

STUDENTS MANIFESTO

[PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2019]

sio



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(Parliamentary Election 2019)

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INTRODUCTION

India is a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic guaranteeing every citizen: social, political and economic justice; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and expression; equality of status and opportunity; fraternity and assurance of dignity of the individual¹. These values, as enshrined in the Constitution of India, are the cornerstone of our national identity. With a population of over 132 crore², India has a tremendous human resource. India also boasts of tremendous diversity, be it cultural, linguistic, ethnic, or religious.

With such a huge and diverse human resource, come huge challenges as well. To uphold unity in face of such diversity is no easy task. It requires conscious efforts to be inclusive and promote pluralism, ensuring that the fruits of growth and development are enjoyed by everyone. Only inclusivity and unity would ensure a healthy and dynamic civil society resulting in a peaceful, harmonious and happy India.

India is the largest democracy in the world. Democracy provides the opportunity for people to resolve their issues and challenges through their elected representatives. This is what sets democracy apart from other systems of governance. Elections provide the opportunity for people to elect candidates who would represent their demands in the legislative body and build consensus. Election manifesto is a means to communicate people's hopes and aspirations to potential representatives.

On behalf of students and youth of India, the Students Islamic Organisation of India (SIO) takes this opportunity to present a

¹ Preamble, Constitution of India.

² World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision. Population Division, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

“Students’ Manifesto” before all the political parties for consideration and inclusion in their respective manifesto and agenda.

This manifesto is a result of extensive studies around pertinent issues and consultations with students and youth across the nation. It discusses the major issues related to students, education and youth in India and includes a number of demands and recommendations.

PRESENT SCENARIO

1. Education

Education is one of the key tools for human and societal development. A well educated population equipped with knowledge, understanding and skills is essential for social and economic progress of the nation. Higher the proportion of the educated citizens in the total population, higher is the probability of brighter future for the nation. Considering the importance of education in a society, we have focused on issues related to education and students in this manifesto.

Evaluating the issues relating to education, for better comprehension, we have broadly classified them into three areas: accessibility, quality and regulation. First, issues are briefly discussed before recommendations are enumerated.

a. Accessibility:

Reservation, as envisioned by the constituent assembly, was to rectify the social parity and misbalance that had crept in the larger Indian society due to socio-historical hierarchal stratification. It was not a poverty alleviation programme. In this regard, the reservation policy must be continued till the marginalised sections are integrated with the

mainstream. This extends to educational as well as employment opportunities.

Spending on education is a vital indicator of not only the state of education in a country but also of the importance given to education by society and government. According to the Economic Survey 2017-18, the proportion of GDP spending on education is just 2.7 %. This down from 3.1% in 2012-13 period³. This data is collaborated by Bloomberg data as well. This figure is lowest among the BRICS average of 4.6⁴. India needs to increase the expenditure on education to 6-7% of GDP to train its vast human resource to be competitive with rest of the developing world.

With respect to Gross Enrolment Rate (GER), at primary level the situation has improved to 98.4%, at secondary level it drops to 86.9%. The GER for higher education in India is 25.8%⁵.

In terms of gender parity in education, at primary level it female enrolment is at 98.1%, it drops to 86.6% at secondary level. In higher education the gender parity ratio is 47.6%⁶.

In terms of different communities, GER in higher education for SCs is 21.8%, STs is 15.9%, OBC is 22.1%. In terms of community-wise break up in higher education, SCs are 14.4%, STs are 5.2%, OBCs are 35.0%,

³ Need Faster Growth? Spend More on Educating India's Children. Bloomberg Report, accessible at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-02/need-faster-growth-spend-more-on-educating-india-s-children>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ All India Survey on Higher Education 2017-18. Dept of Higher Education, MHRD.

⁶ Ibid

Muslim minority are 5.0% and the other minorities are 2.2%. The rest are general category students⁷.

One of the facilitators of accessibility of education is transportation. Another is healthcare, since without physical well-being education is not possible. In this regard the government can introduce various schemes to facilitate transportation and access to healthcare so as to make education more accessible.

Another hurdle in the accessibility of higher education is the distribution of institutions, nationally and within state as well. Premier institutions like IITs, IIMs, central and state universities are not available everywhere. Some states lack central universities whereas some others have regional disparity in the distribution of institutions of higher learning.

In the absence of regular household surveys by the concerned local authorities, there has been failure in maintaining records of children up to the age of 14 years, who are eligible for free and compulsory education under the RTE Act, as required by Section 9(d) of the RTE Act⁸.

The infrastructure of the educational institutions across the nation is far from satisfactory⁹. Due to poor facilities, huge vacancies in teaching positions and absence of a well-defined roadmap for holistic implementation of the RTE Act, the enrolment in government schools has sharply declined resulting in school closure/merger. On the other hand, privatisation and commercialisation of education is on increase, pushing poor parents to send their children to these schools in the

⁷ All India Survey on Higher Education 2017-18. Dept of Higher Education, MHRD.

⁸ 4.5 Years of Modi Sarkar: Review on Education. Centre for Educational and Research Training (CERT) Publication.

⁹ Section 25 of the RTE Act (2009) deals with the infrastructure of schools

absence of well-equipped public schools in the neighbourhood as mandated by RTE Act¹⁰.

Section 3 of the RTE Act specifies neighbourhood school system based on common school system. The Central and State governments as well as local authorities have failed to implement this citing lack of funds to provide the infrastructure as specified under the norms and standards¹¹ of RTE Act. Similarly, School Management Committees (SMCs) have not been constituted as required under Section 21 of the RTE Act¹².

Another key issue is that of lack of availability of textbooks. Students are entitled to free textbooks under the RTE Act. In the absence of provision by the government, students are forced to buy textbooks from private publishers who charge exorbitant amounts for it¹³.

Infrastructure for Children With Special Needs (CWSN) is another area of concern. There is inadequate provision to accommodate CWSN at schools. This includes lack of Braille printers in government schools although funds are allocated in the budget free Braille and large print books to the visually challenged children enrolled in primary and upper primary schools¹⁴.

With respect to scholarships, in view of the increasing inflation and rising living costs, the current funds allotted in the budget for scholarship is proving inadequate. Additionally, awareness about various scholarships is low, the process for applying and securing scholarships is

¹⁰ 4.5 Years of Modi Sarkar: Review on Education. Centre for Educational and Research Training (CERT) Publication.

¹¹ This includes requirements and specification for potable water, restrooms, etc.

¹² 4.5 Years of Modi Sarkar: Review on Education. Centre for Educational and Research Training (CERT) Publication.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

cumbersome and long. Educational loans are hard to secure and even harder to repay, resulting in long-term deep negative impact on the lives of fresh graduates.

One critical issue is that of recognition of Madrasa education. In a survey of 500 Madrasas across India, found many Madrasas in relatively good status maintaining quality, diversity and creativity in education with holistic approaches. However the qualification of the graduates of these institutions is not recognized widely, preventing their accessibility in institutions of higher education¹⁵.

b. Quality

There are a number of different syllabi in force across the nation like, CBSE, various state boards, National Institute of Open Schooling and Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE). This affects the quality of education, especially the noticeable disparity in math and science syllabi. Currently there is no proposal to introduce common courses to be offered by different syllabi so as to equalize them in terms of quality¹⁶.

Another issue of import is that of education in mother tongue. As countless studies have established beyond doubt, education in mother tongue is the best for a child's cognitive development. In spite of policy of education in regional languages, there are a number of issues proving to be hurdle in its implementation. Various, there is a lack of availability of syllabus in some languages or a lack of availability of textbooks or a lack of teachers.

¹⁵ Shiksha Samvad: Madrasa Education – Issues and Challenges. A Survey by SIO, accessible at <https://sio-india.org/siksha-samvad-on-madrasa-education-issues-challenges/>

¹⁶ 4.5 Years of Modi Sarkar: Review on Education. Centre for Educational and Research Training (CERT) Publication.

Similarly, importance should be given to languages of religious or cultural significance. In this regard the National Commission for Minority Education Institutions (NCMEI), a statutory body under the act of Parliament must be strengthened and its affiliations must be recognised accordingly and enforced equally across the nation¹⁷.

One of key aspects of education system is teachers and their qualification is critical in ensuring quality of education. There has been a failure in fulfilling core provisions of the RTE Act (2009) in the form of lack of trained teachers, huge number of teacher vacancies, appointment of unqualified contract teachers and utilization of teachers for duties and work beyond specifications of the Act. Section 24 RTE Act (2009) prohibits deployment of teachers for non-educational purposes, other than decennial population census, disaster relief duties or duties relating to elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament¹⁸.

There is a serious shortfall in the number of trained teachers available to fill existing vacancies. The total number of teachers is 12,84,755, out of which about 58.0% are male teachers and 42.0% are female teachers. At national level there are merely 72 female teachers per 100 male teachers¹⁹.

According to data provided by in the Lok Sabha by Minister of State for HRD, Upendra Kushwaha, as of 30 July, 2018, there are 9,00,316 vacancies in elementary schools. In secondary schools, there are 1,07,689 vacant posts. This break down vacancy to 17.51% of posts at elementary

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ All India Survey on Higher Education 2017-18. Dept of Higher Education, MHRD.

level for government teachers and for secondary level at 14.78% of posts²⁰.

Apart from these, other crises affecting quality of education in India include, absenteeism, estimated to be over 25% every day, lack of training for teachers, widespread corruption in the appointment of teachers, lack of motivation or capacity in teachers resulting in affected learning outcome of students or even dropouts²¹.

The Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR), given below, is much higher than other educationally well-performing countries like China (17) or USA (14)²².

Year	Primary School	Upper Primary School	Secondary School	Senior Secondary School	Higher Education
2015-16	23	17	27	37	24

Source: National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration

A recurring pattern observed is that of hate and prejudicial content being introduced in the syllabi. This is an alarming threat that has to be promptly and decisively dealt with. Such frequent changes and conflicting accounts in history have very adverse and enduring impact on students and threaten the harmony and social cohesion of India. Similarly, there is a systematic effort to negate the opportunity for the marginalized students in the field of education. New educational policies as well as the systematized invisible violence are extensively contributing

²⁰ Teacher's Crisis In India: Country Falls Short Of 1 Million School Teachers. NDTV Report, accessible at <https://www.ndtv.com/education/indias-teachers-crisis-country-falls-short-of-1-million-school-teachers-1778220>

²¹ Rot in education: Students suffer as corruption, politics plague the system. Hindustan Times report, accessible at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/rot-in-education-students-suffer-as-corruption-politics-plague-the-system/story-cNnB8ZoPgXpbVnrZjy0nIM.html>

²² World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise.

to this marginalisation. This is actually similar to old fashioned casteist, colonialist monopoly of education and knowledge is coming back to the practice. Instances such as, institutional murder of Rohit Vemula in HCU and forced disappearance of Najeeb Ahmed in JNU, is symptomatic of this marginalization and violence.

Since the rising environmental crisis is fast assuming a critical proportion, it is of utmost importance to pay it attention and undertake action in this regard. Environmental education is one of such admirable steps taken previously by various union and state governments. However by and itself this is insufficient. A further step would be to make all governmental and private educational campuses environmental-friendly.

An increasingly alarming trend that is emerging is that of fake educational institutions and boards. A large number of students are falling prey to such boards which are operating with impunity and tacit complicity of officials. The list of such boards currently stands at 24, as notified by UGC²³.

There is lack of systematic periodic inspection which has in turn affected Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation as stipulated under Section 29(2)(h) of the Act. Therefore, it is important that centre, state and local authority should prepare a joint road map in accordance with the roles and responsibilities assigned to them under sections 7, 8 and 9 of the RTE Act to achieve the best results²⁴.

²³ University Grants Commission, as notified on its official website, <https://www.ugc.ac.in/page/Fake-Universities.aspx>

²⁴ 4.5 Years of Modi Sarkar: Review on Education. Centre for Educational and Research Training (CERT) Publication.

c. Regularization:

The large scale corruption, exploitation and inefficiency in the administration of educational institutions remain a major cause for concern. Quality education is only available at a high cost, and there is an undeniable mountain of anecdotal evidence regarding the profiteering carried out by private schools and colleges.

In government schools and colleges, ad-hoc appointments are rampant and recruitment processes are riddled with corruption and irregularities. The lack of quality in government institutions has meant that parents are willing to pay a premium price for access to a good education for their children, and there have been almost no serious or successful attempts to cap fees or control hidden costs of a private education.

Apart from the profiteering carried out by such schools and colleges, there has also been a steady proliferation of fake or bogus institutions. Similarly, the outsourcing of publishing textbooks and other educational material to private contractors has driven up costs for students and introduced new avenue of corruption.

One institutional hurdle is the lack of any specialised mechanisms or tribunals to specifically deal with education and educational institution related issues. Further, the lack of a transparent and public system of supervision – particularly of the RTE Act – has only compounded the problem.

Conclusion

Overall, the appropriate governments and the local authorities have failed to discharge their constitutional and statutory obligations and consequently to implement the spirit of Article 21-A and the RTE Act. All these issues would have been discussed and debated on the floor of

the Parliament to ensure effective implementation. However, the preceding sections reveal that the discussions in the Parliament did not help much to fulfill the obligation of realising the fundamental right to education.

Youth Issues

India has a burgeoning youth population and every year millions of new people enter the job market. The last two decades of relatively high economic growth have not resulted in a proportionate rise in jobs or a commensurate rise in wages.²⁵ In fact, a leaked draft of the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO) periodic labour force survey (PLFS) found unemployment levels to be at a 45 year high of 6.1% overall.²⁶ Other studies have shown that unemployment among educated youth is as high as 16%.²⁷

The current government's inability to provide new jobs and opportunities has been worsened by its disastrous policies like demonetization and poor implementation of GST.²⁸ As jobless growth becomes a constant feature of the Indian economy, India's youth have increasingly pinned their hopes on government jobs. Here too, while on the one hand the number of vacancies itself is shrinking drastically,

²⁵ "State of Work in India 2018", Centre for Sustainable Employment, Azim Premji University .

²⁶ https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/unemployment-rate-at-five-decade-high-of-6-1-in-2017-18-nssso-survey-119013100053_1.html

²⁷ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/need-for-an-employment-policy-to-solve-jobless-growth/article25041745.ece>

²⁸ https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/demonetisation-gst-effects-gdp-growth-to-fall-to-6-5-for-fy18-118010501096_1.html

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/demonetisation-gst-impact-on-jobs-more-than-nssso-s-headline-numbers-119013101575_1.html

<https://scroll.in/latest/911614/unemployment-after-demonetisation-and-gst-even-worse-than-headline-numbers-suggest-says-report>

corruption and inefficiency prevalent in almost all exams and selection procedures has ensured that youth are once again faced with frustration and disappointment.²⁹

Instead of an upsurge in jobs and opportunity, the last few years have seen a general rise in lawlessness as well as increasing incidents of targeted attacks against minorities and marginalized groups.³⁰ There has also been a troubling and noticeable rise in the number of vigilante groups that have taken up the time and energy of a significant segment of the youth population.³¹ These groups frequently attack the disadvantaged through direct acts of violence as well as by spreading an agenda of hate and division, particularly among students and youth.³² Amidst all this, the role of the state has been found to be negligent at best, if not outright complicit. This has contributed to an atmosphere of insecurity among minorities and marginalized groups in the country.³³

The rise of violence against minorities and marginalized groups is only one part of a larger series of threats to freedom and security faced by the youth of India. In last two decades, a large number of students and youth have been arrested and imprisoned under false charges of involvement in

²⁹<https://www.change.org/p/government-of-india-yuvahallabol-demands-job-opportunities-for-youth-fair-selection-in-recruitment-exams?signed=true>

³⁰<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/india#> See section on “Dalits, Tribal Groups, and Religious Minorities”

³¹<https://www.thequint.com/videos/documentaries/mob-lynching-cow-vigilantism-india-gau-raksha>

³²According to www.dotodatabase.com since January 2014 there have been 691 reported incidents and 5151 victims of religious identity based violence in India.

³³“Lynching Without End” available at <http://www.misaal.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FINAL-report-Lynching-without-End.pdf>

terrorism and subsequently released by the courts after spending long years in prison for no fault of their own.³⁴

The right to privacy – recognized as a Fundamental Right by the Supreme Court³⁵ – faces numerous threats from both private and government institutions. The recent government notification enhancing the powers of surveillance of various investigating agencies is simply one example among many.³⁶

Similar challenges to freedom and security abound and exist as a serious hindrance to our enjoyment and exercise of meaningful citizenship.

³⁴ Jury Report of Peoples' Tribunal on Innocent Acquitted". See also <https://scroll.in/article/895007/india-could-soon-have-a-law-to-compensate-those-who-have-been-wrongfully-prosecuted>

³⁵ Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd) vs Union of India

³⁶ <https://www.indiatoday.in/technology/talking-points/story/10-govt-bodies-can-now-monitor-and-seize-any-computer-but-calm-down-india-is-not-a-surveillance-state-yet-1414420-2018-12-21>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the present status and relevance to the context, SIO places the following recommendations and demands for the consideration of the political parties, to be included in their respective manifestos, as well as to the future union and state governments to be included in their agenda.

Education

a. Accessibility:

- Reservation must be given in the educational institutions – including 10% for Muslims and 5% for other minorities – for students as well as teachers, as per the Justice Ranganath Misra Commission. Reservation should also be extended to premier educational institutions such as IITs, IIMs, central universities, etc.
- To address accessibility parity between different regions of the nation, SIO demands that educational institutions of significance such as central universities/IITs/IIMs, etc., be equally distributed geographically such that every region of the nation has equal access. In this regard, new central universities can be established or high performing existing state universities can be converted to central university or centres of existing central universities can be established with the view of converting them to central university at a later date.
- Special attention is to be given to minority concentrated districts (MCDs) which are educationally backward. Off-campus centers of minority universities, such as Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), should be established in such MCDs to give accessibility for higher education.

- Neighbourhood schools system based on common school system as specified under Section 3 of the RTE Act (2009) must be implemented.
- To improve the enrolment rate as well as prevent dropout of students, it is necessary to involve parents in the education process. In this regard there is a specific provision for School Management Committees (SMCs) under Section 21 of the RTE Act (2009). Involvement of parents can in form of inclusion in SMCs or establishment of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). Awareness drives designed to reach out to parents should be organised by the relevant local authorities to ensure parents are sensitised about the importance of education for their wards.
- To facilitate access to educational institutions, free transportation facility should be provided to students of all levels in the form of free train/bus passes.
- Free or government subsidized medical insurance should be made compulsorily available for all students irrespective of level of their study with provisions to convert the student insurance to general insurance post-student hood.
- Education is one of the basic and essential human needs. As a welfare state, the Indian government is bound by the constitution of India to facilitate this basic need. Where the government facilitates education by providing the requisite services, it is also necessary that it provide financial assistance to facilitate securing education, especially higher education. In this regard the financial assistance should not become a burden on the new and aspiring graduates, hindering progress of their careers and life by imposing a heavy premium on it. Hence the government should waive all outstanding education loans as well as

convert all educational loans to educational grants or scholarships in future.

- The government should pay extra attention to Children With Special Needs (CWSN). In this regard, special and prompt attention should be made to ensure they get the requisite physical infrastructure, syllabus materials like books, trained teaching and assisting staff.
- The scholarships offered by under various schemes by the union and state governments are encumbered by a number of issues such as inadequate amount, criteria to be met, documents to be furnished and a general lack of awareness among students about the scholarships they might be eligible for. All these issues have to be addressed. In this era of rocketing inflation, the government should at the very least double the current amount given under various scholarships/fellowships/grants/schemes. Similarly, ease of access must be ensured by reducing the number of documents required and it should be made easier and free of cost to furnish them.
- New regulations of CBSE-UGC NET requirement for the Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) for minorities and the Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) for SCs and STs, is reducing the accessibility of the intended beneficiaries to higher education. These regulations must be scrapped with immediate effect and the number of fellowships offered under them should be increased.
- Strengthening National-Commission for Minority Education Institutions, both in terms of jurisdiction and enforceability and increasing its funding.
- Arabic and Islamic studies chair has to be opened in all the Universities. All the Universities should commence BA in Arabic & Islamic Studies courses. Qualification certificates from Madrasas must be recognized as

valid for eligibility of students to join these courses. MA courses must be commenced as a follow up for these courses.

- The government must enact regulation to increase representation of SCs, STs and minorities in higher education.
- UGC must revise and increase the number of seats offered for PhD and MPhil degrees in all universities.
- Equal Opportunity Cells (EOC) must be made compulsory in all educational institutions. Jurisdiction of EOCs must be extended to include religious minorities.

b. Quality:

- Math and science syllabi across the different central and state boards should be equalised to ensure quality of all students across India.
- The respective governments should ensure that syllabus are prepared and made available in the regional languages so that education of students is ensured in their respective mother tongues.
- Special status, and requisite provisions, should be made for languages of religious and cultural significance.
- National Commission for Minority Education Institutions (NCMEI) must be granted enforceable jurisdiction and recognised accordingly across the nation.
- A relevant statutory authority should be constituted to constantly monitor different new tools and methods of education and teaching. This body should also be tasked with periodic revision, implementation and training of teachers.

- Steps should be taken to ensure that teachers are not utilised beyond the duties as specified in Section 24 of the RTE Act (2009).
- The respective governments should ensure pupil-teacher ratio (PT ratio) is maintained as per Section 25 of the RTE Act (2009).
- Different syllabi across different boards should include value-based education and it should be made compulsory. The value-based education can be based on respective religions of the students.
- Steps should be taken by the parliament to ensure that syllabi are free from hate and prejudicial content. Appropriate rules should be framed and enforced so that syllabi are not easily tampered with.
- Different syllabi across different boards should include environmental education and it should be made compulsory.
- Relevant amendment should be made in the RTE Act (2009) to make all public and private educational campuses eco-friendly in all aspects and the respective governments should take appropriate steps ensure its strict implementation.
- Strict implementations of anti-tobacco and drug abuse laws. Stringent action must be taken against those guilty of contravening the law.

c. Regularization:

- Regularisation of educational institutions in terms of licensing and fee-capping against exorbitant fees/donations must be ensured so that exploitation of students is prevented. Vigilant monitoring and stringent action against bogus and exploitative institutions must be ensured.
- Ad-hoc appointments must be curtailed so that permanent appointments to relevant vacancies must be promptly ensured such that, no position of

permanent appointment is vacant for more than a period of one academic year.

- Special tribunals for education-related disputes must be constituted regionally to ensure prompt and swift disposal of disputes and cases.
- Status of the University Grants Commission (UGC) as the statutory regulatory body for higher education in India must be continued. Towards this, it must be empowered and its jurisdiction made enforceable.
- Government should ensure that the minority status of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) is not interfered with.
- Private contracts for syllabus textbooks must be abolished to prevent expensive retailing by private publishers.
- Instances of corruptions and exploitations in education field are on the rise. From bogus institutions to exorbitant fees/donations to expensive textbooks by private publishers and distributors to scams of various kinds in admissions, appointments, examination, results, contracts, fund utilisation, etc., are becoming a norm. There is an urgent need to address the issue of corruption and nip it in the bud. A dedicated vigilance bureau should be set-up to deal with corruption and irregularities in the educational field and ensure public accountability and transparency.
- Rohit Act must be enacted by the parliament to prevent systematic and institutional discrimination and atrocities against students of minority and marginalized sections in the educational institutions. Violence against minorities and SC/STs must be criminalised.

- Regularisation of sessions, examinations and result declaration is of utmost urgency. Government should take immediate steps to ensure regularisation.
- To address various issues, a standing joint-party committee (JPC) must be constituted in the parliament to oversee and monitor implementation of RTE Act (2009), including accountability of its funds and finances.

Youth (Employment and Opportunity)

- All vacancies in government and public sector jobs should be filled immediately.
- Reservation in public services must be given as per Ranganath Misra Commission.
- Government should create more jobs in sectors that are currently facing a shortfall, for instance teaching, police and security agencies, armed forces, lower judiciary, healthcare services, Anganwadi workers etc.
- The selection process for government and public sector jobs should be made transparent, fair and efficient. The process of recruitment, from notification of post to the actual appointment and joining of the selected candidate, must be completed in a time bound manner.
- Skill development and vocational training centers should be set up on a mass scale in an effective, transparent and accessible manner so that their benefits can be availed by those most in need of them.
- Entrepreneurship and the setting up of SMEs should be encouraged by making the necessary financing and infrastructure easily accessible. Special care must be taken to ensure that the benefits of schemes and

policies to encourage entrepreneurship are not limited to only a particular class of people.

Human Rights

- Institutions made for the protection of human rights (NHRC, SC/ST Commission, NCW, NCM etc) should be strengthened by appointing credible people to their posts and providing them the necessary funds and infrastructure. The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 should be amended to make the orders of NHRC enforceable.
- A comprehensive law should be enacted for the prevention of discrimination against religious minorities in employment, education, housing and other public utilities, and for the prevention and punishment of all kinds of harassment and violence on the basis of religious identity.
- A comprehensive scheme must be developed for the rehabilitation of those innocent citizens who were falsely accused in terrorism cases and subsequently acquitted. Further, the innocent people must be adequately compensated for the duration of their incarceration.
- Section 197 of the CrPC must be scrapped to allow for the filing of cases against police officers who commit torture, concoct false cases against innocents and carry out other excesses in abuse of the law.
- The process of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam must be carried out in a fair and transparent manner. Every person must be given adequate opportunities to prove their citizenship, and no citizen should be left out merely because of a procedural lapse or bureaucratic oversight. The government must also lay down a clear plan for those who are eventually left out of the NRC, ensuring that no

person is left stateless and without rights which are ensured under the constitution and the mandate of international law.

- Privacy of individuals, whether digital or otherwise, must be protected. No state authority must be given jurisdiction to monitor, collect or share information relating to private citizens without legally valid cause and due process of the law.



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