

RECORD OF DISCUSSION OF THE 57TH MEETING OF THE CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Fifty Seventh Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) was held here today under the Chairmanship of Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister of Human Resource Development. Smt. Ambika Soni, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Smt. D. Purandeswari, Minister of State for Human Resource Development and Vice-Chairperson of CABE, Shri Prateek Patel, Minister of State, Youth Affairs and Sports and Ministers-in-charge of Education from various States/UTs attended the meeting. The Board also has eminent educationists, authors, artists, linguists etc. apart from Heads of different autonomous organizations and Secretaries of different departments of the Government of India as its members.

The CABE is the highest advisory body to advise the Central and State Governments in the field of education. The previous meeting i.e. 56th meeting of CABE was held on 31st August, 2009. The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed today with a minor amendment of Shri M.A. Baby, Hon'ble Education Minister of Kerala that he was not against the private participation in education but it should be with strict and comprehensive regulations.

The meeting focused on the vision of education for the future with Child Centric education, as mentioned by Shri Kapil Sibal in his opening address. Shri Sibal said that we cannot be slaves of the past and must move with the processes of change. We need to learn from the past; build on it and create opportunities for the future of our children as also the future of the unborn child. While enunciating his vision of child centric education, HRM recalled the very insightful and perceptive statement made by Shri MC Chagla in 1964, when he was Education Minister. He said: (Quote) "*Our Constitution fathers did not intend that we set up hovels, put student there, give untrained teachers, give them bad textbooks, no playgrounds and say, we have complied with Article 45 and primary education is expanding...They meant that **real** education should be given to our children between the ages of 6 and 14"* (Unquote). HRM said that the most precious of all resources are our children and we must ensure that they get all the opportunities for their development.

Addressing the meeting, Smt. Ambika Soni, Minister of I&B suggested that the HRD Ministry, for its education reforms incorporate a media strategy. She was of the view that a campaign theme could be developed for Right to Education. She congratulated the HRD Minister for his efforts in developing India as a knowledge society and said that her Ministry would be glad to partner with MHRD to have a nation-wide campaign of empowerment through education.

The meeting focused particularly on the proposed Higher Education and Research Bill, dematting of academic awards, harmonising norms of SSA & RTE, National Vocational Qualification Framework and core curriculum for Science and Maths as also Commerce.

After detailed discussions, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) took the following decisions:-

i. **CABE** considered the proposal on the draft Higher Education and Research Bill, 2010. It was clarified by HRM that the draft Bill remained the property of the Task Force until it submitted its final proposal to the Ministry. Prof. N.R. Madhava Menon, member of the Task Force constituted by MHRD to follow up on the recommendations of the Committee on Rejuvenation and Renovation of Higher Education (Yash Pal Committee) and the National Knowledge Commission, presented the proposal and explained the modifications proposed by the Task Force after taking into consideration the inputs and suggestions received from various stake holders during the wide ranging process of consultations across the country.

Members of the Task Force also briefed **CABE** on clarifications in regard to certain provisions raised on behalf of States. It was explained that the proposed NCHER was intended to promote autonomy of universities by devolving powers hitherto exercised by the existing regulatory bodies, prevent fragmentation of education, promote interdisciplinary pursuit and creation of knowledge, accord a level playing field through norm-based funding for all universities – Central or State, grant powers to States to participate in policy making at the national level through representation in the decision making processes of the proposed Commission etc.

While there was a general consensus in regard to the need to establish an overarching body at the apex level to prevent fragmentation of Higher Education and to promote interdisciplinary pursuits for creating knowledge, **CABE** decided that State Governments and other members could send in written comments and suggestions within 4 weeks, so that the Task Force could take the same in to consideration, before the draft Bill was finalized and submitted to the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the consideration of the Central Government.

ii. **CABE** considered the proposal on the proposed National Academic Depository Bill, 2010 for creating and maintaining a national electronic database of academic records and awards at no cost to Central or State Government. **CABE** endorsed the proposal which mandates academic institutions – universities, higher educational institutions, CBSE and States Boards of Education to entrust academic awards with authorized Depository to be appointed under the legislation for secure storage, authenticated access, online verification and efficient retrieval while ensuring confidentiality, fidelity and authenticity.

iii. **CABE** unanimously welcomed the steps taken to harmonise the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009. CABE expressed solidarity in taking proactive steps for ensuring the educational rights of all children. The Central and State Governments will collectively provide adequate financial resources to meet the challenges of implementation of the Act. In the context of admission of 25% children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections in unaided schools, CABE resolved to constitute a Committee to address the complexities involved in its implementation.

iv. Recognising the high demand for skill in the country, **CABE** emphasised the need for a National Vocational Qualification Framework to provide a common reference framework for linking various vocational qualifications and setting common principles and guidelines for a nationally recognised qualification system and standards. It was resolved to set up an inter-ministerial group which would also include representatives of state Governments to develop guidelines for such a National Framework.

v. **CABE** endorsed the proposal for implementation a core-curriculum in the subjects of science and mathematics by all higher secondary boards in the country from the academic session 2011-12. The preparation of core curriculum for commerce was also endorsed.