

CBSE syllabus reduction is 'just rationalisation' on advice of experts: HRD minister

The discussion should be on the development and empowerment of students rather than using them as power-play and creating a mockery of the system that empowers young lives, writes HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank

Last Updated: Jul 11, 2020, 12:36 PM IST

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By Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank

"The point of modern propaganda isn't only to misinform or push an agenda. It is to exhaust your critical thinking, to annihilate truth." The quote by Garry Kasparov has impounded my thoughts lately, and particularly so when I never expected that a goodwill action taken by the government towards its CBSE students will become the recipe for malicious propaganda. Given that every time we make efforts to keep

education out of [politics](#), but sadly each time education has fallen prey to frivolous power play where a certain section of people, better categorised as relentless publicity-seekers, seek to deplore and treat the vision and actions of the Government, to the utter horror, confusion and pain of our young learners. At present, this section of people is looking at education as a tool to arrive at the elusive (for them) position of dominance and power rather than to empower students with critical thinking, scientific temper, analytical power and creativity that can empower them to blossom to their full potential, abundantly equipped with all the 21st-century skills, and with ethics and integrity.

The unprecedented pandemic has thrown a challenge to the Ministry to not only provide quality education to our students while keeping our focus on learning outcomes intact but also to make a stress-free environment for the students. To do so, the Ministry has been working hard to keep abreast of all the issues related to our student community. I take pride in the team at HRD for taking up and supporting exemplary decisions, such as the provision of mid-day meal to the children even during the vacation period, promoting students based on internal assessment, giving 'Power of Choice' to class 12 students and boosting the [e-learning](#) in India.

However, lately, a web of accusations is being created, regarding revision of syllabus of CBSE board influenced by socio-political needs and aspirations. Despite all the false examination, however, C.B.S.E. has also directed the schools to follow the NCERT Alternate Academic Calendar. This calendar is available in the public domain, and all topics that are being "sensationalized" to catch attention and traction, are covered in this calendar. This calendar has specific learning plans for each topic based on experiential or activity-based learning, with the help of commonly available resources at homes. As I say, 'Shiksha see phele Surakhsa', therefore, in fact, these measures will help in reducing the hassles and stress faced by the students and is a one-time measure for exams, due to the COVID19 pandemic.

How it was done: The process for rationalization is not straight-jacketed as assumed by my colleagues in the opposition. A strenuous exercise was carried out following the advice and recommendations of various experts and considering the suggestions received from educationists through our #SyllabusForStudents2020 campaign; more than 1500 expert suggestions were received. The suggestions and expertise of esteemed educationists have helped us do "just rationalization" while keeping the learning outcomes intact. The rationalization has happened across the subjects as opposed to the misconstrued testimonials of the opposition of exclusion of 3-4 topics like nationalism, local government, federalism, etc. To give a few examples, the topics expected in economics are Measures of Dispersion, Balance of Payments Deficit, etc, while in Physics are Heat Engine & Refrigerator, Heat Transfer, Convection & Radiation among others. Similarly, in Maths, Properties of Determinants, Consistency, Inconsistency, and Number of Solutions of System of Linear Equations by Examples and Binomial Probability Distribution. In Biology, portions of Mineral Nutrition, Digestion & Absorption have been exempted for evaluation.