

Unaided schools await their just dues

10 YEARS OF
RTE ACT

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TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3
The Chandigarh Administration, it seems, has flunked in the effective implementation of the Right to Education Act, 2009. In the absence of timely reimbursement of expenses incurred on students from economically weaker section (EWS), the schools have been finding it tough to maintain the high standards of education and have virtually been left fending for themselves on the financial front since 2011-12 — the academic session when the 25 per cent reservation began in the city's unaided schools.

The Independent School Association (ISA) has time and again raised the issue with the UT Administration about the reimbursement of the dues that have been pending for over nine years.

It was only in October last year when the UT Education Department had sanctioned these long-pending dues, amounting to Rs 99 lakh, for the academic years 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18. For the sessions 2018-19 and 2019-2020, the unaided private schools are yet to receive any reimbursement as per child cost for the said academic

As the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, completes its decadal anniversary, the private schools still continue to grapple with the problem of streamlining the 25-per cent reservation system, implementation of the no-detention policy, calculation of per-child cost and reimbursement to unaided schools.



FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY

'SCHOOLS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO IMPART QUALITY EDUCATION'

Independent School Association president HS Mamik highlighted private schools were finding themselves in a spot when it came to providing high-end facilities to students while bearing the financial burden of the studies of EWS students. "The decreased amount of reimbursement has impacted the economics of running a school. If this situation continues, the schools will not be able to admit EWS students after three to four years."

sessions has not been decided by the department.

A letter by the District Education Officer to private schools claimed that the Education Department had cleared all claims of reimbursement with effect from 2010-11 to 2017-18 for admissions to 'entry class' as per the provisions of the RTE Act.

As per the Act, the admissions of EWS students should commence at the entry level. A child admitted at the entry level completes his or her elementary education, i.e. till Class VIII, in a private school free of cost. However, the city's unaided schools contend that the UT Administration was reimbursing them

SCHOOLS MAY GET REIMBURSEMENT TILL CLASS VIII: DSE

Rubinderjit Singh Brar, Director, School Education, said, "Keeping in view the provisions of the RTE Act, the internal departmental committee has already recommended releasing the payment for EWS students studying up to Class VIII. The case is under process with the finance department. As soon as the approval is received from it, the reimbursement process up to Class VIII will start."

only for entry-level classes and not a single penny came for subsequent classes.

REIMBURSEMENT ONLY FOR 10% STUDENTS

Private schools claim that while reimbursement should be for the whole of the 25 per cent quota of EWS students, they only get it for 10 per cent

WHAT THE ACT SAYS

Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act provides for admission of children belonging to economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups to entry class to the extent of at least 25 per cent of the strength of the class. The section further mandates that such schools shall be reimbursed expenditure incurred by them according to per-child cost norms notified by the state/UT government concerned.

students. The Administration holds private schools accountable for reserving 15 per cent EWS seats under the land allotment scheme of the UT.

Strawberry Fields High School, Sector 26, is at present catering to 315 underprivileged students till Class VIII. Its reimbursement dues till the 2018-19 session had

crossed over Rs 90 lakh. However, the amount is only for 10 per cent of the EWS seats. When calculated for 25 per cent seats at all levels, the amount crosses over Rs 3.42 crore. The dues estimated by Bhavan Vidyalaya, Sector 27, for the academic session 2011-12 to 2018-19 are over Rs 69 lakh. This when the expenditure of only '10 students' out of the 25 admitted under the RTE Act has been taken into account.

Out of the 100 entry-level seats, Bhavan reserves 25 seats for EWS students every year but gets reimbursement for only 10 students (10 per cent of 100 seats). The school was reimbursed only Rs 12.6 lakh. ISA president HS Mamik said, "The UT Administration has never been serious about dealing with the issues in a proper manner and always found ways to avoid reimbursement. The dues calculated at 25 per cent for all schools have crossed Rs 20 crore. We have been regularly claiming this amount from the Administration."

WHY SCHOOLS AREN'T REIMBURSED FOR 25% SEATS

As per the provisions of the RTE Act under section 12(2), the schools, which have received any land, building, equipment or other facilities either free of cost or at a subsidised rate, are

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MC finance panel okays 'unrealistic' ₹1,471-cr Budget

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CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3
Even as the Municipal Corporation has been allocated only Rs 425 crore in the Union Budget, its Finance and Contract Committee (F&CC) today approved a Budget estimate of over Rs 1,471 crore for the fiscal 2020-21. The final decision will be taken by the MC House on February 7.

BUDGET DRAFT 2020-21

₹1,471 crore

Capital head: ₹444 cr

Revenue head: ₹1,027 cr

Own revenue: ₹397 cr

Funds granted in Union Budget: ₹425 cr

While Rs 444 crore has been approved under the capital head, the panel approved Rs 1,027 crore under the revenue head. The Budget was earlier proposed to be of about Rs 1,349 crore. However, officials said they expected to earn from its soon-to-be-operational two petrol pumps. They will purchase petrol, diesel and CNG for Rs 90 crore and earn Rs 95 crore from it in 2020-21. While Rs 2 crore will go as salaries, Rs 3 crore will be the annual net profit.

MC Commissioner KK Yadav told Chandigarh Tribune, "We have got the NOC and the possession of the two petrol pumps at Sector 52 and the Industrial

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