

24 JAN 2001

Another course in CBSE syllabus: defence studies

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NEW DELHI, JAN 23

DEFENCE studies, now being taught at graduate levels in select institutes, will be available to school children, thanks to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

Director (Academics) G. Balasubramanian said this course would be introduced in the academic session beginning 2002. The idea was being deliberated in the Human Resource Development (HRD) ministry for the past two years, and the CBI made took the decision six months ago.

The National Cadet Corps, CBSE and the HRD ministry of HRD are working on the project, said Balasubramanian. The CBSE was in the process of drafting the curriculum in dialogue with the NCC

"The course should be equivalent to the B-Certificate course," he said. The course content would comprise an introduction to military history and other units relating to defence management. They also said they were collaborating with few universities like Panjab who offer the defence studies course.

Initially, the CBSE said the course would just be available in

50 schools like those of the Army and the CRPF. "Schools where there is already a faculty for NCC will be given priority," he said. When asked who their target audience was, he said: "Primarily the NDA and other armed forces enthusiasts".

According to the Directorate Training of NCC, they would like the course to be introduced "across the board" instead of only in Defence schools.

"It would not only inspire children but also ensure more time spent on it if it became a CBSE course," said a senior official. He also said they hoped it would increase the number of students opting for the armed forces.

The principal of The Air Force School, Subroto Park agreed. "If children are introduced to such ideas in the early stages, then it influences them more," he said. Although he had not heard about the move, he said that it is "not a bad idea".

The defence experts disagree. According to the head of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, "It was a serious mistake to narrow down on such a subject". He said if the CBSE, if they had to, should introduce a subject on national security.

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