



Report

of the

One Man Committee

to avoid violence based on caste and community feelings among college and school students, create harmony and to suggest guidelines

RECOMMENDATIONS

-Justice K Chandru
One Man Committee

Terms of Reference:

1. The Committee to analyse measures that would have to be taken to create an atmosphere free of differences on the basis of caste / creed in Schools and Colleges.
2. The Committee to list out the guidelines, suggestions and motivation required for creating a caste / creed free society as the ultimate goal of harmony in association with teachers, students and parents and submit reports.
3. The Committee to advise the govt. on setting up a Grievance Redressal Mechanism so as to enable the students to ventilate their grievances.
4. The Committee in connection with the issue solicit opinions from educationists, students, social workers, journalists and various other segments and submit their opinions to the government in its Report.
5. In order to have a deep understanding, the Committee must interact with the Police Officers, Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, and Children in Conflict with Law and to suggest clear guidelines and ethical standards to the government.
6. The Committee must investigate such other factors which it may consider necessary or as per the suggestions made by the government.

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15. Recommendations

15 (1) Cannot Wait Anymore

Hindus must consider whether the time has not come for them to recognize that there is nothing fixed, nothing eternal, nothing sanatan; that everything is changing, that change is the law of life for individuals as well as for society. In a changing society, there must be a constant revolution of old values; and the Hindus must realize that if there must be standards to measure the acts of men, there must also be a readiness to revise those standards.

-Dr.B.R.Ambedkar

Ambedkar An Overview (p.404)

1. **Dropping the Caste Appellations:**

- a. The government must issue an administrative order directing the removal of the names "Kallar Reclamation" and "Adi Dravidar Welfare" as prefixes from school names and must refer to them solely as "Government Schools", followed by their place of location.
- b. The government must mandate the removal of any caste prefix or suffix associated with government schools that indicate either the donor or their family.
- c. If any educational agency seeks to establish a new school, the conditions for permission to start a school must include a stipulation that the school's name shall not bear any caste appellation.
- d. In the case of existing private schools that have caste appellations, the department should request these schools to give up. If they fail to comply, appropriate legal steps should be considered, including legislative changes to serve the larger public interest.

2. All Schools Under One Roof

- a. The policy decision made by the government to place all types of schools, including Kallar Reclamation Schools (Most Backward Classes Department), Adi Dravidar Schools (Adi Dravidar Welfare Department), and Tribal Schools (Tribal Welfare Department), under the unified control of the School Education Department should be implemented immediately.
- b. Before bringing schools under the unified control of the School Education Department, the issues concerning the service conditions of teachers in the aforementioned schools, including seniority, promotion, and pay fixation, should be resolved. If necessary, the government should appoint a committee of high-level government officers tasked with completing this within a stipulated timeframe.

3. Teachers and Officers

- a. There must be a periodic transfer of high school and higher secondary school teachers.
- b. Regarding the posting of officers from the cadre of CEOs, DEOs, BEOs, and Headmasters of high schools and higher secondary schools, guidelines must be issued concerning the non-posting of persons belonging to the dominant caste of that area.
- c. Rules relating to Annual Confidential Reports (ACR) must be framed. The ACR for Officers and Headmasters must include a column to record their attitudes towards Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, with appropriate procedures for maintaining these records.
- d. A Code of Conduct for teachers and staff of all types of Schools, Colleges, and Universities run by the State must be prescribed statutorily.

- e. At the time of recruitment of teachers by the Teachers Recruitment Board (TRB), the aptitude of the teachers, as well as their attitude towards social justice issues, must be ascertained and taken into account for recruitment.
- f. Teachers and staff of all schools and colleges must undergo a compulsory orientation programme relating to social issues, caste discrimination, and the different laws pertaining to sexual violence, sexual harassment, drugs, ragging, and offences against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes before the start of every academic year. Also, they must be informed of the consequences of violating those laws.

4. Teacher Training

- a. The syllabus for the B.Ed. degree, conceived by the Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University (TNTEU), as well as the syllabus for the Diploma in Elementary Education, evolved by the Tamil Nadu Board of State Council of Educational Research and Training (TNSCERT), must undergo a thorough revision to ensure orientation towards inclusivity.
- b. An expert committee of educators, along with a person who specializes in child pedagogy, must be constituted to review the syllabus prescribed for school students. The committee must provide suggestions for eliminating incorrect views and include content that will enhance social justice values, non-discriminatory attitudes, and concepts of equality.

5. Curriculum Change

- a. The government must appoint a Social Justice Monitoring Committee comprising academicians and social activists to monitor the school students' curriculum relating to social issues and suggest appropriate modifications, including the inclusion of topics based on social justice, equality, and non-discrimination based on caste, in a time-bound manner.

- b. The government must accept the Social Justice Monitoring Committee report and provide appropriate directions to alter, modify, and include lessons that enhance and enlighten school students on these issues.

6. Seating arrangements in Classrooms

Seating arrangements of students in every classroom in all schools and colleges should be strictly based on alphabetical order. This is with the exception that if any physically challenged student is present, they may be accommodated in the front row irrespective of where their name falls in the alphabetical order.

7. Caste Names to be Kept Confidential

- a. The students' attendance register should not contain any column or details relating to their caste.
- b. At no point can the class teacher call out students by either directly or indirectly referring to their caste, nor make any derogatory remarks about the student's caste or the so-called character attributed to the caste.
- c. Classrooms are not the forum for announcing details of communications received regarding the scholarships of any student. If such communications are received, the headmaster shall call the student to his room and privately furnish such information.
- d. Violating any of the above directives by the teachers should result in strict disciplinary action against them.
- e. The Committee recommends that while maintaining the caste status of a student as a record file in the school, access to such a record should be confined only to the Headmaster and other inspecting authorities visiting the school, ensuring that confidentiality is always maintained.

8. Students

- a. A Code of Discipline for all students must be evolved by the government and strictly enforced within legal bounds.
- b. Students should be prohibited from wearing any coloured wristbands, rings, or forehead marks (Tilaka). They must also refrain from coming to school on bicycles painted with reference to their caste or exhibiting any caste-related sentiments. Failure to comply with these rules must result in appropriate action being taken, in addition to advising their parents or guardians.
- c. An orientation programme should be compulsorily given at the beginning of every academic year for all 6th to 12th standard students, facilitated by trained professionals and student educators.
- d. The State government and School Education Department should permit all schools and colleges in Tamil Nadu to have student associations in every institution, with leadership elected annually by allowing all students to vote in those elections.

9. Mobile Phone Restriction

The State government and the School Education Department are justified in prohibiting the use of mobile phones by school students. It is crucial to strictly enforce banning the use of mobile phones by students on school campuses. This order should be applied not only to students of schools under the State Board but also to those in schools affiliated with the CBSE and other boards, such as ICSE, ensuring a consistent approach across all educational institutions.

10. Conducting Ara Neri Classes (அறநெறி வகுப்புகள்)

- a. Imparting Ara Neri (அறநெறி வகுப்புகள்) must be made compulsory for all students from Class 6 to Class 12 in all types of schools.
- b. Weekly, one period should be allocated for imparting Ara Neri. A qualified teacher should be designated to deliver this lecture on a rotational basis. Additionally, well-qualified external persons may also be invited to contribute to these lectures.
- c. A proper guide should be prepared for the contents of Ara Neri to be imparted to students, including concepts of social justice, equality, and non-discrimination.

11. Appointment of Counsellors

- a. The government should appoint one trained counsellor for each Block, who will be required to attend all the secondary schools in that Block, including the schools run by the government, a local body, or private.
- b. The counsellor must visit each school monthly.
- c. After interacting with the students identified by the teachers and the Headmaster of the school, the counsellor will maintain a diary recording their observations and advice given.
- d. If the advice given requires further treatment, the counsellor will contact the parents and arrange for appropriate counselling by an expert.
- e. In case any student suffers from drug addiction, the counsellor will recommend the admission of that student to a de-addiction centre at the expense of the State and will monitor the student's progress.

12. Appointment of School Welfare Officer (SWO)

- a. The state government must create a post of School Welfare Officer (SWO) for each secondary school with more than 500 students. In cases of co-education, there must be two SWOs, one of each sex.
- b. The SWOs must monitor the functioning of the school regarding issues of ragging, drug menace, sexual assault and offences related to caste discrimination and should address these issues in accordance with the law.
- c. The SWOs must be responsible for conducting orientation programmes on the aforementioned issues at the beginning of every academic year and should continuously monitor the school's activities in this regard.
- d. In schools where the student population is below 500, the District Education Officer of that educational district will serve as the SWO for that particular school.
- e. The SWOs must directly report to a State-level Monitoring Committee constituted by the Director of School Education (DSE) in collaboration with the Director of School Education (Private Schools) (DSEPS).
- f. The qualifications for recruiting the SWOs should be prescribed by the state government, considering the requirements of their role.
- g. If complaints are levelled against members of the School Management Committee (SMC), including the local body members, the SWO can file a complaint before the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR).
- h. The SWO can also recommend action against teachers and other staff regarding caste discrimination and other unfair practices they may engage in.

13. Grievance Box:

- a. Instead of having multiple grievance boxes, a dedicated Grievance Box (known by any name, including மாணவர் மனசு) should be installed, and the key should be kept with the School Welfare Officer (SWO) to be appointed.
- b. The grievance box shall be opened at least once a week, if not more frequently, and the grievances raised should be addressed promptly without any delay.
- c. The identity of the student should be kept confidential; under no circumstances should the student experience any trauma or agony.

14. Reservation

The State must direct the reservation of seats in higher secondary classes to enable Scheduled Caste students to pursue higher education by choosing science subjects in the plus two course.

15. National Service Scheme (NSS)

- a. In schools, the National Service Scheme (NSS) must admit students from 9th to 12th standard.
- b. Accordingly, funding should be provided for the expanded activities.
- c. To plan the programmes for the NSS, the School Education Department can lay down guidelines regarding the posting of the Project Officer and the programmes that could be included in the voluntary service of the force.

16. Social Justice Students Force (SJSF) (சமூக நீதி மாணவர் படை)

- a. The Tamil Nadu Government must establish a student force called சமூக நீதி மாணவர் படை (Social Justice Students Force) (SJSF), which will operate independently of the union government. The SJSF will consist of

students from all communities, free from communal divisions, united in their efforts to combat social evils.

- b. The primary objective of creating the SJSF is to combat social evils and to participate in community-level programs organized by the government. Special care should be taken to include students from minority groups, women, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.
- c. The units of this force can be organized at the village level, encompassing all types of schools within that revenue village, and managed at every Block level.
- d. The SJSF should have a uniform and conduct regular drills and exercises, in addition to inculcating social values such as inclusivity, equality, and non-discrimination.
- e. A committee can be constituted by the government to plan and organize such a force, as well as to devise methods and means to raise funds for the force.

17. Block Level Food Kitchens

- a. Instead of having kitchens in every school, the government should establish central kitchens in every Block (Panchayat Unions), with adequate regular staff required for its operation and a distribution network attached to school noon meal centres.
- b. While recruiting staff for each Block, the government must follow the rules of Reservation.

The existing staff involved in the noon meal scheme can be utilized in the work related to Panchayats, Panchayat Unions, Municipalities and Corporations suitable to their qualification and age.

- d. Under no circumstances should the question of retrenching the existing noon meal staff occur unless some staff voluntarily decide to leave work.

- e. The Block-level food kitchens will also serve as support centers during times of disaster-related relief, such as heavy monsoons, floods, and epidemics.

18. Restriction on the Use of School Properties for Non-Educational Purposes

The government must bring appropriate regulations applicable to all educational institutions, including private ones, that govern the use of school, college, and university properties for non-educational purposes. This includes the prohibition of using auditoriums, classrooms, playgrounds, or open spaces for activities such as mass drills, parades, or the propagation of communal or caste-related messages. Any violation of these regulations should be met with appropriate penalties.

19. Declaration of Areas as Caste Atrocities Prone and the Constitution of Special Intelligence Units

- a. The state government is well-advised to assess whether specific areas should be declared as caste atrocity-prone and to take precautionary and preventive measures in those areas.
- b. The State government can also constitute a Special Intelligence Unit to gather information on caste violence and identify persons or organizations involved in fomenting caste discrimination.
- c. An expert body or an agency can be appointed to investigate allegations of saffronization of education and activities that infiltrate educational institutions, hampering caste and communal harmony.

20. Government to take appropriate steps to address the issue at the societal level for communal harmony and caste eradication

The Terms of Reference given to this Committee are confined to providing suggestions for framing guidelines to tackle caste differences in educational institutions. However, the issue of caste discrimination extends beyond student campuses and needs to be addressed at the societal level. Therefore, the government is advised to take appropriate steps to address this issue at the societal level for caste eradication and to foster communal harmony.

15 (2) Long Term Goals

1. Special Legislation to enforce a policy of social inclusion and eradication of caste discrimination

The State of Tamil Nadu must enact separate legislation governing all students from schools to higher educational institutions to enforce a policy of social inclusion and eradicate caste discrimination. This legislation should impose duties and responsibilities on students, teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as the management of such institutions, and prescribe mechanisms for supervision, control, and sanctions for non-compliance with these directives.

2. Enhance Local Bodies' control over Primary Education

- a. The current limited role granted to local bodies in the school education system should be expanded to full control over primary education.
- b. Block-level administrations (Panchayat Unions) must have full control over schools, including appointing, posting, and removing staff.
- c. The laying down of guidelines relating to curriculum and standards and conducting board exams shall be managed by the Directorate of School Education and the state government.
- d. The government should formulate new legislation to grant true autonomous powers to local bodies, making education more people-oriented by amending the existing Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act of 1994.

3. Amend the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, to prevent Caste Appellations in the Names of Educational Institutions

The government must take steps to amend the existing Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, and insert a provision that a society intending to start an educational institution shall not include any caste appellations in their institution's name.

29.05.2024

CHENNAI

Justice K Chandru

One Man Committee

