

SUMMARY RECORD OF DISCUSSION OF THE 58 TH CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD OF EDUCATION HELD ON 7TH June, 2011

Fifty Eighth Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) was held on 7th June, 2011 at Hotel Ashok, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Human Resource Development. Shri Ajay Maken, Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports; Smt. D. Purandeswari, Minister of State for Human Resource Development and Vice-Chairperson of CABE, Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Member (Education), Planning Commission along with 26 Ministers-in-charge of Education from various States/UTs attended the meeting. The meeting was also attended by eminent educationists, authors, artists, linguists etc. apart from Heads of different autonomous organizations and senior officials of different departments of the Government of India as its members.

2. The CABE is the highest advisory body to advise the Central and State Governments in the field of education. The previous meeting i.e. 57th meeting of CABE was held on 19th June, 2010. The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed today along with the Action Taken Note on them.

3. In his opening remarks, Hon'ble HRM put forth the main challenges facing the nation. He stated that delivering the right to elementary education enshrined in the Constitution, has been taken up in right earnest by the Centre and the States. He placed the suggestion that the Right to Education needs to be extended up to the secondary level (class 10) to provide avenues for children emerging from elementary education, as a natural corollary. He also stressed the need to ensure quality in educational delivery aimed towards bringing down drop-out rates and providing value to the children through the educational process.

4. Hon'ble HRM also mentioned that one of the critical challenges before the nation is to develop, recognize and enhance skills in youth to be productive members of society and the economy. It is essential to develop a set of nationally recognized qualifications tailoring the qualifications to the requirements of industry. The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) proposed in the agenda aims to embed vocational education in the educational system providing for horizontal and vertical mobility for youth to seamlessly move between general and vocational education. Hon'ble HRM underlined the integral role of State Governments in preparing this Framework, as the levels of diversity in skill development in the States will best be addressed by the State Governments. He also said that an element of diversity must be built into the education system to enable mobility; and the necessary unity that is also required will be provided by the standards set by a common NVEQF.

5. Another pressing need of the day is to promote transparency and accountability of the educational system towards its primary stakeholders i.e. children and their parents. Hon'ble HRM informed the CABE that the Centre is proposing a legislation to prevent and prohibit adoption of unfair practices in school education for which he sought suggestions and views from the CABE to generate a

platform for consensus. He said that this legislation could be modelled on the lines of a similar legislation on prevention of unfair practices in Higher Education already introduced in the Parliament and on which the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Parliament have since been received.

6. Regarding the Higher Education sector, Hon'ble HRM stated that an important item on the agenda is consideration of the recommendations of the recently held conference of Vice Chancellors of Central and State Universities in the public sector, especially with regard to reforms in the affiliation system in universities. Affiliation had emerged in the period of colonial India for the rulers to control what was being taught. There has to be a change in the philosophy of affiliation to enable the power of independent thought to flower in the collegiate system. He requested CAGE that efforts need to be made to reduce the number of colleges affiliated to universities so that universities could become centres of learning. He also mentioned the importance of Book Promotion as also preservation and promotion of languages in creating a knowledge society.

7. Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Ajay Maken, mentioned the need to integrate physical education and sports into the education system. In this regard, he recounted the measures provided under RTE and the steps taken by CBSE in its affiliated schools and exhorted States to adopt similar measures in schools affiliated to State Boards.

8. After deliberations, the CAGE resolved as under:-

- (i) Members expressed deep appreciation for the earnest efforts in implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. Further, all members of CAGE endorsed the proposal to extend free and compulsory education to the secondary sector. It was felt that every child in the country – irrespective of gender, caste, class or community to which he or she belongs must have the right to at least 10 years of formal schooling. It was decided to constitute a CAGE Committee comprising Ministers, members of civil society as well as educationists to formulate the draft legislation. The CAGE Committee will prepare a preliminary draft in about three months time, so that it can be discussed with all stakeholders, including students, teachers, teachers associations, parents and community members.
- (ii) Members earnestly shared the concern about the increasing trend of adoption of unfair practices in school education sector and expressed the need to arrest this trend. While the Ministry has already introduced a Bill in Parliament to prohibit unfair practices in the higher education sector, it was agreed to initiate a similar legislative proposal for prohibiting unfair practices in the school education sector also. It was decided to constitute a CAGE Committee comprising Ministers, members of civil society as

well as educationists to formulate the draft legislation. The CABE Committee will prepare a preliminary draft in about three months.

- (iii) There was unanimous endorsement of the need for a National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF) providing for a nationally recognised framework with vertical and horizontal mobility between general and vocational education. The Group of State Education Ministers already constituted will develop a road map for implementation incorporating the requirements and concerns of all the States. State Governments were urged to identify regional and local skills and develop curriculum content to feed into the NVEQF. The courses chosen should be locality specific to be implemented through plans devised by the States, which would be woven into a national grid within the parameters of NVEQF.
- (iv) The recommendations of the Vice Chancellors' Conference held on 25-26th March 2011 were presented before CABE. Considering the criticality of the need for expansion in higher education consistent with quality in order to address issues of access with equity, university reforms including governance reforms are essential. In order to chart a road map for such reforms, it was decided to constitute a committee of CABE consisting of State Ministers and academics. The CABE Committee on University Reforms would submit its report within three months. All the State Governments were requested to examine the recommendations of the Vice Chancellors' Conference and send their views and comments to the CABE Committee.
- (v) The initiative taken in formulating a National Book Promotion Policy was widely appreciated and endorsed by CABE. Members felt that implementation of this Policy would go a long way in reviving the interest in Books particularly amongst children and youth.
- (vi) CABE expressed their concern for preservation of the linguistic diversity and resolved that measures be taken to protect and preserve endangered languages in the Twelfth Plan thru' appropriate schemes.
- (vii) CABE also discussed the need for integration of sports and physical education with academic curriculum as also introduction of "10 Great Thinkers of Modern India" in the syllabi of schools.

9. While appreciating that three meetings of CABE have been held in the last two years, members suggested that preferably two meetings be held every year in context of wide ranging reforms and large scale expansion taking place across the education sector which could provide a platform for the interaction amongst the Centre, States, academia and civil society.
