

ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ ପ୍ରକାଶକ ସମିତି
ବିନୋଦବିହାରୀ, କଟକ-୨
ଫୋନ୍-୨୧୨

Pathya Pustak Prakasak Samiti
BINODBEHARI, Cuttack-2
Phone-612

To

Track
Sri ~~fix~~ Minoo Masani, M.P.

NEW DELHI.

*In Reply
for discussion
M.P.*
Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to present you herewith a copy of the Appeal submitted to the Chief Minister and Minister for Education, Government of Orissa on behalf of the Writers, Publishers and Printers of Orissa.

I request you to kindly go through the pages and realise the grave situation the education of our children and our literatures are going to face as a result of monopolisation of Text Books by the Government and the Board of Secondary Education.

If possible, may I request you to kindly express your valuable opinion in this regard in the interest of the public either through news paper or communicate the same to the address given below.

Yours sincerely,

S. Mahapatra
(S. Mahapatra)

Shri S. Mahapatra, President,
Pathya Pustak Prakashak Samiti
& Working President,
Orissa Printers Association,
C/O Grantha Mandir, Cuttack-2.

ଅନୁରୋଧ

ମହାଶୟ,

ଜାତର ସମୁଦ୍ର ବିକାଶରେ 'ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ' ଯେ ପ୍ରଥମ ଯୋଗାନ ଏଥିରେ ସନ୍ଦେହ ନାହିଁ । ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ-ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସୁଲଭିତ, ସୁମୁଦ୍ରତ ଓ ସୁ-ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇ ଯଥାସମ୍ଭବ ସୁଲଭ ଓ ସହଜ ଲଭ୍ୟ ହେବା ଉଚିତ । ତାହା ସହିତ ସାଧାରଣ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ସୁଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ, ଅନାଗଳ ବହୁମୁଖୀ ପ୍ରକାଶ ମଧ୍ୟ ବିକାଶଶୀଳ ଜାତର କାମ୍ୟ । ଏ ଦୁଇଟି ବିଷୟ ପରସ୍ପର ସଂଶ୍ଳିଷ୍ଟ । ସୁତରାଂ ଏହାକୁ ଜାତୀୟ ସମସ୍ୟା ମନେକରି ଦେଶର ଶିକ୍ଷାପ୍ରେମୀ, ସାହିତ୍ୟପ୍ରେମୀ ତଥା ଶାନ୍ତି-ନାଗରିକ-ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ-ସମାଜ ଏ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧେ ଗାନ୍ଧିଜୀ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ରଖିବା ଉଚିତ । କେବଳ ଲେଖକ, ପ୍ରକାଶକ, ଶିକ୍ଷାବିଭାଗ ବା ଶିକ୍ଷକଙ୍କର ଏହା ସାପୁର ବିଷୟ ଭାବିବା ସମ୍ଭବ ଠିକ୍ ନୁହେଁ ।

ଗତ କେତେକ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା ନିମ୍ନଶ୍ରେଣୀମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ ପ୍ରଣୟନ ଓ ପ୍ରକାଶନ ବ୍ୟବସାୟକୁ ସରକାର ଏକଗୃତିଆ କରି ନେଇଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଉଚ୍ଚଶ୍ରେଣୀର ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ ସବୁକୁ ସେକେଣ୍ଡାରି ବୋର୍ଡ଼ ଦ୍ଵାରା କରାଯାଇ କରାଯାଇ କରାଯାଇ ସୁଧା ଅଧିକାଂଶ ନିଜ ଦାୟିତ୍ଵରେ ସଂକଳିତ ଓ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏ ପ୍ରକାର ପ୍ରକାଶନକୁ "ଜାତୀୟକରଣ" ଆଖ୍ୟା ଦିଆଯାଉଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହା ଯେ ପ୍ରଧାନତଃ ଏକଗୃତିଆ ବସ୍ତୁାୟତ୍ତକରଣ ଏବଂ ଜାତୀୟ ତଥା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରାକୁ ଆୟତ୍ତକରଣର ପ୍ରଧାନ ଉପକରଣ ଏକଥା ବହୁ ଶିକ୍ଷାବିତ୍ କହିଛନ୍ତି । ତେଣୁ ଏକଗୃତିଆ ପ୍ରକାଶନ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଦେଶର ଶିକ୍ଷା ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ବିକାଶରେ କିଭଳି ଗୁରୁତର ଅନ୍ତରାୟ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇଛି ଓ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଛି ତାହା ଦର୍ଶାଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କେତେକ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ତ ଲେଖକ, ପ୍ରକାଶକ ଓ ମୁଦ୍ରାକର ସମୁଦ୍ଘଷକରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଅବେଦନ ପତ୍ର ଆମର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଏବଂ ଶିକ୍ଷାମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କଠାରେ ନିବେଦିତ କରିଅଛନ୍ତି । ଉକ୍ତ ପତ୍ରରୁ ଖଣିଏ ଏଥି ସହିତ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଅବଗତ ନିମିତ୍ତ ପଠାଇଲୁ ।

ସବିନୟ ଅନୁରୋଧ, ଆପଣ ଦୟାକରି ଏହାକୁ ଅମୂଳରୂପେ ପାଠକରି ଏ ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ସୁଚିନ୍ତା ମତ ପତ୍ରିକା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କଲେ କିମ୍ବା ମୋ ନିକଟକୁ ପ୍ରେରଣ କଲେ ତାହା ଦେଶର ସାହିତ୍ୟ ବିକାଶରେ ତଥା ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ୍ ନାଗରିକ ଜୀବନରେ ପ୍ରଭୁତ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରିବ ।

ବିଶ୍ଵମ୍ଭଦ

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ଶ୍ରୀଧର ମହାପାତ୍ର,

ସଭାପତି, ପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ ପ୍ରକାଶକ ସମିତି ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମୁଦ୍ରାକର ସଂଘର
କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ-ନିର୍ବାହକ ସଭାପତି ।

AN APPEAL
TO
THE CHIEF MINISTER
&
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, ORISSA

**To consider the serious evils of Nationalisation of
Text-Books—to the Education, Culture and
Literature of Our Nation and take
necessary remedial measures
forthwith.**

From :

**PUBLISHERS
PRINTERS
&
ORIYA WRITERS**

TO
THE CHIEF MINISTER & THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA, BHUBANESWAR

SIR,

We, the printers, publishers and writers of Orissa prayerfully submit before you the following facts about how the so-called nationalisation of text-books started by the previous Government is going to affect most adversely our literature, education and culture and above all, how it is going to wipe out of existence, for absolutely no fault of the publishers, an entire irreplaceable class of skilled and experienced people who have made glorious contributions to national development, for your sympathetic consideration and necessary action.

1. That the unjust and uncalled for *State-monopolisation of School Books* production having been taken up by the previous Government, all on a sudden, without ever consulting the Educationists of the land, was a sheer academic fraud foisted on the country under the pretext of re-organisation of syllabus and text-books, is proved beyond any doubt, by the fact, that not any experienced or specialised academician in the line, but an old Congress worker, who never had any association whatsoever with the Education Department, was put in charge of the whole organisation, to everybody's utter amazement. It was, it seems, to provide a job to a political worker the whole project was abruptly started, riding rough-shod over all educational, democratic, humanitarian and civilised principles. It behoves any civilised Government to give at least a chance to the supposed culprits to explain themselves. But here was a case of flagrant and culpable injustice committed by a Government in *snatching away the means of livelihood of a whole class of people* just because a Comrade had to be provided for.

2. That, this so-called nationalisation had not the blessing of a single educationist worth the name in our whole Republic and has been, on the other hand, vehemently opposed by that entire noble class, barring, may be a few, is a well-known fact. All the Vice-Chancellors of India assembled in New Delhi turned down even the late Prime Minister Nehru's suggestion that production of school text-books should be an exclusive State undertaking.

(Hindusthan Standard—Editorial)

3. That this uncalled-for and unjustified State monopoly of text-books abruptly initiated by Government in the most aggressive and dictatorial manner though vehemently opposed by educationists as stated above has already worked havoc in a vital sector of our national life, the present Government should realise betimes so that, the total consequences in no-distant future, may not turn out to be irrevocably disastrous for our culture and literature.

4. Sir, as a result of this uncalled-for State-venture nearly 100 private-owned printing presses, binding work-shops and type foundries in Orissa have closed down or are nearly closing throwing into unemployment about 3000 skilled workers all over the State whose plight at their middle ages, burdened with school-going children and ailing wives, with ever-spiralling costs of living can easily be imagined.

5. This has suddenly deprived also a slowly growing specialist class of writers of children literature in Orissa, of their eagerly looked-for annual earnings from the various publishers, and has thus helped in the very murder of children's literature in Orisa, none too rich or plentiful by the standards of neighbouring languages. This has surely affected also a large class of book-traders, printers and binders all over the State.

THE ONE INDUSTRY OF THE ORIAS

6. And let it be known also that printing and publishing was the one and only trade and industry that was solely in the hands of the poor and industrially and commercially backward Oriyas. What could therefore be said of a Government that has tried to kill this one industry in the State that was in the hands of the sons of the soil, all others being entirely controlled by outsiders, under the pretext of "nationalisation"? Surely, no project of the Government could logically be described as Nationalisation that not only kills outright a growing private industry, providing employment to thousands but irreparably damages also the healthy growth of the printing and publishing class, national literature and book-trade.

7. And Sir, the unkindest blow has fallen on the heads of the publishing class of Orissa, for absolutely no fault of theirs and in the most callous non-recognition of their contribution to the sum-total of Orissa's grand national culture. You will surely realise that the publishing class are no enemies of or parasites on the nation, when you take the total picture into consideration. Nor are they mere upstarts, having no roots in the intellectual or cultural soil of Orissa or of India. On the other hand, theirs is a most ancient tribe, whose patient labours could keep alive the great literary traditions of this sub-continent through thousands of years. If the Vedas and Upanishads or the creations of Kalidasa or Sankar or Jayadeva are still sung or recited or studied, valued and enjoyed today, due credit must go to the great anonymous band of scribes whose labours prepared millions of copies demanded by our reading public age after age. When the printing machine replaced the palm-leaf and the iron-styl, the present class of publishers replaced the scribes and have carried on their business most patriotically towards spread- ing and enriching the national literatures.

8. And with this printing and publishing business of Orissa, in particular, great names, such as that of Fakir Mohan Senapati, Nilamani Vidyaratna, Pandit Akula Misra and Govinda Rath and even of Gopabandhu Das are associated. In the joint-stock manner in which Gourishankar and Fakir Mohan started printing presses and publications in Cuttack and Balasore respectively in the last century, even British administrators such as T. E. Ravenshaw and John Beames got themselves associated with those ventures through monetary shares. It is through the agency of the Printing and Publishing class only that during the last hundred years, down to this day, all the modern as well as ancient poets, writers and novelists of Orissa have been ushered into the grand national arena and brought joy and glory to the whole nation.

9. Could it be the honest wish of a national Government, therefore, to kill outright this ancient and useful class of people of the nation which even a

foreign Government dared not do? After all, all the anti-British and anti-imperialistic literature, all those stirring poems in Oriya language were published by the publishers even when the British ruled this land. We too could humbly claim to have helped the Freedom-fight in our own unostentatious ways. But is this cold-blooded murder after independence the fit reward for all that?

10. Having accepted Democracy, it behoves us all also to behave as a really Democratic people and Government. This so-called nationalisation of school books, against the opinion of all educationists in India and Orissa, which have accepted Democracy as their sole political faith is, therefore most undesirable and most harmful at doing no good to anybody. Every body in this State knows what stuff the so called Orissa Sahitya Akademi has produced in the last ten years, at colossal State expenses which is only tax payers money. These are so unwanted that these cannot dare come to the open book-market and face the competition with the products of the maligned publishers neither in quality nor in price.

11. In a Democracy like ours where a new Government is expected every five-years through the ballot box, the school books as well as the syllabi may be liable to change every five years or even after much shorter periods, under successive new Ministers of Education. The present Government should, therefore, give due attention to the undesirability of the Party or personality-based projects started by the previous Governments.

12. It may surprise many, that world-famous publishers such as the MacMillan and the Longmans etc. of U.K. or Random House or McGraw Hill of U.S.A. while bringing out books of great writers invest quite a lot of their money and energy also on text-books in many lands, because quite a good bit of their financial resources, invested in general literatures comes really out of these well-prepared text-books. General literature is not so profitable a venture even in those advanced countries, as many people imagine. Hence, the publishers do try other ways, and text-book-production is a recognisedly respectable means with the entire publishing class all over the world.

And it is not only so with the publishing class in Orissa for all these hundred years and more but more delicate, precarious and losing. In our neighbouring states of Bengal or Andhra, general literatures are usually printed in 5000 copies editions, whereas in Oriya it is brought out in 1000 copies ✓ editions which takes 7 to 10 years to sell. Still if the nation enjoys the poems and novels of a Radhanath, a Madhusudan or a Fakirmohan today, it is because not the Government of Orissa but the humble publishers brought them out and they could take up those financial risks simply because, Text-books, with their large clientele compensated their small gains or even losses in those sectors. But entirely deprived now of their profits out of text-books by this, unjustified and uncalled for State-Monopolisation process, from where shall the publishers get the wherewithal for General literature? And the text-books having been snatched away by the Government, scores of printing presses in Cuttack and other cities of Orissa are already idle which means the death of an entire industry, so valuable to society for which the State can never set up proper substitutes, or recover the big economic loss of the Country as huge Capital invested in the printing presses will be idle.

In other words, our Government may be said to have taken a step that is most surely going to kill the free and natural flow of our literature. It is high time therefore, that this crippling measure were taken way in the interest of national literature alone.

13. It is needless to say that after complete monopolisation of text-books, the unfortunate publishers and printers may be forced to take to other trades very soon. But then, to whom will poets, writers and novelists of the land come, with their manuscripts as they have been doing? Literature, after all, is most essentially, a free enterprise. It thrives best in free climate and cannot be produced to State orders. As the "Hindu" of Madras has so wisely remarked "Books do not stand on the same footing as steel or electricity which are suited for manufacture in state factories." It has to be left to a special printing and publishing class and to the natural principle of demand and supply. And our Government supposed to be solemnly committed to Democracy has no moral justification whatsoever to take such measures as this monopolisation of Text-Books to kill outright the free intellectual growth in the land and start controlling literature and culture through its own agencies.

THE HOAX OF BETTER QUALITY AND CHEAPNESS

14. It is often argued that State-produced Text-Books shall be qualitatively better than those produced by the publishers and shall reach our children 'cheaper' also.

Qualitatively these State-produced books are no more than a miscellaneous hodgepodge. Thanks to repeated appeals in the Board of Primary Education, there is already a committee appointed to look into serious deficiencies already visible in these nationalised text-books. Regarding price, it may be said that publishers did not increase a single pie on the face value of text-books since 1960 though every other commodity in the country went up several times, and though their cost of production has gone up. Still they pay 20% royalty to the authors and 15% as trade discount, whereas the prices of monopolised text-books either by Government or Board of Secondary Education were increased despite their not paying a single pie as royalty and giving only 5% (Government publication), 7½% (Secondary Board publication) to trade, and to meet transit expenses the motusil retailers (not book sellers alone, even panwallas are allowed to purchase and sell these books) charge extra price at their sweet will on the face value of books according to demand and availability of stock. It is reported also that these books are sometimes sold at double the face value, which was never the case in respect of private publisher's text-books.

Unfortunately, in Orissa at least, both the arguments of quality and cheapness have been proved utterly false. And not the State-produced primary class books alone, but even those produced by the Board of Secondary Education and even by the Universities are a shame not only to the compilers as far as the quality of selections goes, but also to their printers for the horrible printing errors. There is no sense of personal responsibility in them all, lacking a private-publisher's total concerned interest and pride in his products. A private Publisher has the incentive of competition which the State or a Board just because of the artificial and FORCIBLE MONOPOLY has not, and no wonder therefore, that quality of products, unafraid of competition or structures, remains indifferent. We do hope that our Government could not be unaware of the

fact that even in the *Communist State* of Soviet Russia, China and Yugoslavia the principle of private ownership has at last been accepted, willy-nilly, after disastrous experiments in State monopolies, collectivisation and communes. Recently Soviet Russia is said to have introduced even the capitalistic Profit-motive in all their State enterprises.

Will our Government refuse to learn from the flagrant failures of other people in the same lines?

15. It is also too well known by now that in the post-independence India, all public ventures have not only turned out scandalous but have landed the nation in financial losses to the tune of thousands of crores of rupees. It is strange indeed that Governments that have failed so miserably in Steel and Cement, hope to be successful, of all things, in Book-production, as if producing books was much simpler than producing cement. In States like West Bengal, Gujrat, U.P. and Bihar, distribution of State-produced Text-books along with their uncertain publications, has also become scandalous.

16. It is also worth pointing out that no national paper of any standing has supported this measure. We have already quoted above the opinions of *Hindu* and *Hindustan Standard* of Calcutta who have spoken adversely in the matter and rightly has now the "Swarajya" (Nov. 12, 1967) of Orissa said as follows in its editorial comment:

"The harm already done to the nation by the chaotic conditions in the educational world of ours during the last few years, may not be remedied even in the next fifty years. The so-called nationalised text-books are rotten by any standard. We doubt, if ordinary publishers would have cared to submit such despicable stuff and whether the Education Deptt., would even have approved them at all. These are not only thoroughly condemnable on academic grounds, but seem to be bereft of any particular ideal whatsoever, and cannot be said also to possess any linguistic standard. We wonder if our Minister of Education, has given due attention that this vital matter deserves".

17. And we ASSERT also that the word "NATIONALISATION" is a thoroughly wrong phrase to use in this case as the project is and shall ever be doing untold harm to the nation and the State as a whole.

18. The State text-books, on the other hand, have not proved either cheaper, or qualitatively better as already stated above. Behind their supposedly nice get-up lie so many facts that are not at all commercially tenable. This is most unfair in comparison with what the publishers produced, forced as they were to work under many inhibitions, including even prices of our books. Nor were they fortunate enough to get Australian Paper and that too at no cost. It is to be considered also how long such gifts will last.

19. And it is highly wrong and unjustified to blame publishers also for the supposedly bad or unsatisfactory text-books. The D.P.I. under whose imprimatur only these books could ever hope to come to light, should accept all moral responsibility for these supposed wrongs which were never communicated to the publishers nor even discussed academically or professionally anywhere or any time. The publishers have always been eager to accept

In summing up our petition, we, therefore, appeal to you, Sir, to judge this vital national problem in an unbiased, unprejudiced and unpartisan manner, as well as, in true Democratic spirit. Free gifts of paper from Australia or of a printing press from West Germany cannot be the argument for adopting particular national policies that are likely to cripple our national literature, wipe out a whole class of most useful and experienced people in our society which can never be replaced by State officials and which will surely result also in bad education to generations of our children. Above all, State monopoly of school books and literature being well-known fascistic and communistic processes, as the means of indoctrination and brain-washing of the

SUMMARY

21. Besides all that are submitted in previous paragraphs, we may be permitted to mention a few words regarding introduction of regional language medium in higher studies. Mr. Sher Singh, Minister of State for Education of Government of India, educationists and national papers have declared in clear terms that introduction of regional language medium will not be possible within ten years' time if the publishers of the private sector do not co-operate. It is surprising, therefore, that if our Government is going to deprive the publishers of publishing school text-books by monopolising them either by themselves or through the Secondary Board, how would they expect their co-operation in college stages which will surely be a losing venture for negligible demand specially after having 4 Universities in this small and poor state?

20. And we challenge, even now, that according to the new syllabus also, the publishers can produce far better books than the nationalised ones, given the chance which may kindly be given, for at least fair play. And now that there are separate Boards of Primary and Secondary Education and separate D.P.T.s also for these sections, wrong text-books produced by any publisher cannot exist also for a day. But we are afraid that Government publications as such shall naturally remain even below commonplace, first because, there will be red-tape products and secondly because these will be safe from criticism, out of fear of official and ministerial wrath. Does Government really mean to build up a new nation on books produced on such impractical lines? That any learned and objective enquiry even shall condemn almost all of the text-books produced by the State and the Board and University, lacking intellectual integrity, sincerity, sense of responsibility, and above all any patriotic vision or clear academic objectives, we have not the slightest doubt about it.

Government's suggestions for improvement. Let there be an enquiry as to what suggestions of any of so many D.P.T.s were ever ignored by the publishers. And if there was corruption, the source was certainly in the D.P.T.'s office. And that the cancer of corruption is not altogether cleanly removed even by this much vaunted nationalisation process, can easily be traced to the plethora of unworthy pieces in the nationalised text-books from those who never had any celebrity as writers, carrying tell-tale indications. The publishers having all along prepared books, as directed by the D.P.T. and their books having reached school children only through the D.P.T.'s approval, it passes one's reasoning power, how the book-publishers could be blamed and butchered for whatever they were never responsible for, or for wrongs which were never explained to them.

entire nation, this ancient land of ours, famed all the world over, for freedom and brilliance of thought, having accepted Democracy as her way of existence in modern times, must not resort to such undemocratic ways in outright violation of our national commitments. We must follow the examples, in this matter, of our sister democracies of the world.

PRAYER

On all these considerations, therefore, we appeal to you, Sir, that in the name of justice and fair play, in the name of Democracy, in the name of healthy growth of free enterprises as an integral part of Democracy, in the name also of the future of our national literature and our future poets, writers and thinkers and in the name, lastly, of democratic education, you may kindly withdraw forthwith this undemocratic and unacademic measure of State Monopoly of text-books in Orissa and by the Board of Secondary Education thereby saving the whole class of writers, printers and publishers, binders and typographers who may justly claim to have kept alive the whole national literature so far from slow extinction. And we are confident that this act of grace and good judgment of yours, Sir, while providing the nation with better school books in all branches, shall also in the perspective of regional language being the medium for all national purposes, play a most vital role in the rapid development of Oriya language and literature as is being visualised by the Government of India.

Yours faithfully

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for Archana Press,
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