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Parents' checklist to make nursery admission smooth

FOR THE BETTER Prepare charter of demands

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NEW DELHI: Namit Tandon can't forget his experience while trying to get his son admitted in nursery class at a school of his choice.

"I didn't want to take a chance so I got my son admitted to a school, which was my second preference. Later when he made it to the school of our choice, the earlier school created a fuss over refunding the fees," said Tandon.

Tandon went through a nightmarish experience as he kept waiting for the refund and struggled to arrange money for the second admission.

Ultimately when he did get the refund, the school allegedly kept back Rs 40,000, which included one month's fee and transportation charges.

As Delhi is gearing up for the nursery admission, this all-familiar scene of confusion and chaos is back.

Keeping this in mind, a panel discussion on school admission woes and reforms in was organised by School Choice Campaign (SCC) on October 14.

The discussion focused on problems faced by parents as well as the grievances of schools

THE CHARTER

- **Transparency of results:** Schools must display exact break-up points for each child when they release admissions list on school website/ Directorate of Education website.
- **Transparency of criteria:** The break-up of points must be based on 'definitive' criteria avoiding vagueness.
- **Fee refund and deduction:** In case a child is not admitted to the school or the admission is cancelled, the portion of the fee retained by the school must be made clear in advance.
- **Time-bound fee refund:** Fee refund must happen within 3 working days of filing applications.

in order to evolve long-term solutions to existing problems in the admission process.

Mr Rajan Arora, founder, NurseryAdmissions.Com and RC Jain, president, Delhi State Public School Management Association and Baladevan R, national campaign director, School Choice Campaign, were present as part of the panel.

"Based on the discussion and the interaction of parents on the website, we have formulat-

ed a charter that points out the problems faced by parents," said Ranjan Arora.

Among the problems pointed out are lack of transparency in declaring the results.

Parents are not clear about the markings of the group discussions and interviews conducted by the schools and there is no clarity on the refund of funds in case of cancellations.

R.C. Jain disagreed with one of the points of the charter regarding the common admission schedule. "It will not be conducive for parents as they would miss an opportunity to approach another school in case their child does not get admission in their preferred school of choice."

Baladevan R felt the common admission schedule would not only benefit parents in not having to deposit huge sums of money in multiple schools (the problem is compounded by schools not refunding the entire amount) but would save them extra time of having to run after the schools for months.

Ajay Jain, a parent, said, "The discussion cleared a lot of confusions."

The SSC is planning to submit the charter to the Directorate of Education.

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