

Minutes of the meeting of the Project Approval Board (PAB) to consider proposals under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan held on 12.11.2009

The first meeting of the Project Approval Board (PAB) for Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan to consider the project proposals of Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh was held on 12.11.2009. Secretary (SE&L) chaired the meeting. A list of participants is at **Annexure –I**.

2. Strategy suggested by Appraisal Team

2.1. This being the first meeting of the PAB for RMSA, Secretary (SE&L) enquired about the general strategy adopted for appraisal of the proposals. Director (SE) clarified that since the appraising body, i.e., Technical Support Group (TSG) for RMSA is not yet in place, the appraisal has been attempted by the Ministry officials in consultation with the officials of Educational Planning Department of NUEPA. It was pointed out that the scheme is effectively at an inception stage and the State Governments need to build up capacities for a detailed District Level Planning based on school mapping. Besides, most of the states are not yet ready with state specific norms and parameters for diagnosis of secondary education. Therefore the appraisal team has recommended only those components for which clear norms and unit costs have been provided in the RMSA framework for implementation.

2.2. The appraisal team had recommended the following components for consideration of PAB:

- (i) Annual Maintenance Grant for all existing schools (restricted to 30% of the admissible amount).
- (ii) Grant for major and minor repair
- (iii) Sanctioning of new schools with two classrooms per schools to begin with
- (iv) In-service training of teachers
- (v) Residential quarter for teachers in remote areas
- (vi) Activities aimed at Special Focus Groups, Enrolment drive etc.
- (vii) Management cost @ 1.5% of the approved cost.

2.3. Additional facilities in existing schools are need-based and can be decided only after a detailed analysis of existing facilities. Posts for additional teachers have not been recommended in the current year as the requirement will depend on existing norms of state governments.

3. General decisions of PAB for the year 2009-10

3.1. No. of classrooms in new schools: JS(SE) suggested that new schools should generally have 4 sections at the rate of 2 sections in each class so that the school will be viable in terms of pupil-teacher ratio. It is important to plan on the basis of the whole school concept and State governments should set up these schools in areas where sufficient number of class VIII graduates to fill up two sections in each class is available. This was supported by the State Secretaries present. Secretary (SE&L) also felt that the whole school concept has considerable merit. **PAB therefore decided to recommend new/ upgraded schools with 4 classrooms (two sections each in class IX and X), subject to having adequate no. of students passing out of class VIII from the catchment area.**

3.2. Additional teachers:

- (i) **New Schools:** Secretary (SE&L) stated that posts of teachers as per State norms should be sanctioned while approving the new schools. While it is true that no teacher would be appointed in the current financial year and no grant may be required during the current year, the posts should be sanctioned along with the civil component of the school, as the framework clearly envisages additional teachers for newly sanctioned schools. Besides, this would also enable the State governments to start the recruitment process. **PAB therefore decided to sanction teachers' posts as per State norms while sanctioning of new schools.**
- (ii) **Existing Schools:** State government representatives, particularly from Punjab and Mizoram, vehemently requested for sanctioning of the additional posts in existing schools to improve pupil teacher ratio. Secretary (SE&L) felt that this should be done after the State norms and the existing sanctioned strength are carefully examined.

3.3. Annual School Grant: Annual school grant is provided for the following three activities,

- (i) Rs.25,000 for repair/ replacement of laboratory equipments and purchase of lab consumables.
- (ii) Rs.10,000 for purchase of books, periodicals, newspapers etc.
- (iii) Rs.15,000 for water, electricity charges etc.

It was decided to sanction the first two sub-items in full as these are not in the nature of payment, while restricting item (iii) to Rs 5000 as only 4 months of the year would be left. **PAB therefore, decided to approve Rs. 40,000/- (water & electricity charges restricted to Rs. 5,000/- and amount for purchase of periodicals etc. restricted to Rs. 5000/-) per school as annual school grant during the current year.**

3.4. Major and minor repair:

(i) **Major Repair:** The appraisal team submitted that there was lack of clarity among the State governments regarding the nature of major repair. While the framework envisages this as an one time grant amounting up to Rs.2 lakh per school for two section schools and up to Rs.4.00 lakh per school for four section schools, most of the State governments have proposed the grant on 'per classroom basis'. Besides requirement for such activity will obviously vary from one school to another. However, it is observed that most State governments have proposed a uniform amount for all schools, which only indicates that the projection is based without any assessment of school specific requirement. State governments also need to develop well defined criteria for selecting schools for major renovation as relatively older schools should be given preference for this. **PAB therefore decided not to approve this component unless a very clear cut proposal with school specific assessment has been submitted by the State government.**

(ii) **Minor Repair:** As regards grant for minor repair, PAB felt that most government schools are in dire need of such grant, as State governments are hardly spending any money except for teachers' salary in existing schools. As a result even essential activities requiring little expenditure like white washing, repair of toilet, water tank and fittings, electrical fittings etc often remain unattended. **PAB therefore recommended grant for minor repair @ Rs.25,000 for all government schools having existing building.**

3.5. In service training of teachers: PAB decided to approve the number of teachers based on the preparedness and capacity of State governments to train teachers during the remaining part of the year.

3.6. Strengthening of existing secondary schools: The appraisal team suggested that requirement for additional classrooms, laboratories, computer room, drinking water facilities etc. can be worked out only after district level planning after assessing the existing and required facilities at school level. Most State governments have not come up with such proposal. PAB agreed that it would be difficult to approve this component unless the proposal is prepared after taking into account existing facilities in the school as part of district level planning. Secretary (SE&L) stated that if the State governments are able to furnish details quickly, the same may be considered in the next PAB. She desired that a suitable proforma may be developed and circulated to the State governments quickly.

3.7. Relaxation of limit for civil work:

(i) Para 7.2 and 7.3 of the framework for implementation provides as under,

‘7.2 Programme funds on Civil Work should not exceed the ceiling of 33% of the entire project cost approved by the PAAC. The allocation for civil works will not exceed 33% of the approved Perspective Plan. The ceiling of 33% would apply on the entire project cost based on the Perspective Plan prepared for the period till 2011-12. However, in a particular year’s Annual Plan, provision for civil works can be considered up to 40% of the Annual Plan expenditure depending upon the priorities assigned to various components of the scheme in that year within the overall project ceiling of 33%.

7.3 Each State must formulate a strategy for repair. This expenditure will not be included for calculation of the 33% ceiling on civil works.’

- (ii) The appraisal team submitted that given the need for creating the enabling conditions for take-off of the RMSA, and keeping in view the need for expansion and quality improvement facilities of existing secondary schools/sections, a conscious suggestion has been made that the budget allocation for meeting non-recurring expenditure, particularly, civil works proposed in the State annual Plans, may be permitted to exceed the specified ceiling mentioned in the RMSA Framework for Implementation. Considering that no teachers’ salary is going to be released during the current year, the major project cost is bound to be non recurring in nature.
- (iii) Secretary (SE&L) agreed with the need to relax the limit in the first year, and suggested an appropriate proposal for requisite relaxation may be moved for approval of HRM subject to ratification in National Mission later.

4. State Specific Proposals

With the above approach, PAB proceeded to examine the proposals of various State governments.

RAJASTHAN

4.7 Rajasthan

(i) A presentation for State Project for RMSA was made by Principal Secretary (Education) and Director (Secondary Education), Govt of Rajasthan. The salient features of the proposal are:

- The GER for secondary stage as in September 2008 was 49.38%, which the State government targets to enhance to 65% by 2012 and to 85% by 2017.
- There is considerable gender gap at secondary stage, the GER for girls was only 37.09% as against 60.48% for boys. The gender gap is quite pronounced in all segments of population
- Although SCs and STs are behind the overall GER, the gap is less pronounced as compared to gender. One interesting finding is that GER for STs (46.61%) is higher than that of SCs (43.31%)
- Total no of teachers in secondary schools in 2008-09 was 63,515, withy female teachers accounting for only 21.35%.
- The transition rate from class VIII to class IX was 74.38%, as against the national average of 86%.
- The State government is running a large number of scheme in secondary education including Vidyarthi Mitras (kind of para teachers), several girls specific incentives etc.

(ii) It was observed that no. of government secondary schools in the state has more than doubled from 3096 in 2007-08 to 6277 in 2008-09. Director (Secretary Education), Rajasthan clarified that this was primary due to upgradation of more than 3000 upper primary schools in 2008-09. He requested for infrastructure support, including sanctioning of teacher's posts, for these schools under RMSA. Secretary (SE&L) stated that as the schools had been upgraded by the State government prior to launching of RMSA scheme, teachers for these schools cannot be sanctioned under RMSA. However, strengthening of infrastructure may be considered subject to viable proposal as per the norms for existing secondary schools.

(iii) Dir(SE), Rajasthan also stated that recently the State government has also decided to set up one secondary school in every Gram Panchayat, as a result of which a large number of schools are likely to be upgraded soon. He enquired whether these schools can be covered under RMSA.

(iv) JS(SE) stated that schools are to be upgraded based on spatial planning or mapping exercise. State government can send a proposal based on school mapping for upgradation/ setting up of new schools which will be given due consideration. Secretary (SE&L) stated that the proposal regarding setting up of new schools in Rajasthan will be taken up only after receipt of a proposal based on school mapping.

(v) After examining the annual work plan of the State government, PAB approved the following,

- Annual school grant @ Rs.40,000 per school for 6315 government secondary schools (3096 schools existing in 2007-08 and 3219 higher secondary schools with secondary classes). The schools upgraded in 2007-08 were not sanctioned any Annual School Grant as these schools are still functioning in upper primary school building. Similarly, the 63 Sanskrit schools were also not sanctioned school grant.
- Minor repair grant @ Rs.25,000 per school for 6315 government secondary schools.
- In service training of teachers for 15,000 teachers.

(vi) The State government will submit a list of new/ upgraded schools district-wise as per the number sanctioned by the PAB. The State government was advised to accord priority to setting up of new / upgraded schools in minority concentration areas, and also to given due priority to SC/ST concentration areas. Being a State with high tribal population, State government was also advised to consider upgradation of Ashram schools wherever possible.

(vii) As regards strengthening of existing secondary schools, the State government was advised to submit a detailed proposal with a district-wise list of schools to be strengthened indicating existing facilities in the school and additional facilities to be provided. A format for this purpose will be made available by MHRD.

(viii) The Principal Secretary, Govt of Rajasthan stated that the state government would like to submit a proposal for skill development and also for children with special needs. JS(SE) clarified that there is a separate scheme for mainstreaming the education of children with special needs and such proposal may be considered under that scheme. The State government representative stated that these are special schools exclusively meant for children with special needs. JS(SE) clarified that such special schools come under the domain of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

(ix) Considering the huge gender disparity at secondary stage, the State government was also advised to submit proposal for gender specific interventions.

4.8. Management and Monitoring Cost: The PAB approved 1.5% over and above the total proposals approved for each State for Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MMER) activities. Each State is to formulate a detailed work plan for these activities and spend the money accordingly.

4.9. Total Proposal Approved: A summary of proposals approved for 7 States is at **Annexure –II**. As may be seen total proposals worth Rs 652.70 crore including 1.5% for MMER activities has been approved for 7 States. The estimated Central share is Rs 489.53 crore.

5. General Issues

(i) JS(SE) advised all State governments to put in serious thought in perspective planning process. He clarified that the perspective plan document has to indicate at least three clear timelines for achieving important targets,

- For 2011-12 - end of 11th Five Year Plan,
- For 2013-14 - end of 5 years from the scheme commencement

- For 2016-17- end of 12th Five Year plan

(ii) Besides, clear strategy for achieving the target will have to be indicated in the perspective plan document.

(iii) All State governments are also required to list out the reform initiatives and the action taken in this regard. In particular the following areas need to be focussed:

- Curricular reform
- School governance reform
- Examination reform
- Classroom transactions

(iv) JS(SE) also advised the State governments to constitute a small committee, if required, for carrying out the perspective plan exercise in a time-bound manner. Mizoram, in response informed that a State Education Reforms Commission has been constituted, recently under the Chairmanships of a renowned educationist and their report was expected in 3 months time.

(v) In order to prepare a comprehensive perspective plan next year, all state governments were also advised to:

- Consolidate all existing norms in secondary education
- Indicate norms for teacher per secondary school
- Develop norms in case norms are not in existence

(vi) For preparation of a better annual plan document, State governments were advised to provide due attention to:

- Proper diagnosis of the secondary education situation based on available data and information, particularly SEMIS;
- A proper method for projection of school age population for estimation of key performance indicators of participation in secondary education;
- Consistency in reporting data and information in the plan document;
- Proper presentation of tables and diagrams with captions and sources;
- Discussion on the criteria/norms and methods for proposing various requirements, including Upgradation of UPS to secondary schools, and additional teachers;
- Establishing linkages between various Chapters in the Annual Plan; and
- Proper organization and presentation of budget estimates.

(vii) All State governments were also advised to submit society details, Bond, Resolution, Authorization Letter etc without delay so that the fund approved can be released immediately and the State governments have maximum time to implement the programme during the current year.

(viii) Representative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj requested for ensuring centrality to Panchayati Raj Institutions in implementation of the scheme. Secretary (SE&L) stated that it is not for individual scheme to ensure centrality to PRIs, rather it is for the State governments to bring about such centrality. Besides, Ministry of Panchayati Raj also needs to clarify what has been done on their part to persuade State governments to ensure such centrality to PRIs.

6. The proposal for institutionalization of SEMIS in NUEPA

(i) NUEPA has been entrusted with the responsibility to undertake a project on mapping provisions in secondary and higher secondary schools and also to develop a comprehensive database in respect of secondary education. This mapping exercise and development of a reliable database for secondary schools in line with DISE system in elementary education, called Secondary Education Management and Information System (SEMIS), is of critical importance to planning and identification of shortfall in secondary education, particularly for the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan. The mapping exercise requires survey of all recognized secondary and higher secondary schools using a structured Data Capture Format for preparing a base line status report and operationalising a comprehensive Secondary Education Management and Information System (SEMIS).

(ii) More than 30 States/UTs have frozen data, as on 30.9.2007, in respect of all secondary/ higher secondary schools under SEMIS. Collection of data as on 30.09.2009 is under way at present.

(iii) NUEPA has submitted a proposal to augment hardware and software facilities and manpower for management of SEMIS as was done for DISE. The total estimated requirement during the 11th Five Year Plan works out to be Rs 2.61 crore and the same for the remainder of the current year is Rs 68.41 lakh.

(iv) It was observed that :

- SEMIS is extremely critical to the success of RMSA, and it is the basis on which the entire planning process for RMSA is dependent and would require a continuous and constant upgradation/ upkeep of data for successful running of the scheme. NUEPA has spent the initial amount for rolling out of SEMIS and it may not be possible for them to do so year after year without support from external sources and this Ministry should be ideal choice for funding the programme considering the sensitivity involved. External agencies have been offering support to fund such programme, which NUEPA has been declining.
- The SEMIS also forms an integral part of the scheme approved by EFC and the Cabinet. It should be ideal to fund it from the planning perspective of RMSA, since the SEMIS is also a project mode of activity and should last till RMSA as a project lasts.
- Besides funding of RMSA or by NUEPA out of its own plan budget, does not amount to anything different, since NUEPA is dependent on Ministry for funding of his activities.
- The requirements projected for SEMIS are in line with DISE. In fact requirements are slightly on lower side as compared to DISE.

(v) Considering the above, PAB approved the proposal in principle for the 11th Five Year Plan and expenditure of Rs 68.41 lakh during the current year. NUEPA will submit a proposal with detailed financial estimates for 2010-11 and 2011-12 for consideration of PAB at the appropriate time.

(vi) The expenditure for this purpose will be met out of the MMER fund available at the Central level.

7. **Ratification of TSG for RMSA:** The proposal to set up a Technical Support Group (TSG) for RMSA as already approved by IFD was ratified by PAB.

8. Secretary (SE&L) stated that the proposals have been approved after careful scrutiny and IFD should not sit in judgement of the decisions taken in the collective wisdom of the PAB.

9. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Annexure- I

List of Participants

1. Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary,
Department of School Education & Literacy,
Ministry of Human Resource Development,
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
2. Shri S.C. Khuntia, Joint Secretary,
Department of School Education & Literacy,
Ministry of Human Resource Development,
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3. Shri K. Satish Nambudiripad, Director,
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Ministry of Human Resource Development,
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
4. Shri S.R. Dhall, Director (Finance),
Department of School Education & Literacy,
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5. Shri Bhaskar Dasgupta,
Under Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy,
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6. Shri Sanjay Kumar, DO (Finance),
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NUEPA

7. Dr. S.M.I.A. Zaidi,
Professor & Head,
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8. Dr. K. Biswal,
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9. Dr. N. K. Mohanty,
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NUEPA, New Delhi

NCERT

10. Shri M. V. Srinivasan,
DESSH, NCERT.
New Delhi.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj

11. Representative of Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Govt. of Mizoram

12. Shri K. Riachho,
Secretary (School Education),
Govt. of Mizoram, Aizawl
13. Shri Robert R.Royte, OSD,
School Education, Govt. of Mizoram,
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Govt. of Chhattisgarh

14. Shri Nand Kumar,
Secretary (School Education),
Govt. of Chhattisgarh,
Raipur
15. Shri K. R. Pisda, Director,
Public Instruction,
Govt. of Chhattisgarh.
16. Dr. Yogesh Sheohare,
Deputy Director,
RMSA, Govt of Chhattisgarh

Govt. of Uttar Pradesh

17. Shri Jitendra Kumar,
Secretary,
Department of Secondary Education,
Govt. of U.P
18. Dr. Vikrama Jeet Tiwari,
Special Secretary,
Department of School Education,
Govt. of U.P, Lucknow.
19. Shri Sarvendra Vikram Singh, Addl.Director,
Directorate of Secondary Education,
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Govt. of Tamil Nadu

20. Shri R. Venkatesan,
SPD/SSA,
Govt of Tamil Nadu.
21. Dr. P. Perumal Swamy,
Director of School Education,
Govt. of Tamil Nadu.
22. Shri S. Karmegam,
Joint Director(HE),
Govt. of Tamil Nadu.

Govt. of Punjab

23. Shri Krishan Kumar,
Director General,
School Education, Govt. of Punjab.
24. Ms. Kul Mohan Sood,
Deputy Director, SSA,
Punjab.

Govt. of Kerala

25. Shri James Varghese,
Secretary, Gen Education,
Govt of Kerala.
26. Ms. Tinku Biswal,
Special Officer,
RMSA, Govt. of Kerala.

Govt. of Rajasthan

27. Shri Lalit K. Panwar,
Principal Secretary,
School Education, Govt. of Rajasthan.
28. Shri Bhaskar A. Sawant,
Director, Secondary Education & SPD,
Govt. of Rajasthan.
29. Shri Ramesh Chandra Sharma,
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