

Submissions from point of view of Minority Community for National Policy on Education

Point 6.5 of National Policy on Education - Education of children belonging to Minority groups & Religious Minorities.

To increase participation in Education of Minorities and specially of Muslim community as there is a gulf between the other minority communities and the Muslims. Further, in point 6.1.2, it's mentioned as a policy matter to take special measures for greater participation of Muslims in education.

On the above , we wish to submit as under

1. Jain community by nature are in Minority with lowest percentage in Country's population since independence but its massive contribution in education has always been significant and thus playing an important role in nation building which is certainly a matter of proud for them. As against the national average of around 20% in attaining the College Education , it is above 50% in case of Jain community. No doubt the Jain community is a smaller one in size, but its members are spread over different parts of the country, maximum number of which are dwelling in rural India. It's an established fact that rural sector is deprived of education facilities and there is a huge gap in quality of education between the two. Bringing Muslims in main stream is a need of the hour. Certainly it is a welcome step. However, other Minority communities who are on par with the minority community under reference need the driving force on the part the government, so that they too can match with the majority communities. We don't mind Muslims being brought into the mainstream through the different efforts made by the Government but at the same time other minorities communities also deserve the Governments focus and attention so that they don't feel left behind and treated step motherly.

As a minority, it's fundamental right of the Jain community to claim special measures from the Government as far as its educational needs are concerned. Considering the above we pray the following for considering in National Policy on Education.

- a) Around 2500 educational institutes are being run in length and breadth of the country by Jain community. These efforts on the part of the Jain community deserve the Nation's attention and appreciation as a whole. In nutshell, it's a community in service through educational activities for the centuries and can play a lead role for the betterment and improvement of education systems and provide quality education. Most of these institutions were established in the pre independence era purely out of gesture of philanthropy. There is a big need for overall infrastructural redevelopment of these institutions. With this, Jain community will enable to lead and contribute in nation's education process in a far better way which is a need of the hour too. Though there are schemes of Ministry of Minority affairs and MHRD etc. for giving grants for the infrastructural development but those do not cover various categories of Educational

Institutes (mostly the schools only) and the criteria of allocating the funds are based on proportionate population of minority communities as per the National Census. Since we are hardly half percent in country's population, our share in terms of financial assistance comes to almost negligible level. We request that these age-old institutions which are in dilapidated condition be taken under special provisions of NPE 2019.

b) Hostels –

As mentioned above, in spite of Jain community being scattered in rural India, its students are shining in different educational fields, scoring remarkable percentage bringing laurels to the society as well as the nation. In this regard it is needless to mention that the students have to face a lot of struggle staying away from homes and residing in single rented rooms or PGs in the cities where they live for their higher education. Though under the Infrastructural Development schemes of Ministry of Minority affairs and MHRD there are provisions to sanction grants for the establishment of the Hostels by the Minority Educational Institutes, they have failed to provide required number of accommodation as per the increasing number of minority students from different rural set up to the cities where they migrate for their higher education

We request for the creation of special fund, minority community wise and specially the Jain community to establish Hostels at Taluka and District places under special provisions of NPE facilitating the students to have quality education at par with urban students.

We also suggest making provisions to establish Hostels under PPP system and necessary land to be provided by the concerned State Government to the Educational Institutes and the NGOs which wish to run the Hostels exclusively for the Minority community's students.

2. Preserving the language, scripts and the culture

a) It is the fundamental right of Minorities as provided in Article 29 of the Constitution of India. Truth and non-violence are one of the basic principles of Jainism for whose protection, the Government should consider establishing Jainology department at least in minimum 2 universities in each state and this must find an important place in National Policy on Education. By establishing Jainology department, it would be possible to impart Jain philosophy which paves the path of peace and non-violence not only to the Indian citizens but to the whole world.

b) It's a fact that a few of universities in the country are running Jainology department but for want of sufficient funds the preservation of the scriptures in age old languages i.e. Prakrut, Pali etc. is not being done in a required manner. We also request for the consideration of allocating sufficient and regular funds as a policy matter.

3. Scholarships

Under 6.5.1 of the Draft National Policy on Education, there is a commitment to provide scholarships to the meritorious students pursuing higher studies based on National Testing Service. Though the basis as mentioned is not very much clear, we appreciate and welcome the step.

Scholarships and Financial assistance is a big need of Jain minority community. It's a well-known fact that Jain community is a major contributor in the economic growth of the Nation, but at the same time bitter truth is that there are many Jain families in the country living in different pockets which are languishing in poverty. From such families large number of students as per our tradition and culture are migrating to cities for attaining higher education but for the scarcity of the funds not all can achieve their goals. As per the policy, every year Jain Minority community is being allotted scholarships under minority scholarship schemes for different levels of education but it is a pittance. Our request is that the Government should consider the community as whole without going by the numbers and allocate the funds for scholarship which can reach to the last unit of the community, so that in the long run they will be able to contribute in form of giving back to the society. For that, considering our percentage in attaining higher education, special formula has to be formulated for the purpose of allocating the scholarships, so that maximum number of students from Jain community can be benefited.

4. Promotion of languages

PRAKRUT the basic language of Jainism is included in point 22.4 of the draft National Policy on Education. It is proposed to strengthen the working of National Institute already working for the promotion of the languages. Since the National Institute is working for many languages like Pharsi, Pali etc. including Prakrut, we request to make clear policy specifically to allot budget for each language separately which is must for Jain community to support and contribute in terms of availing of the rights provided in Article 29 of the Indian Constitution. It is also laid down in point 22.4 that the promotional activities of these languages will be carried out through the Universities. It also supports our request as mentioned in the earlier paras establishing Jainology departments in minimum 2 universities of each state.

5. Schools on JNV pattern

It is proposed to establish at least one residential co education school on JNV pattern in every district fully financed by Government of India exclusively for the students of the Minority community so that the bright students from each community will have better opportunity for their academic and professional upliftment.

Niranjan Juva Jain

National Head – Minority Affairs

Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS)

Ahmedabad