

CHAPTER VII

OBJECTIVE OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND EDUCATION: IS CPI(M) CHANGING?

Before the establishment of the 7th Left Front Government in West Bengal, there was a hue and cry for quick establishment of industrialization in West Bengal for its people. The mounting demand was mainly from the middle class people.

The left front government in West Bengal ensured Travel Allowance for the Government Employees which enabled them to visit various parts of the country. Their travelogues often published in various news papers and magazines reflected this. These travelogues often depict the picture of industrialization, growth and development of infrastructure in various parts of India. These areas were not known as industrial sectors even few decades ago. These areas became the hub of activities. The accounts of travelogues reflect the despondency when the middle class people found just the opposite picture in their own state. Moreover, the exodus of young workforce and students in search of jobs and education to other states created irritation in their minds.

One letter of Rajendra Chattopadhyay published in the Anandabazar patrika, dated 15th January, 2008 writes: 'can West Bengal offer minimum facility to the multi-national companies that Gujarat offers in abundance ... In 2001, I was fortunate enough to visit Gujarat. If I compare West Bengal of 2007 with Gujarat that I have seen: certainly, Gujarat was potent with infrastructural facilities much ahead in terms of West Bengal'¹.

In another travelogue by Shree Arbinda Kumar, former Head Master of Malda Zilla School in their Annual Magazine reflects the same despondency of the Bengali middle class. He noticed that Western U.P., Haryana and Gujarat put West Bengal much behind in industrial development. After independence West Bengal ranked second in

Industrial development after Maharashtra. People used to come in Bengal in search of jobs, bread and butter. But today its glory is snatched by Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Haryana, even by U.P.

This public opinion forced the left front government to change their course of action, often called, a paradigm shift. The reflection of this paradigm shift was endorsed by the CPI(M) leadership during 2006-2008. In 2006 the left front came to power with a call of (i) more developed left front government and (ii) massive industrialization in West Bengal. The leftists could secure 235 seats in the Legislative Assembly while the opposition could secure only 35 seats.

On the eve of Panchayet Election in West Bengal in the State Conference of the CPI(M) which was held during the middle of January, 2008 in a Symposium on "Problem and Development of West Bengal" the Industry Minister Shree Nirupam Sen had stated: "To develop Industries in villages, to uplift the standard of living of the people around, exactly to convert village to towns is perhaps our aim"².

Shree Sen also added: "To produce specific and multiple commodities there is need for Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and apart from six industrial zones there is also need to develop industrial area in each district. The role and importance of village panchayet is very crucial while developing infrastructure for upcoming industries in rural Bengal. In the state 60 per cent people are peasants and they contribute only 20 per cent of the total average production of the state. The aim of the state is to bring down the number of peasants and train the rest of them to become the workforce of the future industries"³. Actually he said that "we want to extend industries at the grass root level. We want to bring changes in the idyllic villages of Bengal. Some say, this is not the right way to development. Because they guess it will be a boost to capitalism. Learned people are posing different questions. But through this process we want to involve each and every body"⁴. He further added: "If we cannot establish industries promptly the investors will move away from the state. Generally, it takes around 5 to 6 years to acquire land. With the

proposed establishment of Tata Car Factory in Singur more 55 industrialists are ready to invest in and around Singur. But the process of acquiring land should be made more painless and humane”⁵. In last 16 years there was the investment of 32 crore rupees in Bengal; and only in last year there is the investment of 32 crore rupees. Should we float our industrial-boat in this ebb; or will we wait for distant ebb to come?”⁶. Regarding the mode of development he said “More or less West Bengal wants to follow the Chinese model of industrial development although there are some problems also in Chinese developmental process. In the process of industrialization in Bengal we are discussing our successes as well as failures. Manufacturing industries in Bengal should get priority since 15 per cent of the manufacturing industries are in Bengal. Moreover, there are 6 lakh self-help groups in West Bengal and these groups should be involved with this process of development”⁷.

Since the Polit-bureau of the CPI(M) and Governmental policy and perspectives of West Bengal would vouch on the Chinese model, hence, let us examine the Chinese educational reform and employment policy in the face of globalization and changed economic perspective of the world for sustainable development. Shree Tapas Sarkar writes in an article: “Chiner Siksha Sanskar O Karmasanthan” (Educational Reform and Employment Scope) in the daily Aajkal, a renowned Bengali news paper, on 29th January, 2008. In the article he depicts the views of the Chinese political vision with regard to entrepreneurship and spread of education to fit in with the ever changing demand of the enterprises. Shree Sarkar writes: “For the advancement of youth and society, education plays a very vital role. Each human being possesses a unique potential. Education helps to develop and flourish this inherent quality of the human being. Through proper education anyone can highlight his innate potentialities in the society.

There are indications that youth in China are increasingly joining academic institutes. Moreover, the compulsory education scheme for 9 years is gaining popularity day by day. The scheme is launched by the Chinese government. In the year 1986 the Chinese Government has

introduced "Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China". The Central and Local Governments in China implemented this scheme with utmost spirit and achieved exceptional results.

To eradicate illiteracy the Chinese Government put in extra effort and achieved their goal. In 1990 the Chinese Government has decided that each year China will make 40 lakhs people literate. The statistics show that during 1995-2004, in this time period, China could make 3 crore 96 lakh 73 thousand and 300 people literate.

In China the education reform is taking place with utmost speed. The Chinese government has set a few goals for education, viz., people oriented education, development of agriculture, proper use of talent and developing a scientific approach. To achieve these goals and aims of education the Chinese government practically approached each and every family and educational institute. The main aim was to increase the over all skills of the people of China. With this call or evocation the Chinese education department asked the opinion of the graduating students of the colleges in the year 1998 and asked the opinion of the primary and secondary students in the year 2001. All the stake holders of the academic life in China were being approached, viz. students, people related to academia, administrators, researchers etc. by the Chinese education department. Thus, potent with these opinions the China government proceeded to excel in moral and value education, uplift the standard of research, and to advance the skill of the people. And to achieve these goals, if necessary, they agreed to change thoroughly the structure of education, teaching-learning process, examination system and methods of evaluation. All these aspects come within the broad frame work of educational reform.

Keeping in view the demand of the market and employment possibility the technical education is getting prime importance. Funds are coming from various sources for the spread of education. Private initiatives are also being encouraged for last one decade for the advancement of education: The aims and objectives of education and

norms set by the education department should be followed by the private enterprises strictly. There are good many private players in China in the field of education and they follow the rules and regulations as well as enjoy rights and facilities followed by a Policy Resolution on Private Actors in Chinese Education of 1st September, 2006. The report says that private schools are doing very well for the advancement of education with the beginning of the 21st century in China.

Apart from government and private ownership academic institutes, peoples' initiatives also direct the academic institute. The most important among such initiative is "HOME and BUD" project. Behind this project the master-minds are All China Youth Federation and All China Women's Federation. These two federations are collecting fund from within and outside China. This project takes initiative to bring the students to schools and tries to minimize the number of school drop-outs specially in the economically backward areas of China.

The advancement of the youth and the establishment of a just society depend much on economic engagement and employment. It not only solves the problem of unemployment but ensures human resource development, economic advancement and healthy advancement of the youth which leads to establish an egalitarian society. China is a youthful country and Chinese government has introduced certain principle to make the best and fullest use of this youth power.

To make sure and sustained economic development the Chinese government provides numerous scopes for the youth of China. Keeping in mind the presence of huge labour force the government adopted a labour intensive economic path. As a result the small scale and middle range industries and services are in top priorities. The private enterprises are being encouraged. With the joint initiative of the education department and local administration both the graduates and private enterpreneours are coming close to each other and in this respect information centres are playing a vital role.

All China Youth Federation (ACYE) has established 651 'Job Informational Express' in 107 cities of China. These entire jobs providing centers are providing information about employment and re-employment and works as a liaison between the job-seekers and the market.

In China encouragement is also given to those who want to establish and run businesses. A good business ensures employment. For the last 6 years training related to private ownership business, is given to 4 lakh youth. These trained youth are successfully running 90 lakh small scale and middle range industries and entrepreneurships. These economic initiatives have not only employed these youth but helped to reemploy 11 lakh retrenched labours. Finally, by establishing a link between education and employment and adopting a most scientific approach towards planned, economy and market mechanism, China put forth a unique economic model which is not only, India should follow, rather many capitalist countries are also ready to imbibe for their economic resurrection⁸.

In the Indian Republic, West Bengal is just a state. In a multi-party electoral system the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI(M) has made itself felt only in three states, viz., Kerala, Tripura and West Bengal. The presence of CPI(M) in other states are not so predominant as it is in three aforesaid states. Thus taking a univocal policy on education or economy is not possible. Like other states they are working within the same federal or quasi-federal structure following the same constitutional set up. Keeping aside the policy perspectives of the Central Government, the CPI(M) dominated Left Front Government wants to establish an alternative path of development. Although education as Concurrent subject belongs to the Concurrent list but for resource mobilization in India, the state governments are to a good extent dependant upon the central financial allocation through planned and non-planned budget allocation. And here lies the great difference. China as a communist country - can take any drastic policy decision with regard to development including education which is not possible for a state government in

Indian liberal democratic system. The approaches of these two rising giants of Asia, eventually are diametrically opposite.

Our endeavour to look into the CPI(M)'s education policy should be discussed in the above mentioned back drop. A comparative discussion with regard to education policies between China and India and their approach towards economic development would be appropriate at this juncture of our discussion to understand CPI(M)'s policy perspectives with regard to education and economic development in the state of West Bengal as it is the bastion of leftist movement in India.

Philip G. Altbach is with the centre for International Higher Education, Boston College, Massachusetts, United States, in his special article in the "Economic and Political Weekly (EPW) on June 6, 2009 issue, vol. XLIV No.23 highlighted elaborately the aspirations of the two Asian giants in the field of education to expedite economic progresses. With India and China aspiring to build more state of the art economics, both international actors are prioritizing higher education to procure potent educated personnel and supreme quality research. Philip G. Altbach made in his paper a comparative assessment of the development of the higher education system in the aforesaid two countries: their challenges and their future.

Meanwhile, China has made considerable progress with its top-notch institutions and at the same time India has also manifested in fits and starts with the Indian Institutes of Technology and a few other institutes of high esteem that they can touch the pinnacle of high standard. But the question of employability of the graduates coming out of these institutions with flying colours is looming large. Philip G. Altbach observed that to prepare the graduates for the ever-changing labour market of these two aspirant countries demands drastic changes in the academic realm and a reform is urgently required to ensure over all academic quality of higher education. The suggestion Altbach pin pointed: An effective quality assurance system. The opinion of Altbach is that neither country has such a system will probably become more

stratified, with a small number of research universities at the top and very large numbers of fairly unselective colleges and universities at the bottom. But implementation of such system, definitely boost up further stratification both in China and especially, in highly stratified society of India. Anyway, an over view of this article: The giants Awake: Higher Education Systems in China and India may highlight certain promising as well as grey areas and comparative discussion may pin-point our strength and weaknesses to steer the wheel of development at the right direction and the pain and pathos of the sojourn can be minimized by adopting a humanly approach.

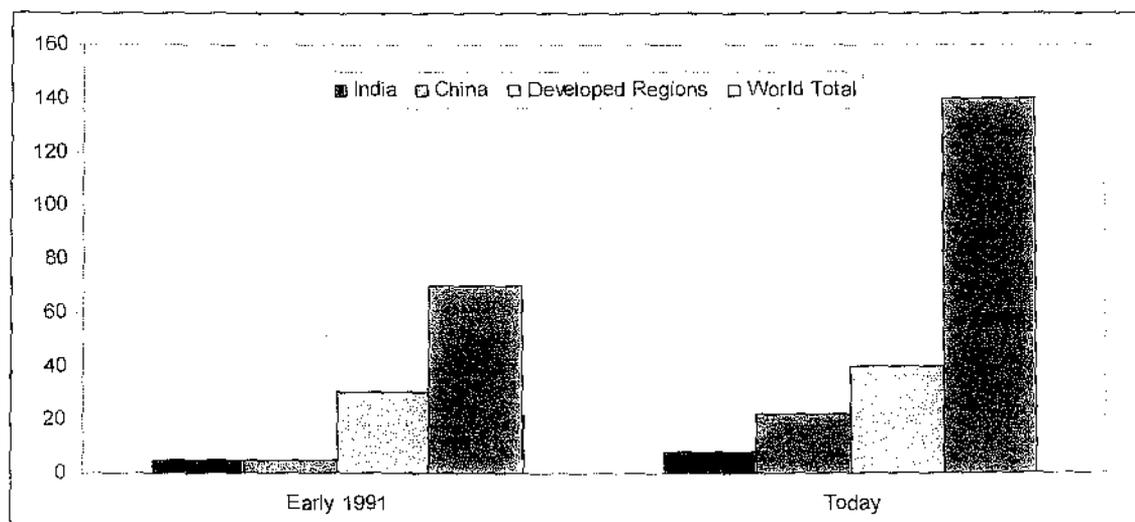
Here is an excerpt of the article by Professor Philip G. Altbach on: The Giants Awake: Higher Education Systems in China and India.

The coin used in the article the 'Giants Awake' denotes a historical reminiscence. It is said that when Nepolean Bonapart attacked Russia after vanquishing and capitulating one-third of the then European hemisphere; one advisor urged Nepolean to capture China. The answer of Nepolean became a myth and a cliché: China is a sleeping giant and it is better to sleep for the rest of the world. The two ancient giants with a cherished and checkered past and a definite record of academic excellence in the field of philosophy, literature and sciences are awakening.

China and India together have a third of the world's population. They are most rapidly growing economics and taking serious initiative in higher education for technological development and for the global knowledge economy. The current economic slowdown did not affect these two countries much. The need for better -educated work force is felt by the political leadership in these two political societies and universities are up their ante to produce these workforces with appropriate skills to fit in the ever competitive global knowledge system. To ful-fill this goal they are expending higher education and building some world-class research universities at the top of the differentiated education system.

India educates approximately 10% of its university age population, while China enrolls about 22% with 27 million students. China ranks top in enrolment and India is in third position in enrolment with 13 million students. China's post-secondary enrolment has grown from 1990's 5 million to 27 million in this millennium, while India has expanded from 5 million to 13 million. Total 100 million students are in post-secondary stage of education. The quality of education is compromised at the cost of quantity. According to McKinsey 75% of India engineers are ineffective without on-the-job training. The qualifications of Chinese graduates are questionable.

Figure 1: Number of Higher Education Students in the Early 1990s and Today (in millions)



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Agarwal 2009, P.G. Altbach EPW 06.06.2009.

Due to difference in political system China is more stable with their education system and India seems overtly unstable. China's system is not flexible but capable of dramatic and sometimes unpredictable policy shifts. On the other hand, India is constantly debating new directions, changes gradually and often without clear planning.

In the economic demography of both the countries we notice that they are over dominated by middle class. The Indian middle class now

numbers more than 50 million, China's is similarly large. The prediction is that by 2025 each country will have a middle class of perhaps 500 million. Thus, the mounting demand for Higher Education and world's competitive economics already forced China to move to create and sustain an elite academic sector. India is beginning to grapple with this issue.

III

A Short History of Education

For higher education system, history plays a role in the present. For both China and India, the academic past has created difficult and problematical result for the present – and it is likely for the future too. Both the countries inherited western academic model ignoring extraordinarily rich indigenous intellectual and academic traditions. China rejected the philosophy of Confucious and India shunned age old Gurukul system to University (Nalanda and Taksheela) system. However, there is little salience to-day of those tradition of academic philosophies.

In the 19th century Chinese recognized the need for modernization to compete with the west and also to develop China economically. Some universities developed along China's east coast under the aegis of European power and Peking University was established with the assistance from America. Thus, by the time that the imperial system was overthrown in 1911, a small number of western-style Universities existed, and many Chinese had been educated in the west and in Japan also.

Meanwhile, civil war, economic disruption, and Japanese invasion stood as stumble blocks for the growth of academic system during the period of New Republic. With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, in 1949, the new dispensation inherited a weak higher education system. There were 1,16,504 students enrolled in 205 Universities in China at that time. The newly established communist regime followed Soviet model of education. Research institute were separated from the Universities. Freedom was scanty and emergence of

academic profession hindered. Opportunity to study abroad was highly limited.

During 1966 to 1976, the period of infamous cultural-revolution academics faced dramatic cataclysm. With the end of cultural-revolution and defeat of the Gang of four Universities were permitted to look abroad for new academic ideas and were given funds to re-establish themselves. The Soviet pattern of highly specialized vocational institutions was in part dismantled. Political control was loosened as well. By the 1990s, as China's economic boom began, the university system was poised to expand.

Indian, however, was under the British colonial rule for 190 years, which ending with her Independence in 1947, and this colonial experience shaped our higher education and continues to influence us. The British did not help much to develop higher education in India but influenced the 19th century Indian middle class. The British endorsed this system by employing graduates in administration and college and universities. Colleges were affiliated to the universities and these universities framed the curriculum and conducted examinations. These graduates finally gave birth to the National Freedom struggle movement and led to achieve independence.

From the early 19th century, almost all higher education in India was entirely in English; no Indian language was used for instruction or examination since a small number of British academics were recruited to teach and lead the universities and colleges. The curriculum was mostly available in law, the social sciences, and related fields. At the time of independence there were 3,69,000 studying in 27 universities and 695 colleges. Even in 1961, only 1.5% of the relevant age group participated in post-secondary education. Research was an elusive term since the British were not interested to spend money on it. Moreover, 90% of Indians did not have access to higher education because of the hindrance of English as medium of instruction in higher education despite many reports and criticism, higher education expanded between independence

and the end of the last millennium with few structural changes from little more than 1,00,000 in 1950 to 9 million with an over all increase in 10% marked with declined quality and the basic structure remained the same like the one of the colonial past. Thus, both the systems of education in the two neighbouring countries could not serve the need of the society.

Contemporary Characteristics

Both countries emerged, as it emerged from the evidence, into the mid 20th century with a kind of dysfunctional academic organizations. The dual Chinese administration, viz., operational ministries at the local level and Ministry of Education diminished the effectiveness of the academics.

In India there are not more than 18,000 undergraduate colleges. A few universities are there with single campus without any affiliated college. There are a few research organizations in specialized fields to do advanced basic research in some scientific disciplines. Without changing the basic structure of the university much has been added to the Indian Higher Education. The funding source determines the standard of the academic institutes including a ever increasing private sector. The hierarchy of the Indian academic institutes are:

- (a) with highly selective elite research – intensive universities at the top:
- (b) Comprehensive universities in the middle:
- (c) And an array of less-selective and often non-baccalaureate colleges at the bottom.

It is needless to say the elite sector typically enrolls only a small proportion of the students and is, disproportionately, generously funded. Here, what is interesting, except in the U.S.A. and Japan, almost all elite universities are public administered.

China moved consciously towards a differentiated academic system. They have put in special attention to the 150 or so research universities. The Central Government looks after it. The provincial governments are taking the responsibility of 1,7000 universities. A few such universities are there under the responsibility of the municipal

authorities. In the academic hierarchy these universities ranked middle or bottom positions. There is currently a move to expand the non-baccalaureate sector like the concept of American community colleges. But emerging private sector tends to be at the bottom of the hierarchy. Till date China does not have a coherent and articulated academic system but they are vying to develop one.

Like China, India does not have a coherent academic system till date. India has a widely respected small elite sector of specialized academic institutions, most notably the Indian Institutes of Technology, now numbering 13 the Government recently announced to establish 8 more such institutes and 2 more Indian Institutes of Science, and 1,000 new polytechnics. For the general education the 380 universities are under the State Governments and mostly undifferentiated. There are 24 central universities and obviously better funded, and of higher quality than the rest, but undifferentiated.

In India there are 18,000 post-secondary institutions - more than 17,000 of these are colleges offering mainly under-graduate degrees. There are undifferentiated institutions until a few have taken advantage of legislation that allowed high-quality colleges to separate from their sponsoring universities and offer their own autonomous degrees. These colleges are recognized as more prestigious than the rest.

There are another kind of post-secondary institute, oddly named 'deemed' university, mostly specialized and recognized by the University Grants Commission and thus have degree-granting authority. Additional technical institutions are recognized and evaluated by the All-India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), another Central Government Agency. This incoherent education system is dealing with variety of institutions, sponsorship, and jurisdiction make the emergence of a system very unlikely.

The academic picture in India is very confusing because academic has grown without planning to serve the mass and an expanding economy. The responsibility is divided among several agencies in the

central and state governments, a increasingly powerful private sector, and occasionally the courts. Over the years, reform of higher education have sidestepped the traditional universities and rather have added new institutions alongside them. The Indian Institutes of Technology came into in this way. There is no formal division of responsibility for access or research.

Governance

An effective academic system needs an effective governance and management. But colonial hang-over, 'overweening' bureaucracy and political compulsions made the governance dysfunctional. Self-governance and autonomy, in one hand, and appropriate accountability to external constituencies and professional management, on the other is the general agreement for an effective university system. But neither India nor China has much self-governance.

In India, the undergraduate colleges are affiliated to universities and in general dominated by university rules and regulations and have very little scope for autonomous decision making. The large majority of Universities are controlled by the State Governments. Political interference with academic decisions, from hiring academic staff to creating new programmes, is widespread. The newer private universities have less external controls although their governing boards are often directly involved in the day to day management of the institution. Amity University near Delhi and Symbiosis in Pune are examples of newer private universities.

China established a unique model of academic and political combination by selecting a president for academic and an executive vice-president chosen by the all powerful communist party. It leads to administrative tension at times and certainly reduces self-governance of the academic-community. But in recent years China is adopting 'American-style leadership model' where President will be empowered to discharge more authority and autonomy to excel in research and teaching.

Funding

Funding is a great challenge in both the countries. At all levels education system is expanding. With 10% or higher GDP expansion they remain developing economies. The per capita purchasing capacity of China is \$5,3870 and for India \$2,740 according to World Bank – 2008 report. The increasing tuition cost is a great burden for the students and families in both the countries. To ensure equal access to higher education, in both the countries, adequate system of grants and loans are simply missing. But there are some financial aid programmes in place for poor students and students from disadvantaged populations.

Public funding for higher education comes from a variety of sources. In both the countries, the bulk of funding comes from provincial governments. These funding authorities decide the mode of allocation. Some states and provinces prioritizes higher education, while others do not. Central funding agencies in both the countries are concerned with the research facilities. In China around 150 research universities receive huge fund through 985 and 211 Central Government funding programmes. For example, the Shanghai government provides resources to its research universities, as have other cities and provinces. The Indian Government, does that largely through the University Grants Commission. The large chunk goes to 20 central universities and rest to other universities.

Calculating private funding for higher education in China and India is very difficult. The growing number of private universities and colleges are 'unaided'. There are also 11, as of 2007, fully private universities that receive no government funding. Tuition levels vary in the private sector, and in some cases regulated by government authorities. The picture in China is more or less the same like India. The Min Ban private universities and colleges are quite diverse in purpose and role. The tuition and costs vary. Some Chinese public universities sponsor affiliated semi-private branches or other degree offering programmes that are not state funded and they charge higher tuition fees. These

programmes are intended to generate revenues for their sponsoring universities as well as to increase access. Some critics have accused them for having low academic standard and the degrees they offer are not free from controversies.

For both the countries the funding provided by public sources for higher education, as is the case worldwide, is inadequate to fulfill the quality and access. India spends 0.37% and China 0.6% of GDP on post-secondary education – both are below the expenditures compared to other emerging economics and well under the 1% more spent by developed countries.

China and India as International Higher Education Players

In very significant ways, both countries loom large on the international higher education scene and will become much more central in the future. It is not because of the policy but due to the exodus of students and professionals to the west and elsewhere since 1970s. China and India, undoubtedly, are the top two exporters of students for the past two decades. In 2008, approximately, 2,00,000 Indians and 8,92,000 Chinese were studying abroad. These numbers are close to half of the world's total International students.

There are some reasons for this exodus: prestigious institutions of the home-country instigate, the brightest students, in India and also in China, to join a foreign university. Secondly, the prestige of a foreign degree from a top Western University has considerable importance.

Thirdly, for students who do not score well or rank well prefer to join a foreign university instead of joining insignificant local university.

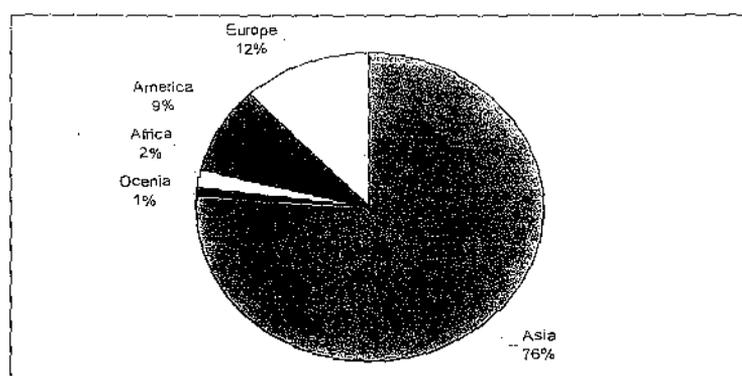
And finally, the economic ability of the growing middle class is increasing considerably. The parents are increasingly sending their wards abroad for studying.

Large number of Indian and Chinese scholars and researchers are working abroad. Majority of these expatriates obtained their doctorates abroad and did not return home. From 1970 to 2005, about 75 to 80% of

Chinese and Indian obtained their doctorate in the U.S.A. and never returned home although many have academic and other relationship with their home countries. The Chinese Ministry of Education report says that 8,15,000 students went abroad to study between 1978 and 2004 and 1,98,000 returned. Statistics for other western countries are likely similar in terms of non-return rates. But since 1990s, due to improved economic and academic conditions in India and China more graduates are returning home. 'Brain Drain' could be checked to some extent in both the worried countries.

China has implemented an international education policy since 2000, and India is debating on it. More than 2,000,000 international students were studying in China in 2007, with $\frac{3}{4}$ of them from Asian countries. China awards more than 10,000 scholarships as well. The goal of this policy is to earn and to give valuable international dimension to the institute. Many Chinese universities have extended their campus facilities for international students. Confucius Institutes, now have 292 centres with a plan to expand for 1,000 by 2025. These centres provide Chinese language instruction, cultural programmes, mainly on university campuses worldwide.

Figure 2: Distribution of International students in China's Higher Education



Source: The China Scholarship Council, 2005.

In comparison with China, India's international effort lag behind, in 2008, approximately, 20,000 international students studied in India, most from South Asia, Africa and NIRs. Indian Universities either have

facilities or staff for international studies. The 'USP' for Indian higher education, according to some experts, can be English as medium of instruction. But without planned and systematic investment in infrastructure, as well as coherent policy, Indian dreams will never come true.

By establishing a partnership with its neighbours in north-east Asia, e.g. hosting 35,000 students from South Korea and hosting and exchanging students with Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan both China and India respectively emerged as regional educational powers. Political differences should be eased to collaborate with Pakistan.

Other countries see China and India as major markets for their higher education initiatives. 11,000 students are studying in China for British academic degrees, and 2000 British institutions have programme in China. American academic institutions such as John Hopkins University, the University of Michigan, and many others including numerous colleges, are also active in China. Almost 1,000 foreign academic institutes are active in China including two full-fledged branch campuses of British Universities.

At least 150 foreign academic institutions with the largest number of 66 from the U.S.A., second largest 59 from Britain are there in India. Most collaborations offer professional programmes. News reports indication is that foreign investment in academia are waiting. Once legislation will be passed by the Indian parliament Indian market will be getting active collaboration and involvement from the foreign investors in the academic arena.

China through its 2003 legislation regulates foreign collaborations India is still in the process of implementing rules.

The role of independent branch campuses, ownership of institutions, the role of private and the for-profit sector, quality assurance for foreign institutions, the role of franchised overseas degree programmes, and other complex issues have proved controversial. A complication in rule making and implementation for both countries are

the varying jurisdictions of the central and provincial governments, as well as changing perspectives among policymakers. They seek to – maintain control over foreign institutions and programmes on their territories while welcoming international involvement.

In short, China and India, due to their size, population, potential, rise of middle class are of great interest to the international academic community. China and India are to play key role as a source of students and academics and as a place to do higher education 'business'. Transparent policies and regulations are necessary for both the countries concerning foreign collaboration and involvement to protect their national interest as well as to ensure quality and to clarify arrangements for political overseas partners.

Research Universities

At the pinnacle of any academic system are research universities. Through research university links to the international network of science and scholarship is established producers of much of the research in the academic system, and educations of the elites for key positions in society are done. Countries like China and India, want to develop this area to compete with other top universities of the world and also serve the national academic system and rapidly growing economies.

Neither India nor China are academic powerhouses, although, China is moving in that direction. From the point of view of research productivity the Survey that Shanghai Jiao Tong University conducted in 2008 discloses that neither country has a single university in the top 100 but China has two, Peking University and Tsinghua University, and India none in top 100 of the 2008 Time Higher Education / QS ranking. It measured academic reputation as well as performance. Hong Kong being part of China and not as part of Chinese academic system has several universities in the top ranks of these league tables. But both the countries want to become research super powers.

Historically China and India have a few specialized research institutions and these institutions are separate from the Universities.

With regard to research orientation China follows the Soviet legacy. India carries the British legacy. Chinese research institutions are best of working condition and nurtures best of talents. These institutions are getting higher prestige than the Universities.

Some of the institutions are sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. These institutes offer Master's and Doctoral degrees as well. Around 30,000 graduate students are enrolled in CAS intuitions.

The number of research institutes in India is smaller, and their role is not quite so central. Similar institutes in India in some cases offer advanced degrees as well. It is generally concurred as better to have research and teaching in the same institution, and efforts have been taken in China to integrate these institutes with neighbouring universities.

The plan related to establish world-class research universities are multifaceted. Meanwhile, over 20 billion purchasing power parity dollars are spent on building an elite sector in Chinese higher education.

By merging several universities the Chinese Government re-established some comprehensive universities. In 1993, around 100 universities were upgraded; in 1998, during the centenary year of Peking University proposal was to create 40 "world-class" universities in China. There projects are popularly known as 1993, 211 Higher Education Project and 985 project. To create new infrastructure, to build impressive campuses, large inter-disciplinary centres both the centre and provincial and other authorities are providing fund. The 985 project also upgraded courses, interdisciplinary centres, brought entire change in English course, publications in recognized international journals, were done and hiring internationally acclaimed faculty. The basic aim was to be identified with the top world research universities and especially seek to emulate the top American research universities. The Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking is a vital point in this effort undoubtedly.

But reform have also diversified the academic system in general and created much greater inequalities between the top, middle and bottom of the academic system in the aspects of quality, funding, mission and other factors.

To be precise India has no world-class research universities. The global higher education ranking considered just a few Indian institutions which include Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) where combined enrolment is 30,000. But they are all small specialized institutions. The research productivity, while impressive, is limited by the size and mission of the institution.

India's 431 universities have excellent research focused departments but none of them can claim that they have excelled in research. On the other hand, 25 Union Government sponsored universities are of higher quality than the 230 state universities. According to the report of Ministry of Human Resource Development 2009 six of the Central and 114 of the State Universities have affiliated Colleges - some 20,667 students are studying there.

Achilles Heels

The Achilles Heel of India Higher Education indeed represents the traditional universities, especially state universities infested with endemic under funding, political interference, often a significant degree of corruption in academic appointments and sometimes admission and examinations, and inadequate and ill-maintained facilities. Moreover, the tremendous burden of supervising the affiliated colleges saps the energy and creativity of most universities. The University of Mumbai has 364 affiliated colleges, while the University of Calcutta has 170 and Delhi University 83. Major students are studying in the undergraduate colleges of these universities and universities are responsible to conduct the examinations of this huge number. Reform is a distant dream and no substantial efforts have been taken in the past-half century. Continuity is the priority and not excellence in these universities.

Starting with the University Education Commission (Radhakrishnan Commission) in 1948-49 and proceeding to the 1964-66 Education Commission (Kothari Commission) many thoughtful recommendations at all levels of education reform were suggested, like 'decouple' the colleges from the universities, and many others. But a combination of the lack of political will, entrenched and at times political interests, a divided political system, and resource constraints and paucity of funds have contributed to this gridlock.

The on-going government plans to establish the new Indian Institute of Technology, Central Universities, Technological Institutes, and other institutions are not sufficient measures to address the perplexing problems of reform. The question of improving the traditional and existing universities and institutions have been kept deliberately in the side lines. Indeed, reforms are taking place in IITs and the Indian Institute of Management ignoring the traditional universities without calling them universities.

China in this sector is well ahead of India. But they need to address some grey areas, viz., to build an effective academic culture, academic freedom etc. but, overall, they have an impressive and promising state. India remains far from creating globally competitive research universities.

The Academic Profession and Academic Culture

The Prime condition of a successful academic institution is well educated and committed professoriate where the 'best and brightest' develop an 'academic culture' that promotes meritocracy, honesty and academic freedom.

In India 5,50,000 and in China 12,00,000 full-time academics are working. An additional 3,50,000 part-time instructor are working in Chinese higher education and a small but growing number in India.

The large majority of academics are teachers of undergraduate students who do to little, if any, research. Most of them do not have a doctorate and some have only a bachelor's degree' only 90% have

doctorates in China, although 70% hold doctorates in the research universities. In India 35% hold a doctoral degree and higher proportion of Ph.Ds are in research - oriented university departments. Teaching 'load' is high for those who are teaching at under-graduate level. Only 3% graduate and post-graduate teachers related to research-oriented departments of 'better universities' are much better off in terms of pay and working condition. 'Most, if not all, of those academics have doctoral degrees, often from distinguished universities in the west'.

Both in China and India the problem areas are related to 'size', 'diversity' and 'organization' dominated by a tradition of bureaucratic control. And these are great constraints on academic freedom. Both in China and India the backlog of colonial past, frequent policy changes affected adversely the academic profession.

In comparison with China the freedom of Indian professoriate's are more. They can publish without restriction in academic journals, or in newspapers and other publications; although 'a combination of overweening administrative power, sensitivity to religious and ethnic sensibilities, and some political interference in academic matters affects academic freedom'.

Since Chinese universities seek to compete globally, academic freedom is becoming more recognized as a necessary condition of a world-class university.

A true academic culture must be free from corruption. In China plagiarism is widespread and also bribery for admission and grades.

The list of corruption in India is very long: plagiarism, academic administrations and Professors, at time practice bribery in the admission of students, falsifying examination results, selling examination questions and answers and many other 'malpractices'. Prime institutes are comparatively free from corruption; while about states such as 'Bihar, Uttar Pradesh' many problems have been reported.

In order to build an effective academic system, the academic profession must be adequately paid and enjoy campus working

conditions'. According to a recent international survey (Rumbley, Pacheco and Altbach 2008) with regard to academic salary, India and China were at the bottom of a group of 15 countries (Figure 3).

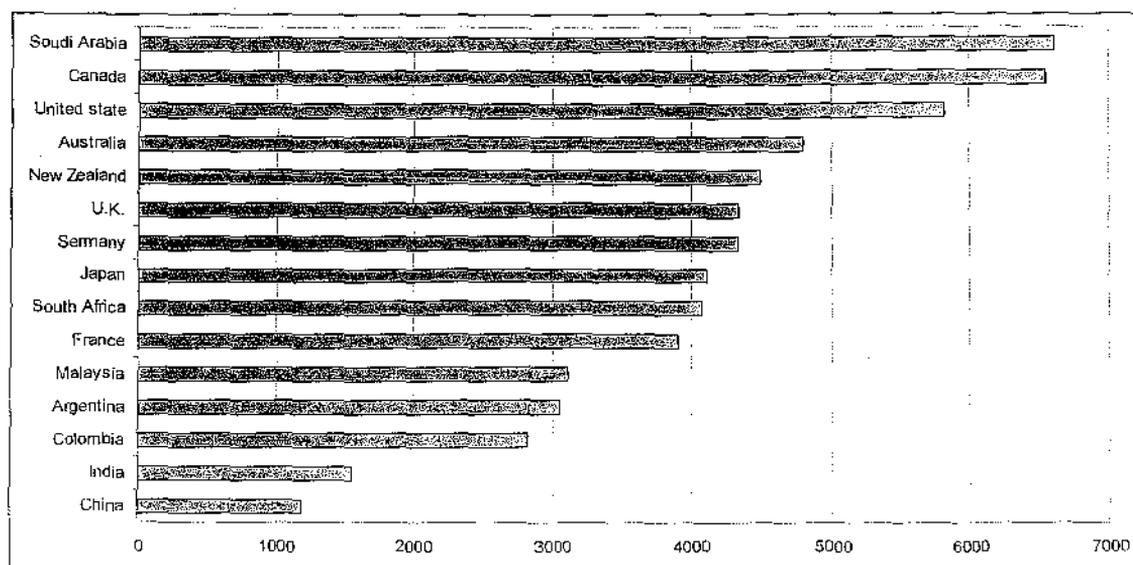
The salary professionals are receiving at an average of \$1,182 for China and \$1,547 for India. These salaries are 25% of U.S. averages and modestly, less for most Western European countries'. The academicians are middle class people in their respective countries.

Full time appointment is a unique feature in academics in China and India. 'Many were able to earn more income through additional allowances'. Indian academicians, in an average are getting higher salaries than their Chinese counterparts although India's GDP is lower than China, Furthermore, a salary hike is in pipeline in India by the Government of India. However, the 'best and brightest' are avoiding university teaching jobs because they are getting better remuneration elsewhere.

To ensure comparable global standard in China universities have a flexible remuneration policy and 'STAR' professors are getting permission to hold part-time appointments abroad. India does not have any such policy to attract best scholars at home.

Hiring 'inbreeding' is a challenge in both the countries. In colleges, applicants for academic jobs are expected to provide payment to persons hiring them or to the hiring institution – clearly a corrupt practice.

But both countries inspite of several challenges and petty-corruption practices effective academic culture is good in top institutions and also in other parts of the academic system.

Figure 3: Average Academic Salaries: Selected Countries

Source: Rubley, Pacheco and Altbach, 2008

Access and Equity Challenges

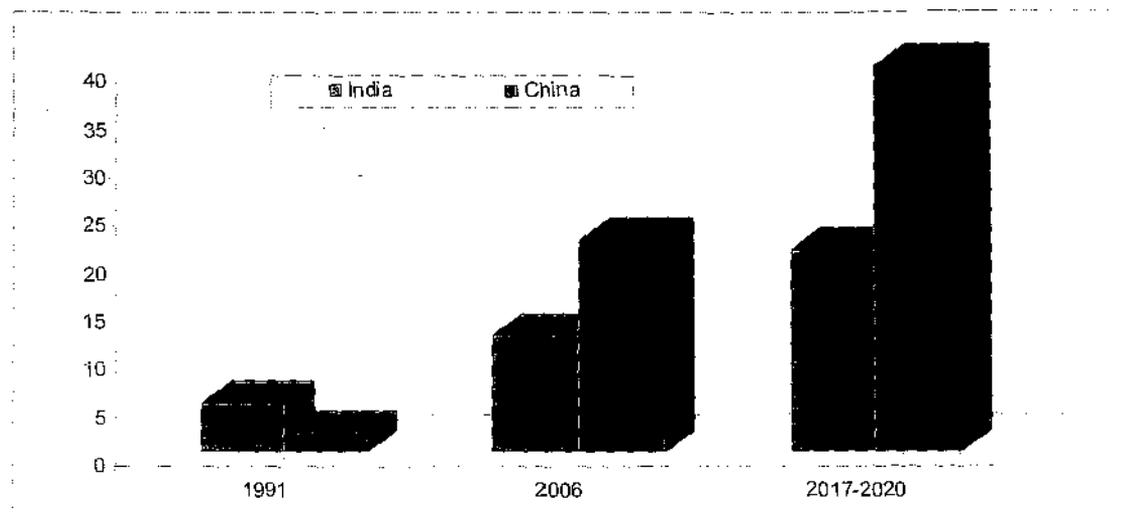
Both China and India are over populated. Thus greatest challenge is to give, all segments of population, access to higher education, and especially post-secondary higher education. Another challenge is to provide equity to population groups which remain till date under represented. India, at present, is still at the 'elite' stage of access; with only 10% of the students are entering higher educations. The target of the government to expand access to 15% during Eleventh Plan period, i.e., during 2007-12 and to 21% by the end of the next plan period, i.e., within 2017. It would be a historic initiative to help to grow the number, quality and expenditure in India in the years to come.

In the case of China already 22% of the age group is in the fray. The target is 40% by 2020. These two countries will overwhelmed the world in its enrolment growth in the coming two decades.

The private sector will play a definite role as 'demand absorption'. Although the debate: how to control 'for-profit' institutions and other topic remain a burning issue. For India, 'unaided' private colleges and in

China 'min ban (Private) institution and semi-private public universities are most expanding sector and ready to absolve new demand for access.

Figure 4: Higher Education Participation in China and India (Gross enrolment ratio 1991-2006, official targets for 2017 and 2020){%}



*Official targets.

Source: World Bank 2008; Government of India; government of China, Philip G. Altbach

Another great challenge in India and China is equity. The under-representation includes: country or region; gender, socio-economic inequalities; rural-urban disparities, and ethnic or other minority groups.

Despite massive urbanization, a substantial majority of population is still with low income; low-literacy rate; low access to education at all levels, low life expectancy and lower level of quality of living.

Historically, equity has been a major concern of Chinese and Indian Government planners. China kept regional quotas to provide access to applicants from all over the country. From the beginning of the People's Republic of China to minimize the inequalities, the Chinese Government is till date encouraging expansion of access in Western China. Since 1980s, loan programmes were issued to provide access to the students from the poorer section of the society to take part in higher education. However, major inequalities could be avoided and the gap

increased due to the prosperity in the high growth regions of the country, although data is unavailable.

"The most controversial issues in Indian higher education include the array of policies aimed at improving access and equity for tribal groups, lower castes and dalits'. In India this policy is called "positive discrimination" often politically charged and raises "acrimonious debate", legal acrimony, and litigation. Since independence in 1947, these above mentioned groups of under-privileged classes get reservations in seats and jobs. The new inclusion in this group is called 'other backward castes" or OBCs. This means that post-secondary institutions are required to hire, and fixed percentage of these groups – almost half of the total.

More and more institutions are coming under the purview of this policy of 'positive discrimination' or reservation including the Indian Institute of Management. In spite of all innovative measure equity remains a key dilemma and access 'still of concern for some social groups". And, hence China and India are no exceptions.

Private Provisions

Presently throughout in the world higher education sponsored by private houses or agencies is the fastest growing segment of Post-secondary education. In China and India there are good many private high education institutions and these institutes are supporting the education system, over all, substantially. In China the private Sector is relatively small. Around 43,00,000 students enrolled themselves in private post-secondary institutes. There are 16,00,000 in private universities, and 8,70,000 odd students are there in other patterns of institutes. The Chinese Ministry of Education – 2007 discloses it. Good many institutes are imparting vocational training. All private institutes are not allowed to grant degrees.

A very small number of academic institutions are calling themselves universities allowed by the Chinese education ministry. There

are private schools of different kinds: non-profit entities, business enterprises ownership, families or other arrangements. The number is well over 1000. These private educational enterprises are very new and even two decades ago the concept of private educational entrepreneurship was unheard of in China.

Semi-private colleges are another feature of Chinese education system. These colleges are under local universities. Classes are taught by regular university staff and regular degrees are offered by the universities but not always. At times students of these types of colleges sit along with regular students and colleges in different buildings sit separately. These semi-private universities are a source of extra-income for the affiliating universities.

The moot point behind establishing private sector is for creating access to higher education and to impart vocational course 'that can not be met by the existing universities'. The government regulations are trying hard to establish a clear and transparent system of private academies with regard to quality of education and financial entanglements. General tendency in China among students is for the preference of admission always in public institution instead of a private one because of higher fee structure. There are a very few private run academia in China with overseas institutional connections. Moreover, public institutes are carrying more prestige, till date, than the private one. It will take a long time in China to develop a chain of prestigious private higher education institutions but likely to expand in near future because these institutes are visibly making their presence felt in the landscape of Chinese higher education. Moreover, the growing enrolment demand cannot be ignored by the government and feasibility to fulfill that rising demand can only be met up by granting and establishing more and semi-private higher education institutes.

In the realm of private college business, in India, the situation is more complicated. 95% students, in India, are studying in government 'aided private college established and managed by various private

agencies, viz., religions organization, cultural agencies, philanthropic groups and others. Other colleges, including many medical colleges may receive no funding from government. Almost all are affiliated to the universities.

A small number of private universities have been approved by state or central government authorities to offer degrees. But these institutes are not receiving any government funding. They are mostly managing the teaching-learning affairs by means of private funding, viz., philanthropic donations and tuitions. A group of specialized post-secondary institutions, mainly business schools, are a new addition to the privately managed higher education in India. 'Some have degree-awarding authority while other offer only certificates' because they could not manage degree-granting approval from the government. Tuition payments are the source of their financing and sustenance.

There are a few private universities who have 'achieved considerable respect'. The Birla Institute of Technology and Science, established in the 1900s and upgraded to 'Deemed University' status in 1964 is one of the top universities in the country.

Manipal University was established in the year 1953, as a medical school. Presently, they have 24 colleges and 80,000 students in various disciplines are studying in different branches in Nepal, Malaysia, Dubai and the Caribbean. Reliance Industries, Mahindra and Mahindra and the Vedanta Group, India's large corporate house geared up to begin their educational ventures. The logic behind this stimulation is to establish private universities with high standard curbing the existing low quality universities.

'The growth of the private sector in India has been dramatic'. 30% of students are studying in India 43% private unaided institutes, "while accurate satisfaction is unavailable'. Some of these institutes are profit making, quasi profit making and many are family owned. Opening up of private sector also opened up complexity and 'dysfunctional regulating framework for higher education in India'. The state government and

central government have the power to recognize colleges and universities. In 2002, the State Chhattisgarh suddenly passed a legislation for the recognition of private universities; 134 interested parties applied and 97 applicant got approval. Most of these were not located within the state but within India. 'Some other state also recognized new private institutions'.

The University Grants Commission or UGC found this anarchic situation highly alarming and after much debate stepped in with new regulations and in 2004 the Supreme Court of India recognized the authority of the UGC over the State Governments. The complexity and malfunctions are at galore.

Again the issues like 'Capitation fees', very high tuition fees, flouting regulatory stipulations, corrupt practices in admission, hiring, and the award of degrees tarnished the reputation of the private sector.

"Private higher education in China and India is fast expanding. It is already a significant part of the higher education system". The reasons behind its expansion are:

Firstly, the lack of financial resources; and, secondly, demand for growing populations access to education. These institutions are playing 'demand absorbing' role at the lower rung of the hierarchy in Indian education system. It is a fact that 'fully comprehensive private research universities in the American or Japanese models are unlikely in China and India. The cost of starting and sustaining such universities are just too high⁹.

Kapi(ta)lisation of Indian Education

It began with the first United Progressive Alliance Government when the Manmohan Singh Government has survived due to out-side support of the communist block of more than 60 MPs. Professor C.P. Bhambri wrote: "But it is no misnomer to state that communist support to the government is from 'out-side' but the reality is that communists have participated very actively in the making of every crucial national and international public policy, and the best illustration of the active

engagement was on the India-US nuclear agreement. The government has not been able to move a single step forward either in areas of economic or foreign policy without the consent and approval of the coordination of the UPA allies and the communists ... because except a period of their support to Indira Gandhi after the 'split' of 1969, the communists were never 'participants' in policy-making at the national level¹⁰.

He further mentioned in the article: "The new political status of the communists has attracted the attention of major opposition parties and powerful mass media, and every act of omission and commission of the communists like the events in Nandigram or the Taslima Nasreen controversy has been adversely commented on within parliament and in the hyper-active mass media. It is also for the first time that the role of communist parties have attracted public attention beyond West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. This is the price communists have to pay for their national presence"¹¹.

Professor C.P. Bhambri described the ground reality in India where communists are trying to get their ground. To quote Professor Bhambri: "Further, unlike existing communist countries like China or Cuba, Indian communists have to participate in the ruthless politics of a multi-party system, and it is inherent in the logic of competitive democracy that parties in power, including 'outside' supporters of a ruling party, are never excused by opponents and critics"¹².

Professor C.P. Bhambri correctly highlighted certain grey areas where the communists in India are balancing between their much proclaimed 'theories' and implementation of 'real life policies' in the reality. And as a result of 'balancing act' between 'theory and practice' for the great question of survival often becomes the subject matter of dichotomy and obviously criticism comes from left and right. Professor Bhambri gave some examples of such criticism: "The political and ideological supporters of SEZ and private foreign direct investment have pounced on Buddhadev Bhattacharjee's defense of his new economic

policies as opponents of communists have rejected his plea that West Bengal is part of a capitalist country and this is the compulsion under which the communist governments of three states are obliged to work”¹³.

Thus, the communists have been taunted: “How is it that what is good for West Bengal is not good for the whole India or what is good for China is not good for India?”¹⁴

The backup of the rural people of West Bengal since 1977 ascended the Left Front Government to power. The Left Front is still in power. It has served one of the rarest instances of regime continuity in the history of parliamentary democracy ... The trend continued smoothly and unabated till the 15th Lok Sabha Election, 2009. In this election the LF in general and Communist Party of India (Marxist) or (CPI(M)) in particular have witnessed the most dramatic setback in their electoral fortune from the 26 seats which the CPI(M) had won in the Lok Sabha Election 2004, the number went down to 09, while the opposition alliance comprising primarily the Indian National Congress (INC) and the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) increased their tally from 07 to 25. This is mainly due to tremendous electoral success of the AITC in the current election where it won 19 seats compare to only 01 in the 2004 Lok Sabha Election.

The decrease in the number of seats of the ruling CPI(M) and the concurrent and almost equal increase in the number of seats of the AITC can be regarded as a near debate for the former which is also reflected in the share of votes of the two parties”¹⁵. The tables will reflect the number of seats and vote shared by the two contending blocks.

Table 1: Share of votes and number of seats won by various major political parties in 2004 and 2009 Lok Sabha Election in West Bengal

Year	Left vote shares and seats				
	CPI(M)	CPI	RSP	AIFB	Total
2004	38.57 (26)	4.01 (03)	4.48(03)	3.66 (03)	50.81 (35)
2009	33.10 (09)	3.50 (02)	3.56 (02)	3.04 (02)	43.3 (15)

Year	BJP+			INC+		
	Vote Shares and seats			Vote Shares and seats		
	BJP	AITC	Total	INC	AITC	Total
2004	8.06 (0)	21.04(01)	29.1(06)	14.56	-	14.56(06)
2009	6.15(01)	-	6.15(01)	13.47(06)	31.210(19)	44.67(25)

Note: Vote share is in percentage terms, seats (showing parenthesis) are in absolute numbers.

*In 2004 AITC was an ally of the BJP

** In 2009 AITC is an ally of the INC

Source: The Election Commission of India

The pundits are busy to locate the reason of this defeat of the Left in West Bengal. Certain obvious question arises: What happened to its traditional support base?

If so, what are the factors for this paradigm shift ? And, is there any change in the ideological standpoint of the left (ideological paradigm shift) which is increasing the gap between the party from its natural support base?

The last question will dominate the rest of our discussion because the dimensions of development in the face of globalization certainly changed the Chinese leadership with their perspective of economic development and when government of India echoing the same path, a state in Indian Federalism, viz., West Bengal despite many a reservations, cannot but follow the same suit. Professor Jyotiprasad Chatterjee has rightly pointed out: "The last question assumes crucial significance particularly due to the expansion of the neoliberal economic framework globally under which the parliamentary left parties are operating. How are they negotiating with such an economic arrangement whose anti-poor tendencies are being increasingly revealed throughout the world"¹⁶.

To locate the 'complex causation' at work we need to look into the social base of the Left Front.

Undoubtedly, the rural folk of West Bengal provided the solid rock foundation of the left politics not only in Bengal but also in rest of the country. They have harvested for decades the mass support of rural Bengal by means of land reform. The successful implementation of the land ceiling measures has helped to acquire a good amount of surplus agricultural land from the erstwhile Zamindars and big peasants, the re-distribution of which among the landless agricultural labourers contributed immensely in the formation of a solid vote bank for the Left Front.

But the Parliamentary election 2009, in the backdrop of Singur and Nandigram imbroglio, however, shows a somewhat different picture. "In this election, according to National Election Study (NES) and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) data, the opposition alliance comprising primarily the INC and AITC has secured almost 4% more rural votes than the Left Front.

Comparing this with the findings of the 2004 Lok Sabha Election brings out some deep-rooted trends. In 2004, the left secured 52% of the rural votes and 49% of the urban votes. The share of the non-left rural votes is less than 43% than that of the left, while the urban votes were equally shared by the left and the non-left parties. This is probably a clear indication of the shift in the support base of the Left Front¹⁷.

Yogendra Yadav also observed this significant shift in the 'core constituency' which adversely affected the electoral prospect of the Left Front in West Bengal.

The Swing is also another factor which devastated the left bastion in rural areas of West Bengal for the parliamentary leftists. Around 26% of the farmers have changed their allegiance from the left to the non-left opposition alliance. Furthermore, the support base in the production sector in rural areas of West Bengal comprising with many skilled and semi-skilled workers failed to receive any 'break-through, technological as well as institutional for further development. At the same time, the Left Front has extended its influence upon the salaried segment of the

rural populace by 23%"¹⁸. The shift from peasants and workers and dependence on middle class salaried petty-bourgeoisie has changed eventually the class approach of CPI(M) along with other constituent left parties over the years. This middle class 'Proclivity' of the Left Front and shift in the traditional support base is the assertion of Yogendra Yadav since 2006, 'perhaps, finds its expression here'.

In the urban zones of West Bengal Left Front has lost a chunk of voters from among the followers of the business world. These small and petty-business find it difficult to survive in the face of 'corporations of the business sector, symbolized by the mushrooming of shopping malls, multiplexes, etc., in urban West Bengal during the last decade or so, which has been restricting the scope of small and medium businessmen considerably. Coupled with this the forcible collection of subscription (total in Bengali) to the party fund from the businessman, allegedly by the CPI(M) workers might have irritated them"¹⁹. Moreover, the changed life-style of some of the persons in the party rank and file and a kind of arrogance in the section of party workers and leaders definitely disillusioned the common people.

The statiological and psephological study revealed that the caste factor also determined the reversal in the electoral behaviour of the people of West Bengal. The Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes (SCs and STs) the major vote-bank in West Bengal for the left. The steady support of these two groups saved Left Front from being routed in the 15th Lok Sabha Election in 2009.

The other backward classes and upper castes of the society thinly supported the cause of the left than the above mentioned castes. In 2004 Left Front could secure 25% less OBC votes, whereas non-left parties could secure 23% extra votes from the OBCs. "Indian National Congress and AITC have registered a noteworthy increase in their share of OBC votes from 12% and 18% in 2004 to 28% and 23%, respectively in 2009. Perhaps, in a lower magnitude the same trend can be traced back for the upper castes as well"²⁰. But AITC, the left leaders often complain, has

introduced in West Bengal politics two aspects, viz., religious fanaticism by allied with BJP and caste-politics by hobnobbing with MATUA-Group, a sub-religious Hindu sect most lower caste people uprooted from Bangladesh and settled mostly in 24 Parganas of West Bengal. The leftist also balm that ultra-Marxist Revolutionary Group, CPI(Moist) also got an access to West Bengal holding the hands of All India Trinamool Congress or AITC on the issues of Singure, Nandigram and Lalgarh.

Again according to the assessment of Professor Jyotiprasd Chatterjee: "The reluctance of the Left Front Government in West Bengal to recognize the OBC as an official category can offer a partial explanation for its diminished popularity among this group The alleged insensitivity of the leftists towards their cause might have irked them and the election result may be a reflection of this"²¹.

Due to the proposal of Land acquisition issue for proposed chemical hub in Nandigram, and other development initiatives in some places of South 24 Paraganas district, where the Muslim population is predominant, the mishandling of Reizwanur Rahman case and Muslim non-representation in government services made the Muslim population of West Bengal dejected and the fear psychosis of the common and rural Muslim population sharply favoured the non-left political forum. About 58% Muslim voter's favoured the non-left parties; where as 36% is the share of Muslim vote in favour of the left political parties. Moreover, the upper castes also reflected after good long time a definite tilt towards the non-left parties. The national Election Study of 2009 raised a question about the much vaunted 'secular' tradition of West Bengal. The Marxist education could not fully erase the other identities like, caste, religion etc. even after long left rule as well as secular and non-castiest education system from the mind of the people of West Bengal.

The National Election Study till 2004 shown a 'gender-neutral' voting pattern and generally both the leftists and non-leftists were sharing almost equal number of votes. But the study report of NES-2009 reveals that in comparison with the study report of 2004 there has been

13% decline in left's share of women votes and a spectacular increase of women's share of vote for non-left parties. For Professor Jyotiprasad Chatterjee's assertion it may be due to unfavourable social condition, viz., incidence and rate of rape, domestic violence, kidnapping and abduction of girls made the majority of women of West Bengal apathetic towards the Left Front Government. Significantly, the women's wings of the left parties neither could assess nor could mobilize women against these.

Moreover, the main opposition party AITMC in headed by their Supremo Miss Mamta Banerjee, who being a women could create a sense of pride and security among the down trodden women Folk of West Bengal. The tilt and swing of women votes to non-left parties can be a definite reason.

Table 2: Shifting support of the Left among occupational group in Rural and Urban areas:

Occupational Group	Vote share in 2009 (%)		Gain / Loss of the Left since 2004 (Percentage points)
	Left	Congress	
	Rural Sector		
Agricultural workers	46	41	- 2
Skilled and semi-skilled workers	30	59	- 16
Marginal farmers + share croppers (Bataidars)	44	53	+ 1
Farmers	31	65	- 26
Salaried	62	35	+ 25
	Urban sector		
Professional and salaried	44	44	- 3
Business	39	51	- 15
Skilled and semi-skilled workers	57	37	+ 3

Source: Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS); National Election Study 2009; Jyotiprasad Chatterjee; Post-Poll Survey.

Table 3: Vote sharing by Social Categories (in%)

Caste Group	Congress+		Left		BjP		Others		N	
	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004
Upper Caste	53	18	39	50	04	28	03	05	975	479
SC	26	07	55	55	09	33	10	05	414	266
ST	31	26	47	39	07	27	15	08	116	107
OBC	52	12	34	59	10	27	04	02	169	104
Muslim	58	24	36	47	01	21	05	07	526	134

Source: CSDS; NES/ Jyotiprasad Chatterjee 2009; Post-Poll Survey.

Table 4: Vote Sharing by Gender (in %)

Gender	Congress+		Left		BJP		Other		N	
	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004
Male	46	16	44	46	06	33	04	05	906	539
Female	46	13	43	56	06	24	07	07	795	416

Source: CSDS; NES; Jyotiprasad Chatterjee and Post-Poll Survey 2009

Policy-Related Issues: Decline of Left in West Bengal

“Land is our foundation; Industrialization is our target” that was the beacon call of Left Front Government in West Bengal in recent years. Land Reform and Panchayet System with its overall effectiveness ushered in a change in the economy and expectation of the rural Bengal. Shree Buddhadev Bhattacharjee become the harbinger of new age in Bengal. The whole Bengal electorate was moved by this new slogan. The unprecedented electoral victories in the 14th Lok Sabha Election 2004 (vide Table 1) and the assembly elections 2006 were the two powerful indications for the CPI(M) led Left Front Government in West Bengal to go for massive industrialization. Like other states, except Kerala, West Bengal also joined the fray to attract private investors, national and foreign for the great purpose of massive industrialization.

According to Professor Prabhat Patnaik, Kerela is the only state in India which did not follow this policy to woo the private capital for their development. In his language: “What is unique about Kerela under the

recent Left Democratic Front rule is that it did not follow this policy²². What Professor Amartya Sen popularized as 'Kerela Model', Professor Prabhat Patnaik described it with humility as 'strategy'.

For not joining this rat race for furrowing private capitals, even Prime Minister Dr. Monmohan Singh tagged this state with 'anti-development'. As a result Professor Patnaik admitted, "Kerela, not surprisingly, did not acquire fame like Gujarat as a destination for private capital, to the chagrin of many pundits sympathetic to the state"²³.

The acquisition of land and establishing industry and dolling out money for the land, capitalism often forgets about the contribution and sacrifice of the land giver. "By the same token when projects did come up it was not uncommon for those on whose lands they were located to participate in the inaugural function"²⁴. Citing the example of Kerela strategy of economic growth he admitted that 'conventional wisdom of recent vintage would accuse the LDF Government of frittering away precious resources on populist schemes, to the detriment of the economic growth'²⁵.

In his article Professor Prabhat Patnaik has shown that Kerela in the recent years has projected 'a slightly higher growth rate than the Indian economy as a whole. He said that this remarkable economic growth of Kerela is slightly lower than much projected capital destination Gujarat. His argument: "The gross domestic product cost is constant in (2004-2005) and in 2009-2010. It was 25 percent higher in 2006-2007 in the country as a whole; for Kerela the gross state domestic product was 28 percent higher and for Gujarat 31 per cent higher"²⁶.

Again Professor Patnaik added: "Growth rate, though much advertised these days by central government spokesman, is an utterly inadequate index for judging economic progress. Even by this criterion, however, Kerela, despite not joining the rat- race for attracting capital, has performed quite creditably"²⁷.

The next argument in favour of Kerela's economic development strategy Professor Prabhat Patnaik said that being 'hospitable to private capital' a state can not be equally generous to provide inducement to private capital and at the same time save extra-penny to 'expand welfare expenditure remarkably. The Hindu disclosed that to woo Tata's decision to shift the nano plant in Gujarat, it is said "the Gujarat Government promised to give out Rs. 31,000 crores ... with such largesse, clearly the scope for increasing welfare expenditure gets severely constricted"²⁸.

In the present world, there are two alternative models or strategies of development, viz, using the public exchequer to woo private capital investment in the state with a belief that this investment will ensure economic and other growth:

On the other hand, using the exchequer for various welfare measures which in turn enlarge the domestic market, and the enlarged market will automatically draw investment. This investment may not come from the big corporate houses but essentially from a range of small entrepreneurs.

For Professor Patnaik this 'would kill two birds in one stone'. In his language, "The advantage of achieving growth, the revenue of the State Government would also grow, permitting an even larger increase in welfare expenditure and in state plan outlay, as has happened in the case of Kerela. We would thus get on to a virtuous cycle with the second strategy"²⁹.

Thus his suggestion is not to depend entirely on 'big ticket project' but encouraging relatively small entrepreneurs, the cooperative and women's self help group.

The capital intensive model or strategy even becomes successful, little of its benefit will 'trickle down' to the people'. Moreover, big ticket projects are generally, busy producing 'sophisticated goods' which generate fast revenue but not huge employment. The collected revenue, major part of it goes out of the government purse for the 'incentives' to

the capitalists is a 'perennial problem'. Thus, for Professor Patnaik, from the point of view of welfare strategy the Kerala strategy is imitable.

The supporters of the capital intensive economic growth put the cart before the horse by raising the question that the first strategy i.e. capital wooing system serves the middle class better. But Professor Prabhat Patnaik is of the opinion: "In a relatively egalitarian society, before the middle class split itself off from the rest believes welfare measures also benefit the uncles and aunts and poor cousins of the middle class itself"³⁰.

Moreover, 'big ticket projects' according to Professor Patnaik, inevitably spawn corruption. The middle class, as custodian of value-system of the society abhors corruption. The second strategy will always be supported by the middle class. Hence, professor with sarcasm stressed: "of course it is never too unwise to embark upon a Kerala-style. Strategy"³¹.

There can be a debate to ascertain which is the best economic growth model and strategy including the one presented by Professor Prabhat Patnaik. But, the leftist counter parts in West Bengal has, primarily, gone for 'big ticket projects', but not entirely ignoring the middle range and small scale industries. But to create provision for the 'big ticket projects' like Tata Nano in Singur of Hooghly district and Salem group of companies in Nandigram of East Midnapur district put the three decades long well-governance of left Front Government of West Bengal in quandary. The reality is that after receiving massive mandate in favour of industrialization of West Bengal in the parliamentary election and state assembly election of 2004 and 2009, respectively, the 7th Left Front Government kept no stone unturned to prove that West Bengal is the 'most preferred destination' for investment to make industries and to develop.

This demand for massive industrialization was primarily from the middle class section of the society. Thus, what was sudden and radical shift for the rural electorates in Bengal, was essential for the ambitious

middle class people of West Bengal. But the rural populace in Bengal did not accept this 'positive spirit' as it was expected by the Left Front. 'Spontaneous mass mobilization against land acquisition took place everywhere in rural Bengal cutting across the line of political realities, starting from Bhangar in South 24 Parganas to Singur in Hooghly, and Nandigram in Purba Medinapur. The Left Front Government, spearheaded by the CPI(M), famous for its various mass organizations operating actively at the grass roots level, perhaps could not anticipate this"³².

What was loss of CPI(M) that was the gain for A.I.T.C. In West Bengal, the non-left opposition, i.e., mainly AITC under the leadership of Miss Mamta Banerjee who fully utilized the situation. "Leading this movement from the front, Banerjee gained the much required confidence and faith of peasantry. Her unbending anti-CPI(M) stance, also helped in her emergence as an icon of anti-CPI(M) struggle ... In this fusion the anti-left political parties, chiefly, AITC, made considerable inroads into rural Bengal, the erstwhile citadel of left politics. The electoral victory of the AITC in the Panchayet elections of 2008 in West Bengal and the increase in the support of the non-left opposition among the farmers election (Table 2) serve evidence here"³³.

The survey report depicts in Table 5 and 6 the level of willingness to establish 'big ticket projects' but their unwillingness to sacrifice the most pertinent rights of citizens in a free and democratic country for which CPI(M) educated its man, both in rural and urban Bengal.

"The manner in which violence erupted at Nandigram, claiming several lives, and its "by per-real" portrayal in the media sensitized the people of West Bengal and beyond about it" and furthermore, the allegations have been made that the involvement of supporters of the CPI(M) members at the local level, and deteriorating law and order situation, made not only the opposition parties, vocal about it but also other left parties became critical about it. This Nandigram imbroglio

cornered the CPI(M) and the overall disapproval to the Left Front is reflected through the Panchayet, Municipal and Lok Sabha Elections.

Table 5: Opinion on Demand made by Farmers in Singur

	Those engaged in Agricultural related activities	Engaged in other occupations	All
Fully justified	44	38	40
Some what justified	27	30	30
Somewhat unjustified	11	14	13
No opinion	10	09	09
N	335	1,117	1,452

Source: NES 2009 All figure except N are percentages.

Q: I'm going to ask you about few things. Please tell me if you have heard them (If yes) would you say that they are justified or unjustified?

Table 6: Opinion or Role of CPI(M) in Nandigram

	Full justified	Somewhat justified	Somewhat unjustified	Fully unjustified	No. opinion	N
Congress	09	15	22	40	14	131
Left Front	23	29	18	12	18	457

Source: NES 2009: All figures except N are percentages of those who know about the role of CPI(M)

Q: I am going to ask you about a few things, please tell me if you have heard of them (If you) would you say that they are justified or unjustified?

It is to be noted that CPI(M) implicate a tacit understanding between AITC and CPI(Maoist) to dislodge the Left rule in West Bengal and to do so the AITC allowed the CPI(Maoist) to train the activists and also to take part actively to disturb the current political dispensation. The allegation may be politically motivated; but the accusation can not be ignored absolutely. The movement and nature of resistance and sudden increase in political casualty, the statements of the top Maoist leaders in captivity and out side the jail certainly ensures the nexus between the All

India Trinamool Congress and Maoist in Nandigram and elsewhere in West Bengal in recent years.

Political Issues

There are some definite political issues which jeopardized the prospect of the left rule in West Bengal. According to Professor Jyotiprasad Chatterjee and Professor Suprio Basu, the Left Front leaders have identified two grey area for the electoral debacle of the left.

First, there was an overall wave in favour of INC-led UPA, the electorates of West Bengal was no exception. They were also influenced by this popular wave.

Second reason is more viable which they say the alliance between INC and ATMC could easily surmount the votes received by the left parties.

Professor Chatterjee and Professor Basu pointed out that the electorates of West Bengal, specially, 32% voted in favour of INC and TMC combined force on the basis of the work done by CPI(M) led Left Front Government. Only 20% voters analyzed the work of UPA government. Moreover, 10% decline in voting overage shown the popularity of the Left Front Government is waning steadfastly.

Shree Goutam Deb, a central committee member of the CPI(M) and a Cabinet Minister, told categorically in recent times in the public meetings, Press and Television interviews that the CPI(M) and Left Front was not defeated by INC-TMC combined force but by their own misdeeds, pitfalls and decisional and judgement shortcomings. Professor Chatterjee and Basu identified a few, viz., non-implementation of NREGA; wide spread of nepotisms in preparing an appropriate and impartial BPL list, corrupt practices of the ration shop dealers. Moreover, the fear of loosing cultivable land pertinently among the rural Muslim population and high handedness and attitudinal problem of some left leaders at the rank and file. The comparative study of NES 2009 and Election Stud 2006 reveals the 'shrinkage' of the popularity of Buddhadeb Bhattacharya as a Chief

Minister by 16%. The interesting fact is that this waning popularity of Shree Bhattacharya has not benefited Miss Mamata Banerjee.

Table 7: CM choice in West Bengal (2006 and 2009) in %

CM Choide	2006	2009
Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee	46	30
Mamata Banerjee	24	19
Pranab Mukherjee	05	05
Other leaders	14	21
Don't know/ No opinion	11	24

Source: CSDS NES 2009 and West Bengal Assembly Election Study 2006.

Q: Who would you prefer as the Chief Minister of West Bengal?

The statistics show that 36% of West Bengal electorates support the left rule in West Bengal even after the massive defeat of Left Front in the Lok Sabha Election 2009. "It is indeed interesting to note that even after 32 years of uninterrupted rule a majority of the electorate in West Bengal do not associate the Left Front Government with good governance"³⁴.

It is said that capitalizing on the weaknesses of the opposition parties 'the government and the ruling party are increasingly becoming indifferent to the common people of West Bengal'³⁵. The space and liberty of the people gradually becoming the subject matter of the political authority. The encroachment of liberty of the civil society revealed through the expression of a section of intelligentsia after the Singur, Nandigram and Rizwanur episodes about the commitment and responsibilities of a government in a democratic polity.

The successful implementation of the land reform programme allowed the leftists in West Bengal to get a strong hold in rural areas: ensured overall economic upliftment of the rural people and a long rule. But the hasty implementation of industrialization drive definitely created a fear-psychosis among the peasantry which ultimately back fired to the leftist bastion of rural Bengal. The leftists in Bengal have miserably failed to take the peasantry in their confidence with the question of

industrialization and their future prospects. "Instead, the industrialization drive of the Left Front, probably, has acted as an impediment against this"³⁶.

Therefore, the catchy slogan of AITMC "MAA, MATI, MANUS" (Mother, Land and the People) once used by Begam Khalejda Zia in Bangladesh as electoral slogan, created by late Bhairov Bhattacharya, a noted 'YATRA' script writer is about to dislodge the left Front government primarily from their rural bastions and finally from the political dispensation.

Professor Chatterjee and Basu wrote with a correct note: "The victory of the AITC in this sense reminds the people of West Bengal about those days in West Bengal in 1977 when the Left Front had assumed power in a similar way, depending on widespread support of the rural populace. The electorate has shift the mantle from the Left Front to the AITC. They have ultimately found an alternative to the Left Front in the form of AITC ... This is very much in tune with the heritage of peasant movement in West Bengal. Such a mandate, hence, is not a fundamental change in the direction of politics in West Bengal"³⁷

It is a fact that AITMC is a break away fraction of INC. It is also a fact that AITMC has an electoral alliance with INC. But the approach of INC. with regard to India's economic development and industrialization is very different from the AITMC.

The task of Shree Kapil Sibal, the HRD Minster of the Union Government is to direct the education endeavour in such a way which will suit with the tune of economic policy of the Central Government of India.

With the installation of UPA-2 Government there had been the race among UPA ministers to announce agendas. The concept of a 100-day target in democracies in 'modern times can be traced back during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency in the U.S.A. to revive a shrunken tattered economy as an effect of 'Wall Street Debacle'. The 100-day agenda, the idea, came into the being in 1933.

Fifteen laws that combined to form President Roosevelt's "new Deal" can be compared with this New Deal is passed in the first 100 days and the American revival from the great depression. It was a trend setting example and ever since American Presidents are evaluated for their performance in the first 100 days of their tenure in the office.

In India, the concept of 100-day target was first announced by H.H. Deva Gowda in 1996 and then it was continued by I.K. Gujral, NDA-1 and NDA-2 1998 and 1999 respectively.

There are pros and cons about the implementation of the concept of 100-day agenda. Jairam Ramesh, the Union Environment Minister distanced himself from the controversial comment. "There are lots of potentially radical and interesting proposals.... But some of them lack detail and we should not take the 100-day target too literally. After all, the government takes in own time to work", said Pratap Bhanu Mehta, President of the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi.

Professor Rajeev Gowda of Public Policy at IIM Bangalore praised the 100-day proposal with a tint of caution. In his opinion: "From day one, this government has indicated it wants to follow perform or perish policy. This is good sign for the nation. And given high targets, even if half the 100-day promises are accomplished, it would prove remarkable". However, he warned: "You can not rush into major reforms in sectors like education without adequate consultations and debates"³⁸.

Mr. Kapil Sibal, the Union HRD Minister, has announced his plans and programmes of 100-day agenda on June 25, 2009.

"Unveiling his 100-day plan, HRD Minister Mr. Kapil Sibal today said: "By a single board, a student can decide which university he wants to go"³⁹. Broadly speaking Mr. Sibal's targets areas are:

- (1) Class 10 Board Examination to be scrapped, and an evaluation system set up based on grades;
- (2) Single board to hold a uniform examination across the country;
- (3) CBSE to be first board to introduce grading system in India;

- (4) Steps to enact the Right to Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill;
- (5) National Literacy Mission to focus on female literacy;
- (6) To develop All India Madrassa Board;
- (7) To improve the Municipality run schools by adopting a joint venture.

Again in the field of Higher Education:

- (1) To bring U.G.C. and M.C.I. etc. under the same roof;
- (2) To introduce law to prevent capitation free and ragging;
- (3) To set conditions to get recommendation to start new academic institutions;
- (4) To establish Tribunal to mitigate agony and anguish among students, teaching and non-teaching staff;
- (5) The government is set to launch an interest subsidy scheme for economically disadvantageous students;
- (6) To stop 'Brain-Drain' initiative will be taken to bring back meritorious 'NRIs' to 'Brain-gain';
- (7) To develop the minorities through imparting education and finally
- (8) To spread Distance education.

There is no doubt about the purpose, mission and vision of education as projected by the HRD Minister of the Union Government of India, Mr. Kapil Sibal. But criticism is also immense.

Firstly, the former school education Minister of West Bengal Mr. Partha Dey commented: "It is an effort to centralize education, which we protest. And Board Examination is necessary at the end of the Class 10. The Higher Education Minister Mr. Sudarshan Roychoudhury and Mr. Abdus Sattar, the Minister for Madrassa education are also holding the same view. For Mr. Sudirshan Roychoudhury, at the School level education language, social history etc. play a vital role. The education

under a single board these conditions will not be fulfilled. Moreover, how can a central minister talk so much about education without consulting with the education ministers of the states, since, education is the concurrent subject as per the constitution. Mr. Abdus Satter told that Central Government may raise the question about the necessity of so many federal states in India, one day. For Mr. Kanti Biswas, the Former Education Minister, lack of proper evaluation of class students will jeopardize the teaching-learning method. Their basic foundation of knowledge will remain ever immature⁴⁰.

Like China our country that is India is ready for a massive reformation. But China has taken the stock of their situation – socio, economic and political. Let us take the stock of our socio-economic and political situation.

At the penultimate moment of our freedom (14th August, 1947 – midnight), the inaugural “Bande Mataram – Sujalang, Sufalong, Malayaja – Sheetalang” it was a happy combination of two icons of India, composed by Sree. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and its musical notation by Shree Rabindranath Tagore, was performed by Smt. Sucheta Kripaleni. The hoisted national flag of that historic programme was handed over to Smt. Sarojini Naidu. The prominent women were felicitated this way at this historic juncture of India. Mrs. Indira Gandhi was elected the Prime Minister of India twice and ruled the country for 15 years and 11 months. Smt. Pratibha Devi Patil, a distinguished lady is our President. Kumari Mayabati, Kumari Mamata Banerjee and Kumari Jayalalitha are three prominent lady Chief Ministers of three states.

Several women became the Governor of the States. But in the list of total Development for Women Index among the 130 countries, the India's position is 116th again in the Man-Woman Deprivation Index among 130 countries India's position is 113th. It is a matter of great shame, the number of women trafficking is highest in India in the world.

One the other hand, from the point of view of Human Development Index among the 179 countries, last year India's position was 128th. This

year it came down a few more slots and at present India's position is 132. In the Poverty Index among the 94 developing countries India's position is 53rd. Our consolation is that the conditions of 41 countries are more deplorable than us. In the World Deprivation Index among the 119 countries India's position is 96th. In the World Hungry Index among 88 countries India stand at the 66th position.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dreamt of a resurgent educationally illustrious India. In the Educational Development Index among 129 countries the position of India is 105th. 82% of the adults in the world are literate. In case of India it is 61%. Again, 77% of the adult women of the world are literate, whereas, India's average is 48%. 17% of the adult women of the world are literate, whereas, India's average is 48%. 17% of the total world population lives in India. And 34.7% of the total illiterates of the world are Indians. The world spends 14% of the government budget for the spread of education and development. India spends 11%. From the point of view of World Health Index India's position is 171 among 175 countries. Furthermore, 33% of the total unemployed youth of the world are living in India.

The child death rate in India is 54 out of one thousand. The world infant death rate is 47 the number of millionaire increased in 2008 by 7% in the world. 4% has been increased in the U.S.A.; 2% in the U.G. and surprisingly in India it has increased by 23%. Among the top-most 8 richest families of the world, 4 richest families are in India. IN the "Transparency International Report - 2007 among the most corrupt countries of the world, India's position is 74th. In the Research paper of Tulsi Swami about Black Money laundering and Swiss Bank reveals that Indians have deposited highest amount of black money in Switzerland. According to that report Indians so far deposited 1,45,6000 crores in the Swiss Bank.

In the U.N.O. Commission for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Report India has witnessed highest number of racial discrimination and violence. Finally, according to the Economic Survey -

2008-09 report in india's per capital foreign debt is Rs. 12,000⁴¹. At the outset Mr. Kapil Sibal's effort to revamp the Indian education system naturally comes under scathing attack from different quarters.

Mr. Indranath Guha, the former founding Principal of Saurth-Point School, Kolkata, is literally anxious about the two proposals of Mr. Kapil Sibal, viz., the decision of CBSE to make class 10 examination optional and secondly, the implementation of 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009 for the children with the age group of 6-14. His complain that Mr. Sibal did not consult the teachers about this proposal which is sheerly undemocratic.

Secondly, this change will ultimately force the other boards to follow the same path.

Thirdly, syllabuses of the school children are often prepared by the college and university Professor. They do not have much idea of School Education or ground reality that a student faces in the class-room environment.

Fourthly, Mr. Indranath Guha was happy initially thinking about the radical proposal taken by Mr. Sibal to detached learning process from the fobia of examination and complex character of pass and fail.

But Mr. Guha being an educationist became really anxious when he would come to know the sources of Mr. Sibal's inspiration for change. Mr. kapil Sibal was influenced by a Rhyme. The four lines of the Rhyme reads: - create the space / for me to run / let learning be / a lot of fun.

For Mr. Indranath Guha 'learning should be made interesting' and 'learning should be fun' are diametrically two opposite ideas. Thus he suggested that group of people who believes that examination is merely a pressure upon the students and leads to 'trunma'; leads to two basic points: firstly, it is a well accepted concept that 1% innate ability + 99% honest effort = success. Achievement demands intelligence and perseverance. There is no short cut route to success. The ladder of 'fun' may look bright and beautiful but not strong and stout. It is not a dependable means for achiever to reach the coveted height.

Secondly, if evaluation is not a yard-stick then why the government and private houses are not accepting any graduates for any kind of job. What is the need to conduct Joint Entrance, WBCS, IAS Examination? According to Mr. Indranath Guha the whole process will create the problem of mediocrity which is already looming large in our country.

Finally, the suggestion of the veteran educationist is that 'life itself is a great examination. Every moment we are facing new challenges. We just can not escape. The school examination is the rehearsal for the unknown life situations'⁴².

Ms. Subarna Bhattacharyaya wrote in the same note: "In India where competitive examination is the route to grab a job; elimination of examination at the school level may lead to create new phenomena and plethora of problems. Now the pertinent question is: Is it the right time to take such a drastic measure to bring change? Optionalisation of examination will certainly not radicalize the education system of our country. Rather it demands insight in retrospect to understand the burning issues in our existing education system and their immediate solutions. The imminent changes are solicited to replace old and hackneyed syllabus, methods of evaluation, improved infrastructure for better education etc. to bring the changes suggested by Mr. Sibal the consent and participation of student, guardian and teacher fraternity. Trading in different ways may harm ultimately the student body"⁴³.

We have mentioned it already the conflict and compromise; rejection and acceptance are the general principles of governance for survival and existence in a parliamentary form of liberal democracy.

The last parliamentary election was the beginning of the set back for the CPI(M) led Left Front rule in West Bengal. The liquidation of the mass base also a prominent feature of that election result during 2009. This alarming situation and Congress-Trinamool congress alliance at the grass-root level, changed the whole gamut of political equation that West Bengal witnessed for the last 32 years. In recent years CPI(M) literarily

followed the Leninist path: "One step forward; two steps backward" Political analysis highlighted that the hasty decision of the CPI(M) to withdraw support from Congress led UPA-I Government on the issue of 12 nuclear agreement with the USA certainly brightened the chances of BJP to come to power. The people, especially, minority felt insecure. They voted heavily for Congress. After the election Congress formed once again the Government at the Centre and AITMC and DMK with their rejuvenating performance in their respective states supported the UPA-2 government shading off the decade long bitterness close to each other. The CPI(M) strategy was to create distance between these two forces. It was a political compulsion for CPI(M) led Left Front not to protest vehemently the anti-people resolutions taken by the UPA-2 government.

Mr. Asim Chattopadhyay, a former Naxal leader and a political analyst pointed out correctly about this lackadaisical attitude of the leftist in India with regard to Mr. Kapil Sibal's dangerous stand' on education.

"The immature experimentation with the primary, secondary and higher education the people of the state has seen several times. And they were severely criticized for it time and again by the people of the state. But with regard to the 'Education Bill on Higher Education' placed in the Parliament by Mr. Sibal ... for the rejuvenation and excellence of the higher education, the Bill will not only spoil and disrupt the higher education sector; but also the future of 21,000 colleges and many universities will be bleak, it will also destroy the very concept of autonomy of the educational institutions, and it will destroy the spirit of constitutionalism but no one is bothered about it"⁴⁴.

Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay tried to analyse the motive of Mr. Kapil Sibal. For him this changed plan is not the result of accidental 'ripples of brain'. It is the resultant of long process keeping in space with globalization. The basis of this endeavour began with Sam Pitroda's concept of 'knowledge commission' during 2005-2009. Later on Yashpal Committee Report of 2008-2009 gave the lip service on autonomy of

education but proposed to form National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHIR). "This is not a surprise spurt of idea but a well planned manoeuvre to centralize the educational endeavour"⁴⁵.

There are three organs of government, viz., University Grants Commission (UGC) since 1957, All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) since 1957 and National Council for Teacher' Education since 1993. Till date these constitutional statutory organs are taking care of higher education. But according to Mr. Sibal's proposal NCHIR will look after the affairs of education and even India Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) will come under its umbrella. More or less 21,000 academic institutes will work under NCHIR.

Secondly, the relevance and, authority and autonomy will take back seat for the universities. The universities and institutes will confer degrees and diplomas as an agent of the NCHIR. The subjects like university recognition and approval will be meaningless. In the present situation the authority of the State Assembly and Lok Sabha will stand cancelled and the authorization of NCHIR will be a necessary condition.

Thirdly, the fate of 21,000 academic institutes of higher learning will be controlled by a super-powerful and highly centralized commission comprising - a chairman, three part time members, whose role will be automatically minimal'. These members will be appointed by the president of India for five years. The rank of these members will be of the same status enjoyed by the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. These 'Four Members' will solely decide the future of Indian education.

Fourthly, to streamline the academic standard of the academic institutions according to the set yard-stick of the NCHIR a National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Education will be established. This statutory body will evaluate the academic institutions and accredited certificates have to be acquired by the institutes on the basis of their infrastructure, teaching staff and non-teaching staff,

administration, syllabus, student admission, evaluation system and even the administrative set up.

Sixth, a colossal collegium comprising of renowned teachers of inside and outside the country will be elected for a year to advise the NCHIR. This short-span of their tenure will be spent at best to elect the members and Vice-Chancellors.

Seventh, the NCHIR will submit the report to the governor of the state about the prospect of education in the state. The Governor will be liable to place that report in the State Assembly himself.

According to Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay this over centralization will establish an Elitist form of education. Out of 21,000 institutions of higher education only 1,500 will be built up as Centre of Excellence. On the financial matter the minister maintained stark silence about the other not so fortunate academic institutes. "This will lead to a catastrophe in the field of higher education. Higher Education will be dearer Mr. Sibal is dreaming to establish supreme elitist institutions like MIT, Lincon Lab and this 1,500 privilege institutions will play the lead role. He has forgotten that quantity ensures quality – it an axiomatic truth. The rate of admission in higher education in U.S.A. is 70% whereas in India the rate is meager 12%. In the newly adopted system it will encroach this possibility to take part in the higher education. The process of 'Brain Gain' by means of negative 'Brain Drain' will be a distant dream and ultimately it will culminate in 'Brain Death'⁴⁶.

Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay is much concerned about the political implication of this major decision taken by the HRD minister. For him, the diversity of India rightly put in the state list. Later on curbing the power of the state after much debate the subject like education was placed in the concurrent list. "Now it is noticed that Mr. Sibal's plan on education wants to place it in the Central list. The constitution of the country does not permit it. According to the norms and decorum of the constitution HRD ministry cannot directly hand over the report on education to the Governor of the states, nor can it pass direction to the

Governor to place it in the State Assemblies. Thus, these statements are anti-constitutional. Therefore, without amending the constitution the Union Government can not place the subject like education in the central list"⁴⁷.

To justify his argument about the hasty move on educational reform and revamping by the HRD Minister Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay wrote. "The question is why Mr. Sibal is so keen about it? There are two reasons behind this move, one is economic reason and other reason is political. The economic reason is, following the principles of Globalization, to open up a huge market of education which amount scintillating \$6.5 billion (650 crores) for the foreign education merchants"⁴⁸.

The Union Cabinet has reportedly passed a version of the Foreign Educational Institution (Regulation of Entry and operation) Bill. The draft Foreign Educational Institutions Bill suggests that the process is one of creating a window for foreign players and then changing the rule in their favour.

Mr. C.P. Chandrasekhar expressed areas of concern about the quality of education provided by these foreign institutes. The possibility of charging high fees which will allow for commercial provision of educational services by foreigners and the repatriation of surpluses or profits earned through such activity.

He has reasoned the case for a 'freer entry' for private domestic institutions and foreign private and public institutions because in India the facilities for higher education are 'woefully inadequate'. In comparison with other Asian countries in India among the people within the 18-24 age groups getting access to higher education is almost half, i.e. half the 15 per cent. Even where facilities are available, quality is uneven.

Mr. P.C. Chandrashekar pointed out that though the target of the nation is to spend 1.5 per cent of GDP for education but our governments are spending $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for the last two decades. His suggestion,

emphasis must be on ever increasing public spending and enrolment with adequate allocation for education. His suggestion, this can be effectively implemented 'since India has the requisite institutional framework. We have to ensure the quality of our education. Private entry is not a guarantee for quality education.

Mr. Chandrashekar unlike Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay gave any reason behind encouraging private domestic and foreign entry in Indian education scenario. But he said univocally that if foreign institutions are to be allowed they should be asked to work within the stipulated framework of regulation other wise with foreign tag they may fool the poor Indian student financially and qualitatively.

Mr. Chandrashekar has rightly pointed out that under the present foreign investment law of the country allow for commercial provision of educational services by foreigners and 'the repatriation of surpluses i.e., profits earned through such activity. His suggestion: Surplus can be generated by means of fees charged, but profits to be 'ploughed back' against to the institution. This private sector, both domestic and foreign, has produced a mixed result of a few good and many extremely bad institutions. If not all, many of these institutions are profiteering legally and otherwise, and distributing among their various promoters.

Although the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill seeks to ensure 'proper pedigree, investment of adequate resource, quality faculty, provide adequate facilities, reinvestment of the profit to the institution but kept silent about the fees structure imposed upon the students, setting parameters for compensation for faculty and impose demands for reservation of seats for disadvantaged sections of the society. Certainly according to Mr. P.C. Chandrashekar the basic principle of egalitarianism and 'demand supply' gap will get a set back and principles of equality will take a back seat.

Secondly, according to Mr. Chandrashekar too much stringent regulations will certainly discourage the foreign institutions to anchor in our country. Thus the subvert clause of the Bill enabled the advisory

board to waive or exempt any 'foreign provider' if they are 'a not-for-profit body'. Instead of providing degrees and diplomas these foreign institutions can only run 'Certificate Courses'. Hence, his conclusion: This Act is unlikely to bring high-quality education into the country or 'poor-quality out. Thus, the motivation of the Bill is unclear!

Now the third proposition will rise from the two points that we have discussed. For Mr. P.C. Chandrashekar, this Bill is just the thin end of the wedge. The stringent measures of the government naturally make the foreign and domestic investors of education disinterested to invest in India. Thus Mr. Chandrashekar suspects that government will use that 'failure' to 'dilute' the law even further and provide for profit and its repatriation by foreign operators. Mr. Chandrashekar cited a Commerce Ministry paper where negotiations were asked from foreign investors to build support for Indian education under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). "The paper, while inviting opinions on a host of issues, was inclined to offer foreign educational providers significant concessions that would facilitate their participation in Indian education⁴⁹.

To detect the political implication of the present manoeuvre of the HRD Ministry of the Union Government of India, according to Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay, is in commensurate with the strategic agreement between the U.S.A. and India. The economic partnership between these two countries demands the expansion of higher education and human development. Thus, the higher education and research in India will be directed by the guidelines of the United State of America. This is sheer surrender of our education system and lease out of Mr. Kapil Sibal and Dr. Manmohun Singh to U.S.A.

For an active Leftist political activist like Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay it is high time to battle against the subversive forces and intensions to sale out Indian education to foreign hands. But he is scared that the turbulent leftists of India, specially, West Bengal tamed because of their defeat to AITMC in the last Lok Sabha election in 2009. Their protest

against Indo U.S. Atomic Agreement and withdraw from UPA-I government back fired in the form of electoral debacle. Now their effort to create schism between the INC and AITMC may get spoiled if they register their protest against the leasing out of education to foreign educational providers.

Therefore, it is the assertion of Mr. Ashim Chattopadhyay that 'our education system can not be compared with beautiful lotus garden. But the assumption is that the existing plantain grove can be destroyed by Mr. Kapil Sibal'⁵⁰.

Mr. Basab Choudhury analysed the aspect of Mr. Kapil Sibal's proposal from different point of view. He has suggested that final decision should be taken after much debate, analysis and certainly unanimously. He has stressed on the relevance of examination system particularly in Education system.

He has grouped the questions into three divisions, viz., 'Prognosis' or 'Prognostic Type Test' usually used in Joint Entrance Tests to detect the inner ability to cope with the subjects, Medical or Engineering. The teachers are making an assessment of the student through this type of tests.

The test and examination generally takes place in schools and colleges are called 'Diagnostic' or 'Diagnostic Type Tests'. These tests help the teachers to understand the area a student could not cope with. Where he needs special attention needs training. The Annual Examination is the method of assessing the knowledge potential of students and grades them according to the assessment.

For Mr. Basab Choudhury these subtle differences between prognosis, diagnosis and assessment should get due importance which is sometimes not even followed in Joint Entrance Tests. The motif points of different examinations are different so the pattern of questions asked should also be different.

Once again the quality of students in good schools like R.K. Mission Schools and South Point School are more or less of the same

standard, well equipped, good infrastructure, quality teachers and assessment methods are of same standard. Thus, board examinations can be waived in these types of schools. But schools with poor infrastructure, poorly equipped, student teachers ratio not maintained scientifically for Mr. Choudhury fear of examination is eventually a boon for the students. These board examinations are preparing them for future. The future of majority Indians are full of unpredictable happenings. Class X board examination is the first road to the unseen world to pick and choose: Survival of the fittest. This can be a great motivator for the student. "The abolition of Secondary level examination will minimize the motivation of the student and the standard of education will be severely affected. Before introducing new education policy all these aspects should be kept in our mind ... Replacing memory work the students should be taught how to think, continuous evaluation and surprise tests should be more and more encouraged to prepare the young minds for the unseen examinations of lives. The present education system teaches the young learners to score high marks but does not teach the technique of survival with due prestige in the battle field of real life ... I support the concept of continuous assessment and surprise tests. But in Indian condition it is not possible. In villages, a student of a school helps his father during rainy season to sow paddy. The girl, a student of a school carries meal for her father and brother to the field. It is not conducive to assess their performance or they may be more surprised facing the surprise tests and this will lead to increase school drop-out cases...It is not right time to abolish Class X board examination. Rather reform the assessment system so that children can be focused to the challenges of live and will develop a strong mentality that they can think emphatically: I can also do"⁵¹.

The minority issue in recent years has sensitized the whole Indian society. A report writes: "Kapil Sibal, the country's officials to prepare a roadmap for the urgent implementation of key initiatives promised to minorities... The return of minority votes from regional parties back to

the Congress is considered by many analysts a key reason for the party's haul of 206 seats in the Lok Sabha Elections⁵².

It should be remembered that the UPA-I had set up a committee under the aegis of former Delhi High Court Chief Justice Rajinder Sachar to study the State of Muslims in education, health, employment and other social and economic indicators.

The Sachar Committee report gave us some startling revelations of the deplorable condition of Muslims in education. Muslim students spend almost a year less in school than the national average.

One in every four Muslim children between the age group of 6 and 14 never goes to school or drops out before completing standard 10.

Less than four in every hundred Muslims are graduates or hold diplomas. It should be noted that based on the Sachar Committee's recommendations to uplift the socio-economic conditions of Muslims, the Prime Minister had drafted a 15-point programme of action.

The action plan includes good many initiatives in education, revolving around focusing on districts and blocks with higher than average Muslim population.

Although, Arjun Singh, Sibal's predecessor, started acting on several initiatives outlined in the 15-point programme, most are yet to be implemented.

Mr. Sibal's urgency is the urgency of the Prime Minister. An Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) was recommended by the Sachar panel to address grievances of backward communities.

It is interesting to note that "the panel also recommended a 'diversity index' to award extra points most effectively like a golf handicap – to backward community members applying for jobs or education"⁵³.

Another pending aspect of Sachar panel proposition is to scrutinize school textbooks for communal content. The University Grants Commission is yet to implement a recommendation to link financial allocations of higher educational institutions to the diversity in their

student populations. Moreover, Mr. Sibal not ready to abrogate policies of the previous government, but if any change is needed, that can always be accommodated.

“Sibal called recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission “pivotal” to transform India into a knowledge economy, hinting a shift from his predecessor’s public opposition to the panel under Sam Pitroda”⁵⁴. But it is worthy to mention that Mr. Sibal stated that “all recommendations of the NKC need not be implemented”⁵⁵.

According to Rajinder Sachar Commission Report: In the State of West Bengal the representation of the Muslim population in education and jobs is very meager: 2.4 per cent which is much less than other states of Indian federation including Gujarat. This report put the Left Front Government in back foot. Hence, the CPI(M) led leftist government declared instantly to identify the backward among Muslims following the models of other states

The Supreme Court of India has suggested that 4 per cent seats can be reserved exclusively for in the higher education for the backward Muslim population.

In 2007, the Ranganathan Committee recommended reservation for the backward Muslims and Christians in India. But this recommendation remained unnoticed. But after the publication of the Sachar Committee Report to get back the minority support base, the CPI(M) Central Committee placed a demand to include both the Muslim and Christian communities, specially, the backward among them to bring under the fold of reservation. This pioneering demand was placed by the CPI(M) to the Prime Minister Dr. Mammohan Singh. The verdict of Supreme Court of India suggests that reservation is possible even upto 49%.

Since the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi in India 33% seats and jobs are reserved for the SC/ST and OBCs. Among them 7% are backward Hindus. Thus more 16 per cent seats and jobs can be reserved following the laws of the country.

In West Bengal 26 per cent of the population are Muslims. Among them 12 per cent are backward. They are scattered all over the southern part of West Bengal. Apart from these districts of West Bengal Muslims are densely populated in the districts of Malda, Murshidabad and North Dinajpur of West Bengal.

To get back the lost support of the disgruntled Muslim community in West Bengal the CPI(M) led State Government ensured 10 per cent reservation in jobs and educational institutes of higher studies.

In this respect the former Minister of the Department of the Development of Backward Communities, Mr. Jogesh Barman had informed: "Now the students belonging to the backward communities were getting privilege of reservation at the graduation level: but now both the backward population of Hindus and Muslims will get the privilege of reservation at the post graduation level too"⁵⁶.

The whole domain of reservation concept came under scanner. Professor Andre Beteille, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, and National Research Professor, raised question about rights, rather 'language of right'. "... the word 'right' has acquired a more capacious and flexible meaning than is ordinarily given to it by the constitution and the law. It is becoming more a matter of politics than law, an instrument of political combat more than legal justification The shift from the language of policies to the language of rights may be seen in number of fields. The first relates to the specific field of elementary education, and second to the broader, and ill-defined, field named 'development'⁵⁷.

For Professor Andre Betelkille: "The constitution of 1950 made free and compulsory education of all children till the age 14 a directive principle of state policy ... But it is also evident that the government did not act with the will and the determination needed to meet the objective in any significant way. They dragged its feet and India fell behind while other countries moved ahead"⁵⁸.

Thus pointing out about the new rights and the growth of identity politics Professor Andre Beteille has taken the path of sarcasm and word of caution to the policy and right makers with this language: "It has been said that India is the country with the most rights and the fewest sanctions The growth of identity politics has given a new turn to the language of rights and greatly extended its appeal It is undeniable that India is a land of deep and pervasive inequalities. There are not only inequalities between individuals and households but also disparities among communities. These disparities can not be eliminated at one stroke..."⁵⁹.

Furthermore, Professor Andre Beteille suggested with a more of caution: "They can not be used for galvanizing the masses or mobilizaing electoral support. There is something stirring in the language of rights that appeals to demagogues of every political presentation ... The use of the language of rights as an instrument of identity politics raises the temperature of public debate ... Nothing is easier than to destroy trust among communities, and nothing more difficult than to create it. It can not be said that we are to day at the high watermark of trust among communities. The champions of more rights for disadvantaged castes and communities must ask whether their actions are likely to weaken or strengthen social prejudice"⁶⁰.

There is another kind of speculation about the feasibility of Right to Education Act. Pankaj S Jain and Ravindra H Dhalakia argue that even an allocation of 6% of the gross domestic product to the educations budget would not be sufficient to fund universal school education until the very distant future if the government school system is used as the only instrument. It is their suggestion that the only way to meet the Right to Education obligation is to rely on low cost private schools as a significant instrument of the government education policy on the contrary, the proposed RTE Bill introduces provisions that would oppose low cost private schools. So they feel, "the legislation of RTE needs to be modified and framed with specific provisions for private - public partnership"⁶¹.

Pankaj S Jain and Ravindra R Dholakia estimated the RTE from various aspects related to costing. In their opinion: "Since policy decisions can be taken only with a medium to long-term perspective, we estimate all these parameters with five-years intervals over 2006-21, using the data from the most reliable available source"⁶².

Table 1: Budged available (at 2006 prices) per child with Education Budget at 6% GDP

Year	Total estimated population in India (in 1000)	Population in 5 to 9 year age group (%)	Population in 10-14 year age group	Total No. of Children in 5-14 year age group	GDP (Rs. In Crore) with 9% pa real growth	Education Budget available/ child/ year in R. #2	Education Fund available / child / year in Rs. (80% coverage) #3
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2006	1121914	10.72	11.01	243792	3580000	5674	7342
2011	1201810	9.52	9.9 4	233872	5558920	9508	11885
2016	1277770	8.9	8.9	227443	8553087	15042	18803
2021	1347742	8.4	8.4	226421	13159984	23249	29061

#1: GDP growth is considered on actual basis till 2006-07 and then @ 9% p.a.

2: Total School Education budget is taken as = 2/3rd of 6% of GDP (while 1/3rd is left for higher school and university education) which is divided by total number of children 5-14 age group and assuming 100% coverage of children.

3: This column gives budget per child by assuming that only 80% children would be covered with full budgetary support of 6% GDP.

"Indiastat.com tables on Indian population readily provide population projection by broad age groups ... It is clear from the table that as per the projections of Indiastat.com, the absolute population of children in the school going age-group of 6-15 years is sharply falling from 244 million in the year 2006 to 234 million in the year 2011 to 226 million in the year 2021"⁶³.

The assertion of Jain and Dholakia is that the quantum of money will be less if the number of children (6-15 age-group) turns out to be more, and hence the salary could be paid to each teacher would be less than the estimation made in section 3.

Furthermore, the whole estimation is based on 2006 prices. Thus, all inflation –related components of the pay-package of the school teachers like dearness and other allowances can be ignored.

Therefore, their conclusion: “We need to recognize that currently India is far from achieving universal school-education and that the higher education at present remains substantially subsidized and not privatized. Currently, this proportion in India is around 60% over years, we can expect these conditions to change in such a way that about 2/3 of the total budget on education sector would be spent on school education”. Supporting the causes in favour of PPP model of education they have set the chart of ‘Meeting Minimalist Education Goals’.

Table 2: A Feasible Scenario for Meeting Minimalist Education Goals

Year	Children in Govt. Schools (%)	Children in PPP Schools (%)	Children in Govt. Funded School (%)	Pupil/ Teacher Ration in Govt. Schools	Cost/ Child in Govt. School	Cost/ Child in PPP School	School Education Budget (Rs. Crore)	Education Budget as % GDP	Share of School Education Budget for PPP
2006	29	10	39	40	18575	3600	140104	602	626
2011	34	20	54	30	24767	4376	217408	602	941
2016	43	20	63	30	24767	5316	266419	479	908
2021	68	20	88	30	24767	6465	410607	480	713

***Note:** PPP stands for Public-Private Partnership.

To justify the case for PPP model of education in Indian scenario the Jain-Dhalakia projected the tentative salary structure. The structure will denote that ‘under all reasonable scenarios, and maximal favourable assumptions, the feasible salary that can be paid to school teachers remains substantially less than the recommendations of the 6th pay commission. Meeting the goal of universal schooling of all of India’s children under an education budget of 6% of GDP is, therefore, not possible if all school education is through government schools and all teachers are to be paid salary as recommended by the 6th pay commission’⁶⁴.

Below is provided the Table to assess and understand the allocation of money to pay the primary and secondary school teachers. Jain and Dhalakia justified their assertion with this elaborate disposition. The logic can not be ignored but ensuring the equal payment of salary to private schools, colleges and universities demands a solid mechanism for education and good governance.

Table 3A: Feasible Monthly Salary for Primary and Secondary School Teachers (with 100% children coverage and average student teacher ratio of 30:1, is Rs. per month).

Year	Children in Govt. Schools (%)	Children in PPP Schools (%)	Children in Govt. Funded School (%)	Pupil/Teacher Ration in Govt. Schools	Cost/Child in Govt. School	Cost/Child in PPP School	School Education Budget (Rs. Crore)	Education Budget as % GDP
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2006	5874	9545	6818	3788	3443	13042	4132	15996
2011	9508	14045	19032	5574	5067	13042	6080	15996
2016	15042	22221	15872	8818	8016	13042	9620	15996
2021	23249	34345	24532	13629	12390	13042	14868	15996

Table 3B: With 100% children coverage and average Students-Teacher Ratio 40:1

Year	Children in Govt. Schools (%)	Children in PPP Schools (%)	Children in Govt. Funded School (%)	Pupil/Teacher Ration in Govt. Schools	Cost/Child in Govt. School	Cost/Child in PPP School	School Education Budget (Rs. Crore)	Education Budget as % GDP
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2006	5874	9727	9091	5050	4591	13042	5509	15996
2011	9508	20600	14714	8175	7431	13042	8918	15996
2016	15042	32591	23280	12933	11757	13042	14109	15996
2021	23249	50372	35980	19989	18172	13042	21806	15996

Table 3C: With 80% Children coverage and average Student-Teacher Ratio of 30:1

Year	Children in Govt. Schools (%)	Children in PPP Schools (%)	Children in Govt. Funded School (%)	Pupil/Teacher Ration in Govt. Schools	Cost/Child in Govt. School	Cost/Child in PPP School	School Education Budget (Rs. Crore)	Education Budget as % GDP
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2006	7342	11931	8522	4735	4304	13042	5165	15996
2011	11885	19312	13795	7664	6967	13042	8360	15996
2016	188803	30554	21825	12125	11023	13042	13227	15996
2021	29061	47224	33731	18740	17036	13042	20443	15996

Table 3D: With 80% Child coverage and average Student-Teacher Ratio 40:1

Year	Children in Govt. Schools (%)	Children in PPP Schools (%)	Children in Govt. Funded School (%)	Pupil/Teacher Ration in Govt. Schools	Cost/Child in Govt. School	Cost/Child in PPP School	School Education Budget (Rs. Crore)	Education Budget as % GDP
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2006	7342	15908	11363	6313	5739	13042	6887	15996
2011	11885	24750	18393	10218	9289	13042	11147	15996
2016	18803	40739	29099	16166	14697	13042	17636	15996
2021	29061	62965	44975	24986	22715	13042	27258	15996

NB: @ Salary of School Teacher is taken 20% higher than the primary school teacher on an average.

Source of all Table: Teasibility of Implementation of Right to Education Act., IEPW Ignue, 20,2009/Vol.XLIV No.25.

Arguing in favour of PP concept of education Jain and Dholakia have suggested that non-government schools and private schools provides better quality education than the average government schools. Moreover, they think that government funded high school education in India is already in the form of PPP model⁶⁵.

According to the suggestion of Jain and Dholakia the resource mobilization and teacher salary was not explicitly discussed in Saikia Committee (GOI 1997) and Tapas Majumdar Committee (GOI 1999) Reports.

To look for a solution Jain and Dhalokia have opined: "An independent assessment of resource requirement by the Earth Institute – IIMA collaboration had actually projected a large use of low salary teachers for meeting the universal school coverage goal"⁶⁶.

There are two alternative paths to find out solutions about quality control, equity and access to achieve rational educational goals. "It would be challenging task," Jain and Dholakia said that "but solving the problem of India's education sector can not be easy"⁶⁷

Certain arguments of Jain and Dholakia, specially that financial responsibility to implement successfully the Right to Education will be more explicit if we place the main features of the Right to Education 2009 Act.

- Free and compulsory education to all children of India in the 6 to 14 age group;
- No child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until completion of elementary education;
- A child above six years of age has not been admitted in any school or though admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age, then he or she shall, in order to be at par with others, have a right to receive special training, in such manner, and within such time-time, a may be prescribed: Provided further that a child so admitted to elementary education shall be entitled to free education till completion of elementary education even after 14 years.
- Proof of age of admission: on the basis of the provisions of the Birth No child shall be denied admission in a school for lack of age proof.
- A child who completes elementary education shall be awarded a certificate;
- Will apply to all of Indian states except Jammu and Kashmir;
- Provides for 25 per cent reservation for economically disadvantaged communities in admission to class I in private schools;

- Mandates improvement in quality of education;
- School teachers will need adequate professional degree within five years or else will lose job;
- School infrastructure (where there is problem) to be improved in three years, else recognition cancelled;
- Financial burden will be shared between state and central government.

Source: www.education.nic.in/constitutional.

The need for good primary elementary education is a must for quality higher education Professor Ardhendu Chatterjee with regard to Primary Education is equally critical about the policies of the former left front government and also about the HRD Minister Mr. Kapil Sibal. In his words: "Taking the cue from second Pratichi Survey Report and the HRD Minister Kapil Sibal's recommendation on reforms in the wrong spirit, West Bengal's Minister for Primary and Secondary Education, Partha Dey, has said that the State Government would do away with pass-fail system for children aged 14 and below. So we must be ready to witness a further deterioration in primary and secondary education"⁶⁸.

"The Pratichi Education Report – II, Primary Education in West Bengal: Changes and Challenges", reflects about some revealing findings, both positive and negative.

For him: "Amartya Sen is right in thinking that the quality of university education or research can never be improved without good primary or secondary education ... Lets consider the positives first. Although things have changed very little since the first survey was done in the some schools in 2001-02, the report finds that attendance, the success of the mid-day meal system, parents' satisfaction with teaching quality and their children's schooling and the ability of children to read and write "noticeably increased" over the last eight years in our state"⁶⁹.

Professor Chatterjee begs to differ about the expression of the Pratichi Report since it is not an exercise on the part of an 'ineffectual

angel beating in the void his luminous wings in vain but to ensure quality primary education should be constructed rightly.

Attacking openly the left rule and their virtual education policy professor Ardhendu Chatterjee wrote: "Its wrong to think that parents were satisfied with teaching quality and their performance in schools when teaching was not by choice but by chance. Merit and quality became the first casualty during the past three decades to accommodate loyalists of Left parties. Even people in their forties received such kind of favours"⁷⁰.

Thus Professor Ardhendu Chatterjee's contention is very clear: "So parents have all along been scared people masquerading as teachers because they have right connections and get political pampering when in crisis"⁷¹.

During Left regime, sarcastically Professor Chatterjee said: "Also, we have seen the rise of another new crop of teachers who would outshine Mr. Creakle of Dickens's David Copperfield in cruelty. The print and electronic media have been reporting incidents of children being mercilessly beaten or abused by them"⁷². His bold question is: "How did they get away"?⁷³

His sarcasm become more profound when he writes: "Until recently, primary teachers used to contest assembly and local body elections. Thanks to this policy, a new breed of politician - teachers and teacher - politicians took the centre stage Poor teaching leads to poor learning"⁷⁴. This statement and observation is partially correct but when Professor Chatterjee writes: "In rural areas, parents are left with no alternative but to send their wards to government sponsored schools now hardly attract any students except those who hail from very poor families. Middle class and affluent classes, now send their wards to private English medium schools. The Trust's Report is silent on this"⁷⁵. But question arises that each year in madhyamic or secondary level examination thousands of rural and semi-urban children are out showing their abilities to their urban counterparts. Moreover, these well

perform children are also doing very well in their future life. The assessment of an end-product is not very depressing. The presence of mediocrity was always there in every society. But the improved performance of the lower and middle ranking students is an indicator.

Furthermore, Professor Ardhendu Chatterjee argued that Trust's emphasis on 'curriculum overload and homework' remains as 'soft underbelly' of primary education. He argued that the curriculum of state primary schools are much lighter than that in CBSE or ICSE Schools. "Promotion on the basis of Performance in weekly, monthly, half-yearly and annual tests is still a popular practice with ICSE and private English medium CBSE schools"⁷⁶. He doubts that a lighter curriculum will force the students of state-sponsored schools in quandary and they will lag behind others potentially for ever.

But the recent prescribed change in CBSE curriculum and pattern of examination has sparked furore among the parents about the future of their wards. Professor Chatterjee maintained a silent path.

Election Manifesto of the Left Front: The Education Perspective

1. To uplift the standard of living and also to ensure provisions of work of the people living below the poverty line.
2. Sincere effort would be made to upgrade the position of West Bengal in terms of purchasing capacity, Education and Health.
3. To expand the agriculture, Industry and service sectors to ensure the jobs for 40 lakhs poorest of the poor people to increase their income level. Through these the upward journey of development of the state of West Bengal will be ensured.

To achieve the coveted goal of education the Left Front mentioned in its West Bengal Assembly Election - 2011 manifesto that it has a definite plan to expand free universal education upto class - VIII. The government will provide with financial assistance to bring down the school level drop-

out rates by 1%. Initiatives will be taken to ensure Adult Education. Within 5 years term in the phased manner school dress and cycle will be provided to all the girls students belonging to ST, SC and other categories of backward class. Professional and Technical education will get more emphasis to make education job oriented.

For the students who go beyond 5 km to attend plus – II schools the government will ensure for those students fare-free bus services both in private and government buses.

To consolidate the position of Higher Education as well as Engineering Education and to increase the financial assistance to the meritorious but economically weak students of the state⁷⁷.

The Left Front Committee in its pamphlet: "Why we want Left Front Government" published before the Assembly Election – 2011 mentioned in page 12 to justify their all out effort for the backward sections of the society. It writes: "The lion share of the benefits provided by the left front government in the tea gardens of North Bengal are shared by the tribal and Nepali workers of those gardens; the children of these families are being educated. ... The girls of the Muslim communities are getting education. This year more than 2 lakhs of boys and girls from the Muslim communities are writing Madhyamic Examination. The numbers of girl examinees in Secondary examination are more than 1 lakh. Around 600 madrasas are being established by the state government. More than 30 thousands of teachers of both the genders are recruited from the minority section of the state and society. First time in the country following the Ranganathan Commission suggestion on reservation of the economically backward section has been commissioned in this state. As a result 1 crore 72 lakhs of people from among the Muslim community in the state come under under the purview of reservation. It is noteworthy that the total Muslim population in West Bengal is 2.02 crores In the years 1976-77 the total expenditure for Madrasa Education was Rs. 5.60 lakhs. Now it is Rs. 610 crores"⁷⁸. But beside this above statistics there is a different story altogether. "We cannot deny the majority of the Muslims

are in distress. For the first time they have given us a befitting reply, said Abdus Saltar, West Bengal Minority Affairs Minister⁷⁹.

In the article Mr. Rabi Banerjee has highlighted that new school graduate of Murshidabad, Nadia and Malda, traditionally Muslim populated districts of West Bengal, the youth deprived of higher education in a good number are joining Muslim ultra jihadi organizations. It is highly alarming. All these boys are aged between 16 and 20 years.

The article says: "Alep Sheikh; a landless farmer, was one of the many beneficiaries of the land reform movement of the CPI(M). He got five beighas of land. Many Muslims now blame the CPI(M) for spoiling the future of their children. They do not have means to send their children for higher education. Education in state run school is not a guarantee for a decent job"⁸⁰.

The statement of a mother is more revealingly honest: "What would my son learn in the government school? We do not have money to give him private tuition" Seeing their plight (three class X graduate brothers) we decided to send Emajuddin to an Arabic School so that he can become a maulavi and have a steady income. But I don't know all that happened (joining terrorist group), said Safeda. Her husband, Mainul Haque, works in the paddy fields for a pittance⁸¹.

The anger of the Muslim Community, as a result, in Malda, Murshidabad and North Dinajpur was reflected in the elections last year – all the CPI(M) candidates were defeated. "The villagers blamed the party for turning a blind eye to the pathetic condition of the community, which was reflected in the Sachar Committee Report ... Is there a government out there? For the last three decades we have been crossing a river to come to school or to get treatment (Nayachar village, which is located in an island on the Padma river near the Bangladesh border). Imagine a situation we are in! This government did not bother to set up a school or clinic in our village, said Chabi Bibi, who has to cross the river to sell her

vegetables in the market at Shibnagar. She is assisted by her 12 year old son, Maizan Sheikh, who no longer goes to school”⁸².

According to Sachar Committee Report: “While 37.9 per cent Muslim pass class X on an average in Kerala, a left ruled state, it is just 11.9 per cent in West Bengal. Only 2.1 per cent Muslims get government jobs in the state, the lowest in the country”⁸³.

Mr. Abdus Sattar, West Bengal Minority Affairs Minister is of the opinion: “...the state could not ameliorate the sufferings of the 2.5 crore Muslims without the help of the centre. The centre has allotted Rs. 1,00 crore for minority development schemes. Out of that they only send Rs. 524 Crore for minorities. We won't be able to do much unless the centre comes up with help”⁸⁴.

The shortage of popular votes has shaken the foundation of left regime in West Bengal. The Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharyay agreed to spend Rs. 500 crore in 12 worst hit districts of West Bengal where sizable Muslim population exists. He accepted that they are deprived of basic needs. The money would be spent for their all-round development, specially, to set up new schools, modernize madrasas and construct new roads.

With regard to Pachayat and Village Development work 2009 government of West Bengal along with other development statistics highlighted that “The Pachayat and Village Development Department of the Government of West Bengal are assisting 14 lakh 90 thousand students studying in 16110 children's' Education Centres (upto class IV level) and 3 lakh 80 thousand students in 1889 Secondary Education Centre. These students are representing 82 per cent of the marginal and economically and socially backward sections of the state”⁸⁵.

The dwindling support of the Muslim Community in West Bengal put the Left Regime in quandary. According to SK Sadar Nayeem to open up the provision for reservation for the Muslim will create a constitutional Gigsaw. The debate evolves when Dr. Abdus Sattar, Minister of State of Minority Affairs, Government of West Bengal, wants

to single out “backward Muslim” reservation modalities. On the other hand, Union Minority Affairs Minister Salmen Khurshed is of the opinion that reservation for Muslim is a subject matter of constitutional amendment.

Furthermore, SK. Sadar Nayeem argued that CPI(M)’s willingness to put the Muslim communities within the bracket of reservation due to their backwardness then the whole Muslim community will come under the purview of reservation because historically in India Muslims are no match with their counter part i.e., Hindus.

Sk Sadar Nayeem is equally critical about the Union and State Governments in India. He says, “has done anything to right this wrong since partition. The Left Front (read Marxists) which has been ruling West Bengal for the last 32 years has done little to improve the lot of the state’s Muslims in real term despite the communities giving unflinching support to the Left parties all these years. Then what is the *raison deter* behind the CPI(M)’s new found love for Muslims?”⁸⁶

Sk Sadar Nayeem is apprehensive about this reservation of the Muslim because this may create firstly, casteist and secondly, communal feelings which may in turn help BJP in future for their electoral benefits.

According to the Sachar Committee observations there are three layers of Muslims in India – Ashrafs, Ajlafs, and Arzals – call for different types of actions

According Sk Nayeem the Ashrafs, the Muslims of foreign blood and converts from higher castes went to Pakistan immediately after partition leaving behind brothers who were largely illiterate and steeped in poverty. Call them Ajlafs and Arzals. Thus SK Nayeem’s pertinent question is: where are the social hierarchy left after partition among India Muslims?

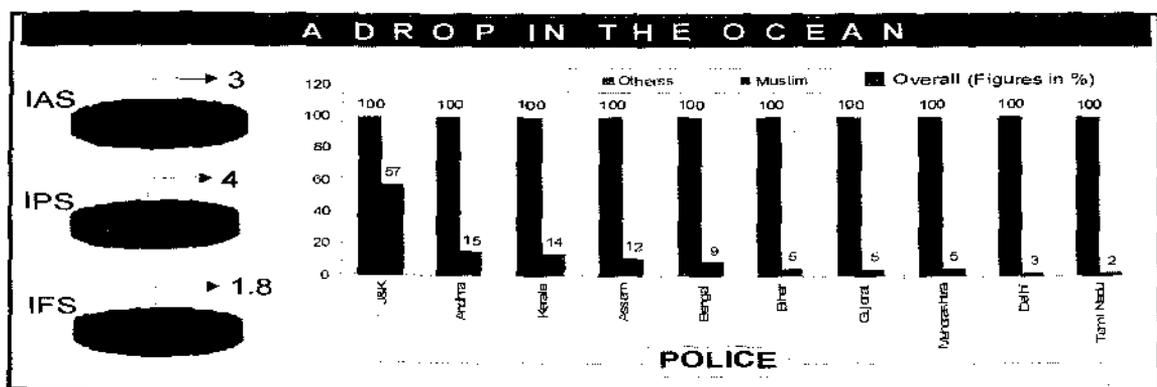
He argued that to-day, Muslims, as a monolithic block, comprise the weaker section of the society and West Bengal Muslims are worst off.

His conclusion is very simple: 'Indeed, the CPI(M) and the so-called advocates of Muslims are not really bothered about the plight of the community A tactical ploy to make political capital of it. Ultimately, Muslims will get nothing ... No community can prosper by remaining dependent on government handouts. Proportionate representation to every community in central and state services is desirable, rather than granting reservation to any particular section'⁸⁷.

The non-presence of the Muslim Community in Indian Federalism is a reality. After the Sachar Committee and Ranganatha Committee Reports to 'sensitize' the states and Union territories the Centre has asked to post more Muslim policemen in areas with large minority populations so the force acts more impartially in tense and violent situations. The directive is part of a larger plan to have more Muslims in the administrative machinery at large and on the other hand to bring the end of "institutional communalism".

Activist-scholar Asghar Ali Engineer and others have been arguing that having more Muslims in the police would lead to better management of communal violence and post riot situations.

But the counter argument is also vital. It has been observed that having more Muslim men and police-women does not necessarily lead to communal peace. Political culture and political education by the political leadership ensures non-communal environment. Bengal and Kerala, for instance, do not have a very high minority presence in their police forces but have recorded the least incidents of communal violence in recent history.



Source: 10th May, 2010, The Telegraph

In the Editorial column of Bengali daily the Anandabazar Patrika, dated 15-07-2009 a letter written by Shree Anish Lahiri highlights certain burning issues on education. He shows his concern about the PTI problem. There are dirth of qualified and properly trained teachers in Primary schools. About 75 thousand PTI trained students are waiting eagerly to join Primary schools. The training colleges are not recognized by the governments. As a result the futures of these trained students are literally bleak.

Thus under this circumstance with adverse public opinion as the Left parties fast loosing their foot hold in the rural areas, the Panchyat and Rural Development Department as a last resort was all set to venture into the field of education to help the rural youths working as 'sachayaks' and 'samprasarak's with the Sishu Siksha Kendra (SSK) and the Madhyamik Siksha Kendra (MSK) respectively.

SSKs and MSKs were set up under the centre sponsored Sarba Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) Programme. But from this year on wards, the funds of SSA would not be available.

Currently, there are 16,045 SSKs across the state and there are four Sahayaks on an average attached with each of the SSKs. The state has total of 2,000 MSKs and a total of 10,073 samprasarks working with these MSKs. All the SSKs and MSKs have about 19 lakh students in total 84 cent of them belong to SC, ST, OBC and minorities.

The Minister and Writers building officials opined that firstly, it was required to calculate the financial liability the state needs to shoulder. Secondly, to decide how many MSKs would be upgraded to Madhyamik Schools.

Currently, the gram panchayats recruit Sahayaks and Samprasarks. But in the new proposal recruitments of teachers would be done by BDOs and SDOs. The management of the SSKs would look after by Panchyat Samiti and MSKs would be managed by Zilla Prishad^{ss}.

It is to be noted that the UPA Government on 2nd March, 2009 launched its largest new education scheme after five years in power only

36 minutes before the announcement of the election schedule clipped its powers to 'initiate populist measures' At 2.54 pm, the government quietly flagged off the Rashtiya Madhyamick Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) to universalize secondary education.

The Rs 20,120 crore schemes, proposed in the 2007 budget, were kicked off without any of the fanfare associated with the launch of mega projects.

It is said that the RMSA aims to 'replicate the success of the Sarva Shiksha Abiyan (SSA) at the secondary school stage⁸⁹.

In this backdrop the idea of two kinds of Madhyamik Education systems came under criticism and before the critical assembly election of the West Bengal 2011 the Left Front Government dropped the idea not to pursue it any further.

Stock-Taking on Indian Education

The Grade Fact Report⁹⁰.

Indian has 49% of the world's underweight children

34% of the world's stunted child population is in India.

Only 59% of Indian children finish upper primary education.

India's total workforce comprises only 20% females.

Only 6.9 million out of 52 million rural households have got 100 days of work under NREGS.

India spends only 3-4% of its GDP on education and health.

India spends only 3-4% of its GDP on education and health but its increasing allocations for different 'Flagship Programmes' are noteworthy. Below the figure is given to assess the amount spent for the all inclusive development. The mission and vision is good. But the effectiveness of the implementation whether in a state like West Bengal or over all India demands through introspection.

Year	ICDS	MDMS	SSA	NREGS	SGSY	PMGSY	NRHM
2010-11	8700	9440	15000	40100	2984	12000	15440
2009-10	6705	8000	13100	39100	2350	12000	13930
2008-09	6300	8000	13100	16000	2150	7530	11930
2007-08	-	7342	10671	12000	1800	6500	11010
2006-07	4087	5348	11000	11300	1200	5226	9065
2005-06	3142	3011	7156	4400	862	3810	6605
2004-05	-	1675	3057	-	1000	2468	834

ICDS: Integrated Child Development Scheme, **MDMS:** Mid-day Meal Scheme, **SSA:** Shiksha Abhiyan, **NREGS:** National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, **SGSY:** Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, **PMGSY:** Pradhan Manti Gram Sadak Yojana, **NRHM:** National Rural health Mission.

The concept of all-inclusive growth gets a jolt when we read inspite of huge budgetary allotment. "Indian has 8.1 million children out of school, 41.6 per cent of population lives below the poverty line, the maternal mortality rate is 450 per 100000 live births and merely 16 per cent of its labour force has received formal education till the secondary level"⁹¹

The inclusive picture in the State of Kerala, on the other hand, is very impressive. "More than 94% of the rural population is served by primary school/section within a distance of 1 km while 98% of population has got one school with a distance of 3km. More than 96% of the population is served by an upper primary school / section within a distance of 3km. Nearly 98% of the rural population has the facility for secondary education with 8km. Facilities for higher and technical education too are available to rural students at a reasonable distance. Furthermore widespread availability of public transport system and highly subsidized transport fares have facilitated an easy access for rural students to higher educational institutions in towns and cities"⁹²

The paper shows that all these achievements in the field of education in Kerala are mostly through government owned an aided school. The students pay no fees at any level in schools. The government owned and aided schools of higher and technical education institutions charge very low rate of fees: 'the ratio of recovery of government's revenue expenditure was only 2.6% in 2006-07"⁹³.

Gender equity is another feather in the cap of Kerala's education movement. Almost half of the students in lower primary classes are girls.

According to the Central School Education Survey – 2002, the gender disparity is non-existent in the pre-primary school enrolment. The report says the proportion of girls is higher in higher classes in schools. This proportion is much higher in arts and science colleges both at the graduate and post-graduate levels.

On the other hand, the participation of girls in professional courses is comparatively low. Among the teachers in schools in the backdrop of 50% at the all India level, Kerala recruit 70% female teachers. Both in arts and science colleges the representations of the female teachers are around 50%.

The literacy rate, none the less, among the SC and ST population are lower than the general castes in Kerala, but higher than the all India average. As a result 10.7% students from among the SC category and 1.2% of the ST category took part in the school curriculum.

It is noteworthy that "their share in enrolment is commensurate with their share in the school going age group population, i.e. 10.4% for SCs and 1.2% for STs. The share of SC and ST students in enrolment in higher education also is commensurate with their share in the total population of the state, which is 9.8% and 1.1%, respectively⁹⁴.

According to the researchers, mentioned above, the situation is not as rosy as projected by the aggregate statistics. The reality is that the aggregate statistics often camouflage that real educational achievement of people belonging to different socio-economic segments. What is alarming that instead of all inclusion exclusionary trends have been getting stronger since 1990s.

They have identified broadly four reasons/factors behind this trend. These factors are:

"(1) to increase in private costs incurred by students, (2) growth of student-finance institutions, (3) strengthening of non-financial entry

barriers, and (4) inadequate attention to the problems of the disadvantaged groups⁹⁵

Firstly, in Kerala the ever increasing unaided schools set a higher fee structure. According to Ajith Kumar the picture is no different in respect of medical education either. CSES (1997) and Ajith Kumar have highlighted that high costs of education act as a barrier to majority families in the state.

Secondly, the aggravated growth of unaided schools, colleges and technical institutes with self-financed course expedited the process of exclusion. Table 1 will prove the plethora of unaided academic institutions backed by self-financed courses.

Table 1: Ownership of Educational Institutions in 1991 and 2007-08

Type of Institution	1991					2007-2008				
	Govt. Regular	Aided	Unaided	Total	% of unaided in Total	Govt. Regular	Aided	Unaided	Total	% of unaided in total
LP Schools	2565	4068	134	6767	2.0	2548	3992	277	6817	4.1
UP Schools	960	1883	72	2915	2.5	954	1870	213	3037	7.0
High Schools	960	1380	111	2451	4.5	996	1428	366	2790	13.1
H.S. School	49	37	0	86		729	529	439	1697	25.9
VHSE Schools	179	7	0	186	0.0	261	128	0	389	0.0
ITI/ITC	28	-	274	302	90.7	76	-	354	430	82.3
Arts and Science College	40	132	0	172	0.0	39	150	153	342	44.7
Polytechnics	24	6	0	30	0.0	43	6	9	58	15.5
Engineering Colleges	5	3	0	8	0.0	11	3	72	86	83.7
Medical College	5	0	0	5	0.0	5	0	8	13	61.5
Ayurveda College	3	2	1	6	16.7	3	2	8	13	61.5
Dental College	2	0	0	2	0.0	3	0	6	9	66.7
Homoeo College	2	3	0	5	0.0	2	3	0	5	0.0
Nursing College	3	0	0	3	0.0	5	0	42	47	89.4
Pharmacy College	1	0	0	1	0.0	2	0	17	19	89.5

Source: Economic Review 1991 and 2007, Government of Kerala.

Thirdly, in the case of admission in professional course the study found ample evidences where the students of government schools and rural schools found it difficult to get admission to these course. Evidently, the students of Malayalam medium found scantily in these courses.

Both the CSES (1997) study and N. Ajith Kumar identified the entry point impediments to professional course in the education of the State of Kerala. These barriers are, viz., (1) First generation educated students; (2) Gender biasness; (3) Huge disparities in educational standards at the schools levels; (4) Urban students are getting better coaching facilities to prepare for the admission tests of the professional courses.

Table 2: Schooling in Kerala upto Class X in 2006-2007

Type of School	No. of Schools	Share in total number of schools
Government or aided State Government Schools	4498	28.1
Private Schools aided by the State Government	7290	45.5
Kendriya Vidyalaya	26	0.2
Novodaya Vidyalaya	14	0.1
Sub-total Government or aided	11828	73.8
Private unaided Schools recognized by the State Government	856	5.3
Approved by CBSE	586	5.3
Unrecognized unaided Schools	2646	16.5
Sub-total Private unaided	4189	26.2
Total	16017	100.0

Source: Government of Kerala (2008): Economic Review 2007 and Government of Kerala (2007): Report of the Survey on Unrecognized Schools in Kerala.

Fourthly, K.K. George showed in his journey of education at the primary level in Kerala is cent per cent. But the participation of the children belonging to the Below Poverty Line decreases: 66.7% at the middle school level (age 11 to 14). At the secondary level the ratio falls drastically 20 25% (age 14 to 18). The enrolment ratio among the poor are 1.9% (age 18 and above). As a result, the Human Development Report

92005) admitted the fact that the deprived groups lag behind than the others in the achievement of this basic functioning.

The CBSE study *Alternative Schools* (2003) and the study of Tharakan et al. (2004) on Kerala's education system bring out several instances of gender stereotyping in the learning materials.

The study paper put ample emphasis to find out the reasons of the exclusion of the women folk in the political participation in Kerala. The paper writes: "Such gender stereotyping may lead to exclusion of women from the main stream and make them lag behind their male counterparts in active social and political participation. This may be a reason for the inability of women in the state to convert their achievements in education into practical achievements in the real world"⁹⁶

Fifthly, the study paper suggests that the exclusionary trends accentuates due to the failure of the state to provide quality of schools and increase the intake capacity of professional education institutions. These demands are there in rural and urban areas of the state. Since the households need to pay more for education which is related to the growth in per capita state domestic product (SDP), expansion of job markets within and out side the country, inflow of remittances, decrease in number of children, reduction in households' size, etc. In the face of world wide fiscal crisis, despite these favourable developments, the rate of recovery of revenue expenditure of education by way of fees has been coming down.

Table 3: Share of Education, Art, Culture and Scientific Research I Budgeted Expenditure (from 1992-93 to 2006-07, figures in percentages)

Plan Periods		Revenue Expenditure	Capital Expenditure	Total Expenditure	Plan Expenditure	Non Plan Expenditure
VIII	Kerala	25.20	5.70	23.61	6.55	28.64
	All States	18.74	2.56	17.92	8.66	21.16
IX	Kerala	21.72	3.32	20.67	5.65	25.14
	All States	20.31	1.98	18.56	10.04	21.01
X	Kerala	19.24	3.64	18.60	4.58	22.02
	All States	17.75	2.00	15.60	8.34	18.06

Capital outlay is taken as capital expenditure; it does not include and advances by the State Government.

Source: Computed from State Finances, various issues, Reserve Bank of India.

Sixthly, the dichotomy made the education scenario in Kerala more acute with regard to private and public differences of expenditure on education. The study paper suggests that while the public expenditure on education remained high, the state income was growing very slow. The acquired statistics showed that the proportion of revenue expenditure on education to GDP in 1970-71 was 4.8% by 1980-81, the proportion went up further to 6.1%. But by 2004-05, the proportion came down to just 3.3%⁹⁷.

A sectional economic affluency is one of the vital reasons for the exclusionary development in education in Kerala. A unique feature of Kerala economy made it different from the economic picture of other states is its large quantum of remittances received from the out-migrants (to other states) from Kerala.

K.C. Zachariah and Rajan S Irudaya wrote: "The importance of migration to Kerala economy may be gauged from the fact that one-fourth (1/4) of the households have a non-resident Keralite. The annual remittances from the emigrants increased from Rs. 13,652 crore in 1999 to Rs. 18,465 crore in 2003 and further to Rs. 24,269 crore in 2006-2007. It is estimated that the remittances to Kerala from its emigrants to other countries alone were equivalent to 1/5 of Net State Domestic product (NSDP). This flow of income made of large number of households capable of pursuing education. But the matter of fact is that this increase in financial capacity was not shared by all households. The reality is that the distribution of income from both domestic production and remittances has been quite uneven⁹⁸.

This new money-power of a section of households instigated the government's willingness to spend less for education. The fiscal crisis has changed the priorities of the government from education to other areas to recover its economic strength.

As a cascading effect of this declining cost recovery aggravated, to some extent, the financial crisis of both the government and the

educational institutions. Exclusion accentuates in Kerala education scenario. "The shares of education come down from 27.4% during the 5th plan period to 18.6% during the 5th plan period ended in 2006-07. Table 3 will project the expenditure trend of Kerala in recent decades"⁹⁹.

Social and Political factors that influence the growth of Education in Kerala

There is an emergence of a strong class in Kerala. This portion is much higher in Kerala than the rest of the country"¹⁰⁰. This emerging middle class is both prepared for and is capable of buying its way in the educational sector. The study paper shows a kind of revelation that "Many of the less educated but rich members of this class find education as a means for social mobility and respectability. Thus a competition like situation among financially capable middle class people is fast developing to avoid government aided schools and health care facilities. The private agencies are encouraged by this shift of public psyche which by turn creating scopes for the government to shift its priorities of plan expenditure also avoiding social services, which the middle class is no longer availing.

The study paper also shows that the higher education has helped the formation of the middle class. The highly subsidized education once provided by the government helped to create this new-middle class. Moreover, the growth of commercial agriculture and employment in industry and the service sectors have also contributed to the growth of this class. Furthermore, land reforms helped the rest while tenants who were mostly to 'middle' castes' and communities to throw away the feudal yoke and to become middle peasants. International migration has also helped in the formation of the middle class.

Even in the recent past expansion of educational opportunities irrespective of regions, religions, caste and classes, was the top-most priority of all the political parties in Kerala. State funding of education directly or through liberal grants-in-aid to private agencies, according to

the authors, an earlier version of to-day's public private participation (PPP model) helped the process of expanding educational opportunities.

To day a new political consensus made the 'education issue' a non-political one. This consensus and eventually contributed to the Kerala Model of Educational and Social Development. But the ever increasing presence of middle class in political parties, the fiscal crisis since 1989s put the fate of education in Kerala in the hand of market.

Casteist and Religious pressure groups are very influential in Kerala's social and political scenario. Kathleen Gough wrote in village politics in India that "The correlation between caste, rank and party support raises the question of 'Casteism' in Kerala politics All parties in their efforts to control more seats jockey for influence with one or another communal association, Nair Service Society (NSS), Muslim League and Catholic Church"¹⁰¹.

Naturally the whole politics and educational entrepreneurship of Kerala is clearly dominated by these organizations and 'not on the education of the deprived'.

N. Ajith Kumar and K.K. George wrote very clearly: The unhealthy labour practice of the privately managed schools and colleges is a very common feature in Kerala because of the influences of these casteists, communal and religious organizations. This practice could not be stopped even by Congress and Communist leaderships. Wide spread, corruption, and the nepotism in the appointment of teachers in private educational institutions has further led to the exclusion of teachers from poor economic backgrounds to enter the teaching profession.

Shree S.L. Rao highlights in his article on: 'More money for Stealing' that the principal cause of India's abysmally low ranking on the UNDP's Human Development Index is rampant corruption despite huge allocation in the budgets. For him like other sectors education is no different. There is no dearth of money. But the façade of regulation hides the reality of no inspection, monitoring and punishment for violations. The super regulator proposed by the National Knowledge Commission,

and accepted by the government, for higher and professional education should 'think through how it is to be implemented. Whether it is All India Council for Technical Education or AICTE recognized colleges or school education every where there is lack of adequate or competent teachers, students pay heavy capitation fees for admission, actual fees are very high, quality of instructions are very poor. Everywhere one would find 'dismal story of poor execution inspite of massive funding. As a result, 'even the poor prefer private schools for their children despite that cost because they can be confident of real teaching for their children. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme of the government is said to have been effective in getting most children in schools. The school itself is poor"¹⁰².

In this socio-economic back drop the two CPI(M) led state governments are facing a massive challenge in the State Assembly Election 2011 with a call of change for political dispensation. In Kerala it was as usual Congress took the initiative and in West Bengal Miss Mamta Banerjee led All India Trinamool Congress. The Left Front agenda on education in their election manifesto has been projected already in our on-going discussion. Here we will place the All India Trinamool Congress agenda on education especially in their all out evocation to the people of West Bengal for the change of guard.

The All India Trinamool Congress (AITMC) on their West Bengal: Action Agenda kept a target of first 200 days.

- The gap between West Bengal and other progressive states of the country in terms of educational infrastructure is huge. So to revamp the education sector that defines the future of our children.
- Thrust on vocational education;
- Training of Teacher in schools to deliver the above objective
- Creation of new Universities, Colleges and Schools to meet people's aspirations in the form of:

1. Identify location for new universities across the state;
2. 10 more Medical Colleges;
3. Muslim Universities and Colleges;
4. Matua Community University;
5. More Madrasas and Urdu Schools; and
6. More Hindi Schools;
7. Implement the recommendations of the Sacchar committee and the Ranganathan Commission, where 10% Urdu speaking Muslims are there.
8. Set aside a portion of the State's Budget for plans intended for the educational and economic uplift of Muslims.
9. Give, without any hindrance, official recognition to urdu educational institutions, thereby facilitating them with all the constitutional benefits, which they lacked hitherto;
10. Special budgetary provision should be made for imparting technical education in Madrasas¹⁰³.

In the special issue of 'Jago Bangla' AITMC mouth speech highlighted the agenda of the party on higher education:

Higher Education as we have pondered;

- To form Task-force to analyze the ground level reality and to set development plan from Primary education to Higher Education.
- In the process of re-structuring and re-vamping higher education the guidelines of the Kathari Commission and Prof. Yash Pal Commission Reports will be strictly followed:
 1. Deficiency of appropriate subject teachers would be looked into;
 2. Research in Higher education will be given priority;
 3. Prompt recognition of the Colleges;
 4. Employment assurance of the graduates;

5. To bring the end of the management of the previous regime;
6. To pump in fund to solve the fiscal deficit to revamp educational infrastructure;
7. Thorough change in syllabus and
8. Examination system;
9. To elevate the standard of education;
10. To stop polarization of education; and
11. By annihilating corruption in education to establish in ideal environment for educational growth.

AITMC has kept to bold captions in their Election Manifesto:

1. Our goal is to set up an impartial education system based on merit for appointing teachers; and
2. School infrastructures will be revamped and new school will be opened where there are gaps in all districts and towns of the state¹⁰⁴.

After long 34 years of left rule the people of West Bengal chose a different path of development and All India Trinamool Congress came to power defeating CPI(M) led Left Front Government securing a massive support from the people of West Bengal, the AITMC secured about 49% of the votes cast and the Left Front secured 41% votes cast.

“Change” was the slogan. And the “Change” took place. It is the time for the people of West Bengal along with the rest of India, may be whole world to witness the ways and methods of “Promises to keep”. The finishing lines are from MaC lver and Page: “to live is to act; and act is to choose; and choose is to evaluate. Hence, as human beings we cannot get rid of the concept of change and progress. If one can prove it; none can refute it. At least, it is a vital myth ineradicable from the creative strings of life”¹⁰⁵.

The discussion began with a note that a unique experiment was initiated in 1977 by in stalling a Marxist regime in a Parliamentary set

up. The Parliamentary Governance is always driven by the principle of conflict and compromise; acceptance and rejection. In the long 34 years of rule the left governance, has shown these principle correct umpteen times. Democracy is a great catalyst of change. Change is always welcome when it is pre-constructive and at the same time against the pro-destruction. The U.S.P. of democracy in the language of Professor Amartya Sen: "What a democratic system which social conditions become political issues. Some conditions become politically important issues quickly ... While other problems - less spectacular and less immediate - provide a much harder challenge ... Success or failure here depends on the range and vigour of democratic practice¹⁰⁶.

It is the high time for the leftists in India to put on the thinking cap again as Professor Ashoke Mitra suggested to the speaker head of the left movement in India. Failure is the pillar of success and trifle makes perfection; but perfection is no trifle. Let these two Shakespearan beliefs be the guiding principles to usher in a new era of left movement, two steps of backward movement may ensure a great leap forward. Socialism looks way ward but capitalism at the same time is not in a happy mood. Options are open; the world will surrender to that option where they will get the genuine endeavour.

A communist party was established at Tashkhard on 17th October, 1920 following the decisions of the Third International to adopt such principles which will suit with the ground reality of India. The greatest lacunae of Indian communist movement are that the communists are still way ward to understand and subsequently to adopt such principles to steer their movement to reach the final goal. To quote Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore with his wish ful words of inspiration at the time of despondency and depression:

At the horizon with the beaconing new light who is delivering the evocation - Fear not, fear never! Death never touches that Dare-devil who never fears to die.

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