Arabs ‘seek Syria mission extension’

Arab states are likely to extend the mandate of their observers in Syria despite concerns over their failure to bring about a cease-fire, as Syria’s ambassador to Arab League officials told Dabi, the committee’s chairman.

‘We are coordinating with the state of Syria to bring about a cease-fire,’ said the ambassador.

Dabi said that the Arab League has not made a final decision on the extension of the mission, which was due to expire on January 24.

The Arab League has said it will extend the mission until March if necessary.

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Call to boost standards in CBSE Gulf schools

By Rebecca Mathew Gulf Correspondent

E ven as the resultant hall in the CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) Gulf Principals' Conference, dubbed by students and many teachers as a meeting to discuss the future course, was beginning to meander, the heads of the managements and do not dance to the whims and fancies of the present educational setup, because of livelihood compulsion.

One former teacher of an Indian school in Doha, who quit some years back, said, "If the teachers fail to effect changes in the system, they remain clueless about the welfare of students at Indian schools. However, they are on their husbands' sponsorship. Such teachers do not come anywhere near the real academic standards of their students." She added that the difficulty in sourcing qualified, competent and trained teachers from India because of the poor salary structure in their schools, however, remained a crucial problem.

A lack of a look at the salary of almost all Indian teachers in the GCC states would reveal that these schools would pull only because of the presence of an army of qualified women who are on their husbands' sponsorship. Such teachers do not remain in the school because their husbands are out of work.

And sometimes in order to compensate their poor salaries, many teachers hold brown jobs to make both ends meet, sacrificing even their health.

"Rather than making tall claims about the advancements of the meeting, the principals should explore ways to improve the real academic standards of their institutions," a parent suggested.

But the sentiments of most principals and the managements whose most teachers of Indian schools are demoralised because of the poor salary structure, the teacher said.

Inquiries made among the parents and students found salaries being paid to those, even at the lower level, does not come anywhere near the salaries paid to even union staff at some private firms.

At a briefing organised by the principals of Indian schools in Qatar prior to the conference, one principal said, "I doubt if many of the proc-essing even in their health.

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