

RGICS



RAJIV GANDHI INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES
JAWAHAR BHAWAN, DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

Saffronisation of Education (December, 2014)

Saffronisation of Education

Introduction

Prof. Romila Thapar (Third Nikhil Chakravarti Memorial lecture delivered on 26 October 2014) said, “The ultimate success of a democracy requires that the society be secular. By this I mean a society that goes beyond the co-existence of all religions; a society whose members have equal social and economic rights as citizens, and can exercise these rights irrespective of their religion; a society that is free from control by religious organisations in the activities related to these rights; a society where there is freedom to belong to any or no religion. Public intellectuals would be involved in explaining where secularisation lies and why it is inevitable in a democracy and in defending the secularising process.”

Education being used a tool for ideological indoctrination of future generations. Concerted efforts are being made to target young minds are being targeted through school curricula and content of books. Rajnath Singh, “It has been proposed that school textbooks be changed in order to ensure that children be made aware of human values and life values .”(July 23,2014, Rajya Sabha).In the past 6 months several developments have taken place in the education sector which need to be examined without delay. It is becoming increasingly clear that the RSS agenda of pushing forward the Hindutva agenda in educational institutes starting from schools to universities has gained momentum. It is time for academicians, policy makers and activists to take cognizance of these changes taking place and speaking out against the agenda to impose ideas based on a particular religion.

Let us begin by looking at the recent appointments made by the NDA government in various educational institutes. RSS wants to appoint its supporters and colleague in leading cultural bodies in India, which include Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Sangeet Natak Akademi, Kalashetra and the Censor Board of Film Certification (CBFC). According to information published in various newspapers, HRD minister Smriti Irani has received a list of 27 names that the RSS deem fit ICHR and ICSSR appointment. Some names in the list include-

BB Lal – Ex director of Archaeological Survey of India, who during his tenure at ASI tried to prove the existence of Mahabharata and Indraprastha.

Satish Chandra Mittal- president of Akhil Bhartiya Itihas Sankalan Yojna, a historical research body affiliated to RSS, and Dilip K Chakrabarty, an archaeologist at Cambridge University.

In its latest diktat, the RSS has asked the Union Human Resource Development Ministry to ‘change all members’ appointed by the previous UPA government in the NCTE. The RSS has communicated its demand to HRD minister Smriti Irani. The RSS has red-flagged the appointment of professor Kishna Kumar, professor Janaki Rajan, professor Padma Sarangapani and professor Virginius Xaxa saying they don’t fit the criteria prescribed by the NCTE Act 1993.

Major Appointments by Government in the Area of Education

Name	Appointment	Background
Yellapragada Sudershan Rao	Chairman Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)	
Surya Prakash	Chairman Prasar Bharti	Fellow at a New-Delhi-based think-tank, Vivekananda International Foundation.
Mr. Vishram Ramchandra Jamdar	Chairman Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur	According to an article published in Indian express, prior to his appointment in VNIT, Nagpur, Mr Jamdar, sent his job application to HRD minister Ms. Smriti Irani with the reminder that he was an “RSS person” at whose Nagpur house she once had a “brief stay”
Ram Shankar	MoS, MHRD	Former RSS Pracharak
Appointment in Pipeline		
Prof S. L Bhyrappa	National Research Professor	Whose novel paint Tipu Sultan as a religious fanatic
Dr. Ashor Gajanan Modak	National Research Professor	An Economics lecturer and a BJP member of Legislative Council in Maharashtra for 12 years
Sura Kant Bali	National Research Professor	Journalist and known RSS sympathizer whose book was recently released by RSS joint General Secretary Dr. Krishna Gopal

Sources for appointment news are :

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-08-18/news/52942157_1_leela-samson-sangeet-natak-akademi-rss;

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/eveing-vacancies-in-top-culture-body-rss-sends-govt-list-of-candidates/article1-1291646.aspx>

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/NewsContent.aspx?NID=66439>

Saffronisation of Education

The following section takes you through the positions taken by RSS, BJP and other organizations backed by them on issues of history, caste, education policy etc.

History and Mythology

In praise of Hemu: Medieval king reveals true intent of Hindutva history

At a seminar organised by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-backed Akhil Bharatiya Itihaas Sankalan Yojana (ABISY) to offer tribute to 'A Forgotten Hindu Emperor, Maharaja Hemchandra Vikramaditya' with Bharatiya Janata Party leader Subramanian Swamy made another controversial statement calling for burning of their books. ABISY president said, "our history has been distorted by Western, Muslim, Communist and Secularist historians. Subramaniam Swamy in his nakedly communal speech says, "It was due to the struggle of people like Hemu that Muslims and Christians failed to convert "80 percent of Hindus. That is the reason ISIS wants to come back to India. To finish the unfinished task." The communalization of this chapter goes well beyond Hemu's life. The symposium expresses outrage over the alleged encroachment of Hemu's memorial in Panipat. "It is a Muslim dominated area and they have built a dargah there"

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/in-praise-of-hemu-a-medieval-king-reveals-the-true-intent-of-hindutva-history-1749171.html>

Doctoring History for Political Goals: Origin of Caste System in India

"The Sangh leaders claimed that these castes had come into existence due to atrocities by foreign invaders and did not exist in Hindu religion earlier. According to Bhayyaji Joshi, number two in RSS hierarchy, 'shudras' were never untouchables in Hindu scriptures. 'Islamic atrocities' during the medieval age resulted in the emergence of untouchables, Dalits."

<http://www.countercurrents.org/puniyani041114.htm>

RSS Stand- Bhayyaji Joshi (RSS) states that 'sudras' were never untouchables and it was due to Islamic atrocities that led to emergence of dalits and untouchables. "To violate Hindu swabhimaan (dignity) of Chanwarvanshiya Kshatriyas, foreign invaders from Arab, Muslim rulers and beef eaters, forced them to do abominable works like killing cow , skinning them and throwing their carcass in deserted places. Foreign invaders thus created caste of charma-karma by giving such works as punishment to proud Hindu prisoners". (Excerpts from a booklet entitled 'Stop Communalisation of Education by CPI(M))

Counter Argument by CPI(M) : Jaiminiya Brahmana: 1000-500 B.C states sudra is created from feet of Prajapati without any god and therefore the lords of the house are his gods and he has to earn his living by washing their feet. Apastamba Dharmasutra states that the food brought by an impure sudra cannot be taken by a Brahmin and is compared to food which is looked at by a dog. It also states that recitation of Vedas should be stopped in the presence of sudra particularly candala. Even early Pali texts mention the 5 despised castes: the candala, mnsada, vena, rathakara and pukkusa as low castes. Travellers like Fa Hien also have mentioned the practice of untouchability. (Excerpts from a booklet entitled 'Stop Communalisation of Education by CPI(M))

Saffronisation of Education

Myths made reality, bizarre claims made for ancient India's achievements

RSS and its outfits including ruling Party BJP have started diluting facts and myths. Few of claims made in this area as follows:

- Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, BJP MP from Haridwar and former Uttarakhand chief minister, disagrees. "Today we are talking about nuclear tests. Lakhs of years ago, Sage Kanad had conducted a nuclear test. Our knowledge and science do not lack anything," **Nishank told Parliament.**
- The head of RSS's cow protection department Mr. Om Prakash in 2009 said, "Cow urine offers a cure for around 70 to 80 incurable diseases like diabetes. All are curable by cow urine," The RSS is keen on promoting a **soft drink made from cow's urine**, mixed with products such as aloe vera and gooseberry to fight diseases.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at the inauguration of a hospital in Mumbai in October, equated birth of Mahabharata's Karna to genetic engineering.
- At the same event, Modi also said, "We worship Lord Ganesha. There must have been some plastic surgeon at that time who got an elephant's head on the body of a human being and began the practice of plastic surgery."
- In his book **Tejomay Bharat**, Dinanath Batra, convenor of Shiksha Bachao Andolan Samiti, claimed stem cell research was invented by an Indian, Dr Ganpat Matapurkar, who was inspired by the Mahabharata.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/myths-made-reality-bizarre-claims-made-for-ancient-india-s-achievements/article1-1293274.aspx>

RSS Politics- RSS is ignoring the real contributors to science in ancient India, Susruta- known for surgery; Varahamihira and Brahmagupta two famous astrologers who found out the reasons for lunar and solar eclipse as they advocated a rationalist philosophy.

Added to this it is clear through Gowalkar's writings that he presents buddhists as traitors and equates Buddhism with darkness.

Saffronisation of Education

Text Books

ABVP takes pledge: Will push for 'Indianisation' of varsity curricula

ABVP in its recent national conference passed some resolutions related to 'Indianisation' of curricula and forwarded it to the HRD ministry. Few of these resolutions are as follows:

- ABVP has demanded a law under which students would be provided lessons in mother tongue up to the primary level.
- Another resolution stresses the need to bring students closer to "Indian culture", while demanding "proper status" for historical figures like Shivaji and Guru Gobind Singh.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/politics/abvp-takes-pledge-will-push-for-indianisation-of-varsity-curricula/>

Communalizing Language

RSS and its outfits have microscopic eye on every aspect of education system. Dinanath Batra had several meeting with HRD minister in last few months. According to a recent news he wanted minister to remove all URDU words from Hindi text. He wanted to replace those words with Sanskrit words.

<http://www.jansatta.com/politics/editorial-against-scientific-thinking/8792/>

RSS brainstorming to make theoretical spiritual content a practical tool for student

The RSS and its affiliated organizations such as Shiksha Bachao Andolan (SBA) are coordinating with HRD ministry to push forward 'proper' values and spiritualism in educational curriculum. According to SBA co-convenor Atul Kothari, the curriculum currently taught in schools lacks focus on values and spiritualism as recommended by the Radhakrishnan and Kothari commissions. "CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), for instance, has some component on value education but it's all in theory. How do we ensure this translates into practice? There has to be a greater focus on values.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rss-starts-work-on-a-new-chapter-foreducation-to-inculcate-proper-indian-nationalistic-values-in-students/articleshow/45116158.cms>

Sanskrit over German: Smriti Irani's agenda harms KV students

In the last six years, the number of Indian students going to Germany for higher studies has risen by 114 percent. Germany is one of the top destinations for Indian students, particularly those studying engineering, science and technology, for affordable higher education and possible employment. Proficiency in German language is an asset that these students pursue while in school itself. But the Human Resources Minister, Smriti Irani, wants them to learn Sanskrit. Who gave you the permission to learn German? Stop it, and learn Sanskrit at once -- is her diktat.

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/speak-german-smriti-iranis-hindutva-agenda-dims-prospects-kendriyavidyalaya-students-1802783.html>

Saffronisation of Education

Saffronisation of text books-

Social science and history in Karnataka , M.P, Maharashtra , Punjab and other states. –cited by Central Advisory board of education committee in 2005. These textbooks strengthen stereotypes of muslims, Christians and women.No references are made to oppression by upper castes or right wing terrorist attack. (Excerpts from a booklet entitled ‘Stop Communalisation of Education by CPI(M))

Education Policy

RSS’s plan for education reform

Addressing to a tow-day meeting of Academic Council of Punrutthan Vidyapeet at Maharshi Vyas Sabhagrih in Nagpur, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said that they have good opportunity to change the Indian education system. He said our mindset has been polluted and influenced by the values of people and forces that attacked India. He stressed on two things to do in future, one, to change mindset of people and the other is to establish education system based on our culture, live values and ethos.

http://epaper.organiser.org/stepaper.aspx?lang=4&spage=Mpage&NB=2014-11-29#Mpage_46

HRD minister Smriti Irani meets Sangh leaders for 'improving' education

Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani met RSS leaders and representatives of six Sangh-affiliated organisations on Thursday (October 30, 2014), amid speculation that the government was being persuaded to pursue a revamp of the education system. The meeting that lasted well over three hours at Madhya Pradesh Sadan is part of the government-organisational interface being institutionalised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-10-31/news/55631250_1_rss-leaders-hrd-ministersmriti-irani-sangh-leaders

Smriti Irani stated that there is a need for state wise and region wise national debate on course correction of the country’s education policy. She has met with RSS about 6 times already with a view to initiate change. Dinanath Batra president of Shiksha sanskriti Utthan Nyas(SSUN)said , “ political change has taken place , now there will be total revamp of education. Education in India is neither Indian nor a real education.. a nationalistic education system has to be developed to address the requirements and through this we have to develop a young generation that is committed to hindutva and nationalist”. (Excerpts from a booklet entitled ‘Stop Communalisation of Education by CPI(M))

Dinanath Batra to guide Haryana on education

BJP government in Haryana has decided to appoint controversial writer Dinanath Batra as an advisor for its education policy. Dinanath Batra is one among various other people in the advisory committee appointed by Education Minister of Haryana. Education minister Ram Bilas Sharma said the committee comprising well-known educationists and experts, including retired teachers and professors from the state education department,

Saffronisation of Education

and Jat and Hindu educational institutions, will advise to the state government on steps to improve the education system.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/rss-ideologue-dinanath-batra-to-guide-haryana-education/article1-1285430.aspx>

Re-interpretation of History

Re-writing History Books

RSS its various outfits working on issues of education and culture are closely working with HRD ministry to not only change education policy but also make significant changes in school curriculum. One of the focuses of the RSS is to replace current history book with a book published by RSS second chief MS Golwalkar in 1939. According to the book Aryan race originated in India and North Pole was originally in India, somewhere around today's Odisha and Bihar, and eventually shifted to its present location. "It was not the Hindus who migrated to that land but the arctic which emigrated and left the Hindus and Hindustan."

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/is-the-rss-trying-to-rewrite-india-s-history/article1-1294056.aspx>

An Attempt to disprove the fact that Aryans were foreigner

Sanskrit Department of Delhi University has a project to prove that Aryan were not aliens but indigenous people. On 24th November 2014 the department had organized a seminar where the founder of the American Institute of Vedic Studies Dr. David Frawley repeated the controversial lines of RSS and the Department. Frawley has rejected the 'Aryan Invasion Theory'.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2844804/Hindu-scholar-lecture-DelhiUniversity.html>

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/7959-55-52/news/56529237_5_ramayana-history-indiancouncil

DU's Sanskrit Department Kick starts Project to Prove Aryans were not Foreigners

A project that could possibly rewrite history to fit the Sangh Parivar's view of India's past, was announced by Delhi University's Sanskrit department in the presence of OP Kohli -- a BJP leader recently appointed Gujarat governor -- and vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh at an event marking 60 years of Sanskrit research. Hindu nationalists claim that the Aryans were an indigenous group people — not migrants.

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-09-30/news/54475201_1_sanskrit-department-delhi-university-scientificevidence

Elevation of Right Wing Icons

.. the destruction of old icons demands the elevation of new ones. This government's first Budget had social schemes named after right wing stalwarts such as Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Deendayal Upadhyaya and Madan Mohan Malaviya. All three are relatively unknown in the popular discourse but hold special significance to the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Hindutva movement.

<http://scroll.in/article/683966/Meet-the-icons-of-India's-refurbished-history:-Mukherjee,-Upadhyaya,-Malaviya>

Saffronisation of Education

Imposing Idea Related to Hinduism

VHP forced Catholic Schools to put up Maa Saraswati Picture

In Bastar region of Chhattisgarh VHP has forced various Catholic schools operating there to put picture of Hindu goddess Ma Saraswati in their campus. They also asked them to avoid using term 'father' for Christian priest in their schools.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/no-father-bastar-catholic-schools-willhave-maa-saraswati/>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/hindi/india/2014/11/141124_bastar_christian_missionary_du

In MP, the BJP has issued a circular for teaching Bhagwad Gita in schools and madrassas by making it part of Urdu text books. Surya Namaskars were also made compulsory in schools. (Excerpts from a booklet entitled 'Stop Communalisation of Education by CPI(M))