

## **All-India Forum for Right to Education (AIFRTE)**

### **National Assembly on Common School System and the Judgment of Allahabad High Court**

**Allahabad: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

#### **Call for Participation**

In August 2015, single bench of Justice Sudhir Agarwal of Allahabad High Court pronounced a judgment on Elementary Education, which is a historical landmark in judicial intervention to promote equitable quality education under direct state auspices. It represents a unique assertion of the faith in public education system in an era of Neoliberal Capitalism, which has precipitated rampant privatization of education, excessive fee-hike, siphoning of public funds to corporates through 'public private partnership' (PPP) schemes, merger and closure of Government schools, and contractualization of teaching and non-teaching cadres. Diverging sharply away from these trends of Neoliberal political economy, Justice Agarwal directed the Government of the State of Uttar Pradesh to ensure within six months that all Government servants, public representatives and all those who derive any benefit or perquisites from state exchequer mandatorily send their children in the age group of receiving Primary Education (meaning Elementary Education here) only to the schools established and maintained by the UP Board of Basic Education. The court also directed the Government to take punitive action against those who do not comply with this order. The court hoped that when children of power-holders will be sent to study within 'Common Man's Schools', the decision makers will be compelled to take the interests of students of these institutions seriously. Moreover, once the standards of these schools are improved, other parents will also prefer to send their children to study there, instead of in other elite and semi-elite private schools. It will also create a social revolution when children of various backgrounds will be made to study together. The court demonstrated a genuine but increasingly rare concern for the recruitment of quality teachers in 'Common Man's Schools' in a period when the Governments have been recruiting untrained or insufficiently trained para teachers for the education of the children of masses.

The AIFRTE believes that a political campaign should be urgently mounted in favor of these directives of the court. In light of this judgment, the demand for 'Common School System' should be taken up during the next elections in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The process should begin from the National Assembly to be held in Allahabad. The AIFRTE invites activists from each district of Uttar Pradesh who on their return would constitute District Committees to carry forward the campaign. Besides this, participants from other states are invited to provide the campaign an all-India character. We would also identify like-minded persons of good repute from different spheres of social life, such as intellectuals, artists, social workers, literary personalities, trade union leaders, lawyers and judges to champion this cause across the country. Through these and other measures, we would like to build a nation-wide campaign that exposes the Neoliberal agenda of the new National Education Policy being formulated by the Central Government led by the NDA turning over the socially equalitarian principle of 'Common School System' recommended by Kothari Commission in 1966 and accepted by the Government of India in 1968. The National Assembly would be a learning experience for all those who are concerned about public system of education, as many experts of the field and renowned speakers would address the gathering. Justice A.P. Shah, (former Chief Justice, Delhi High Court) and Shri Ashok Vajpeyi, (reputed Hindi poet, creator of Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, and promoter of Art, Fine Arts and returnee of Sahitya Academy Award) have agreed to address this National assembly. We invite all those persons and organizations to join this historic assembly to make it a big success who champion constitutional objectives of equality, social justice and secularism against commercialization and communalization of education and all other forms of discrimination based on class, Caste, gender, disability, religion, language, region and religion; who stand for mother-tongue situated within multilingual context as the medium of education; and who support the demand for

directly and fully state funded 'Common School System' based on the concept of neighborhood schools.

Date and Time: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 09:30 A.M.-06:00 P.M. followed by rally and public meeting till 07:30 P.M.

Venue: SADHANA SADAN, 1, Tashkent Road, Allahabad –211 001.

Visit our website for more information: [www.aifрте.in](http://www.aifрте.in)

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