

CORRESPONDENCE

GEOLOGY INTRODUCED AS AN OPTIONAL SUBJECT IN SCHOOLS IN RAJASTHAN

Ultimately, a geologically very important state in India has agreed to include geology as an optional subject in the school curriculum. Government of Rajasthan in its recent letter No.3(9) Edu-6/2002 dated 1st July 2005, permitted the Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan to start geology as an optional subject in Senior Secondary Schools of the state in class XI and XII under the Faculty of Arts.

The Government of the largest State of the country, officials in the Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan and State Institution of Educational Research and Training and the Geoscience Community of the state made vigorous efforts, in the hour of need especially when the state is facing water and power crisis in addition to the apex court of the country imposing and lifting bans on mining in the Aravalli.

Teething troubles are inevitable, as the subject has been clubbed with the Faculty of Arts. Efforts are being made to introduce geology both in the Faculty of Arts as well as in the Faculty of Science. Inclusion of this subject in class XI and XII in the Faculty of Arts is likely to create a problem when these students will seek admission to the First Degree Course i.e. B.A. or B.Sc. They will not get admission to the B.Sc. course because they did not have other two science subjects like Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Biology etc, at class 12 which is the minimum requirement for the admission. On the other hand these students with Geology at 12th class will not get admission to the B.A. Pass Course because of the fact that at present nowhere in the country this subject is being taught in the Faculty of Arts.

Another option is that Geology is introduced in the Faculty of Science also at the school level. In that case admission to B.Sc. Pass and Honours courses will not be a problem. But we anticipate another problem of Indian

parents. Parents of class XI and XII students in this country nowadays are desperate to get their wards admitted to Medical, Engineering or other similar professional courses. In such a situation geology will be their last priority that will give a big set back to the efforts made by a number of people. Some solution to this problem is to be evolved. One possibility is that a provision be made for students passing their Senior Secondary Examination with Geology as one of the optional subjects are also eligible to get admission in Engineering Courses which have a close affinity with Earth Science like Mining Engineering, Environment Engineering, Metallurgical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Exploration Engineering, Industrial Production Engineering and Structural Engineering etc.

In the present scenario geology curriculum as a whole requires an overhauling for all the courses right from school level to the Master's Degree. A balance is to be maintained between making it more vocational job oriented and strengthening the basic knowledge of the subject.

Introducing geology at the school level will also enhance the over all standard of the subject and bring it on par with other science subjects. All the preliminary knowledge of Geology that, at present is being provided at the First Degree level will now go down to the school curriculum and the advanced knowledge of the subject will automatically become a part of the Undergraduate and Post-Graduate Courses. After all to be informed about Mother Earth is the fundamental right of every child born on this living planet.

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