

Webinar on Right to Education

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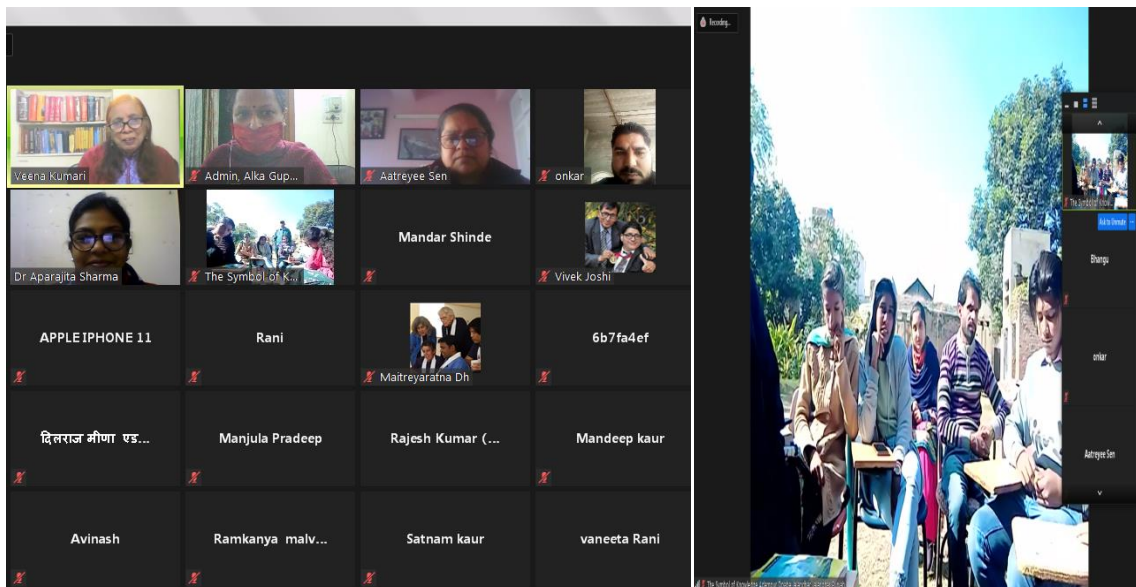
Passcode: 961570

By

Human Rights Law Network, Chandigarh. & Ambedkarite Women's
Era

Date: 21.11.2020

Time: 11:00 – 1:15pm



HRLN
HUMAN RIGHTS LAW NETWORK

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Subject/ Topic	Time	Resource Person
Introduction and Context Setting	11.00 to 11.10 AM	Adv. (Ms.) Veena Kumari, Human Rights Law Network, Chandigarh
Introduction to Right to Education and Status of its Implementation	11.10 to 11.35 AM	Mandar Shinde, Education Activist, Pune
	11.35 to 11.45 AM	Interaction with Participants
Impact of Covid 19 on Education	11.45 to 12.10 PM	Aatreyee Sen RTE Forum, Himachal Pradesh
	12.10 to 12.20 PM	Interaction with Participants
New Education Policy: A brief introduction, Charter of demands and comments	12.20 to 12.45 PM	Dr. Aparajita Sharma, RTE Forum, Assistant Professor, Council for Social Development , New Delhi
	12.45 to	Interaction with Participants

	1.00 PM	
Valediction and the Way Forward	1.00 to 1.15 PM	Adv. (Ms.) Veena Kumari

The Webinar on Right to Education

A webinar on Right to Education was organised by Human Rights Law Network, Chandigarh in collaboration with Ambedkarite Era on 21.11.2020. Around 60 participants from various groups like students, teachers, advocates, NGOs, Social Activists and home makers from Punjab and other States like Gujrat, Maharashtra, Haryana, U.P. and Himanchal Participated in the said webinar. Three experts from Himachal, Maharashtra and Delhi with through vast experience on the issue-academic to at grass roots addressed the said webinar.



The welcome note and concept note was addressed by Advocate Veena Kumari, HRLN, Chandigarh. While welcoming the house she opened with the remarks that the webinar was on Right to Education has been another webinar in the series which had been organised by HRLN, Chandigarh. She added that due to the peculiar condition of COVID-19 we have been reduced to virtual meetings and cannot organised the physical meetings. She further added that the physical meetings have its own positive impact but now instead of sitting idle and getting disconnected, some that is better than nothing.

Advocate Veena observed that she is not going to the history of Right to education. She added that the RTE Act, 2009 is a Central Act and we have already celebrated a decade of its passing. However, its implementation in its letter and spirit is a matter of concern.

She spoke about ingredients of the Act i.e. Free and compulsory Education in the context of , Article 14 which provides affirmative action in the form of special legislation like RPD, DVA, SCST Act, POCSO & JJ Act etc. She added that Article 21 which provides rights and life is not only right to live but to live with dignity and respect. She further shared that the Article 21 A provides right to education and if this right is provided in its letter and spirit all other rights could be achieved without any obstruction. She added that there is no provision for the children 0-3 to 14 to 18 in RTE. She spoke about 25% reservation, no detention policy, which now have been amended, gender issue, drop-out rate. Etc.

Adv. Veena Kumari welcomed the resource person and added that in future also her organisation would be getting the same kind of support.

Mandar Shinde, Education Activist, Pune: Introduction to Right to Education and Experience of its Implementation



The next speaker Mr. Mandar Shinde has a vast and thorough experience of working on the RTE for the last ten years in the state of Maharashtra at grass roots level. He started his address with his observation that the RTE Act, 2009 is a legal document and its provision can be get implemented in its letter and spirit. He shared his experiences with the house as an educationist activist.

He further made it clear to the house that the ‘Compulsory clause in the Act is generally misunderstood that it is compulsory for the children to go to school

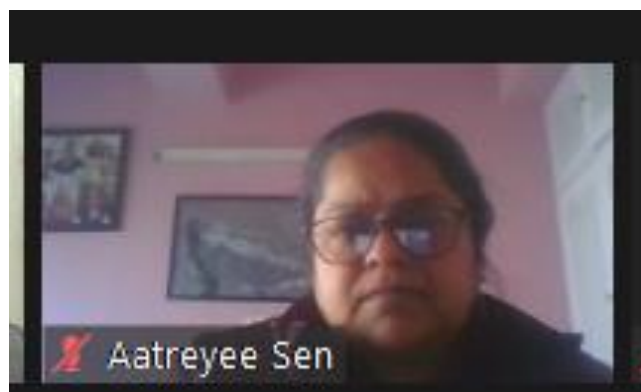
and for the parents to send their wards to the school. In fact 'compulsory' in the Act is for the State and Local Administration to ensure that every child goes to school and the expenses are not to be borne by the State/Local Administration. Mr. Shinde also shared the concept of Neighbourhood school and its distance from the residence of child in pre to elementary school. He further added that after enactment by the Parliament, all the states were asked to formulate Rules and it was done by 2011. He also added that school means any complex which includes boundary wall, play ground, water, and toilet for boys and girls separately.

He also shared that number of times State and local administration shows their inability to run schools with less students. He also addressed that in case there is no State run School in the stipulated distance, the Act provides 25% reservation in Private Schools However only such students are exempted from tuition fee and are liable to pay other charges Mr. Shinde expressed her concern that for the last so many years there is extra focus on 25% reservation to no-detention policy by the Media. He shared that to get the implementation of RTE, a people campaign is most required. He also shared that we should start a public campaign so that there is no need of 25% reservation in private schools. He also informed for the house that the children are entitled to get admission in Govt. schools without showing any documents in the age appropriate classes. He also informed to the house the students teacher retro for primary and elementary classes, distance of school, no non teaching work from the teachers etc.

Mr. Shinde shared information about the provision of school management and its constitution, portion of Child Rights Commission and also importance of awareness about the Right to Education Act and Role of people campaign. The also spoke about media street plays and other various programmes to make people aware about RTE.

Mr. Shinde concluded his session with a positive note stating information and intervention about the provision of RTE and intervention to get realised the same. Shall Development Programme percentage of women and how the positive interventions have been made by these groups.

Aatreyee Sen RTE Forum, Himachal Pradesh: Impact of Covid 19 on Education:



The next speaker was MS. Aatreyee, an active member of RTE Forum, H.P. spoke about the adverse impact of Covid 19 on the Right to food and RTE on the children coming from deprived section e.g. The children of migrants, children with disability children coming from socially deprived groups etc. she lamented that a curfew was imposed across the country on March 24th and under the forced circumstances thousands of workers migrant workers just within couple of days, Start marching on feed to their native places after loss of employment and consequently thousands of children became out of school. She further added that till date there is no data available with the government agencies that how many children became out of school and whether there is any programme with the government to bring them again to the schools.

Ms. Aatreyee speaking about the Right to Education also spoke at length about the right to food of the Children. She observed that Right to Food or mid-day

meal has been an integrated programme in the schools. But when due to lockdown, the schools were closed; automatically mid day meal or Right to Food of the children got suspended till the month of April every right of the children was put under suspension.

Ms. Aatreyee shared with the house that on certain areas the food items like Rice and pulses were distributed to the deprived sectors of the society but the ration distributed was in the name of adults in the family and did not include the food as mid day meal. She further added that starvation to hunger was spread everywhere and the children also had to the hunger and starvation. Out of school due to pandemic and food crisis.

Ms. Aatreyee further added that due to loss of job not only the workers had to face starvation; they also could not arrange food for their children. She also mentioned about the domestic violence and its negative impact on the children. She further added that till date no figures about the children who suffered and whose various rights got violated is not coming from Govt. agencies and it is coming from the grass roots organisation working with the children. She lamented since there is no survey got conducted by the Govt. agencies, therefore, there is no programme also introduced by the govt. in their regard. She added that the schools were a place where the children used to spend 5-6 hours and even which provided various forums to the children to discuss their issues.

Ms. Aatreyee spoke about the online education in the context of rural and economical poor strata where if the family has 2-3 children, then the some numbers of mobiles are required. She even shared about the suicides committed by the children fearing that they would get fail or would not score the desired marks since they could not attend online classes. Ms. Aatreyee also added about the mental issues like anxiety, depression being faced by the children.

She also added about bullying of the children and also that in the past giving electrical equipment or gadgets was not allowed to be given in the hands of the children which has become new normal. Ms. Aatreyee lamented that we have reached to the phase where we have accepted and reconciled various situation and have reached to the conclusion that there is no way out. She added that if we think about the challenge, certainly we can reach to some point where we can come with a way out. The main challenge is that we have stopped thinking and exploring the answers to the various challenges.

Ms. Aatreyee further observed that we have stopped to have interest with the children and to know how and where they enjoy. We have accepted the system as it is. We are living in the society of control & imposition we are also promoting the model of private companies like sale of mobiles and online education systems. Like Byjus. According to Ms. Aatreyee children resume in better position when they go to school since they can interact with various individuals and groups.

Ms. Aatreyee spoke about the situation where the schools were used only to quarantine centres thinking as schools are never going to reopen. She spoke about the gender biases and child marriage due to the situation created by pandemic. She spoke about the non supply of reading material and also added that it is responsibility of the State and not of the parents to arrange reading/ study material.

Dr. Aparajita Sharma, RTE Forum, Assistant Professor, Council for Social Development, New Delhi: New Education Policy: A brief introduction, Charter of demands and comments:



Dr. Aparajita the next and last speaker of the webinar discussed about the New Education Policy is interesting and important for two reasons first it came in time of COVID-19 pandemic. Policy doesn't focus on problems of the pandemic even though it came in the middle of world pandemic. Secondly the process of drafting the New Education Policy started in 2015 and in 2015 a committee was formed and finally after 34 years we have got a new education policy. The policy is not binding but it provides the vision of how the government wants the education to be. This New Education Policy is different because before this all the education policies were passed through parliament but New Education Policy 2020 was passed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

She further shared about the policy, Early childhood care and education (3-6 years old) before this there is Anganbadi system but this was not included in the school structure New Education Policy focuses on this to make children school ready for future.

She also shared that 10+2 was introduced by Kothari Commission then Right to Education provides 8 years of free compulsory education and this education is state sponsored. New Education Policy introduces new structure 5+3+3+4 first five years include three years of early childhood care and education and two

years of school education , early childhood care and education in spite of being added in New Education Policy, 2020 but still it is not a fundamental Right Govt tries to revive Anganbadi System once by the help of New Education Policy.

She shared when something is fundamental right then it becomes the duty and responsibility of the Government to provide the necessary education and when we talk about private schools we cannot forget the price factor.

She further discussed about out of school children by bringing informal education and considers them an important part in bringing back out of school children in the field of education New Education Policy demolishes the how the teacher should be what teacher is what qualification teacher should have. Non formal education takes an extra step to bring girl child especially from backward classes socio economic disadvantage group. New Education Policy shifts toward centralization by establishing parakh that focuses on evaluation

She further lamented that online education cannot be accessed by every student every student should be availed infrastructure and New Education Policy 2020 ignores all that. Schooling should be made compulsory from early school to senior secondary there should be similar guidelines for private and government schools education should not be bases on the spending capacity of parents and children for weaker section should be getting weaker education and this all can be made a reality by an amendment only without amendment this New Education Policy is not binding. Education should be more than just number recognition it should focus more on working of society.

The meeting was concluded with vote of thanks by Advocate Veena Kumari from HRLN Chandigarh.

PARTICIPANTS:

SI No	Name
1.	Aatreyee Sen
2.	Onkar
3.	Mandar Shinde
4.	Dr. Aparajita Sharma
5.	Vaneeta Rani
6.	Vivek Joshi
7.	Maitreyaratna DH
8.	Dilraj Meena
9.	Manjula Pradeep
10.	Rajesh Kumar
11.	Mandeep Kaur
12.	Avinash
13.	Ramkanya Malvia
14.	Satnam Kaur
15.	S.H. Raihan
16.	Syed Khursheed
17.	Deeba Abrar
18.	Rani
19.	Shamina Perween
20.	Bhangu
21.	Chandar Singh Parmar
22.	Govind Parmar
23.	Preeti Vaghela
24.	Mastan Singh

25.	Goraksh ASVSS
26.	Sonam
27.	Sonia Devi
28.	Sita Devi
29.	Neha
30.	Preeti Kumari
31.	Kinu
32.	Asha
33.	Anu
34.	Deep Mala
35.	Kashmira Singh
36.	Phoolmani(Champa)
37.	Prajakta Dhole ASVSS
38.	Shabina Parveen
39.	Adv. Kuldip Bhatti
40.	Samarth Suri
41.	Shadaab
42.	Harpreet
43.	Priyanka
44.	Kalpana Mohite
45.	Rajwinder Kaur
46.	Veena Kumari
47.	Alka Gupta