

**By Sidharth Mishra**



Last week the Delhi's Finance Minister Manish Sisodia presented budget in assembly where he claimed a hike on the allocations in the education sector. The Delhi Government has for the past six years made many a claims of spending on education but unfortunately it has so far failed to show on the ground.

It's matter of record that in the past six years, Delhi Government has failed to open any new school or college in the national Capital. What it has done is the retrofitting of the government school, which in natural course is undertaken by any government unless its

an anarchic establishment like the one run by Lalu Prasad-Rabri Devi for many years in the state of Bihar.

On a more serious count, Arvind Kejriwal government has also failed to procure private capital invested in the field of higher education. The Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPIU) which over the past two decades has emerged a major hub of professional education the national Capital, has seen no growth during the term of the present government.

Worse is the case of Delhi University, which has 12 colleges funded by the Delhi Government. While the hoary university has its many problems thanks to the lack of vision on the party of the Union Education Ministry, the matters have been worsened by the fork-tongued Education and Finance Minister of Delhi Government Manish Sisodia.

The teachers and the employees of Delhi University had to go on a shutdown last week to force the Delhi Government release salary grant for the last quarter of the financial year, which has seen several delays in the release of salary all through the Covid time. While Sisodia ordered release of salary, he also claimed that he was ordering a probe into the misuse of funds, probably indicating that in future too he would delay grants.

Nothing could be more ironic for the teachers and the students of a much-respected university, which has to go on frequent strikes and shutdowns to get their minimum due from a government which talks of putting focus on education. For the past one years, Sisodia has ordered several rounds of probe into the finances of these colleges and has so far failed to unearth anything substantial.

The misery of the teachers was evident in a recent note on social media by a college teacher which mentioned that it was strange that whenever there was an action programme or a High Court directive, Delhi Government released salary. The message bemoaned the fact that teachers have to fight each time to get their due salary and notes in the same vein that till October 2019 there was no problem with release of grant.

These teachers are caught in a cleft stick with their future not too assured. On the one hand the Atm-Nirbhar central government has no plans to take over these university colleges, on the other Delhi Government wants to fund only such institutions which are under the aegis of the state universities. It has recently taken over the historic College of Art and put it under Ambedkar University of Delhi and nobody has complained about it.

It's moral duty of the Visitor of Delhi University that is the President through the Union Education Ministry to ensure that the colleges under it remain functional. It cannot shirk its responsibility. The new vision of education, announced last years by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, in search of Atm-Nirbharta (self-reliance) should not leave the colleges orphaned fending for survival with no support from anywhere whatsoever.

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