

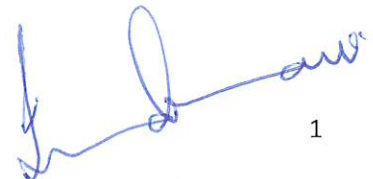
**Minutes of the Review Committee Meeting of National Talent Search Scheme  
Held on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2021**

A Review Committee Meeting of National Talent Search Scheme (NTSS) was held on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 in blended mode (Online at <https://meet.google.com/fyg-zbmv-ica> and Offline at the Conference Room, Zakir Hussain Block, NIE, New Delhi). The meeting was chaired by Prof. Sridhar Srivastava, Director (I/c) and Joint Director, NCERT, New Delhi. The list of committee members present in the meeting and who could not attend the meeting is placed at *Annexure – I*.

Prof. Indrani Bhaduri, Professor and Head, Educational Survey Division welcomed the chairperson Prof. Sridhar Srivastava and all the distinguished members of the Review Committee of NTSS. She informed the house that the purpose of this Review Committee Meeting is to seek their expert opinion, critical comments and suggestions for the enhancement in the modalities and processes of the NTS Schemes. Prof. Indrani then gave a brief about the history of scheme and how various changes have been done with time in the scheme.

After a round of introduction of the esteemed members, Prof. Sridhar Srivastava in his opening remarks highlighted the issues and challenges regarding less representation of girls and students from rural areas. He expressed his concern about the influence of coaching culture and the lack of awareness among the parents. He also desired that NTSS awardees should do high quality research in science, humanities and allied areas.

Major Harsh Kumar, Secretary, NCERT informed the house of the various issues and cases that are coming related to the Stage-I examination and requested the committee to deliberate and suggest measures, if any, that can be useful in a better conduct of the examinations at the state level. Then Dr. Sukhvinder presented few insights from the data pertaining to NTS Examination 2020 and highlighting striking imbalance based on gender, location and regional in selection of NTS scholars nationwide. After the general discussion on some of the issues that were flagged, the



following general suggestions and comments were made by various members.  
Suggestion points by the esteem members for the enhancement of the scheme:

- it is desirable that the identification of talents commences at a much early stage i.e., class V and VIII in multi-level as done by other countries across the globe;
- taking measure to cultivate talent by organising summer camps in individual subjects at state/national levels for the students since it provide opportunity to learn from other students, besides the experts and mentors;
- scheme could be linked with the NITI Aayog Atal Tinkering Lab to reach even the remotest places of the country;
- explore social media, video clips with celebrities especially women role models in rural areas to popularise the scheme among the girls;
- extend the SAT into different discipline including vocational subject so that the scheme may attract more talent from different discipline and also from rural areas; and
- consider linking the NTSS web portal with the National Scholarship web portal.

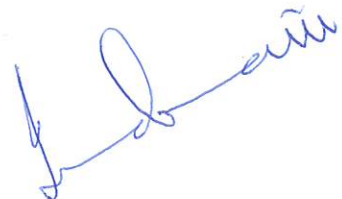
Comments on the agenda points are as below:

Agenda 1 **To enhance the pattern of existing NTSS Stage II level:** Existing pattern of the NTSS Stage II Level – test paper has multiple choice questions (MCQ) with four distracters including a key. It is proposed to adopt the pattern of MCQ with more than four distracters having more than one key instead of four distracters with single key.

#### **Comments and suggestions**

The committee suggested following points

- to adopt the pattern of more than one correct key but limit the number of such question to 10-15% questions;
- to adopt different levels of MCQs, for eg. MCQ with eight distracters and more than one key, by providing more time and marks. Such type of questions may help in identifying real talent;
- to reduce number of questions from present number, if above pattern accepted;
- there should be Partial Credit System in MCQs;
- to think out of regular box by including some innovative or creative pattern by posing questions based on case studies / unseen passages;
- Some committee members had suggested considering the negative marking, as it would be helpful in weeding out the entry of candidates by luck.



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Agenda 2: **To develop a system for Students and Result Management for States:**

At the State level NTSS Stage I examination, a lot of discrepancies happened regarding students' personal information, etc. as well as NTSS Stage I examination result. In such situation, parents/students approaches to the NCERT to rectify their problems and also submit their request before the honourable Court of Law. Since the NTSS Stage I examination is conducted by States only and NCERT has never interfered in their jurisdiction. To have a more standardized manner of receiving the data from the state, it is proposed to develop a Students' and Result Management System for all States where they can enter the students' information and other details in the structured format. For result of Stage I examination, the system will generate the result of the state according to their allocated students' quota of that respective state including distribution of students' result by general, SC, ST, OBC – NCL, PWD and EWS category.

**Comments and suggestions**

The system will help to reduce the human error and grievances appearing at the state level. The system will help to maintain the standardised database for next level. It is suggested to add the Aadhar of the students in the database so that it can be helpful in future. Hence, recommended.

Agenda 3: **Issue related to result processing**

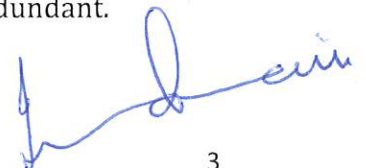
(i) While processing NTS Stage II results, it may happen that certain questions are to be dropped from scoring in such case we need to take decision that whether we need to give bonus marks to all students or to give from the arrived total score. *For example, if a candidate score marks (out of 100), in MAT – 99 and in SAT 96 where in MAT 01 item is dropped and SAT 04 items are dropped due to some reason.*

(ii) Passing minimum marks are 32 and 40 for SC/ST/PH and General/OBC/EWS candidates, respectively. While arriving sometime 40% of 96 = 38.4 and 40% of 99 = 39.6 (for example). Do we have to round off marks to the next nearest whole number (39 and 40) or round off to the nearest digit (38 and 39), respectively.

**Comments and suggestions**

It is recommended that

- (i) to give respective bonus marks to all students; and
- (ii) if (i) exists then there is no need for (ii), it will be redundant.



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- Agenda 4: **Inclusivity in the process of talent search:** It is noticed that in last five years the participation of girls' students and students from rural areas in the NTSE Stage II examination is very less. Hence it is requested to the committee to give their valuable suggestions or comments how to increase their participation in the examination.

**Comments and suggestions**

The committee members suggested to conduct more awareness programmes by NCERT as well as States/Union Territories and also more frequently in different places in the States/UTs. Constitute a sub-committee to collaborate with other organisations/institutions to popularize the scheme. It is also suggested to significantly increase the number of students who can participate in the test at stage II. At present ratio of selection of awardees at Stage II is 1:4(roughly). It was strongly advocated to be increased to 1:8 or 1:10 and this suggestion was welcomed by almost all the members and unanimously passed.

- Agenda 5: **Improvement of MAT/SAT at State Level:** A qualitative analysis of the NTSS question papers received from the states shows that they are usually based on content directly rather than on its application. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) also suggests that the questions need to be more competency based.

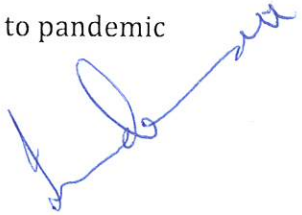
**Comments and suggestions**

Organise workshops and conduct intensive capacity building programmes for selected teachers from the states/UTs to help them to design good and quality items/questions especially for NTSS examination at state level.

- Agenda 6: **Feasibility of conducting NTSS Stage II level in online mode:** Now a day, every examination is being organized in online mode. It helps to quicken the examination process and to reduce to human error associated. Hence it is proposed that NTSS may be conducted online with the requisite measure.

**Comments and suggestions**

It is recommended to adopt NTSS Stage II in online mode due to pandemic situation if feasible.

  
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Agenda 7: **Conducting NTSS Stage II Level at different cities instead of number of centres at a single place:**

**Comments and suggestions**

The members unanimously recommended to increase number of examination centre in the states so that students especially girls and those from the rural students can easily participate in the examination.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Dr. Vishal D. Pajankar.



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