

Status of Implementation of the Right to Education Act, 2009 in Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Everyone has the right to education. Education should be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education should be compulsory. The UN recommendation has been reinforced in the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act (2009), which came into effect in India on 1 April 2010, enshrining in law for the first time the rights of all Indian children aged between six and 14 years to free and compulsory elementary education regardless of caste, class, gender, etc. The RTE Act, though deserves due credit for laying down in fairly specific terms state's responsibility towards education, it would be appropriate to examine the status and awareness on the part of schools and concern authority to provide free elementary education to the children aging between six to fourteen years of old. Present research study has tried to explore the status of the implementation by analysing some important indicators which are necessary for the implementation of the Act. The paper also analyse the awareness and understanding of the provisions of RTE among the stakeholders in Himachal Pradesh. Four years have already been passed since implementation of the RTE Act in Himachal Pradesh but still the state have to do more in the terms of enrolment, basic infrastructure, student learning, awareness and understanding among its stakeholders. By providing some recommendations the paper calls for some necessary actions by the government to improve the implementation status of the RTE Act in Himachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Right to Education, status, implementation, Himachal Pradesh.

Introduction

In our national perception, education is essentially for all. Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit thus furthering the goals of socialism, Secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution. The positive role of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) in strengthening the socio-economic base of a nation cannot be over-emphasized. Recognizing the importance of it, the original Article 45 in the Directive

Principles of State Policy in the Constitution mandated the State to endeavour to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to age 14 within a period of 10 years. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986/92, states via the 86th Constitutional Amendment, a new Article 21A was added in Part I of the Constitution of India to make free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right for children. As a follow up to the NPE, a number of programmes were initiated in India with a view to achieving UEE. These efforts were intensified in the 1980s and 1990s through several interventions. The latest is the SSA, a centrally-sponsored scheme implemented in partnership with state governments for the UEE across the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the government's flagship programme to provide universal access to elementary education for children 6-14 years old. Due to these initiatives, over the years there has been significant spatial and numerical expansion of elementary schools in the country. Today, access and enrolment at the Primary stages of education have reached very close to universal levels. The scheme aims to improve enrolment, retention, and the quality of education to enable children to achieve grade appropriate levels of learning. The number of out-of-school children at the elementary level has reduced significantly. The gender gap in elementary education has narrowed and the percentage of enrolled children belonging to scheduled castes and tribes has increased successively.

Right to Education a Historical Background

The Right to Education Act was earlier termed as The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act came into function after Gopal Krishna Gokhale's famous impassionate plea to the Imperial Legislative Council for introducing free and compulsory primary education throughout India. India became one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child, when the act finally came into practice in April 2010. A rough version of the draft was first prepared in the year 2005. It was met with a lot of criticism because of the large percentage of reservation made mandatory across all schools for the unprivileged children. However, the Central Advisory Board of Education, who were founders of the draft stood ground and justified the 25 percent reservation as a definite requisite to become a democratic and egalitarian society.

Right to Education Act, 2009

The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 passed by the Indian Parliament in 2009 mandates free and compulsory education of all children of 6-14 years age until they complete elementary education in a neighbourhood school. There is also a reference of children with disabilities who are to be given elementary education in the age range of 6-18 year of age as defined in clause (i) of section 2 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection and Full Participation) Act, 1996 in accordance with the provisions of Chapter V of the said Act. The Act also has a provision for every child, who is above six years of age and has not yet been admitted to any school or could not complete his/her elementary education due to any reason, to be admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age. The child admitted under age appropriate admission has a right to receive special training or additional instruction in order to be at par with other children of the class. However, there is an important concern over implementation of RTE Act in the school system with reference to the special training or instruction, its modalities and execution. The states are expected to respond to the situation arising out of the implementation of the Act. States and UTs are required to pay special attention to cope with the situation in terms of appointment of qualified teachers, development of special training programmes for out of school children admitted to age appropriate classes and preparation of relevant teaching learning materials for them.

In order to ensure access to education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years, the RTE Act offers the following provisions:

- Right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school. According to the Act ‘compulsory education’ means obligation of the appropriate government to provide free elementary education and ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the 6-14 age group.
- Local authority should identify out of school children (OoS) with the help of teachers, school management committees (SMCs) and enrol them in age appropriate classes. The Act also provisions for special training to OoS children admitted to age appropriate classes.
- No child should be denied admission due to the lack of birth certificate.

- Child should get transfer certificate at any time of the academic year on request and also should be admitted during any time of the academic year in the age appropriate class.
- No fee should be collected from any child.
- It specifies the duties and responsibilities of appropriate Governments and local authorities. In providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.
- It provides for adequate deployment of teachers by ensuring that the specified pupil teacher ratio is maintained for each school, rather than just as an average for the State or District or Block, thus ensuring that there is no urban-rural imbalance in teacher postings. It also provides for prohibition of deployment of teachers for non-educational work, other than the decennial census, elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament, and disaster relief.
- It provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite academic qualifications.
- School should be CWSN friendly with special teachers, learning and transportation support.
- It prohibits (a) physical punishment and mental harassment; (b) screening procedures for admission of children; (c) capitation fee; (d) private tuition by teachers and (e) running of schools without recognition,
- It provides for development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution, and which would ensure the all-round development of the child, building on the child's knowledge, potential and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child centred learning.
- It provisions 25 % reservations in private schools for children from the disadvantaged and economically weaker sections (EWS).
- It has provisions which envisage social inclusion and gender equity in the school management committee (SMC).

Key efforts for the implementation of the RTE Act 2009

One of the unique features of the RTE Act is that it has very clearly put down a deadline for its implementation. It specifies that within three years from the date of enactment, all the provisions except for qualified teachers should be met and that the latter should be fulfilled by 2015. Towards this end, government has taken the following steps:

- Revised the SSA Framework in 2011,
- brought out the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) in 2009,
- established the monitoring arm of RTE implementation by strengthening the RTE division of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR),
- mandated the Central Advisory Board I for Education (CABE) to review the status of implementation periodically and
- More importantly ensured that all States notified RTE State rules.

Right to Education Act a Milestone

The Right to education Act is a fundamental right which allows every child between the age group of 6 to 14 to have access to free and fare education. It requires all private and government schools to reserve 25 percent of the seats for children belonging to weaker sections of the society. The act also separates the fraudulent schools and donations and concessions have been rolled back. The act also states that no child shall be expelled, held back or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education. There is also a special training of school drop-outs to bring them up at par with students of the same age. The Right to Education act stretches to 18 years of coverage for children with disabilities, and other provisions covered in the act range from infrastructure development, teacher-student ratio and faculty are mentioned in the act. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is an autonomous body set up to monitor the implementation of the act along with commissions set up by the States. The body in question was formed in the year 2007.

Status of Implementation of RTE Act in India

In the below tables we have studied the status of the implementation of Right to Education Act in India under some selected indicators. These are the indicators which are very necessary for the implementation of the RTE Act successfully in the country. So we have mentioned the data of the indicators in different tables below:

Table No. 1 Demographic Indicators of India

Indicators	Census 2011
Total Population	121.01 Cr
% age of Urban Population	31.2
% age of Scheduled Caste Population	16.6
% age of Scheduled Tribes Population	8.6
% age of Total Literacy Rate	73.0
% age of Female Literacy Rate	64.6
% age of Male Literacy Rate	80.9
Sex Ratio (0-6 years)	914

Source: Census 2011

The above table shows that the population of India according to the census is 121.01 crores among which the urban population is 31.2 percent, SCs population is 16.6 percent and STs Population is 8.6 percent. The total literacy rate is 73.0 percent among which female literacy rate is 64.6 percent and male literacy rate is 80.9 percent.

Table No. 2 Enrolment Indicators

Indicators	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Total Enrolment Primary	133405581	134784272
Total Enrolment Upper Primary	54467415	64926077
% age of Girls to Total Enrolment Primary	48	48
% age of Girls to Total Enrolment Upper Primary	48	49
Gender Parity Index Primary	0.94	0.94
Gender Parity Index Upper Primary	0.93	0.95
% age of SCs to Total Enrolment	20	20
% age of STs to Total Enrolment	11	11
CWSN Enrolment	1402817	2175768
Annual Average Drop-Out Rate (Primary)	9.1	5.6

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the table reveals that the total enrolment at primary level was 133405581 in 2009-10 and was increase to 134784272 in the year 2012-13. The enrolment at Upper Primary level was 54467415 in the year 2009-10 and increased to 64926077 in 2012-13. The percentage of girls' enrolment at primary level remains same and increase with one percent at Upper Primary level. The enrolment percentage also remains same for STs and SCs students. The average drop-out rate decreases from 9.1 in the year 2009-10 to 5.6 in the year 2012-13.

Table No. 3 Status of RTE

Indicator	No. of States/UTs	
	2009-10	2012-13
Notification of State Rules	15	34
Constitution of SCPCR	11	32
Notification of Academic Authority	20	34
Policy on Eight Year Elementary Education	28	34
No Detention	27	34
No Corporal Punishment	28	34
No Board Exam up to Elementary Level	26	34
Banning Private Tuition	18	34
Banning Screening Procedure and Capitation Fees	18	34
Working Days Notified	21	33
Decentralized Grievances Redressal Mechanism	-	20
Local Authority Notified	-	26
% age Schools with School Management Committee Constituted	-	26
25% Admission in Private Unaided Schools at Elementary Level	-	27

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the above table shows that the indicators mentioned in the table number 3 are adopted by the maximum states of the country. The RTE Act does not implement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Table No. 4 School Infrastructure

Indicator	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Number of Elementary Schools (Govt. + Aided)	1120968	1153472
Student Classroom Ratio (SCR)	32	29
% age of Primary Schools with Student Classroom Ratio >30	40	29
% age of Upper Primary Schools with Student Classroom Ratio >35	36	32
% age Schools with Girls Toilet Facility	59	69
% age Schools with Drinking Water Facility	93	95
% age Schools with Ramp Facility	47	56
% age Schools with Play Ground Facility	51	57
% age Schools with Boundary Wall Facility	51	61
% age Schools with Kitchen Shed Facility	43	60

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data related to the school infrastructure in the table shows that the number of elementary schools government and aided increased from 1120968 in the year 2009-10 to 1153472 in the year 2012-13. There is a decrease in the student classroom ratio. Girls' toilet facility also increased by 10 percent. Drinking water facility also shown an increase with 2 percent, ramp facility increased by 9 percent, play ground facility increased by 6 percent, boundary wall facility increased by 10 percent and kitchen shed facility increased by 17 percent.

Table No. 5 Teachers Indicators

Indicators	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Total Teachers (Govt. + Aided)	4477429	4463642
Pupil Teacher Ratio	32	27
% age Primary Schools with Pupil Teacher Ratio > 30	46	37
% age Upper Primary Schools with Pupil Teacher Ratio > 35	36	33
% age of Single Teacher Schools	9	9
Number of States conducted TET for Teachers Recruitment	-	26

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The above table shows decrease in the total number of teachers in the year 2012-13 as compare to the year 2009-10. Pupil teacher ratio improves in the relevant years at all levels. But the percentage of the single teacher schools is same. Maximum number of states is conducting TET for teachers' recruitment.

Table No. 6 Quality Indicators

Indicators	2012-13
% age of Teachers with Professional Qualification	81
Number of States with Revised Curriculum	27
Number of States with Working hours as per RTE	34
Number of States with Instructional hours as per RTE	33
Number of States with Implementing Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation	26

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the above table reveals that 81 percent teachers having professional qualification and maximum number of states have revised their curriculum. Maximum states have implemented continuous comprehensive evaluation.

Himachal Pradesh: An introduction

In January 1971, Himachal Pradesh was granted the status of a full-fledge state and became the 18th State of the Indian Union. Following full statehood, Himachal Pradesh started making concerted efforts to improve the economic conditions of the State. Himachal Pradesh occupies 55673 square kilometre area. The state has 123 population densities. It consists 3 Divisions, 51 Sub-Divisions, 75 Tehsils, 34 Sub-Tehsils, 17882 inhabited, 3243 Gram Panchayats and 78 Community Development Blocks. In Himachal Pradesh there are 68 Legislative Assembly seats, 4 Lok Sabha seats and 3 Rajya Sabha seats. The State has made significant strides in developing an educational and health infrastructure and transport and communication network. These advances have had a positive impact on the socio-economic

and demographic status of the state. From the very beginning the local leadership in the state recognized the importance of family welfare programmes and has implemented them vigorously.

Population and basic information of Himachal Pradesh

The total population of Himachal Pradesh is 6,856,509 as per the census of 2011 with a decadal growth of 12.81. It contributes 0.57 percent to the total population of the country. The sex ratio of Himachal Pradesh is 974. On the bases of census 2011, Himachal Pradesh is on 21st place among all the 28 states of the country. A brief detail of the population of Himachal Pradesh is given in the table below:

Distirct	Population 2011	%age of Total Population	Area in Sq.Kms.	Density of Population Per Sq.Kms.	No .of Divisions	No. of Sub- Divisions	No. Of Tahsils	No. of Sub- Tahsils	No. Of Inhabited Cen.2011	No. of Gram Panchayats	No. Of Community Development Blocks
Bilaspur	382056	5.56	1167	327	0	2	4	2	953	151	4
Chamba	518844	7.56	6528	80	0	6	7	3	1110	283	7
Hamirpur	454293	6.62	1118	407	0	3	5	1	1671	229	6
Kangra	1507223	22.00	5739	263	1	8	14	5	3617	760	15
Kinnaur	84298	1.23	6401	13	0	3	5	1	241	65	3
Kullu	437474	6.38	5503	80	0	4	4	2	314	204	5
L & S	31528	0.46	13835	2	0	3	2	1	280	41	2
Mandi	999518	14.56	3950	253	1	6	9	7	2850	473	11
Shimla	813384	11.86	5131	159	1	7	12	5	2705	363	9
Sirmaur	530164	7.72	2825	188	0	3	6	4	968	228	6
Solan	576670	8.45	1936	300	0	4	5	2	2383	211	5
Una	521057	7.59	1540	338	0	2	3	2	790	235	5
Himachal Pradesh	6856509	100.00	55673	123	3	51	75	34	17882	3243	78

Sources: Compiled from Directorate of Health and Family Welfare SDA Complex Kasumpti Shimla-9

In Himachal Pradesh only 10.33 percent of the total population lives urban areas and 89.67 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Majority of the people of Himachal Pradesh live in rural areas. So it becomes difficult to implement the programmes and different schemes easily. Because in rural areas the geographical condition, communication system, transportation and other basic facilities are not enough. Due to lack of such basic facilities the rural areas are not well developed.

Literacy Rate of Himachal Pradesh

Without a good literacy rate any nation cannot be developed. Literacy makes a person to understand the things easily. The literacy rate of Himachal Pradesh is 83.78 percent among which 90.83 percent male and 76.60 percent female are literate. The literacy difference between male and female is 14.23 percent. Decadal population growth rate is +12.81 percent.

Table No. 8 District-Wise Literacy Rate and Decadal Growth of Himachal Pradesh

District	Population 2011	Male Population	Female Population	Literacy Rate %age	Male Literacy %age	Female Literacy %age	Decadal Population Growth %age
Bilaspur	382056	192827	189229	85.67	92.39	78.90	+12.08
Chamba	518844	260848	257996	73.19	84.19	62.14	+12.58
Hamirpur	454293	216742	237551	89.01	95.28	83.44	+10.08
Kangra	1507223	748559	758664	86.49	92.55	80.62	+12.56
Kinnaur	84298	46364	37934	80.77	88.37	71.34	+7.61
Kullu	437474	224320	213154	80.14	88.80	71.01	+14.65
L & Spiti	31528	16455	15073	77.24	86.97	66.50	-5.1
Mandi	999518	496787	502731	82.81	91.51	74.33	+10.89
Shimla	813384	424486	388898	84.55	90.73	77.80	+12.58
Sirmaur	530164	276801	253363	79.98	86.76	72.55	+15.61
Solan	576670	306162	270508	85.02	91.19	78.02	+15.21
Una	521057	263541	257516	87.23	92.75	81.67	+16.24
Himachal Pradesh	6856509	3473892	3382617	83.78	90.83	76.60	+12.81

Sources: Compiled from the Wonderland Himachal Pradesh by Jag Mohan Balokhra 2014

Implementation of Right to Education Act in Himachal Pradesh

The aim of the education is not the acquisition of information, although important, or acquisition of technical skills, though essential in modern society, but the development of that bent of mind, that attitude of reason, that spirit of democracy which will make us responsible citizen. “Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009” was implemented in Himachal Pradesh by the government of Himachal Pradesh with effect from 1st April 2010 and State RTE rules were notified vide notification NO.EDN-C-F (10)-8/09 dated 5th March 2011 to carry out the provision of the Act. Over the years the government has made efforts to implement the Act successfully in terms of access, enrolment and retention and infrastructural facilities in the state.

Status of Implementation of RTE Act in Himachal Pradesh

In the below tables we have studied the status of the implementation of Right to Education Act in India under some selected indicators. These are the indicators which are very necessary for the implementation of the RTE Act successfully in the country. So we have mentioned the date of the indicators in different tables below:

Table No. 9 Enrolment Indicators

Indicators	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Total Enrolment Primary	623198	610098
Total Enrolment Upper Primary	412919	374800
% age of Girls to Total Enrolment Primary	47	48
% age of Girls to Total Enrolment Upper Primary	47	47
Gender Parity Index Primary	0.90	0.91
Gender Parity Index Upper Primary	0.89	0.88
% age of SCs to Total Enrolment	28	29
% age of STs to Total Enrolment	6	6
CWSN Enrolment	8942	10707
Annual Average Drop-Out Rate (Primary)	2.8	-

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the table reveals that the total enrolment at primary level was 623198 in 2009-10 and decreased to 610098 in the year 2012-13. The enrolment at Upper Primary level was 412919 in the year 2009-10 and decreased to 374800 in 2012-13. The percentage of girls’ enrolment at primary level increases with one percent and remain same at Upper Primary level. The enrolment percentage also remains same for STs and increases with one percent for SCs students.

Table No. 10 Status of RTE

Indicator	2013
Notification of State Rules	Notified
Constitution of SCPCR	Notified
Notification of Academic Authority	SCERT
Policy on Eight Year Elementary Education	Issued
No Detention	Issued
No Corporal Punishment	Issued
No Board Exam up to Elementary Level	Notified
Banning Private Tuition	Issued
Banning Screening Procedure and Capitation Fees	Not Issued
Working Days Notified	220 (P), 236 (UP)
Decentralized Grievances Redressal Mechanism	Notified
Local Authority Notified	MC,PS,NP,GP,BEO
% age Schools with School Management Committee Constituted	96
25% Admission in Private Unaided Schools at Elementary Level	Notified

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the above table shows that the maximum indicators mentioned in the table number 10 are adopted by the states.

Table No. 11 School Infrastructure

Indicator	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Number of Elementary Schools (Govt. + Aided)	15125	15112
Student Classroom Ratio (SCR)	15	15
% age of Primary Schools with Student Classroom Ratio >30	5	3
% age of Upper Primary Schools with Student Classroom Ratio >35	16	14
% age Schools with Girls Toilet Facility	98	97
% age Schools with Drinking Water Facility	56	78
% age Schools with Ramp Facility	46	56
% age Schools with Play Ground Facility	63	84
% age Schools with Boundary Wall Facility	50	64
% age Schools with Kitchen Shed Facility	15	86

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data related to the school infrastructure in the table shows that the number of elementary schools government and aided decreased from 15125 in the year 2009-10 to 15112 in the year 2012-13. There is stability in the student classroom ratio. Girls' toilet facility also decreased by 1 percent. Drinking water facility show an increase with 22 percent, ramp facility increased by 10 percent, play ground facility increased by 21 percent, boundary wall facility increased by 14 percent and kitchen shed facility increased by 70 percent.

Table No. 12 Teachers Indicators

Indicators	Years	
	2009-10	2012-13
Total Teachers (Govt. + Aided)	49736	45697
Pupil Teacher Ratio	16	4
% age Primary Schools with Pupil Teacher Ratio > 30	6	4
% age Upper Primary Schools with Pupil Teacher Ratio > 35	5	5
% age of Single Teacher Schools	6	7
Number of TET conducted for Teachers Recruitment	-	3

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The above table shows decrease in the total number of teachers in the year 2012-13 as compare to the year 2009-10. Pupil teacher ratio improves in the relevant years at all levels. But the percentage of the single teacher schools increases by one percent. The state has conducted TET for teachers' recruitment for four times till date.

Table No. 13 Quality Indicators

Indicators	2012-13
% age of Teachers with Professional Qualification	90
Revised Curriculum	Under Process
Working hours as per RTE	36
Instructional hours as per RTE	800 (P), 1000 (UP)
Implementing Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation	Universal Coverage

Source: DISE, PMIS, NAS & NCERT.

The data in the above table reveals that 81 percent teachers having professional qualification and maximum number of states have revised their curriculum. Maximum states have implemented continuous comprehensive evaluation.

Problem of the RTE Act at Ground Level in Himachal Pradesh

Near about 90 percent of the total population in the state live in the rural areas. Due to being hilly state the geographical condition of the state is not good. So the basic infrastructure in the state is not well developed. The data shows that the physical infrastructure and other resources are less as compare to require. The decrease in enrolment and decrease in the total number of teachers are big problems. The people are not well aware about the act. The school management committees are not aware about their rights and functions.

Recommendations to Strengthen the Implementation of the Act

To strengthen the implementation of the act the government should take the important steps. Fill up all the vacant posts of the teachers and provide them training modern techniques of teaching. Conduct the TET twice in a year. Improve basic infrastructure in the state. Make

aware the people about the act and take their help to increase the enrolment. Make aware the School management committees about their rights and functioning.

Conclusion

The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 passed by the Indian Parliament mandates free and compulsory education of all children of 6-14 years age until they complete elementary education in a neighbourhood school. However, there is an important concern over implementation of RTE Act in the school system with reference to the special training or instruction, its modalities and execution for children admitted under age-appropriate admission. The states are expected to respond to the situation arising out of the implementation of the Act. States and UTs are required to pay special attention to cope with the situation in terms of appointment of qualified teachers, development of special training programmes for out-of-school children admitted to age appropriate classes and preparation of relevant teaching learning materials for them. Similarly, there is an urgent need of taking appropriate steps for inclusive education of children with disabilities by providing teaching-learning materials, aids and appliances in accordance with nature and needs of each disability, suitable infrastructural modifications, and training of regular teachers and school-based appointment of special teacher. There is also a need for organising programmes for community awareness and attitude change in order to make school for all children. Home-based education has to be given to children suffering from multi-disabilities, severe and profound disability conditions.

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