

All India Seminar at Patna

Ms. Guddi, the National Convenor of Yuva Biradari, Yusuf Meherally Centre, Mumbai, while inaugurating the Seminar, called upon the audience to stand by the weaker section of the society and do everything required to provide quality education to their children as the Government and the Corporate class do not seem to be worried about them at all. According to her, the RTE Act 2009 is an eye-wash and it is meant to help privatise education and make it a part of profit making and market economy. She further said that the Common School System in Neighbourhood schools is the only way to fulfil the dreams of our earlier generation of Nation-builders. The inaugural session of the Seminar



organised by the Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association was chaired by a Presidium consisting of Prof Wasi Ahmad, President of the Association, Dr. V.N.Sharma, Member, Secretariat, All India Forum for Right To Education (AIF-RTE) and Prof. S. P. Verma, formerly of Patna University.

Prince Gajendra Babu of Tamil Nadu Platform for Common School System (spoke in English; Hindi interpreter: Sri Ashwini Kumar) narrated the story of two years of implementation of RTE Act 2009 and drew attention of the audience to the fact that Bihar was the first State to set up a Commission for CSS-NS and it was expected that others

like Tamil Nadu will follow suit. But the Bihar Report is dumped without action to fulfil the ruling class agenda. He further said that TN Government opened Malls and police station in schools and merged the school with other schools. Doubting the intention of the ruling elite, Sri Ashutosh Kumar Rakesh desired that their hidden agenda must be exposed as the Act is only to help multi layered system of education. Prof. Anil Sadgopal said that the Government is determined to close down the Government schools so that the children are forced to go to Private schools where they may or may not go due to financial constraints. The Government is openly making anti-people laws which is

leading to from bad to worse situation in the field of education. He further stated that 30 schools in Bhopal were closed recently and they have all been asked to work in P.P. mode thus getting support of the market forces. Prof Wasi Ahmad summed up the session by asking how long the Government will speak something and do something differently. He desired that in the sessions ahead there will be convergence of views in making Education a political agenda. Sri Ankan Kumar, the working committee member, Sri Om Prakash Ojha, the State Secretary of the Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association, Prof Meher Engineer,

Chairman AIF-RTE and Aaj correspondent Sri Amalendu Mishra also spoke on the occasion.

The second session on Child Labour and Education was co-chaired by Prof. Madhu Prasad, Member, Presidium, AIF-RTE, Md Taslimuddin, General Secretary, Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association, and educationist Sri Akshay Kumar. Dr. Vikas Gupta of Delhi University dwelt upon at length on the problems faced by the handicapped children in their education. He clarified that census keeps no proper account of the handicapped. It is natural, therefore, that policy and laws made in this connection do not benefit them. Prof. Anil Sadgopal

explained that economically distressed parents cannot bear the educational expenses of their children. This requires to be changed so that children can get educated upto class 12. S/Sri Lalan Kumar and Sanjay Kumar and Rajeshwar Das, Vice-President of Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association, Ashwini Kumar of Haryana, Dr. Vikas Gupta of D.U., Sri Rajesh of AISF also took part in the discussion. Sahdeo Ravidas, the Vice - President of Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association presented a beautiful song on differential in infrastructure affecting the educational environment.

The third session, jointly chaired by Sri Md. Taslimuddin, General Secretary of Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association, Prof. Meher Engineer, Chairman, AIF-RTE and Dr. Anil Sadgopal, Member, Presidium AIF-RTE, discussed what will be the mode and intensity of struggle to achieve the free and compulsory education of equitable quality for all. The house was also informed that when (Late) Brahmadeo Narain the founder of Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association organised movements 2.25 lakh teachers were participants. Teachers income have shot up now between 20000 and 50000 but the organisation is a pale shadow of the past.

The fourth session on 29th April was co-chaired by Prof. Anil Sadgopal, Prof Wasi Ahmad and Dr. Vikas Gupta. Prof. Minati Panda of JNU introduced the issue of Language and education and said that in 1970 81 languages were used in India which has reduced to 41 in 1999. Sri Surjit Singh Thokchom from Shillong, member, AIF-RTE talked about language issues in the N-E States whereas Dr. Vikram Singh Amrawat, the Office Secretary of AIF-RTE talked about the differences being created in

the name of language and dialects. According to Prof. Ramakant Agnihotri the difference between language and dialects is the language has tank and bullets behind them to support, dialects have nothing.

Dr. V.N.Sharma spoke at length on the Role of Common School System in National Integration wherein he explained how the later was a serious issue in 1960-80. It is not talked about anymore but the national integration can be achieved through imparting education to all in Common Education System in CSS-NS as education is a powerful tool. Teachers must be trained to impart education with this in mind. He called the RTE Act 2009 as a tool to weaken national integration rather than strengthening it.

Sri Ashwini Kumar of Harayana, Prof. Khagendra Kumar, Principal, Patna Training College, Dr. Kumar Sanjeev of Patna Training College presented their views on the subject. Dr. Anil Sadgopal quoted the case of Finland saying that it had the best system of education in whole of Europe after adopting CES in CSS-NS. Prof.S.K. Ganguly, Secretary of Patna University Teachers Association critically examined the State of Education in Bihar in his talk.

The fifth session had Prof Meher Engineer, Prof S.K. Ganguly and Prof Minati Panda in the Presidium. Prof Madhu Prasad, Sri Chaturanan Ojha of Gorakhpur, Prof. Anil Sadgopal, Prof S.P. Verma and Prof. Minati Panda of JNU took part in the discussion.

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(Brief & English translation by Dr. V.N. Sharma)

State Level Seminar on RTE Act at Hyderabad

Andhra Pradesh Save Education Committee (APSEC) has conducted a State Level Seminar on RTE Act and its implementation for two full years in Andhra Pradesh.

Prof. K. Chakradhara Rao (President, APSEC and Member, Board of Advisers, AIFRTE) presided over the meeting. Prof. G. Haragopal (Gen. Secretary, APSEC and Member, Presidium, AIFRTE) presented the key note address. Sri Madhusudhan, State coordinator, RTE cell, Government of Andhra Pradesh was the special guest of the evening. Reports of implementation of the RTE Act from

four districts namely; Karimnagar, Warangal, Mahaboobnagar and Guntur were placed in the Seminar. Sri D. Ramesh Patnaik (Organizing Secretary, APSEC and Member, Secretariat, AIFRTE) welcomed the gathering and laid down the purpose of the seminar. More than two hundred delegates participated in the seminar. They included activists of Democratic Teachers' Federation, Andhra Pradesh Teachers' Federation-257, Andhra Pradesh Teachers' Federation-1938, Andhra Pradesh Residential Educational Institutions' Teachers'