

# Education bills discussed

Staff Reporter

**NEW DELHI:** Detailed discussions on the education bills that the United Progressive Alliance plans to table in the Budget Session of Parliament were held as part of a People's Parliament on Education organised by the All-India Students' Association here on Monday.

Speakers pointed out that the proposed bills such as the Foreign Universities Bill, National Commission for Higher Education and Research Bill, Educational Tribunals Bill and others were aimed at transforming the social and academic priorities as well as the structure and administration of higher education in India.

It was emphasised that the proposed legislations would imply unregulated and exor-

bitant fee hikes, commercialisation of campus spaces and other facilities and extraction of "user charges" as well as a shift in focus of educational curriculum towards market-oriented courses. Apprehensions regarding basic sciences, social sciences and humanities courses being replaced by market-driven self-financed "applied" courses were expressed.

Fears relating to the subverting of reservations in the upcoming higher education institutions and the immunity from law of privatised educational institutions were also raised. A people's charter on education was proposed.

Participating organisations included the School Bachao Andolan, Left and Democratic Teachers' Forum and All-India Forum for Right to Education.