



भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा संघ
Indian Adult Education Association

INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NEW DELHI**

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INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002.



Minister of
Health & Family Welfare
India
New Delhi-110011

May 17, 1989

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Indian Adult Education Association is holding its Golden Jubilee Conference at New Delhi from 22nd to 25th May, 1989.

Education is the key factor in human development. Unfortunately, the level of education in our country has been considerably low, particularly among the women and in the rural areas. This has not only impeded out progress, but also exposed these sections to exploitation.

It is encouraging to note that concerted efforts are now being made to impart education to the adults as well, to make up this gap.

I wish the efforts being put in by Indian Adult Education Association in this sphere every success.

Sd/-
(Ram Niwas Mirdha)



Minister of State for Education & Culture
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Govt. of India, New Delhi-110001

Feb. 2, 1989

MESSAGE

1. I am happy to know that Indian Adult Education Association a Pioneer organisation in the field of education has completed 50 years of useful service. Contribution of the Association for improving the quality of education and adult education has been appreciable.

2. I wish for the success of the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Association.

Sd/-
(L. P. Shahi)



Minister of State
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Departments of Youth Affairs & Sports
and Women & Child Development
Government of India
New Delhi-110001

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Indian Adult Education Association will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee by organising symposia, panel discussions and public lectures from the 22nd May to the 25th May, 1989 at New Delhi. The Association is rendering valuable service in promoting adult education in the country.

I send my good wishes to the Association on this happy occasion.

Sd/-

(Margaret Alva)



Minister of State
Information & Broadcasting
India

April 27, 1989

MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that the Indian Adult Education Association will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee in May 1989 and that a number of symposia, panel discussions and public lectures will be organised during the Conference from May 22-25, 1989, participated by adult educators from different parts of the country and delegates from abroad.

The Indian Adult Education Association during these fifty years of its useful existence, has helped in improving the education of the masses and thereby enhancing the quality of the life of the Nation.

Besides congratulating the organisers of the Association, I send my greetings and best wishes for the successful conduct of the celebrations.

Sd/-

(S. Krishna Kumar)



No VPS-403/89
Private Secretary
To The Vice-President of India
New Delhi

April 27, 1989

MESSAGE

The Vice-President of India is glad to know that the Indian Adult Education Association is organising its Golden Jubilee Conference from 22nd to 25th May, 1989. He sends his best wishes for its success.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-
(S. W. Malwade)



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE

Literacy helps in opening up a world of information and knowledge and is an indispensable input for human resource development. Adult literacy can contribute in more effective implementation of anti-poverty programmes by helping create conditions for increasing awareness among beneficiaries. It can also facilitate dissemination of information and programmes in important areas like agriculture and family welfare.

I am glad to learn that the Indian Adult Education Association has completed fifty years in spreading the message of literacy. The discussions at the Golden Jubilee Conference of the Association will, I am sure, help in further strengthening the work of the Association. I wish the Conference all success.

New Delhi
May 15, 1989

RAJIV GANDHI



Minister of Defence
India
New Delhi

9th May, 1989

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Indian Adult Education Association is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this year and is organising the Golden Jubilee Conference on the occasion. It seems paradoxical that even though India ranks very high among the countries of the world with a highly developed technical man-power, yet it also has the one of the largest illiterate populations in the world. Education has been given a lot of importance in the country since independence. The spread of education has not been even throughout the country because of our increasing population. There are States like Kerala and Mizoram where the literacy rate is very high. On the other end of the spectrum, there are States like Bihar where literacy is one of the lowest in the country. A large number of school dropouts add to the increasing number of adult illiterates in the country every year. Adult education becomes extremely important in this context. A basic minimum level of literacy needs to be imparted to every citizen of the country. The Indian Adult Education Association has been rendering yeoman's service in this sphere. Adult education is an area where a lot needs to be done because the magnitude of the problem is growing. I send best wishes to the Association in its endeavours.

Sd/-
(K. C. Pant)



Minister of Communications
Government of India
New Delhi-110001

16 May, 1989

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that Indian Adult Education Association would be organising its Golden Jubilee Conference in New Delhi from May-22-25, 1989.

During these fifty years this Association has done commendable work in promoting adult education by coordinating the activities of various agencies—national and international-engaged in similar pursuits.

I am sure the deliberation of this four day meet in which about 500 adult educators would be participating, would be fruitful.

I wish the Conference all success.

S/-

(Bir Bahadur Singh)

so deeply impressed as during this meeting. I then compared India to a sleeping giant, waiting to be awakened by a kiss, which is literacy and knowledge needed to be taught to the Indian people, especially the vast masses of the illiterate. In that field you have done a marvelous job in the last 50 years, and I can only wish you to have the capacity of expanding substantially your blessed activities, and thus contribute to the creation of pre-conditions for a happy life for all the citizens of India, and help them occupy a leading position within the family of mankind.

The International Federation of Workers' Educational Associations is proud to have you as a member organisation, and we look forward to enlarging and deepening our cooperation.

With best wishes for further success, in friendship and solidarity.

**Director, Regional Office of Science and Technology for
South and Central Asia, UNESCO, New Delhi, Mr. M.P.
Derkatch**

We are glad to learn that the Indian Adult Education Association, doing very useful work in the field of adult education, spreading the idea of lifelong education, greatly contributing towards National Development, is celebrating its Golden Jubilee from 22-25 May 1989.

We take this opportunity to express our Hearty Congratulations and Best Wishes for the success of the Golden Jubilee Conference.

**Chairman, All India Committee on Eradication of
Illiteracy among Women, Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon**

My best wishes for the Golden Jubilee Conference. I am sure the Celebrations will go off well and the function will be a success.

**Professor, Adult Education, Ontario Institute for Studies
in Education, Toronto, (Canada) Prof. James A. Draper**

As one who has been supportive of the work of the IAEA for over twenty-five years, beginning with my work in Rajasthan, I especially regret that I will not be able to join you at the Golden Jubilee Conference. Your march for Adult Education is very symbolic of the Leadership provided by the Association during the past 50 years as well as the tremendous contribution it will undoubtedly continue to make in a future which all of us share together. I for one have been greatly enriched through my contact with Adult Education in India. Especially on the days of your conference, I shall be with you in my thoughts as we all praise the achievements of the IAEA.

Prof. John K. Friesen, Vancouver, Canada

The Indian Adult Education Association, over the years, has demonstrated its ability to plan and carry out national, state, block and community programs, many on a scale and with a commitment that would dwarf similar undertakings in either developing or developed countries. On your Anniversary I convey heartiest greetings to my fellow-members, and best wishes to the Association for much success over next half-century.

Fifty Years of Indian Adult Education Association

J. C. Saxena*

Indian Adult Education Association is a national level voluntary organisation dedicated to the promotion of adult/non-formal education in the country. Starting in a small way, by a band of dedicated men and women of vision, a little over 50 years ago, the Association has been and continues to be, a pioneering institution in the field of adult education.

2. The Association owes its origin to the foresight and organised attempts of a few enlightened individuals who derived their inspiration from universities/associations abroad and found, in the organisation of the then existing sporadic attempts of various agencies and individuals in the sphere of eradicating illiteracy, a fertile ground for the development of an adult education movement in India. These pioneers founded the adult education society in 1937 to investigate the problems of adult education in and around Delhi, to explore methods of solving it and to extend adult education work throughout the country. At this time the education movement in India had begun to make rapid strides with the assumption of office by the popular Ministries in the Provinces under the Government of India Act, 1935. Though a few adult education agencies like the Bombay Presidency Adult Education Association, South Indian Adult Education Association and Bengal Adult Education Association had been formed to coordinate and extend adult education work in their respective areas, the need for a central organisation with branches/associates in different Provinces and States was increasingly felt to help in evolving suitable methods and techniques by experiment and research to act as a clearing house of ideas, information and experience, to coordinate adult education activities carried on in different parts of the country and above all to direct uniform progressive policy for the proper development of the adult education movement in India. At the request of some of its very active members, the Indian Adult Education Society took the initiative in organising the first Adult Education Conference in Delhi in March 1938 to confer and explore the possibility of bringing into

*Retired Dy. Adviser, Planning Commission and presently Honorary General Secretary, Indian Adult Education Association.

being a Central organisation. A professional committee was set up in December 1939 when the second All India Adult Education Conference was held in Bhagalpur (Bihar) under the Presidentship of Dr. R.P. Masani from Bombay. It was at this session that the constitution of the central organisation was presented and finally adopted unanimously by the delegates to this Conference. Thus the Indian Adult Education Association was formally inaugurated as the Central organisation with the following aims and objects :

- a) To spread knowledge among the people of India on all subjects related to their all round development, welfare and culture in a popular and attractive manner through suitable agencies.
- b) To initiate, wherever necessary, adult education activities in co-operation with various organisations and individuals interested in the work and to encourage and coordinate local efforts and organisations engaged in promoting the cause of adult education.
- c) To serve as a "Clearing House" for exchange of ideas, information and advice concerning adult education in the different states of India.
- d) To cooperate with movements aiming at the removal of illiteracy and ignorance and promotion of the civic, economic and cultural interests of the people.
- e) To serve as a connecting link for inter-state cooperation and coordination.
- f) To prepare and supply, if necessary, slides, charts, films, booklets, suitable literature etc. and to undertake the publication of bulletins and journals.
- g) To arrange public lectures, demonstrations, seminars, etc. for furthering the objectives of the Association.
- h) To organise Indian Adult Education Conference and other meetings in furthering the objectives.



Chief Executive Councillor
Delhi Administration, Delhi

May 1, 1989

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that Indian Adult Education Association, after having completed 50 years of its useful services in the field of Adult Education, is organising its Golden Jubilee Conference in Delhi in the month of May, 1989 in which 500 adult educators from different parts of the country are participating as delegates.

I am sending my best wishes for the success of the Conference and also for the successful publication of the Souvenir.

Sd/-

(Jag Parvesh Chandra)

MESSAGES

Director-General, UNESCO, Paris, Prof. Federico Mayor

Member State's endeavours to promote adult education and offer educational opportunities to disadvantaged groups have always been welcomed, encouraged and supported by UNESCO. Fifty years work by your Association in this field have earned respect and esteem of international community. Your important role in promoting lifelong education in India greatly contributed to national development process. Please be assured UNESCO will support your efforts to achieve education for all. Wishing every success to your Golden Jubilee Conference.

President, IFWEA, Prof. Kurt Prokop

On my own behalf and on behalf of the International Federation of Workers' Educational Associations (IFWEA) I send you our cordial congratulations on the occasion of your Golden Jubilee. This shows to the world your work, your success, and your impressive history for the workers movements and adult education as a whole. The Golden Jubilee Celebrations afford you an opportunity to look back to your historical roots, to draw up a balance of the present and try to focus on the future activities while engaging yourself in the daily activities of your organisation. The IFWEA is very proud to have I.A.E.A. as an affiliate in our great family of workers' education movement, where you represent the voice of the developing countries.

All our affiliates know, what important work you have done in the past and what difficult task and challenges you have to tackle in the future.

Workers and adult education has to deal with the challenge to improve social situation of human beings and the society as a whole and is today and also in the future the key of emancipation of the individual and the workers movement. We are not exaggerating when we say that only educated societies will survive and they will be able to control the technological, ecological and scientific challenges of today and tomorrow. Education is the key for development. We know today that only the educated and literate human beings are able to combat poverty, social and economic under-development, children's work and the challenge of growing population by organising themselves in social pressure groups to demand more and intensive education, not only for the privileged society, but also for the weaker sections of the society. Therefore, we need for this challenge, more and intensive international contact, understanding and solidarity. We are convinced that the Indian Adult Education Association, as one of our most respected affiliate, has chosen the right road for its own future. May the family of the IFWEA wish your Association all success for your important work, for India's present and future.

Educators have to try daily the impossible to be able to reach the possible targets and aims in their society. We, the IFWEA salute your Golden Jubilee and wish you every success.

To try.

**Chairman, Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education
Region I Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne**

I feel deeply disappointed in my not being able to participate in this historic function of celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), our premier NGO in the region devoted to the cause of educating the adults. Although I will be thousands of miles away physically, in spirit, I will be sharing with you this joyous occasion.

Fifty years of continuous fruitful existence is a landmark that cannot let pass by unnoticed, and it is nothing but fitting that this occasion should be celebrated with this grandeur.

I do not propose to make use of this opportunity to recount the many and varied achievements of this august body, which are well known and well chronicled. Nor do I propose to give a discourse on the functions of an organization of this type to an audience, many of whose life long mission is the promotion of the very aims and objectives that this Association stands for. I wish however, to make use of this occasion to salute the galaxy of stalwarts, many of whom are not with us today, whose vision, dedication and devotion made this occasion possible, and to pay my humble tribute to those who are presently associated with guiding the destinies of this national asset.

May I, on behalf of my own organization Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka which has just passed its 30th year and the Region I of the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education which is just about to celebrate its Silver Jubilee, wish our giant brother all the strength in its successful march towards its Diamond Jubilee in the service of the nation.

I wish the celebrations all success.

Secretary-General, ICAE, Dr. Budd Hall

Congratulations !

Wishing the Golden Jubilee Conference all success.

General Secretary, IFWEA, Mr. David Faran-Frankfurter

It is a special honor and pleasure for me to congratulate you on the happy occasion of the 50th birthday of the Indian Adult Education Association. On my first visit to India in 1987, I had the good chance of meeting some of your most important officers in your centre in N.D., and of participating in the meeting of your activities. Only in very few cases in the past, while meeting people from various countries and nations, had I been

- i) To persuade the Universities and other educational bodies in the country to take up adult education work and to do all other acts that are incidental to the fulfilment of the above mentioned aims and objects of the Association.

3. Sometimes people judge the success or failure of the Association by the slow progress of literacy in India and the increasing number of illiterates due to rise in population and heavy drop-outs from Primary schools. They often forget that the objectives of the Association continue to remain very broad. At no time the Association had the means nor the manpower, to eradicate illiteracy from the country. It only focussed attention to this grave problem through seminars and conferences. It maintained that programmes of basic education for children and adult education should be undertaken throughout the country as they are mutually reinforcing and can lead to universal literacy in our country. The very first national seminar organised by the Association at Jabalpur in 1950 discussed problems of organisation and techniques for liquidation of illiteracy.

The Association continues to lend its support to official and un-official agencies in order to cooperate with movements aiming at the removal of illiteracy as stated in the objectives of the Association.

4. When we judge the growth of an organisation a glance at the 'numbers' becomes inevitable. Table below will indicate the all round expansion of IAEA during the last 25 years :

At the time of	Institutional Members	Life Members
1. Silver Jubilee (1964)	79	60
2. Golden Jubilee (1989)	225	815

The Association has engaged itself in organising Conferences, Zonal Conferences, Round Table discussions, Seminars and Workshops which have yielded a wealth of ideas for the benefit of the policy makers and planners and the implementors of the programmes in the country. Earlier the main function of the Association was to mobilise public opinion in favour of adult education. After independence its main function was to help government

formulate policies and help Adult Education Programmes to coordinate the activities of the agencies and workers, official and non-official, in the field to act as a clearing house of ideas and information. This role of the Association was recognised in the following words in the First Five Year Plan (1951-56) Document: "A common national platform where the various agencies can meet at intervals for mutual discussion—so necessary for evolving a common outlook and securing coordination of different agencies—is provided by the Indian Adult Education Association."

5. On this occasion, we remember with gratitude the leadership provided and services rendered by great stalwarts in the earlier years of the Association. Some of the prominent among them were, Dr. Zakir Hussain (Vice-President of the Association for a number of terms), Dr. R.P. Masani, Prof. N.G. Ranga, Dr. Amar Nath Jha, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri R.M. Chetsingh, Shri J.C. Mathur, Dr. V.S. Jha, Prof. A.N. Basu, Prof. M. Mujeeb, Shri S.R. Kidwai, Shri V.S. Mathur and Shri S.C. Dutta. Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta provided dynamic leadership during his Presidentship of 16 years (1958-74). The present premises of the Association was built during 1958-61 through his guidance and Shri S.C. Dutta's efforts as General Secretary. Dr. Mehta was responsible for setting up the first department of Adult Education in the Rajasthan University, Jaipur of which he was the Vice-Chancellor. He convened the Conference of Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities, in Bhopal in 1965 where Dr. Mehta and Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao guided the deliberations of the conference and mobilised Universities for Adult Education. Later I.A.E.A. was responsible for the setting up of Indian University Association for Continuing Education, (I.U.A.C.E.) of which Dr. M.S. Mehta and Shri S.C. Dutta become the President and Hony.-Secretary respectively. The Association rose to great heights under the inspiring leadership of Dr. Malcom S. Adiseshiah who became President after Dr. M.S. Mehta. During six years of his Presidentship Dr. Adiseshiah built valuable foreign contacts; We remember with gratitude the valuable services rendered to the Association by Dr. S.C. Dutta during his Secretaryship (1956-78), Treasurership (1984-86) and Presidentship (1987). He was connected in one capacity or the other with the Association right from the beginning in 1939 till his death on Dec. 4, 1987. It may be stated here that all subsequent Presidents/Secretaries/Treasurers and Members of the Executive Committee have drawn inspiration from these stalwarts and served the Association to the best of their ability. The Association's membership and activities increased immensely in 1980's.

The Pioneering role of IAEA

6. In the early days, the Association strove to create public opinion on the need for a public policy on adult education and to mobilise support from the Government and other public institutions for the movement. Today, with adult education recognised as an essential process of national reconstruction, the Association is concerned with making that process purposeful and effective. The Adult Education Movement in the country began as a part of the nation's struggle for freedom. It now forms as part of the nation's quest to give that freedom meaning and significance. The people in India are now in the process of learning to find through Adult Education, their well being and happiness.

7. The Indian Adult Education Association made several representations to the Central and State Governments for the constitution of National Board of Adult Education and its counterparts in the States. At long last, the Association succeeded when the Ministry of Education at the Centre constituted a separate National Board of Adult Education representing several ministries and departments from the Centre and States, important educationists, social workers including the President of the Indian Adult Education Association.

8. The efforts made by the Indian Adult Education Association right from its inception, for the appointment of separate functionaries in the Department of Education, for looking after programmes of adult education, were not conceded at first but later provided a token staff—first at the Centre and then in some States. It was heartening to note that when National Adult Education Programme was launched in 1978, adequate administrative structures were built at the State, district and project levels.

9. Some of the leaders of Indian Adult Education Association were drawn from the ranks of workers organisations and, therefore, they emphasised workers education. Consequently several programmes of workers were carried out in the 1940's and 1950's. An important Seminar was organised by the IAEA in Calcutta in 1956 to examine the whole gamut of workers' education. It included a recommendation to the Government of India for setting up an agency for workers' education in the country. Consequently a Central Board for Workers Education was set up by the Ministry of Labour and the Indian Adult Education Association has been represented

on this Board right from the inception of the Board. The Central Board for Workers' Education is now a large organisation with its zonal and regional offices and unit level organisations. It also has got an Indian Institute of Workers' Education located in Bombay which organises training programmes round the year.

Annual Conferences & Seminars

10. The Association has organised 41 Annual Conferences and about four dozen national level seminars and a large number of Regional Seminars. These Conferences and Seminars attracted the participation of administrators, academicians, social workers, field workers, drawn from the Governments at the Centre and the States, trade unions and voluntary organisations, universities and colleges. These Conferences and Seminars provided a forum for exchange of ideas and information and pooling of experiences. These also helped in clarifying new ideas and most often their recommendations helped in policy formulation and guided the field workers in the implementation and organisation of adult education programme.

11. The Conferences provided leadership and new concepts in this newly developing field of education called the oldest as well as the newest form of education.

Publications

12. In pursuance of the objectives of the Association, the Association brings out an English Journal of Adult Education, which was earlier monthly but made quarterly in 1987, a monthly called "Proudh Shiksha" in Hindi, a monthly Newsletter in English and a Hindi monthly "Jago Aur Jagao" for the benefit of new literates. "Jago aur Jagao" was initially started with assistance from UNESCO.

13. These Journals held a record in continuity because the mortality rate of educational journals and particularly journals of adult education is very high all over the world. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Indian Journal of Adult Education has been making its appearance regularly during the last 50 years. It is mailed out to over 80 countries in the world.

14. The Association has brought out many books in English and Hindi for the benefit of practitioners of adult education and field workers. Many of the UNESCO publications were translated into Hindi in order to make available to field workers, the results of studies made by UNESCO experts.

Projects

15. The Association has undertaken a number of experiments and pilot projects. Several training programmes were organised from 1948-1951 for social education workers in rural as well as urban educational areas. The syllabus of social education workers, training courses of the earlier community development programme were mostly drawn upon this experience. Later the Association in collaboration with International Federation of Workers Educational Associations (IFWEA) and with the financial assistance from UNESCO organised a training course for workers' education in 1960-61. With the financial assistance provided by the Central Board for Workers Education (CBWE) the Association have been organising workshops and seminars regularly for the benefit of workers. From time to time, the Association organised literacy centres on experimental basis. It is launching 100 literacy centres, 80 for women and 20 for men in a resettlement colony, Himmat Puri in East Delhi this month.

Correspondence Courses

16. The Association organised correspondence courses for workers in Hindi. For the benefit of workers, courses on "Collective Bargaining" and "Trade Unionism" consisting of 24 lessons each were organised.

Condensed Courses for Women

17. In the past, the Association conducted Condensed Courses for Adult Women with the help of the Central Social Welfare Board. At present also the Association is conducting a project "Awareness Camps for Women" with assistance from Central Social Welfare Board.

Training

18. The Association accorded a high priority to training programmes for various types of functionaries engaged in adult education. The Associa-

tion obtained the cooperation of experts from the ranks of its own members, official and un-official agencies to do this job. These training programmes were conducted in Delhi and several other places in India. The Association also organised training workshops for writers to prepare appropriate literature for the neo-literates. With the advent of National Adult Education Programme, the size and dimension of these training programmes increased. Further impetus was given to this activity of the Association by the ASPBAE and DVV assistance received during 1985-87. The Indian Adult Education Association is grateful to its members—both individual and institutional who helped it in carrying out these training programmes in different parts of India including tribal and hilly areas. Most of these training programmes are area-specific and group-specific and participatory in nature.

Research

19. The Association has undertaken a number of research studies, some on its own and a few with the collaboration of other agencies. Some of the research were evaluative and others were survey-type. The Association in collaboration with the research, training and production centre of the Jamia Millia Islamia carried out a research study on Adult Schools. With the financial support of UNESCO, the Association conducted jointly with Jamia Millia Islamia two studies on Literature for Neo-Literates in Hindi and two Mobile Exhibition Literature for new reading public. The Association carried out a study on the impact of television in collaboration with the National Fundamental Education Centre (which later became the Directorate of Adult Education, Govt. of India). A study on Rural Leadership was conducted and a survey of libraries in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh was undertaken. The Association carried out an evaluation of social education work in Delhi in 1957-58. A survey of cultural organisations in South East Asia was also undertaken on behalf of UNESCO. The Association brought out a directory of social education functionaries in 1948 and later in 1958-59. Several Research studies were undertaken during 1960-80. In 1982-83, the Association carried out two important research :

1. Research on Research which includes a study of the M Ed., M.Phil. and P.hd. dissertations on the subject of Adult Education in Indian Universities also gives future trends of Research; and

2. Reading needs and interests of Neo-literates and the levels of literacy achievement.

These studies were carried out with the help of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, West Germany.

20. In honour of our late President Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, a research fellowship was instituted in 1986. It is awarded every year to an individual to carry out a research project. Two such projects have been completed.

Cooperation with others

21. The Association from its very inception has been cooperating with agencies—both official and non-official in the task of promoting and developing suitable adult education programmes and policies. Representatives of the Association and its leading members have been connected with various Governmental Committees and have drawn up plans for adult education in the country. The members of this Association have served with distinction on the Central Advisory Board of Education and its Standing Committee on Social Education, the Panel for Social Education set up by the Planning Commission, Central Board for Workers Education set up by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Television set up by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, the National Advisory Committee on Public Cooperation set up by Planning Commission and Social Education Committee of Union Territory of Delhi set up by the then Ministry of Education. Some of the office-bearers and prominent members of the Association have presided over the working groups on adult education set up for Five Year Plans by the Planning Commission while many of them have been members of such groups.

22. The Association was actively involved in the establishment of India Literacy Board (Lucknow) in 1954. The then President of our Association, Dr. Harnatha Jha was its first Chairman and the then Hony. General Secretary Shri S.C. Dutta had been a member of the Board and its Executive Committee for a long time. A former President of the Association Dr. M.S. Mehta was elected Vice-Chairman of the India Literacy Board which runs the Literacy House founded by Mrs. Welthy H. Fisher. Several State departments of education/adult education, Universities and Colleges and voluntary

organisations are institutional members of the Association. Institutions like Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Bombay City Social Education Committee, Bengal Social Service League, Karnataka State Adult Education Council, S.R.C. Jamia Millia, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth and a host of other university departments of adult and continuing education and extension are our members. We are very proud of them for their good record of service in the cause of adult education, at the grass-root level. The Association has fostered the growth of State Associations and Regional Institutions for Adult Education, many of which are making a valuable contribution to the adult education movement in the country.

Literacy Awards

23. The Indian Adult Education Association instituted the "Nehru Literacy Award (N.L.A.)" in 1968 for outstanding contribution towards the promotion and development of literacy among men and women in India. In 1987, the Association instituted "Tagore Literacy Award" for outstanding work in the promotion of literacy among women. So far 20 Nehru Literacy Awards have been given—18 to individuals, who rendered outstanding services to the cause of literacy in India and two to voluntary organisations with a record of literacy efforts. So far two Tagore Literacy Awards have been given. These are selected from a panel of names recommended for the purpose by the members of the Association, the State Education and Development Departments and voluntary organisations or institutions in the field of adult education and adult literacy. The selection of the awardee is made on an yearly basis by a committee consisting of Chairman and four members appointed by the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association. The awards are made for (i) literacy work among adults; (ii) follow-up work for neo-literates; (iii) continuing education work; and (iv) organizational/supervisory work. These awards are announced on the International Literacy Day i.e. September 8 every year.

Dr. Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture

The Association organises Dr. Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture every year to commemorate his distinguished services to the cause of education and enlightenment and his close and intimate relationship with the Indian Adult Education Association, Dr. Zakir Hussain Memorial Lecture is delivered at the request of the Association by an eminent educationist on the

occasion of the annual conference of the Association. So far 17 lectures in the series have been delivered.

International Contacts

24. The Association has built up fairly extensive international contacts. It is affiliated with the International Federation of Workers' Educational Associations (IFWEA), International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE). We are proud of the role of our two former Presidents, Dr. Malcolm S. Chidsehsiah and late Dr. S.C. Dutta in the formation of I.C.A.E and A.S.P.B.A.E. respectively. Both of them were the Founding Presidents of these two important international organisations. We are happy to welcome representatives of I.C.A.E. and A.S.P.B.A.E. who are present today with us. The Association continues to maintain contacts and exchange of information with World Education Inc., New York, Adult Education Association of U.S.A., Canadian Association of Adult Education, German Adult Education Association, Australian Association of Adult Education, New Zealand Adult Education Council Social Education Association of Japan, the World Confederation of Organisations of Teaching Professions and African Adult Education Association, Commonwealth Association for Education and Training of Adults and a number of agencies and institutions in other parts of the world. The Association in collaboration with South Gujarat University organised a Conference of Adult Educators from Commonwealth Countries at Ukai Dam (Gujarat) in 1987, which led to the formation of the Commonwealth Association for Education and Training of Adults (CAETA). The Association readily agreed to collaborate with UNESCO in the launching of International Literacy Year in 1990. When I.C.A.E. set up International Task Force on Literacy in Canada, they set up a Regional Office in South Asia which accounts for the greatest share of illiterates of the World. The Association at the request of Dr. Budd Hall, Secretary General, I.C.A.E. offered space in its own premises to I.T.F.L. office in the region. All possible help and support is being extended to I.C.A.E., A.S.P.B.A.E./I.T.F.L. and other agencies in the promotion of the common objectives of eliminating illiteracy and expanding knowledge, understanding, cooperation and goodwill. The Association received guidance and support from UNESCO right from its inception. Several projects were carried out with support from UNESCO.

Introspection

25. At a meeting of members of the Association from Delhi convened by us on 24th April, 1989, a valuable suggestion was made about setting up a small group of 5 or 6 eminent members of the Association to examine in depth our achievements and failures in the past 59 years and to suggest new goals and approaches for the coming decades so that the Association fulfils the tasks undertaken by it. Action has been initiated in this regard.

26. At the time of our Golden Jubilee, we find ourselves at the cross-roads of history. We face the challenge of poverty and illiteracy. Our first concern today is to make India literate and use literacy as an effective tool for social and economic transformation. The implementation of current anti-poverty programmes will be considerably assisted if people become literate. Also the consolidation of newly acquired literacy will keep the people above the poverty line once they come above it.

27. On this historic occasion, the Indian Adult Education Association dedicates itself to serve the people of our country in the great tasks of—

- i) achieving universal functional literacy,
- ii) promoting life-long continuing adult education,
- iii) moving towards the goal of achieving learning society,
- iv) assisting all anti-poverty programmes and ensuring that the benefits reach the people for whom these are meant,
- v) raising the social and economic status of the people, particularly of women, and weaker sections of society, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes,
- vi) improving general awareness, upgrading skills and general well-being of the people,
- vii) promoting
 - a) scientific temper

- b) national integration
- c) conservation of environment
- d) women's equality
- e) observance of small family norms
- f) international understanding.

28. The Indian Adult Education Association, after 50 years of devoted service to the cause of adult education and adult literacy in India, can be proud of its past accomplishments and can move forward into the future with even more vigour and optimism.

Towards Promotion of a Learning Society

Lakshmidhar Mishra*

It was 8th April, 89, the new year day for Rajasthan, a day of festivity and rejoicing. The sun had set. It was a long and winding journey through the sandy track of village Bhadaunda Kala in Chidawa Panchayat Samiti in Jhunjhunu District. The occasion was visit to one of the Adult Education Centres located in the harijanwada at an extreme corner of the village. Of the 35 learners in the Centre, 24 were above 20 years of age and the remaining were children in 10+ age-group.

Normally, the centre is meant for people in 15-35 age group which is expected to represent the most productive age group in the country. It was natural, therefore, for me to ask, as to what made the young boys and girls to attend a night school meant for adults. The answer is the burden of this story.

Majority of the learners belonging to the SC Community were from the category of landless agricultural labourers. Some of them also work as building and construction workers. Simple and free of guile, they represent one of the finest specimens of humanity. Their average earnings range between Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 per day. No other crop is grown on the sandy track except bajra which constitutes the staple food for majority of the people. It is used for breakfast, lunch and dinner. About 15 qls of bajra would be annually needed for consumption for a family of 5 members. Due to successive years of drought (till 1987-88), there was a failure of this crop leading to semi-starvation conditions. On account of the harsh geography and topography characterised by sprawling desert tracks coupled with a tradition bound society, schooling of children (and particularly of girls) seldom occupied high priority for the parents. Besides, all 33,000 villages of Rajasthan do not have primary schooling facilities. Even in those villages which have a school, the distance of the school from the harijanwada is such that parents do not feel naturally inclined to send their children to the school.

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The environment in the school does not somehow appeal to them, it does not conform to their immediate needs and interests. That, however, is not the real reason for not sending the children to school. This stems partly from conditions of acute poverty and partly from their deep attachment to and concern for the livestock which needs to be tended. And who will tend them when men go to the field for agriculture or for other subsidiary occupations and women remain busy in household chores which also compel girls to stay at home. The boys, therefore, are left to be sent to the field to tend the livestock i.e. the cattle, the sheep and the goats of which every rural Rajasthani household is proud.

And they leave home in the early hours of the morning with their herds of sheep and goat. They remain in the field for the whole day. As the herds of animals start chewing and ruminating the kejri and bubul leaves, these boys gaze at the clear sky in a vacant and pensive mood. Occasionally, they cover their face with a wet gamcha (towel) to protect it from the onslaughts of andhee i.e. sandstorm and occasionally, they relish the bajra cake sent by their mothers. It is a gruelling test of physical stamina. It is also a supreme test of survival amidst "the slings and arrows of an outrageous fortune".

Years roll by. The rough exterior goes on roughening more and more. The rough surface which represents flower like innocence and serene calm gradually turns into a rough exterior. It gets toughened further by the arrow like sweep of desert sands. It hides a scar within, which is deep and penetrating. The petals of boyhood fall before maturing into the full bloom of youth and manhood. A sense of futility sets in. The spectre of worthlessness haunts them though they cannot express it. It numbs them, stifles initiative and creativity and reduces them to the level of a non-being.

This is nothing short of a deep psychological and emotional trauma. The trauma deepens as they return home, fatigued and devitalised. There is hardly anything lively or inspiring at home. Pangs of penury and deprivation stalks the landscape as much as it pervades their home life. The unsparing money-lender and his wily machinations for recovery of loan/debt/advance taken by the hali in extremely difficult and indigent circumstances instil into everybody's heart and mind a sense of awe and helplessness.

It is in this background that the young boys, the rearer of sheep and goats find their parents going to a night school opened for them in the village. A strange desire is kindled in their mind to join their parents. The desire deepens and so also the quest, the urge and the inquisitiveness. A vista of new experience opens up before them. Hitherto they have been deprived of the opportunity for learning. And now they find their parents want to learn. Why not they? The Nachiketas in each of them is fired with a new passion, a new urge which was hitherto latent and had almost started languishing.

But how does the teacher deal with this brand of uncanny seekers of the new path? How does he diagnose the trauma or the scar which had been deep set over years of deprivation and negligence? How does he provide a healing touch? How does he set in a process of emotional and psychological rehabilitation?

The answer to these complex issues is not easy. The teacher will have to diagnose the ailment, the scar and the void pervading the life of the wastrel for years and will have to design the therapy all by himself. After all, the teacher may not be very much different from the pupil. He comes from the same milieu, the same strata of the society. His own life pulsates with the same joy and sorrow, the same laughter and tears,

Dealing with adults and children in the same class together is a complex phenomenon. Normally, the adults unlike children are not inclined to accept anything and everything instantly, which is told to them. They would question, analyse, interpret and accept something only after discriminating between the right and the wrong, the important and unimportant, the immediate and remote. Not so is the case with children who are used to a culture of acquiescence, submissiveness and who ordinarily cannot single out the pairs of opposites which affect their lives.

The scenario witnessed by me at Bhadaunda Kala was somewhat different. The young and the old are indistinguishable in many ways except in physical form. The young are fatigued but inquisitive to learn. The old, through years of hard manual labour are drained of their vitality, are weary and worn, withered and forlorn. The laughter in them seems to have died out. They seem to have almost given up the battle of life. But they at the sametime are free of guile and pretension, are as open as nature itself.

This poses a very delicate and difficult problem before the teacher. On the surface, he deals with two different groups who on account of poverty, malnutrition and fatigue factor almost appear to be the same but who in real life are very much different. He has to be conscious of this difference and design different methodologies appropriate to the needs and perceptions of the clientele. He has to bring himself down to the level of a teenager and the very next moment he has to elevate himself to the level of the adult. The two facets of his personality, one for the young and another for the old, will have to oscillate like a pendulum without losing its basic identity. In other words, the teacher will have to be adept in the art of orchestration without loss of originality, a process considered extremely difficult and not easily attainable.

The question is : do we have such human resources ? How do we identify them ? What type of orientation and training do we impart them ? Can training make a very big difference in infusing the art and culture of orchestration into the personality and psyche of the teacher ?

These and many other complex issues will have to be answered as we proceed on the extremely tenuous path of adult education. It is a long and winding one, as long and winding as the sandy tracks of Rajasthan desert. It calls for infinite patience and counselling. And more than anything else, it calls for a spirit of fellow-feeling, of bonhomie, of empathy and sensitivity to the plight of others.

In order that the entire exercise makes some sense to the lives of millions of such kids, who unlike their counterparts in the better placed sections of the society, did not have access to something which is most desirable, the teacher must set in a process by which the learners are able to critically reflect on the existential reality of the situation in which they have been helplessly placed. Who are they ? Where have they come from ? What forces or factors have led them to their present predicament ? Are they aware of these forces or factors ? Can they identify them ? Do they have the strength, the skill and the wherewithal to deal with them ? If not, how do they overcome the hurdles ? How do they eventually overpower their adversaries ? Yet another, and quite intriguing, question which will have to be answered is : How do adult educators know what the adult learners want to learn ? Can we assume ourselves in their position to have

a correct understanding of what they have, what they do not have, what they know and what they do not know ?

These and many other questions will arise as we proceed further. The teacher should not merely help the learners to identify the problem, the forces and situations, he should enable them to find the solutions as well. In answering the last question, I would like to state that this is the inevitable corollary of a situation where many of our unfortunate fellow-beings are unable to exercise the correct option or discretion for themselves and their family members. They often do not know what they ought to know and in acute distress situations they do not know what they do not know. In such a situation, we have to 'throw off our mantle' (in the words of Rabindranath Tagore) and come down to the dusty earth where those of our unfortunate fellow-beings live, identify ourselves totally with their weal and woe, exercising the option or discretion (for them) which would be in their best interest, without any axe to grind for ourselves.

In order that they are enabled to find solution to their own problems, the teacher must make them sit in one circle and he must sit alongwith. He should then make them pause and think. He should enable them to form groups. He should facilitate the process of one participating in the affairs of many. This is teaching 'unity is strength' through adult literacy. This is translating the participative decision making process into a reality.

Illiteracy is not a fatality: it is not pre-ordained. Nobody is born illiterate; illiteracy is nobody's choice or making. Illiteracy is just the product of time as much as poverty, destitution and bondage are, and it is curable and correctable. An illiterate is just the victim of a situation; she/he did not have the opportunity of going to school at the tender, formative years of life or having gone to the school, dropped out of the system, not of his own violation but on account of inscrutable social and economic compulsions. She/he grows up to adulthood and remains an illiterate; cut off from the rest of the world without access to the print media, without access to the world of information communication and skills. Illiteracy, therefore, was not his/her own making; it was the outcome of forces beyond the control of the illiterate. All or any one of us could have been the victim of that situation. Illiteracy, as a phenomenon is, therefore, not to be condemned or pitied but viewed with empathy and sensitivity, has to be squarely encountered with grit, patience, determination and resolve.

Illiteracy is a growing phenomenon and unless nipped in the bud, is likely to grow further and pose a menace to development, to human evolution and growth. Eradication of illiteracy requires many things such as a good and stable learning environment, good infrastructure for production of well visualised and well illustrated teaching learning materials which are of direct interest and relevance to the lives of the learner and training resources, human, material and financial. And all this will make sense if there is simultaneous planned and determined effort to bring about a qualitative reform in the social, economic and political system, a reform which will bring about a perceptible change in the working and living conditions of the people. But more than anything else, eradication of illiteracy will not be possible or the efforts will not produce the desired results without few basic attitudinal changes. Illiteracy is an inequality phenomenon and, therefore, its eradication must be prompted by consideration and respect for the culture of equality. All men are not equal. They are born differently; they grow differently and live differently. They have different genetic and anthropological background, different traits and characteristics. These mould their thought process and life-style differently. This difference cannot be obliterated; it can at best be minimised or harmonised. Making an illiterate alphabetically and functionally literate is a part of this harmonisation process and this will be possible only if those who are wedded to literacy promotion efforts are also committed to the culture of equality.

The second is treating the illiterate adult with dignity and respect as a human being. An illiterate adult is not a goof; she/he is intelligent, sensible and mature. The only missing link is that she/he does not have access to the print media and lacks, therefore, an easy access to a wider world of information, communication and skills. An illiterate person more than anything else is also a human being, the finest and the best in creation. And every human being has her/his own frailties and deficiencies. They are partly inherited and partly acquired. Literacy promotion effort like any other promotional effort must take cognizance of this basic fact that genuine concern for a human being, for his failures and limitations, brings in a new type of energisation, motivation and mobilisation.

Today those of us, who are in the literacy movement, are dealing with a situation which is at once complex, formidable and also uneviable. This is on account of the fact that unlike in Cuba, Nicaragua and Burma, we are trying to promote literacy as an integral part of development process.

In those countries, there was a revolutionary change in the social, economic and political system and literacy was an offshoot of that change. It was facilitated by the change. Ours is, however, an altogether different case. We are also committed to bring about change but through peaceful and constitutional means. And we treat, converting an illiterate into a literate, as a part of that process of change. Such a process, according to our thought and culture, is gradual. Literacy by itself, may not instantly lead to removal of landlessness and bondage and better employment, better wage, better quality of life ; it will need to be supplemented by a host of other efforts. But merely because those efforts are wanting, we cannot postpone literacy promotion efforts. For us, it is not one or the other but both and simultaneous. This is because of the sheer magnitude of the problem and the long time span which is involved. And ours is a sub-continent, much larger in size than Burma, Cuba and Nicaragua. Our problems are also different in their range, magnitude and complexity. There is not one language like in Burma but 1600 languages and dialects. There is not one but a large number of ethnic groups. There is not one but many agroclimatic regions. There are wide socio-cultural variations and practices. There cannot, therefore, be any homogeneity, far less of any uniformity. And no region or no dialect or no cultural variation can be ignored or belittled. A variety of tools, techniques and methodologies, as may be appropriate to a particular region or situation will have to be thought of and applied. This is what makes the task most arduous and daunting. This calls for patience, fortitude and hardwork. This calls for determination and dedication. This calls for tolerance, catholicity, compassion and equanimity. It should be remembered that there is no other soft option left. By no stretch of imagination, we can allow this sub-continent of ours, which was once the light of Asia and the cradle of civilisation and culture for the whole world, drift into a nation having world's largest number of illiterates by the turn of the century. But literacy for the teeming millions who want to read and write and yet who have been deprived of the opportunity thereof at the formative years of their life must be imparted in a normal, natural and unaffected milieu, with love, kindness, understanding and commiseration. It will then be something different from alphabatisation. It will be a union of two hearts and minds which Paulo Friere depicts in a somewhat different language as 'reversal of the role of the teacher and the taught'.

National Literacy Mission —The Perspectives—

S. N. Saraf*

Introduction

The establishment of National Literacy Mission, following the need for achieving national target of eradicating illiteracy among 100 million in the age-group 15-35 during the period 1985-1995 (Seventh & Eighth Plans), as laid down in the Programme of Action, 1986, is a welcome and historic step. The Seventh Five Year Plan (October 1985) had stated that "the task of covering all the illiterates in the age-group 15-35 years by 1990 is a formidable one". The National Education Policy (1986) stated: "The whole Nation must pledge itself to the eradication of illiteracy, particularly in the 15-35 age-group". In view of the current national literacy scenario, several inadequacies of various literacy programmes, implemented by various agencies, highlighted by numerous evaluation reports and the immensity of the tasks ahead, the National Literacy Mission has to face a number of challenges. The objectives laid down for the Mission are both laudable and achievable provided there is a clear perspective and an earnestness to learn from the past successes and failures and the right kind of leadership is provided throughout.

1. *Literacy Dilemma* : In a non-literacy milieu, literacy has no hope to develop and then to survive. It would not be incorrect to say that this has been the brief history of literacy in India. Literacy was never a political time bomb. Many attempts in the past forty years have produced results which are not commensurate with the immensity of tasks. Without being a prophet of doom and basing *estimates* on the existing trends and new policy initiatives, tentative *projections* about literacy growth till the end of 2001 are shown in Table 1.

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Table 1. Population and literacy rate 1951-81 and 1991-2001 projections (Absolute figures in millions)

S. N.	Year	Population	Literates	Illiterates	Percentage literacy
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1951	356	60	301	16.1
2	1961	445	106	333	24.1
3	1971	548	161	387	29.4
4	1981	683	244	439	36.2
5	1991	840	378	462	45.0
6	2001	1000	600	400	60.0

Even in 2001, cent per cent literacy target may not be achieved. One would not like to live to see these projections coming true. In a sense the Education Commission's 1964-66 prophetic vision may become a reality because the programme of free universal education has not been able to catch up to the extent which it was visualised nor is any programme of mass campaign of eradication of illiteracy on the cards.

The recently launched National Literacy Mission has fortunately set the goals clearly but achievements may not be according to expectations. Millions have suffered and will continue to suffer the indignity of illiteracy and their numbers have been growing—the last decade of this century will be crucial. These millions are the poor, the deprived, the backward, and the socially weak and depressed, who are below the poverty line and have been 'left outs'. Geographical distribution of universal illiteracy in India is partially co-terminus with the areas which, by and large, are underdeveloped and poverty-stricken. Social and economic growth, has taken place mostly in areas which are not educationally depressed.

3. Basic Education of Poor : The emphasis on elementary and adult education as important components to improve the social conditions of the under-privileged and exploited sections of the community, will have to be noted by educationalists as positive incentives providing an excellent oppor-

tunity to make education an important factor in development. Appropriate basic education enables the majority of the poor, in both rural and urban areas, to lead productive lives and to benefit from social and economic development of the community. Moreover, the effectiveness of higher level of education depends on the completion of the basic level. With the initiation of the National Literacy Mission in 1988 it seems that a new leaf has been turned. The implementation of the Programme, will depend on the extent to which literacy planners and administrators have learnt from previous experiences. The repetition of the same old bottlenecks, lack of preparation, absence of functional materials, low rate of motivation, inadequate response from developmental agencies, indifferent quality of teachers, supervisors and other personnel, slipshod training programmes, non-involvement of media as a support and bureaucratic delays have to be avoided. All these are man-made. For the first time, money seems to be no problem though the national planners have started asking questions about the 'results' 'impact', 'outcomes' and what not. The resources constraint seems to be hunting almost every sector of development. They are entitled to ask these questions because financial resources for developing countries will continue to be a major constraint and educational reforms with minimal or negative returns will have no chance for inclusion in plan priorities.

4. A time has come to pause and think. Can the various bottlenecks be removed? In other words, can the literacy milieu (climate) be improved when there are many pulls and pushes in a contra-direction? Will the present priority to adult education and literacy continue in terms of allocations and in having a place of pride in the Education plans? Even if the priority continues, will the country wake up to the realisation that literacy is a condition precedent for redistributive justice and economic growth? These are various segments of the literacy milieu we have been talking about. At this crucial stage of implementation, there are some major issues which the planners and managers of literacy in India have to bear in mind. These issues and conclusions are briefly discussed.

5. *Intensity* : The accent has to be intensive. Bulk of illiteracy in all the age-groups and particularly in the age-group 15-35 is confined largely to about 170 districts located in educationally backward states. These districts form over 75 per cent of the total number of districts in the educationally backward states leading to the inevitable conclusion that the actual battle will have to be fought in these areas. If all-out efforts are

made to *eradicate* illiteracy in these districts during the next 10 years, the back of illiteracy will be broken. It is no intention to propose that other areas should be neglected—that would be a retrograde step—but to suggest central government's positive discrimination in favour of these areas by applying the famous 'equalisation' principle which was recommended by the First Finance Commission (1952) for promoting primary education in the then nine educationally backward states. Unfortunately, while accelerated and specific grants were given to these states for expanding primary education there was no mechanism provided that the grants do promote the proposed intention. In other words, there was no monitoring of programme. Equity and justice demands that in these deprived areas, districts are fully supported and all kinds of technical and professional assistance provided. A massive technical assistance programme, for a specific period, with an accent on monitoring of the programme, is to be visualised. This approach seems to be inevitable.

6. *Joint strategy for literacy and universalisation of elementary education*: The universalisation of elementary education should reinforce the literacy activities in about 170 districts in the educationally backward states. Over 70 per cent of the non-enrolled children in the age-group 6-14 are in these districts. Perhaps a further scrutiny of the district-wise data may indicate that there is absolute correspondence between the backwardness in literacy and low rate of enrolment ratios at the elementary stage of education. Further projections indicate that by 2001, 10 out of 100 children in the age-group 6-14 may not be enrolled (how many will be attending can be anybody's guess) in schools and 20 out of 100 persons in the age-group 15-35 will still be illiterate. These estimates, however, seem to be optimistic assuming that the present trend will continue. This dual dilemma illustrates the close relationship between the failure of elementary education as a direct cause of literacy backwardness or vice-versa. If universal literacy in the age-group 6-35 is sought to be achieved, say even by 2001, the educational system, to borrow the current Chinese phrase, will have to walk on two legs—elementary education and adult literacy. The two are inter-connected for several reasons. An audacious development of elementary education is not only relevant to the task of achieving the goal of universal elementary education alone, it is closely related to the campaign against illiteracy as well. One significant reason which planners of developing countries have to note seriously is that after reaching a target of about 65 to 70% of elementary

school enrolments the growth curve tends to slow down considerably—it becomes almost a plateau—because the population, which is 'resistant to education' begins to be reached. It is here that adult literacy helps to change the milieu in favour of non-enrolled children who may otherwise go on adding to the ranks of illiterates and the vicious circle will ever grow. The other correspondence between the two is provided by the fact that greater the retention rate of elementary schools, lesser will be the incidence of illiteracy. For instance, at the primary stage, Classes I-V, in India, the retention rate during 1951-71 has increased miserably from 33.1 per cent in 1950-51 to 36.8 per cent in 1970-71. The position at the middle stage of education (Classes VI-VIII) is much worse. The retention rate there does not exceed 22 per cent. If all those who are enrolled in Class I could be retained for all the subsequent five years of schooling, the problem of adding to the illiterate population would automatically evaporate. In spite of a number of incentives and many financial inputs, which may be difficult now to provide at the same rate as in the past, it would be difficult to achieve the miracle of cent per cent retention. The Fifth All India Educational Survey, September 30, 1986, published recently by the NCERT, New Delhi, confirms that the hard core of children not enrolled, or dropping out, from school is from the scheduled castes and tribes. These tend to be the children of landless labourers and urban slum dwellers. The Fifth Survey also indicates that the gross enrolment ratio at the elementary stage in 1986 was only 77 per cent. The attendance ratio may not be more than 55-60. In this context, bold experiments of part-time non-formal education, multiple-point entry and non-sequential system of elementary education will have to be initiated, pursued, promoted and a bigger dose of these innovations applied. Above all, a joint strategy will have to be evolved between the planners of elementary education and literacy, to make a dent on this problem within the next ten years. This would necessitate the need for joint planning—the two programmes are complimentary and should not be treated separately. The two legs must walk together in unison; walking on one leg alone is always strenuous, time-consuming and frustrating. That is what is happening in India.

7. *Accent on experimentation and innovation* : No single method or experience can be suggested to solve all the problems connected with illiteracy. Even within the Indian context, many experiments can be cited which have contributed to the evolution of new approaches and methodologies. As part of the creation of literacy milieu, different kinds of

experimentation and innovation, which are problem solving, need to be encouraged. Different sets of solutions are required for different kinds of clientele. For this purpose, states and voluntary organisations should be allowed to take initiatives. Within the broad contours of the nationally accepted programme, the implementation agencies should have the freedom to innovate and experiment. Such experiments and innovations should be appropriately disseminated through media and other channels. This should be in line with the concept of grass-root planning and development of literacy programme. What is further important is that these experiments and innovations should be suitably rewarded at the district, state and national levels by the Government, in addition to various voluntary agencies, as at present. These coveted awards, to be given for inventions and experiments and sustained efforts should be able to stimulate institutions, organisations and individuals to struggle continuously to find answers to several knotty problems of implementation and management. Several institutions and organisations in India, have been receiving UNESCO awards and prizes and it would but be appropriate if the Central and State Governments in India also do institute such prizes to create the much-needed literacy milieu and promote pioneering efforts.

8. *Overevaluation* : Evaluation is an integral component of the educational trinity ; the other two being formulation and implementation. Literacy programmes have been subjected from time to time to intensive evaluation to prove their credit-worthiness. While it would be useful to subject literacy and adult education programmes to all kinds of scrutiny and reviews (one would wish that such reviews were applied equally to prestigious and elitist-programmes of higher and technical education from the point of view of cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness), one would like to express a word of caution in regard to product-cum summative evaluation. Process-cum-formative evaluation, in the initial years, is more important than product evaluation. An effective and well designed programme, systematically managed, will undoubtedly have efficient results. Further, the results of evaluation and review studies need to be fed-back into the whole gamut of procedures, policies of planning and management of the programme. Necessary correctives need to be applied without any loss of time. This has not happened in the past in spite of evaluation galores and yet new programmes and schemes are launched without drawing any lessons from past mistakes and omissions. One is inclined to say that the

setting up of committees and commissions and mounting of evaluations and review studies has always been alternatives to action and policy decisions. For instance, if planners and managers of the National Literacy Mission have to benefit from previous experiments, they will have to look closely into the achievements and failures of previous projects and programmes. These have lessons not only for India, but perhaps for other countries similarly situated.

9. *Overtargetting* : While the National Literacy Mission is a bold and imaginative initiative and the momentum gathered needs to be sustained, the planners and those who operate the Mission have to have a second look at its contours and strategy for implementation. The zeal for overtargetting may start the process of cracks in the programme. Finally it may tend to become a purely literacy programme. It has to be functional. It should not become a programme which comes from above. It has to be communitised. In fact these should be the expectation of any well-conceived adult education and literacy programme. This change in strategy may require, in the initial years, and, also in the interests of efficiency, scaling down the area of operation and intensification of efforts. The results of the existing reviews of the programme call for some rethinking.

10. *Conceptual clarity* : Many objectives and outcomes have been set for the National Literacy Mission. Besides literacy and numeracy, social awareness and functionality are the two basic components and objectives. While working out operational implications of literacy and numeracy are easy and are well-known, the policy makers have to concretise the programme implications of social awareness. Further, statements like 'learning, working and living are inseparable and each acquires a meaning only when correlated with the other' and "the illiterate and the poor can rise to their own liberation through literacy, dialogue and actions", are mere lofty perorations and sweet words meaning nothing for a literacy worker and organiser, a writer, a trainer, a planner, a manager and an administrator. No appropriate teaching and training materials are available and perhaps it would be hard to design, develop and disseminate such materials without careful preparation, tryout and testing. Concepts and objectives, which are difficult to be concretised in relation to programmes, and operationalised in terms of management and action at the field level, are difficult to be evaluated. The natural tendency becomes to overlook these, in spite of their value, and in course of time, they recede into the background and are at least ignored as exercise in

futility and offsprings of wild imagination. That is what has happened in India right from the beginning and more so in the case of National Adult Education Programme. Evaluation studies have reflected on this situation. It is sad that the functional aspect was not stressed right from the beginning. There is nothing wrong in combining literacy, numeracy and techniracy in a well designed programme of adult literacy.

11. *Rural Youth* : The age-group 15-25 in the entire population is the most sensitive. While in urban areas, many opportunities do exist for this age-group to develop their potential, in rural areas existing facilities are insufficient. This age-group has to play a major role in the regeneration of the rural areas and in its social development and economic growth. One essential condition for the success of the National Literacy Mission would be the extent to which it functions effectively in relation to the learning needs of rural youth—especially in the age-group 15-25. This will call for a major restructuring of the programme and introducing innovations. The existing educational infrastructure, and the new literacy structures will have to be the emerging scenario of integrated rural development.

12. *Linkage with development* : One of the essential conditions for heralding a literacy milieu would be to give a practical realism, at the field level, to the concept of promoting linkages between literacy and other areas of development. For this purpose, the Central and State Governments must identify some of the existing projects of rural, tribal hill development and specific area development programmes and encourage these, with positive inputs' to incorporate the programme of literacy and adult education within these area-specific and programme-specific projects. Such a close correlation will meet the requirements of National Education Policy, 1986 when it states :

"Since participation by beneficiaries in the development programmes is of crucial importance, systematic programmes of adult education linked with national goals such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, energisation of the cultural creativity of the people, observance of small family norm, promotion of women's equality, etc. will be organised and the existing programmes reviewed and strengthened."

This has to be achieved even if the initial attempts may be heart-

breaking. Otherwise literacy will be pure literacy and not functional and development-oriented. The policy of including literacy and adult education as an integral component of the Minimum Needs Programme should continue as it will ensure a place of pride to the programme in the national priorities and be the right step in the creation of appropriate policies. Here also, the various components of the Minimum Needs Programme have to be integrated, for formulation and implementation purposes, at the area level and not to be treated as segregated programme, as at present. The M.N.P. has to be treated as a package, in order to achieve maximum results. Here also, the Central and State Governments should encourage innovative and pioneering efforts.

13. *Micro Planning and Development* : Planning and development, at the local level, is practically non-existent. This has been revealed by several evaluation studies referred to earlier. If the illiterate and the poor have *really* to be enabled 'to rise to their own liberation through literacy dialogue and action', then the unit of planning and development of literacy programme has to be lowest, that is, the block and village level. This will make literacy local and programme specific. National Literacy Mission has been able to initiate these local specific projects. No amount of micro-planning is going to deliver the literacy goods. The Central Directorate and State Directorates of Adult Education would do well if they could adopt small selected ten or fifteen areas, blocks, villages and experimental projects, in different parts of the country, to study in depth, what micro-planning constraints and possibilities are and especially in the area of literacy and adult education; how literacy and adult education can be effectively linked with other components of Minimum Needs Programme, Social Services and on-going Developmental projects. From platitudes, which have been expressed in many reports and documents, it would be appropriate now to move to practicalities.

14. *Management of Operation* : From the organisational point of view, it is of utmost importance that elaborate preparations are made before launching a massive programme of literacy. In elaborating a strategy for literacy planning, one would not normally like to use military terminology. Since, however, literacy programme can conveniently be compared to a campaign and a crusade against a great national and international injustice, one is tempted to recommend operationalising the programme on a war-footing ; leaving nothing to chance. After operationalising the conceptual

framework—which is necessary in the case of National Literacy Mission—the next inevitable stage is to develop planning and development operations in terms of sequence and space. For instance, before launching the programme in specific areas, various preparatory steps need to be taken in advance. Some of these measures will include programme planning in consultation with various agencies, establishment of resource centres, preparation of curriculum and teaching/learning materials on the basis of identified needs of learners, development of methods and materials for training, training of instructional personnel and orientation of planning and managerial personnel at different levels etc.

15. *Political Will* : One, and the most important, irresistible conclusion emerging from various studies is that the political will to eradicate illiteracy has been almost non-existent. However, with the initiation of National Literacy Mission, the hope has been revived that illiteracy is being recognised as one of the impediments to development and its eradication as an important ingredient of the removal of poverty. The mere fact that literacy has been included as an important component of the Minimum Needs Programme is a tribute to the Indian planners and that sizeable developmental funds have been provided for it, and may perhaps continue to be earmarked in future as well, within the Education Sector, speaks very high of their earnestness. This is a welcome departure from the first four decades of planned inaction. It is therefore, with high hopes that the National Literacy Mission has been launched.

16. *National Authority for Adult Education* : In every endeavour of this kind, the first step is always difficult. The first step has now been taken. The onward march has to continue. One cannot afford to have 400 million illiterate adults even in the year 2001. That will be a great tragedy. Apart from major surgery which will be required to be undertaken, on techno-professional levels, what is important is to give Literacy Programmes an appropriate status within the political and administrative hierarchy of the country. It could take many forms but what emerges is that within the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the work relating to the education of the masses should be the concern of a high level Commission to be serviced by an equally high-level full-time Chairman or Director-General. Parallels do exist in India. There is the Minorities Commission, the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the University Grants Commission,

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (I.C.A.R.) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (C.S.I.R.) etc. These are high-level bodies entrusted with important tasks. The mass literacy programme is not an easy task and it will have to be handled by a very competent agency which is run almost on a war-time footing at the national and state levels and especially in the various districts of different states which are lagging behind. The current departmental approach, based on rigid bureaucratic model, will not deliver the goods. The need for the setting up of a National Authority on Adult Education needs urgent consideration.

17. *Value-Orientation* : The above issues are abundantly clear to close observers of the literacy scene in India. The National Policy on Education—1986 has observed while opening the para on Adult Education—“Our ancient scriptures define education as that which liberates”. It is a meaningful sentence. It does not mean only “the ability to read and write”, but, through it, develop a consciousness among all about unity in diversity and also inculcation of basic human values which should get highest priority in the world of today when emphasis is largely on material values. The National Education Policy 1986 states that “coming generations should have the ability to internalise new ideas constantly and creatively. They have to be imbued with strong commitment to human values and to social justice. All this implies better education. It also observes that “in our national perception, education is essentially for all. This is fundamental to all-round development, material and spiritual”. This has to be stated clearly and built into materials and pedagogical techniques.

Conclusion

18. The poor alone know what poverty is and what it means. They often get used to it. That promotes inequality. Poverty perpetuates. Countries and the world get divided between the poor and the rich. This has to stop. The formal schooling and education ‘continue to educate for poverty’. In this sense, non-formal education and literacy have a significant role to play. Underprovided, underfed and illiterate masses comprise the poor. They need work, food and also literacy. One without the other have no significance. We have also to remind ourselves, at this crucial stage, that four decades of planned inaction resulted in the painful and slow fall of adult education and literacy programmes—Fundamental Education was talked about for a while, Social Education was a fashion at one time, non-formal education caught

imagination for sometime, then came Functional Literacy followed by National Adult Education Programme with a big bang. Name plates were changed overnight and became fashion of the day to suit the powers to be. Thus adult literacy programme for masses marked time. Let us resolve that the National Literacy Mission under the proposed National Authority for Adult Education should continue with men and women infused with missionary zeal at different levels till we eradicate illiteracy from our country. Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation, observed : "Illiteracy is India's sin and shame and it should be wiped out." This should be the goal and emblem of National Literacy Mission.

Adult Education for Women and Weaker Sections

Vidyaben Shah*

Education is an indispensable component of human resource development. It is an essential tool for communication and learning for attaining and sharing of knowledge and information, thereby becoming a pre-condition for an individual's growth and for the development of the country.

The importance of adult education for women and weaker sections gets further underlined as these are the sections that are oppressed and marginalised. Women for instance are subordinate to men—less preferred, less cared for and have virtually no say in crucial decision making within and outside the family. This is true of weaker sections—their involvement in the developmental work of the country is virtually non-existent.

Women bear most of the burden of work and are yet not recognised for their contribution towards the economy of the family and the community. The concept of work as accepted by the society is discriminating against women and weaker sections. Their work performance rests on low status and low pay.

Women and weaker sections are less equipped to make decisions as their educational level is very low.

In many of our programmes we give them guidance in limiting their family size, give them messages on child care nutritional requirements etc. paying little attention to various other socio-cultural factors preventing them from following our messages.

The causes for the failure of such development effort are (1) the

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unequal gender caste and class relations promoted and sustained in the system and (2) the social political and economic institutions that reiterate the unequal gender caste and class relations.

Our social system is such that "dominance" is infused into the male and the stronger sections and into the female and the weaker sections. The oppressed generally speak the language of the oppressor. The dependent lose their identity and consider themselves lucky to serve the dominant.

In order to change this situation it is necessary that these two groups namely women and weaker sections change from being passive to active and timid to confident.

An educational programme can help to achieve this transformation. It is only through provision of rich learning experiences and the environment that a person's self-concept can best be developed. Recognizing one's capacity to succeed and control one's destiny is basic for the development of the individual and the community. The education experiences can be so structured as to facilitate clarification of value positions, cause-effect relationship etc.

The development of women and weaker sections would mean questioning and reflecting on their own life, situations to get to the roots of their oppressed condition and thereby internalising new values that lead to their own development and that of the community.

Literacy in India

India heads the inventory of nine countries identified by UNESCO which have over 1 crore adult illiterates by having a 26.4 crore adult illiterate population.

Even as with the expansion of our school education system the percentage of literacy is increasing over the time and that of illiteracy decreasing. With the fast expanding population, on the other hand, the absolute number of illiterates is increasing. Thus, in the 1961 census the literacy percentage was 24 while the number of illiterates was 34 crores. The 1971 census showed an increase in the literacy percentage to 29.35 but there also was a rise in the total number of illiterates to 38 crores. The 1981 census reported a further rise in the literacy percentage to 36.23 but the number of illiterates rose to 42 crores. Thus we remain standing in the same position inspite of running fast.

Let us now look at the female literacy in particular. The female literacy rate in India is 25% as against 47% male literacy rate. The situation is worse in rural areas where the female literacy rate is only 18% as against 48% in the urban areas. But, be it a rural, urban or tribal area—everywhere the men score over the women in grabbing opportunities for self development.

Although the female literacy percentage has shown a steady increase over the last several decades it is far from the desired standards. Even in 1981 the literate female population formed only 25% of the total female population of the country. Isn't it unfortunate that three fourths of the members of the section which constitutes half the population of the nation are illiterate. It is painful to learn that in some states the female literacy rate in the rural areas is as low as 10% or even below that.

What Adult Education Really is

Education should not be equated with mere learning of alphabet. Ability to read and write must be accompanied by a process of understanding. This can only come about with access to a wide range of information and some faculties like imagination and reasoning. Literacy is therefore essentially a tool for communication, learning, acquisition and sharing of skills, getting to identify one's strong and weak points and equipping oneself with techniques to face hostile forces for survival and better living standards. It is also a tool for improved participation in the affairs of the community and makes one empathetic and sensitive to the situations, needs and problems of the fellow human beings.

There are several studies and experiences to show the manner in which literacy affects human resource development.

1. Literate parents, especially mothers, send their children to primary school more readily. Their children are less likely to drop out and their achievement levels are higher.

2. There is evidence to show the Infant Mortality Rate (one of the major indicators of living standards of the people of a country) is lower in respect of literate mothers. As the level of the women of the household increases the IMR tends to go down. The IMR in case of illiterate urban women is 88 against 50 in literate women.

3. Literate mothers easily accept immunisation of children. The adult literacy centres serve as the forum for communication with other mothers regarding all kinds of issues related to children—whether it is nutrition and health aspects like breast feeding, oral rehydration therapy, growth monitoring or the education of children. All these programmes are more likely to succeed with literate mothers.

4. It has been found that the level of literacy affects the size of the family. The higher the literacy level the higher the percentage of couples adopting small family norm. This in turn affects the women and her family in all other spheres.

5. Through education, women become aware of their social and legal rights, learn and improve skills for economically gainful activities, acquire a decision making power in the family and community affairs thereby moving towards more participation in the process of development.

The Adult Education Programme was launched in 1979 and all possible efforts were made to wipe out illiteracy in the age group of 15-35 years. The following table indicates the progress made in this programme from 1980-81 onwards :

(Figures in millions)

Year	Enrolled Beneficiaries			
	Women	SC.	ST.	Total
1980-81	1.00	0.62	0.45	2.59
1981-82	1.15	0.84	0.57	3.10
1982-83	1.78	1.17	0.79	4.36
1983-84	2.26	1.36	0.88	5.15
1984-85	3.23	1.70	0.99	6.18
1985-86	3.70	1.81	1.07	6.65
1986-87	4.23	2.13	1.10	7.70
1987-88	4.33	2.11	1.12	8.07
1988-89	4.24	2.02	1.14	7.73

The position of literacy in India was reviewed at the end of the 6th Five Year Plan and it was found that about 30 million adults had been covered under the Adult Education programme by the year 1984-85 leaving about 80 million illiterates to be covered. It is with the objective of imparting literacy to these 80 million that the National Literacy Mission was launched. It is expected to impart functional literacy to 30 million adult learners (15-35 years) by 1990 and another 50 million adult learners by 1995 through this societal mission.

The Success Stories

There are several success stories in the field of Adult Education, highlighting how effective our programmes have been in various parts of the country. The Adult Education Programme has been found to be most useful in those areas where it has established linkages with other programmes of the Government.

For instance the Rural Functional Literacy Programme in Kurnool has achieved creditable success in linking the adult education efforts with the activities of District Rural Development Agency by arranging for training of adult women learners in tailoring and plastic caning.

An interesting case documented by the Directorate of Adult Education is that of Venkateswaramnia a 17 year old deaf and dumb girl who joined the Adult Education Centre at her village Uparapalli. Some special effort had to be made to impart education to her. Through signs, pictures, visuals writing and other aids the organiser succeeded in making her literate. She could then write fluently in Telugu and could express all her thoughts on paper. She then received training in tailoring under another scheme and would shortly become self supporting.

There are instances where beneficiaries of the Adult Education Programme have got together to form milk co-operatives or some other co-operative.

Thus the adult education instructors do not merely serve to make the illiterate adult population of their area literate but also act as motivators and awareness builders so that the beneficiaries are able to bring themselves up in other spheres of life as well.

Then we also have the Mass Programme of Functional Literacy where student volunteers have helped hundreds of illiterate men and women to become literate and improve their lot. The beneficiaries include domestic maids, dhobis, drivers, dhaba workers, vegetable vendors, rickshaw pullers and other destitute/distressed persons. In some areas, colleges have taken care of an entire community under their N. S. S. schemes. An example is of the *Ramoshi* and *Paradhi* communities settled at the foot of Karhe hills in Nasik, Maharashtra. These communities were traditionally known as criminals and were therefore neglected. Therefore, they could not contribute in the development of the villages. However, an Adult Education Centre was started by Sangamner college. The liquor sellers were therefore rendered jobless—so they were provided with an alternate occupation of brick making.

Slowly, other activities were brought in—the community is now running an agricultural co-operative and getting benefits from there. The community has also managed to build a primary school.

So, these are some of the success stories that should encourage to work more and more towards eradication of illiteracy.

Some suggestions

We know that it is the educational planner who has decided that illiterate women and weaker sections are to be made literate. It is not they themselves who have come up with any such demand.

Therefore, the first step while commencing Adult Education Programme in any area should be to find out whether the identified beneficiaries do want the education. If they do not want to participate in the programme, what are the forces and factors dissuading them and how can they be overcome.

Once the beneficiaries have joined the Adult Education Class some factors still continue to dissuade them from regularly attending the class. Unsuitability of time and place of study, uninteresting methods and materials being the major reasons. Thus, these factors will essentially have to be kept in mind in any Adult Education Programme.

Another essential pre-condition for the success of the movement of adult education for illiterate women and weaker sections is that this educa-

tion be quite useful and effective from the point of view of fulfilling their immediate needs. It is often seen that most families are worried about maintaining the balance of income and expenditure of their homes. So, the adult education would really be taken up by members of these families, if it assures them economic benefits. The curriculum should be so designed that the needs of the society at large are also not ignored.

The other important aspect is the mobilisation and involvement of the community in the programme. Unless we involve the entire community, it will not be easy to achieve our targets by reaching individuals.

More and more volunteers should be mobilised to undertake literacy campaigns. Also, as many student volunteers as possible, should be mobilised to assist on the Mass Functional Literacy Programme. Other volunteers, besides students, should also be trained for handling adult literacy classes.

School teachers can be oriented to undertake the adult education programme. They can be asked to devote a few hours every week to adult literacy—specially women and weaker sections.

It is extremely important to link the Adult Education programme with various other development schemes that are offered by the Central Government or the State Government in that area. This has already been done in many places and has achieved considerable success by establishing linkages with IRDP, TRYSEM etc.

The voluntary agencies should be involved in the eradication of illiteracy in a big way. The voluntary agencies are always close to the masses and the community. They are flexible in structure and functioning and have dedicated and experienced workers available. Many of them are already involved in the programme.

Let us hope that with the combined efforts of the Government, the voluntary agencies, students and other individuals, and of course the participants, we will be able to achieve the targets laid down by us in the near future.

Role of Voluntary Agencies, Universities Colleges and Schools under National Literacy Mission

G. B. K. Hooja*

Faced with the menace of growing numbers of illiterate population in the country, the Government of India launched the National Literacy Mission (NLM) on May 5, 1988.

NLM seeks to concentrate on the age group 15-35, particularly focusing attention on the rural areas, women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

NLM has identified the following key issues for the success of its programme :

1. National commitment
2. Development of an environment conducive to learning.
3. Motivation of teachers and learners
4. Mass mobilisation and peoples' involvement
5. Techno-pedagogic inputs
6. Efficient management and continuous monitoring.

It can not be denied that despite Directives contained in the Constitution and recommendations of several commissions and committees on Education, national commitment to the literacy programme is conspicuous by its absence. In fact, the educational system, as it operates in the country, tends to divide the nation between two distinct classes. Firstly there are the privileged classes who had an early start and have thus appropriated the

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benefits of the modern educational system and use it to further and perpetuate their own prospects and status in life, in utter disregard of the debt which they owe to the millions of disadvantaged citizens, on whose backs they ride to receive the benefits of the educational system. On the other hand, there is the vast multitude of Indian humanity which is condemned to grovel in ignorance and want, without a gleam of hope. This is a very explosive situation and ill affords a nation which plans to march into the 21st century on an equal footing with the advanced nations of the world. According to a World Bank estimate, India will have the dubious distinction of possessing the largest concentration of the illiterate population in the world by the turn of the century, viz ; 50 Crores ; and this will constitute 54% of the illiterate population of the world.

As it is, the fulfilment of the constitutional Directive to provide free and compulsory education upto the age of 14 by 1960 is still far from achievement. This dismal failure can only be attributed to lack of national commitment, flowing from the failure to appreciate the importance of elementary education quational resurgence on the part of the powers that be. It may be claimed that the expenditure on Education is next only to the expenditure on Defence, but, as it happens, the share of elementary/secondary education in the educational bowl leaves much to be desired. In fact, it has progressively declined over the years.

In 1950-51, expenditure on primary sector of education constituted 43% of the educational budget. It was followed by expenditure on high/higher secondary sector which was 29.7%. By 1976-77, the share of primary education in educational budget had declined to 27%, while the share of high/higher secondary schools registered a marginal increase from 29.7% to 31.7%.

It would be pertinent to note here that most of this expenditure is in the form of salary payments and the schools continue to starve for want of basic educational tools and environmental facilities.

In USSR, the child is considered to be the Most Important Person, while in India the child is an expendible commodity, to be neglected, mis-used, even tortured. See rag pickers, domestic servants and *bidi* workers. When it comes to providing funds for higher education, prestigious institutes of higher learning which tend to export their end products abroad to serve

affluent countries and such other national projects, enormous funds are readily released whether under pressure or otherwise ; but since the child or the elementary education sector has no lobby or pressure group, it faces scarcity of funds. If this is not an indication of lack of national commitment, what else does it mean ?

Thus the first issue which the NLM has rightly identified for its success is national commitment.

India was the first country to sponsor the establishment of the Africa Fund to aid the depressed people of Africa. Why can we not undertake to build up a Literacy Fund, calling upon the well-to-do and the better-placed sections of society to contribute liberally towards the programme of eradication of illiteracy in India ?

In the pre-Independence days, private philanthropy undertook to establish schools and colleges. In fact, private schools and colleges far outnumbered the Government schools and colleges. After the attainment of Independence this source has almost totally dried up. While money can be found for monumental temples, mosques and gurudwaras, primary/secondary schools occupy a low priority in the philanthropic scales and, therefore, they continue to suffer for want of teachers, teaching aids, readable attractive books, maps, black-boards, and even facilities for drinking water and sports.

Voluntary agencies who may be expected to raise resources for these purposes have also now, ironically, begun to look up to the Government for financial aid.

If there is national commitment to the cause of elementary and adult education there should be no difficulty in providing the basic needs of primary/secondary schools and adult education centres. Public concerns, industrial houses, civic bodies should be persuaded to contribute substantially to the cause of education, particularly for their own employees and their families by suitable legislative and fiscal measures. Similarly, the vast reservoir of retired civil and military pensioners could also be called upon to make their contribution to this movement, by providing reasonable incentives. Then there is the vast untapped resource of student power. Half-hearted, cosmetic efforts have been made in the past

few years to involve the students through NCC and NSS to organise literacy centres, but a mass mobilization campaign is nowhere in sight, except perhaps in Gujarat. The society which foots the heavy bill of higher education expects the Universities, Colleges and Higher Secondary Schools to serve as "Light Houses" in the areas under their jurisdictions and spread the light of learning in their neighbourhood as part of their extension activities. This is the debt they owe to the society which sustains them. If they fail to do so, they may well be dubbed as parasites.

C.D. Deshmukh Committee recommended several years ago that compulsory national service of one year should be made obligatory for students seeking admission to the college after the completion of secondary schools.

Similarly, proposals have been mooted that all colleges and Universities should be involved in programmes of national and social service in general and in transforming the educational environment in particular. But these have not touched the conscience of the policy-makers.

Now that three-years degree course has been accepted all over the country, the proposal that the award of degree should be dependent upon quantifiable participation in the adult education programme, well deserves to be considered.

To meet chronic problems, hard decisions are absolutely necessary. Whether they can be taken in the election year is another matter. At any rate, the election manifestoes of the contending political parties would certainly be critically scanned by a vigilant electorate to see what importance the various political parties attach to this national programme and whether they would be willing to undertake solid action programmes to wipe out the shame and sin of illiteracy, as Gandhiji called it, when they are voted to power. This will be a test for the political parties so far as their commitment to this national programme is concerned.

Once the national will, which constitutes the sum total of the wills of the individuals comprising the nation, imbued with the spirit of adventure and determination, pervades the corridors of power and the sub-lanes of service throughout the length and breadth of the country, its universities, colleges and schools, public and private offices, streets and mohallas, towns and

villages, farms and factories, the other constraints would automatically melt away.

II

Speaking at the 15th Rajasthan Adult Education Conference, Lakshmi-dhar Mishra, Director General, NLM pointed out the seriousness of the situation and the extent of the challenge facing the country. He referred particularly to the enormity of the problem in the field of women education, and made a call for concerted effort to involve voluntary agencies at the local level.

J.C. Saxena, Secretary General, Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA) referred to the experiment launched under the aegis of IAEA in Delhi following the inauguration of NLM in May last. The plan which was developed at the instance of the Ministry of Human resource Development (MHRD) as a result of consultation with the National Progressive Schools Conference (NPSC), DAV Managing Committee and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was to identify 100 responsive schools who would, in turn, select 100 active volunteers per school coming from the 9th and 11th classes, thus making a total of 10,000 student volunteers, who would, in turn, undertake the following programmes commencing October 2, 1988 :

1. One to one teaching,
2. Teaching in local community as part of the SUPW programme.
3. Organising literacy centres in the school premises.

The State Resource Centre, Jamia Millia offered to make available Literacy Kits in the required numbers and to organise training programmes for the master-trainers.

The months of July and August, 1988 were utilised to identify student volunteers, who were called upon to write informative essays on the literacy situation, to prepare attractive posters, to develop catchy slogans and to perform skits and organise song competitions with a view to motivate the volunteers as well as the learners. On the International Literacy Day, on September, 8, 1988, over 7,000 students from Delhi schools assembled at the Rajghat and took a pledge at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi that they would do their best for the eradication of illiteracy from the fair face of the

motherland. It was a sight for gods to see and a unique event in the history of Rajghat.

On October 2, the actual implementation of the programme began.

According to the report, prepared by Mrs. Rajni Kumar, Coordinator, National Literacy campaign, Delhi Schools, the first phase of the programme ended on January 31, 1989.

Considering that it was the first attempt and the workers were treading completely on new ground, for most of the schools, the response was quite encouraging. Some schools succeeded in motivating even the parents and making them literacy volunteers. Some parents have come forward to open literacy centre in their residential areas. One school brought out an Offspring edition of the Times of India on the literacy programme, which generated a lot of interest.

From the feedback it has been found that the greatest amount of zeal was exhibited by the students of the middle school, viz, standards VI-IX. The response of Standard XI students varied from school to school. Classes X and XII were excluded from the programme as they faced terminal examinations.

As the programme progressed it was noted that the original target of enlisting 100 volunteers per school and making 100 learners literate per school was not coming through for various reasons. Schools which had a past record of community service were proceeding well. Similarly schools which had a social worker attached to their staff or had a socially dedicated teacher prepared to give his/her voluntary services for the cause were able to build a tempo, but quite a few schools began to flounder when the actual implementation of the programme got under way.

In the event, about 12 schools reached the target of over 100 learners. Some managed a reasonable number of 50-75 learners, but there were many who had just a few—5, 10 or 15.

Necessarily, there had to be a lull in the programme during the examination period (February-April, 1989). As they approach the summer vacations, the Coordination Committee has proposed the following programmes :—

1. Cluster schools should get together and hold meeting to share their experiences.

2. Teachers supervising the programmes in the various schools should meet together for sharing of experiences and sort out problems.
3. Some more inter school motivational programmes should be organised during this period, especially for schools, where enthusiasm has yet to be generated.
4. The schools which have not yet held their contact programme should do so.
5. The Standard X students now promoted to Standard XI should be enrolled for the programme.
6. Some motivational camps, cycle rallies, etc., should be worked out for the summer vacations.

Learners, who were enrolled in August-September, 1988, would shortly be ready for the final evaluation. It has been suggested that schools should make arrangements for final evaluation and issuance of certificate in July and again in September. Evaluation should be undertaken by teachers along with student volunteers to ensure that the required standard has been achieved. The State Resource Centre shall prepare the certificates both for the learners and student volunteers, to be distributed at appropriate functions. It is felt that there is need for a good badge which the student missionary may feel proud to wear as a symbol of his/her belonging to the Literacy Force.

Recognising, it is very important that after the learners have been declared literates they do not relapse into illiteracy, it is felt necessary to make available to them reading material to keep up their interest in continuous learning as well as to prepare them to reach the standard V and thereafter join the open school. It is expected that a package of such material shall be prepared by each participating school, using its own resources for the same so that each school centre comes to possess a mini-library in due course of time. In doing so the assistance of various voluntary organisations like the Rotarians, the Lions, and other socially active associations could be harnessed.

Above all the report points out that the electronic media must come forward to play a big role in promoting the cause of the literacy movement, through spots on TV/AIR at peak periods and in the middle of popular pro-

grammes, calling upon the educated people to volunteer their services and exhorting the prospective learners to join literacy classes. The Delhi report regrets that unfortunately so far the coverage of the programme by the mass media has been in a low key and as a consequence schools have been working in isolation, in a fairly indifferent climate, with little concern being shown by the public generally. This not only dampens the student-volunteers' enthusiasm but also deaccelerates the progress of enrolment of learners.

III

Yet another project which has appeared on the horizon lately is the Gujarat Literacy Campaign. There are about 3.5 million adult illiterates in Gujarat. Under the dynamic leadership of Prof. Ram Lal Parikh, Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapeeth, a mass movement was started with the cooperation of over 400 voluntary agencies with a volunteer force of 1 Lakh on May 1, 1988 to make an assault on this problem. The first phase of the Saksharta Abhiyan, as it is called, was for 45 days and the target clientele was 5 lakhs, to be made literate in 90 hours of teaching.

According to an assessment, the first phase of the programme was found to be very successful in creating a learning environment. Motivated volunteers were able to motivate learners. It was, however, found that the learners could not achieve the literacy level as per NLM norms in 90 hours spread over 45 days. It was also found that the one-day orientation programmes for volunteers were not sufficient and needed to be strengthened.

At the termination of the programme, the Gujarat Vidyapeeth held a National Convention of Voluntary Agencies on 'Literacy as a Human Right' on December 10, 1988 which is celebrated as a Human Rights Day by the United Nations. About 1500 volunteers participated in this Convention. Addressing the Convention, Prof. Parikh said that the *Saksharta Abhiyan* of Gujarat had established its potentiality without doubt and they were now confident that they shall be able to raise the present rate of 44% literacy in Gujarat to 70% by the end of 1990 and will thus cross the threshold point. He announced that literacy will only be an entry point and national values will be embedded in the programme from the very beginning and the process will be repeated through post-literacy programmes and *Jana Shikshan Nilayams* upto 1995, to ensure that there is no relapse into illiteracy. He called

upon the vast infra-structure of 176 universities with 6,000 colleges and 4 million students to actively participate in the movement and if necessary to suspend some of their conventional activities of formal book-based education at least for 90 days each year in the next two years, 1989 and 1990, so that when we celebrate the U.N. International Literacy Year in 1990, we can face the contemporary world with a definite rise in the rate of literacy by at least 20% above the prevalent rate. He said that for students and teachers it was a great opportunity of enlightened and empirical self-learning. It would enrich all students and teachers who would participate in this mass movement for national resurgence. He realised that it was an ambitious and even an adventurous programme but as he said, without the spirit of adventure and high ambition we cannot generate a mass movement for any cause.

It was gratifying to find that 7 Vice-Chancellors of Gujarat Universities assembled at the Convention undertook to yoke 1.5 lakh students from their Universities into this movement during the summer vacations falling May-July, 1989. There seems to be no reason why similar efforts cannot be mounted in other states too.

Considering the vast and galloping dimensions of illiteracy in India, what is needed is a *Bhagirath* effort to overcome it. The Ganga of knowledge must be released to enable it to irrigate the farms, fields and factories of India. Here is a challenge and an opportunity waiting to be seized by the educational, political and industrial leaders of India, so that they do not have to carry the mill-stone of 50 Crores of illiterate brothers and sisters around their necks as they step into the 21st Century. And this challenge has to be accepted TODAY, for TOMORROW may be too late.

The Last Invasion—NLM

K. L. Zakir*

The Prime Minister of India lit up the lamp of learning at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on the 5th of May, 1988 for launching the National Literacy Mission. I happened to be there among the audience sitting in the spacious air-conditioned hall. It was perhaps for the first time that a larger number (almost half of those present in the hall) of adult learners and their instructors, mostly women, had been invited to a national function. But they had no role to play except to sit mute and wonder as to why they had been asked to come. According to the reports in the press similar functions were held in all most all provinces of the country. The Prime Minister released some of the publications also as details below :

1. "Voluntary Agencies—Partners in Literacy Action"
2. "Students" participation—Some Success Stories"
3. "Jana Shikshan Nilayam—an exposition of scheme;
4. Profiles in literacy
5. National Literacy Mission—Document in Hindi.

An exhibition was also arranged at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi in which many agencies were involved, who had been working in the field quite some time, for the eradication of illiteracy.

Earlier Experiments

There have been many experiments made in the field of the eradication of the illiteracy in the past. Even before the partition of the country the programme of adult education were there. I remember when I joined Govt. service in the joint Punjab in 1946 there was a practice, that a person who was a candidate for Govt. service, had to produce a certificate to the effect

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that he had made atleast four adults literate. This was a mere formality and every candidate could produce this certificate. There is much hue and cry now, regarding the sale of fake certificates and degrees in the country. Many people have been caught in the net and perhaps, prosecuted too. Production of a certificate for making a couple of adults literate was not difficult to obtain, during the days I am referring too. There were many individuals and agencies who could help.

But after Independence the Govt. of India seriously thought of this problem and felt that if the democratic set up was to be strengthened, the voters who elect their representatives, must be made literate. They should be aware of the value of their vote. It is a different thing that even now a voter is not fully aware of the value of his vote, which can be purchased, keeping in view the level of his ignorance, illiteracy, poverty and other social handicaps. But it is a fact that the Govt. of India seriously thought of the problem of illiteracy and some academicians, administrators, parliamentarians and social service organisations, did conceive of some meaningful projects which could be launched for the removal of illiteracy. One such recent experiment was made in 1977 under the title "National Adult Education Programme". The programme envisaged that the 10 crores illiterate people in the age group of 15 to 35 would be made literate within a period of five years. Huge amount of money was sanctioned by the Govt. of India, to achieve the target. A number of Voluntary Agencies cropped up in various Parts of the India over night. Many high level and middle level posts were created. Special types of materials were produced for use at various levels. Number of seminars were organised in the important parts of the country. But all this exercise could not give the desired results. The programme was later on evaluated by the Kothari Commission and many loop-holes came to surface after the reports was printed, though quite late.

The net result was that the population of illiterate people in the age group of 15 to 35 increased from 10 crores to 11 crores. The total population of the country had also increased and with this increase in population more than half of the people of India slid below the poverty line. This was a very shocking state of affairs. Something had to be done if the country was to be pushed into the 21st century.

The Magnitude of Problem

I quote the following paragraphs from a government publication rele-

ased on the 5th of May, 1988 which gives the Government's version about thh existing problem :

- Forty years after Independence, six out of ten people in the country are still illiterate; three out of four women are illiterate; eight out of ten tribal are illiterate ; eight out of ten Scheduled Caste are illiterate.
- Today many Government programmes for the poor suffer because people do not get to know of them—their access to information is severely limited by their inability to read. In turn people's response do not get back to policy makers, because they can not write.
- A women's educational level determines her child's chances of survival ; it determines her acceptances of immunization for her child, it determines her willingness to adopt family planning methods.
- Can a country whose first and foremost resources has always been its people, afford to ignore their tremendous potential ? Can an independent nation afford to leave the majority out of the mainstream.
- Can modern, democratic nation be built on the foundations of ignorance and illiteracy ?

The people are, however, always doubtful about the Government version. But it is a grim reality which the nation is facing at the moment. And the government acknowledges it.

National Literacy Mission

National Litercy Mission is an attempt to make 80 million young people between the ages group of 15 to 35 literate by the year 1995—30 by 1990 and an additional 50 million by the year 1995. This is a mass programme in which all literate young and old, school and college students, people from voluntary agencies, workers of trade unions, politicians, representatives of public and private sector agencies are required to participate, for the achievements of the target set before the nation.

A unique feature of this programme is the setting up of Jana Shikshan Nilayam. A Jana Shikshan Nilayam will be information and education centre for every 5000 people living in a cluster of four-five villages. Each Nilayam will have, beside literacy classes, a reading room, a small library, a community radio and other electronic media equipment. The Nilayamas will cater especially to neoliterates who often relapse into illiteracy because they have no access to post-literacy and continuing education materials.

In this mass campaign no one is left out. There is a place for everyone to play a role in the gigantic campaign. It is for us to see how far can we help in serving this national cause, which is the need of the hour too.

People are really tired of participating in new experiments and seeing the dismal fate of these very spectacular and imaginative schemes. A common man, after having seen so much misery and sufferings, in life, has started looking with suspicion and pessimism at every new effort made by the Govt., however, sincere it may be. It is high time that the Govt. realises this and stops playing foul with the men and women comprising a great nation. If the biggest democracy of the world is expected to succeed, we have to play the desired role. We are on a big voyage but thronged in a sinking ship. If, we with the strength of our body and mind do not drag it to the shore, it would sink. And with this the destiny of the great country, known as Bharat, would also perish.

The Last Chance

To my mind these experiments seems to be the last chance for saving a big catastrophe. Among the six 'technology missions; identified by the Prime Minister of India, I feel that highest priority should be given to the National Literary Mission. The time is passing swiftly. No body can check the rising wave of time which ultimately engulfs even the highest mountains and fathomless ditches. Time is not going to wait for the nation or the Government to go on trying new experiments at the cost of the limited human resources, and continue diverting the minds of the people from basic and grim realities of life. National Literacy Mission is, perhaps the last endeavour of the country to eliminate the calamity of illiteracy, poverty and injustice. This is certainly the last attack on the citadal of darkness engulf-

ing crores of people, living in remote areas, stretching from Himalayas to the farthest end of the country. Let us join this big attack. If we fail this time, we would never be victorious. It would be a shame for the entire country if millions of its people stand at the threshold of the 21st century blind-fold, crippled and completely dumb and deaf.

N.A. Palkiwala has given a moving dedication of his book entitled "We the People". It runs as follows :

"To My Country Men"

Who gave unto themselves the Constitution but not the ability to keep it,

Who inherited a resplendent heritage but not the wisdom to cherish it,

Who suffer and endure in patience without the perception of their potential.

Perspective Planning for National Literacy Mission

K. S. Pillai*

Many attempts have been made before and after independence to wipe out illiteracy from India. During the pre-independence period it was second only to the freedom struggle. But, after independence it could have gained top priority as in many other countries. The post independence period saw the emergence of social education as a movement followed by the functional literacy concept of the sixties. The NAEP launched in October 1978 evolved much expectations but could not deliver the goods. The schemes that followed viz point 16 of the new 20 point programme and Mass Programme for Functional Literacy (which is even now prevalent) have not achieved the desired results. It was in this context that the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on 5th May 1988 by the Prime Minister. A massive time bound programme as in the case of NAEP, the NLM has been proposed as a mission and not as a project or programme. This shift itself is a welcome sign. The thrust on voluntary effort is also good. Whether the NLM is also likely to meet with the same fate as the previous attempts, is a pertinent question. Some people feel that NLM can do it 'now' or 'never'. Optimism is very good and is needed, but many precautions are essential to achieve the targets. Adequate vision and managerial skill in planning and implementing the programme are essential for the success of any programme. NLM is no exception.

Let us critically look at some of the salient aspects of NLM.

The 'missionary zeal' is there generally among the Missionaries but not among the educated people. 'Service mindedness' quite often becomes less and less as the educational ladder goes higher and higher. The

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less educated may at times help their illiterate brothers whereas the educated would try to exploit them. This being the case, how many will be there to voluntarily join the mission? Awareness has to be created among the educated (employed, unemployed, retired etc.) on their bounden duty to help the illiterate masses liberate themselves from illiteracy, poverty, ill-health etc. The masses need adequate orientation and motivation to make use of the available opportunities, even amidst other problems and difficulties. Media support has to be ensured and effectively utilised for appropriately conscientising all kinds of people. This task is yet to be completed.

Another major drawback is that the actual number of illiterates is not yet known. The 1981 census figures and projections thereupon are not valid enough to prepare action plans. Hence a detailed, scientific and 'whole' survey for identifying illiterates belonging to various age groups in the various house-holds in Corporation/Municipal/Panchayat areas has to be undertaken with the co-operation and collaboration from people's representatives of such agencies. Without such reliable data, any amount of planning will not suffice. The number of illiterates covered and made literate during the eighties, is not clear. Even, among the illiterates, a good number have relapsed into illiteracy due to lack of post literacy and follow-up activities. The number of people who have gone into the 15+ age level and those gone out of the 15—35 range are only estimates and not real numbers. These have to be found out scientifically. This preliminary step is essential for NLM to succeed.

The selection of functionaries at different levels—Project officers, Supervisors (Preraks), Instructors (Animateurs), Opinion leaders etc. for the effective implementation of the NLM is also an important aspect. The centre based approach and the Mass Programme for Functional Literacy are to be simultaneously attempted. Appropriate measures for overcoming the 'minus points' of both these approaches have to be taken as a precautionary step. The Area Approach is good, but the 'coverage' has to be ensured. Voluntariness and service are good but there should be at least 'recognition', if not monetary benefit and other allied favours. The interest of the workers as well as that of the learners has to be sustained through appropriate measures. Creating interest or motivating people is one side of the programme; the other side relates to the sustenance of their interest.

Whether it be CBAEP or MPFL, the instructors/volunteers have to be

adequately conscientized and trained. This however is lacking. Strengthening the training programmes through technological input and modern approaches has to be insisted upon. Equally important is the question of monitoring and evaluation. Simple statistical reports and figures are not enough. Real and timely factual data should be collected and made available for timely checkups and adoption of corrective measures. The phenomenon of dropping out is there in the non-formal sector as well. This again is a serious problem affecting the whole programme. In built concurrent evaluation is yet another essential feature. Attempts in this direction are there, but they have to be streamlined. In the case of learners product evaluation may be sufficient but process evaluation is required for improving the programme as such. Qualitative aspects of the NLM need to be further discussed and implemented.

Post literacy and follow up activities were also lacking all these years. But in the NLM, Jana Shikshan Nilayams have been suggested to overcome this drawback. JSNs are really post literacy and follow up Institutions catering not only to the neo-literates, but also to all the people of the locality helping them in their all round development. In the beginning, these were planned as follow up action but now things have changed. AEC's and JSN's are simultaneously sanctioned. There are merits and demerits. We may have to wait and see before coming to conclusion. JSN's should become permanent establishments as community centres providing opportunities for literacy, education, occupational pursuits, literary and artistic talent development, physical well being, and general welfare of the people.

In 1978, many voluntary agencies sprang up and the programme collapsed. Now again too much faith in and involvement of V.A's, has to be cautiously viewed. There are many good V.A's, but there are also many who are opportunistic and concentrating on financial and other benefits. Over-emphasis on V.A's has to be seriously viewed. Proper accountability—not only fiscal but also social—has to be ensured. Technological intervention should not only become namesake but should be result-oriented and locale-conscious.

Every effort should be made during 1990, which is declared as International Literacy Year (ILY) to mobilise resources and activities so that considerable improvement in the literacy situation in India be made. School

and college students from Std. IX upwards may be given longer vacation and be requested to participate in some kind of literacy drive along with the teachers. Action plan for 1990 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31) may be prepared urgently. 1991, being Census Year, the work done during 1990 will have great influence. No stone should be left unturned and no resource should be kept out of reach. All activities of 1990 should lead to the target of total literacy thereby trying to reach the targets of NLM.

Adult Education—Prospects and Challenges

M. S. Ahluwalia*

H. S. Bais**

Lessons from the Past—Adult Education Movement is not new to us. In the past, during 1937-39, when India had a sort of National Government, it had started with much fan-fare and initial enthusiasm in Bihar and other provinces. It had a short life of two-three years. The efforts in this movement were confined to literacy work. Lack of interest on the part of adult illiterates and quick relapse to illiteracy were the experiences of the past. It made us to think that any programme of adult education must provide for motivation of the learners and there should be a built-in provision for follow up work so that the neo-literates may not fall back to illiteracy.

The second phase of adult education started in 1948. When Independence was ushered in, there was awakening and enthusiasm at all levels for self-improvement and betterment of life. It was then adult education emerged as Social Education. The idea of Social Education was conceived in Madhya Pradesh but it was so appealing that soon it was accepted by all the provinces in the country. It was an all inclusive programme with provision for effective use of audio-visual aids, mass media and production of teaching aids, literature and follow-up programmes of rural circulating libraries. It was wholly and singularly Indian concept, born out of Indian experience, Indian situation and Indian thinking. The name itself was very signifying and acted as a constant pull towards the main central objective. It had the Gandhian theme of 'helping the illiterates and the poor to raise to their own liberation through literacy, dialogue and action.' It was accepted as part of the First Five Year Plan and entrusted

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to Community Development. Consequently it had to share the fate of the community development programme as a whole.

The third phase of adult education started on 2nd October 1978. To rid the country of illiteracy, starting with the age-group of 15—35, within a period of ten years, a massive programme of adult education was introduced. The NAEP, as it is known, aims to provide skills to the target group, i.e. illiterates in the age group of 15 to 35 years, so that they become self-directed for learning, leading to self-reliance and active in their own development and in the development of the environment. The national decision was expressed in setting up the infrastructure frame-work—with the National Board of Adult Education and Directorate of Adult Education at the Centre, State Boards of Adult Education, State Directorates and Resource Centres, District Adult Education Committees, and functionaries at district, Block and village levels. With this the out lay on the programme was increased from Rs. 32 crores in the fifth plan to Rs. 200 crores in the sixth plan. During 1978-80 some 37 lakh illiterates were enrolled in different centres in the country and out of it 40% emerged as literates. Review of the adult education programme was conducted by a committee headed by Dr. D.S Kothari. The review committee brought out the defects into the open. The greatest one was how a centrally conceived and centrally administered programme could become not only a people's programme but one that would be based on and meet the educational and developmental needs of the people. Most of our programmes of adult education, while emphasising literacy as the focal point, undermined the fact that most of the illiterates happen to be most under-privileged. A meaningful struggle against illiteracy and ignorance cannot be separated from struggle against poverty. The outline of NAEP rightly points out: "Indeed the problem of poverty and illiteracy are two aspects of the same stupendous problem and the struggle against one without, at the same time, waging a fight against the other is certain to result in aberrations and disappointments."

Our experiences with adult education programmes till now have told us that the present delivery system in these programmes; i.e. the existing learning tools, learning mechanism, etc. are limited to the teacher and classroom ethos, the chalk, talk and text-book based literacy approach with little of information for improving living levels, no knowledge of one's lowly and

exploited condition and the way to come out of it, are not going to take us far. Another limitation of the adult education programme is an impersonal and hierarchical administrative set-up. Our rural communities are household centered and highly localised conglomerations, form an informal sector. Any attempt to serve or rule it from impersonal or hierarchical administrative instrumentality will not work. Dr. A.K. Jalaluddin has rightly observed that, "The more money we put on this district; magistrate-oriented welfare administration the less the return. Unless an interactional field, favourable to the veneration of individual and group initiative at the local level, is created through meaningful socio-economic and cultural modes of communication, there will not be an element of spontaneity and incentive in the process of development."

Another fact that has come to light through our experiences with adult education, is the narrow objective of literacy, making only token concessions to the idea of delivering relevant knowledge to the target population, for improving their economic performance as well as their quality of life. The adult education programmes have missed the mass participation. Without initiation from the masses for social, economic and political changes, no worthwhile breakthrough is possible. In adult education, a system has to be developed which will start at the village level, with its formal, informal and non-formal learning systems which can be enriched and fed upon. It has been our conscious or sub-conscious tolerance of indigenous and localised methods of management of the process of personal and social transformation. It has reflected itself in our patterns of social, economic and cultural developments. We are too much under sway of Western models. We have to develop alternate and non-traditional channels for mass education. In this reference Dr. Jalaluddin's observation is worth citation, he observes, "It is only through spontaneous and uninhibited participation of the people in the process of development, in contrast to dependency syndrome, the goals of adult education can be realised. Promotion of a joint sector in education and other social services under a partnership arrangement between the major implementing agencies and local-level groups of young people trained in social entrepreneurship, marketing and management, is extremely important not only to vitalise the present process of change but also to give it a certain direction and vision of a preferred future."

Prospects—It has been accepted in the New Education Policy that

adult education can and has to be used as an instrument for the bulk of the population who may have never been to school, in order to educate them about the programmes of family welfare, hygiene, immunisation and child-care. In spite of all the impetus given to adult education programme only a handful of illiterates have been covered in the sixth plan. There remains 110 million illiterates, out of which 68 millions are women, who are to be brought to functional literacy by 1990. By end of 2000 A.D. illiteracy as a whole is aimed to be wiped out.

The Seventh Five Year plan (1985-90) has earmarked Rs. 352 crores in State sector. With it the Govt. is committed to convert it into a mass-movement to eradicate illiteracy by end of the Seventh Plan. In November 1987 the Minister for Human Resource Development made it clear to the Consultative Committee of the Parliament that a comprehensive Central Programme has been drawn up for promotion of adult education, which is termed as National Literacy Mission. It is one of the five national missions where scientific and technical inputs are being used for the development of the country and upliftment of the poor. This National Literacy Mission hopes to promote functional literacy to 80 million illiterates by 1995—a target of 30 million to be achieved by 1990, and the remaining 50 million by 1995. To achieve the targets and to make adult education a mass movement, a National Authority of Adult Education headed by Minister Human Resource Development at the Centre is proposed. This authority shall have functional autonomy and full powers to take all decisions and to ensure eradication of adult illiteracy in a well thought out and time bound scheme. Similarly at the States, a Commission or Authority will be set up headed by the Chief Ministers to plan and implement the programme at the State level.

The National Literacy Mission works out phase by phase programme. It spells out that by 1988, 40 technology demonstration districts for computerisation would be set up. A small computer will be set up at each district mission office as part of the pilot study. In two districts out of the 40, data pertaining to all illiterates in the 15 to 35 age group would be computerised. In the first phase a detailed system study will be conducted at various locations across the country. Computer resources will be made available to the district mission leader and national level computerisation to analyse data from 40 districts, will begin. In the second phase (1988-89) the experience gained from the 40 districts will be combined with the

findings of the detailed systems studies to draw up computerisation plan for the whole country. State level computerisation will also commence at this phase. By 1989-90 computerisation will be introduced on a national scale. The budget out lay for this mission will be to the tune of Rs. 550 crores, the Central share will be Rs. 340 crores and States share will be Rs. 210 crores. Out of this provision, Rs. 325 crores will be incurred for field programmes, Rs. 110 crores followed by continuing education, Rs. 50 crores for voluntary agencies, and Rs. 30 crores for research and development. The management and media support gets Rs. 25 crores, Rs. 10 crores are set aside for mass programme through students and volunteers.

The national literacy mission and the infra-structure developed at the Centre and States express the political will. The commitment of the Govt. to convert adult literacy programme into mass movement, is a clear indicator that the country is poised to eradicate illiteracy in the age group of 15 to 35 years by end of the Seventh Plan. The institution of Shramik Vidyapeeths, insistence on employers in the organised sector to provide for education of workers, recognition of voluntary agencies as partners in the cause of adult education are some of the positive steps which make the prospects of adult education very bright.

Challenges—When we come to the receiving end, i.e. the adult learner, the ways and means of delivering his goods, the quality and quantity of goods, we realise that we have come only half way towards our goal. It is unfortunate that our illiterate adults are poor and under-privileged. They have not been able to generate movement for their own uplift, awakening and liberation. Our illiterate and poor masses are the victims of oppression, are bewildered by assaults on their culture and environment, are divided and conned by agents of oppressors and are abandoned by their own alienated elites. They seem to be losing self-confidence in their own culture and material base, finding themselves at the mercy of others in an unjust social order.

The foremost task before us is to organise and mobilize them for protective, liberative and reconstructive purposes. The problems surrounding them are many; like minimum wages, fair price for the primary produce, land reforms, deforestation, bonded labour, dowry, atrocities, resource development and management, social forestry, crafts regeneration, housing, sar.itation, health improvement, representation in panchyati raj

bodies and co-operatives, social and cultural reforms, etc. They should be made aware of it, mobilised and organised. The Draft Sixth Plan under the head—Distributive Justice—has made a significant suggestion in this regard. It says, "... and finally the rural and urban poor have to be organised. Their vigilance alone can ensure that the benefit of various laws, policies and schemes designed to benefit them, do produce their intended effect." In fact the poor for whom the policies and schemes are designed, since they are ignorant and indifferent towards their own betterment, feel themselves isolated to ask for their due. There is a need that some sort of dialogue and exchange of ideas be developed among them. A forum be developed where birds of the same feather may flock together. If such bond and environment is created they would be motivated to organise themselves and would be inspired to come out of their problems. This mobilisation and organisation comes through them, by them and for them. No outsider is involved in their local, community and village level organisations.

A serious misgiving about these poor illiterates is, that they do not have any motivation and mobility of their own. They have made some compromise with their lot and are happy with what they have. Here the role and importance of voluntary bodies and social activists come. They can convert people from the target group (adults in the age-group of 15 to 35 years) and instil in them the feeling and confidence that they alone can help themselves to come out of their poverty and ignorance. The Approach Paper to Seventh Plan (85-90) has realised that voluntary agencies have a role to play in professional areas. Voluntary agencies are in a position to be flexible and involve the local community in education of children and adults. These bodies can make the people conscious, to improve education and capabilities and be organised to assert themselves.

There are certain basic assumptions about adult learners which differentiates adult education programmes from general education programmes, i.e. pedagogy. These assumptions are;—self-directiveness of the adult learners, vast reservoir of experience with them, readiness to learn related developmental tasks, and problem-centered orientation to learning. Besides, the studies of Ingalls (73), Mckeachie (70) and Knowles (70) have proved that adult learners have some typical characteristics; like, 1. Adult learners are voluntary learners who will leave learning if it is not relevant to their needs, 2. Their varied experience affects how learning is interpreted,

3. They require more time to practice new skills, 4. They suffer from great anxiety, 5. They have more clearer, immediate and concrete goals, 6. They are not full-time learners, have other compelling responsibilities which compete for their time. These characteristics have a bearing upon selecting and designing learning materials and environments, methods and approach in adult education programmes.

These postulate general principles for teaching adults.

1. Adults better learn by doing. There is little room for theory and background information, therefore, problem—centered, rather than subject-centered, learning environment is congenial.

2. Learning should be related to jobs. They are keen to learn in each session. Teaching material be so designed that it satisfies them and suits to their interests.

3. Learning material must have immediate applicable value. As a result, incidental learning should be the criteria for selecting learning material.

4. Adult learners do not want home-work and frequent tests. Learning should be done in the class itself. The literacy skills be correlated with functional skills and social awareness. Skill learning material to this effect; like, material dealing with travel, property, bank loans, seeds and other such necessities with which they are confronted in every day occupational life.

5. Tasks—individual and group—of surveys and studies for opening up new lines of gainful occupations for them, be the part of adult education programmes. This can be done by initiating them into the problems and giving them thoughts, leaving them in midst of alternatives and leading them to opt for one.

6. Other communication devices like T.V. and Radio, be encouraged. Dance, theatre, music, as well as messages of the agronomists, fertilizers and handicrafts men be brought to them. They should be exposed to legislated rights as part of the learning programme.

Another aspect of the adult education programme is the drop-out rate of the adult learners. The reason for the large number of drop-outs is that the programmes and instructions are not interesting to them. Organisations

ing parallel or sequential vocational programmes would not serve the purpose. The literacy course itself can be made interesting by introducing innovations in the methods of its formulation and presentation.

The organisational infra-structure for adult education programme needs to be strengthened. The grass root level workers need better emoluments. Incentives to teachers and instructors who run adult education centres be raised and aid, in kind and cash, be given to house the centres. There is need for institutional linkage between the vast and deep rooted formal education sector with non-formal education programmes for adults. The teachers and students of the schools and colleges in the country will form the potential infra-structure needed for the task.

Our experiences with educational video prepared for children have been quite encouraging. The CIET established in 1984, is aided by State Institutes for Educational Technology in six States, The Development and Educational Communication Unit of the Indian Space Research Organisation and International Agencies like the United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO, and The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development, set up for promotion of understanding and utilization of educational technology for the spread of education are potent means of reaching the target area. The SITE project reached 2340 villages in clusters of 20 districts spread over in six States having a population of 45 million. It had three specific targets; out of school adults, school children and teachers.

The educational programmes of INSAT have lot of appeal, potential and possibilities, only it needs to be tapped. It is now being realised that if the educators have to reach the target group, they have to produce programmes in a language and culture that could be understood by that group. It should involve the people as performers and actors for whom it is meant. It should aim at increasing the understanding of the entry-level skills or present state of knowledge of the target group, develop step by step curriculum and provide a feed back for the future. Certain experiments conducted in other countries can serve as models for us. Jenet Jenkins, a British expert on Distance Education, has cited the example of Latin America, where a small group, often family based, would meet every day and receive instructions from one member of the group who is somewhat literate. The group instructor would work with a primer as other members watch him and listen to the broadcast. This was carried out successfully and the

broadcast media could reach out to people in remote areas. Similarly, listen-discuss-act experiment was conducted in Tanzania with the use of Distance Education focussed on environment, nutrition and health related issues and sought to make people aware of their rights. About two million adults were organised into study groups over a three months period and were directed to listen-discuss and act. This had a positive effect. Such experiments could be useful to us.

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INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION CONFERENCES

From 1938—1988

<i>Conference No.</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Conference No.</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Place</i>
1.	1938	Delhi	21.	1967	Mysore
2.	1939	Bangalore	22.	1968	Pondicherry
3.	1942	Indore	23.	1969	Gauhati
4.	1946	Trivandrum	24.	1970	Bhubneswar
5.	1947	Rewa (M.P.)	25.	1972	Bombay
6.	1948	Mysore	26.	1973	Jaipur
7.	1950	Hyderabad	27.	1974	Lucknow
8.	1951	Bombay	28.	1975	Jabalpur
9.	1952	Nagpur	29.	1976	Mysore (Karnataka)
10.	1953	Calcutta	30.	1977	Dabok (Udaipur)
11.	1954	Patna	31.	1978	Coimbatore
12.	1955	Delhi	32.	1979	Amritsar
13.	1956	Udaipur	33.	1980	Ahmedabad
14.	1957	Calcutta	34.	1981	Patna
15.	1958	Lucknow	35.	1982	Mhow
16.	1959	Gargoti (Kolhapur M.S.)	36.	1983	Mysore
17.	1960	Aliabada, Jamnagar (Guj.)	37.	1984	Varanasi
18.	1961	Coimbatore	38.	1985	Trivandrum
19.	1964	New Delhi	39.	1986	Surat
20.	1966	New Delhi	40.	1987	Rewari
			41.	1988	Aurangabad (Maharashtra)

ZONAL CONFERENCES

<i>North Zone</i>	<i>South Zone</i>	<i>East Zone</i>	<i>West Zone</i>	<i>Central Zone</i>
1. Udaipur (1985)	1. Madras (1985)	1. Gauhati (1985)	1. Bardoli (Gujarat) 1983	1. Mhow (M.P.) (1985)
2. Chandigarh (1986)	2. Madras (1987)		2. Silvassa (Dadra & Nagar Haveli) 1988	2. Faizabad (U.P.) 1986
3. Jammu (1987)	3. Pondicherry (1988)			3. Gaya (Bihar) (1988)

GOLDEN JUBILEE PUBLICATIONS OF IAEA

	Rs. P.
1. Mass Movement for Adult Education by B.R. Fatil	30.00
2. People's Education by S. R. Mohsini	15 00
3. Adult Education : some Reflections by B.B. Mohanty	20.00
4. Adult Education : A focus for the Social Sciences by James A Draper	20.00
5. National Literacy Mission—Problems and Prospects Edited by J.C. Saxena & J.L. Sachdeva	10.00
6. Adult Education Terminology by J.L. Sachdeva	7.00
7. Adult Education in Bihar by S.Y. Shah	20.00

**LIST OF AWARDEES OF NEHRU AND TAGORE
LITERACY AWARDS AND MOHAN SINHA MEHTA
RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

Nehru Literacy Award

- 1968 Dr. (Smt.) Welthy H. Fisher, Founder, Literacy House, Lucknow.
- 1969 Smt. Kulsum Sayani, Vice-President, Bombay City Social Education Committee, Bombay.
- 1970 Karnataka State Adult Education Council, Mysore.
- 1971 Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh, President, Andhra Mahila Sabha, Hyderabad.
- 1972 Shri S.N. Maitra, Secretary, Bengal Social Service League, Calcutta.
- 1973 Shri R.M. Chetsingh, Rajpur, Dehradun.
- 1974 Shri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, Founder Director, R.K. Vidyalaya, Coimbatore.
- 1975 Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, President. Seva Mandir, Udaipur.
- 1976 Dr. T.A. Koshy, Project Director, Council for Social Development, Bangalore.
- 1977 Shri A.R. Deshpande, Former Adviser, Social Education, Govt. of India, Ministry of Education, Nagpur.
- 1978 Shri G.K. Gaokar, Former Social Education Officer, Bombay City Social Education Committee, Bombay.
- 1979 Smt. Krishna Aggarwal, Chairperson, Bhartiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, M.P. Branch, Indore.

- 1980 Shri Janardhan Rai Nagar, Founder Upkulpati, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, Udaipur,
- 1981 Shri C.R. Bhatt, Hony. Secretary, Gujarat State Social Education Committee, Surat.
- 1982 Shri N. Bhadriah, Former President, Karnataka State Adult Education Council, Mysore.
- 1983 Bombay City Social Education Committee, Bombay.
- 1984 Shri Mushtaq Ahmad, Former Unesco Expert and Hony. Director, State Resource Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.
- 1985 Dr. S.C. Dutta, Hony. Treasurer, Indian Adult Education Association New Delhi.
- 1986 Dr. Madhuri R. Shah, Former Chairperson, U.G.C, and former Vice-Chancellor, S.N.D.T., Women's University, Bombay.
- 1987 Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P., New Delhi.
- 1988 Prof. Ram Lal Parikh, Vice-Chancellor, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad.

Tagore Literacy Award

- 1987 Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon, Chairperson, All India Committee on Eradication of Illiteracy among Women, Trivandrum.
- 1988 Smt. Anurupa Mukherjee, Chairperson, Tripura Adibashi Mahila Samiti, Agartala.

Mohan Sinha Mehta Research Fellowship

- 1987 Dr. N.V. Gayatonde, H.J. College of Education Bombay.
- 1988 Dr. V. Reghu, Director, Shramik Vidyapeeth, Trivandrum.