

# **Report on the Online Meeting of National and Regional Education Secretaries**

**Organised by CBCI Office for Education and Culture**

## **Introduction:**

An online meeting of the National and Regional Education Secretaries was convened on 29th April 2026 organised by the CBCI Office for Education and Culture. The meeting brought together key stakeholders in Catholic education across India to deliberate on pressing national concerns, regional challenges, and future directions for strengthening the educational ministry. The session was presided over by Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, who set the tone for a reflective and action-oriented dialogue.

## **Welcome and Opening Remarks:**

The meeting commenced with a warm welcome and initial remarks by Archbishop Elias Gonsalves. In his address, he emphasized the critical role of Catholic educational institutions in shaping society amidst changing socio-political realities. He called for unity, foresight, and proactive engagement in addressing emerging challenges, encouraging all participants to remain steadfast in their mission of “Educate to Empower.”

## **Key National Concern: FCRA Amended Bill 2026:**

Mr. George Kuruvilla, Chartered Accountant, presented a detailed analysis of the implications of the FCRA Amended Bill 2026 on educational institutions. He highlighted the increasing regulatory complexities and the potential constraints on foreign funding, which could significantly impact the functioning and sustainability of many Catholic institutions.

The discussion underscored the need for:

- Greater financial transparency and compliance,
- Strategic planning to reduce dependency on foreign funds,
- Capacity building among administrators to navigate legal frameworks.

Participants acknowledged that this development demands urgent attention at both national and regional levels.

## **Closure and Disruption of Institutions in Rajasthan:**

Fr. A. John Bosco, Diocesan Education Secretary of Udaipur, shared alarming developments regarding the disruption and closure of educational institutions in Rajasthan. He outlined the administrative, legal, and socio-political challenges faced by institutions in the region. The discussion generated concern among participants and reinforced the urgency for coordinated national responses.

### **Moving Forward Amidst Challenges:**

Dr. John Joseph Kennedy, former Dean of Christ University and a noted columnist, provided valuable insights on navigating the current challenges. He encouraged educational leaders to adopt a forward-looking approach rooted in resilience, innovation, and strategic collaboration. His reflections served as a guiding framework for the way forward.

### **Regional Sharing- Challenges and Experiences:**

Participants from different regions shared the challenges and difficulties faced in their respective areas. These included:

- Regulatory pressures and compliance issues,
- Financial constraints,
- Declining student enrolment in certain regions,
- Social and cultural challenges affecting institutions.

The sharing provided a comprehensive understanding of the diverse realities across the country and highlighted the importance of contextual responses.

### **CBCI National Consultation on Education 2026:**

Fr. Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary, presented the initial thoughts on the CBCI National Consultation on Education 2026, scheduled to be held in Goa from 25th to 27th November 2026.

He outlined the need for:

- A fresh and relevant theme addressing contemporary educational challenges,
- Inclusion of emerging topics such as technology, policy, and institutional sustainability,
- Active participation from all regions.

Participants were invited to contribute suggestions for themes and topics, ensuring that the consultation reflects the collective vision of Catholic education in India.

### **Global Compact on Education (GCE) Report:**

A significant agenda point was the compilation of reports on the implementation of the Global Compact on Education (GCE) across regions, provinces, and congregations. Participants were urged to:

- Document initiatives undertaken in line with GCE commitments,
- Submit structured reports for national compilation,
- Contribute to the publication of a comprehensive national report on GCE India.

This initiative aims to showcase the contributions of Catholic institutions in India toward global educational transformation.

### **Regional Animation of Catholic Educators:**

The meeting also emphasized the importance of animating Catholic educators at the regional level. This step is expected to enhance collaboration and renew commitment among educators.

**Concluding Remarks:**

The meeting concluded with remarks from the Member Bishops and the Chairperson. They appreciated the active participation and meaningful contributions of all attendees. The Chairperson reiterated the importance of unity, vigilance, and proactive leadership in safeguarding and strengthening Catholic education in India.

He called upon all participants to translate discussions into concrete actions, ensuring that Catholic educational institutions continue to be centres of excellence, inclusion, and transformation.

**Conclusion:**

The meeting served as a vital platform for dialogue, reflection, and strategic planning. It highlighted both the challenges and opportunities facing Catholic education in India today. With a shared commitment to mission and collaboration, the participants resolved to work collectively toward sustaining and strengthening the educational ministry in the years ahead.