence: today's presentation.

CII centre

The Confederation of Indian Industry will set up a centre of excellence on human resource and leadership in Calcutta, its chairman, Y.C. Deveshwar, said.

CII deputy director-general Subroto Niyogi said the centre — at Salt Lake — would be ready in a year.

18/1/2008

THE TELEGRAPH

ORDINANCE TO EMPOWER INSTITUTIONS

Mileage for minorities

*2-
Bansal
Cultures*

SNS and PTI

SFI 2/11

NEW DELHI, Jan. 6. — The Cabinet today approved the promulgation of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (Amendment) Ordinance, 2006 and its replacement by an Act in the Budget session of Parliament.

The Ordinance and later, the relevant legislation, would grant exemption only to eligible minority educational institutions from reservations for SC/ST/OBCs with regard to students seeking admission.

The decision comes a day after Allahabad High Court struck down the Centre's decision to classify AMU as a minority institution and two days after the Supreme Court enforced a High Court order.

Parliament passed the Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill 2005 during the winter session, exempting the minority institutions from the purview of reservation. In order to exempt eligible minority educational institutions, it had become necessary to empower the NEMEI by dint of the Ordinance.

It would also enable the NEMEI to proceed against those institutions misusing their minority status.

The government also approved certain minor modifications of and additions to its earlier decisions relating to strengthening and developing agricultural education. Besides, the National Talent Scholarship amount will be increased to Rs 1,000 a month for each under-graduate student and will be provided to these institutions for excellence in niche areas.

OBC list

The Union Cabinet today approved inclusion and modification of certain

Decision on NMDC, NLC deferred

NEW DELHI, Jan. 6. — The Cabinet today deferred a decision on selling the minority stakes in Neyveli Lignite Corporation and National Mineral Development Corporation. There was no mention of the matter in the official briefing on the Cabinet decisions taken today and it was not known if it had been discussed at the meeting. Sources indicated that the decision on the matter had been put off. This follows the Left's objections to disinvesting government shares in the two profit-making public sector undertakings.

Mr Prakash Karat of the CPI-M and Mr AB Bardhan of the CPI met the finance minister, Mr P Chidambaram, on 29 December to be told that the government was planning to partially to sell its shares in Neyveli Lignite, the Power Finance Corporation, Hudco and the National Mineral Development Corporation. — SNS

castes and communities in the Central list of the Other Backward Classes.

The communities included belong to Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Pondicherry and Uttar Pradesh, said defence minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee after the Cabinet meeting chaired by the Prime Minister.

They would get the benefit of reservations in direct recruitment in civil services and to posts under the Central government, he said.

The eligible persons will be entitled to assistance from the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation for skill development and self-employment ventures, Mr Mukherjee said.