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NCERT proposal for 'PARAKH': Global bodies express interest in setting up school exam regulator

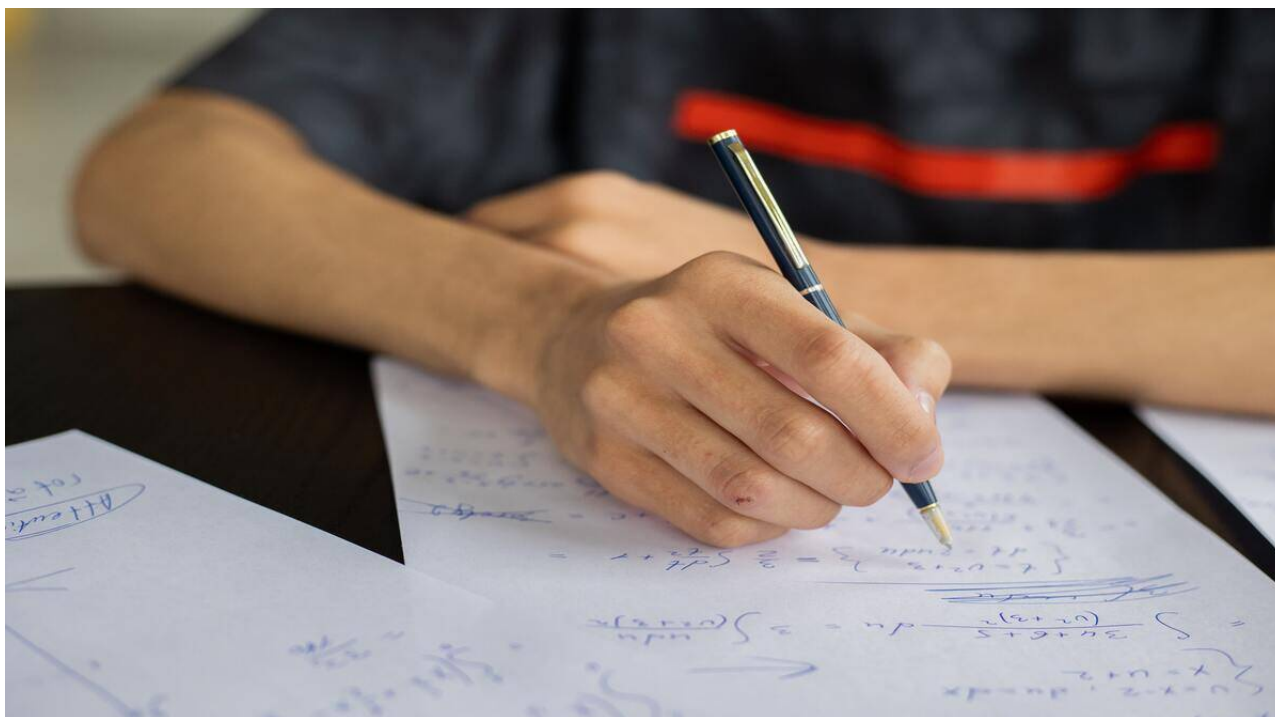
According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, PARAKH will function as a standard-setting body for student assessment and evaluation for all school boards in the country.

Written by [Sourav Roy Barman](#)

New Delhi | Updated: October 31, 2022 9:16:47 am



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Also, it will not just conduct future rounds of National Achievement Surveys (NAS) and other surveys on learning outcomes, but also “review all aspects of the design and conduct of the NAS 2017/2018 and 2021 exercises and identify areas for improvement”.

Three global educational non-profits — Educational Testing Services (ETS), American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) —have expressed interest in helping to set up India’s first national school-level examination and assessment regulator, according to sources.

While ETS is internationally recognised for conducting TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and GRE (Graduate Record Examination), which are gateways to higher education in top institutes worldwide, AIR and ACER are leading names in research on behavioural and social science domains and learning assessment studies.

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The organisations approached the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), responding to an Expression of Interest (EoI) for selecting consulting services to set up the proposed regulator **PARAKH** (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), which is envisaged as an instrument for “establishing comparative measures and

equivalence” among school examination boards and promoting collaboration among them.

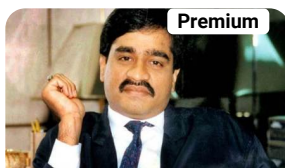
This means that PARAKH will be expected to address the issue of disparities in scores of students affiliated to different boards. Also, it will not just conduct future rounds of National Achievement Surveys (NAS) and other surveys on learning outcomes, but also “review all aspects of the design and conduct of the NAS 2017/2018 and 2021 exercises and identify areas for improvement”.

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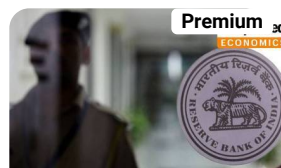
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Sources told [The Indian Express](#) that ETS, ACER and AIR are among a few organisations that responded to the Expression of Interest (EOI) which was put out in August. Based on the responses, the NCERT floated a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the project on October 19.



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ACER, which is based in Australia, has an Indian wing. It is primarily known for conducting a set of benchmark tests for learning assessment in English, Mathematics and Science for classes III-X.

AIR shot to fame in the 1960s after it carried out the biggest study of its time among high school students in the US on racial disparities and economic mobility among others.

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The agency which will get picked will, among other things, also help the PARAKH team to “incorporate international evidence to strengthen assessment systems in India to meet Covid-19 and other pandemic situations”.

Apart from holding NAS and Foundational Learning Study (FLN), PARAKH will also manage India’s participation in international assessments like the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), or Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

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While the NCERT is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Education, PARAKH will be a constituent body of the council. The consulting firm will initially

be selected on a three-year-contract, which will be renewed each year based on its performance, states the RFP.

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According to the key deliverable areas identified by the NCERT for the proposed body, it will develop and validate standards of assessment for all school stages and curricular areas of school education, based on NEP 2020.

“(It will) provide technical guidelines and inputs for boards to design, develop, and implement state-wide systems for measuring student learning aligned with state and national curricular standards... Support examination boards regarding new assessment patterns (both for internal and external assessment), evaluation process, and practices, result in calculation and compilation, post-result practices, and the latest research,” adds the RFP.

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