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## Introduction to the *ad hoc* Commission

### What is an *ad hoc* commission?

The phrase *ad hoc*, is Latin, meaning “for this”. In English, it generally signifies a solution designed for a specific problem or task, non-generalizable, and not intended to be able to be adapted to other purposes. In India, commissions are constituted by the Government either in *ad hoc* or permanent basis, to guide, advice or provide solutions to various issues.

### Procedure of the Commission

Delegates with a basic understanding of MUN Rules of Procedure (in terms of General Speakers Lists, Motions, Points, and Yields) will be able to comfortably handle the procedure of the *Ad Hoc* Commission. All basic rules will apply, as is given in your delegate handbook.

In addition to this there will be a special provision to give Official Statements:

- Given that the members of committee will be representing individuals, delegates will be permitted to make “Official Statements” if they believe their own personal character/character of an institution they represent needs defending under **special circumstances**, such as crises.
- Permission to make such a speech may be obtained from the Executive Board. This can be done either by directly approaching the EB, or through a note. After the delegate has made their requirements known, the decision to allow such a statement will be at the discretion of the EB.

The *Ad Hoc* Commission is expected to develop a series of recommendations, and come up with a report with a format similar to a United Nations Resolution. An example of the same can be found in your delegate handbook.

As for your research, you will not be bound by the rigidity that delegates of other committees face. As commissioners, you will have more freedom, however, this does not mean that you may use any site you wish to. Please ensure that your sources have some amount of credibility, for if you make a statement in committee, and you are questioned about it, either by another delegate, or by a member of the dias, you will have to provide *credible* documents to substantiate your facts.

## **Agenda**

### **Structural & Institutional Reforms to the Education System of India**

#### **Introduction**

The impact of education on the future of a country, especially one as young as India, cannot be overestimated. How India chooses to organise and administer its education system both in rural and urban areas is now of paramount importance.

The issues facing this commission are varied and range from the limited access to education to the nerve-racking university entrance system.

As part of this commission, you will be required to prioritise issues that you believe are most relevant to a long-term policy that will shape the destiny of the economy and fabric of the nation.

As members of this commission will be aware, the current HRD Minister has promised that his draft of a new national education policy will be released within a month. Measures he has suggested include reducing the syllabus by half, and introducing new subjects on ‘ancient Indian science’.

The country needs a stable policy of education and evaluation that does not come saddled with the controversies and U-turns that exam boards have had to face in the last few years.

In addition to the topics presented in this guide, members of CRESI will need to be aware of the numerous policy initiatives and their progress by the past few governments.

#### **Right to Education Act**

The Right to Education Act was enacted on the 4th of August 2009. It was meant to ensure that all children had access to free and compulsory education upto Class 8.

The Act has primarily been criticised for its lack of effectiveness and the discouraging pace of change to the lives of people. Proponents of the Act have however attributed its results to poor implementation on the ground.

The Act needs an enforceable redress mechanism at the local level, rather than the sparsely-known and existing one present on the national level.

Some opponents have criticised the Act for having been unclear in provisions regarding implementation and enforcement on the ground, such as distance clauses, etc.

The Act makes a very controversial provision for 25% of seats to be freely awarded to children from disadvantaged groups and communities; many critics wonder if there are better ways to ensure that high-quality education is available to children from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

The commission is expected to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTE Act and suggest reforms to the Act.

### **Teacher Development and Management**

Pre-service teacher training programs run in a fragmented system of 18000+ teacher education institutions, which has around 13 lakh seats. The vast majority of this capacity is of extremely poor quality. The quality of teacher preparation can be gauged by an abysmal low pass-percentage in Teacher Eligibility Test, which is a test that every new teacher needs to take.

In addition to the problem of teacher preparation, we need to address challenges in continuous professional development teachers in our school system. Teacher professional development is almost non-existent in unaided private schools

### **A uniform assessment system**

The Central Board of Secondary Education introduced examination reform in October 2009 in the form of the new Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation system.

CCE was designed to reduce student stress related to board exams and introduce a uniform and comprehensive pattern for student evaluation across the country. It attempted to shift the focus from 'testing' to 'holistic learning' with the aim of producing young adults with well-developed personalities, in addition to valuable skills.

These problems were in addition to several other issues as submitted by the then HRD Minister, Shri. Kapil Sibal.

However recently, the Central Board of Secondary Education has made it compulsory for students to attempt the class X board examinations from academic year 2017-18. This has made teachers re-evaluate their teaching methodology in classrooms.

The HRD Ministry backed up their policy with evidence that consisted of testimonials from parents and teachers, and letters of complaint against the CCE pattern of examination.

### **University entrance**

In a letter to Dr Manmohan Singh, his principal scientific advisor Prof. C.N.R. Rao criticised India for having ‘an examination system and not an education system’. There are numerous entrance exams to India’s universities in different states; the most notorious of which is the national Joint Entrance Examination conducted by the IITs.

There are several problems to be dissected here, the most pressing of which is the issue of extravagantly expensive ‘coaching classes’ that India’s rural and urban poor are unable to afford. If the exams continue to be designed such that an entirely different strain of education needs to be imparted to their aspirants, then they will continue to feed into the toxic system of coaching classes. The exams and the culture nurturing them effectively shut out bright minds from India’s ‘best’ institutions, condemning them to be trapped in their family circumstances with no possibility of escape.

We shall expect the commission to achieve a significant level of depth and analysis concerning the efficacy of exams designed to judge students’ creativity and problem-solving ability. In other words, the commission shall be expected to discuss not simply the issue of access, but also the utility of exams with such ambitious objectives as entrance exams.

### **Regulation of Private Sector Education**

Private fee charging schools are a visibly ubiquitous phenomenon in urban and rural India. On the one hand they are in high public demand and growing in numbers, on

the other, in public discourse their growth is often dubbed the ‘mushrooming of teaching shops’ and opposed.

One way for benchmarking private schools’ fee is to ask: for what percentage of rural private school pupils is their actual monthly fee below the daily minimum wage of their state. Research suggests that one third or more of the private schools in Indian states are ‘low fee’ schools i.e. that educate the poorest children.

Despite sharing the word ‘private’ in their names, private unaided and private aided schools differ fundamentally in their modes of operation. Private aided schools are virtually like public schools in the way they are governed. Although nominally and de jure run by their private management boards, de facto they are heavily governed by the state.

The commission will need to address the quality of education in private schools and assess whether they are actually better than state-run schools. You will also need to discuss the need to regulate fees and practices in schools, as well as a mechanism to do so.

### **Vocational Training**

Vocational education or skill based education enables students to acquire skills which are traditionally non-academic and totally focussed on a specific trade, occupation or vocation.

Vocational education consists of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. It enables students to learn skills valuable in the workplace, and therefore offers better employment opportunities.

The Vocational Training in India is imparted through two types of bodies:

- Public Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)
- Private owned Industrial Training Centres (ITCs)

The Indian Government has invested a lot for the development of skills through ITIs. The DGE&T generally regulates these ITIs and ITCs at national level and implements policies for vocational training.

### **Questions the commission will be expected to answer**

1. How can the RTE Act be made more effective in truly providing opportunities to the underprivileged, and getting children into school?
2. How can the education system guarantee all-round development?
3. How can we address the issue of the understaffing of schools and the quality of teachers?
4. How can the Indian system of university entrance be expanded to include the disadvantaged? How can these exams scientifically choose the best and the most logical minds amongst the lakhs of students appearing for them every year?
5. How can vocational training in India be improved such that unemployment reduces in India? How does this help in reducing other social contrasts in Indian society?



**Sources we recommend:**

<http://in.reuters.com/>

<http://www.thehindu.com/>

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/>

<http://www.epw.in/>

<http://mhrd.gov.in/>

[mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/](http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/)

<http://pib.nic.in>

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/>

**Please note: You will be required to go beyond these sites to do your research, these are simply a few of the sites that you may use.**

**You will be expected to write a position paper, with all the standard MUN requirements, and email it to the committee.**