



**RECOMMENDATIONS OF VARIOUS COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS REGARDING  
SECONDARY EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL: A REVIEW**

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**ABSTRACT**

A rich tradition of secondary education was founded in West Bengal for historical reasons. After 1977, many education committees and commissions were established by the Govt. of West Bengal for the development of secondary education. Recently, The Govt. of West Bengal was established a new Education Commission of 2013 for the development of Primary education, Higher education as well as Secondary education. In this paper the authors try to highlight the various educational committees and commissions regarding secondary education in West Bengal. The authors also try to shed some light to the relevance that the secondary education under the recommendations of different committees and commissions in West Bengal in the present context.

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**INTRODUCTION**

After Indian Independence so many education commissions were established in India such as Radhakrishan Commission (1948-49), Secondary Education Commission (Mudaliar Commission-1952-53), Kothari Commission (1964-66) etc. Many committees and commissions were also established by the Govt. of West Bengal such as: De Committee, Himangshu Bimal Mazumder Committee (1978), Pabitra Sarkar Committee (1988), Ashok Mitra Commission (1991-92), Ranju Gopal Mukherjee Committee (2001-02) and Educational Commission of West Bengal (2013).

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the development of secondary education in West Bengal since Independence by the recommendations of different education committees and commissions in West Bengal.
2. To evaluate the secondary education under the recommendations of different education committees and commissions in West Bengal in the present context.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study is purely historical research in natures which is based on qualitative work. Books written on Secondary

education in West Bengal during Independence period would be used as secondary sources. This study was purely theoretical based. Content analysis was done on the available documents. Data was collected from two major sources i.e., to study the recommendations of various education committees and commissions regarding secondary education in West Bengal as only the primary source of the data collection and as secondary sources, the investigators were collected data from different types books, journals (including e-journal), articles written by the great authors.

**Delimitation of the Study**

1. The present study was restricted to the development of secondary education in West Bengal since Independence.
2. The study was delimited to the recommendations of various committees and Commissions regarding secondary education in West Bengal.

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**Recommendations of Various Committees and Commissions regarding Secondary Education in West Bengal:**

**De Committee (1978):**

De Committee (1978) was established in West Bengal after 1977 in time of the Left Front Govt. The report of the committee was submitted in 1978. The Committee was established for the development of school education in West

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Bengal. In field of Secondary education, the committee was emphasized on quality improvement, good management as well as teacher recruitment, revision of curriculum, regular inspection, infrastructural development etc.

#### **Review**

De Committee is the Turning point for the development of secondary education in West Bengal. This Committee emphasized on quality improvement, infrastructural development, regular inspection, teacher recruitment etc. This is the good sign for the development of secondary education in west Bengal. We can say development of secondary education in West Bengal that is reflected on secondary education in present time.

#### **Himanshu Bimal Mazumdar Committee (1978)**

After Independence Curriculum and syllabus based mostly on the Gandhian philosophy of basic education were introduced as early as in 1950. After a lapse of some 31 yrs a new curriculum and syllabi subject-wise were introduced from 1981. Based on the recommendations of Prof. Himanshu Bimal Mazumdar committee 1978. This curriculum claims an innovative approach on counts more than one. In its bid to seek a total development of child, it kept in mind all the requirements for reaching the goal. With a view to making education life skill oriented and to making it realistic and practical, co-scholastic subjects such as a) Direct Experience-based works. B) Creative and productive works had been included as the basis of the curriculum.

Emphasis was laid on Games, Sports and physical education, formation of scientific attitude and promotion of inquisitiveness and power of observation. The system of continuous and comprehensive evaluation along with the policy of non-detention up to class iv was introduced making it realistic and practical, the directorate of school education then took the initiative to develop the instructional materials such as text-books and some guide –books. The SCERT, West Bengal since its inception in eighties took up the initiative to prepare the textbooks. Subject wise committees as recommended by the Himanshu Bimal Mazumdar Committee were formed for the purpose and the SCERT developed the manuscripts of text books and subsequently some guide books in early eighties.

The manuscripts were then handed over to the dept. of school education and the policy of No-Detention as per the new curriculum. It became an imperative on the part of the Govt to impart training in all these respects to all the educational functionaries both at the State and D levels and then to the Primary teachers as well. It was the SECRT that took the initiative to impart necessary orientation in all these respects. A three-tier and time bound orientation Programme could however, be undertaken in 1984-1995 after the Primary Board was set up in 1990.

#### **Review**

Himangshu Bimal Mazumder Committee (1978) is the 'Milestone for the development of secondary education' in West Bengal. This Committee emphasized on Innovative curriculum development, quality improvement, infrastructural development, regular inspection, teacher recruitment etc. This is the good symbol for the development of secondary education in west Bengal. We can say development and

improvement of secondary education in West Bengal that is reflected on secondary education in present time.

#### **Bhabatosh Dutta Committee (1984)**

Bhabatosh Dutta Was a great Economist in West Bengal. The Govt. of West Bengal has established an education committee under the chairmanship of Economist Bhabatosh Dutta. It was established in 1984 by the Left front Govt. It was called the Commission for Planning of Higher education in West Bengal. It must have been recognised by the gov. of West Bengal. Even then that in formulating education policy there is no way one could plan for Higher without sparking a thought for lower level.

In West Bengal Secondary Education Structure has been formed for conducting the course of studies (from V to X classes). It is a major academic course of study concerned with various disciplines-Humanities group, Science group and Social Science group also. This system started functioning since 1951 after establishing a board, The Board of Secondary Education under an Act of the State Legislature called The West Bengal Secondary Education Act of 1950. Before that higher Secondary education system was continuing since independence.

The Government of West Bengal had set up an education Committee in 1984 under the distinguished chairmanship of Bhabotosh Dutta State of Education in West Bengal. The base year of considered an important land-mark It was asked to look comprehensively in the presumably because a Left Front government in its present shape had first come to power in West Bengal that Year. The education committee had completed its task and submitted its report just within year (by April, 1984), which must be by itself regarded as quite as a commendable achievement, considering the spread an unevenness of the educational terrain that the committee had been called upon to cover. Dutta Commission was also asked to suggest, amongst others, "measures for improving the standard of education at all levels", along with "special measures for giving a new direction to higher education in conformity with the projected requirements of economic and social growth".

#### **Review**

Bhabotosh Dutta Committee (1984) is the Turning point for the development of secondary education in West Bengal. This Committee emphasized on quality improvement, infrastructural development, regular inspection, teacher recruitment etc. This is the good sign for the development of secondary education in west Bengal. We can say development of secondary education in West Bengal that is reflected on secondary education in present time.

#### **Pabitra Sarkar Committee (1988)**

Prof. Pabitra Sarkar was Ex. Vice chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University and Ex. Chairman of West Bengal State Council of Higher Education. The West Bengal government has appointed a one-member committee to suggest steps for reintroducing English at the primary level.

In field of Secondary education, the committee was emphasized on quality improvement and good management as well as teacher recruitment, revision of curriculum, regular inspection, infrastructural development etc.

### **Ashok Mitra Commission (1991-1992)**

In West Bengal, Secondary Education Structure has been formed for conducting the course of studies (from V to X classes). It is a major academic course of study concerned with various disciplines-Language group, Science group and Social Science group also. This system started functioning since 1951 after establishing a board, The Board of Secondary Education under an Act of the State Legislature called The West Bengal Secondary Education Act of 1950. Before that higher Secondary education system was continuing since independence.

The Government of West Bengal had set up an education Commission in August, 1991 under the distinguished chairmanship of Ashok Mitra. It was asked to look comprehensively in the state of Education in West Bengal Since 1977. The base year of considered an important landmark presumably because a Left Front government in its present shape had first come to power in West Bengal That Year. The education Commission had completed its task and submitted its report just within year (by August, 1992), which must be by itself regarded as quite as a commendable achievement, considering the spread an unevenness of the educational terrain that the commission had been called upon to cover.

The setting up of an education commission has usually accepted as both an important event and a well-meaning gesture in India. Having appointed a commission, government too normally accords its report all respect even when it has reasons to heartily disagree with some of its crucial recommendations and is eventually found lath to implement even those measures that it pretends to endorse. Political parties in India canvassing diametrically opposed policies on almost every other aspect of life have also been known to pay obeisance to the same education commission reports: for examples Kothari Commission of 1964-'66, national education policy of 1968. We would find it if we read again the report of the Calcutta University Commission of 1917-19. It was only in 1981 that the last education Commission in West Bengal was set up.. It was called the commission for Planning of Higher Education in West Bengal and the Chairman was no other than Bhabotosh Datta. It must have been recognised by the government of West Bengal even then that in formulating education policy that was no way one could plan for higher without sparking a thought for lower levels.

Lastly, we can say, The Govt. of West Bengal was established a education commission, known as Dr. Ashok Mitra Commission. Dr. Ashok Mitra was the finance minister of the Govt. of West Bengal. He was the chairman of this commission. The commission was established under the notification of 6324(t) (RH) Home. The commission was established in 13<sup>th</sup> August, 1991. The report of this commission was submitted in August, 1992. The commission was established for the development of Primary, Secondary as well as Higher education.

### **Members of the Commission**

Besides Dr. Ashok Mitra as the Chairman, other members of the Commission were Prof. PabitraSarkar, Prof. G.S. Sanyal, Arun Chaudhury, Mustafa-Bin-Kasim, Parames Acharya, N.S. Ghosh, Gouri Nag and Sunanda Sanyal.

### **Major Recommendations of the Commission**

1. Curriculum: According to Ashok Mitra Commission, the curriculum of the secondary education should be diversified and it should be life oriented.
2. Time Table: Mitra Commission proposed that the Time Table should be very strictly.
3. School Calendar: According to commission, in the beginning of the New Year, school calendar should be given to their hand.
4. Teaching Day's: Mitra Commission Emphasized that total teaching day's may be not less than 220 days.
5. Teacher: Teacher should be Graduate. Trained teacher are desirable.
6. Private tuition: As per recommendations of Ashok Mitra Commission that Private Tuition should be strictly prohibited.
7. Tutorial: At the secondary stage, there should be emphasis on tutorial classes.
8. School Service Board: Every secondary teacher should be appointed by the School Service Board (Known as now School Service Commission).
9. Library Service: Every secondary school will provide a good Library. In this regard, need a good librarian.
10. Examination Reforms: Ashok Mitra Commission emphasized on the external evaluation than the internal evaluation.

### **Review**

In the present time, the curriculum in West Bengal at all levels of education (Including Secondary Stage) is more scientific and reasonable to us. In modern time, time table of all institution will follow by the recommendations of Ashok Mitra Commission in West Bengal. According to recommendations of Ashok Mitra Commission in West Bengal that private tuition should be prohibited. In present time, the Govt. of West Bengal announced that private tuition is strictly prohibited. That is good sign for the development of at all levels of education. Tutorial classes will follow in modern times in different aspects. As per recommendations of Ashok Mitra Commission in West Bengal, that every secondary teacher should be appointed by the School Service Board. It is called now School Service Commission. The people of West Bengal should feel grateful for that.

### **Ranju Gopal Mukhopadhyay Committee or School Education Committee (2001-2002)**

The School Education Committee was set up by the Govt. of West Bengal through a notification (No. 1693-S.E (S), School Education Department, Secondary Branch, dated the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2001). This Committee was set up by the Chairmanship of Prof. Ranju Gopal Mukhopadhyay. Prof. Ranju Gopal Mukhopadhyay was an Ex. President, WBBSE, Ex. President, WBCHE and as well as Ex. Vice Chancellor of North Bengal University. The Committee was set up on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2001. Finally, the report of the commission was submitted on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002.

### **Members of the Committee**

Besides Prof Ranju Gopal Mukhopadhyay was the Chairman, other members of the commission were Md. Refatullah (Member- Secretary), Director, Dr. Rathindranath De (Member- Secretary), Director, SCERT. Prof. Amitava

Chotopadhyay, Dr. Gopa Dutta, Prof. Sudin Chattopadhyay, Sri Lakshmi Narayan Roy, Sri Nema Chand Chakraborty, Sri Sudhin Paul, Sri Dhiren Baskey.

In terms of the Act (West Bengal Board of Secondary Education Act), Designing and prescribing curriculum and syllabus for the secondary stage (Classes VI to X) is the function of the WBBSE. The Board is an autonomous body and its decisions on academic matters usually do not require State Government's approval. The committee had emphasized on Language group, Science group as well as History-Geography Group. The group system has significance from the point of examination because pass-fail is determined by marks scored in the groups, along with minimum qualifying marks in individual subjects. The committee had emphasized on computer education as well as ICT (Information Communication and Technology) at the secondary stage. The Committee had also emphasized on Health education, Value education, Life style education, Vocational Education and Science education.

#### **Review**

Ranju Gopal Committee is the 'Turning point for the development of secondary education' in West Bengal. This Committee emphasized on quality improvement, infrastructural development, regular inspection, teacher recruitment, computer education etc. This is the good sign for the development of secondary education in west Bengal. We can say development of secondary education in West Bengal that is reflected on secondary education in present time.

#### **Education Commission of West Bengal (2013)**

The State Government has been considering, for same time past, the need for setting up an Education Commission to prepare the road map and perspective plans for the state's education sector. Now, after careful consideration of the matter, the Governor is pleased to constitute the Education Commission of West Bengal (No. 992-Edn (U)/1U-96/13 Dated: 01.10.2013)

#### **Members of the Commission**

Besides Prof. Samir K. Brahmachari as the chairman of the Commission and the other members of the commission were Dr. Amitava Bose, Dr. Abu T. Khan, Prof. Sanghamitra Banerjee, Dr. John Felix Raj, Dr. Asokendu Sengupta, Dr. Kalyan Rudra, Swami Shubhakarananda (Shantanu Maharaj), Ms. Susmita Bhattacharya Chatterjee, Ms. Supti Pande, Ms. Renu Barman (Singha), Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Govt. of West Bengal.

#### **Review**

The Education Commission of West Bengal (2013) was established by the Government of West Bengal for the development of education regarding elementary, secondary (Including higher secondary) as well as higher education. Recently, the West Bengal Govt. emphasised on higher education than the elementary and secondary education. In Present Time, the secondary education was not developing due to lack of sufficient teacher, lack of infrastructure and lack of money. We are looking forward for its positive action.

#### **Significance of those Recommendations in the present context**

In fact, the Commissions and Committees had by implication at least, left us in no doubt about what it thought of the state of education in West Bengal. Teach: Ensuring their accountability to society through inspection and other ways- and in demanding that the wide- spread malpractice of using school hours and school children for extracting money in the form of private tuition is ended.

The commission had indeed bared the ugly face of academic institutions in India. In the way no other previous commission had dared to do. But perhaps this was not what govt of West Bengal had actually bargained for, or even what the commission had anticipated when it had started to write its report. Perhaps only someone's irresponsible maverick character had triumphed in the end. The people of West Bengal should feel grateful for that.

In fact, The Education Commission of West Bengal of 2013 is necessary, but it should not be Commission for Commission's sake. We are looking forward for its positive action. At last we can say, let us hope for a bright and fruitful education in near future for the future citizen in West Bengal.

#### **CONCLUSION**

After 1947, different educational committees and commissions were established by the Government of West Bengal. There are some limitations but lastly we can say, those recommendations are turning points for the development of the secondary education in West Bengal. Let us now conclude by stressing the main points of the education policy of the State government. The basic objectives of the State government's education policy are "To reach the common people with facilities of education in an extensive manner as possible in rural and urban areas in order to help them to understand and cope with the socio-economic environment". Secondary-level education has also expanded enormously after independence. The major issues at secondary level are related to curriculum planning and the examination. (Economic Review; 1989-90; Govt. of West Bengal). At the time of curricula planning an attempt should be made for securing a balance between the secondary and higher secondary stages of education. The contents of school education should be such as to expose the students to social and economic realities. There are some limitations but lastly, we can say, it was a 'Turning Point in the history of secondary education' in West Bengal.

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