Udaipur,
March 2nd 2008

To,
The Hon'ble Minister,
Ministry of Human Resource Development,
New Delhi

Subject – National Policy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in School Education

Sri Arjun Singh*ji*,

This is regarding the 'National Policy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in School Education' workbook that is being currently drafted by the MHRD.

We, the undersigned, would like to express our concerns about the procedure being adopted to develop this policy as well as some aspects of the policy itself.

The group drafting the policy has a predominance of technology companies, including the largest software company, the largest computer chip manufacturing company, the largest IT training company and some of the largest education content producing companies. The conflict of interest in involving these private sector companies is very obvious, since elements of the policy would have a direct bearing on their business interests. In our opinion, such a process is akin to asking a pharmaceutical company to draft the drug policy of the country.

On the other hand, the drafting group has too few representatives from the education community and non-governmental organisations.

As a result, the draft document does not have adequate linkages to education policies of the Government of India. Documents like the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, whose preparation was led by NCERT, should provide the guiding principles for any ICT in education policy. It is our view that "ICT in School Education" policy should directly be derived from, and contribute towards achieving education policy goals.

The draft policy document takes a narrow perspective of looking at education exclusively as a process of creating "an efficient workforce which can contribute effectively to the global knowledge economy". It ignores the larger social context and objectives of education that are especially critical to Indian conditions.

We request that the policy-making process be re-examined. The 'conflict of interest' in involving private technology companies in policy making must be recognised. The process should have a greater involvement of public interest groups, including those with expertise in education. Institutions such as NCERT and NUEPA should also be closely involved.

We look forward to your response and will be pleased to provide any clarifications.

Copy:
Secretary MHRD
Joint Secretary, MHRD
Director, NCERT
Director, NUEPA

Signatories to the letter addressing the National Policy on ICT in Education

Scanned copy of signatures is attached below the table

Sl.No	Name	Institution
1.	Jacob Tharu	Independent
2.	Amman Madan	IIT, Kanpur
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