
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.

Ashutosh Kumar Rakesh

Treasurer,

Bihar Non-gazetted Elementary Teachers Association, Patna.

(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'

Association, Progressive Youth League and Progressive Democratic Students' Union. Many individual activists and groups also joined the seminar.

Prof. K. Chakradhara Rao in his presidential address analytically showed how disinterested are the government in providing education to the children. While the constitution of India directed the state to provide free and



compulsory education to all children up to age 14 years within ten years of implementation of the constitution of India, the successive governments in Delhi and in states never took it seriously. Supreme Court had reprimanded the government in Unnikrishnan case (1993) for not providing free and compulsory education to all children for almost four decades and interpreted that the right to education flows directly from the fundamental 'right to life'. Central government took almost one decade to affect an amendment to the constitution for the purpose. The half baked 86th amendment to the constitution (2002) did not include right to preschool and secondary education and limited only to elementary education. The central government took seven more years to bring the legislation, 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009' and took one more year to notify it. The 'Act' does not provide necessary measures to achieve the core elements of right to education like education for all, quality education for all and equitable education for all. The state government of Andhra Pradesh took one more year to notify the rules and is not serious about the implementation of the minimal provisions in the Act for development of government schools and regulation of private schools for

the last two years. It seems that the Act and the associated rules are prepared on the axiom that trade in education is unquestionable. He opined that all government schools will be closed within ten years if the present policy of the Government to neglect its own schools and encourage private schools along with reimbursement for 25% seats continues. The Government policies in every field (including education) are being formulated on the basis of model of development imposed by World Bank. Such design is necessarily fraught with crises. He called upon the delegates to take the movement to the people in order to build strong pressure on the state for equal and democratic education for all.

Prof. G. Haragopal addressing the seminar exclaimed what the meaning of independence is if it can not provide elementary education to the disadvantaged, Dalits

and tribal children even after six decades of its achievement. Referring to his engagement in Bastar (talks between Government of Chattishghad and CPI (Maoist) party for mutual release of arrested tribal persons and abducted District Collector), he said that the children there are naked under age five and semi naked above age five. They are not going to school and are roaming in the forests with self-made sets of bow and arrows. He opined that the state has failed completely in providing education to the children in tribal areas and called up on the people's movements (wherever they are strong) to take up this cause. He said that he advised to Mr. Manushi Varma, a member of National Advisory Committee under chairmanship of Ms. Sonia Gandhi when the latter met him in Delhi to abolish trade in education and to establish common school system if the government is really serious about right of the children to education. In course of his speech, he recollected a reported experience of Prof Anil Sadgopal when the latter was invited to a meeting of the Election Manifesto Committee of Congress Party before general election in 2004 which was headed by Ms. Sonia Gandhi and attended by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Sri Pranab Mukherjee and few others. He narrated that Dr. Manmohan

Singh did not agree to the proposal of Prof. Anil Sadgopal when the latter suggested that 6% of GNP should be allotted to education and further commented that no sensible nation would do it. Here stands the statesmanship of Manmohan Singh, Prof. Haragopal added. Prof. Haragopal reminded to the audience the famous statement of Mahatma Gandhi that education is very important for consolidation of freedom of the country and freedom is not real if it were to depend on police and military forces. He called upon the member organizations to build strong education movement in all districts.

Prof. K. Nageswar, graduate MLC addressing the Seminar said that while the Act is half baked one, the few good aspects of the Act are not implemented by the state government. He said that according to the RTE Act, every state is required to form a State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights or an equivalent body within six months from the date of the notification of the Act. State governments are not doing it even two years have lapsed after notification of the Act. (Only four states and Union Territories have so far appointed such Commissions.) The tragedy, he said, is that the aggrieved persons are destined to go to the same officers who have violated Act as there is no (autonomous) any grievance redressal mechanism in place. Prof. Nageswar Rao criticized the Act for not providing necessary support measures for retention of children in schools. He told that the government allowed teacher training programs in the private sector leading to fall of standards to a dismal levels. The private managements in D.Ed and B.Ed colleges are admitting students on the basis of capitation fee, they are providing fake attendance and teaching practice and records have also become fake. The private managements collect money for each of the fraud, he added. The reimbursement policy included in the Act, he criticized, would lead to the closure of government schools, siphoning funds to private managements and in the ultimate analysis will prove the Act to be a 'reimbursement Act' instead of a 'Right to Education Act'. He cited the appalling low standards in private engineering colleges which are more than seven hundred in number and are running purely on the basis of reimbursement from government and added that reimbursement only breeds corruption and do not produce quality. He called upon the teachers, who comprised the majority of the seminar participants, to recognize the rights of the children and fight for them.

Sri Madhusudhan, State coordinator, RTE Cell, addressing the seminar said that the government is trying to establish necessary infrastructure in all government schools and also to appoint qualified teachers according to the schedule of the Act. However, he consented, that there is a general collapse of governance and is causing weakening of public institutions. He said that the 25% reservation with reimbursement provision in private schools may play havoc with government schools leading to closure of the latter.

Sri A. Narasimha Reddy, vice president, APSEC and chairperson, Education Cell, APTF-257 reminded the house that the APSEC was born in 1986 to struggle against the National Policy on Education, 1986 which initiated commercialization of education through out the country. Criticizing 'RTE Act', he drew the attention of the house to different surveys which only proved that the 'RTE Act' failed in developing government schools in the last two years as expected, he added. He said that none other than Dr. Manmohan Singh should be ashamed of the fact that 40 percent of children are suffering from malnutrition in the country where he has been Finance Minister for two terms and Prime Minister for two terms. He demanded that the Mid-Day-Meal should be developed in to a proper program of nutrition. He analyzed that the finance capital is ruling the world and all policies are framed to serve this finance capital throughout the world. He analyzed that struggle against commercialization of education is a struggle against neo-liberal policies and imperialism. He called upon the teachers to own the save education movement and build it strongly.

Sri K. Narayana Reddy- State President of DTF, Sri. M. Balanna - state leader of APTF-1938, Ms. Ramadevi- State leader of APREITA, Com. M. Hanmesh - state Gen. Secretary of PYL, Com. J. L. Goutham - Gen. Secretary of PDSU also spoke in the seminar. Sri. Srinivas from Warangal District, Sri. Rajpavan from Karimnagar district, Sri Govardhan from Mahaboobnagar district, Sri Ramesh Patnaik from Gunturu district placed the reports of their survey in the seminar. All the reports clearly showed that the minimal staffing and infrastructural provisions made in the schedule of the Act are not implemented in the state.

A resolution was passed in the seminar after a thorough debate demanding abolition of commercialization of education and establishment of Common School System and abolition of reimbursement

policy. The resolution demanded the state government to immediately strengthen government schools and to regulate private schools on the basis of G.O.no. 1/1994. The resolution called upon the save education activists to take up survey in every district and mobilize parents schoolwise to bring pressure on the government for strengthening of government schools. The resolution called upon the activists to build mass movements, schoolwise, wherever the conditions of schools are even behind the schedule of the 'RTE Act, 2009'

Dr. K. Laxminarayana (Secretary, APSEC and

Associate Professor of Economics, HCU) concluding the proceedings of seminar said that government will be interested in implementing negative aspects of the Right to education Act and commercialization of education on which it is based but, the education loving people shall build mass movement to achieve whatever small good things in the Act to start with and proceed further to achieve a democratic education system.

- **D. Ramesh Patnaik**

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May 25-26, 2012

Workshop at Lohaghat, Uttarakhand

Organized by : Rachnatmak Shikshak Mandal

The sixth State level Workshop on Education, organized by Rachnatmak Shikshak Mandal, was held at Lohaghat on May 25-26, 2012. Initiating the discussion the poet/critic teacher Sri Mahesh Punetha detailed out the activities of the Rachnatmak Shikshak Mandal with respect to Education. The programme organizer Sri Govind Bohra welcomed the guests on behalf of the organizing committee. The State Convenor Sri Navendu Mathpal dwelt upon how the Mandal was fighting against privatization of education and helping to strengthen the public (Government) system of education through Common School System while working at the same time against their NGOisation. Peoples poet Sri Balli Singh Cheema formally inaugurated the Workshop by reading out his radical gazals/poems.

Dr. Vikas Gupta, Assistant Professor, University of Delhi; and member-National Executive, All India Forum for Right To Education (AIFRTE) delivered a lecture on the first day of the workshop on "Basic understanding of education and two years of implementation of Right To Education Act - any hope for fundamental Transformation?" Prof. Gupta described in detail the historical, social, philosophical and psychological tenets of basic understanding of education, the initiatives taken to ensure Right To Education during Freedom movement which could not succeed due to various reasons. Building upon this foundation, and on the basis of the available data, Dr. Gupta underlined that the present

design of education is such that it throws out majority of our children out of the sphere of education. 25 percent children admitted in class I do not go beyond class V and 42 percent beyond class VIII. The condition is much worse for the poor and marginalized classes of our society. Official data clearly spells out that the Government schools lack in basic facilities like water and toilets and majority of teachers are engaged in a good number of non-teaching activities. He demonstrated how the RTE Act takes away the Right to Education rather than giving it to the children. It has enhanced the rate of privatization. Unfortunately, instead of improvement, the condition of Education and Government Schools would become worse under the poor provisions of RTE Act. Para teachers are replacing the full-time teachers in large numbers. In the name of 25% reservation for the poor children, huge public money is being transferred to private schools. The Government was expected to strengthen over 10 lakh existing schools but it is, in fact, working overtime to finish them. Decisions with respect to Education is being taken by corporate houses (likes of Birla-Ambani) in stead of the teachers. Education has been converted into a profit making business. RTE Act recognizes multilayered system of education. It ignores the basic principle that education system can be made stronger if teachers are given better working conditions and due respect. While pleading strongly for the Common School System in