

# Central Board of Patience-Test Education

## OUR BUREAU

**New Delhi:** Central Board of Secondary Education students aggrieved at the poor assessment of their Class XII exam papers have had to spend yet another harrowing day waiting for the portal through which they have to seek re-evaluation to start functioning.

Two school principals said the students were feeling increasingly frustrated, with the college admission process having already begun while the portal, supposed to start functioning from May 26, remained unresponsive even on June 1.

At 2pm, the CBSE posted a message on X saying: "Dear students, Verification and re-evaluation portal will go live soon. Official announcement will follow."

But the portal remained inoperative even past 11pm, prompting students and their parents to vent their anger on X.

"Such a careless, pathetic, and disgusting board should be dissolved, or its administration should be replaced. CBSE



**NSUI activists protest against the CBSE's digital evaluation system in New Delhi on May 28. (PTI)**

used to be a renowned board, but now it is just a pathetic governing body," wrote Saini.

The students want a re-evaluation to enhance their scores — affected by what they believe was a flawed on-screen marking (OSM) system — and improve their chances of securing preferred college seats.

But many of them fear that time is running out. The IITs on Monday declared that 56,880 students had qualified through the JEE Advanced. The seat allocation process is to start on Tuesday.

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# 'Live soon' pledge, but CBSE portal stays dead

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To be eligible for admission to the premier IITs, NITs and IIITs, a general-category student must have scored 75 per cent, or made it to the top 10 percentile, in their board exam.

"Many of the students who have cracked the JEE Advanced may fall narrowly short of the eligibility mark because of widespread low scoring in the CBSE exam," a principal said.

"They want the (re-evaluation) process completed as soon as possible, but the CBSE's portal remained defunct the whole day."

After the portal refused to come alive through the initial May 26-29 window for re-evaluation applications, the CBSE had said it would go on stream on June 1.

Under the new OSM system, answer sheets were scanned and transmitted to the examiners for assessment on computer screens. Many teachers have alleged the copies were blurred and

they could not assess them properly.

Even the portal through which the students had to apply for copies of their answer sheets — the first step in the process to seek re-evaluation — worked inconsistently, forcing three deadline extensions.

Some students alleged on Monday that they had still not received copies of their answer sheets, 10 days after having applied for them.

Following the OSM system's introduction this year, the pass rate has dropped to 85.2 per cent from last year's 88.39 per cent. The number of students scoring above 90 per cent has fallen from 1.12 lakh to 94,000.

Under fire alongside the CBSE has been the COEMPT, the Hyderabad firm contracted by the board for technology assistance.

At a news conference on Monday, Congress publicity head Pawan Khera accused the government of playing with the students' future.

"You (education minister

Dharmendra Pradhan) ought to provide answers. Instead, you claim that Rahul Gandhi is frustrated," he said.

"Yes, indeed — Rahul Gandhi is frustrated. The Congress party is frustrated. The entire country is frustrated.... Because you are playing games with the current generation of this country."

Khera asked Pradhan to explain his relationship with the technology company. He castigated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his silence on the fiasco.

"Yesterday, you listened to (Modi's radio broadcast) Mann Ki Baat. In it, you heard recipes — how to make jaljeera, how to make aam panna, and what the different varieties of mangoes are," he said.

The Congress wants Pradhan to resign. It has demanded to know who had ordered the dilution of the CBSE's tender norms for the tech support contract by reducing scan quality standards, removing mandatory robotic scanners, and weakening cybersecurity safeguards.