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# A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE RECOMMENDATION OF ASHOK MITRA COMMISSION (1991-92) REGARDING SECONDARY EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL

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## ABSTRACT

Dr. Ashok Mitra was the chairman of the commission. Ashok Mitra was an Indian economist and Marxist politician. He was Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India and later became Finance Minister (19977-1987) of West Bengal. While the other members were PabitraSarkar, the honorable vice chancellor of RabindraBharati University, Professor G.S. Sannyal, Dr. Gauri Nag, Professor Mastafa Bin Kashim Sri ArunChawdhury Sri SunandaSannyal Sri ParameshAcharyaetc, and S.N Ghosh was the member Secretary. This commission was formed to verify the educational quality from 1977 in all department by applying a short time and longtime project. The commission was given the charge to find out the problem of mass education. The commission submitted their report in August, 1912 A.D. It is notable that in 1977 A.D. Left front Government had taken some new project in education. Among these projects "No detention policy" and continuous evaluation are extraordinary.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Education policy adopted by the Government of West Bengal has two main aspects. Extending the scope of Education to the common people irrespective of class, caste and creed. The priority was given to the recommendation of different Education commission and committees and public opinion at the time of implementation of the policy. As part of the policy, Bengali the mother tongue was made the medium of instruction. After more than two and half decades of the introduction of his policy. With view to the phenomenal change of the global scenario, decision to introduce English as language from class one in the primary level has been taken. A unique environment has been created in the state by offering the privilege of taking Bengali, English, Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, and santhali as the medium of instructions in the primary level. Quality enhancement in the higher education level is reflected in the increase of Humber of engineering college from 12 during 1976-77 to 52 including departments in different Universities. West Bengal Government has announced with the notification no 6324 (t) (RH). Home Political Development on 13<sup>th</sup> August in 1991. It is indeed needed a total evaluation of curriculum and accomplished measure of various stratum of education system of West Bengal Government from 1977 A.D. It is indeed needed to judge the acceptance of education

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through time and possibilities and labor for aim of education. It should be find out the source of problematic education and it must be spread literacy among the people. It must be taken a planning to establish education institute after perceiving aforementioned matters. The commission submitted their report of 376 pages with 118 recommendations the state Government has accepted only 72 recommendations. Only 32 recommendation are under consideration of46 recommendation Generally 11 had been received and 3 had been cancelled. In West Bengal, it was given the responsibility on the commission from 1977 A.D that it is needed to reexamine the education system and its development of various department with actual expenditure allotment and its maintenance in education budget .Education area with evaluation, general law, value of relevant edict, the effect of expense in education should have been considered as an indication of frame work .The aim and motive of education will be fulfilled by applying social and economic condition of our nation and state in between the gap of long time and short time period it is possible counsel about programmed.

In context of reality of mass education campaign, the rising problems should have been solved by trying to explain the inner meaning of creation and its social acquaintance which can help to reach the aim of education and keeping balance it should be formed the deserving education. Keeping consistency the relevant subjects have been considered in this commission. Firstly, it has been said that the commission can abide by any methods for the accomplishment of action. Secondly, the commission can submit their report to the government within six months after the announcement of notification. In this part of the report, commission has eluded a

total description of this action. From where and which date the information had been received, how way the commission had investigated their action which date the convention had been organized there information's have been alluded in this part. The commission has become benefited with the discussion and other experts of West Bengal. Besides the chairman of University Grand Commission, the commission has discussed with the vice-chancellor and ex-vice-chancellor of University of Best Bengal .The chairman of Higher Secondary Education council, Secondary council and primary Education council assisted the commission giving their views and counsels. The discussion basis views of the ministers of West Bengal developed the work method in the commission. The remembrance epistle of the organization of college Principal, Head master, teacher and student and the speech of eminent delegates helped the commission.

## Objectives of the Study

 $\mathrm{O}_1$ : To know the background of formation of Ashok Mitra Commission.

O<sub>2</sub>: To study need of formation of Ashok Mitra Commission.

O<sub>3</sub>: To study the status Secondary Education in West Bengal before (1991-1992).

O<sub>4</sub>: To study the implementation of recommendation of Ashok Mitra Commission.

### Research Questions

 $Q_1$ : What is the background for framing Ashok Mitra Commission?

Q<sub>2</sub>: Why the Ashok Mitra Commission was formed?

 $Q_3$ : What is the status of Secondary Education in West Bengal before (1991-1992)?

Q<sub>4</sub>: What is the fundamental feature of recommendation given by Ashok Mitra Commission?

### Significance of the study

- It is essential to understand the meaning of the term education. Education is defined as the Act of the process of imparting or accruing general knowledge developing the powers reasoning judgment.
- It is compulsory for the Indian citizen in our complex modern democracy.
- It is only through Secondary Education in West Bengal that an individual becomes capable of understanding the complexity of politics.
- In West Bengal, it is commonsense that our Nation will develop surely if individual gain Secondary Education a parsons who has going Secondary Education has the understanding of all the happing in the society as well the Country.
- If Secondary Education made compulsory and Government School for free Secondary Education are established than India as whole will definitely progress in a decade or two.

### Methodology Employed In the Present Study

History is a meaningful and organized record of past events. It provides the researcher a method of investigation to discover describe and interpret what existed in the past. The main purpose of Historical Research is to arrive at an accurate account of the past in order to gain a clearer perspective of the present and to predict the future. It applies scientific method to the description and analysis the past events. This is a non-

experimental research, which mainly depends upon the reports the observation. Although hypothesis is not always explicitly stated in Historical investigation, they are usually implied. The trustworthiness of collected evidence is carefully evaluated by the Historian after he gathers them.

### Sources of Data

Since Historical Research is a non-experimental research, there is no possibility of control or manipulation of variables as it happens in case of experimental research. The sources of historical information are commonly classified primary and secondary. A primary source is an original and first-hand account of the event or experience. According to Good, Barr and Scats, first witness to any fact or information or event are the primary sources. These are the only solid bases of historical inquiry. On the other hand, Secondary source is one in which the person describing the event is not actually present but has obtained description from another person or source, the testimony of the person is not that of an actual observer, the source is subject to an inherent danger of inaccuracy and distortion. For this reason, the relevance of the researcher should be on primary sources as much as possible, and the researcher should use the secondary sources to bridge the gaps between the various pieces of primary data.

### Primary source

An original and first-hand account of the event or experience, Books, Journals, Letters

### Secondary sources

Secondary source is one in which the person describing the event is not actually present but has obtained description from another person or source, the testimony of the person is not that of an actual observer, the source is subject to an inherent danger of inaccuracy and distortion. Like, Articles, Books, and Declarations.In historical research the researcher cannot observe or experiment with what happed in the past. They have to depend on the available data- conscious or unconscious testimony of others. It is, therefore, natural that such collected data must pass through a process of evaluation better known as historical criticism for accepting what seems to be reliable and valid and filtering out the irrelevant, false or misleading. The task of evaluation or historical criticism resembling with the work of a detective, is usually undertaken in two stages, named as external and internal criticism.

External criticism: External criticism refers to determining the authenticity, validity and trustworthiness of the source of historical data. It checks the genuineness and the authenticity of the source material. It helps to determine whether it is what it appears or claims to be and whether it reads true to be original. It is mainly due to save the researcher from being the victim of the fraud. It is the establishment of historical truth. In the present study, the data used are mostly in the nature of the written materials. So, questions like 'When was the source written?', 'By whom was it produced?' 'From what pre-existing materials was it produced?' - are dealt with.

*Internal criticism:* Internal criticism is concerned with the validity, credibility or worth of the content of the document. It not only deals with textual criticism, but also involves such factors as competence, good faith, bias and general reputation of the author. This enables the researcher to discover the literal and real meaning of the text. In the present study the

researcher had tried to ascertain whether authors were honest, unbiased and well acquainted with the facts.

### Analysis and Interpretation

Objectives 1: Background of formation of Ashok Mitra Commission. In 1947-66 according to our constitutional promise all education system of India has to be revised within ten years after 1950. Particularly the primary education should be made honorary and compulsory. And it was also said that the primary education should be transformed into basic education. Again in 1947 Bangla desh was divided at the Indian Independence. Being displaced from homestead from east Bangal many people created pressure in economics as well as education. In 1977 the Left front government got power. This government accepted some progressive steps about education. West Bengal Government has announced with the notification no 6324 (t) (RH). Home Political Development on 13th August in 1991. It is indeed needed a total evaluation of curriculum and accomplished measure of various stratum of education system of West Bengal Government from 1977 A.D. It is indeed needed to judge the acceptance of education through time and possibilities and labor for aim of education. It should be find out the source of problematic education and it must be spread literacy among the people. It must be taken a planning to establish education institute after perceiving aforementioned matters.

Objectives 2: Need of formation of Ashok Mitra Commission. The education policy adopted by the Government of West Bengal two main aspects.

Extending the scope of education to common people irrespective of class, caste and creed.b) Raising the standard of education to the international level. The priority was given to the recommendation of different Education Commission and Committees and public opinion at the time of implementation of the policy. As part of the policy, Bengali the mother tongue was made the medium of instruction. After more than two and half decades of the introduction of his policy. With the change of interest with view to the phenomenal change of the global scenario, decision to introduce English as language from class one in the primary level has been taken. A unique environment has been created in the state by offering the privilege of instructions in the primary level. Quality enhancement in the higher Education level is reflected in the increase of Humber of engineering college from 12 during 1976-77 to 52 including departments in different universities.

After West Bengal Government has announced with the notification no 6324 -p. Home political Development on 13<sup>th</sup> August in 1991. It is indeed needed to Judge the acceptance of education through time and possibilities and labour for the aim of education.It should be find out the source of problematic education and it must be spread literacy among the people. It must be taken planning to establish educational institute after perceiving aforementioned matters. The Government of the time of West Bengal had formed a commission to fulfil the announcement with the persons mentioned below. Dr Ashok Mitra was the chairman of the commission while the other members were PabitraSarka, the honourable vice chancellor of RabindraBharati University professor G.S. Sannyal, Dr Gauri Nag, professor Mastafa Bin Kashim, Sir ArunChawdhury, Sir SunandaSannyal, Sir ParameshAcharya etc. And S.N Ghosh was the member Secretary. The commission was formed to

verify the educational quality formed 1977 in all departments by applying a short time and long-time project.

## Objective 3: The status of Secondary Education in West Bengal before (1991-1992).

In 1947 Bangladesh was divided at the dawn of Indian Independence. Being displaced from homestead many people from West Bengal created pressure in economics as well as education. Without any plan for the need of education secondary schools had been set up everywhere in West Bengal. Now a days there secondary schools have been going on according to their division. According to structure:-

Now a days will find that only the school including class v and vi, the schools including class v to class viii and upper primary schools. Then lower secondary schools including class v to viii. The secondary schools are formed class v to x and class i to x. The government has not affiliated the industrial technical schools as secondary schools. But the some tolls and Madrasahs have been affiliated as secondary schools by West Bengal government. According to Medium of Instruction: -

There are above 90 percent Bengali medium secondary schools. And there are English medium schools. A few schools have the combination of English and Hindi language. Some schools of Gujrati, Tamil and Oriya languages. Most of schools are in Kolkata.

Development of secondary education in Three Five year plans:-

In West Bengal the secondary schools were improved with three plans. The eligibility of teacher has increased secondary level. In spite of being of graduated no one can gate chance at upper secondary schools as a teacher. It is inevitable to have B.T or B.Ed degree. If he has not he will have acquired during his professional, so his salary does not increase. It is noticeable that there are 1/2 portion plain graduate, 1/5 portion honours graduate and 3/10 portion post graduate. According to all India judgement West Bengal is at the bottom by graphic level for its having available trained teachers. At secondary level only 40 percent teachers are trained. In recent days the West Bengal government has tried to minimise the syllabus of training for making available trained teachers. The governmental law will keep secure but the Mudaliar Commission recommended for the development of attitude of the teachers. But this recommendation will be dishonoured by completing training syllabus within three months. But making this proposal the experts thought that it is reasonable to transform the one year training course in to 2 yrs course.

At secondary level the progress is continuing in equal way during three plans. We have mentioned a catalogue in the following-

Year	The number of schools	The number of students	Number of Teachers
1947-48	885	3, 86,972	11,644
1950-51	1,107	3, 93,251	15,228
1956-57	1,556	4,53,302	20,684
1960-61	1,957	7,78,675	29,392

UchhaBuniadi Schools				
1955-56	4	397	25	
1960-61	238	20,584	1,014	

Now (1973) in West Bengal there are 2,083 secondary schools and 2,013 Higher secondary schools. Total schools are 4,096

including madhyamik and higher secondary schools, Among these 1,973 schools are shortage wise.

### Mudaliar commission (1952-54)

Madhyamik education commission or Mudaliar commission reported for the nation and aspect of madhyamik education. The commission said that the madhyamik education would be completed within 17 yrs, according to the proposal of commission there were the primary education for 5 yrs, the lower secondary education for three yrs and High secondary education for 4 yrs, as a result the total school life is of 12 yrs. Then first degree for 3 years the commission said to bring the curriculum instead of intermediate.

#### Curriculum

The commission recommended about the curriculum at lower secondary level the language, Sociology, General Science, Math, Arts and Music, Work education, Physical education will be included and also at secondary or higher secondary level the curriculum will be the same. But the learning method will be divided. Besides these there will be some projects like languages, general science, sociology etc.

### Kothari Commission (1964-66)

Kothari commission has recommended the pre-university education field as a combined stratum. So in this relevant stratum the child is made ready for being responsible and well known citizen so that they have been settled to the secondary level as well as eternal life and for the aim of democratic attitude. According to structure the secondary level has been divided into twoparts one is basic secondary level and other is higher secondary level the first one is from class ix to x and the second one is from class xi to xii. The commission has explained about the lower secondary level where exist three languages like mothers tongue or rural language, Hindi and English. The students where mother tongue is Hindi, they will have to learn another Indian language, henceforth Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Political science, experience, social service, physical education, moral and spiritual education etc.Like India West Bengal has to face various problems for the transformation of recommendation of Mudalar commission Tenth level schools are transformed 11<sup>th</sup> level higher secondary school and it is noticeable that there are excessive labour and expenditure.In 1963, the various counsellors of various states criticized for the present situation of education. Then the education commission is formed after the order of central government. In 1968 the National education policy is formed with the assistance of aforementioned policy. According to the National infrastructure, 10+2+3 system is signed. 10+2 system is period of schools.

## De committee (1978)

De committee is the turning point for the development of secondary education in West Bengal. This committee emphasized on equality improvement, infrastructural development, regular inspection, teacher recruitment etc. This is the good sign for the development of secondary education West Bengal. We can say development of secondary education in West Bengal that is reflected on secondary education.

### HimanshuBimalMazumdar Committee (1978)

HimanshuBimalMazumdar 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.

## BhabatoshDutta Committee (1984)

BhabatoshDutta committee recommended that in West Bengal secondary education structure has been formed for conducting the course of studies (from v to x classes). It is major academics course of study concerned with various disciplines-Humanities group, Science group and Social Science group also. The system started functioning since 1951 after establishing 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. BhabatoshDutta 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. This the good sign for the development of secondary education in West Bengal.

## PabitraSarkar Committee (19880)

Pabitrasarker committee recommended that in the 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.In 1972 the West Bengal government decided to bring class x again from January, 1973, instead of class xi. Protest aroused everywhere against this proposal, because it is not possible to maintain syllabus, book publication within a short time. So the government decided to start class xi from January 1974 instead of 1973, West Bengal secondary council published a draft of curriculum. This is in the following –

- First, mother tongue (200).
- Second, English language.
- Third, a ancient language like Sanskrit, Pali, Fershi, Arabic, Greek, Latin or a modern European language.
- Mathematics 100 marks, and its syllabus will be easy and consistency.
- Science 200 marks, there are two kinds of science, one is life science and other is environment science.
- Social science 200 marks, Indian history 100 marks and geography 100 marks.
- Work education 100 marks.

Besides these, there will be an additional subject along with 1000 marks subjects.

West Bengal secondary council has accepted the proposal to form observer committee for the aid of perusal and new syllabus. The observer committee will be formed with the selected delegates among the educationists. In 1977 the left front government got opportunity to run the West Bengal state. West Bengal government promised some progressive statements for the education. If we examine that promise, we

can find modern distinct picture of secondary education.In 1980-81 it was declared that the secondary and higher secondary would be honorary education. Aforementioned schools were brought under salary shortage fulfilment project. As a result the teachers of secondary and higher secondary schools have not to wait for salary in every month. It has been managed so that they could get there salary through the National bank. From 1st April, 1980 the teachers and nonteaching staffs government affiliated madrasa are receiving their salary. Now there are many secondary, higher secondary, madrasah schools. In 1982-83, 121 schools of two classes have been transformed into four class lower secondary schools, and 142 junior high schools have been transformed into secondary schools. Now in all West Bengal syllabus of H.S. is available in 10,000 H.S. schools. It was also promised that these numbers would increase for the next economical yrs. beside this in this state there are eleven institutions who offer diploma the class viii admission.

The left front government explained that in first 9 yrs, 918 juniors high schools were set-up 1,076 junior high schools have been transformed into high schools. In (1977-78) there were 28 lakes students at secondary level. Now it is above 36 lakes. Every year 3 core rupees are being spent for the development of school room and library. It is also maintain the students – teacher's ratio. It is noticeable that the development is being progressed for the aid of physical handicapped students. It is noticeable that secondary education proposals including National Education Policy are signed by West Bengal government but the NavadayaVidlaya could not gate these proposals.

Objectives 4: Fundamental feature of recommendation given by Ashok Mitra Commission

In 1991-92 Ashok Mitra Commission handed over the report of 376 pages with 118 recommendation to the West Bengal Government viz Left front Government. The main recommendations education for all, development for Primary education learning language, minimum pass marks autonomous body in education 220 schooling days in a year, no private tuition for teachers, enlargement of frees in college and universities, starting of cess there are acceptable. Among there 118 recommendations the government has accepted only 72 recommendation. The main fundamental features of the acceptable 72 recommendation by the government are being explained below—

- No detention policy, the commission keeping observation to the them education system, proposed to remove the pass fail system. The main problem of illiteracy is wastage and unsuccessful. After being admitted to school they left the school without completing lessons. It is compulsory to take education of the students up to 14 years. Before Ashok Mitra commission the illiteracy removal and relevant education should be made compulsory. According to the circumstance, the removing of pass- fail system was excellent.
- The proposal of pass- fail system of Ashok Mitra commission had not been accepted by the Left front government. It was not accepted for the political circumstance.

- It was told in the commission that learning English should be stopped from class one to six and it was started from class vi to x.
- For the democratic nation it is important decision to teach through mother tongue. English should be started Frome class v in government or government aided school. Their decisions were excellent. According time and circumstance students have to face their difficulty for their study in mother tongue but the foreign language would have created mental pressure to the students. It is a kind of burden. As a result the wastage and willingness to school would increase so English should not be included from class

## This decision was perfectly alright

But criticism is expectable in reality. The commission proposed to start English from class v in government or nongovernmental school but some guardians and some educationist did not criticise. It is worth mentioning that the Kothari commission of the government of India recommended that it should not be studied before class v. It was noticeable that the enriching country accepted the mother tongue as medium. At secondary level learning English book would be changed instantly, so the commission recommendation to teach grammar according to syllabus. And this way the commission became successful. According to recommendation of Ashok Mitra commission the one and only feature was the teachers should not engage with private tuition. This proposal was formative. It was formative because the schooling days should be 220 days, and practice to read text book. Now a days, these recommendations are being tried to include curriculum. There was an another context that the schooling days should be 220 days in a year. Before this proposal in 1964-66 the Kothari commission alluded that the schooling days should be 200 days. Ashok Mitra commission is appropriate for the excellent rank and drop-out students. It is a kind of aspect of success. It is a kind of hindrance to this proposal. The commission has said about the continuous evaluation. Methodically this proposal is psychological. The continuous evaluation is formative because it is noticeable that how the students improve their study.

Recommendation for the infrastructure, for the hardship of economical circumstance of government the commission made a glance to build primary school through panchayet. The commission alluded that primary school would be made with "JawaharRajkarYojana". Then state government accepted that system. After having said about the school infrastructure, the "JawaharRajkarYojana" of Ashok Mitra commission was an excellent step to the then state government. In the commission, it was proposed to use operation black-board for all the primary school. Before this proposal of the commission operation black-board had been alluded in National education policy in 1986. For making reality the left front government expressed their budget for this proposal in 1994-95. So, that the development of primary education has been done in West Bengal.

Primary school teachers will have to take training from district primary council this recommendation of training will help the teachers as well as the student. This has been said in Mudaliar commission as well as the Kothari commission. The commission has noticed the teaching method. The old method is still continuing today for the students but this in not active

for the system. The new methods have to be followed by the teachers so that they can take training at every 5 years of gap it is noticeable. The state government has accepted the proposal to supply meal to students and make kitchen in school. It is noticeable that the then West Bengal Government decided to supply meal through panchayet and kitchen room through Gram Committee. The project of Navadaya Vidyalaya had been accepted in the Ashok Mitra Commission. The national education policy accepted this project in 1986. But the then State Government did not accepted the Navadaya Vidyalaya project because they expressed their opinion that in every district many schools would be flourished in place of one standard school.

According to the commission the High Madrasah teachers like Madhyamik teachers should be given chance for B.Ed training in University. Senior Arabic and other language teachers do not gate chance for B.Ed degree. West Bengal Madrasah Education Council is not the autonomous bady like Secondary Education Council. The State Government should explain this for the enlargement and development of Madrasah Education. The commission recommended for the educational cess in urban and rural areas. In rural areas the man bearing above five acres of land and 10 thousand rupees annul income will have to give this kind of cess. This cess would be from 10 rupees to 100 rupees. And whose annual income is about 1 lack they will have to give cess about 50 rupees to 2000 rupees. From the economical circumstance to formative step the hindrance is available in various aspects.

### Major Findings

- In various states of post-Independence India the communal division in one hand and refugee problem on the other create pressure on social economic infrastructure. West Bengal is the inflammable example. As a result of impediment of progress towards these two pressures and as an inevitable condition of progress of people, it makes descent into Ashok Mitra Commission (1991-1992) for the formative steps of primary education in West Bengal.
- The secondary education west Bengal is enhance with the help of three five year plan, at this regarding when the quality of teachers, quality of school, quality of students and enrolment of them in greatly enhanced.
- Te fundamental or basic features of Ashok Mitra commissions report are
- 1. To remove the pass fails system in the class.
- English language should be started at class V standard.
- 3. To stop the private tuition of the school teachers.

There are many recommendations Ashok Mitra commissions report we running in west Bengal school education system, working days of teachers should be 220 days, the arrangement of mid-day meal by the panchayati system, the new recruitment of teachers for maintenance the teachers student ratio.

## Suggestions for further Researches

To study about primary education in Ashok Mitra commission

- From (1977-1991) it can be worked about the commission and committee which were formed before
- It can be comparative study between the National Policy on Education within 2016 with Ashok Mitra commission.

## **CONCLUSION**

After 1947, different educational committees and commission was established by the Left Front Government in West Bengal. Ashok Mitra Commission (1991-'92) is one of them. Let us now conclude by stressing the main points of the education policy of the State government. The basic objective of the State government's education policy is "To reach the common people with facilities of education in as 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 'Milestone in the history of secondary education` in West Bengal.

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