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NHRC notice on closure of school for poor kids

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The National Human Rights Commission has taken suo motu cognisance of reports that a school for poor children, Deepalaya, run by a non-government organisation for the past 22 years in Okhla here was shut down for its inability to comply with the stringent rules framed under the Right to Education Act.

The school had more than 600 students up to Class VIII at the time of its closure in 2014.

The Commission has observed that the reports, if true, raised a serious issue of violation of right to education of children belonging to the lower income group. The NHRC has issued notices to the Delhi Chief Secretary and Education Secretary calling for reports in the matter within two weeks.

The RTE Act requires the States implementing the law to recognise the schools. For this, the schools should have their own land or have it on lease. The NGO running Deepalaya did not own the land, nor did it have it on lease.

The school was being operated from a plot of land provided to the NGO by the Basti Vikas Kendra in 1992 under the Community Development Programme. Moreover, the NGO could not pay the teachers' salaries as per the Sixth Pay Commission, which is required under the RTE Act. In the absence of recognition, the school was shut down and was being run as a tuition centre.

The NGO-run school was shut down for its inability to comply with strict rules under RTE Act

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