
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

Neighborhood Schools he stated that almost all the developed countries of the world have implemented this system at some point of time in their development. He urged that the Government must fulfill its constitutional responsibilities by establishing Common School System and replacing RTE Act with a new one based on people's aspiration and constitutional vision. However, he lamented that the Government, in a very planned way, is bent upon closing all Government schools; and knowledge is being converted into marketable commodity. Essential relationship between Education and society is being overturned in favour of market. Prof. Gupta also explained the undesirable effects of the five Higher Education Bills brought to Parliament. The changes in education are being worked out in favour of Corporate houses. At the same time interference of NGOs are on the rapid increase.

In the second session of the first day Sri Mohan Chauhan of Tehri, Dr. Nidesh Joshi of Nainital, Bhuwan Joshi 'Kannu', Dr. Vivek Pandey, Dr. Dinesh Karnataka, Actor D.N. Bhatt, Shailendra Ghapola Hema Joshi, Pradip Bahuguna, Anita Bahuguna from Bageshwar, Dinesh Bhatt, Chandralal Verma from Pithoragarh shared their experience with the audience about their activities for improving the school education.

In the third session of the same day poetry recitation (Kavi Sammelan) was held in the presence of Sri Balli Singh Cheema. Swami Sarvasadanand and Swami Nikhileshwaranand also delivered their talk. The session presided over by the District Education Officer Sri P.R. Kohli and conducted jointly by the State Convenor Rajiv Joshi and Naresh Rai was attended by a large number of teachers.

The second day of the workshop was addressed by Senior journalist Prof. Anand Pradhan of IIMC (Delhi) on the issue of "Privatisation of Education and Role of Teachers". Prof. Pradhan discussed at length how the privatization of primary to higher education has converted into a commercial venture and education has become a marketing commodity. Its objective and direction has

changed. Due to the policy of globalization and liberalization education is being handed over to market forces with only objective-profit making. Due to the privatization the education is not only going beyond the reach of the weak and the poor students but also becoming anti-people and distorted. The Corporate capital in the country is eyeing on the expanding education market and taking shelter behind privatization and improvement in quality of education is being used as an excuse. All attempts are being made in a planned way to encourage privatisation of education. Under the garb public



education system is being devoid of resources to weaken the present structure. The parallel system of private education from primary to universities and colleges is being established which is creating a further strong environment of inequality and non-governmental interference in the country. The process of privatization and its adverse effect is dominating the total economy and politics and it cannot be looked at separately from the neo-liberal economic policies. It should always be looked at as a part of market economy. Now the time has come to challenge the privatization of education at philosophical, political, educational and creative level. The teachers must take the leadership role and must challenge the policies which is handing over the education to market forces.

In the second session on the second day young journalist Bhupen Basera talked on Social relationships of Cinema. A good number of films were screened in this session.

In the third session discussions were held on the future plans and programmes of Rachnatmak Shikshak Mandal. It was decided to hold the next workshop in Dehradun on Dec. 25-26, 2012

Total expenses of the Workshop was born by the

Teachers' contribution which was Rs. 25,000 only.

- Navendu mathpal

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(English Translation by Dr.V.N.Sharma)

Itarsi, May 21, 2012

The status of education: Challenges and solutions

Discussion hosted by Shiksha Adhikar Manch, Hoshangabad

Participants included students, teachers, social workers and public intellectuals.

Summary of lecture by Anil Sadgopal:

Until the Common School System (CSS) is instituted, public education will not improve. Until the commodification of education is stopped, the common school system will not be viable. By supporting the privatization of education, we are denying all of our children a meaningful/equitable and quality education. The 25% reservations provision will not meet the demand for education. An estimated 2.5 crore children enter primary school every year. The 25% reservations will only affect approximately 20 to 25 lakh fortunate children. What will happen to the rest?

Less than 5 % of schools in Canada are private. Public education is paid for by public resources and rich and poor children study in the same school. It is a decentralized system where the cost is borne by local government but they do not have control. In California, USA, schools with large numbers of poor children have larger budgets, more teachers, and more resources. It is the reverse in India where poor and disadvantaged children receive the worst education. In the

state of Madhya Pradesh, poor and Adivasi children are guaranteed to receive the lowest possible quality of education.

All persons receiving public resources (salary, profit) in any capacity should be required to send their children to government schools then government schools will improve.

The challenge is not implementation but the law itself. It is not possible and even dangerous to try to implement a flawed law. People need to be educated, mobilized and organized.

Comments by other speakers

Teacher union representative Rajiv Dube spoke about the deterioration of conditions in government schools. Rajiv Bamne from Khesla discussed the challenges starting from Class I to B. Ed programmes. Teacher Deepali Sharma shared that when she was in government school she studied with the children of judges and officers. The quality of education was such that nobody needed tuition.

-Rajesh Vyas

President, District Forum for Right To Education,
Hoshangabad

Translated from Hindi by Nisha Thapliyal
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Bhopal, 19 May 2012

Right To Education, Order of the Supreme Court & Struggle for Common School System

Shiksha Adhikar Manch, Bhopal, All India Revolutionary Students' Organisation and Revolutionary Youth Federation of India organized a panel discussion on the Right To Education, Order of the Supreme Court & struggle for Common School System. The principal speakers included noted author Ms. Jyotsna Milan, (retd.) IAS officer Sri Sharad Chandra