

Publisher's Note

With the onset of globalisation not only the economy, but education culture as well as humanity is amid unprecedented crisis. One after another incidents of inhuman rape and murder are tormenting the mind of every sensible human being. Outbursts of protests are rocking the entire country time and again. In such a situation, in order to present an objective picture of the crisis, the nature of the current attacks in the field of education and culture and the tasks ahead of the students, youth, common people in this critical juncture of history, this booklet is being published by the All India Committee of AIDS. If this booklet helps the readers to understand the nature of crisis and help to develop movement, we will consider our endeavour successful.

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Sourav Mukherjee
General Secretary
All India DSO

Globalisation and Educational Cultural Problems

Today all the newspapers and media are singing glory of globalisation and its outstanding achievements in the 21st century. Much lauded in media are the facts that a number of Indian billionaires have found place in top of the world list of billionaires, the figure of GDP growth has been moving upwards steadily! Faces of the major metropolitan cities of the country are rapidly changing. The 'shining India' is emerging with dazzling glamour. Eye-popping malls and parlours, highrise buildings, serpentine flyovers, long queues of streamlined foreign brand cars, all are depicting the contours of 'progress' heralded by the proponents of globalisation. But that is only one side of the story. All the razzle dazzle could not hide the deep darkness of crisis within the society; could not stifle the sigh and sob of the deprived millions. Unbridled price rise, unemployment, extreme poverty is tormenting the life of the vast majority of the population. Suicide of farmers entangled in debt trap has become an endemic disease across the length and breadth of the country. The suicide of jobless workers, the self-killing of students, youths, and employees has become ever-increasing trends. Land sharks are ruling the roost in every small and big city. The real estate business, grabbing the land of the farmers or land used for public utility purposes has become a major trend in the economy of globalisation. As a result millions and millions of poor people, small or marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, workers who were forced to work in their small patches of land owing to closure of industries are being evicted from their lands that provided them shelter or minimum means of subsistence. Workers' slums in big cities are being burnt by the real estate mafias, to evict the slum dwellers from their home and hearth and grab the vacated land. Thousands

and thousands of industries are undergoing lock-outs and closures. Many industries are being permanently dismantled and its land is being used to construct shopping malls or multiplexes, shattering the hope of the workers who had lost their jobs. As a result an ever increasing number of workers are becoming mental patients, many are choosing the option of suicide or self-immolation. Further, with the intensification of socio-economic crisis shameful flesh trade, large scale human trafficking is thriving. Millions and millions of girls, including minors, belonging to the families of landless agricultural farmers or jobless workers, are being sold to different brothels all over the country, even to different gulf countries. With India 'shining' in 21st century due to globalisation, it is also topping the world list, in the number of human trafficking, number of girls pushed to flesh trade, in the number of deaths due to lack of treatment, mortality of new born babies and in number of corruption, scandals and crimes.

Mass Suicides of Farmers Reflect Acute Crisis in Economy

The rise in the number of billionaires couldn't suppress the miserable condition to which the farmers of India, who by their toil, day-in and day-out, provide food to the entire society, have been pushed to, with the advent of globalisation. Suicide of farmers entangled in debt trap has become an alarming trend in this period. Even during the famines in British period such a condition was unheard of, that even after good cropping they had to kill themselves! "More than 17,500 farmers a year killed themselves between 2002 and 2006, The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) also stated that there were at least 16,196 farmers' suicides in India in 2008, bringing the total since 1997 to 199,132. At least 17,368 farmers killed themselves only in 2009, the worst figure for farm suicides in six years, according to NCRB." (Wikipedia, Title: Farmers' Suicides in India). As for the cause of this sudden spate of suicides are the deregulation of seed market (1988), withdrawal of minimum subsidy to fertilisers and deregulation of the agricultural crop market, withdrawal of the minimum support price for crops. All these neo-liberal policies of globalisation have extremely increased the cost of farming and pushed the farmers to the mercy of loan sharks. It had also made them totally vulnerable to the market jugglery of the

wholesale crop merchants, leaving the helpless farmers no option but suicide. Further, wherever farmers' suicides occur, usually in mass scale in a certain region, massive drop out of students from schools follow as a natural consequence! The widows of the farmers are usually left with the burden of their husbands' debts, and are forced to work as indentured slaves, or forced to sell their flesh, or even to sell their small children to repay the debt!

Unemployment is Rapidly Increasing

Unprecedented crisis is prevailing in the industrial sector of our country too. The present day capitalism, with the onset of globalisation, is frantic to earn super profits by squeezing life-blood of the toiling people. It is now switching over from labour intensive industries to capital intensive industries. For that they are utilising the modern technology, particularly the information technology, not for increasing the production, but only for reducing the labour force and thus to reduce the cost of production. Meanwhile, in this phase of capitalist globalisation, due to extreme capitalist exploitation the effective purchasing capacity of the larger section of population is reducing day by day. Thus there is unprecedented stagnation in the industrial production. Unsold goods are piling in the godowns. As a result of extreme price hike, devaluation of money, reduction in salary, lay off, lock-out, retrenchment and widespread use of contract labourers at a salary much lower than the minimum wage of permanent employees, the purchase capacity of the majority of the population is decreasing further sharply. Most of the industries are utilizing the modern technologies for reducing the number of employees and imposing the entire workload on the remaining few. The industries, which earlier employed several thousands of workers are now, in this period of globalisation, resorting to lay-off and retrenchment in the private sector and taking methods like 'recruitment freeze', 'golden handshake', forced 'voluntary' retirement, business process outsourcing etc. in the public sector, in order to reduce the 'burden' of employees. Obviously the purpose of employing contract labourers is to extort the same or much more work from them paying much less than the minimum wages fixed for permanent employees by the government itself. Moreover

they shoulder no liability of the employees, give no employment benefits and do not recognise any labour rights.

As a part of the policies of globalisation, the government is also withdrawing all protections, earlier provided to the small and medium scale industries and enterprises, to small shop owners or retailers, pushing them to the ruthless aggression in the market by the foreign or indigenous multinational corporate giants. As a result due to completely uneven competition with the multinational corporate giants, several thousands of medium and small industries have been closed and are being closed. Even the corporate giants, with huge amount of capital are finding investment in industrial sector very much uncertain. They are diverting their capital to real estate industries, in developing Special Economic Zones, construction of toll based highways and expressways, shopping malls, retail trade of food grains or vegetables, in health services and in the field of education. For all these investments, land has become crucially important. So eviction of farmers from their arable lands, from their home and hearth has become a chronic feature of present day capitalism. The government, instead of protecting the poorer sections, are backing the land sharks on the pretext of 'national' or 'public' interest! SEZ, which is virtually the slaughterhouse of the workers, has become the 'cornerstone' of the economy in the period of globalisation. The eviction of large number of peasants from their lands are leading to further job losses and reduction in the overall purchase capacity of the people. As a result unemployment is thriving. Whatever new employment is being created all are casual jobs, without any employment benefit, without any right or protection to the workers. Even the principle of 8-hour employment is grossly violated. For merely four or five thousand rupees workers are forced to work for 12 to 14 hours.

Education is also Amid Intense Crisis

Education is also in deep crisis in this period of globalisation. In the earlier period also education was beset with very serious problems. It was made highly restrictive in variety of ways. The student organisation AIDS, since its foundation in 1954, has although pointed out that there had been a planned attempt to curtail education and to deprive the majority of

population from the scope of education. From the very beginning it developed movement against the Seat Restriction Scheme and the policy of 'moratorium on opening of new universities' then imposed by the UGC. The AIDS also developed movement against the policy of vocationalisation of education pursued by the government.

The demand for universal free and compulsory education was raised by the stalwarts of Indian renaissance like Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar and Jyotiba Phule in the 19th century and the leaders of freedom movement in the 20th century. Lala Lajpat Rai, the fore-ranking leader of freedom movement and national education movement, in his famous book 'Problems of National Education' wrote: "Universal popular education must be provided by the state and should be the first-charge on state revenues.....The old idea that state was only concerned with making provision for elementary education is also gone. All over the world it is recognized that the duty of the state does not end with elementary education.....nor can the state ignore the necessity of higher education." All the stalwarts of renaissance and freedom movement of our country considered education as an instrument for man-making, character building. They considered secular, scientific and democratic education as the only instrument for removal of darkness of ignorance from within the society. Meanwhile after the Soviet Revolution in 1917, in the Soviet Union, the education up to the highest level was totally free. The socialist government shouldered entire responsibility of education health and employment of all its citizens. Therefore, in India also, since 1947 up to the 80's the government could not altogether deny its responsibility in providing education to its citizens. In this phase the process of curtailment of education started in a planned manner, through restriction of seats of higher education. The Kothari Commission of 1964-66, while discussing the fee issue as well as government funding for education, upheld the system in Soviet Union as ideal and said, "It may be mentioned that school education is completely free in most countries, and all education from elementary school to the research degree is free in the USSR."(Art 6.10, Report, Kothari Commission). But the attack on education has assumed a completely new nature and character with the onset of globalisation. The processes of globalisation have come as the consequence of the dismantling

of Soviet Union and the socialist camp through imperialist and neo-revisionist conspiracy. The process of dismantling started in the mid-eighties and during the same time, in 1986, the new National Policy on Education was passed by the Congress government led by Sri Rajiv Gandhi. The NPE '86 brought a paradigm shift in the question of aims and objective of education. Instead of man-making, character building, and cultivating scientific bent of mind among the students, it described education as 'a unique investment for the present and future'. It opened the floodgate of fee hike, introduced the self-financed courses' approach and launched the drive for all out privatisation-commercialisation of education.

To Manage the Crisis of Capitalism Education is being Viewed as a New Field for Investment

While the NPE '86 provided the blueprint of privatisation and commercialisation, the process of restructuring of the field of education as per the designs of globalisation had started since the 90's. Although 'globalisation' was launched after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the erstwhile socialist camp and meant a 'unipolar' world where corporate capital will be omnipotent ruler in all fields, and all barriers is sought to be removed which existed in the earlier system due to the presence and influence of the socialist states. But in spite of opening of the markets of the erstwhile socialist countries to the international finance capital, the crisis of capitalism could not be solved, rather it became much more intense and complex. One after another waves of crisis in nineties of last century and in the first decade of 21st century have sent the entire economy of the USA and Europe reeling. Due to market crisis a large number of industries or giant banks collapsed and the number of unemployed started sky-rocketing. Today, the USA has become one of the foreranking debtor countries. In such a situation for the capitalist countries, while investment in other industrial and commercial sectors have become utterly uncertain, the investment in the service sector, particularly commercial investment in the fields like health, education and other so-called service sectors have become crucial. OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an international body comprising the USA, UK,

Australia and thirty such leading capitalist countries as its members, and its declared objective being 'to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation' published a document in 2009, viz. Policy Responses to the Economic Crisis: *Investing in Innovation for Long-Term Growth*. In this report it has explained "The current crisis is the first of this severity to hit OECD countries, since they have shifted to 'knowledge-based service economies' and recommended, "Education and training are particularly important in the current crisis. In times of recession, budget constraints (in government, households and businesses) tend to reduce expenditure on education and training. On the other hand, due to rising unemployment, demand for training increases... ..The crisis also presents an opportunity to raise investment in human capital. Support for education and training can accelerate the healthy transition to new jobs and emerging opportunities. It is also essential for innovation, which requires a broad set of skills. Building such skills starts in primary school and continues through firm-based training and lifelong education... ..Investment in educational infrastructure, which can also support demand. For example, many countries face challenges regarding school buildings. Renovating the school infrastructure (e.g. in integrating ICT and building more ecologically-friendly schools) can also foster more innovative and effective learning environments. ... Some countries are using the crisis as an opportunity to reinvigorate reforms to higher education institutions or training policies, e.g. Spain and Portugal. Such reforms are needed in many countries in any case, but are also required to adapt to the emerging needs of a post-crisis society."(Report of OECD, Policy Responses to the Economic Crisis: *Investing in Innovation for Long-Term Growth*, . Thus, what the OECD suggests through this document to its member countries that during the period of crisis, the investment in education may help the tottering economy to overcome the crisis. The crisis management will be in two ways, first while the huge amount of capital that has become stagnant and idle, finding no fields for investment, finds a new field for investment in education. The government should increase its spending in infrastructure development in order to supplement the private investment and spending. Secondly, due to the economic trend of the crisis ridden capitalism to switchover from

the labour intensive to capital intensive industries, overall job opportunities will sharply reduce but the industries will need a few elite labourers, trained in so-called modern information technology. This they term as 'knowledge' based economy. When there will be output of larger and larger volumes of trained manpower, the price of the trained labour will decrease, and the corporate investors will be benefitted by substantial reduction in its labour expenditure. Whatever salary they offer even well trained and skilled engineers will be forced to accept that, in face of the larger supply of trained manpower. Thus the drive for reform of the education sector has started, but that has virtually nothing to do with public welfare or educating the people at large. It is merely for the benefit of the corporate investors, so that they can invest their huge amount of idle capital in a profitable way.

Series of Commissions Constituted for Implementing the Policies of Globalisation in Education

Much before the recommendation of OECD, the Indian capitalism, out of its own capitalist interest started the drive to 'reform' the field of education along this line taking the opportunity of globalisation. After the National Policy on Education 1986, till today, one after another education commissions or committees, has been appointed all of which, recommended on how the field of education could be converted into a field suitable for private investment! Immediately after the onset of Globalisation, the Ramamurthy Committee, that submitted its report in December 1990, was set up by the government of India to review the NPE 1986, even before completion of five years of introduction of the policy! Obviously, the only urge behind this hurry was to review the NPE '86 in the backdrop of the onset of globalisation by the beginning of 90's. By the end of 90's, when the instruments for implementation of the designs of globalisation, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) had already been formed, the then central government formed another committee, viz. the Special Subject Group on Policy Framework for Private Investment in Education, Health and Rural Development, this special subject group was led by the leading corporate investor Mukesh Ambani and comprised of industrialist

like Kumarmangalam Birla. This Ambani-Birla Committee submitted its "Report on a Policy Framework for Reforms in Education" in April 2000. Naturally this report reflected the desires and aspirations of the ruling capitalist class of India for restructuring the education system and making it more favourable for the investors. The Report justifying the process of converting the system of education into a field for investment, clearly stated "Rates of return in education are also better than rates of return in other sectors such as agriculture, industry and infrastructure." (Art 1.4). Furthermore, "Globalisation and a shift to a market-led, knowledge-based economy demands that education must become the cornerstone of development if India has to find a place at the top of the League of Nations." (ibid, Art 1.17)! In the wake of this committee, virtually to implement the prescriptions of this committee, the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) was constituted on 13th June 2005 as a high-level advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, with a mandate to guide policy and direct reforms. National Knowledge Commission submitted its report in 2006 and its tenure expired in the year..... Meanwhile, The Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education' alias the Yashpal Committee, which submitted its final report in 2009 was merely to optimise the process, i.e. to see how the system of education can be converted into a field of investment but at the same time see to it that too much greed for profit of the investors, shall not lead to extreme grievance of the people. The Anil Kakodkar Committee was mainly concerned with the policy of reform of the so-called 'centres of excellence' like the existing IITs and IIMs, and establish new ones, both on the basis of the principle of Private-Public Partnership (PPP). It submitted its report in April 2011. And it is now known that the Central Government is going to launch another new education Commission very soon. All these commissions have made recommendations, in unison, to implement the desire of the ruling capitalist class i.e. to convert the entire system of education into a profitable field for investment. During this entire phase, the government and the policy-makers have been talking of Expansion, Inclusion and Excellence, but expansion and inclusion for whom? Obviously, the entire change, reform and 'rejuvenation' of the educational system are being done not for the benefit of

the broader masses but for the handful of corporate investors. Thus, the man-making, character building aspects of education, whatever existed there in the system of education in the pre-globalisation period, in spite of all the attempts of curtailment, the attempt had started to completely obliterate that. The drive for 'expansion' or 'inclusion' is nothing but expansion of the education market and inclusion of the rich consumers in this process.

Educational Budget Increased To Develop Infrastructure for Private Investment

The demand to increase the education budget for making education free and universally available was raised by all the stalwarts of freedom movement. The student organisation AIDS0 also, for universalisation of education, for making primary to higher education free or keeping it at least within the reach of the common people, for establishment of more institutions, for recruitment of teachers, for improvement of the laboratories etc. always raised the demand for allocation of at least 10% of the central budget for education. Earlier, on the question of increasing education budget, the government always raised the plea of fund shortage. In the period spanning from 1950 to 1985, during one after another five year plans, the plan expenditure of education, which is vitally important for expansion of education, establishment of new schools, colleges, universities and research centres, sharply reduced. During the first five year plan period the plan allocation of the central government for education was around 7%, while during the 7th plan period it had been reduced to mere 1.25%. The AIDS0 always demanded that the military budget and bureaucratic expenditure, expenditure for MLA's, MP's and Ministers should be curtailed and that amount should be diverted for education. In the beginning of the process of commercialisation, after the introduction of NPE '86, the Central Government reduced the grant of the universities and colleges with the plea of shortages of fund, and they advised the institutional authorities to manage the institution by increasing students' fees. As a result of this approach the students fees started to increase rapidly. But in the recent period it is observed that the central government even while increasing the military budget, the

bureaucratic expenditure and the expenditure for MLA's and MP's substantially, are also increasing the education budget. During the 11th plan period, the central government had substantially increased its education budget. But to increase the education budget they imposed an additional educational cess on every commodity collecting a large amount of money from common people. Since 2004-05 2% education cess had been imposed on all saleable commodities ostensibly for Sarva Siksha Abhijaan. In the budget 2013-14 it has been made 3%, extra 1% for higher education. In this manner by imposing the cess on people, the central government has started to increase the education budget. But the slashing of grants of the colleges and universities, and resultant fee hike did not stop. As for example in the budget for the year 2010-11, the education budget was increased by 24% compared to the previous year, although despite raising the education budget, the Centre's allocation of Rs.52,057 crore aggregates to a mere 0.58 percent of the country's GDP. But notable is that among the increased amount Rs 200 crore was allocated for the establishment of National Information Terminal, which is required for facilitating the system of distance education, which offered a very good prospect of business. Furthermore a large amount of the additional Rs.1400 crore for the higher education was spent for establishing 30 new IIT's, notable is the fact that all the IIT's will gradually be self-financing and run on the basis of PPP. Similarly, in the budget of the year 2013-2014 there was 17% increase in the outlay for HRD compared to the earlier year. In this budget a large amount, that is, Rs. 1000 crore has been allocated for vocational training in the name of skill development. The elite Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will get Rs.2,220 crore for 2013-14, almost double the allocation they received in 2012-13, but most of the funds may go to the eight new IITs to augment their capacity. The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) will get Rs.331 crore, triple the allocation of the earlier fiscal year. But the University Grants Commission will get Rs.5,147 crore, a negligible increase of Rs.69 crore for funding the general colleges and universities which also in the backdrop of sharp devaluation of money and price hike is virtually reduction in the allocation.

Since 2004-5, a large amount in each budget is being allocated for implementation of Sarva Siksha Abhijaan and

the RTE Act. It is true that school buildings are essential. But even, the aspect of providing buildings to all the schools, through the schemes like Operation Blackboard, SSA, RMSA etc., which are apparently very much essential and public service oriented, the capitalist class have been provided with new fields for investment. The contracts for construction of school buildings are being offered to the corporate investors in different states.

Then does the increase in education budget make education easily available to students? Not at all! The education is becoming more and more costly, out of reach of the poor people, dropout rates at different levels have been rapidly increasing, and the quality and standard of education also have been declining sharply. The central government has announced that for creation of excellence 30 new IIT's and 50 World class universities or so-called Innovative Universities will be established and there will be no shortage of funds for that. But all these institutions are gradually going to run on the basis of self-financing approach and Private- Public Partnership. The Anil Kakodkar Committee, ostensibly formed for reformation of the IIT's have commented, "It is proposed that the fee charged by the IITs should cover the full operational cost of education, which works out to be roughly 30% of the total current cost of education... ...With this background, the Committee has suggested that the tuition fees should be between Rs 2–2.5 lakh per year per student. This would be reasonable considering the high demand for IIT graduates and the salary that an IIT B.Tech is expected to get."(page XII). Thus money is being extorted from common people, both in the form of fees and taxes. But their taxes are being spent for the development of centres of excellence the gates of which the students from poor families will never be able to cross. And the entire additional fund is being utilised to implement certain schemes which are required for creating variety of provisions and facilities for the private investors.

Thus, whatever might be the propaganda, the increase in budgetary allocation is being done not to cater to education but to provide the capitalist class a profitable field for investment, and for creating the environment in the field of education suitable for private investment, so that, in spite of the intense crisis of capitalism they can continue to extort maximum profit by draining the students and guardians.

Increasing Corporate Entry in the Field of Education

The corporate investors are highly elated that there is a consistent drive for educational reforms as they can now pounce upon this opportunity in the field of education to have their pound of flesh. During the last two decades corporate investment in education is rapidly increasing. A recent research report on the Investment in Education Sector in India prepared by a private research agency, viz. Salvus Capital Advisors Pvt. Ltd, has said that already there are, "Rs10 billion investment plan from educational institutes in Haryana's Rajiv Gandhi Educational City (January' 11). There is RS 28.08 billion corporate investment for setting up 20 IIITs under PPP route (January' 11). Another corporate investor Everonn is going ahead with Rs 36 billion investment plan to setup 300 K-12(K-12 is Kindergarten to Class XII school in one premise) schools by 2015 (July' 10). The investment agency, Educomp has secured "Rs 510 million contract to provide computer education in Bihar's schools (May' 10)". Furthermore, the education sector in India has witnessed 29 PE deals (Private equity deals), cumulatively worth US\$381 million, between January 2006 and June 2010 (as per Private equity roundup April-June 2010 by Ernst and Young). Again a number of big industrial investors are now opening chain of schools, international schools etc. e.g. Aditya Birla World Academy-Mumbai, Amity Global School-New Delhi, D Y Patil International School-Mumbai and Nagpur; Dhirubhai Ambani International School-Mumbai; GD Goenka World School-Gurgoan; Indus International School-Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune; Pathways School-Gurgoan, Noida and New Delhi; Stonehill International School-Bangalore; Sharad Pawar International School-Pune, etc. are some of the examples. As for chain of schools, the franchise based Delhi Public Schools, directly invested Central Schools like Patna Central School, Ranchi Central School etc. established by an educational investor of Bihar, Mr. Y. K. Sudarshan, etc. are a few examples. All these institutions have been established as private limited companies, merely for investment and profit. The research report comments, "The majority of these investments have been in for-profit corporate entities that are not subjected to any government regulations. Apart

from that, there are innumerable private self financing institutions, professional colleges and extremely costly private schools, formed as private limited companies, are mushrooming all over the country. Big and small industrialists, MLA's and MP's of 'big' political parties, filmstars, singers, mafias all are viewing education as a ripe field for investment. The research report comments, "In future, with increased government spending and expansion plans of private players, the potential for PE investments in the Indian education sector is significant. Additionally, sector's less correlation with the broad economic growth makes it more attractive." It says further, "With an education network of more than one million schools and 20,000 higher-education institutes, the market size of the Indian education system is estimated at more than US\$40 billion (2009)." Also, the Government of India is planning to set up an Education Finance Corporation with an investment of around US\$4-5 billion.

All these and many other such facts indicate that the government as well as the educational investors are viewing the entire education system as merely a profitable field for investment. The government spending in the field of education is mostly to build the infrastructure at the public expense so that private investors can use that to reap more profit. Thus the so-called drive for reforming the educational sector has nothing to do with man-making, character building or kindling the spirit of cultivation of knowledge among the students, for which the great men of our country or abroad attached so much importance to education. Nor is it intended for providing education to vast masses of poor students.

Approach Towards Fees Converting education into a Costly Commodity

The approach towards fees, the method to determine fees, is very important to judge a system of education. The view of the British imperialists towards fees was reflected in the Wood's despatch of 1854, following which Calcutta, Bombay and Madras universities were formed. It said that fees in the universities should be high so that only those students who are most serious take admission in the universities. But according to the secular, scientific and democratic concepts education is the accumulated

knowledge of mankind. It can't be treated as a private property of anybody and as a commodity saleable in market. To a student it is a right and should be viewed as a gift of the preceding generation to him or her. Any right is associated with corresponding duty. When a student receives education freely, as a valuable gift of the society, he must feel that he is duty bound to the society. Institutions may run either with funds from public exchequer and provide education to students as public service or it may run by collecting fees from students, then it will appear as price of a commodity. In both the cases public are paying but in the second case education becomes a privilege of the rich. If education is purchased as a commodity, a student's attitude will be solely money oriented, having no commitment towards society. That is why in many western countries, in the pre-globalisation period, education was almost free. In erstwhile Soviet Russia and other socialist countries education up to the highest light of the sun and the moon, should be freely shared by all, rich and poor, high and low." (Gopabandhu Rachanabali, Vol. - I, Page - 27).

It was the true spirit of the days of freedom movement that education should be available to all, both rich and poor, with equality, like the rays of sun or raindrops. Furthermore, in the sixties of last century there was a powerful influence of the Soviet Russia and the socialist camp and due to the impact of it on the people of the world most of the capitalist countries, including India, were forced to talk in terms of 'welfare state'. As the Soviet Russia and all the then socialist countries considered well being of people as prime concern of the state and guaranteed education up to the highest level to be freely available to all; the capitalist countries like India, at least verbally, couldn't deny the responsibility of providing education and other welfare services by the state. Reflecting the same spirit prevalent in the society, the Kothari Commission constituted (1962-64) by the then central government, in its report, regarding source of fund for education, commented, "It is undesirable to regard fees as a source of revenue. They are the most regressive form of taxation, fall more heavily on the poor classes of society and act as an anti-egalitarian force. ... We recommend therefore, that the country should gradually work towards a stage when all education should be tuition free."

Exactly opposite to this view, the National Policy on Education 1986 reflected the view maintained by the British imperialists towards the fees in the Wood's Despatch of 1954. In the Challenge of Education: The Policy Perspective, the document launched by the HRD Ministry prior to NPE 86, it was said that to provide fund for students in general higher education is wastage of national resources. Institutions should procure funds by collecting 'donations', enhancing fees etc. It floated the idea of 'self-financed courses' where fees for a course will be determined in the same manner in which the price of a commodity is determined, that is by calculating the entire expenditure for the course along with some additional profit. The NKC, recommended for enhancing fees up to 100% in all government funded universities in the year of its recommendation and then regular adjustment of fees through "price indexation" so that students may accept it without major grievance (NKC, notes on Higher Education, page-11). This is termed as 'rationalization of fees.' The statement of the Anil Kakodkar committee more vividly demonstrates the out and out money oriented attitude of the policy planners regarding students' fees. The IIT's which will be built out of public exchequer, as 'centres of excellence', but there, "...the tuition fees should be between Rs 2–2.5 lakh per year per student. This would be reasonable considering the high demand for IIT graduates and the salary that an IIT B. Tech is expected to get." (Anil Kakodkar Committee report, page XII). So the policy planners suggest that fees of a course should be determined not even on the basis of expenditure for the course but on the basis of the market value of the course! As such a vulgar and most objectionable approach can be propounded by the government and the educational policy makers, as a inevitable consequence of it the government funded institutions, self-financing, partially aided and all and sundry institutions are going for unbridled fee hike.

In the private medical and engineering colleges by dint of the Supreme Court order the Management quota has been introduced where the seats are being sold at unbelievable prices. In West Bengal in KPC Medical College, Kolkata, for MBBS courses, in the management quota the declared fees is Rs. 22,10,000.00, while in the 'free' seats, i.e. students admitted from the list of joint entrance is Rs.5,90,000.00! The MBBS seats have

been sold by two private colleges in Chennai, between Rs. 12 lakh to 40 lakh. The price for a postgraduate seat in radiology in most leading private colleges across the country is 2 crore rupees while in cardiology, gynecology and orthopedics are priced around rupees 1.5 crore. (Journal of Education and Practice www.iiste.org, Vol.4, No.1, 2013, paper Kusum Jain and Shelly, University of Jaipur, Rajasthan) such is the scenario of medical education. In general courses in the aided colleges also are being hiked regularly and now range from several thousands of rupees to scores of thousands per annum, depending on the nature of the courses.

Not only in the higher education, fees hike, and hike of all sorts of educational expenses has become a feature at the pre-primary, primary and higher school level too. The condition of the government funded elementary schools under the purview of RTE act, due to its policies of teaching and evaluation has become such that a feeling is prevailing that there will be no education at all. As a result most of the guardians are trying to get their students admitted in private schools. A Social Development Foundation Survey Report of 2008 sponsored by ASSOCHAM, also highlight that "...as school expenses excluding tuition fees have risen from Rs.25,000 in 2000 to Rs.65,000 per annum in 2008 and that too on a single child. While the annual income on an average of well off parents have risen not by more than 28% to 30% during the period..... Nearly 60% of parents felt education had become a business and that the high tuition fees did not actually indicate the academic standards of a school. Rather, it indicated a demand supply function so that school managements could effect erratic fee hikes every year – something parents cannot protest. Even private preparatory schools charge Rs 25,000 a term.." the survey says. Obviously the rate in which the school fees increased from the year 2000 to 2008, afterwards the rate has further increased only. Thus the rapid increase of fees are converting education into a saleable commodity and pushing it out of reach of poor and lower middle class/middle class students.

Compulsory Accreditation to Promote all-out Commercialisation of Education

"All higher educational institutions in the country, except technical education one, will now have to get accredited under

law. The law, called the UGC (Mandatory Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions) Regulations 2012, was notified in the official gazette on February 19, and came into force with immediate effect. The UGC Regulations 2012 say that all higher education institutions who fail to comply with the assessment and accreditation clause will be barred from financial aid granted by the UGC or the Ministry of Human Resource Development but says nothing of the private institutions that do not take or aspire to take any financial aid from the government. Nor do the Regulations say anything about institutions like the Indian Institute of Planning and Management (IIPM) who blatantly defy the UGC and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The Regulation require that all higher education institutions (except technical education colleges governed by the AICTE) apply for accreditation within a period of six months to the accreditation agencies namely the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, the National Board of Accreditation, and the National Accreditation Board currently recognised by the UGC.”(University Grants Commission update, 22.4.2013). What is the purpose of this accreditation? If we look at the criteria and yardstick proposed by the UGC for getting accreditation, it is clear that only those institutions will get higher accreditation rating which have re-oriented its course and curriculum in tune with privatisation, commercialisation and the latest market trends. Thus the UGC is linking the issue of grants with the accreditation rating of the institution, and is using it as a tool to restructure the institutions according to the design cherished by the ruling capitalist class. As a consequence in order to get better accreditation rating, the institutions are, on the one hand introducing more and more so-called ‘innovative’, i.e. market oriented, costly self financing courses and on the other hand are imposing huge amount of accreditation fees and development fees on the students, for window dressing of the institutions. Even steps like bribing of the accreditation team, temporarily hiring faculty staffs or instruments in laboratories etc. for better accreditation have become regular practice. Just similar to gradation of hotels as five star or seven star etc, accreditation ratings are being used by the institutions to attract the students. Naturally a better accredited institution means an institution with higher fees in the growing ‘educational market’ of our country.

Very recently, in the month of May 2013, the authorities of the KPC Medical College in Kolkata, the only running private medical college in West Bengal, 18 doctors cum teachers have been summarily retrenched from the institution, without assigning any reason. The teachers alleged that they were appointed only before an inspection of the MCI, merely to show inflated faculty strength to the inspection team. Immediately after the inspection they were thrown out! Many such incidents are now plaguing the field of education as an inevitable result of this process of commercialisation.

Does RTE Act 2009 Safeguard any Right of the Students?

Amid the scenario, where entire education is being viewed as a commodity and a field for investment, the introduction of the Right to Education Act 2009(RTE Act 2009) seemingly appears to be in total contrast. But this illusion at once gets exploded when we have a close look at its provisions and its implementation. The Act was passed on 4th August 2009 in Parliament by the UPA 1 government with the declared “purpose” to prevent school dropouts and guarantee ‘free and compulsory education’ to all children of the country of the age group of six to fourteen years. This act too has come as consequence of the order of the Supreme Court. This ‘right’ has apparently been upheld as fundamental right by amending the Article 21A of the Constitution of India. But the government is apparently taking responsibility of providing education to only those students who are in the age group of 6 to 14 years. For those who are below 6 years and higher than 14 years the government has not bothered to take any responsibility and a student must pay for his own education. The pre-primary education, the higher school education and the college-university education-all these stages will be totally demarcated for private, commercial investment where there will be no responsibility of the government! These institutions will gradually become self-financing and will be run through Private-Public Partnership.

Moreover, in spite of tall talks of universalisation of education, the RTE Act has introduced certain policies, which, instead of guaranteeing any meaningful education to children have virtually destroyed the very process of acquisition of the

knowledge of 3R's among the children. Before introduction of the RTE 2009, the HRD Ministry had declared the Sarva Siksha Abhijaan, as the main drive for universalisation of elementary education. The MHRD said: "Currently, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is implemented as India's main programme for universalising elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning levels of children." (Website Introduction, MHRD, Department of School Education and Literacy). The Ministry of HRD, in fact, by dint of the RTE Act, have made the no-detention policy (that is abolition of the pass-fail system) compulsory in the government or aided schools upto the class-VIII. The ostensible purpose of this move is to ensure the retention of the students in schools, who dropout due to the 'fear of examinations and failure'. But whatever a student had learnt in the earlier existing system has now been totally done away with due to certain changes in approach to teaching and learning which will be discussed later in this article. These changes in approach have been brought forth referring to certain so-called modern educational theories, but the result of implementation of it in different states have been disastrous. Implementation of the policies related to RTE and SSA, have totally destroyed the teaching of three R's in the elementary level, and the standard of education of the students of government aided schools has considerably gone down.

The Overall Condition of School Education

Now what is the scenario of school education in our country? The government claims that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in the schools has substantially improved due to the drives like DPEP, Sarva Siksha Abhijaan, Rastriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijaan, and lastly the RTE act 2009. But what is the reality? Regarding the dropout rates in secondary schools, a report says, "At least 48 of every 100 students in India pursuing secondary education never go beyond that level" the World Bank recently pointed out that our country was doing worse than Vietnam and Bangladesh in enrolling students in secondary education though these countries had lower per capita incomes than India. "Thirty seven per cent students fail before the final examination and 11%

drop out during the period (class 9-12)" the World Bank study which recently released said. "India's GER in secondary school is 40 per cent compared to 70 per cent in East Asia and 82 per cent in Latin America." (Ref. <http://toostep.com/idea/48-school-kids-in-india-dropout-early-how-to-improve-on-the>).

A research report prepared by a fellow of Guwahati University has mentioned, according to a study in 2010, "... .. of the more than 27 million children in India, who joined in Class I in 1993, only 10 million of them reached Class X, which is only about 37% of those who entered the school system and in more than half the states, only 30% of children reached Class X." (An Econometric Study, Rupon Basumatary, ibid). Thus the scenario of enrolment is still dismal after the much fanfare of so many universal enrolment programmes like SSA or RMSA. Not only that but also the quality of education has declined sharply. There are four major reasons for decline in the school education. Firstly, the introduction of new syllabi prepared by the NCERT, on the basis of a changed approach to teaching, viz. the so-called Child Centred Approach and functional method of teaching. Secondly, the change in the system of evaluation, introduction of the so-called policy of Continuous and Comprehensive and Evaluation (CCE) prescribed by the NCERT along with the policy of no detention upto class-VIII, imposed by the latest RTE Act 2009. Thirdly, acute shortage of teachers in the schools, at all levels of education. Fourthly, the overall degeneration of learning environment in schools and higher educational institutions, which is a result of extreme commercialisation.

The Reform of School Textbooks Destroy Thorough Learning

With the plea to reduce the 'burden of textbooks' on the students at the level of elementary education the NCERT proposed the National curriculum Framework(NCF) 2005 and has launched the books based on the new syllabi. The teaching method proposed by the NCERT is the so-called child centred approach, where the children in a class will learn themselves from the playthings. Role of the teacher there will be merely that of 'class room manager'. As regards methods of teaching and learning the NCERT has introduced the highly superficial 'functional approach'. According

to it, in learning languages, there is no need to attain perfection through rigorous learning of grammar- translation etc. Students must learn the language to use it mostly through conversations! As regards mathematics, students should learn how to apply the mathematical formula, proofs are not required. Furthermore, the so-called 'market relevance' of a subject or some topic is considered the yardstick for overhauling of the educational syllabi. We have observed that always, with the plea of 'relevance' the policy makers have discouraged the study of basic sciences and mathematics and literature and make it merely information-oriented and vocationalised. Great scientist Einstein said, "It is not enough to teach man a speciality. He may become a useful machine but not a harmoniously developed personality. It is essential that the student acquires an understanding and a lively feeling for values, he must acquire a vivid sense of the beautiful and of the morally good. Otherwise he with his specialized knowledge more closely resembles a well-trained dog than a harmoniously developed person...overemphasis on the competitive system and premature specialisation on the ground of immediate usefulness kill the spirit on which all cultural life depends, specialised knowledge included".(Ideas and Opinions). It is strong opinion of all the great educationists, that the school education should serve as the common core component of learning, where all students should study the same syllabi. Therefore instead of market relevance or speciality, at this stage thorough learning of two or three languages, mathematics, history, geography, physical and life sciences etc. is much more required, with due importance, in order to develop analytical skills, understanding of the social and political problems and comprehensive development of a student. But the NCERT with the plea of relevance has proposed to introduce diversions like English for science and technology or Business English after class VIII at the school level. With the same approach the NCERT has proposed to introduce business mathematics or mathematics for science and technology, instead of general mathematics at the school level after VIIIth standard. They have reformed the syllabi also, with the argument "In all the four familiar areas of the school curriculum, i.e. language, mathematics, science and social sciences, significant changes are recommended with a view to making education more relevant to the present day and future

needs". With this argument, the history and geography have been abolished as separate subjects and a single subject social science has been introduced. By this the importance of the subjects like history and geography, which are vital in developing social consciousness of the students, have been sharply reduced. In the mathematics course, whatever might be the argument of the NCERT regarding imaginative studies, the approach to teaching is to let the students learn only the numerical application of the formulas and proof is not required. Apart from that due to the stress on yes/no answer type or multiple choice questions make the entire studies merely information oriented and impairs the process of development of analytical skills and faculty of reasoning of the students. Furthermore, the NCERT has adopted the new approach towards examination and evaluation at the school level which is known as the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). The document of NCERT, i.e NCF 2005, has commented, "Examination reforms constitute the most important systemic measure to be taken for curricular renewal and to find a remedy for the growing problem of psychological pressure that children and their parents feel, especially in Classes X and XII. Specific measures include changing the typology of the question paper so that reasoning and creative abilities replace memorisation as the basis of evaluation, and integration of examinations with classroom life by encouraging transparency and internal assessment. The stress on pre-board examinations must be reversed, and strategies enabling children to opt for different levels of attainment should be encouraged to overcome the present system of generalized classification into 'pass' and 'fail' categories."(NCFSE 2005).

Already the CBSE Board has introduced the CCE. As a part of it they are evaluating the students on the basis of an average of the scores in monthly unit tests, what they say CGPA (CGPA-Cumulative Grade Point Average). According to this approach the annual and external examination system will be gradually removed. Assessment of a student will be on the basis of internal assessment in the monthly unit tests throughout the year. In the earlier system, both internal monthly tests and annual and final external examinations were combined to compare the personal evaluation of the class teacher with the impersonal evaluation of the external examiner, in order to provide a check and balance in

the system of assessment. It is true that due to negligence towards teaching, degeneration of the academic environment, students' last moment learning or rote learning became a problem. Pointing to that the National Knowledge Commission and Yashpal Committee had preferred the new system of CCE. In the name of implementing the so-called CCE a large number of schools in different states, most of the government aided schools are now resorting to the blackboard examination instead of examination on papers. Virtually that is examination in the namesake. In many schools there is no separate examinations for different subjects, a single paper examination is taken combining all the subjects. In many schools only multiple choice questions are framed in the tests. In this manner importance of teaching, roll of a teacher and method of examination, evaluation all are being totally destroyed. As a part of the design of CCE, the school final board examination, that is matriculation or secondary board examination is made optional. Already CBSE has implemented this system. If secondary examination is made optional, naturally, students from educated middle class families will opt for seating in it. The poor students mostly will lose the motivation of seating in the examination altogether. The NCERT, for future reframing of the syllabus has proposed to introduce this very approach upto higher secondary level also. Furthermore, the NCF recommends interdisciplinary approach with the argument of "softening of subject boundaries" so that children can get a taste of "integrated knowledge and the joy of understanding." But we are afraid that in this manner the entire school courses will be devoid of any thorough and comprehensive learning.

Disastrous Result of Functional Approach and Removal of Pass-Fail System

Could the implementation of RTE prevent or reduce the school dropouts? Regarding the school dropouts, a research report said, "With the implementation of RTE, of course, there has been a gradual decline in the annual average dropout rate from 9.1 in 2009-2010 to 6.9 in 2010-11 but there have been more children dropout in 2010-11 as compared to 2009-2010 in 10 out of the 30 states where RTE has been notified..." (School Dropout across Indian States and UTs: An Econometric Study, Rupon Basumatary, International Research Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 1(4), 28-

35, December (2012). This indicates that the so-called improvement in enrolment and reduction in the number of school dropouts is merely a jugglery of official statistics, but not reflected in reality. But there is no doubt that the implementation of RTE/SSS have caused sharp decline in quality and standard of education in government or aided schools. Recently, on 26 April 2013, the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on HRD submitted its 253rd Report to the Loksabha, regarding the condition of education in schools under RTE/SSS. This report has showed with data, "...that the time students come to class VIII, their performance in languages, mathematics and EVS/Science decline." It declined so much that, "In 2010 nationally, 46.3% of all children in Standard V could not read Std. II level text. This proportion increased to 51.8% in 2011 and further to 53.2% in 2012." (Art 4.20). For government schools the same percentage "has increased from 49.3% (2010) to 56.2% (2011) to 58.3% (2012)". There are many more facts both from the survey of government agencies like NCERT or NGO's, that even a very large number of students studying in class-VIII or IX, are unable to write a complete sentence or to perform simple numerical division or add two fractions, etc. As for example "The proportion of class I children who could recognise numerals declined from 69.3 percent in 2009 to 65.8 percent in 2010. Likewise the percentage of class III children who can do two-digit subtraction sums declined from 39 percent to 36.5 percent even as the proportion of class V children who could complete simple division sums dropped from 38 to 35.9 percent. (Education News, *EW* February 2011; Special Report March 2011).

In view of many such disastrous facts quoted in the report from the NCERT Learning Achievement Survey of Round 1 and 2, the Report of HRD Parliamentary committee comments "...the Committee doubts about the policy of automatic upgradation from class I to VIII....The Committee feels that a student may not be motivated to work hard to learn if he/she is aware that his promotion to the next grade is guaranteed. A child may not be mature enough to understand the implications of his being required to seat for formal examinations from class IX onwards and obtain minimum benchmarks. Further, even the teachers, parents, peer groups may not always make efforts to motivate the child to have quality education, thus denying the student an opportunity to learn

through the process and be prepared with cognitive faculties to take on higher grade examinations.” (Art 4.22)

It is obvious from the report that the government and aided schools are the most serious victims of this design, which also have been suffering fatally from lack of teachers, building or minimum basic amenities. They are thus being pushed to such a wretched condition that the guardians lose confidence on them and desert them; even going beyond their limits they can afford to, the guardians get their children admitted to exorbitantly costly private schools, which retain examination with all its seriousness. Those who cannot afford to, and they are definitely overwhelming in number, are being compelled to admit their children in government schools where they are automatically promoted whether they learn anything or not. Surely at the later stage of their school education they find it extremely hard to pass in any tests or examination and would therefore be forced to join the list of drop-outs. Thus, large number of government run and aided schools, in their turn, are on the verge of closure due to exodus of students to private schools, adding further aggravating the problems. In fact most important is allocation of sufficient amount of funds for recruitment of teachers and bringing down the teacher student ratio to 1:30. According to the Report, 19.4 lakhs of teachers will be required for that. That requires a large amount of fund, but how much have they allocated? According to a Research study report, “The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee had estimated that in the six-year period from 2006-07 to 2011-12, 24 additional outlays of Rs 4.36 lakh crore (with teachers’ salaries at Kendriya Vidyalaya norms) and Rs 3.93 lakh crore (with teachers’ salaries at the prevalent scales) would have to be allocated to universalise elementary education. Sticking to the lower level of CABE projections, the additional required outlays are Rs 3.93 lakh crore for a five-year period. Reports in the media that the required additional outlays amount to Rs 1.78 lakh crore, spread over a period of five years, as estimated by the MHRD, for implementing the RTE Act 2009 seem extremely disturbing, if not mysterious.”(Right to Education Act 2009: Critical Gaps and Challenges, Praveen Jha, Pooja Parvati, published in Economic and Political Weekly, March 27, 2010). Therefore, from the above discussions, it is obvious that the much-hyped RTE Act acts the other way round and promotes destruction

of the very foundation of basic education in general schools and indirectly encourages privatisation from the very primary level of education.

Semester System is Detrimental to Comprehensiveness

Furthermore, not only at the elementary level, certain fundamental changes have been brought forth in the system of education. One of those is the change in examination and evaluation pattern. The UGC, in the year 2009, instructed all the universities affiliated to and recognised by it to switch over to the systems of Semester/Trimester, gradation, policy to emphasise internal assessment and introduce interdisciplinary course credit based approach in deciding the course pattern, subject combination and method of evaluation. Obviously, all these changes are for the sake of commercialisation, rather for bringing uniformity in the education market for the benefit of investors. The gradation system is required for bringing uniformity in the process of evaluation of different school boards and universities spread all over the country in order to create a uniform education market to facilitate commercialisation of education and private investment and to ensure the easier mobility of students from one institution to other. For greater inter-state mobility of the educational consumers, the on line admission system is also being introduced so that from one corner of the country anyone can choose an institution at any part of the country.

The semester/trimester system will divide the educational courses into small modules or packages. In the concept of secular, scientific and democratic education it has been considered very important to study in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Even in a subject, one topic is connected with other. So it is considered very important that different chapters are studied part by part, then after one or two years a thorough revision of the entire course considering all components of the course together, in view of the final examination, might help develop comprehensive understanding of the course. With that in view, earlier the matriculation examination covered the total course of IXth and Xth standard, the Higher Secondary examination covered the courses of XIth and XIIth standard and BA/B Sc part one covered two years of course study. In the semester/trimester system, when

the courses are divided into small packages or modules of six or four months, after examination of each semester the course of that semester will be dropped, students may forget whatever they learnt in earlier semesters/trimesters and never approach the course in a holistic manner. It will be easier for procuring more marks/ higher grades but learning will suffer very seriously. Neither will a student get the minimum time to make adjustments with a new subject nor will he get a minimum time to study. Always he will be driven by the threat of examination. This may be at best viable in certain 'job oriented' courses, but for science, humanities, medical or applied science courses this approach is very much detrimental to thorough and comprehensive learning.

4 Year Honours Degree Course Will Enhance the Burden of the Poor Students

Moreover, more examinations in a year means more admission and examination fees. Students also will be engaged round the year always facing the threats of examinations, having no time to pay attention to any social, political and educational problems. The intention of the government to extort more fees from the students is more vividly expressed in the fact that recently the Delhi University has proposed to introduce 4-year honours graduate course. This is not an isolated move. This shift shall also create anomalies for students coming from other Universities to do post-graduation in DU and vice versa. Making this an excuse, this four year honours course will be imposed upon other universities also. Earlier, up to the 70's from class-I to graduation total 14 years were required. It was a 10+1+3 system. Since the middle of 70's in the excuse of educational reform 10+2+3, i.e. 15-year graduation course was introduced. At first the argument was who will be a graduate in pass course they will undergo 14 years graduation, that is 10+2+2 system, but who will go to higher education, i.e. the honours students will have to take 10+2+3 pattern. Afterwards, 10+2+3 i.e. 15 year graduation has been imposed upon pass-honours uniformly. Now they, in the same manner are going for 16 year graduation course. Introduction of an extra year is a very crucial matter for the students and parents, as it requires to spend lots of extra money towards Higher Education. The out-station students who study in Delhi, or such

other important educational centres, end up spending Rs 5000 - 10,000 per month towards rent and food apart from the fees. In such a situation this 4-year course will act as a policy to drain more money from the students and also a policy of curtailment for the poor students who will find it extremely burdensome and will drop out. A shift from 3-year graduation programme to a 4-year is a much larger issue than the shift from annual to semester. Such a change should be arrived at only after due deliberations at the all India level. It can be/ should be brought about only if the government (both Central and State Governments) promises more fund for infrastructure development and for recruitment of teachers in the public funded colleges and universities. While the government is promoting the self-financing approach, to force the students to continue for an extra year is nothing but curtailment and at the same time temporal expansion of the educational business.

Interdisciplinary Approach will destroy the Process of Holistic development of Knowledge

Apart from overhauling of the examination evaluation pattern, the union HRD Ministry, and as its representative the UGC, has proposed to introduce the inter-disciplinary approach in combination of subjects and the course credit system. In fact the semester/trimester, graduation, stress on internal assessment and interdisciplinary Course Credit system all taken together represent a total examination evaluation reform plan. For the purpose of greater mobility of student consumers in the education market and greater freedom of the investors to decide the course pattern, this reform programme has been launched. Thus, suppose a student who is studying with Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics, if he fails to earn the minimum credit marks for graduation, he can sit in examination for accountancy, Sanskrit or any other self-financed subject and make up the required deficit credit mark to be the graduate. The Yashpal Committee has further explained why this design is necessary, obviously it is needed for market orientation of the courses, "... graduates should be sufficiently exposed to inter-process of thorough and comprehensive development of knowledge and introduce market oriented approach in the general courses.

Policy of Stress on Internal Assessment May Lead to Victimisation of Students

In fact the policy planners have recommended for a smaller interval between examinations. Even instead of a final examination after a long period of study, they are envisaging the evaluation of a student through monthly tests only. Doing away with, or reducing the importance of external or public examinations they are now stressing on internal assessment referring to different educational theories. But in fact in internal assessment all the students will get 90-95% marks. So the value of his degree will be decided by not solely by the marks he has secured in the final examination, but by the brand value of his institution determined by its commercial rating. Furthermore, internal assessment means arbitrary scope for the authorities to favour the students of their choice and punish the students who do not fall in line. A retired professor of English from SCD Government College for Boys, Ludhiana, Dr. DV Zindal, regarding the emphasis on internal assessment commented, "The system of internal assessment is a blatant act of discrimination against private candidates (most of them being girls) as regular college students are being given much higher marks than they deserve or get in the final examination. A majority of students are given above or nearly 70 per cent marks which they can never score in the final examination. Also, the internal assessment is a tool in the hands of some irresponsible teachers, who exploit their students through favouritism or undeserving punishment." (Indian Express). The glaring example of what can be the result of stress on internal assessment in the hands of the authorities is the Patan PTC College incident of Gujarat. In this Primary teacher's training college, where the internal assessment marks are very important for a student for passing the examination and joining the primary teachership. Taking advantage of it six teachers of the college raped and sexually abused a girl from a very poor family for more than two months, by threatening her of depriving internal marks, in the year 2008. In connection with this case it came to light that there were more than 56 students who were sexually abused in this way. Afterwards it was found that such incidents occurred in many other institutions throughout the country taking

advantage of the internal marks. Naturally, the policy of stress on internal assessment in all subjects will increase the victimisation of helpless students manifold in variety of ways.

Acute Shortage of Teachers at all Levels of Education

Most of the secondary, higher secondary institutions are suffering from acute shortage of teachers. During the 90's, with the onset of globalisation, like other industrial sectors, the recruitment freeze in the schools colleges and universities started. Soon many institutions started to employ para-teachers at the primary level and contract teachers, part time teachers, guest lecturers etc. in the higher school, college and university level. During the 90's due to introduction of schemes like Operation Blackboard, DPEP, later SSA, RMSA etc. number of schools started to increase. A report says "The number of teachers has steadily increased from 16,16,000 in 1990 to 18,96,000 in 2001 at the primary level and from 10,73,000 in 1990 to 13,26,000 in 2001 at the upper-primary level. Out of this 2,59,099 are para-teachers (or contract teachers) with primary schools accounting for 67.94% of parateachers in the country as a whole. (Source: Dr. Arun Mehta, presentation on DISE Data 2003-04, NIEPA 2005). At the higher school level in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, for a long time there are no recruitments in government sanctioned schools.posts are lying vacant in ...alone. In West Bengal the examination of School Selection commission was held in 2010 and its result was published. But the qualified candidates are not being given appointment. Recently, 18 such candidates have submitted written application to the governor of the state seeking permission for mercy killing, if they are harassed in this way. At the college university level also there are acute shortage of teachers. Most of the institutions are running their departments with more than 70% part time teachers/guest lecturers. A task force on faculty shortage set up by the Union HRD Ministry in the year 2011 had estimated the current faculty shortage at the colleges and universities in the country at 54%. The lecturer-to-student ratio in the country is 1:20.9 against 1:13.5 recommended by the University Grants Commission (1:12 for postgraduate students and 1:15 for undergraduates). According to the report, So far as the faculty

crunch goes, the committee found the Central universities reeling under severely shortage. Of the total sanctioned faculty strength of 13514 in these universities, 4662 are unfilled, taking the percentage shortage to about 35. Guru Ghasi Das Vidhwavidyalaya Chattisgarh (converted into a Central university from its state university status in 2009) has the highest faculty shortage as 65 pc of its teachers; positions are unfilled. The University of Allahbad follows with 58 pc shortage and the prestigious University of Delhi had the third highest number of unfilled teachers' positions at 53 pc. Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Millia Islamia and Viswa Bharti follow at 15.3 pc; 14.5 pc and 15.7 pc shortage. In terms of gross shortage, University of Delhi (where the cut offs soared this year to 100 pc) is currently short of 910 teachers followed by the BHU at 905. In state universities, data was available only for 77 out of 264 such varsities. In these 77, there are 23915 sanctioned teachers' posts; 33.3 pc are lying unfilled. The highest shortage is in the following state universities - North Bengal (94.7 pc); Gujarat (over 70 pc); Rajasthan (69.8 pc).

Affiliated colleges are also severely hit with 3585 of the total 12150 sanctioned faculty positions vacant. Here, Himachal's colleges have the highest - 33 per cent - vacancy followed by Maharashtra at 31 pc. In Orissa, Of the 1,818 sanctioned posts in 557 government degree colleges, 612 posts are lying vacant. In Gangadhar Meher (GM) College in Sambalpur, Orissa, when unitary university status is being sought for it - It has 73 teaching posts out of a total of 119 vacant. BJB Autonomous College, the most sought-after college in Odisha has now been left with just a couple of regular teachers, after a spate of retirements. It has 45 teachers against a sanctioned strength of 90. Such or further worse is the condition of other colleges in the state.

Even elite institutions like the "Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology have only around two-thirds of the faculty they require, with central universities facing a 30% shortage". This report, while calculating the faculty shortage, considers part time teachers and guest lecturers also into consideration. Can the quality of an educational system improve without qualified teachers? Due to teacher shortage in many institutions classes could not be held. Students are forced to take private tuition or go to the private tutorials to make

up the shortage. The salary of the part time teachers or guest lecturers are paid from the students fees. So colleges resort to regular fee hike making the number of part time teachers a major plea. Most of the part time teachers, due to their vulnerable status, remain more engaged for seeking other permanent assignments, than concentrating on teaching. Often they leave the job in the midway of the course hampering the study. Can quality of education really improve if such condition prevails in the faculty of the institutions?

Is a Consequence of Commercialisation Corruption is Thriving

In the environment of all out privatization and commercialisation of education, when profit is made the driving force of the educational system, that is not only making education dearer and out of reach of the common students but is also engendering evil and corrupt practices in variety of ways in the field of education. The recent educational scenario makes that vivid. In 2009, the problem centring round deemed university status came to the surface. The status was granted with a massive violation of the UGC rules through bribery and nepotism. After enquiry by P. N. Tandon committee, 44 such deemed universities had to be derecognized in 2010. In another case, CBI has found that 42 institutes were granted illegal approval by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). In this fraud, the CBI detected that the experts appointed by the AICTE thrice and recommended approval for three different colleges for the same building inspected one building (common man, 2010). Recently the anti-corruption bureau (ACB) inspected 48 private nursing colleges in Rajasthan and found that at least half-a-dozen of them were operating from buildings that house other colleges of different streams including nursing, B. Ed and even schools. The Medical Council of India was constituted for the maintenance of uniform standards of medical education and used to give clearance or recommendation for recognition/de-recognition of medical institutions in India. Recently the CBI arrested the President of Medical Council of India for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs. 2 crore to grant recognition to a medical college in Punjab. After that, the CBI found that the President of the MCI and his family

possessed disproportionate assets worth Rs 24 crore (The Hindu, 2010).

The UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning study on corruption in education released in 2007 says that 25% teacher absenteeism in India is among the highest in the world, second only after Uganda that has a higher rate. In Bihar two out of every five teachers were reported absent while the figure in UP was reported to be one-third of the total teachers. In most of the other states the situation is not very different. It is now a growing trend that in schools and general colleges very few classes are held. A feeling is becoming stronger and stronger that in classes nothing is taught and without private tuition or coaching centres, students cannot do good result, or even cannot pass! From different states reports are received that in many schools teachers don't take classes, but in the school building itself they give private tuitions to the same students taking money! In a large number of colleges and universities also classes are not held. Students go the colleges only during the examinations, although they are regular students. Taking advantage of it coaching centres and tutorial classes are thriving everywhere. The success of most of these coaching centres depend on whether they can supply 'genuine' questions or 'suggestions' to their students which are sure to appear in the examination question papers! Question leakage of public examinations and competitive examinations, have become a regular and an industrialised affair. In different states, a nexus has developed involving the staffs of public examination control systems, agents of the coaching centres, big bosses of the departments of education and even ministers.. On the basis of it the coaching centre business is thriving. Those coaching centres become more successful, which can supply such 'genuine' and 'reliable' question papers for different public and competitive examinations.

In many states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh etc. the educational corruption has developed as a systematic and organised process to implicate and exploit the students. Usually a student will get absurd result in examination; then paying money to some officials or agents he will have to get the result corrected, or if needed 'boosted' by paying a more hefty sum. Some all powerful educational

'mafias' are thriving throughout the country taking full advantage of the out and out commercialised approach prevailing in the field of education!

Along with these, textbooks of schools and colleges are becoming extremely costly. Different state governments are withdrawing the subsidy for the textbooks. The central government is making newsprints and other printing materials costly, causing regular hike in the price of the textbooks. In many schools a nexus of school authorities, publishers and booksellers have developed. Textbooks of different authors of same class and subject should be same in content. But many school authorities, taking bribe from the publishers each year change the author of the books and force the students to purchase new set of books. If a poor student wants to study with the books of earlier years, used by his elder brother or sister, or anyone else, that is not allowed. Even in many lower schools, where the textbooks are supposed to be distributed totally free of cost, there are lots of corruptions regarding the distribution of books or disbursement of the fund for textbooks. All these are not making education dearer for the poor students but vitiating the academic environment entirely.

Commercial Environment is Destroying the Teacher-Student Relations

During the renaissance of 19th century of our country, the modern education movement began. Demand for secular, scientific and democratic education, education for all arose. As the object of education was considered as man making, character building, developing scientific bent among the students, the role of teachers was that of man makers. A teachers' life, his devotion to ideology, to cultivation of knowledge, his social commitment were very important in inculcating those spirits among his students. During the British days, teachers' salary was very poor but many outstanding scholars refused other paying professions and accepted teaching profession with the mission of man making. Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Jyotibha Phule, Balgangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Lajpat Rai, Acharya P.C. Roy, Asutosh Mukherjee, Madan Mohan Malvya and many other legendary teachers had been there, whose lives acted as fountains of inspi-

ration to their students. During his school days Netaji Subhas was highly inspired by his teacher Benimadhav Das. In the uncompromising trend of freedom movement also teachers played a very great role. Revolutionary martyr Satyen Bose was the teacher of Khsudiram, the associates of Rashbehari Bose that is Amirchand, Awadbehari, Balmukund, all were teachers. Masterda Surya Sen was a beloved teacher whose life was a fountain of inspiration to his students. Pritilata Waddedar also joined the teaching job when call of freedom movement drew her away. The role of such devoted teachers was vital in building the character of students and inspiring them with spirit of inquiry and ideology of the day. Today, due to commercialisation, education is becoming costly but hundred times more damage is done due to the deterioration of the educational environment, the ideology of teaching and learning, the spirit of cultivation of knowledge, as a result of predominance of profit seeking approach. The GATS, in an institution views the investor as the producer, teacher as the facilitator and the student as a consumer. According to the definition of GATS, while the investors are producers of education, the teachers in an institution are facilitators, i.e. virtually salesmen appointed by the authorities. Furthermore, astonishingly the NKC prefers the incentive 'salary based differentiation' among teachers within the same university and within the same department by rating their performance as in a private limited company. The NKC and Yashpal Committee allow the provision that a private management, in order to attract students may invite some reputed teacher at a much higher salary, while others will be handed a meager sum. The salary of a teacher will depend on the marking and rating by the students. What a humiliating plight to which teachers are being pushed. They will have to virtually appease the students to manage their salary. This will be detrimental to the teaching profession because it will lead to awkward professional competition, jealousy and ego-clashes among teachers. The Yashpal Committee Report had to recognize that that due to privatisation and commercialisation of education the role of teachers has very much degenerated. It has commented, "In many private educational institutions, the appointment of teachers is made at the lowest possible cost. They are treated with scant dignity, thereby turning away competent persons from opting for the teaching profession. A limited number of senior posi-

tions are filled at attractive salaries, especially from other reputed institutions, mainly for prestige. Otherwise, there are many terrible instances of faculty being asked to work in more than one institution belonging to the management; their salary being paid only for nine months; actual payments being much less than the amount signed for; impounding of their certificates and passports; compelling them to award pass marks in the internal examination to the "favourites" and fail marks for students who protest illegal collections and so on." (Yashpal Committee Report page-33).

The greed for profit of the authorities has degenerated the educational environment so much that many shameful and unbelievable incidents are occurring. In one of such incidents "A class three student was paraded naked on her school premises after her family failed to pay the school fees, in Faridabad, Haryana. The nine-year old girl is a student of Faridabad Model School in Sector-31. The victim's parents, who are entitled to a full-fee concession, had actively participated in an agitation against a fee hike by the school recently." (Website, NDTV.com, news on August 29, 2009). In another such incident, in Bangalore, "Four children have been forced to attend their school here in humiliation after the private institution allegedly cut off tufts of hair on top of their heads. This was done to reportedly distinguish these children, admitted under the Right to Education (RTE) quota, from other students. ... According to the parents of these children, all in standard I in the school at Nandini Layout, the children admitted under the RTE quota are made to stand separately during the assembly and their lunch boxes are checked before they enter their class. They allege that the names of their wards have not been entered in the attendance register. The school reportedly makes them sit in the back benches and they are not given any homework." (The Hindu, 16.8.2012) Virtually while the incidents are shocking and heart rending, they are natural consequences of viewing education as merely

a profit making commodity! Countless such incidents are occurring throughout the country today. Many incidents like that of Patan PTC College, Gujarat, where some teachers resorted to shameful sexual exploitation of girl students taking advantage of the internal assessment mark and the poverty of the student are occurring. All these shameful incidents are direct or indirect outcome of the process of commercialisation.

Commercialisation is Leading to Virtual Death of General Courses

The AIDS0 has observed with deep anxiety, that the privatisation and commercialisation is not only making education extremely costly and pushing it out of reach of the common students, but it is bringing forth a radical change in the course and content of education. The policy makers always use the pretext of utility, market value, job prospects and the need to teach vocational skills etc. to undermine the studies of the general subjects like physics, chemistry, mathematics, language, literature, humanities etc. In the pre-globalisation period, this was done with slogans of relevance and need for job, although vocational education did in no way ensure jobs. Explaining the import of the slogan of job-oriented education, the leading Marxist thinker of this era Comrade Shibdas Ghosh said, "...this scheme of 'job-oriented' or 'employment-oriented' education is solely designed by the ruling bourgeoisie to channelize the entire education on to the line of purely informative and technical education instead of providing our students with a truly democratic, secular and scientific education, under the pretext of providing a booster to production?" (Tasks Ahead of Students and Youth). After the onset of globalisation entire education has been being converted into a costly commodity. Naturally, in this environment education of a student is assuming the character of investment by his guardians. When someone is spending so much money, how that can be merely for acquisition of character and culture, or for democratic ethos and values? Investment is always associated with the hope for monetary gain or profit.

With this drive for all out commercialisation and extreme uncertainty in the field of job, a hysteric urge has been created

among the students to go for technical or professional courses. Most of the students are opting for engineering, medical or management courses. Even for engineering students very few jobs are there. Still substandard private engineering colleges are mushrooming while the departments of general sciences, humanities, languages or literature are gradually perishing. In the universities virtually fundamental research is very much neglected. The drive is mostly for applied research and particularly for market oriented research. The crisis ridden capitalism now does not want development of technology even, because it is suffering from overproduction. Now technology means consumer oriented marketable technology. The applied research for development of technology is also perishing due to changes in patent act. In the aided colleges and universities many departments teaching general courses are being closed and institutional authorities are going for self-financing courses. In 'The Hindu', a news was published in August 2012, with heading 'Slow Death of Traditional Courses' The news reports that in different government and aided colleges in Kerala or other South Indian states how the departments of the subjects like "Philosophy, Psychology, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and History are being closed on the plea of lack of funds and lack of students. The news also informed that "students are often misled into choosing only the paid courses where fees are over Rs. 40,000 while seats in lesser known government aided courses are not filled." In many states where e-admission and has been made compulsory, there, in the e-counselling students are given the option of choosing from self-financing courses only while the comparatively cheap subsidised courses of the same disciplines remain vacant. In many institutions teachers of Chemistry department are being utilised for self-financing biotechnology courses, while teaching of chemistry is suffering. When the well known Ravenshaw College of Orissa was made autonomous and updated to the status of university, its authority introduced variety of self-financing courses. Earlier it had eleven hostels, three of which were vacated for launching the self-financed courses, depriving many students coming from faraway places the necessary accommodation in hostels. Even there are allegations that in all such institutions, while allocating the hostel accommodations, the students of self-financing courses are given priority while the general students are treated as second class citizens.

Does Job Orientation Ensure Jobs?

Job-orientation of education does not ensure jobs for the students. Newspapers and media controlled by the corporate houses are also trying to create an illusion that in the age of globalization the demand of the market is changing and students, as regards selecting their studies, must take into cognizance the changing employment pattern. Lured by the false prospect of employment and 'bright future' in industries, the students and their guardians often go beyond their means and crowd in the professional colleges paying fees of astronomical dimensions, and falling prey to the manoeuvres of profit greedy investors.

Nowadays, in this phase of open market economy and globalization, where virtually the entire education has been left to the market forces, the courses and contents are also undergoing fundamental restructuring. As the government is withdrawing the financial support to the institutions, they are being established or run by the private investors with only those subjects or courses in which the investors are sure of the returns. As a result of this market orientation, only some 'lucrative' professional courses like Medical, Engineering, Business Management etc., and certain job training courses like fashion designing, animation graphics, hotel management, tourism development etc. are flourishing. The policy makers are also encouraging such courses on the plea that in changing economic scenario, in view of the future course of 'development' the earlier approach to education is obsolete and must be changed. Obviously, the real import of this approach is to confuse the students and youth regarding the root cause of unemployment, directing the allegation towards general education for its incapacity to provide jobs. But it is known to all that the problem of unemployment is something that is related to the economic system and it has been proved beyond doubt that this crisis ridden capitalist economy is unable to solve the problem of unemployment in any manner. Rather, unemploy-

ment keeps on growing within this system. Particularly since the onset of globalisation, more than 17 lakhs of small and large-scale industries have been closed down. Due to retrenchment, lockout, lay-off and downsizing, as a result of switchover from labour intensive to capital intensive industries, in all public sector industries combined, an estimated 20 lakh employees have lost job. It is estimated that there are more than 25 crore unemployed people in India. The biggest public sector, the Indian Railways, has decided to slash the employment strength by 20% (Recommendation of the Rakesh Mohan Committee) and the department is implementing the decision consistently. Both in the public and private sectors new recruitments in the permanent posts have stopped and many units are running with 90%-95% casual or contract labourers. Nine major Public Sector Entrepreneurs (PSE'S) in India (termed as Navratnas), the largest profit making companies, employ about 20,000 contract workers[Report of International Labour Organisation(ILO)]! Another estimate has placed the number of contract labourers at 16,000 in SAIL and 12,000 in NTPC. According to the Report of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, during the period 2000 to 2009 the number of public sector industrial units (state+central) closed is 1290 and 79438 workers lost jobs due to that. [Table-5(1) Report on Statistics On Industrial Disputes, Closures, Retrenchments And Lay-Offs In India During The Year, 2009]. Total number of workers lost job due to lay-offs from 2000 to 2009 is 202359(Table 7i, ibid). A very large number of workers were also retrenched during this period. The problem of unemployment has become so acute that in 2010, in West Bengal alone 62 lakh people applied for the Teacher Eligibility Test (*TET*). The previous board screened applications and allowed only one in 15 candidates to sit. In the year 2013 in West Bengal, for 35,000 posts more than 54.5 lakh candidates appeared in the TET examination. The number of examinees was even

much larger than the total population of Singapore! The problem of unemployment has become so acute that many highly qualified candidates are applying for teacher's job in primary schools, even many such candidates are applying for class-4 or group-D jobs. The new enterprises, which are coming up here and there, are only few in number and information technology based, employing barest of manpower, that too highly skilled. In view of that the Birla-Ambani Committee has admitted that it is not possible to absorb more than 15-20% of student population in the industries. For the rest self-employment is the only hope, that too at a time when innumerable big and small enterprises are closing down due to unprecedented crisis!

Fascistic Centralisation of Authority to Implement the Designs of Commercialisation

A very important aspect of the secular, scientific and democratic education is the autonomy of the institutions and democratic rights of the students, teachers as well as non-teaching staff. According to the concept of secular scientific and democratic education the government should only fund the institutions but running of the institutions, determination of the course and content, methods of examinations and evaluations – everything should be determined by the democratically elected bodies formed by the teachers, educationists and representatives of students, guardians (in case of school), and the non-teaching staff. During the freedom movement the leading educationists time and again raised their voices against the British government's attempts of encroachment upon the autonomy of the institutions. But in the post-independence period the Indian government started a planned drive to dictate and determine the educational policies. The Report of the University Education Commission or the Radhakrishnan Commission, formed in 1948, gave a pointer saying "...Higher education is, undoubtedly, an obligation of the State and is not to be confused with State control over academic policies and practices. Intellectual progress demands the maintenance of the spirit of free inquiry." Since independence one after

another government at the centre and at different states violated this norm and in variety of ways encroached upon education. But in this period of restructuring of the field of education in order to convert it into a field of investment and convert it into a commodity, the central government, as the most trusted representative of the ruling capitalist class, are imposing one after another of its designs without caring for any opinion of the academic community, common people or even the different state governments. In order to provide a level playing field to the educational investors, the central government and different agencies controlled by it, are implementing one after another policies trampling underfoot all democratic norms and methods. This becomes crystal clear from the study of certain steps taken by the central government and certain Bills proposed or enacted in recent times. In a country like India where from state to state there are wide variations in the level of economic and educational development and wide cultural divergences, planning of education should be made, keeping the standard of each particular state into consideration. An attempt to reframe the system of examination and evaluation in all the universities of the country in a uniform pattern is already afoot. The UGC simply notified all the universities in 2010 to switchover to the system of gradation, semester-trimester system, stress on internal assessment and interdisciplinary course credit system etc. without caring or waiting for any opinion of the teachers, professors or the academic community.

At the school level also, the 'child centred approach', the policy of abolition of the pass-fail system and the system of CCE have been directly imposed upon the schools using NCERT as the tool. Furthermore, as a part and parcel of this plan the union HRD Ministry is proceeding to make the public examinations after class X and class XII, conducted by different state boards and councils for secondary and higher secondary education optional. In a similar manner the Central Government is virtually imposing the Common Entrance Test (CET) for admission to medical and engineering colleges throughout the country, taking steps for doing away with the state level Joint entrance examinations. The central government is not only restructuring the entire examination-evaluation system, but it is very much eager to impose a common school syllabus uniformly

in all the states. A calculated drive for restructuring of school syllabus is already going on. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has formulated the model syllabi which are being imposed on different state boards. The main thrust in formulating the model syllabi is nothing but to make the subject teaching superficial and based on so-called functional approach which is totally detrimental to the development of a thorough knowledge of any subject. Now the central government has introduced the new curricula in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) school system. The CET will be conducted on the basis of the CBSE syllabi. Naturally if CET is accepted, the state boards will be forced to switch over to the CBSE curricula. In this manner the CET is being used as a tool to impose the syllabi designed by the central government. The policies of formation of model schools, centres of excellence like establishment of IIT's subjecting them to the principle of PPP, policies of disaffiliating best colleges from the universities, making them autonomous on the basis of PPP and upgrading them to the level of universities, making accreditation of all aided institutions compulsory, tagging the accreditation rating with grants in-aid, all these designs of commercialisation are being straightaway imposed by the central government using the UGC as a tool, without any care or concern for the opinion of the education loving people.

The process of fascistic centralization of the educational system is most evident from the plan to establish National Council for Higher Education and Research(NCHER), with the plea of making the process of investment in the field of education easier by providing a so-called 'single window' system to the investors. What is the proposed structure of the NCHER, which is supposed to regulate and authorize more than 21 thousand institutions of higher education of the country? There will be a Chairman and three other full members who will run the commission. Three other temporary members of the commission will be appointed by the President of our country for five years tenure. The full members will be nominated by a Selection Committee which will comprise the Prime Minister, Union HRD Minister and Health Minister, Speaker of the Parliament and leader of the opposition. There will also be collegiums comprising more than fifty fellows from among eminent Indian and NRI educationists, which will

mainly act as an advisory body to the commission. So, virtually if this Bill is enacted entire higher education of the country will be regulated by only four persons, nominated by the government. So, on the one hand the single window regulation will simplify the process of establishing a private institution for higher education; abolish the cross checking by different statutory authorities for maintenance of standard; on the other hand, this will lead to fascistic control and regulation of the entire educational system in order to serve the interest of the ruling capitalist class.

Proposal for Governance and Administration of Institutions as Private Limited Companies

In spite of much hue and cry about 'autonomy', the definition of autonomy which, even an academician like Mr. Yashpal has provided, is horrifying. Autonomy of the institutions meant that the role of government in the field of education will be only to provide fund, but running of the institution, policies determination, everything will be done by the teachers, professors, educationists involved in the institutions. But now the autonomy is simply meant unbridled freedom for the private investors in the management in determining fees, teachers' salaries and such other policy matters, where government or university or any other statutory body will not intervene. But on the excuse of improving quality the Yashpal Committee Report argues, 'There is an urgent need to improve governance by developing expertise in "educational management" and avoid burdening good academicians with administrative chores.... ...A separation between academic administration and overall management (including fund-raising) may be desirable.' (Yashpal Committee Report, Article-2.4.1 P-45). Obviously the educational institutions will be run by professional bureaucratic administrators, management experts or technocrats, even IAS, IPS officers. As the educational institutions will take the shape of private limited companies it will be managed also in the same way as a company.

Obviously, in order to ensure unfettered implementation of the process of commercialization the ruling class as well as the administrative authorities will want to rule out the possibility of development of any movement by the students, teachers or non-teaching staff. All the Committees mentioned earlier, in the plea

of depoliticisation of the institutions or “making the system work” have strongly recommended for virtual abolition of all academic freedom and democratic rights of the teachers, students and non-teaching staff in the institutions.

Always posing the political involvement of students to be responsible for deterioration of the academic environment of the universities the government has framed, one after another, rules to curtail the democratic rights of the students of elected student unions. Already, taking the plea of a judgment of the Supreme Court the government has imposed ‘code of conduct’ for students’ union elections, which virtually converted the student union elections into farce and curtailed the hard-won democratic rights of the students and teachers. The J.M. Lyngdoh Committee, formed by the Union HRD Ministry prescribed many undemocratic restrictions on conduction of students’ union elections such as age limit of the contesting candidates, percentage of attendance, fixation of maximum expenditure limit, etc. Even in some states, governments or judiciary have already imposed ban on students’ union elections. It is true that, centring around student union elections, particularly the student organisations which are attached to the ruling parties resort to criminal activities. But making that an excuse these restrictions and imposition of so-called ‘code of conduct’ is in fact an attempt to turn the student union election into a farce. It is virtually to patronize the politics of the parties in power and their affiliated student organizations and, on the other hand, to suppress the possibility of development of genuine students’ movement against attacks on education. Already many colleges like the Patna College of Magadha University have openly declared that any demonstration, dharna etc. within the campus will be treated as criminal offence. In Jamia Millia University of Delhi, in all the private colleges and many aided institutions, during the admission, newly admitted students are being forced to sign bonds for not taking part in any movement against any decision of the authorities. In Madhya Pradesh, the state government has stopped the student union election in all the institutions for the year 2012-2013. In May 2013 the Madhya Pradesh Government has imposed 144 CrPC in and around all the colleges and universities within the state so that no demonstration or deputation can be organised within the campuses. But elected student union is students’ own instrument

of struggle. It can play an important role in fighting all sorts of injustices against the students and the policies of fee hike and privatization and commercialization of education in particular. In fact more the fees are increasing, more the students are being cheated and exploited by the private managements, more will be the unrest, discontent and urge to develop movement against the unjust measures of the authorities. By imposing the code of conduct and arming the authorities with the power to switchover to nomination instead of election and lodging FIR against any student if they participate in any programme like dharna or demonstration within campus, the ruling class in fact is eager to nip the possibility of student movement in its bud and ensure unfettered implementation of commercialization of education.

Sex Education to Destroy Moral Fabric of Students

While, the study of serious and very important subjects are being viewed by the policy makers as ‘burden’, ‘irrelevant’ but the governments are very much enthusiastic to impose on the adolescent students a new subject, sex education, which is being launched in different states in the name of ‘Life Style Education’, ‘Adolescent Education’ etc. In the name of combating the menace of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual anarchy among adolescents and viewing human sexuality as a mere biological instinct as in animal world, sex-education is being imparted for the school children throughout the country. On the basis of recommendations made by the NCERT and international agencies like the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF etc., who are behind such ill-boding strategies, educational bodies and AIDS control societies of different states have enthusiastically joined the bandwagon on this so-called adolescent education programme.

It is true that in the age of adolescence, curiosity regarding sex creates certain complications among teenagers. But human sex cannot be viewed in separation from human values, tastes, aesthetic sense and moral-ethical concepts i.e., the entire cultural ambit of the society as well as sense of social responsibility. A look at the curriculum, modules and manuals on adolescence education containing graphic description and crude examples prepared for class room teaching will tell us that the attempt is nothing but an advocacy for practicing free but safe sex. Not

only that, the campaign that is going on in full swing all over the country with the avowed objective of creating awareness on AIDS and safe sex is a propaganda of bad taste and open encouragement of unethical sexual behaviours. The message behind the whole hog of this campaign unmistakably appears that one can have any type of sexual relation provided if he or she takes precautionary measures. This entire shameless exercise of the government may promote the business of certain companies but cannot prevent AIDS. Rather, these remedies will aggravate the disease as has been reported in America, Canada, Britain, Thailand etc., where such education was introduced long back.

In reality problems of adolescence that are causing so much worry to parents and guardians, stem from a crisis in values and cannot be tackled through introduction of sex education in schools. They have to be combated on a different plane by releasing a powerful current of social and cultural movements based on higher ethics and morality. Moreover, adolescents are to be treated individual-specific and the approach will vary from person to person. Open classroom is not the place for it, nor are the teachers properly equipped for the job.

Presently the biology subject of the high school curriculum deals sufficiently about human anatomy, reproductive system, and health hygiene etc. There are lessons even on AIDS and its prevention. Even the children can obtain the necessary information in the best way from their parents and family. Elderly people guided by high sense of values and enjoying the respect of society can in some situations do the job. Help may also be taken from the medical fraternity or psychological counsellors. Ignoring all these, governments are hell-bent on introducing sex education in lower schools, only to wreck the moral backbone of young generations and to create permissive culture among them so that they will fall victim to degraded sexual behaviours and cultural degeneration.

Portent of Danger to Secular Education

While on one hand market orientation of the courses are going on in full swing, on the other hand another danger is looming large in the horizon of our country, that is the onslaught on secular education. According to the concept of secular state and secular

education, the religion should be considered strictly a matter of personal belief and the educational system, the course and content and the institutions, the government and administration, should be completely free from any religious content, approach and rite. But the Congress governments at the centre from the very beginning, in the name of value education, made attempts to introduce religious education. The government and official circles defined secularism in their own way as equal encouragement to all religions. The Radhakrishnan Commission of 1948, the Kirit Joshi Commission in 70's, and the NPE 86 all advocated to introduce spiritual education for inculcating values among students. The NPE 86 proposed to delve into the country's ancient heritage. In 1998 when BJP government had been formed at the centre, it changed the complexion of attack and made Hindutva agenda a major issue in the field of education. They introduced Jyotishsastra and Vastusastra as university courses, proposed to make Saraswati Vandana compulsory in schools. They launched the attempt to rewrite the textual history and official history on the basis Hindutva oriented communal approach. They raised a question how history should be written, following the objective scientific method or on the basis of popular religious beliefs. Although now the BJP is not in the government at the Centre, but in the BJP ruled states they are pursuing the Hindutva agenda. In Madhya Pradesh and also last year in Karnataka, the BJP ruled state government announced to make reading of Srimadbhagabat Gita in schools compulsory. But although in Delhi there was the Congress-led government, in 2012 the Academic Council of Delhi University has removed an important article written by renowned historian A K Ramanujan, '300 Ramayanas', from the history syllabus of degree course of the university. This decision has greatly aggrieved the educationists, historians, intellectuals and also the students. They all think that the communal forces played important role behind this exclusion who oppose the secular, scientific, democratic approach in education, whatever is there. The authorities of the Delhi University did not explain how it was included and on what ground and why that ground has become invalid today. Nor any opinion of the academic community was sought before the decision of the exclusion. In brief the article of Ramanujan is based on the historical facts and is in full accord with the opinion of renowned historians and different literary and

archaeological documents. Moreover, one of the very important purpose of this article was to depict to students the scientific-historical methodology to study, approach and analyse the historical-literary materials. Paying all respects to the religious values and traditions contained in the Rama-kathas, he showed how the narrated story should be judged on the basis of historical records and evidences with scientific method instead of on the basis of mere faith and religious belief, which tacitly accept the scripture as infallible and immutable truth. It is a matter of deep regret that a fore-ranking educational institution of the country like the Delhi University has taken a step that will provide indulgence to the fanatic, religious fundamentalist ideas. It has fuelled the vile attempt of communalisation of education which is going in the country for the last two decades. This move of the Delhi University has also raised a very serious question. If it is a secular-democratic system, here in an educational institution what should be the yardstick to select an item in the syllabus, is that faith and belief, religious emotion or scientific outlook?

In an educational institution is it an acceptable argument that if scientific truth injures religious belief, then truth should be forsaken? Scientific theories and ideas can certainly be rejected, but that only through scientific reasoning and evidence. Modern science started its onward march with irreconcilable contradiction with ossified religious ideas. Copernicus, Galileo, Servatus, Vessalius, Darwin all injured religious faith and belief and should those chapters be forsaken from science syllabi? Thus there is no reason to neglect the attack on secular education because it is creating a fundamental confusion regarding the method of inquiry which is a dangerous distortion of scientific approach to education.

The Crisis Ridden Capitalist Class is Mortally Afraid of True Knowledge

The great Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy commented, “The strength of Government lies in the people’s ignorance, and the Government knows this, and will therefore always oppose true enlightenment. It is time we realise the fact. And it is most undesirable to let the Government, while it is spreading darkness, pretend to be busy with enlightenment of the people”. We must remember this basic approach while trying to understand the real

intensions of the government behind the move to restructure. The crisis ridden capitalism is unable to solve any of the basic problems of people’s life, like price rise, inflation or unemployment. So they are always afraid of people’s outburst against this exploitative capitalist order. They have taken lesson from history that just discontent can lead to sporadic outbursts but can’t lead to a systematic well organised battle against the social order. Thinking faculty, rational bent of mind, elements of consciousness among the people are most dangerous ingredients which they are afraid of. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, a leading Marxist thinker of this era, whose thoughts enlightened the path of struggle of the AIDSO, showed that in the face of this extreme crisis, capitalism, oppose all sorts of knowledge and for that they resort to curtailment of education. They deprive the larger sections of population from the light of knowledge, from rationality. In the phase earlier to NPE ‘86 the government resorted to restriction of higher education on various pretexts. The first chairman of UGC, Mr. CD Desmukh, while launching the ‘seat restriction scheme’ said ‘we want to restrict higher education in order to minimise the number of educated unemployed’. And for those who get education, they distort the course and content in such a way that destroys the process of development of rational bent of mind and democratic ethos and values. Crisis ridden capitalism is mortally afraid of truth and scientific reasoning. In order to wear out the threats of revolution they resort to fascism, which is worst enemy of mankind. He said, “Due to a lack of elementary understanding of ethics there is a growing indifference and callous attitude towards any social problem among our students, youth and intellectuals. Instead of instilling in students a temper for scientific and systematic reasoning, we find that there is a growing tendency to bring about a peculiar fusion of spiritualism with science. This trend in our educational life is indeed alarming as it is characteristic of the fascist culture. Fascism is a peculiar fusion of science with spiritualism. It adopts the technical aspects of science in its bid to develop and strengthen the economic and military might of the fascist state, while in the matter of ethics and morality, it instills in the minds of people all sorts of anti-science religious fads in the name of national culture and heritage in order to retrograde the mental process of people from the scientific path of causality to the mystic alley of blind faith, pre-conception and obscurantism,

and ultimately develops contempt for social action. All these symptoms are distinctly noticeable in our cultural life.”(A Scientific Approach to our Educational Cultural Problems). In this phase of globalisation, from the slogans of expansion, inclusion and excellence, there is no reason to believe that the moribund capitalism has changed its restrictive approach towards knowledge, education and rationality. The expansion is nothing but expansion of the educational market. By converting it into a lifeless commodity, it is out to kill the very kernel of education. The all out commercialisation, emphasis on only market oriented, technical courses, total obliteration of democratic environment within the institutions, obliteration of all democratic rights of students, teachers and non-teaching staff, fascistic bureaucratic control of the entire educational system, de-politicisation of campus and ban on all sorts of movement by students and teachers, in all these things the onrushing footsteps of fascism in our country are clearly audible. Fascism is worst enemy of mankind, enemy of humanity, culture and civilisation. It is the bounden duty of the students and youths today to rise up to thwart the danger of fascism.

Friendship is Dying, Variety of Psychic Problems on the Increase

Why entire educational system is being moulded in order to pave the way for fascism, the ethics, morality and culture within the society is under tremendous attack. The commercialisation of education, the money-oriented approach and culture that is being projected by the present day capitalism, is taking its toll in the field of morality and culture. Due to high costs of education a large number of students belonging to poorer families are being deprived of any education. Many psychologists opine that the children of poor working class families, particularly who are brought up in slums of big cities, among them, due to poor economic conditions, lack of education, exposure to unhealthy family conditions like domestic violence and alcoholism etc. influence the upbringing of a child and often push them to desperate criminal activities at a very minor age. Further, the uncertainty in life caused by the economic crisis push the young children prematurely to turmoils of life. The existing sharp

disparity between rich and poor, the glamour of upper middle class life frequently portrayed in films, display of excessive violence in commercial films often push the children towards criminal activities.

The social maladies of this dying capitalist system don't spare the children of affluent families also. It is a fact that many students nowadays are becoming friendless, isolated from their family and social ties. Among the upper middle class nuclear families a generation of students are developing, whose both father and mother are working, who don't get their tender association, but their parents 'invest' lots of money for their career. As a result they are under constant pressure of being a 'topper' in all examinations. Many such students are friendless, they don't play; don't take part in sports as a healthy entertainment. Earlier sports were considered a part of education. During the student age studies and sports were considered conducive to each other for simultaneous healthy development of body and mind. Sports were considered essential for development of friendship and association among the students of same age, and for development of the values known as sportsmen spirit. But out and out commercialisation of both education and sports has totally destroyed this crucially important aspect of human development. Only those who want to be professional players they go for sports with a view to earn lots of money in future.

City dwelling students have no play grounds to play because the promoters are grabbing every inch of land. The school students get entertainment only in watching TV or through playing games in mobile, computer, laptop etc. The internet and mobile culture is promoting a virtual community, where time spent playing with local friends is replaced by internet gaming with virtual playmates, and face-to-face communication and meaningful personal relationships are replaced by virtual friendships through social networks such as facebook and orkut. Youth and children are living in the virtual world, isolated from reality, with only gadgets giving them company. Too much addiction to internet and self-centered approach often aggravates their isolated life. In this age of social networking and websites youth are isolated in their societies and live a reclusive life. In computer games, war games and variety of killing games are most popular among children. Scenes of such violence and purposeless killing in these

games are creating strong negative impact upon the tender minds of young children.

Reading Habits of the Students are Decaying

At the sensitive young age the study of good literature is very important to inculcate the tender human values in a young boys or girls. It is also very important to study the lives of great men. In the schools the study of literature and biography of great men is being more and more neglected. In the family environment of the middle or lower middle class families, informal reading is fast decaying. Addiction to gadgets like TV or laptops are destroying the reading habits of children. Many guardians don't allow their wards to study story books or encourage any informal reading fearing that this would divert their attention from concentrating on their career. The lack of acquaintance with the lives of great men who could have been their role model in life, lack of association, friendship and emotional relations within family and society and constant exposure to unbearable stress generated due to rat-race for success “ all these are sharply increasing the desperateness, rudeness, purposeless arrogance and ruthlessness among the younger generations. Juvenile crime and teenager's suicidal tendency is alarmingly increasing in the country.

Variety of Stress Related Psychological Aberrations Have Become Rampant

Totally unprecedented psychological aberrations are being observed among very young boys and girls. It is well known that one of the six accused in the Damini gang-rape case in Delhi, was a minor. The juvenile boy was reportedly, the most brutal among the six offenders. Even after arrest he had no repentance. In another incident in October 2012 involved a 16-year old Delhi boy who killed a 4-year old boy. Displaying totally unexpected brutality he stabbed the victim over 30 times with a pair of scissors. Such incidents are rapidly on the increase. (Ref. The Sentinel, Guwahati, 22 April, 2013). The statistics compiled by National Crime Record Bureau shows an alarming increase in rape incidents involving juveniles over the past few years. In the year 2011, a total of 1,210 rape cases were recorded involving

juveniles, against a figure of 858 in 2010. The figure was 798 in 2009 and 776 in 2008. A news media has reported “The last decade has seen a huge leap in the rate of juvenile offenders in India. According to a recent report by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), criminal cases involving teenagers has gone up from 0.8 per cent in 2001 to 11.8 per cent in 2011. Crimes committed by people below the age of 18 have increased by 85 per cent between 2001 and 2011. It has further said that children arrested under Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws has increased from 20,303 in 2010 to 22,887 in 2011. In 2011, the overall involvement of children in crimes had leaped by 10.5 per cent under IPC and 10.9 per cent under SLL. Burglary, theft, wounding and riots form the majority of these crimes. Kidnapping and abduction cases involving juvenile offenders have increased from 354 in 2008 to 823 in 2011. Another important factor that NCRB has noticed is the sharp increase in the number of girl children being involved in crimes. The percentage has increased from 5.1 per cent in 2010 to 5.8 per cent in 2011.” (The Sentinel, Guwahati, 22 April, 2013).

Suicidal Tendency is on the Increase Among Students

Not only the juvenile crime, another definite indication of social crisis is the sharply increasing trend of suicide and variety other mental diseases and derangements among the younger generations. Particularly the suicidal tendency is sharply on the increase among the students. The problem of students' suicide has become a crucial issue today. The government is also recognising it but, hardly there is any attempt to understand and redress the problem. Rather, the policy makers have decided to remove the pass-fail system up to class VIII, with the plea that the failure in examinations causes a mental shock and as a result of it suicidal tendency is growing. But is it a fact? We see that a large number of the students committing suicide belonged to upper middle class families. Many of them were studying in elite institutions. More the education is assuming the character of investment more mental pressure is created on the students to be successful and able enough to guarantee the return. The social isolation and unbearable mental stress, as a result of ruthless competition in this crisis ridden capitalist system, failure and

frustration are also the reasons for the rise in suicidal tendencies among young people. They tend to carry their own burdens alone without anyone around to share, and get moral and emotional support from.

This leads to an oversensitive mental condition, which sometimes lead to attempted and actual cases of suicide. “Since 2008, at least 33 students across IITs have killed themselves. And it is not the IITs alone; premier private colleges under Anna University too have recorded several cases of suicides in the recent past. Institutes such as IIT Kanpur, IIT Madras, IIT Kharagpur and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, already have counselling units, while other institutes have been asked to set up centers similar to theirs.”(The Hindu,12.04.2012). In 2006 alone 5,857 students committed suicide owing to examination stress.27.6% of IT professionals in India are addicted to narcotic drugs says a NIMHANS study. In India according to National Crime Records Bureau 110,417 people committed suicide in the year 2002, which is 1.8% more than compared to 2001, i.e; a suicide is committed every five minutes. Seven times that number attempt to take their lives and as for those who feel desperate and unable to cope, the number is mind boggling. More suicides occur between 18 and 45 - in other words in the most productive age group of our society. Every 3 seconds a person attempts to die. Suicide is one of the top three causes of death among the young in the age group of 15-35 years. The psychological, social and financial impact of suicide on the family and the society is immeasurable. About 1 lakh people die by suicide in India every year.”

An Ideological Vacuum is Prevailing Within Society

No society can advance without ideology. In any social system we find conflict and ontradiction of ideologies. One or many ideologies help to protect the existing social system. On the other hand, some one revolutionary ideology helps to push the crisis ridden society forward towards its destruction and helps to create a new advanced society. In our country during the days of freedom movement, due to the impact of the movement a general upliftment of the ideological standard of the people within

the society did occur. In the struggle against the British, the ideology of nationalism, the patriotic spirit caused this upliftment. As British imperialism was then the oppressive ruling class, both the Indian bourgeoisie and the Indian working class united in the struggle against British imperialism. Although the nationalism was the spirit of the bourgeois/petty bourgeois class, in the struggle against British imperialism it could unite all sections of the people. With the attainment of political freedom and removal of British imperialism from power, gradually the spirit of patriotism has become historically exhausted. Bourgeois class is the ruling class today and they are the exploiters and oppressors. Thus in this changed situation, on the basis of new distribution of the classes, new ideology, new outlook is required. But in fact an ideological vacuum has been created within the country. The leading Marxist thinker of this era, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, referring to the high ideological, cultural standard that was created during the days of freedom movement said, “...the new standard of morality which developed on the basis of the humanist ideals and sense of values and inspired the people in their struggle against the imperialist exploitation as well as against all sorts of superstitions, religious blindness and bigotry of the feudal society. Because, in those days bourgeois humanism was conducive to the country’s freedom and social progress. Since the attainment of national freedom, with establishment of the bourgeois state and consolidation of capitalism, the bourgeois humanist ideals and sense of values of those days have been reduced today to a privilege in the hands of the ruling capitalist class. In other words, the bourgeois humanist ideals, sense of values and concept of morality have long since lost their progressive character and have been transformed into an ideological weapon in the hands of the exploiting capitalist class to mislead the toiling people and suppress their movements.” Furthermore, “Whereas the appeal of the old religious moral values has long been completely exhausted and the bourgeois humanist moral values too are almost exhausted, and since the revolutionary ideology and new moral values of the proletariat are yet to influence the political-cultural movement and the social life adequately, a vacuum has engulfed the field of ideology and morality. That is the root cause of this all-out crisis.”(Cultural Movement in India and Our Tasks). Due to extreme crisis of capitalism and sharp decline in the ideological cultural standard

within the society, corruptions and malpractices, scams, nepotism, sheer opportunism, all these evils are thriving in every echelon of the society and administrative system. Sharp erosion of minimum democratic ethos and values can be observed within the society, within the governments, administration and parliamentary political parties. Out and out corruption and criminalisation of the parliamentary politics, have become the growing trend today. But above all, the crisis is extreme in the field of ethics and values. The regional and all India level big political parties are dominating the political scene. Whatever might be their method and activities they are getting lots of votes in the elections. But not a single leader is there in these big political parties whose life and character might enjoy minimum respect from the people. Even those who support them, they don't believe that these leaders are honest, dedicated. The political leaders spread money, promise of employment, administrative privileges or political backing in order to attract and utilise the students or unemployed youths. No ideological questions arise during the election campaigns. To win the elections the leaders of the big political parties simply spend crores and crores of rupees, to purchase, the unemployed youths as 'volunteers', professional criminals as source of muscle power. These leaders don't hesitate to use casteist or communal sentiments, or to bribe the voters by money, free liquors and lots of bunkum promises. There are election laws to prevent such malpractices but it is open secret that these are the methods of the big political parties to win the elections. The election victory is determined by the money power, muscle power, propaganda of the newspapers and administrative influences. Ultimately money power is the sole determinant. So only those people win in elections who get stronger financial backing of the big capitalists. Election battles are nothing but battle of the regional and national level big capitalist groups among themselves, in order to get their 'agents' emerge victorious.

But this battle of black money, devoid of any ethics and morality, are destroying the moral backbone of the younger generations. Large brigade of unemployed youths, who have no hope of jobs, no 'mission' in life, become victims of this corrupt politics. Some turn into professional criminals, some become boot-lickers or rank opportunists, some sell their conscience, humanity, sense of justice and injustice at a price less than even a

cattle or poultry. Seeing this meanness of the power politics in vogue, a large number of students are becoming apathetic towards politics. They turn away not only from politics but become indifferent to any social problem. As a result the minimum sense of responsibility and minimum commitment towards the society is sharply degenerating among a section of the students and youths. Utter career-centricism, opportunism, selfishness, hankering for money, power and privileges, all have become the growing trend.

A Calculated Attempt to Destroy the Moral Fabric of the Younger Generations

That a man is a social being, his identity lies in his sense of self-respect and respect to others and his commitment towards society, this simple fact is fast decaying. In the tender student age a boy or girl should choose the mission of his/her life. In this age study of the lives of great men of Renaissance like Rammohan, Vidyasagar, Jyotiba Phule, or the great revolutionary characters of the uncompromising trend like Kshudiram, Netaji Subhas, Masterda Surya Sen, Chandrasekhar Azad, Asfaqullah Khan, Pritilata Waddedar; or the lives of the great scientists like Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Einstein, Madame Curie, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Meghnad Saha, CV Raman, Homi Bhaba, Satyen Bose, or Dr. Norman Bethune, Dwarkanath Kotnis, Florence Nightingale etc. are essential for character building and deciding the mission of life. Cultivation of the lives and characters of the great men are being extremely neglected. That the sense of dignity and self respect is the real identity of a man, this simple truth is almost dying within the society today. Students and youths are the worst victims of this growing trend.

Why such incidents of sexual onslaught on women are constantly increasing? Is it an accident? Rather we find a calculated attempt within the society to destroy the ethical and moral backbone of the younger generations. This is a crisis-ridden capitalist system. The crisis is not limited to the field of economy alone. This rapidly declining social security of women is a result of the calculated attack of the ruling capitalist class and their stooges, the central and the state governments on the ethical moral fabric of the younger generations by promotion of vulgar consumerist culture, constant exposure to sex and violence

through the TV, films, media, internet etc. and even through the system of education.

The sharp decline in the ethics and morality of the people is really shocking. It is well known that within every man there is a contradiction between his conscience and instinctive desires. While animals are servile to their instinct but human beings have a command of their conscience over the instinctive desires. This contradiction determines the personality of a man depending on whether he honours his conscience, pays value to the social needs or submits to his personal animal desires. In any rational society, the proper education, culture and movement for social progress determine the ethics, morality and conscience of the younger generations. The conscience is being constantly weakened by destroying the man-making process in the system of education, by discouraging the study of good renaissance literature, and obliterating or distortedly presenting the life and character of great men of the uncompromising trend of renaissance and freedom movement of our country. On the other hand the animal instincts are instigated by spreading obscenity through advertisements, TV serials, films and pervert sexuality through internet. The media controlled by the corporate giants, have been conducting a planned drive to destroy the moral backbone of the younger generations. The consumerist culture, based on 'eat-drink and be merry' philosophy, unbridled exhibition of sex and violence, easy availability of pornography through the media, internet, mobile etc. are destroying the moral fabric of students and youths.

The Damini Incident is Not An Isolated One

The incident of gang rape and murder of a para-medical student Damini in Delhi, in December 2012, rocked the entire nation. Immediately after this incident the gang rape of a five year old girl child Guriya in Delhi also became an all India level issue. These incidents also brought to the fore the question that were these isolated incidents? Why innumerable such incidents are occurring throughout the country? Why is the security of women and the girl students under extremely serious threat today? Can the problem be solved only by meting out capital punishment to the offenders or by bringing about certain amendments to the existing laws? The problem is deep-rooted within this social

system. A tendency is growing within a large section of students and youths to view women only as the lumps of flesh. The offenders in the Damini incident admitted that they were habituated to watching pornography. The offenders of the 5 year old girl child Guriya, in Delhi, were watching pornographic movies when the hapless child eventually reached the spot.

What is the condition of women in our society? We are living in a country where women are being raped virtually every moment. There is no reprieve. From 65 year old ladies to one and half year old girl child all are being treated only as object of animal lust. According to the information of the National Crime Record Bureau-2011, in our country a woman faces sexual onslaught in every 51 minutes, a case of eve teasing occurs in every 26 minutes. One incident of dowry death occurs in every 102 minutes. In every 54 minutes a woman becomes victim of rape. Furthermore, those are only recorded incidents. In most of the cases, due to shame, social vulnerability and shakiness, the victims don't register their complaint and suffer silently. In a large number of cases, particularly when the offenders are rich or influential, the police do not even receive the complaints rather harass the victim or her family. Very few can pursue with the complaint in spite of non-cooperation of the administration, who were supposed to provide security to them. In last seven years number of rape cases in India has seen a three-fold increase. The moral standard of our society has so sharply degraded that women are not only facing sexual onslaughts outside, but also they are being sexually assaulted or abused within their home. Innumerable incidents are coming to the surface where daughter in-law was raped by the father in-law. Girl child is being sexually abused by their close relatives, even by her own father or brother! Reports testify that in 80% of the rape cases, the rapists were closely known to the victims.

Power Politics is Totally Devoid of Ideology and Character

While within the society the cultural moral standard of the younger generations are sharply degenerating, can the politics of today, the political parties that are in the forefront of parliamentary politics today uplift the standard and save the society? The politics practiced by big parliamentary parties like Congress, BJP or regional parties like, RJD, JDU, DMK,

AIADMK, TMC, Samajvadi Party etc., has stooped so low that there is not a single leader in the field of parliamentary politics today whose personal life and character can earn respect among the people. Even the so-called big lefts like the CPI or CPIM are no exceptions. On the one hand the corruption, nepotism, power hunger and hypocrisy of the parliamentary politicians, on the other hand the increasing criminalisation of politics, indulgence and protection to criminals by the big parliamentary parties in their election interest, is a feature of the power politics of the day.

Not only criminal activities, moral turpitude of the political leaders have become a big issue today. Many sex scandals have come at large involving leading political figures of all the so-called big political parties. The most shocking were the top Congress leader Narain Dutt Tiwari's sex scandal which came to light in 2009. Mr. Tiwari of UP, in the beginning of 90's was viewed as a contender for Prime minister's office. He was also the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. While he was the governor of Andhrapradesh, his physical involvement with three women at his official residence in the Raj Bhavan was telecast by different TV channels. It was later came to light that such sexual turpitude was his regular practice since long. Another top level congress leader Abhisek Manu Singhvi was also found to involved in such a sex scandal in 2012, which the highest leadership of the Congress tried to dilute describing it as his personal affair. Not only the Congress, the other big parliamentary political party, the BJP, which talks of Hindutva and Hindutva oriented culture, what is their condition? In February 2012, in Karnataka Assembly, two ministers and one MLA was found to be viewing pornographic pictures in their cell phones, while the assembly session was on. Their deplorable actions were caught in the TV camera within the Assembly hall. Afterwards it was found that it was a regular practice by many of the MLA's! Almost a similar thing was found in case of a BJP MLA of Gujarat assembly Mr. Jetha Bharwad. Even the so-called lefts were not very much different in this respect. The paravoor sex scandal of Kerala which broke out in 2010. A person brutally raped her own daughter who was a class X student and used to send her by force to more than 100 men for prostitution. It was found that one CPIM local committee member acted as the pimp in the process of prostitution and the local secretary and many other CPIM leaders were involved in abusing the hapless girl. In West Bengal one SFI leader Arka Poddar was

found involved in sexually abusing another SFI activist, rather one of the vice Presidents of Bankura District committee of SFI, Debjani Nandi and abetting her murder/suicide in 2008. In the RG Kar Medical College, Kolkata, under the auspices of the student union led by SFI, in the college hostel a pornography and sex racket thrived. Being entangled in this racket a 4th year medical student Soumitro Biswas died on 25 August 2001, which his mother accused to be a case of murder. A SFI student leader of the college was arrested in this connection, but later the administration led by the then CPIM government managed to give the SFI leader a clean chit and pose the incident as that of suicide. (Ref: Porn ring behind student's murder Times News Network, Nov 7, 2001) These and Many such similar incidents have put a question mark to the political leaders in this degenerated political system.

But most horrible things were observed in the name of politics when it is found that Congress leaders during the anti-Sikh riot in 1984 and BJP leaders, during the post-Godhra riots in 2002 in Gujarat, resorted to or abetted calculated gangrape of hundreds and hundreds of women in broad daylight. Even CPIM, during the Nadigram movement in 2007, in a planned way organised gangrape of the women of Nandigram in order to tame the women in the forefront of movement. In case of the Singur movement of 2006-2007, one of the volunteers of the movement Tapasi Malik, who was a school girl and helping to organise the anti-land acquisition movement along with other AIDSO activists was brutally gangraped and killed. Her bare body was found burning alive in open within the land acquired by TATA in Singur understandably to teach a lesson to the women volunteers of the movement. The main offender, Debu Malik, a well known DYFI activist, when taking advantage of administration was released on bail, the CPIM leaders gave them ovation of a hero by garlanding him and organising a procession, with him at the fore of it! These are not isolated events. Due to total absence of any cultivation of ideology, the parliamentary politics practiced by these and such other political parties, has stooped so low. Can it produce great characters ever?

Money Power and Muscle Power for Capturing Student Unions

Nowadays, it is observed that the students' organisations attached to big political parties are also using money power and muscle power to capture the students unions by hook and crook. During the union elections many so-called 'big' student leaders don't utter a single word regarding ideology, educational problems, fee hike, commercialisation of education or such other basic student problems of student life. They spread money, give the promise of variety of facilities to purchase votes. During the last student union election of Delhi university the students organisations affiliated to the big political parties like NSU or ABVP spent Rs. 40/50 lakhs each for capturing the important portfolios of student union. They use professional criminals also for the same purpose.

Even the so-called left student organisations are no exceptions to this process. In West Bengal, during the tenure of the CPIM-led Front Government, since the end of 80's there was a spree of uncontested wins in the union elections by the SFI, the student wing of CPIM. A nexus had developed between the SFI leaders, police, college administration, local CPIM sponsored mafias to ensure that no other student organisations opposing SFI could obtain a single nomination paper, submit it or get the nomination finalised in scrutiny; and that nexus used to ensure, by hook or crook, that no students other than SFI could contest the elections and capture the union.

Due to all these things, large section of people is viewing politics simply as the 'profession of scoundrels'. As a result a large section of students and youths has become victims of this criminalised and corrupt politics, and another much larger section has become apathetic towards politics. More the common students, the best students of the university are becoming apathetic towards politics, more the politics is becoming criminalised. The wide ideological cultural vacuum is causing sharp decline of the ethical moral standard of the younger generations.

The criminalisation of politics is not only threatening the social security of women but it is posing a serious threat to the entire social environment. Big political parties like the Congress, when they organised the anti-Sikh riot after the death of

Indira Gandhi, or the BJP when they resorted to anti-Muslim riot in Gujarat, both resorted to widespread rape of women in broad daylight. Even the so-called lefts like the CPIM, used rape as a weapon to intimidate the people in the movements in Nandigram and Singur in West Bengal. More shameful statistics has been provided by a Delhi based NGO that, in the last five years more than 100 candidates contested in parliament election against whom allegation of sexual violence was there and 30 of whom have allegations of rape. All these things are increasing the apolitical and anti-political attitude among the students and youths.

Uncompromising Struggle Produced Great Characters in Politics

During the days of freedom movement the politics did not become dishonoured in this way. The revolutionary politics, the politics of the uncompromising trend of freedom movement had produced a high standard of morality and ethics was created. Greatest characters like Kshudiram, Chndrasekhar Azad, Asfaquallah Khan, Bhagat Singh, Masterda Surya Sen, Pritilata Waddedar, Netaji Subhash and innumerable such other revolutionary characters were produced in this trend. Their courage and valiance, readiness to die for the ideological cause, iron determination and discipline, selfless attitude, emotional feeling towards the oppressed and humiliated people, made them the fountains of inspiration to the younger generations of those days. Not only the revolutionary politics, the compromising trend also had quite a high standard of character in those days. It is true that many industrialists, capitalists, landlords and rich people, merely for name, fame, and power joined the Gandhiite trend of the Congress politics, but even within that trend the dedicated political workers had honesty, dedication and a high standard of character. As a result, the values and culture among the masses were quite high in those days. In the system of education, within the family, there was a moral training for the children. Even in a neighbourhood, the elders felt that their behaviour should be example creating before the children of the locality. In educated families, it was a cult to expose the boys and girls to good renaissance literature, the literature of Rabindranath, Saratchandra, Premchand, Bharathi, Nazrul etc. During the last sixty years af-

ter the freedom, absence of movement, absence of social political struggle, pursuit of mostly power politics, has dishonoured the politics very much. Rampant use of money power and muscle power, for winning in elections; purchasing the muscle power of the unemployed youths by money, converting them into criminals, using them for booth capturing, for establishing sphere of influences etc. has become the standard method of power politics, pursued by big parliamentary political parties irrespective of their colours of the flags.

The student politics is also no exception. During the days of freedom movement while the Gandhiite leadership didn't want to make the masses active and tried to keep the rein of the movement in the hands of the veteran leaders, more inclined to negotiations and table talks, the uncompromising trend stressed more on the involvement of students and youths in freedom movement. A fresh drive to build up student-youth organisations started in this period. Netaji Subhas started an attempt to build up student-youth organisations, he raised the demand of elected student unions as students' own instrument of struggle. In 1923 he was elected the President of the All India Youth Congress and started a campaign on the need to develop youth movement. Bhagat Singh also, organised a student youth organisation, the Nauzawan Bharat Sabha in 1926 in Punjab. Kshudiram, Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, Asfaquallah, Masterda Surya Sen and most of the revolutionary leaders and martyrs plunged into the freedom struggle during their school-college days. The colleges and universities in Calcutta, Dacca, Lahore and other cities became centres of revolutionary movement. Netaji Subhas in his autobiographical writing 'The Indian Pilgrim' wrote that in his college days, the Presidency College and Hindu Eden Hostel became a centre of revolutionary freedom movement, leaving his school responding to the call of non-cooperation movement. After withdrawal of the non-cooperation movement, he felt the need to awaken the youths of the country, by exposing the Gandhian philosophy of Ahimsa. The manifesto of the Nauzawan Bharat Sabha reflected the strong influence of the new ideas of Soviet Socialism then which was penetrating the freedom movement. In the anti-partition movement of Bengal of 1905-11, and all the major national level programme of movement, e.g. the non-cooperation movement of 1921, Civil Disobedience Movement of 30's, Quit India Movement of '42, Anti INA Trial Movement of 1946, students participation were massive. It was a time when

best students of the universities resorted to cultivation of knowledge, at the same time they used to participate in politics being influenced by the ideology of nationalism and scientific socialism.

The ruling class knows the people's struggle can't be destroyed with arms and ammunitions alone. That is why they are striking at the moral backbone of the students and youths. In such a situation, to save the society from this all pervading crisis, the politics of movement, which is armed with the most advanced ideology of today, which is based on the correct scientific outlook regarding the social, economic and political systems, which insist on cultivation of knowledge, cultivation of the lives and struggle of the great men of the past and assimilate their great qualities to inspire the movement only that can uplift the ethical moral standard of the youth today.

Instead of Spontaneous Outburst Protracted Movement is Required

This, in a nutshell, is the situation prevailing in our society, in general, and education system, in particular. As the capitalist system in which we live today, has become entirely reactionary and moribund, it cannot deliver any good to humanity except war, destruction, poverty, hunger, insecurity of life, and degeneration of moral and ethical values. In order to ensure education for all, jobs for all, humane and dignified living for all, this system must be replaced by a higher social system i.e. a socialist system. Although at present there is darkness, despair and despondence engulfing the entire social life, an urge for social change, a search for a new ideology is growing in the whole society. The movement, which did burst out after the Damini incident and spread like fire throughout the country, acted as an eye opener. It demonstrated that however may be the attempt of the ruling class to destroy the morality, ethics and humanity that cannot be destroyed altogether. Today, in all imperialist-capitalist countries, oppressed people are coming out in large numbers against the onslaughts of ruling classes. Waves of mass movements are rising throughout the world. Even in America, the bastion of world imperialism, people marched in millions denouncing its wars of aggression

and the policy of financing the capitalists while squeezing the life blood of people. The entire world is witnessing a new surge of movement against capitalism and imperialism.

In our country too, after the process of implementation of disastrous globalisation and market economy, the people has become pushed to a situation with their back to the wall; they have no other course left than to resist and fight back. All the parliamentary parties like Congress, BJP, BSP, RJD, SP, Shiv Sena and others are trying to protect the reactionary capitalist system by extending its lease of life. Even the so-called leftists like CPI (M), CPI, and their student organisations, the AISF and SFI, in their rat race for power and position, want to prove themselves worthy servants of capitalism. All these parties are nakedly exposed in their true colours. People are disgusted with these forces.

Pent up grievance of people due to the onslaughts of capitalism is causing explosion of movement from time to time, what was observed during the Damini incident or during the movement against corruption. But as the people are totally through with these corrupt political forces, the movements are bursting out spontaneously, without any leadership. Millions and millions of students youth, common well meaning people did come forward and went out to streets during both the movements. The powerful media controlled by the corporate giants, seeing the omen of disaster of capitalism in the outburst of the people's did try to paint the movements as 'apolitical' and to confine the movements within the framework of Parliamentary politics. But AIDSOS time and again has pointed out that the movement against corruption or any other evil can be decisive if and only if, it is led by a correct force of movement, armed with the scientific outlook and most advanced ideology of the day. Furthermore, a) it must be directed against the root cause of all the problems, i.e. this crisis ridden capitalism, exposing how it is producing and protecting the evils; b) it must create a feeling and confidence among the masses that they themselves are fighting for their own cause; and instead of passive support, active involvement of the masses up to the grassroots level through its own instrument of struggle, must be organised; c) it will have to be guided by a scientific socio-economic outlook and higher ideology and values of the day that may imbue those who will be involved in the movement

and uplift the general moral standard of the younger generations. Historically now, AIDSOS the force of student movement, armed with the great ideology of Marxism-Leninism and the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, alone can uphold the noble banner of struggle and social transformation. People are being tremendously influenced by these great thoughts and enthusiastically joining the path of emancipation. So it is the best of times to rouse and to organise the masses for sustained struggle conducive to the radical transformation of the society. In this critical hour, it becomes a bounden duty for students and youths to stand up boldly and confront the imminent fascism. It is amply clear that none of the student organizations, but AIDSOS are pointing to this threat of fascism. The so-called nationalist student organizations like NSUI and ABVP, servitors of capitalism have openly lent their support to all anti-people education policies. The ABVP itself has participated in the effort to commercialise and communalize education and is instrumental in spreading religious and communal bias among the students. But painfully even the so-called left student organizations like the SFI and AISF, apart from some occasional and verbal criticism of the policies of ruling class, have done precious little to organize students' movement against these attacks. On the contrary, they have become partners and supporters of the same anti-student, anti-people policies when such policies are being implemented in the states where their parent parties are in power. That is why we have seen the SFI activists to resort to torturing and furiously beating up the AIDSOS workers for developing students' movements in the erstwhile CPIM ruled states like West Bengal, Kerala or Tripura. This implies that once again it is the AIDSOS alone that has to shoulder the task of mobilizing the students to organize protracted movement based on higher ideology against all these onslaughts on education, culture and humanity. We know that at every critical juncture of civilization, history has always bestowed upon the students the responsibility to pave the way for humanity's march to progress and social transformation. Here we recall the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh with great reverence, "...at every stage of development of the society, in every country it is the students and young people who come forward, being influenced by and imbued with the revo-

lutionary ideology and completely dedicated, go to the masses, rouse the masses, organize them in thousands and help them in creating their political power. Then the time comes for the masses for action – that we call revolution.”

Strengthen AIDS0, Hold High the Banner of Students' Struggle

In fact another social transformation is in offing, the ruthless onslaught on anything unfavourable and detrimental to the interest of the capitalist regime and all encompassing degradation are definite pointers towards that. The fascistic attacks of the ruling governments or the ruling parties on the fighting workers in Gurgaon, peasants in Raigarh, Kalinganagar, Singur, Nandigram, and last but not least, on the youths fighting for justice after the rape of Damini, are only glaring examples of that. But no matter whatever coercive instruments and military might such regimes may possess, the strength of organized people's struggle always break all such barriers of oppression and suffering to march towards victory. The indomitable spirit of the valiant fighters of Nandigram has upheld that truth once again. As an instrument of students' struggle, AIDS0 has also proved time and again its worth. We have, to our credit many historic movements at the state as well as at the national level. Movements against seat restrictions, anti-people language policy and National policy on Education, are only a few of them. Presently, our movement against the all-out attack of fee hike, privatization and commercialization of education has made tremendous impact all over the country. Hence the organization, AIDS0 possesses the necessary ideological orientation based on Marxism-Leninism and thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. It derives inspiration from the life and struggle of the great men of Renaissance of this land and the great revolutionary fighters of the uncompromising trend of freedom movement of our country. It has the necessary fortitude and grit to unhesitatingly stand against the fascist onslaught on education and build up mighty resistance movement against the problems of education and students' life. We are firm and determined on our course; victory is bound to be ours!