

WEST BENGAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR'S ASSOCIATION (WBCUPA)

'AN APPEAL'

All teachers and educationists of our state who favor democracy and all people's rights to education are hereby beckoned to join under the flag of WBCUPA

Dear Friends,

You all know already that the long ruling left front regime has been defeated by democratic exercise of electoral right through ballot boxes. Even though our beloved state was once considered to be leading in education, in the last 34 years of misrule by the left front Government West Bengal has fallen back in all fields like education, health, culture, trade and industry, and agriculture, by several decades.

Especially a rapid decline in standards, corruption and narrow political favoritism was evident in the field of Higher Education. It has resulted in the spiritual and intellectual depletion of the people of Bengal.

All appointment of teachers from the Primary to Class IV staff to the appointment of Vice Chancellors in Universities have been controlled by party politics. In every case they have ensured self-aggrandizing personal advancement both for financial gain and for influencing matters of administration.

As a result:

- Government colleges have been irrevocably transformed into cradles of inefficiency
- Promotions have been awarded as reward for allegiance and Transfers have been given punishment for contradicting the diktat of the then ruling party, especially by CPIM.
- Even in Government aided colleges shameless political interference and militant student politics and appointment of teachers and non-teaching staff with the help of political favoritism - has resulted in the creation of an insufferably hostile and frightening environment in education
- An inimical environment has been created in a conscious and calculated manner - even independent, impartial members of the academic community were forced to accept the dictates of left-front cadre. Behind all the fear, the allurements and administrative tyranny of the left front the message perhaps was that given by organized criminals as in Tapan Sinha's film *Atanka* "Mastermoshai, You have not seen anything". Exactly this was the manner in which the voice of the conscience was silenced. Protests were muted. The freedom of critics endangered. Protesters had to abscond to save themselves or were killed and transformed into human skeletons.
- The then only representative teachers' body, the "**West Bengal College and University Teachers' Association**" or WBCUTA gradually became an organ of party politics, and a party office itself from the 1980s onwards. They were led by the political leaders of their friendly Left-front Government; they became the latter's flatterers and sycophants.
- The so called Revolutionary leadership remained obsessed with service towards their superior comrades. That they had to preserve the friendly government like the apple of their eye was their only concern.
- The WBCUTA has done nothing to redress or rectify the condition of education as well as the teachers in the state barring a mere issue of a couple of press statements here and there. In many instances they tried to deflect the direction of teachers' movement; they capitalized on the fears and apprehensions of our humble teachers to further their selfish interests and aggrandize themselves in the hierarchy of educational administration. Does not the teachers' movement of the nineties merely expose this blatant truth about academic politics?
- These self-centered teachers' representatives have for month after month, and year after year extorted money from the fees of teachers either directly or indirectly by means of persuasion. A huge amount of money that has been amassed by the organization to build their own office-building- where is the account for this money? How many more long years should we have to wait for the completion of this 'bhavan'. The money that has been collected from every college in the name of annual conventions remains unaccounted. Will our colleagues at WBCUTA ever speak out about the destiny of this money?
- In all the PTTI and B.Ed Colleges of the state, and in all the good colleges several formidable problems have reared their heads. Several problems have risen out of the condition of Contractual Teachers, Part-Time Teachers and Guest Lecturers associated with higher education yet no concrete steps have been taken to resolve the problems. All outstanding issues are consequences of academic maladministration.
- On the contrary the **present Government** carrying, as it does, a **burden of loan of Rupees Two Hundred Thousand Crores** on its shoulder has never ever tried to evade the grave responsibility it inherited from the former regime. Indeed the current Government of the "**Ma - Mati - Manush**", has acknowledged the debt to teachers and paid off all their outstanding dues since August 2010. We humbly ask you to consider that the date, August 2010 falls in the tenure of the former left-front Government. This is a piece of objective information and cannot be altered or challenged by WBCUTA.
 - The long -awaited CAS - the Career Advancement Scheme - of promotion has been ordered for implementation from November 2012. The Finance Minister of our Government who is committed to *paribartan* has declared this already. That this will benefit an enormous number of teachers there is no doubt. The role of the last Government in this comparison has been either minimal or negligible. In May of 2011 a government with the vision and humanism

of the mother, the land and the people of our magnificent state has been elected to power and has made it possible to dislodge the unmoving rock of a leftist Government. The hostile environment in colleges across the state has been disappeared. Democracy has been established. Various media are scrupulously discussing the policies and decisions of educationists and intellectuals who have come out in support of the new Government. Where did this free and open society exist in the last three decades? Even a couple of years back? No one had the courage to say anything if men and women were to vanish in cartoons and posters, let alone in real life. And every other leader or spokesman of political parties now moves around with print and electronic media behind him. So much so that they can even vitiate the culture of decent opposition, even to the detriment of their own existence as democratically minded intellectuals. We therefore appeal not to hide a face behind a mask, but to come out and join hands together and in unison because only you can support and uphold our movement. And in this context, already you must be knowing that this scenario has led to the emergence of a new organization of teachers of colleges and universities, The *“West Bengal College and University Professors’ Association” (WBCUPA)*

We, therefore, fervently appeal to all of you with warm welcome for your active participation in this association of good teachers with an objective to our ultimate goal.

But therefore we must say:

- ✓ It is necessary to have allegiance for democracy, secularism, nationalism and social idealism
- ✓ We cannot remain beholden to a path of violent and bloody agitation
- ✓ We are committed to the multicultural nation and the high ideas of national integration
- ✓ We believe that all heinous attempts to vitiate and pollute the environment of true and enduring education should be thwarted in order to establish the free and fair ideals of an apolitical and party-less academy so that a comprehensive and functional system of education is set in place
- ✓ We are duty-bound to protect the professional interests and rights of teachers. That we shall remain committed to the free and honest accomplishment of teachers’ rights
- ✓ The struggle for establishment of righteous dignity and identity of teachers shall be conducted democratically on the basis of discussions and consensus of opinion
- ✓ Recognition of the close connection between democracy and party politics in our nation shall not prevent us from visualizing and founding an education free from business interest and interference of political parties.
- ✓ We are committed to adopt a positive approach towards the development of research and higher education in our state. In this relation we fully support the constructive steps taken by the Government of West Bengal for development and achievement of excellence in education.

We are therefore making this humble appeal to all the teachers and educationists of West Bengal to join WBCUPA and enroll with a membership in order to make a tangible contribution towards the development of our state.

- *‘Jai Hind’*
- *‘Bande Mataram’*

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