

**The Educational Development and Marxian  
Philosophy: Policy Perspectives and Strategies of  
the Communist Party of India (Marxist)**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work embodied in my thesis entitled, "THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MARXIAN PHILOSOPHY: POLICY PERSPECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)" has been carried out by me under the supervision of Professor M.Yasin, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science. I also declare that, this thesis, or any part thereof has not been submitted for any other degree/diploma either to this or any other university.

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### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

It gives me immense pleasure to see that Mr. Pradipta Chakraborty who had been working under my supervision for his Ph. D. has completed his research on "THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MARXIAN PHILOSOPHY : POLICY PERSPECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)" and as such, his thesis is ready for submission to the University of North Bengal for evaluation. Mr. Chakraborty has done a very commendable research on an unexplored area and thus is going to contribute immensely to the knowledge-base on such an area of great contemporary relevance. While going through his draft thesis I found it an excellent piece of work done by a committed and devoted researcher. Needless to say, in view of paucity of available literature on the area of his research his thesis is indeed going to be a pioneering research bearing original contribution to the field that deserves positive applaud.

To the best of my knowledge he bears a good moral character. I wish him duly rewarded for his original piece of research.

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It is more than likely that I have missed many names here and I fervently hope that those unnamed too will accept my grateful thanks.

*Pradipta Chakraborty*

(Pradipta Chakraborty)

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Europeans came to India primarily with two missions for spice trade and for spreading Christianity. But the historical eventualities made them the master of our country and people; we became their subjects. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore 'Baniker Mandanda Dekha Delo Raj Dando Rupe'<sup>1</sup> — the measuring rod of the trader was converted into the royal scepter.

That was the beginning of the slow march or padajatra of a new age where everything was strictly followed by the theory of percolating down, including education. Indeed, in the language of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore "Villages were under absolute darkness of superstition and towns were dimly illuminated"<sup>2</sup>, where entirely new models of ideas came down or were imported along with the new model of administration drop by drop, infiltrated.

Both the nationalism and ideas of communism in our country were imported by ship. After independence, the nationalistic wind was favourable to the sail of the Congress Party. Now dreams, new aspirations and expectations of the people were also high. But at the fag end of the 1960s the winds changed. The leftists in India could capitalise on the despair and despondency of the people by the utter failure of the Congress in social-economic and educational fields. The political monopoly of the Congress hegemony was snatched away in different states and the leftists in West Bengal successfully installed and paved a much eloquent path — the Marxism in a Parliamentary set up.

Thirty four years of staying in power in a Parliamentary Democracy set up, is no mean a task. Shri Jyoti Basu and later on, Shri Buddhadev Bhattacharjee and their left-government have done it and have happily entered into the domain of the Guinness Book of World Records and have become immortal. In this context a question arises in our minds that as Panchyat Raj System, in itself is a land mark in the Indian spectrum, similarly, in the field of education, can the official lefts of West Bengal claim to be a new path finder in the history of India? While analyzing the

Ashok Mitra Commission Report in the Economic and Political Weekly, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1993, Shri Tapas Majumder has asked a very relevant question: 'How much we spend on education, however, is not the main question ... The main question is : Are we getting good value for the money spent?'<sup>3</sup> Another pertinent question comes, the left and the communists believe, education to be a catalyst to establish most effective communication to reach the people. Can the lefts in West Bengal claim to have achieved this mission in the face of increasing rise of the B.J.P., and the various regional forces and the other communal forces, and be complacent with their three forts i.e. West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura?<sup>4</sup>

Conflict and compromise; rejection and acceptance are the two important premises of governance in any parliamentary set up. Marxists in general are not believers in parliamentary democracy. But a unique experimentation had been going on for last 34 years in West Bengal. By asking the Ashok Mitra Commission "to look at the changes in the education scene since 1977, the Government of West Bengal was actually fishing for compliments and indirect endorsement of its party-line' but it has produced both compliments and reproach. In the face of ensuing pats, criticism and suggestive measure, it was to be seen how the viable alternative of the future Indian polity and its revolutionary government could react and respond"<sup>5</sup>.

### **Objectives of the proposed Study**

Education plays a key role in the life of a nation. This becomes all the more important in a country where the people are called upon to play a very effective role in not only upholding the democratic ideas but also in spreading the democratic ethos among different segments of the population. Not only that, education provides the channel through which political, social, economic and cultural links can be maintained . This is the communicative aspect of the role of education which is considered very vital in a society characterized by conflicting loyalties and interest. From that perspective, education seeks to maintain a balance in the society. This social equilibrium is necessary for the maintenance of the

social and political system. In other words education not only fixes the 'telos' (ends) of the system but also determines the 'duty' (deno) of the people for whom it is meant.

Coming to India, it becomes clear that education has a 'positive' as well as 'constructive' role to play. If the democratic values of the Indian Constitution are to be maintained, there should be total eradication of illiteracy from the country. In India, education should play such a role as to bring about social equality and justice for all men.

In India, education can work as a 'safety valve' for easing the tension that may generate within the body-politic as a result of uncompromising and often contradictory claims and counter-claims. Education, in India, can play the role of a 'Catalyst' in generating an atmosphere for bringing about the desired social reform. This is the urgent need of the hour if India's democratic governance is made to face all challenges social, economic, political and cultural.

It is rightly admitted that the capability of the India democratic policy depends to a great extent, upon its ability not only to conceive of the various societal demands but also to 'assimilate' them in such a way as to generate a sense of oneness, which in long run, gives birth to a sense of nationalism (national identity).

In the face of Globalization of Economic situation some confusion comes to the fore. Apparently, education does not belong to the productive sector. The investment on education has no immediate return. But it depends solely upon the nation and the national policy makers whether they should invest on an apparently unproductive sector and subject like education? The conflict among the central and state governments about the position of education in the constitution in the Concurrent List creates durable and formidable problem. In a plural society like India the ideological approach to education is also different. The position of education, hanging in between, deters its effective spread and development in the body-politic. The suggestions and

recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission and the Education Commission 1964-66 are worth mentioning.<sup>6</sup>

The left attitude towards education is entirely different in theoretical term as well as in practical implementation. Its manifestation in different socialist countries depicts that picture. But when a combination of different left-parties with varied party lines and objective launch an education movement along with other subjects in a small state to further its effective influence on the whole population of our country, the endeavour confronts an obstacle in a parliamentary governance – conflict and compromise; rejection and acceptance becomes the order of the day for it's survival and communication. This is the central theme of the present study.

### **Research Questions**

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does education influence the pace of nation-building in a developing country like India?
2. What is the precise role that education plays in a society marked by conflicting loyalties and interest as in India?
3. What has the nature of interaction between education and growth of nationalism in India?
4. What has been the attitude of the ruling party towards education policies in India?
5. What role has been assigned to education in the left ideology in general?
6. What has been the communist perception of education policy in India.
7. How have the C.P.I.(M) approached education and its problems in West Bengal?

## **Overview of the Existing Literature**

While trying to answer the questions raised by the present study about the influence of education in our developing country and understanding the attitude of the ruling parties towards educational policies and the communist perception of the educational policy in India, a great deal of information had to be taken from government and semi government documents.

It is appropriate to believe that the Indian communist community would follow Marx's vision on education as found in Das Capital. While reading extensively for the research, I did not find any comprehensive book on Education/ and educational policies dealing exclusively in the Marxist path of educational experiences. One of the reasons may be justified with these words of Jyoti Basu, the first Chief Minister of the Left Front Government in the State of West Bengal, India: "We never thought that people will elect us to power ... .."<sup>7</sup> To understand the communist mind in India and their goal with regard to education, two masterly works have guided this work. The first book is "Sikisha O Sreni Samparko"<sup>8</sup> by Dr. Syed Sahedullah and the second one is 'Siksha Prasange'<sup>9</sup> by Sri Bhavesh Maitra. Both these books broadly focus on Marxist vision on education in India and global perspectives. Both the authors have illustrated their views citing the examples of educational experiences of erstwhile Soviet Union, China and Vietnam, and have highlighted the marked differences in their approach to education vis-a-vis the educational polices of liberal democratic countries.

To understand the nature of interaction between education and the growth of nationalism in India some books were extremely useful. To name a few ... "The Bengal Renaissance"<sup>10</sup> by Professor Sushovan Sarkar deals with the birth of nationalism primarily in Bengal and how it spread across the Indian Subcontinent.

In the book "English education and the origin of Indian Nationalism"<sup>11</sup> B.T. Maccully, the author deals with the influence of

modern English Education in India and the consequent birth of Indian nationalism.

The legendary Professor of History and Philosophy, Arnold Toynbee in his famous book "The Glimpses of the World History"<sup>12</sup> expounds his world vision with the certain conclusion on the gospel of nationalism. Toynbee uses a metaphor of a bee who while collecting nectar from flowers unconsciously helps in pollination of flowers; similarly the colonial master in their endeavour to collect raw materials from the Asian, Latin American and African (ALA) countries unconsciously acted as an active agent to spread the feelings of national upheaval and how the introduction of modern education played a pivotal role to ignite the spirit of nationalism.

Regarding the role of education in a society which is marked by conflicting loyalties and interests in a country like India, the books "History of Education in India"<sup>13</sup> by S.N. Mukherjee and "Education in India: Past Present and Future"<sup>14</sup> by J.P. Banerjee were very useful.

Dr. Chandan Basu's work on left ideology and Bengal in his book "The Making of Left Ideology in West Bengal: Culture Political Economy, Revolution 1947-1970"<sup>15</sup>. (Abhijeet Publication) was very enriching. The author focuses on the critical relationship between the economic structure and the social – historical process on the one hand and links between the expressions of the intelligentsia and archaeology of ideology on the other. The book does not subscribe either to orthodox economic interpretation of historical change or to postmodernist cultural deconstruction of social transition. It goes beyond the "orthodox" and post modernist views of postulating Marxist social history of class struggle approaches<sup>16</sup>.

A few books worth mentioning here which helped to shape up the understanding of the work are the four volume study of the cultural formation of the district of West Bengal – "Paschim Banger Sanskriti"<sup>17</sup> by Binoy Ghosh. Another book by the same author "Metropolitan Mon Madhyabittya Bidroha"<sup>18</sup> (Kolkata: Orient Longman – 1999) is also a

useful contribution in the field. "The Nation and its Fragments Colonial and Post Colonial Histories"<sup>19</sup> (New Delhi-Oxford University Press, 1994) by Partha Chatterjee gives us an outstanding discussion of the rationality of the National State.

The writings of Ashok Mitra, "Samaj Sangastha Asha Nirasha"<sup>20</sup> (Kolkata: Ananda Publishers 1999) and "Kabita Theke Michile"<sup>21</sup> (Kolkata: Papyrus, 1995) were remarkable for the proper understanding of the social economic formation and identification of the fabric of power which require rigorous theoretical conceptualization of contemporary class structure, class relations and class struggle of the society. Some of the books that helped me in the shaping of my research paper are the following where the titles echo the content of the writings.

'Left Politics in Bengal: Time Travels among Bhadrolok Marxist'<sup>22</sup> by Monabina Gupta, is a journalistic account of a journalist and a former S.F.I. activist. The chronicle depicts the saga of the rise of C.P.I.(M) as the vanguard of revolution achieving the political power and subsequent fall of the political dispensation, Jyoti Basu's "Jatadur Mone Pore"<sup>23</sup>, a memoir by the veteran politician and statesmen and Partha Chatterjee's - "The present History of West Bengal: Essays in political criticism"<sup>24</sup> were very relevant books.

In S.K. Kochhar's "Pivotal issues in Indian Education"<sup>25</sup>, the author gives a comprehensive detailed overview of education in India with a historical perspective covering all the areas of pre primary to Adult Education, research in education to equalizing educational opportunities. Explaining what makes Basic Education basic and quoting from Mahatma Gandhi the author says "Basic education is generally interpreted as education through craft. This is true to a certain extent but this is not the whole truth. The roots of "Nai Talim" go deeper. It is based on truth and non violence in individual and collective life. Education is that which gives freedom. Untruth and violence lead to bondage and can have no place in education."<sup>26</sup>

“Higher Education in India” - Policies, Planning and Implementation”<sup>27</sup> Kuldip Kaur - Published by University Grants Commission in 2003 details the higher education policies and plans of the country.

The political role of state, particularly in the newly independent state, is very important in determining the nature of popular consciousness. In a country like India the role of state was fundamentally linked with the legacy of the anti - colonial national movement. For example Bipan Chandra noted, “The national movement ... bequeathed to independent India the political tradition of compromise, accommodation and reconciliation of different interests and points of view. Nehru worked within this tradition in evolving national policies after independence. It was an invaluable experience and legacy for all those who wanted to build a strong and prosperous India and a just and egalitarian society .... Independent India has as a whole remained loyal to the basics of the legacy of the national movement, a large part of which is enshrined in the constitution and incorporated in the programmes and manifestoes of most of the political parties.”<sup>28</sup>

The overview of relevant literature would be incomplete without mentioning one book, “Education and the Social order”<sup>29</sup> by Bertrand Russel published by Routledge in January, 1988 (first Published in 1932). Here Russell dissects the motives behind much educational theory and practice and attacks the influences of chauvinism, snobbery and money energetically discussed and debated are discipline, natural ability, competition, class distinction, bureaucracy, finance, religion, sectorial education, state versus private schools, education in Russia, indoctrination, the home environment and many other topics. Described by reviewers as brilliant, provocative, sane, stimulating, practical and original, this book contains the essence of Rusell’s thought on education and society.

S.N. Mukherjee in his well researched work: “History of Education in India” (Acharya Book Department, Baroda, 1966); “Development of

Modern Indian Education" (Rama Brothers, Delhi) by Bhagwan Dayal, "Bharater Sikshar Itihas" by Mohini Mohan Pan; Publisher: Renuka Pan Hoogly, 1979. "A short History of Education", Macmillan: London, 1949 by D. Flemming; "Sidelights on the National movement in India" by Nagendra Gupta, Hind kitab Ltd. Mumbai, 1<sup>st</sup> Education, 1946, enriched me in many ways and guided me to depict the development of education in India and subsequent growth of the idea of nationalism in the India subcontinent.

M.R. Masani's "The communist party of India: A short History", Published by Derek Verschoyle Ltd. (London,) 1954 has not only highlighted the development of the communist movement in India, but the book also opened up the hidden reports of the British Government about the Indian early communists.

A comprehensive study of the left movement in India and West Bengal in particular; the day to day report of the C.I.P.(M) and its activities can be found in Shree Saroj Mukherjee's masterly work: "West Bengal: Marches on an untraveled path", Ganashakti Publisher, 1980.

During the course of preparing this work a number of books and works of some foreign writers were read in detail. But special mention should be given to two books: (1) "The End of History and the Last Man" by Francis Fukuyama and (2) "Reorient: Global Single world Economic System" by Andre Gunder Frank. Both the books project diametrically two opposite world of politics and economy.

T.J.Nossiter has contributed in a big way by delivering two great works on Indian Marxist experiences, viz, (1) "Marxist State Governments in India: Politics, Economics and Society" Printer Publisher, 1988. And (2) "Communism in Kerala: A Study in political Adaptation," Oxford, 1982. These two great works highlighted the ability of the Indian Marxist to adopt themselves in a parliamentary form of governance and by providing "relief" extending its area of influence to achieve ultimate goal of establishing a socialist pattern of society and economy.

Partha Chatterjee a very well known name in India, in his masterly work: "The Present History of West Bengal: Essay in political criticism" has pin pointed the problems and prospects of socialist thinking with special reference to the Marxist rule in Bengal.

The much debated book of Santosh Bhattacharya: "Red Hammer over Calcutta University" definitely highlights the influence and penetration of Marxist regime in the everyday affairs of the University of Calcutta.

Finally, Zoya Hossain's edited: Themes in political parties and party politics in India (Oxford) a recent publication with great craftsmanship highlights the promises made by the political parties and actual practices of the political parties with special reference to the activities of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

The discussion of the overview of the existing literature will remain incomplete without mentioning a word or two about the most essential reading of "The fundamentals of Marxist and Leninist Philosophy" by Progress publisher, edition 1971. The name of the book suggests that it has dealt with the basic or fundamental principles of Dialectics-historical and materialistic. The publisher has pointed out that there is criticism about its content but no one can ignore the importance of the discussion of dialectics which is fundamentally the basis of Marxian Philosophy practiced by V.I. Lenin during the post - revolutionary period in erstwhile Soviet Union.

The review of existing literature includes a great number of party documents, government documents and government reports, policies on education, local newspapers and relevant websites which provided the primary and secondary data. But it has been mentioned earlier while trying to arrive at answers raised by the research questions the realization deepened that no substantive work was done in this specific area of study.

### **Significance of the Study**

From the overview of the existing literature it appears that most of the works deal with education in general with a socio-economic and political back drop which has been the subject of increasing scholarly attention across the globe but practically no emphasis has been given on my area of study specifically the education development in the light of Marxian Philosophy in India. Therefore the policy perspectives and strategies of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is not seen significantly in any work. Thus present research work seeks to fill that void.

Therefore when in August, 1991, the West Bengal Government decided to have the educational scene surveyed, it was a positive step forward. Not many states take initiatives of this kind. It was equally gratifying that Sri Ashok Mitra was asked to head this commission.

As one of India's most respected and committed Marxist economists, he has always been an intrepid critic of authoritarianism. He is also known for his criticism of some of the policies of the Left Front Government of which he was the first Finance Minister. The report submitted in August 1992, amply justifies the confidence reposed in him. Amrik Singh in his article "Combining Moral Commitment with Pragmatism": Ashok Mitra Commission on Education in the Economic and Political Weekly, Vol 28 (July 17-24, 1993) has aptly stated that three things stand out about the report of the Education Commission appointed by the West Bengal Government under the chairmanship of Ashok Mitra. Firstly, except for 'professional education, the entire educational scene is surveyed and hardly anything worthwhile has been ignored or left out. Secondly, the report is not only an analysis of the problems; it is also "a feasible programme of educational goals and objectives for the short run as well as the longer time frame". Finally, while it is informed by a certain measure of moral commitment, what the report has to say is utterly free of dogma; it is nothing if not pragmatic.

It has now turned in a report which is not only a model by itself, but is perhaps the best documents of its kind produced in recent

decades. What is more, it can also be adapted by other states to suit their requirements.

Like the report the present research work will enhance the existing body of knowledge of Marxian Perspective of education in particular which in turn will help to list the research questions thus helping to evaluate the theoretical frame work, identify the factors and forces that tend to come in the way and finally, suggest measures along which future courses of action need to be undertaken to ensure and strengthen the process of educational policy and the strategies of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

### **Justification**

The present study, a very modest one, is basically analytical in nature based on historical investigation and appropriating the role initiated by left led governments under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The moot point of the present research is to locate the role of educational endeavor as an important catalyst or tool of socio-economic progress and the development of left ideology within the broad framework of our constitutional mechanism.

It is said that "the analysis of the elementary aspects of the leftist movement exposes a good detail of the mass mobilization and popular politics; it does not necessarily explain the intricacies of the role of the intelligentsia in the formation of left consciousness and ideology". But no conscious effort has been taken so far to pin point the role of education to mobilize the mass movement and boost the political consciousness to expand its area of influence in the body polity of the country. To be precise, here lies the importance of this research work which tries to highlight the role of educational endeavour in Marxian method in India with special emphasis to West Bengal. This particular area remains unnoticed, long ignored and not explored. The incisive analyses of the socio-political and economic outlook, transformations and juxtapositions have been focused through the candid lens of semiotic historical analytical method.

### **Chapter wise Break-up or Plan of the proposed Study**

The present study proceeds along the following chapter wise plan: In Chapter I there is the impression of the modest effort made to introduce the subject matter as well as objectives of the proposed research study identifying the problem area with regard to education and body-politic as such.

The Chapter II is a general survey of the educational policies adopted in context of Left Political ideology.

The Chapter III named 'Education Policies in India: An Overview' attempts have been made to analyze the different aspects of education in the light of the socio-political development since the days of the advent of the Christian missionaries.

The Chapter IV 'Agenda of Education: The Indian Scenario' basically deals with the development of Leftist view since the early days of nationalism till the present day in the state mentioned.

In the Chapter V effort has been made to modestly analyze the educational policies adopted by the Left Front Government headed by C.P.I.(M) in West Bengal at the various levels of education.

In the Chapter VI a modest effort has been made to identify the problems of Socialism as 'Re-envisioning Socialism' in the present day context. The Seventh Chapter shows the paradigm shift keeping in view the impending public opinion and high profile and much debated industrial policy adopted by the Left Front Government under the leadership of Shri Buddhadev Bhattacharya.

In the last and concluding Chapter endeavours have been made to critically put forth a subjective viewpoint on the policy perception of the Left Front Government and suggest a few corrective measures which are based broadly on the Ashok Mitra Commission Report which has looked comprehensively into the state of education in West Bengal since 1977. The base year was considered an important land mark presumably

because a Left Front Government had first come to power in West Bengal that year.

The Mitra Commission has, by implication at least, left us in no doubt about what it thought of the state of education in West Bengal.

### **Methodology**

The present study, a very modest one, is basically historical analytical in nature and hence collection and analysis of government/semi-government documents had been the major source of findings. For the purpose of arriving at a particular conclusion, reliance had been placed on party-documents, statements of the policy-planners, government resolutions and public policy declarations relating to education policy. The study has thus followed the method of content analysis. In the process, the methods of deconstruction and reading between the lines of the documents relating to education by the Left Front Government in general and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in particular have been tried to explore and address the research questions. Besides, the researcher had observed the developments and thus the insight and wisdom of the researcher in observing the educational policies and their application were of immense help in supplementing the historical analytical information as well as the findings of the content analyses. In the process of analysis, some reflections of left-leaders as expressed through their own works on party lines had been consulted. With a view to supporting the contention, references had also been made to secondary sources and papers/ articles published in leading Journals of the discipline. National, regional and local dailies and weeklies had also been consulted for collecting data, both primary and secondary.

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## CHAPTER II

# EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND LEFT POLITICAL IDEOLOGY – A GENERAL SURVEY

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### I

Nationalism, historians generally agree, has been one of the most potent factors in shaping contemporary civilization. Throughout the modern world it has supplanted old loyalties, modified social relationships, changed forms of Government, created new loves and new hatreds. A survey of Educational Policy and Left Political ideology suggests one unavoidable conclusion: as Bruce Tiebout McCully observed, "Nationalistic feelings did not germinate of its own accord in the soil of India: rather it was an exotic growth implanted by foreign hands and influences"<sup>1</sup>. Following the observation of famous historian Toyanbee, B.T. McCully said, "Without the existence of the British regimes and the element of foreign domination implicit in that system, the beginning of Indian nationalism would be difficult to envisage ... In India as elsewhere foreign rule produced an atmosphere favourable to the growth of national sentiment, and foreign education in time created native intelligencias in whose rank such ideas found a ready welcome"<sup>2</sup>.

If the hand of the foreigners prepared the country for the reception of nationalist ideas, it also moulded the content of early nationalist thought. As Sir William Hunter saw, "Much of the latter — as the writings of Banerjee and other exponents show — was European in origin, having been appropriated almost whole-sale from the teachings of continental doctrines like Mazzini"<sup>3</sup>. In pointing out the specified role played by the educated nationalists Hunter said, "The liberal nationalists of India — the Banerjee, the Naorojis, the Mehtas, the Ghoses and others invented little or nothing in the way of ideology. Their contribution to Indian nationalist thought consisted for the most part in expounding a modified

version of doctrines which they had picked up as students in the Indian Universities or acquired later while studying in England or abroad"<sup>4</sup>.

Leftist political perception, nevertheless, was also adopted from Europe. The basic tenets of leftist political ideology in recent years are much owed to Marxism. The difference between the leftists of India and Congress as a national platform differs in their class attitude and class analysis. The group interests of the educated class which had emerged in the 'Seventies' and 'Eighties' of the Eighteenth Century, detached from the soil or from the hereditary crafts of their forefathers, many partially educated natives eked out a miserable existence. Lacking social position or property unable to rise above the status of petty clerks, they formed a kind of rootless educated proletariat. Their intellectual superiors, the educated elite, nevertheless, too nursed a grievance against the haughty foreigners who monopolized the highly-paid posts in the government services. In the later phase, the involvement of local bourgeoisie and native industrial aspirants were remarkable and finally "Common education drew the lower and upper strata of the educated class together. The objectives of the Indian Association, the programme of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, the Bombay Presidency Association, the agenda of sundry regional Conferences culminating in the first Indian National Congress at Poona, all bespoke the political interests of educated India"<sup>5</sup>. Participation in an organized movement like the Indian National Congress was therefore the logical step for the intelligentsias to take if such ambitions were to be realised<sup>6</sup>. As the Congress movement with its all India outlook gathered headway, "Each year", wrote Sir Willam Hunter of the Congress in 1888, "its electoral organization becomes, better developed, its sense of responsibility and its consciousness of power increase ... and it justifies more fully its claim to be considered a National Indian Congress"<sup>7</sup>. Soon after 1930s eminent political educationist of U.S.A. observed that the Congress Party, despite its claim to represent all India, "could at most speak for only a small fraction of the people"<sup>8</sup>. In classifying the very structure of the Congress as a political party Prof. B.T. McCully said, "From its infancy the nationalist movement bore

marks of its bourgeoisie origin - The very thing that made for homogeneity among educated natives"<sup>9</sup>.

Thus, two distinct standards appear in the fabric of early Indian nationalist theories. We cannot tell both of them progressive in the truest sense of the term. One school of thought, deeply indoctrinated with English political and economic doctrines, drew its chief inspiration from contemporary European nationalism. The other school alarmed by the steady penetration of foreign civilization throughout the Peninsula, advocated a revival of ancient Hindu culture in order to check the impending Europization of their country<sup>10</sup> which was looming large.

The marks of snooty and elitist attitude toward education paved the way for Indian lefts to criticize and adopt a different outlook on education. To the leftists, it depends upon the class-outlook of the society. To them it is an inevitable offshoot of class in power controlling the means of production. It will adopt like many other policies the educational policy in favour of their class-interests since education is a super structure to the existing economy. To quote Marx and Engles: "And what about your education: Is it not social? Does not your system control education through the direct or indirect control of society when society is controlled by a section of people? The control of society in the field of education was not originated by the Communists; they just want to change the nature of social control, to save education from the clutch of the ruling class"<sup>11</sup>.

After Independence despite many a suggestions sufficient initiative was not taken to implement fundamentals of educational policy. As Syed Sahadullah questioned, "with regard to mass-education Congress is still carrying the superfluous zamindary foppishness? Sufficient measures are yet to take place to arrange for compulsory elementary education ... Although introduction of primary education may not wait for socialist revolution, certainly elementary education in bourgeoisie country does not mean for all what is seen in a socialist state. Education in a bourgeoisie country is solely self-motivated. As it happened in Prussian

feudal state, like wise, in a bourgeoisie state the scope of education means loyalty of the section of people to a particular regime or class<sup>712</sup>.

The importance of Marxist or leftist analysis of education demands the Marxist interpretation of the socio-economic development of society. According to Marxist approach in a classless society there was no need of state. Later as classes evolved in society to maintain the exploitative system of production as well as the domination of the owning class gave birth to the state. In accordance with Karl Max, a state is nothing but a machine to maintain class existence; it is an oppression machine to exploit and suppress one class by the other. According to Engles, the concept of state is not adopted from outside, as Hegel said, a state is the march of God on the earth; it is the actualization of freedom and rationality, but the State is nothing of that sort rather the state evolved in a certain phase of social development. The state grew to solve and mitigate a contradiction, the contradiction of class-interests. It is an out-growth of society to solve the inner-contradiction and put itself above the society but gradually it cuts off all relation with the society. Now this social force away from the society is called state or state power. Thus, in accordance with Marx and Engles, as it grew to control the class-conflict it grew out of class-conflict, so it is natural that a state will represent the most powerful propertied class in society. Thus by their money power and wealth this class becomes the ruling class and continues repression and evolves new techniques of exploitation upon other classes.

According to Marx the major phases of social developments has been divided in five heads: (1) Primitive communal society, (2) Slave society, (3) Feudal society, (4) Capitalism and (5) Socialism. Slave, Feudal and Capitalist bourgeoisie societies, run the state system and the means of production in favour of their class interests and accordingly keep their dominance direct over the education and culture to perpetuate their owning position. These owners of means of production and also the ruling class dominate over the 90 Per cent of the people in state-society. On the other hand, according to Marx and Engles, socialism desires to establish the rule of 90 per cent of the people over the 10 per cent

privileged people. Thus, in course of time the need for the state by all means will be withered away with the establishment of communism.

1640 witnessed the culmination of the conflict between bourgeoisie and feudalism; 1789 witnessed the annihilation of Idealism in France. In 1871 Japan discarded the rule of Damo (Japanese feudal power). In 1867 with the abolition of serf-system (feudalism) in Russia got the first setback. But feudalism was not completely abolished from these nations with the installation of bourgeois system. However, geographical discoveries, specially, like discovery of sea-route to India and Asia by Vas-co-Da-gama in the fourteenth century, discovery of the sea-route to America by Columbus et al fulfilled the need for market to the nascent bourgeoisie of Europe. It can be termed rightly as the beginning of the Golden Age of the bourgeoisie march.

To perpetuate and maintain feudal exploitation and rule feudal class adopted some programme of actions. But education had been exempted from it. The need for education casts very little to go with traditional agro-production. In a feudal society education has a meager role in production system. The demand for education was mainly related to those in the administration. Although that was basically idealistic education based on three R's and filled with religious dogmas. Before the French revolution bourgeoisie in France fought a long battle against the feudal dominated and feudal conception of education. The Prussian victory over France finally brought the victory of the French bourgeoisie in Educational conceptions. Mr. H.C. Barnard said, "... The noteworthy advance which Prussia, for example, has made since the beginning of the century and her recent success in war against France was attributed as a much to her educational system as to her military organization...<sup>13</sup>. Again Encyclopedia Britannica says. "The Constitution of 1791 provided that primary education should be compulsory and free... In wars of 1866 and 1870 the Prussian school masters, were victorious and aroused in Western Europe the importance of popular education. For France the reform of popular education was essentially part of national restoration ... The law of 1888 abolished fees in all primary schools and training

colleges; the law of 1882 established compulsory attendance and finally the law of October 30, 1886 enacted that none but lay persons should learn in the public schools all distinctively religious teaching<sup>14</sup>. "Churches were the means of exploitation and oppression. Thus, rising bourgeoisie tried to inactivate these means of repression and exploitation. They became eloquent to separate education from the Church. They said, there will be no room for Church and Papal education in schools. State should take initiative on education free from religious dogma. The bourgeoisie educationists were demanding to start with universal, free and compulsory and secular education in France. Achieving political power, the French bourgeoisie immediately in 1792 introduced universal elementary education"<sup>15</sup>.

At that time whole Asia, Africa and America were major continental markets for England. With the expansion of market demand for goods were also increasing day by day. Invention of steam engine in the eighteenth century and its massive application in the nineteenth century and the industrial revolution was fast changing the whole historical perspective. Once bonded labour of the land, now in apparent freedom in Industrial world was facing a new challenge – a new crisis. A machine could now work for ten labourers. As a matter of fact, "In the feudal state as peasants turned rootless losing their lands, likewise, in capitalism, with advancement in machinery the labourers had lost their productive role in production and becoming unemployed"<sup>16</sup>. The period of industrial revolution was the period of development of bourgeois class in Europe. It was the struggling period of the nascent but rising bourgeoisie class against the feudal class. In 1779 bourgeoisie economist Adam Smith championed the cause of the educational spread in England and opined forcefully for the introduction of the Universal elementary education. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century bourgeoisie in England arranged some educational facilities among Industrial workers. But their educational endeavour was halted time and again as the political power was still in the clutch of land owning section. Finally, Parliament sanctioned in 1834 and 1839 some amount of Rs. 20 thousand and 30 thousand pounds

respectively. In the meantime, for the interest of unlimited profit bourgeoisie in England arranged to impart little bit education among child labourers. In Factory Act enacted in 1844, it was provided inter alia.

**Marx showed in his Magnum opus 'Capital'**

'But the intellectual desolation artificially produced by converting immature human beings into mere machines for the fabrication of surplus-value, a state of mind clearly distinguishable from that natural ignorance which keeps the mind follow without destroying its capacity for development, its natural fertility, this desolation finally compelled even the English parliament to make elementary education a compulsory condition to the 'productive' employment of children under 14 years, in every industry subject to the Factory Acts. The spirit of capitalist production stands out clearly in the ludicrous working of the so-called education clauses in the Factory Acts, in the absence of administrative machinery, an absence that again makes the compulsion illusory, in the opposition of the manufacturers themselves to these education clauses, and in the tricks and dodges they put in practice for evading them.

It provides nothing more than that the children shall on certain days of the week, and for a certain number of hours (three) in each day, be enclosed within the four walls of a place called a school, and that the employers of the child shall receive weekly a certificate to that effect signed by a person designated by the subscriber as a school master or school mistress. Previous to the passing of the amended Factory Act, 1844 it happened, not infrequently, that the certificates of attendance at school were signed by the school master or school mistress with a across, as they themselves were unable to write.

Paltry as the education clauses of the Act appear on the whole, yet they proclaim elementary education to be indispensable condition to the employment of children. According to the English Factory Act, parents cannot send their children under 14 years of age into factories under the control of the Act, unless at the same time they allow them to receive elementary education. The manufacturer is responsible for compliance

with the Act. "Factory education is compulsory, and it is a condition of labour". The success of those clause proved for the first time the possibility of combining education and gymnastics, (on the very advantageous results of combining gymnastics and drilling in the case of boys with compulsory education for factory children and pauper scholar) with manual labour, and, consequently, of combining manual labour with education and gymnastics. The factory inspectors soon found out by questioning the schoolmasters, that the factory children, although receiving only one half of the education of the regularly day scholars, yet learnt quite as much and often more. "This can be accounted for by the simple fact that, with only being at school for one half of the day, they are always fresh and nearly always ready and willing laobur, and half school, renders each employment a rest and a relief to the other; consequently both are far more consequently both are far more congenial to the child, than would be the case were he kept constantly at one. It is quite clear that a boy who had been at school at the morning, cannot cope with one who comes fresh and bright from his work. I am quite sure that the true secret of producing efficient work people is to be found in writing education and labour from a period of childhood. Of course the occupation must not be too severe, nor irksome, or unhealthy. But of the advantage of the Union I have no doubt. I wish my wish my own children could have some work as well as play to give variety to their schooling"<sup>17</sup> Further Marx added amongst other things, how the monotonous and uselessly long school hours of the children of the upper and middle classes, uselessly add to the labour of the teacher, "while he not only fruitlessly but absolutely injuriously, wastes the time, health and energy of the children"<sup>18</sup>.

From the Factory System budded, as Robert Owen has shown us in detail, the germ of the education of the future, an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine productive labour with instruction and gymnastics, not only as one of the methods of adding to the efficiency of production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings<sup>19</sup> "The antagonism between the

manufacture in division of labour and the methods of Modern Industry makes itself forcibly felt. It manifests itself, .... As with division of labour in the interior of the manufacturing workshops, so it with the division of labour in the interior of society"<sup>20</sup>.

Modern Industry never looks upon and treats the existing form of a process as final. The technical basis of that industry is therefore revolutionary, while all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative. The bourgeois can not exist without continually revolutionizing the instrument of production, and thereby the relations of production and all the social relations. Conservation, in an unaltered form, of the old modes of production was on the contrary the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolution in production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, even lasting uncertainty and agitation, distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones, "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy I profaned and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind"<sup>21</sup>.

By means of machinery, chemical processes and other methods, it is continually causing changes not only in the technical basis of production, but also in the functions of the labourere, and in the social combination of the labour processes ..... But if Modern Industry, by its very nature, therefore necessitates variation of labour, fluency of functions, universal mobility of the labour, on the other hand, in its capitalistic form, it reproduces the old division of laobur with its ossified particularizations.... Modern Industry, on the other, through its catastrophes imposes the necessity of recognizing, as a fundamental law of production, variation of work, consequently fitness of the labourere for varied work, consequently the greatest possible development of his varied aptitudes. It becomes a question of life and death for society to adapt the mode of production to the normal functioning of this law.<sup>22</sup>

**Capitalist Education;** "One step already spontaneously taken towards effecting this revolution is the establishment of technical and agricultural school, and of "Ecoles d'enseignement professionnel". In which the children of the working-men receive some little instruction in technology and in the practical handling of the various implements of labour. Though the Factory Act, that first and meager concession wring from capital, is limited to combining elementary education with work in the factory, there can be no doubt that when the working-class comes into power, as inevitably it must, technical instruction, both theoretical and practical, will take its proper place in the working-class schools. There is also no doubt that such revolutionary ferments, the final result of which is the abolition of the old division of labour, are diametrically opposed to the capitalistic form of production, and to the economic status of the labourer corresponding to that form"<sup>23</sup>.

**Definition of the new social system:** "The system of unlimited exploitation of children's labour in general and the so-called home labour in particular is maintained only because the parents are able, without check or control, to exercise this arbitrary and mischievous power over their young and tender offspring .... The children and young persons, therefore, in all such cases may justifiably claim from the legislature, as a natural right, that an exemption should be secured to them, from what destroys prematurely their physical strength, and lowers them in the scale of intellectual and moral beings". It was not, however, the misuse of parental authority that created capitalist exploitation ... on the contrary, it was the capitalistic mode of production which, by sweeping away the economic basis of parental authority"<sup>24</sup>.

For the quest of more profit a keen competition developed among the capitalists. On this Marx clearly commented: "This", they naturally say, "is an injustice and loss to us, as it exhausts a portion of the boy's strength, of which we ought to have the full benefit".

Mr. J. Simpson (Paper box and bag maker, London) states before the Commissioners: "He would sign any petition for it". (Legislative

interference) ... "As it was, he always felt, lest others should be working later than him and getting away his orders".<sup>25</sup>

When the subject of education enters the periphery of jurisdiction then Marx commented that "The mode of examining the witnesses reminds one of the cross-examinations of witnesses in English courts of justice ... The whole force is true characteristic of the spirit of capital, not to call for a few extracts from this Report. For the sake of consciousness I have classified them. I may also add that every question and its answer are number in the English Blue books"<sup>26</sup>.

Marx again showed that to save the society for whom the Factory Act was evolved to control the greedy mouth of 'Capital-Shark'<sup>27</sup>. Marx wrote in capital: "...The changes in the material mode of production and the corresponding changes in the social relations of the producers gave rise first to an extravagance beyond all bounds and then in opposition to this called forth a control on the part of society which legally limits, regulates and makes uniform the working day and its pauses...."<sup>28</sup>

However, he showed also in the conflict between zamindars and capitalist the working class became profitable by receiving some reforms. Marx wrote, "... The creation of abnormal working day is therefore a protected civil war, more or less dissembled between the capitalist class and the working class. As the contest takes place in the arena of modern industry, it first breaks out in the home of that industry England..."<sup>29</sup>

H.C. Barnard wrote in the 'History of English Education', "Under this Act, the boys and girls those who were working in the textile mills, compelled the parents to send their wards to attend schools half of the day, either three or six days in a week. A few more schools were brought under this Acts of 1864 and 1887".<sup>30</sup>

Syed Sahedullah said, "However Factory Acts made compulsory arrangement of primary education for the child labours. In one hand, the whole system was erroneous, on the other hand, the periphery of application was very limited .... Although in comparison with "no arrangement" it was at least introduced something".<sup>31</sup>

It explores that bourgeoisie state felt for the spread of elementary education among the working people for their own class-interest. Mrinal Das showed, "For the development of production system need for primary education is indispensable. In 1791 after the French Revolution compulsory and free primary education had been introduced. Behind the development of Germany there was also the introduction of primary education in 1870. The immediate need for technical education entitled only those who had primary education. As Germany the ardent competitor of England could arrange technical education side by side primary and general education, so they acquired industrial skill"<sup>32</sup>. This skill helped them to raise demands of their goods. H.C. Barnard showed: "Industrial Revolution and invention of steam Engine attracts people's attention of mechanical technology. Mathematics, science, architecture and Engineering got massive importance. At that time, French Revolutionary ideology focused the demand for wider educational scope among the working class. There were vacancies in industries for technical hands and those who had some technical knowledge they were accepted as eligible for these vacancies .... It was realized by all that those who had received certain form of elementary education if they could get little more education that might help to increase production. It would ultimately help to come out from their inherent strata but that would help them serve in a better way staying at the same strata of the society...."<sup>33</sup>.

But the bourgeoisie were very speculative. "The experience of English educational history shows that replacing the stumbling block of the feudal class the bourgeoisie class in England introduced primary education Act in 1889. Meanwhile Prussia and France introduced it 100 to 150 years before England. For the surplus value they realized that need for the spread of education. But they equally developed those ideas which would deter revolutionary trends of the working class. They arranged plan-fully educational set up and syllabi which deterred and prevented the revolutionary sparks of the working class by influencing their mental and psychic world ... So for this flexible and ever changing

nature of bourgeois society helped in the spread and development of science, knowledge and technology. Can the common masses benefited in a capitalist society where education is run by individual motivation for profit generating? Naturally, bourgeoisie arranged and planned educational effort according to their need. And they give that much of education to the people as much it requires. The most cherished promise of salvation from bondage was not fulfilled by the bourgeoisie democratic revolution rather they bonded people from the bondage of serf-dom to the bondage of wage-slavery<sup>34</sup>.

There are certain opinions of Karl Marx on education in his famous work: "Critique of Gotha Programme". Gotha Programme was an educational resolution taken by German United Labour Union (Social Democratic Workers Party of Germany and General Association of German Workers is referred as Socialist Workers Party of Germany). Lasal, the leader of the General Association of German Workers Party was the main architect of Gotha Programme. Marx pointed out the lacuna of the programme and gave aside notes about what it should be.

The educational clause of the Gotha Programme is given bellow. "Being Estate's moral and mental base German Labour Party demands:

1. Universal and equal Primary Education System should be established by the State. School going should be made sure by the state on the basis of universal, compulsory and free education for all".<sup>35</sup>

Marx first raised a question "Equal education system? From which conception was it written? In present society (and discussion is going on present society) is it believable that equal education can be arranged? Or is it demanding for that education system, not only primary education, or education for wage labourer, other wealthy classes compatible with peasant class, will be forced to come down?"<sup>36</sup>

On "Universal compulsory schooling arrangement for Free Education", he said, the first one prevails in Germany. Second one, (free education) prevails in Switzerland and also in U.K. Hence, Marx referred to the demand of 'free education' and he showed how it should be

analysed and judged from the Marxian or labour class-point of view. He said, two important questions are related with it. First, for which classes this expenditure will be given? And second, which classes will bear this expenditure? In the language of Karl Marx, "Although in some of the provinces of U.K. a few institutes of higher education providing 'free education', actually it bears education expenditures for higher classes from the collection of general taxes".<sup>37</sup> Thus Marx suggested to add a new demand. He said, "In the section of Primary education, demand for installation of technical (theoretical and practical) schools would be worth mentioning"<sup>38</sup>.

Hence he put forth his objection in the word, "Primary education by the State". He observed: It's very much objectionable. Educational expenditure of Primary education, requisite qualification of the teachers, determining different branches of education by the general guideline of laws, again, this articulated laws, whether maintained or not, to supervise it through state inspectors or to put the state as people's educator - there is a great difference between the two. Rather it is desirable to keep Church as well as the State away from the educational front.

Despite so much democratic gesticulation and pampering, Lasolian group's slavery and faith on the state has made the whole programme a cursed. Rather, it can be said, it is a compromise between the two ideas, equally distant from socialism. It is needless to say, objection of the state involvement in educational system does not mean to exempt the state to provide education expenditure. It is worth mentioning that during Marx's life in England, in 1870, the law on Primary Education was taken, there was a provision for local elected organization to run the management of Primary education. H.G. Barnard wrote: "... a new local authority, the school board, was to be set up, it should be elected by the rate payers"<sup>39</sup> One interesting comment of the famous historian G.R. Travellian is worth mentioning here. He commented: "It was characteristic of the two nations that, whereas the German people already enjoyed good schools, but not self-government, the rulers of England only felt compelled to 'educate

their masters' when the workingmen were in full possession of the franchise"<sup>40</sup>.

Thus, Karl Marx mentioned about the clause in regard to child-labour. He observed that education should be based on the age of educate and onto his health. He said every child needs to give some labour based on his age. With regard to prohibit child labour, Marx told, Prohibition of child-labour – it is indispensable to mention age bar. It is incompatible with the general prohibition of child-labour and existence of large industry. Thus, to him its just a statement.

Even if it could be fortified, it would be a reactionary step, because controlling strictly the hours of labour according to age, and the security measures taken for the children, to change the society by mixing productive labour at tender age, is a most powerful means".

The valedictory note has been analyzed by Marx in 'capital' most elaborately. In Communist Manifesto Marx indicated a few (ten) an agenda to be implemented to stir the movement, the last agenda of it was like this:

"10 Free-Education for all children in Public Schools. Abolition of the contemporary model of child-labour system. To add education with industrial production, etc."<sup>41</sup>

To summarise the total development of capitalism in the light of Marxism, "From the perspective of economic condition, the history of Europe can be divided into four broad phases (a) Formation of capital by the merchant class; (b) Competitive capitalistic age; (c) Monopolist capitalistic age; (d) Monopolistic capitalist age at the face of the inception of proletariat state after 1917. During the later phase of the 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism took monopolistic shape in Western Europe and in Great Britain. The highest stage of capitalism is imperialism. Lenin in his masterly works "imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism" stated five basic characteristics of imperialism.

- (a) In the economic sector production and capital has become so centralized which generates monopolistic control on capital

- (b) Annexation of Bank capital and industrial capital, thus, supply of capital and accumulation of capital in industries, has given birth to a small but powerful coterie of capital supplies and investor.
- (c) As a result, previously imports of industrial goods were profitable, now its place has taken by import of capital.
- (d) These coterie of capitalists have formed different international monopolistic groups; they shared and divided the whole world market.
- (e) Most powerful nations among them has ultimately divided the other countries of the world and has captured it<sup>42</sup>.

These captured countries or markets of imperialists were their colonies. "Beside naked exploitation, the imperialists maintained these mass-repression and social injustices. So, the history of imperialism is the history of nationalist movement at the same time. Imperialism did not provide freedom or emancipation deliberately. The people of third-world achieved freedom by tremendous hardship-toil-blood tears and above all elevating nationalist movement"<sup>43</sup>. This was a time, when one-third of the total global population came under the fold of socialist pattern of society. Generally speaking, before the debacle of the U.S.S.R. and the east-European countries the world witnessed the heyday of socialism and they made a major headway after Second World War, world wide.

Despite the above debacle the basic content and characteristics of capitalism is still prevalent in the light of crisis of capitalism. "The general picture of capitalism is, over production and lack of market. It destroys productive powers by destroying finished products of the capitalists, raw-materials, keeping productive machineries in idle by means of unemployment"<sup>44</sup>. According to Mrinal Das, "In our days capitalism is absolutely playing a negative role". He further said: "Capitalism is a reactionary force at this modern-age. It is an enemy of further development of civilization and culture. It retrieves the development of science and technology: it tries to control the contradictions in society by means of prevaricated and mangled

education and human potent culture. But this gesticulation does not serve the basic interest to cope with the crisis of capitalism". "Thus, herein", he said that, "imperialism is also the last stage of capitalism, the inevitability of socialism is a must. But it does not destroy itself deliberately. The proletariat class will annihilate it by their revolutionary movement and will usher in and pave the way for further social development"<sup>45</sup>.

In a class-divided and exploitation ridden society the greatest lacuna of education is that education has been taken aside from the direct production system. As a matter of fact, this education can not contribute to the society effectively. Thus, educated people stay away from the mainstream of labour force. On the contrary, the tie between working people and educational world becomes weak. Thus, millions of working people are deprived from getting sufficient education. On the other hand, educated section of the population either remains away from the productive world or put themselves in the hierarchy of managerial positions. This situation develops incomplete, partial and some-what prevaricated ideas. Justifying the relations between education and the world of creative production, Lenin said "Without establishing relation between education and the productive force, we cannot imagine an ideal society for the future. Technology and Science, where it has developed today, education or teaching away from productive force - away from education or teaching cannot flourish at its desirable goal"<sup>46</sup>.

People liberation movement cannot be completed unless and until education can be attached with the mainstream of the peoples' movement and vice versa, proper education system cannot start unless and until liberation march of the people can be merged with. Education and true education related to the productive force helps to bring the change in social system. In 1918, Lenin delivered a lecture in the convention of the All Russia Teachers' Association : Education is a pivotal part of the movement that we are launching with all truthfulness and perfect honesty by the help of perfect clarity we can strike blatant lie and decepecting forces. We have declared to establish proletariat rule, our

sources of power and invincibility lies there. The bourgeoisie blatantly states that their educational institutions have no connection whatever with politics. This is a straight and pertinent lie. Mentioning the state of affairs in schools in Russia at the pre-revolutionary period, Lenin said: "All the academic institutions became arsenals of the bourgeoisie class. Bourgeoisie concepts were all pervasive in those academic institutes. The basic object and task of these institutions were to supply constantly reliable and loyal servants and skilled labour to maintain and perpetuate production ... We declare openly that education away from mainstream of life and politics is a farce"<sup>47</sup>. Lenin's conjecture was turned into reality when we look at China's example.

Sunderlal correctly says that: 'Our visit same afternoon to the Yenching University proved even more important. This University was established in 1919 with funds mainly collected in America. The leaders of New China admitted that many private Americans must have contributed to those funds in a spirit of real friendship for China; but as later events showed this goodwill was soon twisted to imperialist ends. American imperialism began to use the Yenching University, as it was using other missionary institutions in China, not only as an instrument of cultural aggression but also as a weapon for political and economic domination'<sup>48</sup>.

Sunderlal has effectively drawn the application of Marxism in the same institution. He says: "Now the whole atmosphere of the Yenching University is changed ... Yenching students are enthusiastically devoting themselves to the Resist America and aid Korea Movement ... The whole curriculum of the University has been reformed. Marxist perception of history and social development of Mao-tse-Tung's New Democracy are taught to all students"<sup>49</sup>.

### III

The role of politics in education can not be avoided. Veteran Gandhian and leading educationist J.P. Nayak wrote: "The political system always dominates the entire social scene, and hence those who

wield political power are generally able to control all the different social sub-systems, including the educational system, and manipulate them to their own advantage"<sup>50</sup>. He also said, "Education is essentially a liberating force. The educational system, therefore, is never politically neutral and it always performs three functions generally simultaneously, viz., it helps the privileged to dominate, domesticate the underprivileged to their own status in society, also tends to liberate, which of these effects shall dominate and to what extent, depends mostly on one crucial factor, viz... the quality and quantity of the political education it provides"<sup>51</sup>.

Karl Marx showed in "capital" in 1867 that working people should develop themselves to cope with rapid changing nature of capitalism where he can learn and take the change to do many things at the same time. It needs to develop his profession at such a level when he can face any situation. Marx also pointed out-despite tremendous unemployment and crisis in capitalism trends are ushered in among labour force to advance with to cope with this variable productive environment within fathomless despondency. He also showed that in capitalist state of affairs there is inertia among the existing classes and each class is trying to exert ones position over the other. Thus, the advancement of society is getting setbacks. As a result of it, socialism paves the way for total development of human being.

Apart from these crises of capitalism there are other problems faced by capitalism, Dr. Goldman, researcher and technocrat, said that to recover the setback of technology in recent years in U.S.A. can only be solved if there are ready markets for the product.

"But scarcity of market is the greatest problem before capitalism in this present world. Thus, United States is gradually rotting with crisis. Capitalism can not surmount this inevitable impediment. But the mode of production and production relations is different in a socialist country. So, the future of production is with socialism. Now, to elevate at the stage

of communism, it requires planned set up of polytechnics to reach people varied techniques to cope with every situation"<sup>52</sup>.

Professor Gurner Mirdal wrote in his famous work, "Asian Drama": "The Communist Countries have placed even greater emphasis on improving conditions of education.... So ideological influences from this sources have only strengthened the esteem in which these objectives are held...<sup>51</sup>" He further observed "Another influence was the delayed realization that the Soviet Union had made strenuous efforts to increase educational facilities on all levels, and the inference that her rapid emergence from a state of relative under development was partly attributable to these efforts"<sup>53</sup>.

This rapid development of economy has also attracted the attention of the bourgeois savants. The common usage on education says: "More you will give, more it will increase". Stress is now on mass-education. But the approach is on profit-making. Shahedullaha said, "It is the latest contribution of capitalism that capitalist economists are now busy in analyzing how much capital can be invested in education to get how much profit from it? This approach is certainly unique and latest in capitalism"<sup>54</sup>. Comment of Garner Myrdal shows: "Economic historians have regularly paid a great deal of attention to education and educational reform when seeking to explain why the rate of economic development has varied in different epochs and different countries ... But none in this tradition has tried to put educational reform into the conceptual straight jacket of a quantity of financial investment, accounted for in capital ratio. This is the only innovation in the economic approach..."<sup>55</sup>

In our on-going discussion we are trying to locate the role of education in the light of Marxism. In the later half we will concentrate on the implementation of Marxist educational idea in different socialist counties. However, by the coinage 'in our time', Marx wanted to explain the state of affairs of the bourgeoisie class in the perspective of his time. "Certainly, the perspective has changed a lot with the course of time. By the word 'present society' does not mean the changed perspective of 'our

world'. Ups and downs are going on among nations as well as in connection with ideology. Despite the debacle of the U.S.S.R. numbers of socialist countries are not meager. Practice of Marxism is going on there. Practical implementation of educational idea of Karl Marx is playing havoc. Let us have a glimpse to such countries, specially, to Vietnam and China.

### **First Hand Socialist Experience**

The combination of three factors, education, Party-organisation and Vietnam revolution has shown spectacular results in educational advancement. An American Journalist of 'News Week' wrote: "It was obvious that PRG was making special efforts in health and education. A common sight was a group of school children wearing badges quoting Hocht Min: "Nothing is more precious than Independence and freedom"<sup>56</sup>. It is not their any new endeavour, "To spread education and literacy among peasants and workers to take necessary endeavour and arrangement was ever inseparable part of their struggle. In May 1930 with the revolt led by Communist Party of Indo-China Nakhe Annd and Ja Kinha provinces of central Vietnam witnessed establishment of revolutionary forces into power. From the very inception of this revolutionary government established by working people, which lasted only a year, installed schools in those villages which were under their capitulation. The Party agendas of 1930 (October) laid emphasis on spreading education and culture and to fight against illiteracy and obscurantism. It happened to such a country where more than 95 per cent of people were in utter ignorance under the imperial rule. The direction of the Communist Party was that every commando would make the labours and peasants familiar with alphabets. It was considered that through this work the commandos would govern themselves to proletariat. The wheel of history turned little in France in 1936 by the installation of Popular Front in the Government. It gave the Communist Party in Vietnam an extra impetus to work legally. Party encouraged to

form organizations to popularize Roman words among the working people. Class was taken against illiteracy. These classes led by enthusiastic young people and government employees were spreading in lips and bounds in the towns and cities of Vietnam. They made developed rational and speedy techniques to expedite the education movement. In 1945 after August Revolution, these classes became the basis of 'people' education, movement and organization ... The second world war started in the year 1939. Imperial power ruthlessly suppressed revolutionary movement. In 1941, Ho-Chi-Min formed Vietmin Front ... The basic task of this Front was to organize revolutionary force and to take necessary measures locally to revolt against, so that general revolt might erupt. At the same time, Vietmin Front took the Agenda to fight against illiteracy, to develop the cultural standard of the people, and use of mother-tongue to elevate the standard of national culture and education. In the Party-thesis on the cultural subject in 1943, Party felt urgency for the eradication of illiteracy. In the different Revolutionary Centres and in free areas classes evolved against illiteracy. Near Chinese boarder, there is a 'Pak Bo' cave in Kav Bemg province. This cave became the headquarters of Ho Chi Min after he returned to Vietnam from self-exile. Here Ho was engaged in rendering training to his comrades. Specially, he was imparting the technique to learn Roman Words more easily to his comrades. After August Revolution of 1945, the Vietnamese nascent Republic faced a lot of trouble and problems. More than 20 lakhs people died in lieu of Franko-Japanese Policy. French Power was again trying to return. 95 per cent of people were illiterate. Ho Chi Min united the whole race by three pivotal struggle called Drought-Ignorance and Alien Aggression. These three were closely intermingled. Ignorance was treated as the greatest enemy of the people. "After 6 days of the declaration of 'freedom' on 8<sup>th</sup> September of 1945, Ho Chi Min by a decree established popular Education Department or Cell..."<sup>57</sup> Education was the part and parcel of the whole viet cong freedom movement as well as in the guidelines of Ho Chi Min.

## IV

**Principle and Policy – A Cross-Cultural Perspective:** Vietnam has worthy past and tradition in respect of knowledge and education. History of knowledge and education can be stressed back since third century B.C. It is history of continuous development and its written document is also available. But significant development ushered in especially during the 10<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. to 13<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. 1890, a French Soldier has written that they found and met such a race those who were very eager to learn and they tendered respect to educated and savants.”<sup>58</sup>

Despite this educational background, it was not sufficient in respect of today’s requirement. The Viet Cong Communist Party realized this point and gave attention to formulate necessary arrangements.

Whatever the educational movements and how did they formulate the educational system out of it? And where did they get the inspiration? They said, “Our country is passing through a national and socialistic revolution. It is emerging from a wearing out of the imperial and colonial rule. At the same time, it is also passing through a grave and significant social economic metamorphosis”<sup>59</sup>. They said that this revolution supplied impetus to develop and change the whole education in Vietnam. “Without this revolution, we cannot surmount the practical and technical impediments”<sup>60</sup>. “We can not give proper shape and character of education without this revolution”<sup>61</sup>.

In this movement teachers played a revolutionary role. Even in war ridden environment, when revolution and war disrupted everything, they were marching with educational mission. Although, backlogs were there pressure of various backlash of old-rotten ideas and obscurantism were felt. “Despite courage and patriotism, education was covered by old fossil conceptions of obscurantism”<sup>62</sup>. The basic structure of education was an old one. “Colonial rule and administration set up a model structure of Primary, Higher Primary and Secondary Education. Likewise, that model was also available in the social structure. As if, it was replica of social,

stratification. In return, we began with a general education system of nine years"<sup>63</sup>.

Apart from it, orientation programmes were taken to bring necessary change in the aptitude of the teachers. "Youth organs and trade unions also took part in the education movement. Reorientation programme was arranged to substantiate those teachers involved in the movement against illiteracy but not having sufficient educational background. Therefore, all means were taken to educate the adults"<sup>64</sup>.

"In 1960, after the Party Congress, the direction of education was taken to guide it towards establishing a socialist society"<sup>65</sup>. As a result of it, in 1965, the roll strength of students increased three-times more than a decade before"<sup>66</sup>.

It was then due to the invasion and aggression of U.S.A. that many schools, college and Hospitals were destroyed. Death of many people and teachers became a reality. The number of students was increasing by 5 lakhs every year. Because, with the beginning of the war, the Communist Party of Vietnam had supplemented a strict direction that whatever the casualty and suffering to bear with every difficulty and advancement of education should be carried out. People of Viet Cong responded well, understanding education as a blessing of the revolution. Thus, with full courage and vigour they were implementing the agenda of education simultaneously with chasing the foreign aggressor. The legendary example of courage and self-immolation the teachers-student combined force combated well with their weapon of education decrying and proving futile the conspiracy of U.S.A.

These problems were numerous and unique. No other socialist country experienced such type of problems before hand. These little problems were not easy to manage. A country invaded by an alien mighty force disrupts the whole situation and makes the problem more critical. Schools could not be held in one place. Secrecy had to be observed. It was very necessary to keep the students and teachers alive as well as to continue the educational tasks. They must be provided with job half a

day. It should be provided for the spread of education. Again education for physical labour, art and creative education should also be arranged. But what type of job would be provided for half a day? It is certainly easy to make arrangements in peaceful condition. But in a war time situation, there was no such scope. These types of problems were intricately prevalent in Vietnam at that time. There were tensions everywhere. But master-revolutionaries of Viet Cong said: "This tension provides inspiration and impetus for work and creativity.

One may be amazed to go through the circulars provided by the revolutionary government to schools. It said every secondary school must possess one laboratory. Necessary apparatus and instruments of laboratories should be produced by the State itself. The remaining laboratory apparatus should be exchanged among schools. And which apparatus and instruments could not be produced in the state should be mended. Another circular of 11<sup>th</sup> April of 1968 gave direction to lay emphasis on the learning of foreign language. Importance would be given on Russian and Chinese language among socialist countries and English and French among Western liberal countries. It had also stated about other languages. Every secondary student should learn two foreign languages. But one spectacular point is that all these decisions were taken during war-period. All these became possible because the policy and agenda of the spread of education was related with revolution, with war, with daily activities, with industry and agro-production; with the continuing stream of life it had a living connection<sup>67</sup>.

The case of erstwhile U.S.S.R. under the leadership of Lenin is a point in the case. Russia was regarded as the back-yard of the Europe. In 1917, the highest number of illiterates was living in Russia in the whole of Europe. 76 per cent of men and 88 per cent women of Russia were illiterate. The Bolshevik Party 1917 in the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress took the educational resolution which stated:

1. Introduction of mother-tongue as medium of instruction, use of mother-tongue in private and state offices. State language should be rejected compulsorily.
2. Schools were to be taken away from the influence of Church and to be given a secular shape:
3. Free-education should be arranged by the state for the students' upto age group of 16 years (General and Technical).
4. Free-food, dress and other educational requirement should be provided by the state.

In Soviet Union peoples' education and training was the direct responsibility of the State. Everything was to be provided on education from state-exchequer. The number of scholarships arranged to prepare future scientists and specialists were not available anywhere in the world ... Cuba, Korea all other socialist countries are also free from the curse of illiteracy"<sup>68</sup>.

The example of China as Syed Sahedullah said: "We have also seen attachment of education with production system. It never looks down upon the physical labour to ensure healthy environment in society"<sup>69</sup>.

Lu-Ting-E, famous Chinese educationist, said: "Education should be annexed to labour. We communists differ from the bourgeoisie concept of total development. The basic objective of total development means to us that acquiring knowledge by the students to the highest extent as well as to be eligible to work various works. In the words of Engles "They will acquire such qualities so that they can be taken to any sphere of activity or they can switch off from one branch of production system to the other branch". We understand that workers must be proficient in various forms of Industrial work, the peasants must be proficient with all forms of cultivation and again we understand that industrial workers can be placed in peasants role as well as peasants can be made to work in industrial worker's place. We believe that civilians may need to join in military and retired personnel of the militia might join in civil department help in production. We believe that party-workers must give physical

labour and those among them are in production system must take part in administration. These systems must taken part in administration. These proposals are gradually in the process of implementation. Thus, in a society, there is division of labour along with the scope of interchanging of work place and work, that type of work-culture easily suits with the society. This system is more rational and viable than the model of division of labour available in capitalist society. It will not only enhance the production but it will also provide rational change of working site, employing one force of production to the other sector of production, necessary adaptation and reshuffling can be done. The state can in a simple way take necessary measure rather than a haphazard way to solve the necessary problem of a situation.

At least we have reached to a point of advancement in agriculture and in industrial production. Already we are shifting a section of working force from one branch of production to another branch of production system. The item they were producing, if its rate surmounts the requisite demand of the society or is equal of it, naturally diversification of production calls for. The continuous development of man and society will get a clumsy stumbling if the society lacks the scope of transfer of labour force from one sector of production to other. It will, thus, bring down the level of total social production or Gross National Production. Our education and other systems should create such scope of transfer labour force. Our students can learn and acquire knowledge to the highest extent. But its propensity depends on the particular practical and mental state. Communist society will be one day mature, developed and robust in experiences, different skills can be developed in them at that stage. They will also earn the efficiency to do many other skilful tasks apart from their zone of specialization. This is our aim. We will move forward to achieve that target<sup>70</sup>.

To elevate the society into the Community society, Joseph Stalin said: "I must be assured that a state should created where educated in society may take active role in social development that much of education should be provided to them and they must not be tied in a particular

sector of production for the cause of division of labour, independently they can accept any profession as can get necessary education. So we must ensure that type of society where cultural advancement can be carried out<sup>71</sup>.

To differentiate the capitalist production system with socialistic pattern of production Mrinal Das commented: "The capitalism is suffering from its own contradiction. The production relation in a capitalist set up remains standstill. Again contradiction evolves in the development of labour force and its role in its development...<sup>72</sup>. To him, "Free development is only possible in socialist society. The educational entrepreneurship is fast moving in all the socialist countries. It is providing at the same time the freedom to flourish and the scope of proper utilization"<sup>73</sup>.

According to Syed Sahedullah the advancement shown by China in every sphere of science and technology has put the bourgeoisie savants in awe. In his word: "Since the beginning of the revolution the communist Party of China was inspired by the fundamental principles of Karl Marx. Creation of Insulin in the laboratory, invention of atom and nuclear arsenal, manufacture of computer, creation of intercontinental ballistic missile, the bourgeoisie scholars displayed new news clips. This development cannot be ushered in by the narrow lanes of electoral process. This development had not only ushered prosperity in a country like China, but the practical application of Marxism is taking man in many other egalitarian society with Rocket pace to a higher development, what the bourgeoisie pedantic can not even understand"<sup>74</sup>

A glowing example of the implementation of Marxian philosophy in relating education with economy and production can be found in the records of World Bank Report, "Global economic prospects and the developing countries 1993" stated, "The economy of the Chinese economic areas - China, Taiwan and Hongkong has become a varitable growth machine". At the current pace the World Bank estimated that by

the year 2002, at the standard International Prices, the Chinese economic areas (C.E.A.) gross domestic product should be \$ 9.8 billion (Dollars)<sup>75</sup>.

By then the Japanese G.D.P. at standard International Prices will be \$ 4.7 trillion (Dollars) and the German \$ 3.1 billion (Dollars)<sup>76</sup>. Although World Bank Report stated: If the unrealistic market prices, which grossly understate the G.D.P. of countries like China and India, are taken as the standard it is a different story." "But 'C.E.A. 'S' G.D.P. by 2002 will rank well ahead of that of France, Italy and the U.K. And it will be three to four times the size of India's G.D.P. or that of the former Soviet Union<sup>77</sup>.

The intimate connection of education with the social system which has been emphasised in the foregoing pages is of course, asserted almost too definitely by all Communists. Pinkevitch quotes from Lenin a passage on the schools of Western Capitalist countries: "The more cultural was a bourgeois state, the more subtly it deceived; asserting that the school can remain outside of politics and thus serve society as a whole. In reality the school was wholly an instrument of class domination in the hands of the bourgeoisie; it was throughout permeated with the spirit of caste; and its aim was given to the capitalists obliging serfs and competent workers"<sup>78</sup>.

"In the Communist State, the school is to be quite frankly an instrument of class domination in the hands of the proletariat, and there is to be no moral teaching other than what is useful to the workers in the class struggle. Lenin is quoted again as saying: "We deny any kind of morality which is taken from the non-human and non-class conception and we regard which morality as a fraud and a deception which blocks the minds of workers and peasants in the interest of landowners and capitalists. We say our morality is entirely subservient to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat"<sup>79</sup>.

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## CHAPTER III

### EDUCATION POLICIES IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Here in this chapter we will try to concentrate our attention and discuss the educational policies mostly taken and perused in the modern period. The term 'modern', however, is relative. Advent of the modern era is differed from country to country in respect of time. Modern age on the continent is calculated with effect from 1453 A.D. when India was very much medieval. Actually, the concept of modernity depends upon and is characterized by certain social, economic and political characteristics and value systems in our discussion of the major educational policies taken in different times since the beginning of the effort of the varied Christian Missionaries till the latest policy resolution of government of India, the Ashok Mitra Commission Report in West Bengal and the various policy decisions in recent years on education by the Left Front Government.

New elements in education can be traced back immediately with the arrival of different western colonial powers. Christian Missionaries came to India along with the European trading companies. The historians admitted the downfall of the Mughal Empire after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D., the end of medieval period as well as the beginning of modern period in history. The new era witnessed the growth of a new economic pattern, a commercial monetary economy, and the development of new social values, new education and a new political pattern. Missionaries of 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries provided a link between medieval education and modern education and helped the transition from the former to the latter.

The Christian Missionaries were the pioneer in the history of the spread of education in India to direct education with a particular mission and aim to fit in with the emerging and changing socio-economic and political environment. The reason behind coming to India by Christian Missionaries and the imperial powers were more or less the same and

happened almost simultaneously. But their aims and perspectives were not the same. Vasco-da-Gama discovered the sea-route to India in 1498 A.D. It is said, when he was asked 'why have you come to India?' He replied to find Christians and spices'. Although the missionaries and imperial forces were working in India keeping good liaison with each other, but their aims and perspectives were different. The imperial forces tendered their aid to missionaries to fulfill their spicy game and make spicier by getting some Christian friends within the fold of natives. On the other hand, missionaries tried to see more Christians for their ecclesiastical benefit and in their spree of getting to baptize more natives they would get help and aid from the martial power holders of imperial forces. Professor Mohinimohan Pan observed the arrival of the Europeans in his masterly work: Bharater Siksher Itihas in the above mentioned way.

Undoubtedly, the Christian Missionaries and the imperial powers landed on the coast of India more or less at the same time but they had a basic difference in their aims and perspectives. But this does not prove that they did not need each other's absolute help. The martial prowess of the imperialists aided the Christian Missionaries in their zeal for baptizing more natives into Christianity, thus helping the imperialists to have a firmer hold on the natives as a commercial power leading to achieve political supremacy.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a spate of missionary activities. The reason behind this spate of missionary activities throughout the world was due to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation among Christian missionary. The different geographical discoveries brought a new light to spread their dogmas and both the camps staked everything to secure new adherents. Hence missionaries spread out in all directions along with merchant companies.

Thus merchants and missionaries entered into the vast global field and particularly the subcontinent of India. Occasionally they worked together and occasionally they were separated. Yet, successes of one

directly or indirectly helped the other. They were, therefore, mutual benefactors. The missionaries infused a new religion and a new culture. The merchants infused a new economic relationship. Directly or indirectly this process prepared the ground for the establishment of British hegemony in India. The missionaries function as religious and cultural vanguard. The political and economic spearheads upheld the 'Whiteman's burden'<sup>1</sup>.

The merchant ships boarded missionaries apparently to serve the daily religious rituals and also to impart education to the children of the navigators during the voyages. It is hard to believe that this missionary educational endeavour was completely based on immaterial gains. History during this period requires keen attention. It depicts most clearly that the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French East India Companies brought along with them missionaries. These missionaries took extraordinary educational efforts including spread of Christianity among the natives. But the annihilation of their different 'kuthis' made for trade and business immediately resulted into the virtual collapse of their religious and educational functioning in India. It cannot be denied that the French East India Company entered into a political and commercial venture in right earnest with the far-flung dream of a French Empire in India. In their educational enterprise, they imitated the Portuguese by and large. The first mark of the spread of literal education can be found in them.

But the misfortune of the French led to the fortune of the English. The Goddess of Victory favoured the English and of the practical purposes the French had to withdraw. The concept of liberal thinking fully swept the whole of Europe as a direct influence of Renaissance. But the later phase of Indian subcontinent eagerly noticed and experienced the use and misuse of the liberal thinking of the British model or type.

That model of education began with "The Minute of Lord T.B. Macaulay 1835" was accepted by Lord William Bentinck. He endorsed it by writing one line beneath it, "I gave my entire concurrence to the

sentiments expressed in the minute". Professor J.C. Aggarwal commented: "The Resolution of March 1835 eventually determined the aim, content and medium of instruction of India. Promotion of Western Sciences, and Arts was acknowledged as the avowed object of the British Government in India"<sup>2</sup>.

The heydays of the missionaries came to an end after the English Victory in Plassey. Plassey did not lay the foundation of the British sovereignty in India but took the trend of history to the inevitable development. Thus the British Company became highly sensitive not to lead the situation out of their control to invite the French and the Dutch to take the advantage of British predicament. The Company, therefore, began to adopt measures to guarantee that there was no over zeal of the missionaries. The company discarded those functioning of the missionaries who might affect Indian sensitiveness in matters of religion, culture, education and customs. The company, specially, after 1765 wanted to pose as the champion and custodian to preserve Hindu and Muslim culture, education and traditions for their political and economic interests as it is observed by Syed Sahideullah in his work: Siksa O Shreni Samparka. The spate of educational endeavors by the Christian missionaries and the attitude of the British East India Company demands special attention. The attitude of the Company was entirely self motivated. In the ambitious political policies of the British Company, we perceive that they played contradictory role in their attitude toward the Christian evangelist's role. For example, Robert Clive invited Kiernander, who established a charity school at Port St. David, and he was also a S.P.C.K. employee, in Calcutta in the year 1758. Again that company after 1765 deferred and discarded the overzealous missionary activities for the sake of their political benefit and with a mind to perpetuate their same mission in India. Secondly, the far reaching affect of the policies adapted by the early British occupants ultimately influenced the whole educational policies in India during the entire British regime. The Company from the very initial stage avoided to resume direct responsibility to carry out the educational effort rather they encouraged

the missionaries to go ahead with it. Although in the latter half, we find, the Company was taking the responsibility of the spread of education in India, but the amount they were ready to spend was too meager to meet the colossal demands. Although the rules of liberal thinking was prevalent in educational world but where the policy science is concerned it discouraged the primary education for all or mass-education, which the early missionaries tried to spread in all respect. The new policy of the alien rulers gave birth to keeping allegiance with new economic stratification a newly vaunted and enlightened liberal educated elite class. The rest of the history of the educational policies in India is the history of class conflict, explicit or implicit.

The crux of the early educational policy of the East India Company can be aptly put into a nutshell through the views and analysis of a few eminent thinkers.

According to Sayed Sahidullah who said that it is well known that the East India Company did not allow the Christian missionaries in India, nor did they allow them to introduce a modern educational system. But Marx revealed a different light about this policy of the British. The nascent and ambitious industrialists were gradually emerging as a dominating force in England, so they needed Indian raw materials for their industrial productions and the Indian market for their finished products.

To execute the economic and political policy the British imbibed a minimum form of English Education for practical, profitable purpose. In this context the comment of Arthur Mayhew is note-worthy, "There was also the talk of development of the material resources of the country and the training required for the essential western work". Mayhew further says that "the British also introduced a higher liberal, western education to churn out a new clerks and Hakims who would help them in administration and also encouraged primary education to foster the growth of raw materials"<sup>3</sup>.

The famous historian R.C. Mazumdar, citing a few, example of benevolent Europeans in India tried to prove that the mobilization behind the British introduction of the liberal education policy to a certain extent was not solely commercial.

This view cannot be wholly supported because the East India Company in India only executed the formulated policies already adopted by the Board of Directors, seated in London.

Actually, the distinct policy made under the guideline of Macaulay was the famous percolate down theory or downward infiltration theory which sought, to express the content in the language of Macaulay: "To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population"<sup>4</sup>. Syed Sahedullah quipped that "If the system of education bestowed upon this particular section, they would carry out their national role to take education even at the lower strata of the society"<sup>5</sup>. But the motivation of the East India Company can be realized more clearly by Macaulay's Bill Report where he stressed unambiguously: "We do not at present aim at giving education directly to the lower classes... We aim at raising an educated class which will, hereafter, as we hope, be the means of diffusing among their countrymen some portion of knowledge we have imparted to them"<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, directly or indirectly this was also the common attitude of the educated servants among Indians. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar cited the problem of mass-education in this light: "As the best if not the only practicable means of promoting education in Bengal, the Government should, in my humble opinion confine itself to the education of the higher classes on a comprehensive scale"<sup>7</sup>. The emphasis of such argument of spread only higher education as he expressed in his letter to Charles Grant are as follows: "By educating one boy in a proper style the Government does more towards the real education of the people, than by teaching a hundred children here reading, writing and a little arithmetic.

To educate a whole people is certainly very desirable, but this is a task which it is doubtful whether any government can undertake or fulfill...<sup>8</sup>.

An extract from the Report of the Saddler Commission can focus light on the classes who were mostly benefited from the liberal education system, "... It is not yet from the agricultural classes any more from the commercial and petty industrial classes that the eager demand for educational opportunities has come, ... The classes whose sons came and filled the institutions to the brim were the middle or the professional classes commonly known as the *bhadralok*; and it is their needs and their traditions, which have in turn dictated the character of the University development in Bengal..."<sup>9</sup> The German philosopher of Hegelian model ridiculed the Indian emerging middle class educated people as "...As Trietschke, the great German apostle of blood and iron, said a few years back with a sneer: "Clerks of good family are only found in India, if at all..."<sup>10</sup>.

However, although there had been sufficient base for the further spread of elementary or primary education in India, the typical Indian class-structure nipped the scope in the bud. One statistical report from Adams' report shows: "... Burdwan with a population of 81,17,580 had altogether 931 schools (630 Bengali, 190 Sanskrit, 93 Persian, 1 Arabic and 3 English, 4 for girls) with 15,814 scholars including 175 girls studying in them..."<sup>11</sup>

The famous German ideologist Max-Muller also quipped "... Max-Muller on the strength of official documents and missionary report concerning education in Bengal prior to the British occupation asserts that there were 80,000 native schools in Bengal one for every 4000 ..." <sup>12</sup>. The Wood's Dispatch which initiated the destruction of indigenous education system, on the other hand laid finally the foundation stone of imperial administration and economic powers. The reflection of this imperial attitude is quite implicitly available in the confession in the Hunter Commissions Report: "The Government of India warned the Commission that in providing for the extension of primary schools the

limitations upon the action of the government by financial consideration should always be borne in mind"<sup>13</sup>.

## II

By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at this back-drop of Indian education system, the people of India consolidated the struggle against the imperial as well as feudal exploitation and rule in the different parts of the country. At the same time a section of enlightened people demanded for freedom and urged the people and government to come out from the economic backwardness. In a word, the Indian freedom struggle movement was taking its clear shape and language.

Just beside this we find the National Education Movement was spreading. Lord Curzon appointed "the Indian University Commissions in 1902 to enquire into the conditions and prospects of the Universities established in British India. The recommendations of the Commission did not aim at any basic structural change, but merely at the 'rehabilitation and the strengthening of the existing system"<sup>14</sup>. The Education policy of 1904 had rejected the idea of establishing new Universities. Secondary education was brought under more direct control of Universalities. As we have said earlier that the Nationalist movement for freedom gained momentum during the period. It further accentuated with crucial motivation of the Lord Curzon led government to cripple the nascent Indian nationalist freedom struggle. Thus at this period, education was taken as a major issue by the then Indian leaders. Nationalist leaders vehemently opposed the control of Indian education by foreigners. "The exiting system of education was planned to develop loyalty to British rule. The leaders pleaded that education should develop the nationalist character"<sup>15</sup>. The Indian Education Commission of 1903 gave a report on University Education in India. As a result, the Indian University Act was passed in 1904, and the Government of India passed the well-known Resolution on the Indian Education policy in which primary education was bestowed upon the provincial governments; D.P.I. had been made more active and powerful to fix up the educational budget; proposals

were kept to open more libraries, Colleges and to facilitate the teachers' training programmes; it also limited the size of the Senate to elevate the standard of affiliated colleges.

But the most important side of 1904 Indian Education Policy was that "it emphasized the necessity of adjusting technical education to the need of Indian industry and granting scholarships to the students to undergo training in Europe and America<sup>16</sup>. It was certainly a step forward from the part of the British administration in India to facilitate the industrial growth for the national interest of their own as well as to the rising demands of the nationalist bourgeoisie in India. The opinion of the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823 was the beginning of this policy. "It wanted to win the confidence of the educated and influential classes, by encouraging the learning and literature that they respected ... it would be best to apply the funds to the higher education of the upper classes as distinguished from the general elementary education of the masses"<sup>17</sup>. Although the nationalist movement gained a new direction as well as a new momentum the nationalist movement had brought the question of mass-education to the fore-front. This national education movement tried to develop the importance of mother-tongue, in place of English, to instigate the nationalistic zeal, demanding education for all, and also demanding for technical education to create among Indians skilled hands for future industrialization. Among the fore-runners of this national education movement were Sri Satish Mukhopadhyaya, Rabindranath Tagore, Arabindo Ghosh, Profulla Ch. Roy etc. They even took the steps to establish "National Schools" too. Names like Jagannath Shankar Seth, Jotiba Govindo Rao Phulle, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Ch. Paul and Bal Gangadhar Tilak are also most important in this respect. The epoch making initiative taken by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, "the outstanding Indian Leader was resolved to force the Government to accept the principle of free and compulsory education"<sup>18</sup>. As a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, "Gokhale moved a Resolution to establish this principle in 1910. That this council recommends that beginning should be made in the direction of making

elementary education free and compulsory throughout and that a united commission of officials and non-officials to be appointed at an early date to frame deficit proposals. Though Gokhale failed to move the Government, he was successful in obtaining the support of the Indians in working for mass-education"<sup>19</sup>. But this noble intention and endeavour was betrayed by a section of people among Indians. Later Lajput Rai wrote in one article: "Universal education should be arranged by the state and education expenditure should be made highest among all the state expenditures"<sup>20</sup>.

The intention of the British Government in funding least for education was not inexplicit. But the support from the one, privileged group of people from among the Indians was also not explicit. Marx wrote "... From the Indian native reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta under English Superintendents, a fresh class is springing, endowed with the requirement for Government and imbued with European Science..."<sup>21</sup>. It is correct that British administration in India, from the very beginning was highly reluctant to spend money. The Hunter Commission Report in 1882 categorically" advocated a policy of gradual withdrawal of the Government from direct enterprise leaving the secondary schools to private agencies..."<sup>22</sup>. The information we receive immediately after the British left the country was utterly deplorable. The opening balance, when the British Government finally left our country, gives us this shabby picture of Indian education. Despite their well-articulated system of education for about a century (1854-1947) and their solicitude for the rapid promotion of education in India, our opening balance, on eve of freedom, in every sector of education was extremely meager and disappointing. Little attention was paid to pre-primary education. The Report said, "For the first time, its importance was emphasized in the Sergeant Report of 1944... It, however, remained only an idea when India became free. The total enrolment in the age-group 6-11 was 141 lakhs, which means hardly 35 per cent in this age group in the primary schools. There were 50,000 secondary schools with enrolment of 8,70,000 or 4 per cent of the children of the 14-17 age group. The 19 Universities and 400

colleges had an enrolment of 2,50,000. The total expenditure was Rs. 57 crores or 0.5 per cent of the total revenue of the government”<sup>23</sup>. The one plus point of the British education policy was that they never hid their motives to spread western liberal education in India. During the tussle between orientalist and occidentalists finally the Company tilted its support for the liberal education policy. Lord William Bentinck’s Government in 1835 outlined the policy of the British clearly: “We want a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and in intellect. The epithet ‘learned native of India’ could only be applied to a person versed in the philosophy of Locke or the poetry of Milton and that the objective of promoting a knowledge of sciences could only be accomplished by the adoption of English as the medium of instruction”<sup>24</sup>. Again while endorsing the views of Macaulay, Bentinck issued a proclamation: “The great object of the British Government would, henceforth, be the promotion of European literature and science through the medium of English and that the government funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone”<sup>25</sup>.

This proclamation had far-reaching consequences. It gave rise to two castes in a caste-ridden society of India – ‘English-knowing caste and non-English – knowing man or people’. Also, knowledge of English language became a prominent cause of the growth of Indian Nationalism. In the words of Mayhew, “it helped India linguistically to find herself. Indians till 1880 or beyond proved themselves on out-Macaulaying”<sup>26</sup>.

We cannot deny that English liberal education, on the one hand, was a key factor of Indian Nationalism. On the other hand, were all the India nationalists on out-Macaulaying’ themselves. Sambad Prabhakar, a leading Bengali newspaper, during that period gave us some flash of editorial comments: “... The responsibility of the agricultural field lies on the ignorant, illiterate and poor peasantry ... They failed to develop the agro-production due to lack of knowledge, lack of education and also lack of fund appropriation ... But unless and until the educated sections of our society will not interfere and involve themselves in this productive

sectors the conditions will remain as same as before ... There is need for scientific knowledge on agriculture and this scientific knowledge should be imparted to sons of educated sections of our society"<sup>27</sup>. It should be noted that the editor suggested imparting agricultural education in place of primary education.

### III

The need for a National education policy was thoroughly ignored almost in all the commission reports. A step-motherly attitude was most convincingly found under Diarchy, "Reserve Subjects" gone under the direct responsibility of the Government whereas education, a "transferred subject" became the direct responsibility of the powerless and penniless Indian ministers specially during the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1929 under the leadership of Sir Philip Hertog a Committee was established. This famous Hertog Committee pointed to the dilution of quality but actually deterred its speed. The subject matter of education was first broadly thought of in national perspective during the period of provincial autonomy. But they could not fortify due to their fractional staying at government (1937-39, 1946-47). The abortive Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37) also suggested about technical education but kept mum on the question of National Education. Although just before the final departure of the British from India the Sergeant Report of 1944 put forth the ideals of Education policy which they never implemented but now at the verge of their final departure they solemnly suggested "It recommended universal, compulsory and free primary education for all between the ages of six and fourteen"<sup>28</sup>.

A pertinent question would certainly come to our minds that in the last education report the British government in India recognized and consented on the universal educational right and free primary education. The Indian Nationalist leaders were also eloquent to this point to implement it. But why did the Government of India showed reluctance and ignore all through to introduce a national education policy?

One section of liberally educated Indian leadership felt for its need in our national resurgence. The demand for 'National Education' in due course got political recognition. In the year 1906 under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak the demand for a 'National Education Policy' was passed by the plenary of the Congress in Calcutta. Gandhiji also took the point of backwardness of education sector in India to the Round Table Summit in 1931 in London. As a result of it politically it got a special importance. In course of time Gandhiji endeavoured to form a plan on Education. "This new educational plan is famous in the name of 'Nei Talim'<sup>29</sup>.

But we should keep in mind that "the suggestions and ideals put forth by different Indian personalities were not alike in their point. And it is a natural offshoot because the interest and specially class interest of these leaders were else not alike"<sup>30</sup>. In 1929 in the discussion on a Bill on Rural Primary Education in the Provincial Legislative Council of Undivided Bengal, a section of Zaminders of Bengal vehemently opposed the Bill. They went against the 'education cesses on Zaminders. That move was basically against the spread of education among the poor peasantry. Some of the proceedings and editorial comments may disclose the strength of the British power in India not to universalize the mass-education rather simply stressed on the liberal ideals amongst a handful of educated people almost all belonging to the upper strata of the society. Bhabesh Moitra has observed in his work: Shiksha Prasange.

Council debates on Bengal Rural Primary Education Bill:

Extract from proceedings 5<sup>th</sup> August to 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1946:

The first move originated from a resolution, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1946. Maulavi Rajibuddin Tarafdar moved a resolution demanding immediate introduction of Primary Education. Surendranath Ray supported the resolution. Government proposed amendment, suggesting substitution "with as little delay" for "immediately" implementing the Resolution, and ultimately it was passed:

“The council recommends to the Government that steps be taken with as little delay as possible for the inauguration of a system of free and compulsory primary education in Bengal”<sup>31</sup>

The Bill was the Government’s response, whatever its character, to the said resolution.

The Congress spokesman quipped “to oppose the motion for the consideration of the Bill and to object to the principle underlying the Bill” said: “We are not prepared until other sources of indirect taxation have been explored to burden ourselves with further taxation and a taxation one-fifth of which is to be paid by poor agriculturists and the entire amount of which are to be paid into the public treasury by rent receivers big on small whether they are able to collect the rent from tenants or not, ... Now, sir, it is quite well known that life in the urban areas is much more strenuous than the simple life in the rural area and there is no necessity to accentuate the intelligence of the boys and girls there ...”<sup>32</sup>.

Sir J.L. Banerjee: “The select committee made a change, they altered the proportions. But the Government’s love for the Zamindar is unbounded. It has accepted every other suggestion of the Committee but so far as this most just and righteous proposal is concerned they have turned it down once again and have quietly gone back to the original proposal of 4 piece upon the tenant and 1 piece on the landlord. Some distinguished gentleman of the Swaraj Party have gone even further; they have suggested that even this one piece upon the landlord is too much and that the entire cess must fall on the tenant. Yes, the whole burden must fall upon the tenant for have they not got backs which are sufficiently broad and therefore, fit to be crushed whatever additional taxation may be put on them?”<sup>33</sup>

Shir J.M. Sengupta stated: “It would be a very deplorable state of affairs in the province of Bengal if we have one policy followed with regard to education in urban area and another followed by a different set of man in the rural areas in which case there would be two kinds of children

growing up most probably with perfectly different and opposite mental outlook”<sup>34</sup>.

Shri Ranjit Pal Chowdhury (Congressman, a Zamindar) raising his support of the Congress motion of opposing the Bill, said “... Indeed landed aristocracy notwithstanding all these unwanted circumstances have hitherto stood firmly by the standard of loyalty but I fear they may have to break away essentially if too much stress is put upon them indirectly”<sup>35</sup>.

Mr. Azizul Haq (later member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council, author of ‘The man behind the Plough’) in his speech refers to an educational conference in Bogra in 1908 which ‘demanded” primary education for the masses and were even prepared to be taxed for this purpose the mussalmans suggested that even if it were not considered possible to tax the entire community the mussalmans along ought to be taxed – (vide Council proceedings August, 1930).

Shri Sarat Chandra Pal moving that “The collection of any education cess in excess of the cultivating ryot’s share shall be illegal” said: “Sir, there are many influential landlords in Bengal excepting some benevolent landlords many of whom are against the imposition of primary education cess and as the Bill is going to be passed into law in the teeth of their opposition it is not unnatural to think that as the landlords are interested with the duty of realizing education cess they or their rent collectors may take advantages of the law and being the protector of the helpless illiterate ryot may realize the whole education cess from them...”<sup>36</sup>.

The reaction of the common masses can also be traced back amidst the additional comments on the subject. In ‘Bengal Co-operative Journal’ we find some letters. One of such letter depicts: “Primary education in order to be effective, should be free and compulsory ... A large number of students should come from all over the province but students will not be forthcoming if primary education is not made compulsory”<sup>37</sup>.

In opposition to Modern Review published in the note of Shri Ramananda Chatterjee it has been said by him and other – that as it would not be possible to make the Government of India abstain from swallowing in future what extra-large amount it appropriates from Bengal there is no means left for the Bengalees to get universal education except fresh taxes.... It may be said Bengal may get back her own in some distant or near future, till then, Are the Children here to grow up into illiterate and ignorant masses in the meantime? Not necessarily, if, as Mr. Nazimuddin says, the Bengal farmers and ryots are willing and eager to pay cess for the education of their children why cannot they and their leaders from education committee in each village, tax themselves, collect such tax and have and manage their own school? Such an endeavour would result in those who pay the piper also calling the tune...<sup>38</sup>.

Yet why did the Government through the Sergeant Report give a clear chit for universal, compulsory and free primary education for all between the ages of six and fourteen? The reason does not remain unclear. The motion of G.K. Gokhale in March 1910 in the imperial council had been withdrawn on an assurance from the Government that the demand would be considered sympathetically. But sympathy was never shown. But a strange feeling erupts immediately when in 1944 government suggested the above requirements in the arena of education. The change in the attitude of the Government can be understood to a good extent through some relevant information of Report of the Industrial commissions. Extracts from one of such shows: "Para 142. A factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workmen. The evidence tendered by employers was almost universally in favour of both skilled and unskilled that had at best revived a primary education. This is given in countries with which India will have to compete and is a sine qua non in this country also. This (i.e. providing education) is a duty which, we think, properly developed on local authorities and the government"<sup>39</sup>. In this regards the rapid expansion of primary education, "The decade following year 1921, was a rapid expansion of education,

especially at the primary level ...<sup>40</sup> and also the suggestion of the Hartog Committee of 1929 emphasized on "... the introduction of diversified curricula at the secondary level and placed more emphasis on industrial and commercial subjects... The committee drew the attention of the authorities to the problems of stagnation and wastage, the disparity in literacy between men and women ... lack of industrial and vocational training"<sup>41</sup> so that students could prepare for practical occupation. It was resounded in the Report of the Fiscal Commission 1921-22. It stressed: "Para 122. The Industrial Commission pointed out that 'a factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of the Indian industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workmen and we wish to lay stress upon the indisputable truth of the statement. The quality of Indian labour can be raised by an improvement in the education of the labourer which will lead to a higher standard of intelligence and a higher standard of living. We feel that the type of primary education at present given in India is not always suitable to the development of efficient industrial population. We would suggest that the primary school curriculum should include some form of manual training and that the education system should be devoted for more than at present to awakening of an interest in the mechanical pursuit. If a more practical and industrial turn can be given to primary education, the difficulty to which we have already referred in regard to the supply of industrial labour would be likely diminish"<sup>42</sup>.

But a most pertinent question comes when land-holding sections of our society at that time was very powerful, still how did nascent Indian bourgeoisie able to influence the British administration? The second important question; what was their 'real' "interest in mechanical pursuit in India" and 'actual' image of their economic "difficulty"?

In those period when Bengal Government asked Mr. Bill on 3<sup>rd</sup> August of 1920 to place on the advancement of education. Mr. Bill put forth his report on 31<sup>st</sup> March of 1921 where he mentioned 'the valid' reasons of those who went against the 'too much' of spread of education "it is not necessary to accentuate the intelligence of the rural people".

One of the Bengal Administration Reports said: "If peasantry starts reading and writing and start thinking, then they will be trapped by the immoral propagandist. It would be gross indulgence to foolishness' to agitated proletariat with the agitated middle class". Apart from this Mr. Bliss understood well without quoting French Philosopher Denis Diderot, "to deceive an educated peasant is a more difficult task then deceiving an uneducated one"<sup>43</sup>.

Our conjecture can be substantiated with some relevant references from different countries the stage conducive for elementary education: "... Elementary Education in Britain it was made compulsory in 1870, admittedly to increase the competitive power of British Industry..."<sup>44</sup>.

The introduction of elementary education in Great Britain became prominent in the statement of Sir I.A.R. Marriott. He said in his masterly work "Modern England", "... In 1891 a still greater change was effected. The fees paid by parents were abolished and the state undertook to make good deficiency - Thus elementary education became not merely compulsory but gratuitous ..."<sup>45</sup>. The Historians' History of the World shows: "...The ministry of 1886 which endured till 1892 ... Made elementary education free throughout England. The alliance with the liberal unionists was, in fact, compelling the conservative government to promote measures which were not wholly consistent with wholly conservative traditions or urges..."<sup>46</sup>. The reason for compulsory elementary education and why it was introduced in Britain as a first-forward measure can be identified in Brigg and Jordon's writings. They say: By 1870 the need for technical education was much more urgent than in 1840 and it was obvious that technical instruction could not be given to persons ignorant of the rudiments of a general education.

Moreover, our industrial and economic supremacy was beginning to be challenged both on the continent of Europe and the new World.

Throughout people of all parties and beliefs began to see clearly that it was necessary to educate to some extent at least, if we were to

survive the struggle for existence between nations. These ideas and believes paved the way for national education"<sup>47</sup>.

#### IV

The spear of education is more sharer than the ignorant powerful militia. The spate of the advancement of little Prussia was such an example. "...The noteworthy advance which Prussia, for example, had made since the beginning of the century and her recent success in war against French was attributed as much to her educational system as to her military organization..."<sup>48</sup>. The interesting aspect of the capitalist industrial development is that it never unifies neither capitals nor the capitalists in the broad framework of liberalism. In capitalist development envy is the moot point not the liberal mindedness in the least. The immediate success of Germany under Prussia instigated France to follow the same trend. The trend setter Frederick William I of Prussia "ordered all children to attend school where school existed in 1717..."<sup>49</sup>. An article in the Punch, September 21, 1966 by A.D.C. Peterson on the nature of snobbery in education foretold the French 'Merchants' the need for liberal education. Thus, "The Constitution of 1791 provides that Primary education should be compulsory and free....

The wars of 1866 and 1870 were victories of the Prussian School master and aroused western part of Europe to the importance of popular education. For France the reform of popular education was essentially part of national restoration.

The laws making primary education gratuitous, compulsory and secular are in dissolutely associated with the name of Ferry. The law of 1888 abolished fees in all primary schools and training college, the law of 1882 established compulsory attendance and finally the law of October 30, 1886 enacted that none but lay persons should teach in the public schools all distinctively religious teaching"<sup>50</sup>.

Our attention is drawn to one aspect of Internal Trade. A general question evolves why country exports a particular commodity to other country and also why one country imports one commodity from a

particular country? The answer lies on the "principle of comparative advantage or cost". But this one-time axiomatic theory of International Trade became descended by the rise of Germany and the U.S.A. "To cope with the challenge of international trade with England they were provided appropriate education, provided training to develop skilled manpower which on the turn proved the 'principle of comparative advantage or cost notwithstanding with the changing scenario of modern economy'<sup>51</sup>. The reason behind the introduction of English liberal education in India becomes more explicit in the words of Professor F.W. Taussig. He depicted and analyzed the sufficient cause of the introduction of liberal education in their country and elsewhere as it a subject-matter of world-wide economic phenomenon. He said "... while International Trade is not likely to modify the alignment of grades within a country, peculiarities in that alignment may affect international trade. I will call attention to one or two instance in which this sort of influence seems to have appeared, departing for the moment from the general plan of this book under which illustration and verification have been relegated to the later chapter.

The first illustration comes from the history and position of the chemical industry of Germany. I speak of the situation as it was of 1914-18; what happened in Germany in the years immediately after the war is too confused for the illustration of the forces ordinarily a work in international trade. Before, 1914, as is well known chemical industries and especially those yielding highly elaborated coal for products, were more successfully carried on in Germany than in any other country. Coal for dyes and drugs were supplied to England and the Unites State from Germany; the domestic output in these countries was negligible. Other countries also were supplied by German imports, though not as preponderantly as the two English speaking countries. The Germans evidently had some advantage in making these things. Was it a comparative advantage? Certainly not of a particular kind of labour that of chemists and chemists' skilled assistants. "Germany had a learned proletariat. The excellence and easy access of technological education and the powerful social forces which attracted large numbers from the

middle classes into the learned professions brought about a large supply at a low remuneration of highly trained chemist. Similar excellence of intermediate education supplied to their officers – a capable non-commissioned staff (to use a military analogy) there was a supply of exact careful assistant and workmen also paid at rates low in comparison to those of other countries ... The special cheapness of the types of labour needed an unusual degree in the industry served to give it a comparative advantage – i.e. an advantage in the pecuniary terms which are decisive in the market. And the advantage doubtless was not confined to the coal for other chemical industries. It was probably general. It appeared in scientific industries of other kinds, such as for example the making of optical instruments, surgical instrument's laboratory, apparatus. Not one industry only but a considerable number of German industries similar in character were given a place of their own in international trade because of the especial position in Germany of the grade of labours needed for their products..."<sup>52</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the Educational Policies in the Post-Independence Period:**

"Long year ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of mid-night hours, when the world sleeps, India will awake of life and freedom". With these eloquent words on the historic night of August 14, 1947, Shree Jawaharlal Nehru signaled free India's journey into an unknown future. India stepped out from the old to the new ... The Indian nation long suppressed, "awoke to life and freedom".

"For redeeming the pledge substantially", new objectives and new obligations were outlined – India decided to be an effective democracy. This fact alone underlined the vital as well as pivotal role of education in the national development. "Educate your masters" became the slogan of the resurgent nation. This culminated in making liberal provisions in the Indian Constitution. Syed Sahidullah observed this in his work.

After independence we started with a burst of enthusiasm with the expectation that all our aspirations would be fulfilled and internal and external problems of education will be solved. But, what we inherited and what would be our basic and new objectives?

1. We had inherited a colonial system of education established by the British rulers to facilitate their exploitation and to produce efficient servants of probity. Free India needs to change the very nature and objectives of education in keeping with the national aspiration of a democratic republic advancing with national urge for all round progress.
2. The unscientific curriculum for the then education had no relation with life situation. The methods of instruction were old and traditional. Entire school life, including syllabi, instructions and administration was dedicated by the nightmare of examination. This should be changed.
3. Technical and vocational education had been ill developed. The few institutions that existed had not attained due social status. Individual difference and needs of diversified education were least attended to.
4. There was no state obligation to provide education for all the citizens. Even primary education was not universal or compulsory or free. Expansion of education had been throttled by a thousand devices. Religious, class and caste differences had perforated the educational life of the people. "The entire system was smarted under the domination of English. In fact, there was no existence of a national system of education"<sup>53</sup>. We need to start with an aspiration to build one such education system.

A new constitution for independent Indian became effective from 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950. For the success of democracy and for the spread of liberal ideas the vital role of 'education for all' is no new coinage. To attain this goal the constitution of free-independent India provides 'Constitutional provisions on Education. On our way to discuss the major

educational policies taken after independence by the Government of India we would pick up each of the provisions mentioned in our voluminous constitution, thus would try to light on it from various perspectives.

1. Free and Compulsory Education: Article 45, under the Directive Principles of State policy, lays down: "The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years".

The expression "State" occurring in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include "the Government and Parliament of India and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.

Therefore, the task of universal elementary education is the joint responsibility of the central government, the various state government and the local bodies, as well as the voluntary organizations. In respect of primary education, the Union Government has some important Functions to perform:

- (i) "acting as coordinating agency; (ii) developing research in elementary education; (iii) starting pilot project; (iv) leveling out the differences between states and ensuring equality of opportunities; and (v) providing financial assistance to the less developed states"<sup>54</sup>.

## V

### **Pre-Primary Education**

In the modern concept of education pre-primary education plays an important role. The idea of pre-primary education is quite old. Plato, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Foerbel, the Macmillan Sisters, Robert Owen, etc. all have been the great advocates of nursery or pre-primary education. Pre-primary education is a very comprehensive education which includes parental education, prenatal and school care. It extends from the birth of the child to his entrance into a regular primary school.

To speak about the pre-primary education one of the Macmillan sisters said "The nursery school, if it is a real place of nature and not merely a place where babies are minded' till they are five, will affect our whole educational system very powerfully and very rapidly"<sup>55</sup>. Pre-primary education is needed for the physical, social, intellectual, psychological and emotional health of the child. There are varied types of pre-primary schools – kindergartens, Nursery schools, Montessori schools, Pre-basic schools, Privately sponsored single-teacher, single-room-pre-schools etc.

Dr. Montessori came to India in 1940 and stayed till 1948. She trained a number of group teachers and opened a number of Montessori schools in big cities. Gandhiji also realized the importance of pre-primary education. In 1944, the Sergeant Report called upon the government to provide pre-primary education in the following words: "An adequate provisions of pre-primary institutions in the form of Nursery schools or classes is an essential adjunct to any national system of education ... Nursery classes should be attached to Junior Basic-primary schools ... pre-primary education should, in all cases, be free ... to persuade parents to send their children to school voluntarily ... The main object of education at this stage is to give young children social experience rather than formal instruction"<sup>56</sup>. In India, the Secondary Education Commission Report (1952-53), the Indian Education Commission 1964-66), the Committee of Members of Parliament of Education, 1967, National Seminar on pre-primary education held on 1971, the Study Group on the Development of Pre-school child – 1972 have laid ample emphasis on the provisions of nursery education.

The past three decades have seen a major turn in the history of the pre-school movement in India. "In 1950-51, there were only 303 pre-primary schools with 866 teachers and the total number of children on roll was about 28,000. The total direct expenditure was 1.2 million or 0.1% of the total educational expenditure ... In 1955-56, the number of pre-primary schools rose to 3,500 with 6,500 teachers and the total number of children went upto 75,000.. The total direct expenditure also rose to 4 million or 0.2% of the total educational expenditure"<sup>57</sup>.

It is common knowledge that pre-primary education has not progressed well in our country. Firstly, we should have an Indian system of nursery schools not entirely based on western ideology, unfortunately which are prevalent. Secondly, what position should it be given in the ladder of education is another significant issue. Thirdly, although the education commission a pointer for reform but Pre-primary education is more needed for children of backward families, where parents are illiterate. Still, much step has not been taken in this respect. Fourthly, the slow rate of expansion of pre-primary education has been showed due to expensive rate of fees. There was enrolment of 5% of the children in the age-group 3-5 and over about 5% of children in age-group of 5-6 by 1986. Fifthly, at present, many pre-primary institutions are being set up by private organization and individuals. Almost there is no control of Government on them. Most of the institutions are being run on commercial lines and the education being imported by them is substandard. Some good institutions are there but they charge exorbitantly. Sixthly, selection of curriculum is another important issue in this respect. Proper curriculum is needed to fulfill the objectives of pre-primary education. Seventhly, to uplift the standard of these pre-primary schools there is need for proper training and guidelines. It should be provided with juvenile literature for children and professional literature for teachers is a vital issue. Providing appropriate equipment to the children in these schools is another urgent task. Eighthly, methods and ways are required to create consciousness among the parents to send their wards to these schools. Last but not the least, for quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of pre-primary education, it is essential that special stress should be laid on the development of appropriate programmes of research and experimentation. The Indian Education Commission said: "Every encouragement should be given to experimentation, particularly in devising less costly methods of expending pre-primary education"<sup>58</sup>. The International Commission on Education (1971-72) rightfully suggested: "The development of education for pre-primary age children must become one of the major objectives for

educational strategies in the 1970s", but we should live up with these promise to achieve the coveted goal onwards till every child is provided the facility of pre-primary education.

### **Elementary or Primary Education:**

Elementary education constitutes a very important part of the entire-structure of the society. It is in this stage that the child moves for formal institutions and thus with formal education, begins, elementary education which deserves the highest priority. Because, the education which he/she receives provides the foundation of his physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and social development. To standardize secondary and higher secondary education, highest form of elementary education is required. Thus sound elementary education gives a fillip to sound secondary and higher education.

"The need for sound and compatible elementary education is necessary not only from the pointer of social justice and democracy, but also for raising the competence of the average worker and for enhancing national productivity. Apart from being a Constitutional obligation, the provision of universal elementary education is crucial for spreading mass literacy, which is a basic requirement for all-round economic development, modernization of the social-structure and the effective functioning of democratic institutions. The importance and success of elementary or primary education is more vital as it is considered as indispensable first step towards the provision of equality of opportunity to all its citizens"<sup>59</sup>.

Earlier we have elaborately tried to point almost in depth the causes of the failure in spread of primary education in our third plan period. The Constitution makers wanted to bring all children of the age-group of fourteen under the fold of free and compulsory basic and primary education within 1961. So the modified target became to bring 90 percent of children of this age-group to school by 1971 and 100 per cent by 1971. But the statistics show we have failed to reach the target. During 1965-66 children attending this age-group 76.44%, during 1971-

72 it was 77.3%, 85.3% in 1974-75 and 1978 as figure stood about 90% (Ministry of Education, pp.68-72).

Again wastage and stagnation have been great agents to Indian education. Statistics show that the number of elementary schools have increased from 2,09,671 to 4,66,264 and we have now a primary school within easy walking distance from the home of every child. The enrolments in classes I to V have increased from 191.5 lakhs in 1950-51 to 771 lakhs in 1978-79. In classes VI to VIII, the enrolments have increased from 312 lakhs in 1950-51 to 211 lakhs in 1978-79. The expenditure on elementary education has increased from 85 crores to about 743 crores in 1978. But the literacy rate has not increased much. An all India Survey tried to show the ratio of dropping off of the students. Among the 100 students in class I, the enrolment in class II falls to 66, in class III it falls to 52, in class IV to 40 and in class V to 32.40. This is reduced further to about 25 by the time class VIII or the age of fourteen years is reached. Thus, from the survey report of the Fifth All India Education Survey we gather some startling information about the precarious conditions of the primary education in India. The survey says, (a) "More than two lakhs of primary schools have no pukka building; (b) 71 thousand schools are held under the open sky or under tents; (c) 41.5% of primary schools have no black boards; (d) 4,97,269 schools have less than 5 rooms. Only 46,410 schools have 5 or more than 5 rooms, Smt. K.C. Kochhar aptly said, "...the policy of the Government towards primary education was just like a blind man grinding his food, unaware of the dog eating it away, and the educational machinery, it is like a 100 horse-power engine working with only 24 per cent efficiency"<sup>60</sup>.

In relation to the discussion of elementary education in our country, basic education has been accepted as the official plan for universal compulsory education in the country. Basic Education is the most practical and unique contribution of Gandhiji. He said, "My Plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts is thus conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fought with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral

basis of relationship between the city and the village..."<sup>61</sup> He said again, in 1937, "By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man-body, mind and spirit"<sup>62</sup>, he wrote in July, 1937 in Harijan, it was beginning of the greatest experiment in the theory and practice of education in our country. Similar contradiction can also be found in the English education system in England. H.C. Dent saw a change. "The old prejudices – the false antithesis of liberal and technical education and the groundless suspicions about vocational studies have lost their icy grip; and we can look forward with more hope to the creation of an educational system that will provide much better preparation for life and one more appropriate to this century of change and challenge"<sup>63</sup>.

Late Dr. Zakir Hussain first nurtured elementary education in a Conference at Wardha. Thus, the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Shir B.G. Kher, the Committee emphasized that the scheme was one of education and not of production.

After independence, the Kothari Commission 1964-66 incorporated in his recommendations many of the essential features of Basic Education. Work-experience, community-living and community service, integration of academic knowledge with experiences, respect for all religious and world citizenship, have been recommended by the Commission in the light of what it terms a 'modernism'. Furthermore, National Education Conference was convened by Shriman Narayan at Sevagram in October, 1972, after a lapse of more than three decades. The Conference issued a 'Consensus' statement declining that 'education at all levels should be imparted through socially useful and productive activity, linked with economic growth and development in both rural and urban area'. Once more, the importance of Basic education has been emphasized by the UNESCO Commission on the Development of Education in this language in the title, "Learning to be", that, "... education must cease being confined within school house walls, and many forms of social and economic activity must be used for education

purpose". We would like to go back again to our points of educational reports on the broad based primary education since independence to reach at the core of problems. The extract of the Recommendations of Education Commission shows that it stressed a three-pronged attack – Universal provision, Universal enrolment and Universal retention. The most significant aspects among the suggestions of the aforesaid commission are:

- (i) Five years of good and effective education should be provided to all children by 1975-76.
- (ii) Seven years of such education should be provided by 1985-86.
- (iii) Emphasis should be laid on the reduction of Wastage and stagnation.
- (iv) Unwilling students should be kept in educational system until they complete 14 years and they should be provided with short vocational course of their choice.
- (v) Each state and even each district should prepare a prospective plan for the development of primary education keeping in mind the development already reached and the local conditions and problems.

The other universal recommendations are to establish low budget primary schools even single teacher schools. Attempts will be taken to establish and organize primary school in the remotest part of the country.

## VI

The Government, while declaring the National Policy on Education (p 68) laid emphasis on the importance of Free and Compulsory Education. It recommended that 'Strenuous efforts should be made for the early fulfillment of the Directive Principle under Article 45 of the Constitution seeking to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of fourteen. Suitable programmes should be developed in schools

and to ensure that every child who is enrolled in school successfully completes the prescribed course"<sup>64</sup>.

One Committee was appointed by Mr. Jayprakash Narayan under the auspices of the citizens for Democracy on May, 1978, headed by Dr. J.P. Naik. The Committee suggested that elementary education should be made universal in an intensive and sustained programme which would spread over 5 to 10 years. Special attention should be given to the enrolment of girls and children for the poor section in the society. Multiple entry system should be adopted and part-time education provided to all children who cannot attend on a full-time basis.

Therefore, during the Janata party rule the Draft National Education Policy, 1979 stated that the highest priority must be given to free education for all upto the age of 14. The facilities for formal education in elementary schools for all children should be provided. It also categorically said to stress on set formulation of schemes for non-formal education for dropouts. Thus, the sixth plan had allocated 900 crores for elementary education so that target of 100% elementary education is achieved by the close of the Sixth plan.

To bring a balance with the elementary education and basic education Kothari Commission came to equate the position; it said no particular stage or method of education need be termed as "basic". Productive activity which is the central theme of basic education should permeate the spirit of education at all stages. "Work Experience" is, thus, the Commission's name for productive practice correlated with theory.

Before going to discuss the Kothari Commission Report on Primary Education, we would try to find out and locate the general problems of primary education and, thus, to enlighten us with the Commission's report.

In pursuance of the Directive Principle of State Policy, all states 'have introduced free education for children... except Orissa, U.P. and a few other state'.<sup>65</sup> All states have compulsory education Acts except Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Although in the

1993 Assembly Election of Meghalaya the All India Congress Committee wrote on the wall - decorated, well-published Election Manifesto on February, 1993 that, "In the modern system, education is of primary importance to enable people to absorb the benefits of technology and primary education is the base for further development. Our party have already proposed transfer of primary education to the state government. The Congress is also committee to pursue the matter and ensure that primary education is taken over by the state government and proper policies framed to enable universal primary education"<sup>66</sup>.

Of the Union Territories, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Delhi have such legislation. However, even where such legislation exists, penal clauses are seldom enforced because of socio-economic reasons. The state governments are the ultimate authority, the administration is decentralized in differential degree in all the states. The administration is stratified at District, Tehsil, Town and Panchayet units differ from state which we have mentioned earlier.

Primary education in India has innumerable problems, with slight variation from state to state. A mini list of them will be like this: (1) The objective of primary education is not as progressive, dynamic and practical life-centric as it should have been; and it could encourage the parents and children with its ability; (2) The curriculum is not scientific yet, (3) Defects in curriculum and syllabus is squarely reflected in the text books and in misdistribution of them, (4) It is still suffering from lack of uniformity on language policy, (5) The yard-stick is yet to find out how to differentiate between the elementary and basic education (6) Despite emphasis on newly developed scientific techniques most of the 'free' schools moves with traditional one, (7) Most of the schools are not equipped with necessary furniture, equipment and training aids, (8) Co-curricular activity is but an idea (9) Total absence of child guidance (10) Traditional pattern of "Examination" and 'promotion" system (11) The problem of teacher recruitment and training is complex (12) child health is rarely cared for. The absence of requisite land, buildings and provisions of games and physical education is almost shameful. And last

but not the least, (13) in these age of rocketing price-hike, the provision of finances fall far short of the need. Thus, it requires a bit of analysis. The causes of failure are basically socio-economic, political and pedagogic in nature.

1. The social causes include the age old backwardness of certain communities, castes and tribes created by a long history of exploitation and sub-human existence. Illiteracy of parents, conservative social usages and customs, discrimination against girls also intensify the crisis, "Population has been growing 1% a year" while educational provisions are staggering behind. The physical problems created by lack of roads and transport in the rural areas and the mental reservation against co-education are no less responsible. Statistical returns show that while the average percentage of children (boys and girls together) receiving education in India is about 90, the percentage of girls is as low as 60.
2. The pedagogic failures should be squarely admitted. Primary education must be integrated with the life of the people. The absence of such integration leads to absence of urge. This together with economic and social causes leads to huge wastage and stagnation. Moreover, Primary education should be integrated with environmental socio-economic life. In this respect the failure of our rigid curriculum is vitally responsible.
3. The most tragic failure on the economic front is that budgetary provisions have been meager. While primary education has the biggest claim to public finances, very often funds earmarked for primary education were diverted to other purposes. Budgetary cuts have been a regular feature. The local bodies did seldom exert themselves for the proper assessment and collection of education cess and never took initiative to augment resources by other means. Budgetary grants were considerably consumed by building or other non-recurring activates. Furthermore, the growing cost of living, in addition the incidental costs in education has been

adversely affecting not only the paying capacity but also the spirit of the poor. Moreover, the problem of child labour makes the problem of primary education more critical.

4. Socio-political causes are no less responsible for the sad state of affairs. Compulsory education acts have not been enforced even in states where they are on the statute-book. Employers in industrial and commercial undertakings have not been forced to do anything for the education of their employees' children. Inspection and administration represent unrelenting bureaucracy. The pre-Independence urge for 'education' has been evaporated. Those values are lost. In this respect Prof. J.P. Banerjee wrote in 'Education in India - Past: Present: Future. "The only ray of hope, however, is that we have theoretically accepted the principle of common school (though its application is far away) and the concept of 'education for all' has replaced the concept of 'education for the few'<sup>67</sup>.

A vital principle has been incorporated in the constitution and directly or indirectly the state is responsible in the ultimate analysis. In British period they poked the local authorities to undertake it avoiding the direct responsibility. In our age the central put the responsibility to the states. Suggestions for the solution of the problems are implicit in our analysis of problem. On the background of our successes and failures we should discuss the future prospects as they have been depicted by Kothari Commission.

#### **Extract of Kothari Commission on Primary Education**

The Commission has divided the whole primary education in two halves. It has also suggested along with quantitative expansion the qualitative improvement. Accordingly if the lower primary education must be immediately 'free', while a time-bound programme may be adopted for Upper Primary education and vocational education should be attached with it.

The aim of primary education would be to lay a good foundation of life as a responsible citizen. Simultaneously, effort must be guaranteed that no child leaves school without completing lower primary education and at least 80% complete the 7 year school course. Along with 3 RS there should be phenomenal social environmental and health subjects. Basic emphasis should be upon language. The curriculum must be freed from pedantic matters. According to the variations of the region, the mother language of children will get preference as medium of instruction.

The pace of mental growth of all children at the primary school age being unequal, the commission has not favoured the pre-fixation of a common standard for all. All examinations should be internal and evaluation done in grading system.

The commission proposed 'social service' with the object of imparting social consciousness through living corporative community living, looking after cleanliness and decoration of the class-room, acquaintance with rural society, participation in community development work, helping the old etc. 'Work Education' plays a pivotal role in primary education. According to the commission these are the subjects to the basic education. It has three (3) characteristics: (a) Productive work, (b) Integration of creative activity and environmental life with curricular studies (c) close relation between school and society.

At the upper-primary stage teaching and learning process would be more extensive. Along with three language formulae all the subjects like Arithmetic and Algebra, History, Geography, Civics, Physics, Zoology and Earth Science in VI and in class VII Astronomy will take place in against the earth science, social service and work experience will also be included in the curriculum. Written examination followed by an oral testing will be conducted. Meritorious students will be provided scholarships.

The commission also suggested like "A" course in England, the meritorious students will be provided a superior syllabus and for those who would not go for above mentioned syllabus would follow the formal secondary education; provisions should be made for part time vocational

course. Apart from these attachments and suggestions, the commission has stated that the problem of providing the necessary number of Upper Primary Schools would be much more strident than the same at lower primary stage. Many new schools would be required. Therefore, the Commission phases the admission programme as follows:

	1970-71	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86
Lower Primary Class I-IV	92.0%	100%	-	-
Upper Primary Class V-VIII	50.7%	68.2%	82.3%	90.0%

As discussed earlier, elementary education is intended to provide the minimum essential. But before prepared for life a child's education ends at the age of 13 or 14, it will be like laying foundations of a house and stopping before completion. In fact, secondary education is that stage of education which helps children to become complete members of a complex society.

The term secondary education is simple yet means different things to different people. To Professor S.K. Kochhar, "Secondary Education is really the nation building education and maintenance of good quality therein is of tremendous importance"<sup>68</sup>. It develops to the highest potential of a person's ability, his aptitudes, his interests and qualities of characters. It thus, enables the individual to enter life as a knowledgeable, active-minded, sociable individual.

In the words of Prof. S.N. Mukherjee, "it stands or has, at different times, stood for three things – a stage, a type and a standard. As a stage, it stands for what comes next to elementary education. As a type, it stands for something that, though related to a certain intelligible classification of things to be learnt, is constantly being modified and enlarged, but the fundamental of which can be expressed only by a still more elusive name, humanism or liberal education. As a standard, it aims at that measure of eradication of which Universities can take cognizance ... these three meanings have been brought into harmonious relation with one another"<sup>69</sup>.

In the search of a definition Prof. J.P. Banerjee wrote, "The phase of secondary education is the middle stage of full-length formal education. At the end of the stage, section of student may pursue vocational courses, a second section may proceed to higher education, and rest may not pursue an educational career at all. Hence, secondary education should be planned as terminal education imparting an amount of knowledge and skill which would enable the students to proceed to the next higher stage of education or to the employment market"<sup>70</sup>. Our modern system of education was planted by a foreign ruler. As a distinctive element of colonial-type education, secondary education was made bookish and academic and examination dominated. The periods of development of the secondary education in India can be divided conveniently into major five hands:

1. From the earliest days of British rule to Wood's Despatch in 1854.
2. From Wood's Despatch (1854) to the Indian Universities Commission (1902).
3. From the Indian Universities Commission (1902) to Montford Reforms (1921).
4. From Montford Reforms (1921) to Independence (1947).
5. Post-independence period (1947) till now.

With regards to secondary education in India, the first signs of change were reflected in the recommendations of the Hunter Commission. But a really rebellious attitude was exhibited during the National Education Movement. The Sadler Commission's Recommendations represented a further change in outlook in favour of a longer complete secondary education of a diversified nature. This trend was further strengthened by the Hartog Committee, the Abbot-Wood Committee and the Sargent Committee.

## VII

After independence the question of reforms becomes a real issue. The Mudaliar Commission recommended a type of secondary education as it

thought best for an independent, democratic, developing country. A fresh review was made by the Education Commission of 1964-66. Thus, the concept of Secondary education in our country also advanced in a process of evolution. From the beginning till the early part of the present century it had been theoretical, monotype, humanistic and liberal education for the few. Thereafter, the ideas got fastened to democratic ideals and recognition of the need for meaningful education. In the present phase, we have accepted equality of opportunity and providing vocational education as one guiding principle. The concept of education having changed, the aims of education also changed from phase to phase as required by socio-economic changes.

Internationally secondary education also passed through several experiments. Thus, "A balance now has been struck that the aims should be (i) attention to health, (ii) command of fundamental processes, (iii) capacity to live an effective family and social life, (iv) to exercise of intellect, (vii) aesthetic taste and emotional balance, (viii) education for productive use of leisure, (ix) character formation. Advance countries, however, place different kinds of emphasis upon particular aspects of these aims as demanded by their states of things and their needs"<sup>71</sup>.

Naturally aims of education in India under British rule had been narrow. The Secondary Education Commission in post-independence period proposed the aims of (i) preparing citizens of a sovereign democratic republic (ii) preparation of individuals with integrity and personality, (iii) character formation of the adolescent, (iv) production of citizen with vocational skill, (v) Training of middle grade cadre for economic enterprises.

Thus, lastly the Indian Education Commission proposed that the aim would be the training of productive and creative citizen, material values being combined with spiritual values. Acquaintance with predictive work and social life together with acquaintance with science, mathematics and social sciences will create inspired contributors to national development and social integration.

The aims of secondary education must control the secondary curriculum. The stability should take into consideration the needs of the individual student as well as the needs of the society. Prof. T.P. Banerjee said, "The curriculum must not be over burdened with theoretical bookish knowledge. The values of subjects should be assessed. The subjects of study must help the conservation of heritage while simultaneously they must have utility value in social and national life. The curriculum may be diversified and more vocational bias may be infused, but this is no stage for extreme specialists"<sup>72</sup>.

Secondary school curriculum in India upto 1956 had been narrow, bookish, one sided and academic in nature. It had not recognized the fact of individual differences. In spite of many a reform and improvements, the overall picture of secondary education during the British rule was not satisfactory. H.V. Hampton gives a lucid sketch of secondary education. He writes: "it seems reasonable to conclude that the secondary school suffers from arrested development; it has failed to keep pace with the changes social and political, economic and industrial - which have gone to the making of modern India, and it has failed to keep abreast of the latest development in educational theory and practice. Courses are bookish and theoretical and provide little to attract pupils with a practical turn of mind: the excessive use of English as the medium of instruction, places a severe psychological burden on both pupils and teachers - it stifles individuality; encourages memorization and makes instruction lifeless and mechanical; scientific and practical subjects are neglected and inadequate provision is made for outdoor games and other recreational activities. The whole school system is rigid and inelastic and is characterized by a dull and monotonous uniformity"<sup>73</sup>.

The first Committee of experts to talk about secondary education after independence was the Tarachand Committee (1948-49). This committee suggested 5 years primary education, 3 years pre-secondary education (or Senior basic) and 4 years secondary education i.e. 12 years before admission to University courses. It also suggested diversified courses and one terminal examination. Contemporaneously with it, Ray

Choudhury Committee in West Bengal suggested reformation of Secondary Education. The Universities Commission, 1948-49 (Radhakrishnan Commission) also made illuminating remarks on Secondary education.

The cumulative effect of these developments was the institution of the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) i.e. Mudaliar Commission to make recommendations on all aspects. On the basis of their recommendations the Higher Secondary Scheme was introduced in 1956.

The Government of India appointed a Commission on September 23, 1952 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Lashmanswami Mudaliar, the Vice-Chancellor of Madras University. The Commission suggested on their Report in June, 1953 three major reforms in the Secondary Education.

1. Re-organization of the educational pattern of education;
2. Diversification of the Secondary curriculum; and
3. Reform in examination system.
  - a. The structure of School Education would be: 5 years primary education, 3 years Lower Secondary followed by 4 year Higher Secondary stage i.e. a total 12 years school education.
  - b. First degree course should be of three years' duration after higher secondary.
  - c. There should be multipurpose schools at higher secondary level and students should be encouraged to join professional and technical courses after higher secondary and guidance of master will be there to guide the student to pick up the most suitable vocation.
  - d. The regional language mother-tongue should be made medium of instruction including three language formulae.
  - e. Activity method should be adopted.
  - f. Reform of examination to make it a real evaluation and thereby reduce University mindedness.

- g. Service condition of teaching personnel should be improved by raising pay scales, uniform procedure for the recruitment of teachers in all schools and by extending retirement age to sixty.
- h. A Board of Secondary Education in each state with D.P.I. as Chairman should be constituted. State Advisory Boards of Education should guide and advice the education department.

As a result of recommendation, high schools were upgraded to higher secondary schools and some high schools were converted into multipurpose schools. The recommendations were incorporated into the successive Five Year Plan and began to be implemented both at the Centre and in the States.

To point out the evils of haphazard implementation of the recommendation, Mrs. Kochhar writes: "The haphazard implementation of the Secondary Education Commission's proposal has left a trail of problems, and some of these problems have bedeviled the reform and reorganization of secondary education till today"<sup>74</sup>.

The aims of Secondary education according to Kothari Commission to provide a solid basis of general education for democratic citizenship. Through this education individual would be able to proceed to (a) higher education (b) education for specialization (c) various forms of technical and vocational education and (d) employment for living.

The integrated total period of secondary education may be advantageously divided into two inter-related sub-stages - (a) Lower Secondary State (class VIII/IX and X) and (b) Higher Secondary Stage (Class XI and XII).

The curriculum of Lower Secondary Stage:

1. Three languages;
2. Physics-Chemistry-Zoology and Botany;
3. History-Geography-Civics;
4. Physical and Moral education;
5. Any fine Art

6. Provision for Social Services (Community Development and work experience (wood work, leather work etc.) i.e. production oriented and directly linked with farm or factory work.

Higher Secondary Education: The objective at this stage would be to enlarge and strengthen the foundation of general education together with an orientation of specialization. It believes in two (2) languages and suggests for three (3) elective subjects. But it was also against complete specialization and suggested to abolish the stream of Mudaliar Commission. The selection would not be limited to either art or science. Free selection would be permitted. Liberal arrangements should be made for the study of science subjects in conformity with rural and urban environments.

The commission recommended a rapid expansion of secondary education so that children of lower secondary age group might be provided with attendance facilities by 1985. Such expansion would require 75000 additional teaching posts per year. Hence Teacher Training should have a considerable priority in education budget.

Secondary education in India is infested with many problems, a few of which may be discussed here.

- A. Policy regarding language selection has given the birth of two facet problems.
- B. Language as medium of instruction and languages that should find place in the curriculum. The first question has by now been solved in favour of the Mother Tongue.

It should be noted that English medium secondary education was now more prevalent and extensive than it had been under British Raj. Commercial value and job accumulating ability of English, advantageous position of English in higher education of a technical nature; facilities of foreign tours with a command of English are some of the reasons thereof. Class distinction in education has made English a medium of education for the better off classes. It has become an insignia for social status.

"English Education" has acquired more of an economic value than a cultural value.

The second question is related to the determination of the number of languages to be learnt and selection of those languages. During the British rule, English had been the medium of instruction. The mother tongue and classical languages had been given the second and third position respectively. By the time of provincial autonomy, the Mother languages were given the first place, English the second, classical language the third. Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Although mother language was made the medium, the importance of English remained as before"<sup>75</sup>.

Independence of India failed to bring any abrupt revolutionary change, only situation was slightly altered. The claim of an All India State language was added to the claim of the earlier three. Controversies took no time to ensue and generate sufficient heat.

The Mudaliar Commission recommended a three language formula for secondary education i.e. (i) Mother tongue (or the Regional language). (ii) English and (iii) Hindi. A Classical language could also be taken on elective basis. This formula in general terms, had been applied with subtle amendments in different states.

The Kothari Commission recommended a new and improved three language formula with mother tongue, Hindi and English (a) Only mother tongue (or regional language) at the lower primary stage, (b) Addition of Hindi or English at the upper primary stage. (c) Mother tongue, Hindi or English and one modern Indian language (apart from mother-tongue) or any modern European language at the lower secondary stage, (d) Mother tongue and one of the other language listed in (e) at the higher secondary stage (f) classical language might be electively taken from class VIII.

This formula, after being discussed at the State Education Minister's Conference, Central Advisory Board of Education Committee of the Parliament, was incorporated in the National Policy Resolution of Education with the suggestion that apart from Mother Tongue and English, the third language should be Hindi in the non Hindi regions and

any other modern Indian language (preferably a southern one) in the Hindi speaking regions.

The constitution of India had made one categorical provision for the development and propagation of Hindi as a national language. But the propagation of other Southern languages were not made. Although "The Draft National Education Policy - 1979" had provided a three language formula, Mrs. Kochhar wrote, "The formula will prove useful both for its practicability and integrative value"<sup>76</sup>.

Article 351 of the Indian Constitution states: "It is the special responsibility of the centre to develop the national language i.e. Hindi so that it may serve as a medium of instruction for all elements of the composite culture of India"<sup>77</sup>. But to propagate a southern language no measure was taken so far. But to keep in mind the question of national integration, in a multi-faceted cultural country like India, the need for a constitutional provision for a suitable southern language was highly necessary.

To avoid the problem of language learning Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Language learning need not be frightful if the proper method of effective education in all the subjects, all the stages, be available and followed"<sup>78</sup>. He said with all emphasis, "The crisis in our country may be greatly relieved through standard text books in the regional languages and if such languages are given due recognition in all official and non-official purposes and for all economic and social intercourses"<sup>79</sup>. The Bosenstine famous national Professor Satyendranath Bose and his tryst with development of science in Bengali language may be remembered and Central Government should take necessary measure in this respect.

Problems of curriculum and teaching personnel are no less acute. A difference had crept into social valuation between secondary and higher secondary education. Technical and Agricultural streams never found roots. Most of the higher secondary schools offered only those subjects related to humanities, and that too with a few subjects for individual selection. Lack of proper integration between academic and

vocational courses is glaring everywhere. And the absence of counseling service is no hiding fact.

Uniformity in pattern of schooling is an urgent task. Education Commission (1964-66) even pointed out, "In our country, where the different states are at unequal level of development, a uniform pattern might be above the resources and real needs of the backward areas and below the capacity and requirements of the advance areas as might operate to the disadvantage of both"<sup>80</sup>. Now with the introduction of 10+2+3, there is a hope of achieving that ideal of having uniform pattern throughout the country - if the states care to introduce it.

While recommending the increase in the period of schooling, the Education Commission recommended that +2 classes should not form a part of University work. According to the Commission's suggestion  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the secondary schools should provide education till class X, the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  should be higher secondary schools providing education upto University entrance.

The location of +2 system is likely to prove beneficial to high/higher secondary schools as Prof. S.N. Mukherjee wrote, "...It will enable them to employ good teachers and provide better facilities for students. It will also prevent young adolescent from entering Universities at a too early age". He also said, "Instruction will prove more fruitful as the students will learn through school techniques and not through methods of higher education which are beyond their capacity and more suitable mature student"<sup>81</sup>. In this regard Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Higher Secondary Education of a good standard required the services of academically proficient teachers, particularly teachers for scientific and technical subjects .... But the problem of recruitment was infested with problems of competition in the employment market. Recruitment of efficient personnel demand the payment of handsome salaries"<sup>82</sup>.

Another problem raised by Professor S.K. Kochhar that so far as education consideration goes, the +2 stage needs to be located in schools. It is the higher secondary stage; inevitably it needs to be introduced in a

higher secondary school. Prof. Ranju Gopal Mukherjee, who was once President of W.B.C.H.S.E., said in an interview: "The lecture method of Colleges is not suitable for the students of Higher Secondary. They need care and home-task like the school children. To make higher secondary syllabus and course effective, it requires separate institutions"<sup>83</sup>.

Once again the Education Commission 1964-66 and the draft national educational policy have recommended that education of the two year secondary stage at 10+ should be divided into the academic and vocational streams, and only those who gain entry into the academic stream by virtue of demonstrated aptitude, should eventually go up for the three year degree course. This approach is intended to provide the country with the technical skills it surely needs and also put a brake on the scandalous proliferation of Universities which have deteriorated into large scale factories churning out semi-educated graduates who have been swelling the ranks of the unemployed and the under employed.

As a theoretical framework, this policy sounds very good. But the rule is that it is too idealistic to stand up to the realities of the situation. Professor S.K. Kochhar reacted to approach and observes: "Considering the prevailing social attitudes, would an IAS officer reconcile himself to the idea of his academically inept son going into the vocational stream and becoming a leather worker"<sup>84</sup> thus, her most pertinent queries are: 'where are the resources to provide training to the boys and girls who would be expected to enter the vocational steam? The Vocationalisation of education presupposes huge resources and an attitudinal change, both of which will take a long time to come"<sup>85</sup>.

The lack of attention to the secondary education due to the administrative none functioning has ultimately disgruntled the whole purpose of education as a linkage between schools to University.

Our Constitution is a federal one. It has divided powers in the Centre and States and described some powers as concurrent. There are 66 items in this list, two pertain to education. Secondary education is a state subject, although in these days of planning the Union Government's

indirect role has to be recognized. At the State level, it is a joint responsibility of the Board and the Ministry. Local Bodies play a minor role. Impacts of social forces help the solution of some problems while they gave rise to new problems.

Some expansion has been achieved, but plan targets remained always unattained. 'Craft', 'Social Studies' and 'General Science' as had been adopted in the H.S. Curriculum remained unproductive. The goal of equal opportunity and Common School is far off. Difference between urban and rural facilities, between schools for the rich and the poor are wide. Secondary Education has not been integrated with the life situation of the pupils, or with the economic life of the community. The problem of land and building - both in rural and urban areas, problems of girls' education, problem of backward communities and tribes, and problems of teaching aids still continue unabated.

Article 15(1) provides that the state shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds of ... sex.

Article 16(1) provides equality of opportunity for all citizens - men as well as women, in employment or appointment of any office under the state.

"It is obvious that the constitution has given women absolute equality with men. So Prof. S.K. Kochhar deemed, "This can go a long way in achieving the target of 100% literacy. Also, the spread of education among women will improve their status, which in turn will help in educational, social and economic development"<sup>86</sup>.

<b>Projected areas</b>	<b>Rate of Women's literacy</b>	<b>Rate of Men's literacy</b>
Whole India	23.82	8.079
Rural India	17.92	
India's	12.00 below it	
District's 81	5.00 below it	
District's rural literacy rate 171 Dist.	5.00 below	
SC/ST/ literacy rate		86 <sup>87</sup>

**Source:** Paschim Banga, 19/2/93.

Apart from many of these minor problems have their roots in financial stringency. The Eight Plan highlights on education were that, "Education is an investment in development. The target is to make all the people - some 110 million - in the age group of 15-35 years literate by end of the Plan period. This is to be achieved through involving people at all levels in literacy programmes. Special efforts to be made to spread literacy among rural women; also special programmes to be taken for educating the tribal people, universalization of elementary education, Diversification of vocational programmes; spread of computer literacy in schools; improving higher/technical education"<sup>88</sup>.

The statistical data show: "The First Plan allotment for secondary education had been Rs. 20 crores, which rose to 51 crores in the second plan and 103 crores in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plan. This amount was 21.6% of the allotment for education". Let us see another information about the rate of literacy and plan expenditure in education by the seven sister countries of SAARC:

	<b>Rate of Literacy</b>	<b>Expenditure in Education (G.N.P., in terms of %)</b>
Bangladesh	26	1.7
Bhutan	10	
India	36	3.0
Maldives	82	
Nepal	19	1.9
Pakistan	24	1.9
Sri Lanka	80	3.9 <sup>89</sup>

**Source:** Yozna, Sept.90.

The situation may be partially relieved by adopting the following measures:

- (a) Acquisition of land of school by Government notification
- (b) Construction of School buildings by the P.W.D.
- (c) Supply of aids and appliances from nationalized industries, and establishment of other factories for the same.
- (d) Production of school books with Government subsidy.
- (e) Augmentation of funds by taxation, by freezing the black money of income tax dodgers etc.

Our problems are many, and there could be no progress without solution of the problems. On the background we must organize our secondary education systematically. The educationists, the educational administrators and teachers should shoulder this responsibility. Whatever the political party in power, the system of education, once adopted, should continue. We have had enough of experimentation.

Just on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1993 inaugurating the Bengal Engineering College at Sibpur as a Deemed University, the President, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma, urged industrialists to donate generously for the development of advance academic institutions such as Universities and to take full advantage of income tax relief in this context<sup>790</sup>.

Certainly, it is thus said by the President, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma, to boost up the total education system in our country. At the same time, does it not reflect the idea the President of India who is also an eminent scholar has lost his faith on the central government in regard to spread and successful implementation of educational policy? In the remaining discussion we will try to search out the above query.

Since Independence vigorous efforts have been made in India to reorganize and reform the system of education to make it respond to the needs and aspiration of its people. Changes have been introduced in the form, structure, content and techniques of education.

In comparison to Primary or even Secondary education, Higher education made rapid progress, particularly in regard to quantitative expansion in course of the last 100 years. F.J. Mowat, Secretary of the Council of Education in Bengal Presidency had proposed the establishment of a university. The same demand was repeated in 1852 by Mr. C.H. Cameron, President of the Council. By that time, however, the objective situation had prepared the ground and the Despatch of 1854 proposed the establishment of Universities at Presidency Head Quarters, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay Universities were born, and 1857 became a year of importance also in educational chronology. The functions of the university were kept very limited and its administration was also very

loose. But some academic directions that had been incorporated in the dispatch of 1854 were not actually implemented. The University's functions were practically limited to affiliation, construction of syllabuses, examination and certification.

Still, substantial development can be cited in higher education in the next three decades. During the period of 1857 to 1871, one statistical information shows, the number of Colleges rose to 12 in Madras, 4 in Bombay, 17 in Bengal, 9 in U.P. and 4 in Punjab.

Calcutta and Madras Presidency Colleges, Tinnevely College in Madras, Canning College at Lucknow were Products of this spurt. More colleges grew up in the next decade, namely Allahabad and Aligarh College, Vidya Sagar and City College in Calcutta. A few native princes established their Colleges. However, Indian languages were utterly neglected in these institutions of higher learning. The Bombay University had provided no room for Indian languages on the curriculum. But, it was abandoned in 1862 under the directions from the D.P.I. These Colleges were basically 'Arts' Colleges and that was natural in their conditions.

The Indian Education Commission (Hunter Commission) paved the way for Indian private enterprise. It leads to the further expansion of higher education consequent upon the spread of secondary education. As a result of it, while in 1881-82, there had been 68 colleges, in 1901-02 the number of Colleges increased to 179.

It should be noted that it happened because many a nationalist leaders with a stature like Tilak, Agarkar and Surendranath Banerjee etc. took ample endeavour in the field of education. The spread of higher education naturally enhanced the number of Universities. Lahor University (1882) and Allahabad University (1887) were established during the second spurt. Hunter Commission had recommended alternative courses in higher studies.

But it cannot be avoided that the above noted growth was single-track expansion, Rapid expansion undoubtedly increased the number of

students in the quantitative term, but also quality went sharply down with standards. Rapid production of graduates sharply increased the index of the unemployment suddenly very high even in those days. But it is noteworthy that under the impact of national consciousness, the demand for proper status and role of Indian languages made headway. Bombay University, out of this pressure, included again the Indian languages in the curriculum. Thus, teaching began to be a direct undertaking of the University.

With the University Act of 1904 University educational development coincided with Governor-Generalship of Lord Curzon. Some positive development can be traced back during this period on higher education.

- (a) Teaching became a function of the University particularly the University of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.
- (b) There was sufficient expansion of studies in Law
- (c) The system of extension lectures was introduced
- (d) The curriculum was enriched by the inclusion of Economics, Ideology and Science subjects.
- (e) Research became a part of University activity and
- (f) Scholarships were granted for studies in U.K. and America.

Due to the effect of partition of Bengal, nationalist movement was also at its peak-form. Thus the National Education Movement gave a fresh spurt to University education. Between 1913 and 1919 Varanasi, Mysore, S.N.D.T. Osmania, Aligarh Universities were established.

In spite of these developments, the growth occurred particularly in the study of 'Arts' subjects only. It had also given birth to numerous administrative problems. The Calcutta University Commission recommended reforms and establishment of new type of Universities.

The recommendations of the Sadlar Commission were but partially implemented. Meanwhile, our attitude changed substantially. The second phase of the national education movement (1920-22), the

beginning of technical education and effect of the first global war influenced the quantitative and qualitative aspects of higher education in India. In respect of qualitative progress the most significant feature was the acceptance of 'Advancement of Learning' as a practical proposition and also the acquisition of teaching responsibilities. Absolutely new courses in Indian educational field like study in technology, agriculture, sciences and professions were introduced. In respect of quantity, the number of College increased from 231 in 1921-22 to 933 in 1946-47. This way higher education progressed till 1947.

### VIII

Immediately after independence, assessment was first made with regard to higher education. The Universities Commission headed by Dr. Sarbapally Radharshnan was in 1948. The Commission redefined the triple aims of higher education:

(a) General education with a suggestion to replace the prevailing 10+2+2 pattern by a 10+2+3 one.

(b) Education for liberal idealism with introduction of and stress on higher education, viz., literature, scientific, technical and professional.

(c) To stress on education for professional skill technical and professional courses had been introduced. 'it reviewed the system of University education and recommended that the universities must provide leadership not only in politics and administration but also in the various professions, industry and commerce'<sup>91</sup>. It has also suggested that the University would fulfil the growing demand for skill in literary, scientific, technological and professional callings. 'It would also provide education for manhood' (influence of Swami Vivekananda). Emphasis should be placed, therefore, upon technological and agricultural studies equally with 'general' studies. It said, "Improved collegiate education is possible only on the basis of a good education from 14+ to 18+. Secondary schools should produce the human materials of a high caliber for the University to fulfil the demand for the employment market"<sup>92</sup>. For a higher standard

of College education, the Commission proposed a 3 year Degree Course. In short, the commission recommended 'simultaneous attention to quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement.

The commission felt that there is a need for more Universities. But it was against the idea of the establishment of affiliating the Teaching Universities only. In its place Federal, Unity and residential type were suggested. They suggested for improvement of internal administration of Universities. It recommended formation of a 'University Grant commission' with the responsibilities to determine principles of higher education, improvisation of standards, foundations of new Universities, relation between Government and University etc., they also made suggestion for qualitative improvement through tutorials, students' welfare co-curricular cultural activities, solutions of the student unrest with a sympathetic attitude towards the youth.

The most noteworthy recommendation of the commission deserves special mentioning. The commission proposed a new attitude, a total outlook and an integrated plan of rural education. The Commission opined that the modern system of education in India was never integrated with rural life. As a result of such design of education caused desertion of the village by the educated rural youth. Town Centric industrialization caused urbanized education'. The Commission proposed equalization of education opportunities by removing the differences between education in urban and rural areas. It offered a positive plan for rural higher education totally integrated with rural life.

The Commission's report was an example of betwixt and between, the amalgamation of the idea of Danish Peoples College and Gandhiji's scheme of basic education. Considerable number of Universities came into being including residential and unitary types, after the Commission's work. Many of the higher institutions that had been established during the national education movement was statutorily recognized as Universities. A University Grants Committee had been formed in 1945 to control the than Central Universities. In 1953 it transformed into the

University Grants Commission with an extra-ordinary change to look after the higher education in the country.

To comment on the Radhakrishnan Commission Prof. S.K. Kochhar said, "Barring a few academic exercises on the subject, nothing concrete happened"<sup>93</sup>. In pointing out the concept of rural higher education Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "... the Commission's plan for rural higher education was implemented in a changed and truncated fashion, thereby defeating the very purpose. According to instruction of the Commission some institutes were started with certain off-the-beat subjects like Rural Economics, Co-operative, Rural Sociology, Community Development etc. Evidently these Institutes were not elevated to the level of University and their diplomas were not considered equivalent to University degrees. Thus, these institutes neither implemented the Radha Krishnan Commission's report nor could employ the modern concept of techniques and technology of agricultural education"<sup>94</sup>.

Quantitative expansion of higher education has been undoubtedly achieved. In 1948 India had 500 Colleges and 18 Universities:

University	1950-51	1955-56	1960-61	1966-67
Colleges for Special Course	27	32	45	64
Arts, Science, Commerce Colleges	542	772	1123	1400
Professional + Vocational Colleges	208	346	852	1077
Research Institutes	18	34	41	44 <sup>95</sup>

**Source:** U.G.C. Annual Report (1966-67).

In the above statistics we have dealt with the number of different College since 1950 to 1967, because; (i) it shows a study of a decade; and this decade is marked with uniformity in political process in India. During this time there was the presence of Congress hegemony in India both at the Centre and the states. The dominance of one party rule in both the administrative levels and its reflections can be found on the higher education policy perception as manifested through the apex body - U.G.C.

Increase of different College during 1980s to early 1990 as it stands:

Course of Study	Number				
	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90
Arts, Science and Commerce	4132	4354	4488	4547	766
Technical/ Professional Break up	655	695	723	742	766
(a) Engineering/ Technology	242	253	260	263	268
(b) Medicine / Pharmacy / Ayurveda / Nursing / Dentistry / Homeopathy	320	342	364	376	392
(c) Agriculture	63	67	66	69	71
(d) Veterinary Science	30	33	33	34	35
Law	199	202	210	217	223
Education + Physical Education	441	479	488	495	500
Oriental Learning	321	720	714	714	716
Music / Fine Arts	68	62	66	69	70
Total	6816	6512	6689	6784	6949

\*Excluded Junior Colleges and Colleges having only diploma/Certificate Course.

**Note:** Data for the year 1988-89 and 1989-90 are provisional.

**Source:** X/XII U.G.C. Annual Report for the year 1989-90<sup>96</sup>

Appendix - X/VII/Distribution of College according to Course Study.

Our failure in attaining the objective of higher education is very prominent. Expansion of knowledge by research and experimentation has always been the aim of higher education. "The objective is current in most other countries. According to a statistical report Argentina, U.S.A., Japan, Germany, Russia and Cuba the ratio of illiterate is less than 5 percent", whereas in India the expected number of illiterate will be 50 per cent of the total illiterate of the world after this century. Actually, we have accepted the concept of Advancement of Learning. But more opening of new windows to knowledge would not be productive. Knowledge must be disseminated. Thus, "creation of new knowledge, dissemination of highest knowledge, improvement of the cultural heritage of the nation, production of know-how and solution of socio-economic problems constitute the basic aims of higher education"<sup>97</sup>.

After independence, Radhakrishnan Commission proposed the Triple Objectives of (1) good general education, (2) scientific and liberal ideological preparation, (3) preparation of professional know-how. The

Commission expected the University to lead the nation in all fields of life. Thenceforth, our political and academic leaders explained the role of the University in various terms. But tangible effects were little palpable.

And finally, the Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission) enunciated a few basic objectives of University education – (i) Acquisition of new knowledge, pursuit of truth, reorientation of old knowledge in the light of the new, (ii) preparation of leaders for different fields of national life by searching out the talented youth and helping their mental, physical and moral development and instilling in them the proper attitude and ideals; (iii) preparations of skilled and socially conscious youthful leaders for the nation's agriculture, Arts, Sciences and Technology; (iv) Removal of social and cultural inequality by expanding education; (v) creation of socially oriented robust values by the corporate efforts of teachers and students.

The Commission also suggested some immediate objectives viz. to ensure unity in the diversities of national life by encouraging tolerance and rousing the conscience of the people; to conduct adult educational, part-time education and correspondence courses; to help the secondary school to attain a better standard; to expand and improve the standard of teaching and research; and to raise at least a few institutions of higher learning to international standards.

Still, after 67 years of our independence probably we have failed to raise any national conscience and consciousness. Dissipating and vociferous forces are active everywhere disgruntling the basic structure of unity in the name of racism, religion, casteism and terrorizing the whole atmosphere. It is needless to cite any example.

The University Grants' Commission or U.G.C., the prime and pivotal organization in determining higher education shows that substantial measures had been taken during the last few years for the growth of population education. The Annual Report of the U.G.C. 1989-90 wrote, about population education and Jan Shikshan Nilayams that "With the adaptation of Area Based Development Approach the

Commission approved upto 1989-90 various programmes numbering 17,560. Adult education Centres, 862 continuing Education Courses, 1331 Population Education Clubs plus population education activities in adult Education Centre and 1056 Jan Shikshan Nilayams in respect of 92 Universities and their 1278 Colleges as per new guidelines framed in 1988. As in previous years, the Commission continued to provide funds to University departments/ centres for adult and continuing education and extension of the extent of Rs. 50,000 towards the purchase of audio-visual equipment..."<sup>98</sup>.

On the same section of "Adult, Continuing and Extension Education and Distance Learning", the Report wrote, "Distance Education / Correspondence Education, essentially based on the supply of instructional material for home study, is supported and supplemented by personal contact programmes, radio programmes, audio-visual aids etc."<sup>99</sup>. The broad based objectives of such courses are, (i) to meet increasing demand for education by utilizing alternative systems, and (ii) bring about equalization of opportunities by providing facilities in backward regions, to weaker sections of the community who have to take up jobs owing to their pecuniary circumstances and to women who find it difficult to go to a college as they belong to traditional families and communities. Correspondence course was being conducted by 38 Universities / Institutions during 1989-90.

In a stratified male-dominated society the most affected and backward sections among all are female and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people. With regard to them Indian Constitution has given safeguard. Articles 15,17 and 46 look after the educational interests of the weaker sections of the Indian Community, i.e. socially and educationally backward classes of citizens and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

#### **Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policy States**

The state shall promote with special care the educational economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular of the

scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all form of exploitations.

With regard to women's educational spread the Constitution under Article 15) says that state can make special provision for the education of women and children. Article 15(1) provides that the state shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds only of ... sex. Again, Article 16(1) provides equality of opportunity for all citizens – men as well as women, in employment or appointment to any office under the state.

Thus, it is obvious that the constitution has given women absolute equality with men. This can go a long way in achieving the target of 100 per cent literacy. Also, the spread of education among women will improve their status, which will further help in educational, social and economic development. Before going to discuss elaborately about the subject in later chapters, we are mentioning here the provision of U.G.C. for the weaker sections of our society for the total upliftment of them in terms of socio-political and economic elevation. In section – 14 of the Annual Report of U.G.C. 1989-90, it is mentioned "The Commission has over the years made special efforts for providing facilities to persons belonging to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities in Universities and Colleges. These include reservation of seats in various courses offered by universities and Colleges, reservation of recruitment of non-teaching posts and posts of lecturers, and reservation of seats in hostels. The commission has also made provisions of reservation in various scholarships and fellowships awarded by it and initiated a number of schemes for the advancement of persons belonging to these communities"<sup>100</sup>.

Underlying the importance of Women Education U.G.C. said, "There has been tremendous expansion of educational opportunities for women in the field of higher education – both general and technical"<sup>101</sup>. "There has been remarkable growth in the numbers of women enrolled in institutions of higher education, form a mere 0.40 lakhs in 1950-51 to 13.67 lakhs in 1989-90, recording an increase of more than 34 times

over the forty years period. The number of women enrolled per hundred man enrolled during this period has gone up more than three times from 14 in 1950-51 to 47 in 1989-90. The enrolment of women as percentage of total enrolment increased progressively from 27.2 per cent in 1980-91 to 29.6 per cent in 1989-86 and 32.2 per cent in 1989-90<sup>102</sup>.

For the attainment of these objective the Commission suggested – raising the standard of higher education (b) expansion of higher education in keeping with popular urge on the one hand and manpower planning on the on the other and (c) improvement of University organization and administration.

The imbalance between educational expansion and manpower planning has ultimately accelerated the speed of unemployment in our country. The Seventh Plan gives us an extra-ordinary statistic of overwhelming picture of educated unemployment:

The picture of Educated Unemployment in India (1990) (Unit – 1000)

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Reserved Human Resource at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>On Profession</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>
Engineer	454.4	395.3	59.1
Physical	302.4	263.1	39.3
Nurse	505	5.4	0.1
Veterinary Doctor	23.4	29.1	5.3
Agricultural Graduates	162.8	127	35.8
Science Graduate	1339.4	1044.7	298.70
Post-Graduate in Science	419.7	327.4	92.3
Graduate in Arts	3169.6	2472.3	697.3
Post-Graduates in Arts	1955.1	521.9	429.2
Commerce Graduate	1590.6	1240.7	349.9
Post-Graduate in Commerce	302.7	236.1	66.6
Education	1379.4	1075.9	303.5
Diploma Engineer	734.8	639.3	95.5
Madhyamic / Higher Secondary	52400.1	31964.1	2043.6
Total Educated	68389.2	41455.0	22934.1 <sup>103</sup>

**Source:** 7<sup>th</sup> Plan

The inability to pursue and attain the real aims of higher education Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Truth is that the Universities all over the world have always experienced a conflict between conservation and progress. Yet Universities reformed themselves in response to popular demands and national needs. Now Universities of new types were established to feed ever growing needs. It cannot, however, be vouched that the requirements have fully been met. Moreover, the present world is rapidly changing. It necessitates further changes in the aims, organization and administration of higher education, traditional inertia to keep pace with time led to explosions of student's rebelliousness of many countries"<sup>104</sup>.

The condition of higher education is worse still. Our higher education is still heavily laden with one way liberal courses. The entire field of higher education is dominated by Pedantic theorization including Sciences and Technology. Provisions and basic standard of research still lag behind. Moreover, there is an immense time gap between the advent of new knowledge and our student's acquaintance with it. It is away from the life, our Universities have no direct links with industry and agriculture still, we cannot say that the role of the University in adult and population education and total national improvement is sufficient. It is an undeniable fact that the expansion of higher education is very limited and there is scanty provision for aesthetic and spiritual education. The most glaring truth is that universities are almost silent observers of a battle between national integration and national disintegration. Furthermore, the students' welfare programmes are limited in nature and the role of the University administration is often undemocratic and infested with other age-long diseases. Thus, it may be cryptically remarked that we are yet to get ourselves free from traditional back-pull.

Defects in organization and system are no less glaring, (i) Despite the expansion of Universities we cannot demand that the growth of higher education is matched with total population, (ii) The Universities are still dominated by humanistic studies and questions of proper teaching staff equipment and local needs were not properly evaluated.

Furthermore, the influence of tradition and vested interests play to inhibit modernization of knowledge and acquaintance with the latest thoughts. Again (iii) The University's role in technical and vocational studies fall short of expectations. Very little direct link has been forged between the University and the productive world as President S.D.Sharma mentioned in his call to industrialist in B.E. College (deemed University) convocation as mentioned earlier. Despite the recent initiative of the U.G.C. the link between the University and the adult world of illiterate is very limited. (iv) Defects in examination process have been plaguing our Universities. And last (v) but not the least, recently the questions of finance and the poverty of Universities have been featuring prominently. Equitability of financing procedure is also doubted. (LIV/Summary of Plan Expenditure 1989-90 including XL/Appendix XIV/Governments paid to Universities during 1989-90 (Major head-wise) under Plan and Section III, need special mention).

It is not unnatural that the cumulative effect of these inadequacies and incongruities is reflected in students' unrest. A former Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University admitted in a convocation address that the root of 'students' unrest lies in economic crisis and unemployment'. As a matter of fact, "in the absence of other avenues before them, the students flock to the Colleges and Universities mostly come to kill the time. Even while pursuing the higher courses they find no ray of hope. They could not be what they hoped to be. In fact, the present system of higher education can not invest the pupils with a purpose and an ideal. Indiscipline is but a method to give vent to their feelings, however, undesirable it might be",<sup>105</sup>, as Prof. J.P. Banerjee observed.

There is no panacea to solve these acute problems of higher education. It is so thoroughly diseased that at best our remedial suggestions are implicit in our diagnosis of the problem. First of all we need more Universities, but simply multiplication of Universities without local needs, incidence of students population for proper feeding of the institutions and without provision of 'effective teaching and financing mechanism' is not worth-while. It will be rather infested with new

problems. Secondly, time has come to pay attention to the feasibility of more single institutes providing technological and professional specialisation. Thirdly, the University curricula should be so modified as to forge a link with practical life-situation. Fourthly, seminars and tutorials should foster self-activity of students. The necessary teaching staff should be provided. Fifthly, the area of research provisions needs to be expanded and improved with all facilities. Sixthly, the standard of University Education should be so raised as to weed out the incompetent and undesirables as well as to establish parity with the Universities in advanced countries. Therefore, students-counselling is an essential need. Seventhly, the need for instruction in mother tongue should be accepted too. Eighthly, need for extensive provision of Welfare services for the students to meet the immediate and internal causes of resentment. Again, ninthly, only academic and teaching qualifications should guide teacher recruitment. And finally, University administration should be streamlined and University finances strengthened and University professor from the home-University needs to be recruited to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor post.

The University Grants Commission has been statutorily formed, which we have hinted earlier, with the responsibility to:

- (a) Make decisions on the establishment of new University,
- (b) Disburse Central Grants for Higher Education
- (c) Foster specialization in different Universities,
- (d) Improve the general tone of University Administration,
- (e) Improve the student welfare activities,
- (f) Improve libraries and research facilities.

Some sparing marks of improvements have been made in the field of curricular organization. It has drafted a 'model curricular act' in 6th Inter-University Board, Conference of Vice-Chancellor, Seminars and Refresher and Orientation Programmes. The mother-tongue has been

accepted as a matter of principle, students participation has been admitted to the administration of certain Universities<sup>106</sup>.

But concrete work and actual achievements lag much behind 'talks and discussions'. In the opinion of Professor J.P. Banerjee 'a conflict between tradition and progress is clearly evident'. But his concern reflected through his word about the future of University as well as higher education in India when he cautioned: "But the whole edifice will crumble down if reasonable progress is not made in the immediate future"<sup>107</sup>.

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**CHAPTER IV****AGENDA ON EDUCATION: THE INDIAN SCENARIO**

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India is an ancient country with a long record of experimentation in political, economic and social thought and behaviour. Her present day political thinking and behaviour is imperceptibly conditioned and influenced by the past experience and development spread over thousands of years. It is, however, the more recent history and developments, particularly since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as also other political thought currents which came to India as a direct result of the West, which have a more direct bearing on her present day political life and trends. "Therefore, a clear perception and understanding of this historical evolution of India political thought and behaviour is essential for proper assessment of the present day India's political mind and the lines on which it is expected to develop and grow in the days to come"<sup>1</sup>.

The Indian Nationalism is the direct offspring of Western political and economic philosophy. In search of the roots of Indian Nationalism Sri Nagendranath Gupta wrote in "Sidelights on the National Movement in India": "What are the forces at work for the moulding of a United Nation called India? Primarily, the awakening of a national consciousness comes from within, and secondarily, it is quickened by influences from outside. Both these agencies can be traced back in the growth of the national movement in India"<sup>2</sup>.

The influence of Western model of liberalism and nationalist trend found its place perpetually in the guiding philosophy of the Constituent Assembly, which had given birth to the Indian Constitution, Prof. Balraj Madhak observed: "But unfortunately the Constitution makers of India were carried away by the glitter of Europe at that crucial period of our rebirth as a free nation. They prepared a constitution which is everything

but Indian. It is exotic in inspiration and content. It tried to perpetuate that political pattern which they have inherited from the British"<sup>3</sup>.

The nature of Indian National movement has been sometime termed as "White Revolution". Suggesting this argument, liberalists among the nationalists in India often blamed the "Red Revolution" as a wrong conjecture and put forth their preferences with these words: "The world is familiar with the fable of a white man and the white man's burden, but for the first time in history it is face to face with a white Revolution. Every revolution of which there is any record was a red one, reddened by the bloodshed in the course of it. The revolutionaries commit murders and massacres, and are slain in their turn by those who try to suppress the revolution .... No revolution has been known to be peaceful or bloodless ... In France and in Russia the badge of revolution was red and the revolutionaries waded through blood ... For the first time since the world began an attempt is being made to achieve without violence what was never before obtained without it. What is being witnessed in India is a bloodless revolution"<sup>4</sup>.

Whatever the term they give the influence of Western liberal education on the inception of or in the growth of Indian Nationalism neither can it be ignored nor discarded. And certainly, as we have shown earlier, the liberally educated Indians took the rudimentary role to spread the nationalistic zeal among Indians to take it at the grass-root level. The concept of Marxism and Leninism by the very birth of it in Indian soil, had been borrowed from outside India. But from the dimensional viewpoint the nationalistic zeal locates within the four walls of a liberalized country. But the idea of Marxism by its very inception covers up the whole international dimensions or phenomena. The arrival of Marxist-Leninist ideals happened in the backdrop or doldrums of First World War. As M.R. Masani observed: "The First World War came as a shock in India, as elsewhere, to many people who had come to regard the kind of world they inhabited as something permanent ... Just when this heart-searching and stock-taking were going on throughout the world, the Russian revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky broke out. Its

denunciation of the existing system and sweep of promises of a better future based on peace, equality and social justice took many people by storm... It was on this wave of idealism that communism came to India. Here it mingled with another stream – nationalism”<sup>5</sup>.

Another striking resemblance with Indian Nationalism and Indian Communism is that both the theories spread initially by intelligentsia. M.R. Masani opined: “Though Communism, ideologically, is a creed professedly based on the strength and interests of the proletariat, and though during the war years the increased tempo of the country’s industrialization had created a sizable labour force, the strength of communism in India was in the beginning”, M.R. Masani thinks, “as it is even at the present day, mainly intellectual”<sup>6</sup>.

“The intellectual and emotional climate in India in the early twenties was receptive to the ideas of communism. In such a climate, the Communist International sought to forge the necessary organizational links”<sup>7</sup>, as observed by M.R. Masani. Bolshevik leaders were very keen to Indian isochronal situation. “The Bolshevik leaders turned their eyes very early to India”<sup>8</sup>. In 1919, the Third International decided to support nationalist movements in the East “as they tend to upset the existing authority while not opposing revolutionary aspirations”<sup>9</sup>. In 1920, at the Third Congress of the Comintern, Lenin said: “British India is at the head of these countries, and the revolution is maturing in proportion to the growth of the Industrial and railway proletariat on the one hand and to the increase in the brutal terrorism of the British who are more frequently resorting to massacres (Amritsar), public floggings, etc. – on the other”<sup>10</sup>.

Gay Wint said in his introductory write up of “The Communist Party of India: A short History” that, “The contemporary history of Asia is strongly dramatic. In India, the Congress State succeeded the British Raj in 1947. In China, two years later the Communist Party became masters of the whole country, and professed the principles of Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism as interpreted by Mao-Tse-Tung. The systems in India and

China are opposite poles ... Though India and China are thus in contrast – India is the great example of Asian Communism”<sup>11</sup>. Thus, Guy Wint said: “Inevitably and without intention, India and China have become symbols of the different methods by which economic and social change may be brought about ... Whichever country shows the more impressive economic progress. India and China, is likely to be accepted as the social, and perhaps the political, leader of Asia. All the countries of South-Asia are watching the competition”<sup>12</sup>. Thus, he concluded by saying the fact: “Most of the current books on India described what the Indian Government is doing to resist all the threat of Communism”<sup>13</sup>.

Indeed, the Communist International directed the whole movement of Indian Communism at the rudimentary stage. The first part deals with ideologies inimical to communism. Amongst these is Gandhism and on this subject the programme says clearly: “Tendencies like Gandhism in India, thoroughly imbued with religious conceptions, idealize the most backward and economically most reactionary forms of social life, see the solution of the social problem not in proletarian socialism, but in a reversion to these backward forms, preach passivity and repudiate the class struggle, and in the process of development of the revolution become transformed into an openly reactionary force. Gandhism is more and more becoming an ideology directed against mass revolution. It must be strongly combated by communism”<sup>14</sup>.

## II

After independence except a few bouts of impulsive adventurism by communists, they generally observed the Constitutional path. It has been correctly observed: “Before India attained independence, the Communists, together with many Indian nationalists had believed that self-government would come only after a violent revolution .... In April, 1957, the communists won the general elections in the State of Kerala and formed a government. It was the first time that they had ever held political power in India and the fact that this power was secured by

constitutional means ... The argument of the rightist in the C.P.I. – that under present conditions parliamentary tactics are superior to revolutionary tactics – have been immeasurably strengthened”<sup>15</sup>.

Therefore, “unlike its predecessor, the preamble of the new draft contained no reference to the dictatorship of the proletariat – Instead it stated the aim of the party to be the establishment of “people’s democracy” by ‘integrating the theory of Marxism-Leninism with the realities of the Indian situation...”<sup>16</sup> etc. The existence and characteristics of the two major Indian Communist Parties have been described neatly in a nut shell: “Two other political parties, the communist party of India (C.P.I.) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or C.P.I.(M) had a common origin, and till 1964 a common history. The Communist movement began in the early twenties; and a Communist Party was formed in 1925... in the early sixties however there were serious differences inside the Communist Party over some questions, and the party split into two. Those who broke away from the C.P.I., formed CPI(M) in 1964. Now the two Communist Parties have come closer together, and works together quite often. Both the Communist Parties have formed or headed State Governments. At present the CPI(M) has a great deal of support in West Bengal, Tripura, and Kerala. In fact, it is the most dominant party in the front of leftist parties in these states”<sup>17</sup>.

India witnessed many ups and downs in the national scenario. After tensed and hectic period of the seventies the mandate of the people favoured the consolidated opposition and Janata Government came to the power at the centre in 1977. Although left felt their presence in Kerala and West Bengal considerably well, the coalition government in 1967 and 1969 was actually the path-finder in the search of the alternative approach to Indian government and politics. The evidence shows: “The Left Front Government assumed office in West Bengal on June 21, 1977 following the resounding victory of the Left-Front at the Assembly polls held on June 11 and 14, 1977. Of the Assembly seats polling was held in 292 seats of which Left Front secured 230 seats with

CPI(M) securing 177 seats. The party-wise position was, Janata Party – 29, Congress – 20 and others – 14”<sup>18</sup>.

Despite alleged misrule for about long 30 years of the Congress regime in West Bengal, the Left Front immediately engaged to restore the democratic environment lost during the former rule. They wrote: “Democratic rights trampled by the previous Congress regime and the peaceful atmosphere destroyed by the Congress hoodlums were restored; freedom of speech, writing and of association as well as of democratic movement were restored and safeguarded under the Left Front Government. These were now being enjoyed fully not only by the Left and the democratic Parties, but also by parties who are identified as the enemies of democracy and secularism”<sup>19</sup>. About the state of affairs of economy they found: “The newly formed West Bengal Legislative Assembly began its first session on June 25 under the Left Front Government. From the previous Congress regime the Left Front Government had inherited a shattered and bankrupt economy and an authoritarian and repressive administration which indulged in sort of corruption, favoritism and nepotism. Economic imbalances created through decades of misrule and neglect was further aggravated during the period 1970-77. In the backdrop of such a situation, Chief Minister Jyoti Basu placed and explained the principles and programmes of the Left Front Government before the Assembly”<sup>20</sup>.

The influence of chaotic socio-political environment of the ‘draconian rule’ of seventies also spoiled the whole environment of academia. The total academic environment became vicious and was in a mess. To their opinion: “During the reign of terror between 1970 and 1977 the field of education became an area of special target. Educational institutions including the Universities were turned into a happy hunting ground of anti-social elements and hoodlums under the Congress rule. Academic atmosphere was destroyed. Examinations were reduced to a farce through mass copying and results were manipulated at the University levels. Classes were frequently disrupted”<sup>21</sup>.

The newly formed Left Front Government felt the urgency to restore and return normalcy in the academic atmosphere. "One July 5, the Chief Minister announced the decision of the Left Front Government to take firm stand against this and to stem the rot and put an end to all this, and restore normal academic atmosphere in the educational institutions"<sup>22</sup>.

In our ongoing discussion to put forth the Left perception of education in India and especially, in West Bengal, let us verify the education of India in world perspective. This backdrop may help us to understand India's educational achievements and the achievement of liberal democratic doctrine and side by side of the track record of achievements of left educational philosophy in India.

The indispensability of education has been correctly felt in all the ages. Because it helps to develop the human potentialities, uplift the standard of living, make the whole mass of the country conscientious and form and strengthen the rational outlook of the people. On the purview the subject has been considered and a comparative data of the utilization of resources on education head, all over the world is being placed here.

The UNESCO report on "Education in Asia and Pacific - 1982" shows that in 1982, 62,773 crore of dollars were spent for education all over the world. This expenditure is 5.8% of the Gross National Product (G.N.P.). African nations spend 4.9 per cent of their Gross National Product, Asian countries spend 5.1 per cent and the developing countries of the world spend 4.3 per cent for education respectively.<sup>23</sup> In our country the education Commission. (Kothari Commission) of 1964-66, recommended to spend at least 6 per cent of the Gross National product for education<sup>24</sup>. But over six decades passed the amount now being spent in our country on this head is 'a bit lower than even 3 per cent'<sup>25</sup>.

According to a report a United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Nigeria a country with a population of 8 crores considers that the education is the most effective means to bring social evolution and national development. So Nigeria has decided to spend

8.33 per cent of the national income on education<sup>26</sup>. That report has also mentioned that the countries viz. Belgium, Colombia, Chile, Finland, Ghana, Malaysia, Morocco, Mexico, Spain, Thailand, Uganda and Venezuela spend 17% to 20% of their national budgets for education. Countries like Maldives, Argentina, Botswana, Gambia, Cyprus, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Portugal, Zambia etc. Spend 11.8% to 15% on this head. Some African countries like Costerica, Tunisia spend 26% to 29% of their national budget for education<sup>27</sup>.

It may be recollected here that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad former Education Minister of India and an eminent educationist, in his budget speech in 1949 in constituent Assembly expressed his grave concern and dissatisfaction over the proposal of spending only 1% of the Union budget on education and appealed to raise that amount immediately to 10 per cent<sup>28</sup>. 'Kher' Committee also recommended to allot the same proportion of budget for education<sup>29</sup>. But till today the amount, spent on education as allotted by the Central Government in national budget is more or less only 1 per cent of the total budget. On the contrary state governments spend 16% of their budget in average on this head. "The Government of West Bengal", says Sri Kanti Biswas, former Minister of Education (Primary and Secondary), West Bengal Government 'spends nearly 25% of its budget of the State. Still the allotment for education is 639 crore of rupees whereas the Union budget has exceeded 52,800 crore of rupees, but the allotment on education (except the allotted money for Navoday Vidyalaya is 645 crore of rupees"<sup>30</sup>.

In Japan the Central Government bears 48% of the total expenditure on education. In Australia the Central Government bears the entire financial liability of the higher academic institutions like College. University etc. In Federal States like West Germany, U.S.A. etc. the Central Government bears the major portion of financial responsibilities for the expenditure on education"<sup>31</sup>.

### III

Another important subject on educational analysis is the Administration of Education. The major debate in this sector is the question of centralization and decentralization. Sri Kanti Biswas writes: "In all Federal States of the world most of the responsibilities of educational administration is entrusted with the local self-government or organization. Even in the countries where unitary form of government is prevalent, the present trend is towards the decentralization of educational administration. In South American Countries the education system has been conducted centrally from time immemorial. But at present a radical change is found in it. As for example, in the countries like Argentina, Chile, Columbia, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela the responsibilities of educational administration have been assigned to the local administration more and more. There the system of education is being decentralized.

In the same way the system of decentralization of educational administration is being pursued to a great extent in Spain, Sweden, France, Egypt, Morocco, Canada, Australia, Sri Lanka and even in U.K. Contrary to it our country at present the education system is being centralized gradually though ours is a country with full of diversities<sup>32</sup>. Thus, Sri Kanti Biswas former Minister of the West Bengal Government (Primary and Secondary), observed: "The founding fathers of Constitution rightly put education under the control of State Government, Kothari commission also appreciated the system and thought it to be the best in our country. But during emergency, education was brought in the Concurrent List (Which is as good as keeping the same in the Central List). The Central control has been more firmly enforced by the introduction of New Education Policy. But all the Non-Congress (I) State Governments are pressing their demand to put back education in the state list though the Union Government is following the opposite direction, in Indian education system is being guided surprisingly towards the opposite direction"<sup>33</sup>.

For the noble cause of imparting education to each and every child, different countries have enacted compulsory primary education act. "From a survey of 200 countries of the world it has been revealed that 168 countries so far have enacted compulsory primary education acts for all the children of 5 to 12 years and they have implemented it also. In 30 countries primary education has not been made compulsory. Data collected from the remaining 2 countries are ambiguous" Thus Sri Kanti Biswas commented: "In our country, children of the age group of 6 to 11 years are brought under the purview of compulsory primary education in a few small pockets only. Other parts remain uncovered. Moreover, the cities which have passed this law, did not execute it fully. There is no provision for compulsory education in 12 countries out of 51 Asian Countries, in 12 out of 46 African countries and in 2 out of 45 countries of South America. Compulsory education act has been executed in rest of the countries; our condition in this respect is so miserable"<sup>34</sup>.

In the international sphere, usually education is divided into three levels. First level denotes primary education, second level secondary education and third level graduation and Post-graduation level. Sri Kanti Biswas took some data of 1982 and analyzed in the light of availability of students and getting the facility of education and thus he compared among nations.

It transpires that girl students constitute 43% of the total. Total number of students in India is 9,88,21,581. Population of India forms 16% of the world population but Indian students compose a little more than 11% of the world-total.

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Level</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Level</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Level</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Level</b>
Total number of students	579217000	241164000	50162000	870543000
Number of girl students out of this total	257119000	96216000	21476000	374811000

Ratio of girl students in India is far behind the global average. This will be shown level wise afterwards.

Comparative rates of admitting students at different levels of education are shown below:

	Primary level	Secondary level	Degree level	Average of all levels
World average	91.3	43.0	17.7	53.6
Africa	78.1	21.0	5.6	35.1
Asia	84.8	34.9	10.1	45.9
Developing Countries	85.9	31.2	11.2	46.2
India (1981)	82.0	24.0	4.8	32.0

Percentages of students enrolled at different levels (1982) are shown below:

	1 <sup>st</sup> level	2 <sup>nd</sup> level	3 <sup>rd</sup> level
World average	66.5	27.7	5.8
Asia	70.4	26.4	3.1
India	70.0	27.5	2.5

Sri Biswas specially mention: "it may be mentioned here that total number of Indian students studying at degree level including Engineering, Agriculture, Medical, Honours etc. is 21,15,257. That is they are only 0.3% of the total population. This is far below the world average<sup>35</sup>.

#### **According to the world-average,**

Percentage of girl student at the 1<sup>st</sup> level of Education - 44

Percentage of girl students at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Education - 40

Percentage of girl students at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of Education - 43

#### **In African Countries,**

Percentage of girl student at the 1<sup>st</sup> level of Education - 45

Percentage of girl students at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Education - 39

Percentage of girl students at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of Education - 43

#### **In Asian Countries,**

Percentage of girl student at the 1<sup>st</sup> level of Education - 41

Percentage of girl students at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Education - 27

Percentage of girl students at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of Education - 32

This picture in India

Percentage of girl student at the 1<sup>st</sup> level of Education - 38

Percentage of girl students at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Education - 33

Percentage of girl students at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of Education - 26

Number of teachers: Total number of teachers in the world is 39,326,000.

Percentage of teachers at different levels are shown below:

	1 <sup>st</sup> level	2 <sup>nd</sup> level	3 <sup>rd</sup> level
World average	66.5	27.7	5.8
Asia	70.4	26.4	3.1
India	70.0	27.5	2.5

(Total number of teachers in India is 33,94,000)

### First Level

21 students per teacher (in 56 countries)

21 to 30 students per teacher (in 43 countries)

41 to 50 students per teacher (in 20 countries)

Over 60 students per teacher (in 4 countries)

In India this ratio is 43 students per teacher. In 158 developing countries, number of students per teacher is lower than that of India.

### Second Level

11 students per teacher (in 12 countries)

11 to 20 students per teacher (in 109 countries)

21 to 30 students per teacher (in 61 countries)

Over 40 students per teacher (in 2 countries)

In India this teacher pupil ratio is 1:19.

In 112 developing countries, number of students per teacher is lower than that of India.

### Third Level

5 students per teacher (in 15 countries)

6 to 10 students per teacher (in 63 countries)

11 to 15 students per teacher (in 48 countries)

16 to 20 students per teacher (in 19 countries)

21 to 25 students per teacher (in 7 countries)

Over 25 students per teacher (in countries)

In India this ration is - 1:15.

And in 126 developing countries number of students per teacher is lower than that of India.

Percentage of lady teacher: In the whole world percentage of lady teacher to the total teacher in first level I 52%, second level - 36 and third level - 12.

In India, these percentages are 39, 32 and 19 respectively. And in developing countries, percentage of lady teachers for the first levels are 48 and 34 respectively.

Number of foreign students: In the year 1980, 8,60,585 foreign students enrolled in 45 countries, Out of this number.

3,11,882 students were enrolled in U.A.S.

1,10,763 student were enrolled in France

62,942 students were enrolled in U.S.S.R.

61,841 students were enrolled in W. Germany

56,003 students were enrolled in Lebanon

28,443 students were enrolled in Canada

27,784 students were enrolled in Italy

21,751 students were enrolled in Egypt

15,888 students were enrolled in Rumania

14,710 students were enrolled in India

Science by the countries of the world was 2.04% of the G.N.P., This rate for the Asian countries was 1.08% of the G.N.P. In India amount of such expenditure is 0.6% of the G.NP.

According to the World estimates of 1989, there were 709 scientists per one million of population.

<b>Countries</b>	<b>No. of Scientists per Million Population</b>
African countries	86
Asian Countries	273
Developing Countries	125
Out of these in: Indonesia	57
Pakistan	63
Philippines	97
Iran	159
Sri Lanka	169
India	47

**Source:** K. Biswas<sup>36</sup>.

Thus one study of government expenditure in different levels of education.

	1 <sup>st</sup> level	2 <sup>nd</sup> level	3 <sup>rd</sup> level	4 <sup>rt</sup> level
India (1980)	36.0	24.0	13.5	26.5
Pakistan	39.0	32.6	19.7	8.7
Bangladesh	44.2	29.4	23.4	3.0
Afghanistan	43.2	22.0	19.3	15.5
Burma	87.1	-	-	12.9
Algeria	61.1	38.9	-	0.0
Zimbabwe	60.8	23.9	10.6	4.7
Cuba	22.8	43.3	10.6	23.3
U.S.A (1981)	63.4	-	-	36.6
Thailand (1982)	61.1	23.3	12.2	3.4
West Germany	16.0	53.6	15.1	15.3
England	26.2	40.1	22.4	11.3
U.S.S.R. (Erstwhile)	33.7	16.0	23.5	26.8 <sup>37</sup>

Sir Kanti Biswas thus pointed to the publication of Books. He said: "Just as book plays a unique role in the spread of education, similarly the standard of education in a country is judged by the quantity and excellence of the books. In 1982, 7,65,00 titles had been published in the world. Of these 10,391 had been brought out in India, 22,920 in China and 51,595 in (erstwhile) Soviet Union. It has been calculated that per one million of population of the world, 167 titles are published in average. In India 15 such titles are published. In Asian countries 58, in African countries 28, in American countries 255, in European countries 558 and in the developing countries 48 titles are published. Despite the fact that 16 per cent population of the world inhabit in India, only 1.3 per cent of the published books are brought out from here. Only 1.4 per cent of the translated titles of the world get published in India"<sup>38</sup>.

He further adds, "But publication of children literature is an aspect of paramount importance in education. Form the latest available information (1984) titles under the children literature which are published every year in different countries are as follows - in Japan 3,702 titles, in Korea 3859 titles, in Spain 3745 titles, in a small country like Malaysia 668 titles and in our own country 459 titles"<sup>39</sup>.

The critical assessment of education by the Communist Minister of the previous Left Front Government of West Bengal commented on the subject by the use of paper. To his words: "To ascertain the economic condition of a country the quantum of per capita use of iron and steel in that country is taken into account. Similarly to assess the extent and standard of education of a country the rate of use of paper in that country is treated as a measure. In the world (in 1982) per one thousand population 9,000 kg. of paper is used in average for writing and printing purposes. The rates are 18,908 kgs. In Japan, 2,657 kgs. In Cuba, 1462 kgs. In Sri Lanka and even in Nicaragua, 1875 kgs. Of paper is used. In African countries 1200 kgs. and in Asian countries 3200 kgs. of paper are used. In the developing countries 1800 kgs. of paper is used on an average. And in our India the quantum of the use of paper, stands to a meager amount of 329 kgs. How melancholy is our position in education"?<sup>40</sup>

To him the number of reader of the newspapers is yet, another criterion of the extend of education in a country. "Out of every 1000 persons in the world 112 daily newspapers are sold". A comparative study of several countries has given by him, which we placed below:

**Circulation of daily newspaper per one thousand people**

World's average	-	122
Asian countries	-	158
African countries	-	18
European countries	-	311
Latin American countries-		86
Developing countries	-	40
India	-	22

**Source:** Sri K. Biswas<sup>41</sup>

Sri Kanti Biswas thus charged the whole state of affairs of education in India and tried to find out a fundamental question, why did Union Government in India (and certainly the ruling Congress (I) government) avoid carrying out the financial responsibilities for the

spread of primary and secondary level of education? He commented: "After ten years of the census in 1951 it was found in 1961 that the number of illiterate persons in India rose by 3 crores. After ten years in 1971 the number was further increased by 4 crores. This time in 1981 the numbers of illiterate person have increased by 7 crores. Whether this advancement has taken place in arithmetic or in the geometric rate we need not go into it. The apprehension that looms large is what is the destination? Where will be the termination of this trend? The number of illiterate persons in our country exceeds the population of India at the time of her independence. Today, in a world with a population 485 crores, India shares a population of 76 crores whereas 44 per cent of the world's total illiterate persons reside here. How much shameful it is; How much disgraceful: The theme of the new education policy (that we will view with a critique's eyes later on) however, is that we have entered into the twenty first century for which we must prepare ourselves. That was they in the first document of this education policy it was boastfully pronounced in a loud and obnoxiously complacent manner that when the world would enter the twenty-first century, 54.8 per cent of the world's total illiterate persons would live in India alone. That was why the Union government had refused to take financial responsibilities for the primary and secondary education. Instead, it resolves to circumscribe its entire duties in running a handful of model schools. And by hopelessly restricting its attitude towards the spread of higher education, this government decides to discharge its democratic duties by turning its eyes to the creation of a few educational centers of excellence"<sup>42</sup>.

One of the main focuses of the Eighth Five Year Plan was employment and human resourced development. The government proposal is on this line: "In line with the high priority accorded to human resource development in the Eight Plan, the budget has substantially stepped up "Social Sector" spending. The outlay for education (mostly meant for primary education) has been increased by 37.6 per cent to Rs. 1,310 crore. Within this provision primary education of girls and adult literacy have been given special emphasis. For health (mostly for

primary health care), the outlay has been increased by 60 per cent to Rs. 483 crores in the next year<sup>43</sup>.

In the Eighth Five Year Plan more employment has taken as a major goal. It said: "The Government headed by Shri Narasimha Rao initiated a number of measures to revitalize the economy"<sup>44</sup>. In highlighting the 'Eradication of illiteracy' - it said: "Education is an investment in Development"<sup>45</sup>. Thus to fortify this developmental major target it has chalked out: "the target is to make all the people - some 110 million - in the age group of 15-35 years literate by end of the plan period.

This is to be achieved through involving people at all levels in literacy programmes.

There should be special efforts to be made to spread literacy among rural women; and special programmes for educating the tribal people.

Universalization of elementary education.

Diversification of vocational programmes; spread of computer literacy in schools, improving higher/technical education"<sup>46</sup>.

On June 1992 the Government of India has published an informative booklet, "Times of Challenge Times of Change", highlighting its basic line of action. In its Chapter on 'Spread of Literacy' projects its future line of action on education: "The National Literacy programme has now become a people's movement.

Kerala; Pondicherry; Burdwan and Hooghly districts in West Bengal; Gandhinagar and Bhavnagar districts in Gujarat; Sindhudurg and Wardha districts in Maharashtra and Dakshin Kannada district in Karnataka have achieved total literacy through the campaign strategy during 1990-91 and 1991-92.

Literacy campaigns are in progress in about 150 districts.

Campaigns for total literacy have boosted up the demand for enrolment and retention of children in the formal school system, campaign for total literacy has also become campaigns for total

immunization, nutrition, maternity protection and child care, conservation of environment and small family norm.

For the first time country's literacy rate has crossed 50% mark.

Main endeavours in education will be:

- Universalisation of elementary education
- Equalization of educational opportunities
- Women's education and development
- Vocationalisation of school education
- Consolidation of higher education
- Modernization of technical education
- Improvement of quality, content and process of education at all levels<sup>47</sup>.

For the upliftment of the women in our society the Union Government has declared: "Women should be brought into the mainstream of the country's economic development. To achieve this strategy will be: Providing education, awareness generation, vocational training and also to provide employment"<sup>48</sup>.

We have seen earlier the left approach and attitude towards the educational development since 1947, and its achievements and position in different sectors of education in the world perspective. Here also we have produced the alternative approach and provisions made by the government of India, specially, in the Eight Plan period.

Here some comment of Gay Wint may help to understand the two approaches existing in our country. In the introductory chapter of Mr. R. Masani's work 'The Communist Party of India: A Short History' Gay Wint tried to point out the common sector between ideologically antagonistic countries, India and China, and he said: "they have one characteristic in common. It neither can be the aim of government simply to keep an existing social machine for smooth functioning. In each country the urgent need is for a radical transformation; and the governments are

under immense pressure to make them responsible for bringing this about... The demand of all the educated classes is that this state of affairs should be brought to an end. They want their countries modernized, made strong in relation to other countries, and equipped with industry. They want to end for ever the familiar sights of Asian penury – the beggar, the under nourished masses, the hovels and slums, the dirt, disease and squalor<sup>49</sup>.

Thus Gey Wint said: "The prime interest is in material advance. If it appears, from the result of the test in India and China, that by sacrificing freedom there can be a quicker advance materially, much of the intelligentsia will not hesitate to turn communist. Even in India itself this may happen"<sup>50</sup>.

Gay Wint pointed out the real cause of conflict between the liberalized and radicalists with his analytical biasness. He said: "While the Indian Government pushes on with its plans of social and economic reform, while its planning commission supervises the monumental Five Year Plan, the efforts to make the present free system of success are under constant attack from the Indian Communist Party. They are boring from within, trying to frustrate all that is done by government in India. The more they succeed, the more they might tip the scale in China's favour in the international competition .... Though the total votes which is received are still a small fraction of those of Congress, ... by its energy and discipline, has since then been able to win general acceptance as the principal opposition to Congress – and a formidable opposition"<sup>51</sup>.

Capitalist system had been imposed upon the pre-capitalist society. The final blow to destroy the pre-capitalist system was neither done by the colonial power nor by the Indian bourgeoisie. And it is the cause of all sorts of backwardness, in economic, social and cultural aspect in India. Its reflection is also explicit in Indian education in India. Its reflection is also explicit in Indian education system. Now, to get rid off, from this stalemate conditions, is only possible by the completion of the incomplete democratic revolution. Democratization of the educational

policy and system is an important aspect and agenda of the peoples democratic revolution. The incomplete tasks of democratic revolution can be accelerated by the expansion of educational right, evading superstition, and regionalism from the subject matter of education, on the contrary, developing scientific temperament, democratic and socialistic idea among the people through the content of subject matter.

The Left Front Government in West Bengal has adapted and fixed up its education policy keeping in mind these above mentioned tasks. In the presence of financial limitations, the government spent immensely on education, primary education has received due attention, inclusion of democratic and true scientific values in the text, addition to it. Democratic set up of educational administration is trying to abolish the remnant and conceptions of the pre-capitalist and colonial past. This democratization of administration of the educational administration will certainly cast impact and influence on the nation's education movement and also on the total educational policy of India.

During the freedom struggle movement the education movement was also expanded along with political and economic movement. In the beginning of this century widespread resentment was passed against the contemporary education system. "National Education Council" was established in Bengal. This Council formed an alternative education policy. This education policy provided education through mother tongue and includes matters for the development of patriotic feelings among the countrymen. Ample emphasis was also given for the spread of science and technology. We have already mentioned that Gokhale in 1910 raised demand for free elementary education in the National Legislative Council. But unfortunately that demand was discarded. Even some of the India delegates went against it. But nothing was unnatural and unexpected. A fraction of the stable and aristocratic section of the Indian society although urged for the spread of education, but they did not want its spread to that extent so that common people get the chance to become consolidated and work together to war out and surmount all the imposed and man-made impediments, because this dimension of education was

not in favour of their class interest. During the second decades of this century, the political and social movements became more pro-people with the effect of national and international eventualities. "Although political segments representing the vested interest of bourgeoisie and feudal sections of the society, but almost all the education commission in India deemed to establish a new and appropriate education policy, rejecting thoroughly the old and remnant colonial education system. This new education policy and system will enhance our national interest. To meet this goal they placed detailed policy perception. To complete this monumental task there was a need of certain provisions - education for all, imparting democratic values in the content of education, to adapt suitable programme of action to develop rationality and finally, to allot requisite finance to implement the educational policy. Sri Bhabes Moitra said: "A government's nature can be presumed by how much importance it is laying on education, how much money it is spending and allotting for the educational development. According to the Indian Constitution the basic sources and power rests on the Union Govt. to collect taxes. Thus, collection of money and the responsibility of national welfare also basically rest on it. As a result, the State Governments are too dependent on Central aid. The major economic setback of the state is coming from the inflationary effect due to fallacious economic policy of the Union Government. In this backdrop, the Union Government's fiscal and expenditure policy and its analysis will depict the backlash in the educational development in our country"<sup>52</sup>. Only the Statistics shows that less than 3% of the G.N.P. is being spent for educational development. Earlier, we have found that in comparison with other countries India spends a meager amount for education. After analyzing the yearly budgetary expenditure, on the whole, only 1% has been spent for educational development. But Sir Moitra has an opinion. "We should not conceive always that no development have been ushered in educational endeavour in India. Earmarks can be found in higher education, scientific and technological advancement. But his expansion of knowledge and science has failed to bring any major change in hopes

and aspirations as well as welfare of the common people in our country. Basically, this education is working on the limited sphere and hence preserve and articulates the interest of the monopolists and feudal in our society"<sup>53</sup>.

Sri B. Moitra has opined: "Marxism gives us this teaching the prevailing political, social and education-culture condition can not remain in such a state permanently. The people of India have realized that they will not get immunity from this under-development, poverty, hunger and exploitation maintained by the bourgeoisie feudal government of theirs. It can be ruminated over, that the Indian pattern and form of capitalism is not matched with European or western kind of capitalist development. Despite its capitalism development, the factors and ingredients of pre-capitalist form of society are still active and working.

In advanced countries capitalism was developed upon the destruction and debris of pre-capitalist society. But this did not happen in India. The policy of 'movement, discussion and improvise' with the colonial rules, but change in the production system as well a change in national and international economic equilibrium and also increases in political consciousness of the working people and their resentment against the imperial rule and feudalism took vehement shape. As a result of it, in 1947, colonial rulers transferred the power to the representative of the bourgeoisie-feudal section in Indian society"<sup>54</sup>.

But coming to power the new ruling class has failed despite promises to usher in any fundamental change and to perform the bare minimum tasks to complete bourgeoisie democratic revolution. Thus, it chalked the economic development, spread of mass-education and scientific and democratic norms and components have not been included in the overall education system. Sri Moitra observed: "The basic objective of education system is to develop man's power of thinking and consciousness, by partaking into the education system development of human potentiality increased. And as much as this scope and standard

increased so much the national wealth and potentialities increased – although by policy perception it has been accepted, time and again, but its reflection has not been shown in practical implementation. The new power regime has done that much which will not go against their interest. The exploitative class in power has tried to preserve the existing distribution system of wealth; likewise, they also try to preserve the existing system of education with its partial and limited scope of spread. In this decaying phase of capitalism, the capitalist have not any other way except to run the national economy in this fashion. Since the spread of education among the working class will destroy the existing status-quo of the social system. On the other hand, if education remains with a handful of people it strengthens the status-quo and it entices the people to that system to adjust with the same”<sup>55</sup>.

But his education cannot match with the demand and requirement of the people. The common approach and interest of the people will be to acquire all the knowledge of all epochs to advance themselves. On the other side, the ruling class will try to use the education system for their means of exploitation. They will try to indoctrinate in their doctrine all the educated people.

In this respect the comment of the “Indian Education Commission – 1966” is worth mentioning. It has said: “It is detrimental to conceive that all education system is good for both individual and society. From the quantitative term, education can be used for the establishment and expansion of social- justice; it can also be used to curb it. There are ample evidences in history that various minority groups and aristocratic communities use education as a means to spread favourable values among people to perpetuate their position. On the other had, evidences are there by providing equal opportunity of education social and cultural revolutions have taken place. And by imparting education consciously in men, different problems of society and nations have been solved through the development of inner potentialities in them”<sup>56</sup>.

The greatest difference between educated and an uneducated person is that the educated persons can read and write and understand on his own and his world is bigger than one who is incapable of reading and writing. He needs to live on the mercy of the educated people. In our time, people are being engaged with different and critical social organizations. The mode of production becomes day by day more critical so in the social life of the people. People need to join and participate in electoral and political systems of various levels and to judge and to take decision aptly on all these matter of public administration. Thus B. Moitra opined: "To do all these vital work efficiently and correctly, education and skill is required. If working people can be educated, they themselves can understand the ins and outs of the policy of each political party, their history, organizational pattern and agenda to reach to a correct decision with more confidence of his personal experience. They need not to depend upon to the mercy and words of other people"<sup>57</sup>. Then he extended his ideas with this comment: "There are many impediments on the way to expand educational facilities to the working mass. The desired educational policy and system of the working mass cannot be established without capturing the political power and state machinery by the unified forces of labour and peasants. To achieve the goal as intermediary programmes on economic and political aspects are being taken, likewise, in the aspects of educational and social revolution intermediary programmes should be taken. The Education movement is a crucial part of the democratic movement"<sup>58</sup>.

#### IV

Men express themselves by various ways. To lead a successful social life is the most desirable quality of an individual in society. The participation in production system is another cardinal aspect of successful social life by the individual. Here one finds his way to express himself in the highest form. And the relation between production systems and language is very keen. In the higher level of thought language plays a pivotal role.

Diversity of knowledge developed skill of language, extending its help to think big and profoundly and also to develop them materially. Actually the whole thinking process moves through language. The first and foremost condition of stable and free thinking is only possible by free a stable flow of a language. The human intellectual faculty develops through work and thinking process. The individual entity depends a lot on his capacity and power of intelligence and thought process. Naturally, a few questions come to our mind that when there is a deep interconnection between human life and individual development with language than how do we learn a language? How did men learn one or more than one language? Is there any difference among languages in human life? If there is a difference, what is it? And how does vocabulary of a language increase and develop the language? It can be said without going into details that the theoretical analysis of a language touches the chord of all the people everywhere in the world educated, uneducated, literate-illiterate. All normal human beings speak at least in one language. That is to say, all of them know at least one language and this language is his means of life-struggle. And to win these struggle men felt the need to express their idea. And finally we can quote an age-old cliché: "Necessity is the mother of invention". Men, thus create language. Through evolution man has developed his (mechanism for speaking) faculty to a particular stage. "As a result of it, men were able to create, develop a language and also learn to use it perfectly. Thus, through this spontaneous way when a child learns a language, we may call it his-/her mother tongue. So the mother tongue of all is as natural as one's breathing system. This power of mother-tongue adds new power in exchange of views, thought process and also in different activities of men in society. "And in which language should a child learn to read and write? The answer to this question is that the language he uses, exchanges his views, express his feelings, the language he uses in the play-ground and in the school. And certainly it is his mother tongue.... Teaching to learn a second language, whatever the practical use and glitter it possesses, creates impediments to his natural growth... the need

for a second language can be learnt in course of time"<sup>59</sup>. Rabindranath Tagore said in his inimitable language: "The capacity to compose in mother language helps in course of time to learn another language and courageous application of it surmounts all obstacles"<sup>60</sup>.

To support their language policy the Left Front in West Bengal projects Rabindranath Tagore. Rabindranath analysed his opinion of Education in "Sikshar Bahan", "Laksha O Siksha". "Sikshar Sangikar", "Sikshar Herfare" etc. he knew it well, although the role of mother-tongue in education was most natural as well as a rational phenomenon, despite counter arguments will be there. So he wrote in the essay "Sikshar Sangikaran" is 1935: "In education mother tongue is as natural food as breast milk to a baby: I told this universally recognized word long back: I will repeat it still to day. On that day, it was an ugly sound to those ears of men under the illusion of English language. Even today, if it misses the target, I hope, time and again appropriate men will be there to repeat this very simple and easy truth"<sup>61</sup>. But Ananda Bazar Patrika wrote: "it is very wise to use Bengali as medium of instruction in all levels of education. Unfortunately, there is no Indian language to carry out this responsibility at the high level of education"<sup>62</sup>.

But genius of Rabindranath knew this point of argument. He wrote in "Sikshar Sangikaran": "How long will we behave like a coward? Can we not tell with full determination that we will carry out the responsibility of higher education in our own Vernacular; we will make it our own?"<sup>63</sup> Citing the example of Japan Rabindranath wrote: "Japan was able to spread the best of Europe in her whole country, because she imparted and held education by her own mother tongue. But the capability of Japanese language is not parallel to major Indian languages. The capacity to create new words and vocabulary in our languages are infinite. Again at the intellectual level we are more near to Europe than Japan. But they said forcefully we will establish European knowledge in our academic set up and environment. But, alas, we can not tell it with confidence that we will impart higher education in Bengali and if it is possible and if it is fruitful then the fruits will be enjoyed by all the

countrymen"<sup>64</sup>. Thus he wrote: "Imparting scientific education in Bengali is impossible – it is a lame excuse of a coward. I agree, it is difficult, for that reason we require strong determination. Standard text books are not available in mother tongue, I agree with this opinion, but if we do not provide education, how do we expect standard texts? Standard texts are not coming out in Bengali, if it is a point of limitation, the only remedy is to introduce higher education in our Universities based on Bengali language"<sup>65</sup>. Sri Bhaves Moitra said: "Bengali language is incapable to impart higher education, is a vague term only. The real point is lack of good-will and good intention. But Left Front Government has shown that confidence and implemented the noble idea of Rabindranath in real practice"<sup>66</sup>.

Men realized from their own experience that to win the life struggle, he needs a well built body, sufficient physical and working strength and thought power. He also realized that through vigorous muscular activities he can acquire all the above qualities. So to hold and to increase these powers and qualities it has become part and parcel of his daily activities. Thus through evolution the modern games and sports has got its present shape. Today games and sports and physical exercise are accepted wholeheartedly as social phenomenon. To take a glimpse to any Western and Eastern developed country, we see that ample arrangements are there for games and sports. In one hand it has taken place in general education; on the other hand, in society recognized agencies are taking initiatives to develop this sector of education. The success of socialist countries everywhere is no exaggeration of the fact.

Shri B. Moitra said: "Socialist countries have created ample scope for the people, specially, for the students and youngsters through schools and other organizations. Hundreds and thousands of programmes they have taken to ensure the health and joy of the future citizens. They took this colossal task to make the socialist concept successful and also for the fullest development of the people"<sup>67</sup>.

The aim of general education is highly related with physical education and vice versa. But traditional concept of education is still dominating. Things should be changed for the sake of National interest. "For that reason we need to take a two-way expedition. In one hand, the scope of education should be taken to all and that education should be attached to life of the people. In this systematic arrangement of education, attention of all sections related to education should be given, so that the spread of physical education can be enlarged and expanded with integral part of general education. At present, in West Bengal "Physical Education" is a compulsory subject at the Primary as well as at the Secondary Education"<sup>68</sup>.

Any one who is related with education, directly or indirectly, is familiar with the word "Universal Education", it is also a known fact to them that universal education has not been started in India full-fledgedly. Still today education is limited within a specific population. Universal Education carries a special meaning – it is meant 'Education for all'. There are two sets of education – Formal education and Informal education. "But neither Formal education nor Informal education is all perfect. The synthesis of them can take us to our cherished goal... In the modern world formal education has been recognized as birth right to all children. This right is a must in all socialist countries even in all the developed capitalist countries has tendered this right to their citizens... The absence and non-recognition of 'Formal Education' by the ruling class of our country and society is least advanced in the field of education... It is said education is a powerful weapon to change the society. It is no exaggeration of the fact. Real education develops mental power and flourishes human qualities. And human being is the real force for overall development and works as panacea to solve every kind of social problem. Thus, we need the spread of education and educational modernization for the total development of society as well as to solve national problems and crises"<sup>69</sup>.

In an economically divided society, the poor young boys and girls can not get the light of education without the state entrepreneurship.

And for that reason allotment of huge money is required. Total literacy and education can not be obtained or materialized without money. "But who will take this responsibility? Guardians, State Governments or Central Government? Guardians are trying their level best. The roles of State Governments are also not miserly. Moreover, the direct pressures of the people are on the State Government. Even if they try to avoid, this pressure does not allow them to avoid the task. And States like West Bengal and Tripura with progressive governments in power spends on an average 25 per cent of the total budgetary allotment ... Union government has accepted that it spends a meager amount of its G.N.P. for the education in comparison with other countries"<sup>70</sup>.

'Universalisation of Education' does not mean providing scope of education to all. It is closely related with the concept of equalization of education. Somewhere it has provided latest scientific equipment's method and somewhere minimum facilities have not been insured. This condition is incompatible with the concept of equalization of educational opportunities. Democratic and universal education system demands to obtain equal success for all, equal educational facilities should be provided or opened up. In West Bengal and in Tripura, two left governments are active to reach this despite economic limitations, to set up an alternative system almost in every sector. In the prevalent socio-economic structure considering the prospects and limitations of these programmes movement and struggle can be elevated to the next stage so that right to 'universalisation of education' can be enjoyed"<sup>71</sup>.

In 1968 UNESCO had declared in a report 'Inevitably the conception must be limited to an illiterate man with regard to state life and other greater aspects. The ways to enter in a coherent world of knowledge is closed to them. Illiteracy is thus standing as great obstacle to create endeavour to develop perfect citizens. There is nothing extraordinary that a State which likes to establish its rule on a profound basis of democratic foundation, that country will certainly literate her citizens"<sup>72</sup>. Since 1974 under the guidance of Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development or APEID is conducting literacy

mission in 24 countries. This UNESCO sponsored organization has finished its 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sets of literacy programmes in 1977, 1981 and in 1986 respectively. In this fourth programme it has stated its principle: "Education for all" and "To restructure education in accordance with social need". Thus, it has also stated: "Education is a fundamental human right and an important medium for the manifestation and development of the individual"<sup>73</sup>. To Sri B. Moitra: "Its political implication is immense - world Communist movement also teaches us this lesson. The movement of the spread of education and literacy is a most powerful ingredient of democratic movement ... To ensure 'literacy for all' 'Universal education' is a must"<sup>74</sup>.

## V

It is an age long demand of the people of West Bengal and of India to make the subject-matter of education more life-centric and to make the educational opportunities easily accessible. In 1977, after coming into the power the Left Front Government had taken some measures to meet this age long demand of the people. To express his idea on this subject Sri B. Moitra said: "So far we have seen, it has reflected the idea that the Left Front is patronizing all sorts of liberal-mental faculties working out from the all limitations. The basic motive force of this government is to give priority to the desires and aspirations and needs of the majority people. For that reason, separatism, fundamentalism, repression of the Harijans are not being entertained. The education policy of Left Front is also based on this principle. And to implement this basic policy conflict is arising. This conflict can not be avoided without sacrificing the principle. The Left Front Government has taken the path of struggle, a better choice than to sacrifice the principle. It is the actual cause of headache of those people who believe in opposite principles"<sup>75</sup>.

Let us go through some information. The Education policy of the Left Front Government has been explicitly described in the aims and objectives of the Primary Education. It has said: "There are certain aspects of human development, viz. Physic, knowledge, Activity and

Sensation. To follow this trend of development this can be said that way to acquire knowledge to develop thought-process can only be achieved by the help of mother-tongue and learning the skill of elementary mathematics, even development of sense, to develop good habits and aesthetics, to develop good habits about individual and social health and above all to develop democratic values free from exploitation and to develop mental-structure free from all kinds of social and natural or physical obscurantism and prejudices. And to habituate with this type of life pattern is the basic goal of primary education<sup>76</sup>. It has also stated: "On the basis of this general goals of education with the stages of maturation appropriate knowledge, skill and other principles of desired intellectual faculties can be determined, these are -

1. To grow scientific temperament and views on natural and social phenomena i.e. emphasis has been laid on curiosity, spirit of discovery and observation.
2. To grow a correct and perfect mentality with regard to the contribution of the working people in the advance of human civilization and to create the wealth of nation.
3. To grow a sense of dignity about the productive and the contribution of the labour.
4. To grow patriotism in the light of humanism and universal fraternity
5. To grow regard for the democratic and humanistic values
6. To arouse aesthetic senses<sup>77</sup>.

Thus, Sri Moitra argued: "Let a reader assess which article or part of this education policy announced by the Left Front Government is not at par with the National Education Policy; which statement of our education policy is against the principle of the Constitution? Even a staunch critic of Left Front will not tell that neither the Indian Constitution nor the education policy was drafted by the principle of Marxism.

The changes brought under the primary and secondary education of West Bengal if we analyze, the education policy and programmes have been adopted keeping parity with democratic principles of educational productivity of any country in the world ... The life-centralism is the greatest characteristics of this education policy. The difference between old and new lies here. If any one says it is an imitation of Marxian principle, then we must say the other name of Marxism is rationality and humanism<sup>78</sup>.

All of us agree with this point that a nation cannot develop neglecting education. And in our modern age a state cannot play the role of a silent spectator in regard to education. Although, in state run education system, which percentage of people will be provided what type of education, it depends on the socio-economic condition as well by the character of the state. "In a class-ridden society, the constitution is the basic means to maintain a particular class rule. Written Constitution is an indispensable part of modern state-affairs. In a exploitation ridden society it constitutes Constitution to sub serve the exploitation interests of the state. The constitution makers projects the provision of equality, justice and neutrality to hide anti-people purpose ... This means attitude of the state can easily be understood by analyzing any one constitution of this model or state. It provides a particular right in a particular column of the Constitution, on the other hand, it takes away that right in other provision. It is no contradictory characteristic of that constitution – but it is the basic feature of that Constitution. For example, in the Indian Constitution in the column of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Constitution categorically stated that the state administration should be directed in such a way that may ensure right to education and employment. It has also stated that free and compulsory education should be provided to each and every boy and girl of 14 years of age within ten years. But this right has not been placed under the Fundamental Right. Thus the whole thing became a loud sounding nothing<sup>79</sup>.

After the introduction of the Constitution, "the Union Government tried to take away the 'Education' from the state list to the Union list. The reason put in favour of it was that "The Central Government has sufficient power to implement the education policy and the recommendations of different education commissions and committees cannot be implemented otherwise"<sup>80</sup>. The Union Government has not placed yet the report publicly, about the initiatives taken in implementing the suggestions and recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66). Since 1975, the Union Government has centralized the all power - since then what measures have been taken by them for the universalization of education, for the establishment of 'common school' for the total development of education and to eliminate discrimination, for the raising of the overall educational standard or quality of all teaching personnel's, for the increases of the professional perquisites, for liberalizing scholarships for the economically backward and meritorious students? What is their achievement? Who is holding their hands or curbing their powers? The reason put forth by the Union Government about the limitation of sufficient constitutional power to implement the recommendations and educational policies is a lame excuse. It is pretention on their part. Evocation of 'well-administration' by following 'steam-roller policy' can only suggest and favour the cause of concentration of power"<sup>81</sup>.

It would not be irrelevant to mention here the opinion of the Kothari Commission (1964-66) with regard to take away Education from the state list to the Union list. In the words of Kothari Commission - "We have examined the matter most carefully ... we do not hold the same view altogether. We differ on certain point with the members of the Commission. We do not agree with all their proposals, with regard to the transfer of education from the State list to the Union list. We hold the opinion of the constitution is the best to put the subject matter like education in the state list in a huge country like ours ... to take away education in the Union list will be the unnecessary concentration of power. And thus, the whole system of education will be stiff and rigid

specially, in a diversified society and country like India. Through rough analysis we have come to this determination that present rules and regulations have provided ample scope to formulate joint programme of action and their fullest implementation”<sup>82</sup>.

Thus, the total and even development of all sectors can only be possible by accepting the rights of the states. “Snatching all rights of the states and blatant concentration of power only creates grievances among the people of the states. Destroying the basic principles of democracy and federalism the tasks of total development and national integrity can not be carried out. “Unity in diversity’ this feeling of Indian can only be implemented standing firmly on the principle of federalism. Nanya Pantha Vidhate Ayanaya”<sup>83</sup>.

As a matter of fact, the lack of proper and coherent education policy and system has increased the number of illiterate, on the other hand failed to use the proper personnel to engage them in the task for social upliftment. The statement of Sri P.A. Sangma, the Union Labour Minister, in the Parliament focused this picture. In the statement he said: “In the list of Employment Exchange there are names of 31,700 medical students and 95,600 engineers. Apart from this in list the total names of educated (Matric and above) unemployed is 20 lakhs and 90 thousand and the numbers of other employed persons are 12 lakhs and 50 thousands. It shows the record upto December, 1990”<sup>84</sup>.

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**CHAPTER V****EDUCATION POLICY IN WEST BENGAL – A  
CONTEMPORARY ANALYSIS****Agenda on Education: The West Bengal Scenario****I**

Close on the heels of our Independence, the ‘School Education Committee’ was set up in 1948 under the Chairmanship of the then Education Minister Sri Harendra Nath Chowdhuri to bring in comprehensive reforms at various levels of School Education. The syllabus that this Committee framed in 1950 with an eye to bring about radical change in the curriculum of primary education was adopted as syllabus for the primary school level. Although his syllabus was not totally consistent with the principles of primary education, it however, reflected the fundamental ideas of the child-centered education in general. This syllabus in almost unchanged form had been in vogue for long twenty four years at the level of primary and lower basic school. To meet the needs of the time and the demands of the changed social context, the Education Department of the West Bengal Government formed the ‘Primary Education Syllabus Committee’ in 1974. ‘The purpose of this committee was to modernize the syllabus and give it a realistic bias. In fact, this Syllabus Committee took up its work in 1977 as per Government Order [No.1334-E DN (P) dt. 13.11.1976, No. 1000-E DN (P), dt. 10.09.1997, No. 159-E DN (P), dt. 1.2.1978 and No. 1251-E DN (P), dt. 30.6.1978] following the installation of the present Government the Committee started its work in full swing’<sup>1</sup>. ‘For the spread, development and progress of education, one of the prior conditions is to ensure a democratic environment in the area of education... The democratization of the aims and objectives and subject-matter or education depends a great deal on the active participation of the educationists and teachers and to spread the scope of students’ opinion in the formation of the education policy and programme...’<sup>2</sup> This (Primary

Education Syllabus Committee) Committee was comprised of the experts on primary education, the eminent educationists, teacher-representatives in the primary and secondary teachers' training Colleges and also persons representing primary Teachers' Association, Primary Teachers' Training Association etc.

"This syllabus has attempted at blending the needs of the total growth of the child with the demands of the developing society. Especially, the requirements of the children of 6 to 11 age group, belonging to the weaker section of the society have been given weight age in this syllabus. The objectives of the primary education have been delineated with this principal goal in view. The applicability of this syllabus in the primary schools of West Bengal has been aimed at. The social relevance and principles of modernization have been in mind in framing this syllabus.

Following are the characteristics of this syllabus:

- (a) Modern thoughts have been incorporated in the syllabus. That is why, primary education has been regarded as an aid to comprehensive growth of the child and the society itself, such objectives as the total development of the child's personality, creation of the sense of true citizenship in a changing society, inspiration for having the benefit of training in the total life-span and growth of efficiency have been adhered to.
- (b) Recommendation of the Education Commission, especially, those of Kothari Commission have been given due consideration in the syllabus.
- (c) A new subject of "Direct Experience Work" having characteristics of the direct observation and implementation has been introduced with a view to making education life-oriented and has given it the quality of practical application. To initiate the child to apply his knowledge to this betterment of his environment and to hold him in assimilating his experiences in different aspects introduction of this subject has been felt necessary.

- (d) Enough scope has been left to introduce necessary changes and modification in the syllabus to make it applicable, practical, relevant to the environment and flexible.
- (e) Provisions for productive and creative work have been made to help emerge effective citizens suited to the age. Emphasis has been laid on curiosity, spirit of discovery and observation.
- (f) On the syllabus of each subject, aims for teaching that subject and general guidelines to the teachers for the method of teaching have been incorporated.

Methods adopted to frame the Syllabus:

- (a) The previous syllabus was discussed and analyzed. It was observed that although some of its aspects could be acceptable, certain fundamental changes were necessary in the light of the experiences gained during the last 30 years.
- (b) At the meeting held at the lower basic training institutions in all the district of West Bengal, the teachers and persons interested in education expressed their views on a set of questions.
- (c) Opinion of the general public was invited through newspapers.
- (d) Appropriate principles were deduced after studying syllabi framed by the N.C.E.R.T. and the authorities of Primary Education in certain states. The Committee also utilized opportunity of exchanging aims with the N.C.E.R.T.
- (e) Besides, the opinion of two more representatives of the family planning organizations and population education was considered.
- (f) The principle Committee constituted sub-committees consisting of experts on different subjects. Representatives of teachers and educationist of all levels participated in these sub-committees. The findings of these sub-committees were thoroughly discussed, analyzed, expanded and modified before being finally accepted.
- (g) It has been possible to keep links between the syllabi of Primary and Secondary Education as far as practicable owing largely to the

fact that the Administrator of the Board of Secondary Education was associated with the principle committee.

As a first step to the framing of syllabus, the committee determined the aims and objectives of the primary education and prepared a preliminary report incorporating recommendations for necessary organizational framework to implement their aims and objectives and a proposed structure of the syllabus.

This report was submitted to the W.B. Government, for its consideration as preliminary recommendations.

The different sub-committees then started preparing drafts and syllabi of various subjects. The Committee has made certain recommendations in respect of administration, inspection and teachers' training for proper implementation of the total syllabus. Those recommendations of the report are enclosed below: The Committee expressed the hope that the syllabus of the Secondary Education will be revised on the basis of the syllabus approved by the Committee<sup>3</sup>.

Curriculum or syllabus is a coordinated working process through which the aims or targets of education is reached. The syllabus of Primary Education may be directed mainly into the following four groups:

1. Games, sports and Physical Culture
2. Creative and Productive Oriented Work
3. Work based on actual experience or Actual experience based work.
4. Reading-teaching based work.

On the basis of the four areas as outlined above, the following subjects should be treated as the Course of Education at the Primary Stage:

“(a) Games, Sports and Physical Culture ... (b) Creative and Productive Oriented Work... (c) Work based on Actual Experience or Actual Experience Based work... (d) Reading-teaching Based work: This

group can be sub-divided as follows: (i) Mother tongue, (ii) Mathematics, (iii) Knowledge of environment or surrounding<sup>4</sup>.

**(i) Mother Tongue**

The gradual explosion of knowledge has made indirect aids to education inevitable and mother-tongue has been recognized as the medium by all. Besides, in expression feelings and thoughts mother tongue has its place at the top. Obviously, plain and simple culture of the mother tongue forms a ritual part of primary education. Through the mother tongue knowledge about various subjects, ideas values have to be built up.

**(ii) Mathematics**

Clear ideas about the simplest processes in the world of Mathematics have to be built up..

**(iii) Knowledge of Environment and Surroundings**

Environment may mainly be divided into two major groups. In the first two stages (class) the students have to be introduced in a very general manner to the environment in which they live. From the third stage (Class III) this introduction to environment has to be over four distinct areas or branches. These branches would obviously include history, geography, natural science and life science. In the fifth stage (Class V) the areas as indicated would be given a definite shape<sup>5</sup>.

“The present state government has taken certain off-beat measures without following the conventional trend. It has tried to give practical shape to some important subjects which should have materialized a long time back. They have taken measure to implement certain aspects declared by the Directive principles of the state policy in the Constitution, some proposals of the Union Government declared in different times and also to implement the hopes and desires of the common people reflected through the various recommendations of various commissions and committees<sup>6</sup>. To fulfill the objectives of primary education the Left Front Government has taken the following supplementary arrangements and

said: "...should necessarily be made in order to fulfill the objectives of primary education.

1. Regular checking of health and necessary treatments'
2. Arrangements for lunch;
3. child-welfare activities;
4. Arrangements for building up repairs of school buildings and furniture and minimum equipments for teaching ... In West Bengal, there must be an 'Infant class' attached with school ..."<sup>7</sup>  
 "This infant class will act as a preparatory base ... spelt out guide book for the teaching (if necessary in more than one volume) is necessary for the purpose of proper implementation of proposed syllabus and curriculum... Arrangements for proper and regular inspection should be made in order to properly implement the proposed syllabus"<sup>8</sup>. Sri Bhavesh Moitra said in this respect: "The present State government feels despite many limitations and hindrances certain welfare activities can be done to give minimum relief to the people. In the meantime free education upto Class XII has been introduced, to pay the full salary with regularity of the teaching and non-teaching staff, to supply regularly to 31 lakhs of students' tiffin, clothes, books slates etc. New primary schools are being established and even secondary schools are being sanctioned. This is being done not only to educate a handful of rich children but to spread education to all the quarters of the society"<sup>9</sup>.

To determine the educational frame-work at the primary, secondary and the degree levels as well as the introduction of the different languages in the different levels is not the brain- child nor the whim of the West Bengal Government. The present Educational policy of the West Bengal Government is closely linked with the all India Educational perspective and the moot point of this policy is to rearrange the Educational policy so that the slogan Education for all is justified and to make Education meaningful to each individual.

## II

Language plays a vital role in the development of a child and in the present educational policy of West Bengal, the language to be taught is the bone of contention and the argument is over the place of mother tongue and English in the school.

In this context, it is necessary to discuss about the medium of education as well. There is, however, no controversy in any advanced or socialist country about whether the mother tongue should be the medium of instruction or not. This is essentially the problem of a country which was once a colony. Now, the question is which language the child will learn to read, and write at the primary stage of education. If we want to get education as strength of learning instead of viewing it as a mere garb and if we want to reach it to all the stratas of society, we must realize then that there is no substitute for mother tongue. But unfortunately, there is a section of people among us who think otherwise. They think that the modern Indian Languages are incapable to be the media of instruction at all levels of education and also to be the vehicles of high thoughts and so called high offices. "In education "the mother tongue is the mother's milk" - these famous words of Rabindranath failed to touch the right chord of some people and it can be easily imagined that it is very difficult to change their attitude.

The discussion on language education in schools will remain incomplete if we do not touch upon an important point, that is, the question of learning a language other than the mother tongue. "The need for teaching a second language is not only important for international and inter-state communication but also for exchange of views between the different language group in a particular state"<sup>10</sup>. English is called the window of the world. So English should get the preference for the selection as the second language. Now the most stirring question is: What is the purpose of learning a second language and when should it start?

It is proper to arrange teaching English or any other language after learning well the mother tongue. We may quote Tagore in this regard. He

said that learning Bengali properly would lead to correct English learning. His conviction was that if the practice in writing in the mother tongue became easy then one can master a second language in due course and try to write the language with confidence. One need not weave a texture by carefully stitching the worn out sentences of English much in vogue. Tagore emphasized this theory of teaching a foreign language with the help of the mother language after learning it well in several other places.

Learning a second language will be facilitated and get fillip when a learner is mature in age, conscious about the importance of learning a second language and above all has acquired improved aptitude in the mother tongue. "If the teaching of the second language along with the study of its literature is made compulsory from class XI to class XII and a well arranged syllabus is prepared and placed before the students and teachers of West Bengal then it can be said confidently that the students will be able to master the mother tongue as well as English in a far more better way. If we sincerely want mass oriented administration, universal and effective education, then we have to stand firmly for the mother tongue and regional languages"<sup>11</sup>.

To ensure democratization of education system, to ensure the right to express and right to profession, Sri Bhavesh Moitra wrote: "It is accepted by all that the educational institutions are the centres for learning and development of thought process. The successes of all these institutions depend a great deal on the scope of independent exchange of views. It can be said with all certainty that teachers, students and administrative personnel's are enjoying the right to independent expression of opinion fully. At the same time, all are enjoying the facilities of Trade Unions and students' Union irrespective of political allegiance. Apart from this the discussions related to the aims of education, the necessity and utility of its subject matters has spread even to the remote villages of West Bengal today"<sup>12</sup>.

As we have seen earlier the all round participation of all sections of the society in the formation of the policy perspectives and at the stage of implementation of the primary syllabus and education, likewise, this policy has also been followed with regard to Madhyamik or Secondary Education. "Readers must know at present at the Secondary level in class IX and class X in West Bengal Board of Secondary Education the third language is not a compulsory one. One can take it as an optional subject. This decision was taken after having an elaborate discussion among the heads of the Department of Education of all Universities in West Bengal, distinguished educationists and the leaders of the Madhyamik Teachers' Associations. In the formulation of the mathematics syllabus, the discussion was also taken after having an elaborate discussions for about a year among the retired and present stalwarts of mathematics of all the Universities of West Bengal with the representatives of the different Teachers' Training Colleges in West Bengal. The same policy has been adopted to determine the syllabus of Geography, History and other subjects at the secondary level. In formation of syllabi at the Higher Secondary and College education specialists and teachers are taking part. They also took part to bring necessary changes and developments in the aforesaid syllabi. The democratization of the education system can only be possible by following this democratic policy to formulate and develop the syllabus. A democratic basis of education has been laid by following this policy at all levels of education system in West Bengal"<sup>13</sup>.

### III

On 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October 1977 the Student Wing of the CPI(M) took one important Resolution in Mabalankar Bhavan, New Delhi. The resolution said: "The Democratic Student Movement believes in formulating democratic education for the people as the most important task ahead for the educational reform. The Government should accept these basic demands related to it and would take effective principles to give it a proper shape. The Democratic Students Movement pronounced it

fully that these demands are taken as an inseparable part to establish an honest society, to fight against capitalism and also to establish a society free from all sorts of exploitation... the convention evokes for the struggle to accept all these above mentioned demands and objectives by the government and to deter any endeavour to continue old principles. The Democratization of Education and Right to Employment are the two most powerful weapons in the hands of our people"<sup>14</sup>.

The convention also demand that the primary schools should be upgraded upto the VII standard and should be made free and compulsory by 1980 as a first step. The immediate next step should be to introduce free and compulsory secondary education and also to start vocational training. The democratic education can only be possible by establishing a compulsory and free school education till class X. the basic aims of the education system would be to eradicate mass-illiteracy. Necessary steps should be taken to literate effectively all the men and women till 35 year of age and mass-literacy campaign should be launched in wide-spread scale. To meet up this appropriate plan should be taken by the government and cooperation of the literate section of the mass and students organizations should be evoked and raised.

"To reach the goal of the Universalisation of Madhyamik education special aids and facilities should be provided for the pupils among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The convention also demanded to increase the amount and number of scholarships for the students from the backward sections of the society"<sup>15</sup>. They are also against the 'so-called' "Public School" and "Model School" system and demanded their immediate abolition as these structures are against the interest of the mass education movement.

The convention of the Students' Federation of India in New Delhi in 1977 argued the cause of education through mother tongue. The resolution stated: "Our country is multi-lingual, thus it requires the constitutional recognition of each and every language. The replacement of English as the medium of instruction should be made by the vernacular

languages. Only that policy can develop the mental faculties of the students which uses the mother tongue to impart education and which also encourages and protects the regional languages of the minority groups. The languages like English and Hindi should not be imposed forcefully<sup>16</sup>.

According to them education should not be de-linked from jobs. As the Right to Education is an integral part of the Right to Employments, so the provisions should be kept by U.P.S.C. and other job-providing organizations to allow students to use any regional language. Ample text books and other teaching aids should be provided in the Indian languages. They also demanded 'to tear up the three-language formula' as it is an 'burden' to the system. The Mother-tongue would be followed strictly upto Class VII. Later on any other languages can be taught to the student according to his capacity and willingness.

The convention of S.F.I. said in 1977: "... to ensure democratic rights of the students as a vital point of Democratic Education System"<sup>17</sup>. They have also supported the cause of free and fair franchise system to form students' Union and to elect their representative and even to send their representatives at the highest decision making bodies of the College and University administration. During the Howrah Convention of S.F.I. State Conference the resolution was also taken to initiate students democratic movement at the school level and necessary procedure should be adopted to form Union in schools through popular franchise of the school students to enhance and encourage different innovative and leadership qualities.

According to the statistics found out by the Convention of 1977 it is stated that, "More than 60 p.c. of the educational intuitional are under private concern and they have been turned into business organization which is based only on monetary profit and the corruption is the key-word. The educational atmosphere is completely spoilt by the private ownership and the educational and monetary interests of the students and teachers are at stake. The Government should take over these

schools and take active part in the formulation of the policy adaptation and administer by involving people in the process of democratization”<sup>18</sup>.

According to the resolution of the Convention of 1977 it was stated that minority and religious schools and colleges can be allowed to run but the State cannot provide them any monetary help. They should run on their own expense. Later during the intermediate stage the Convention evoked that all the State Governments would provide equal salary and facilities to all teachers at par with the Government schools. Their salary should be disbursed from the Government exchequer.

The Convention also stated against the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Act of the Constitution. The Convention favoured the cause of education to be placed in the State list. Replacement of education from the State list to the Concurrent list has given birth to unnecessary concentration of power. They favoured the opinion of the Kothari Commission to place education in the State list.

The Convention also favoured the initiation of the work and production oriented education system. It suggested beginning with vocational education at the last stage of the elementary education system. Because the percentage of school drop outs at this stage is generally highest. The need for work experience and to relate students with the productive activities should be started at the fag end of the primary education. This will also help the student not to avert physical labour and to divert their attention from just to secure a desk job or sedentary jobs.

Thus the convention demanded: “Allotment of Educational Finances should be second highest in vocational training. Highest allotment of money should be in elementary education. Productive and work-oriented education which is related with the basic question of the spread of industries should get priority”<sup>19</sup>.

The Convention also proposed that Right to be employed must be ensured after the completion of education at every stage. “The Right to employment should be enlisted in the Fundamental Rights of the Indian

Constitution. To fight against unemployment is to fight against capitalism uncompromisingly. To achieve this the society has to be changed radically with the combined help of the student, youth and the exploited section of the society"<sup>20</sup>.

With a demand to introduce scientific syllabus with modern and democratic view, the resolution of the Convention said that to throw away the undesirable burden, the convention demanded to the Union and all the State Governments to introduce syllabus with a modern scientific outlook. There should be uniformity of syllabus throughout the country. All the unscientific prejudices and obscurantist and colonial outlook should be replaced immediately from the syllabus. The reactionary and narrow political vested interest that has been imposed systematically down the ages should be done away with. There should be a balance between theoretical and practical knowledge in the syllabi of the various classes.

In regard to the Higher Education the Convention of the S.F.I. said that ostensibly the 5<sup>th</sup> Plan allotted more money for higher education which made the school education suffer. The Union Government's plan to serve higher education. As a result of the elementary, secondary and 10+2 or Higher Secondary spheres became weak. So the whole scheme of the education policy of the Congress Government was completely faulty, impractical and fallacious.

Curbing the percentage of students during 1975-76 and 1976-77 in higher education and introducing autonomous College overtly established the elitist foundation of education more strongly. The convention also demanded to ensure to the students of technical and professional course apprenticeship programme to spread widely these course as well as to ensure jobs in industries to these qualified apprentices. In Medical Courses, the Convention demanded to introduce short Medical courses pondering the immense need for treatment of the vast rural population. These trained personnel on medicinal course should be provided with scopes to complete their full-length course to

increase their skills and opportunities to get a better job in due course of time.

The Convention stated that apart from the remnant of Colonial past, the imperialism has made headway in our education system straight after independence. It has said: "To cancel the Indo-American Commission on Education and to stop taking financial aids in the educational sphere of India by the imperialist power like U.S.A. to check the penetration of rotten Yankee culture in India. Hence, the student community needs to continue their struggle"<sup>21</sup>. The convention also declared that at the expense of school education the over-growth of higher education is not the sign of overall good health of education. This tendency should be checked.

The Convention stated in clear words that the problem of mass-education is an inseparable part of the fundamental problems of social and economic sectors in society. Immense rate of illiteracy, higher rate of dropouts in the school level and elitist trend of educational establishment can only be deferred by taking appropriate measures to eradicate poverty. According to the Convention these measures will be completed with land reform, providing minimum wages to the workers according to their needs, to minimize immense inequalities. Appropriate policy should be taken to give rightful share to those who are involved in manual labour and producing material goods. The struggle behind these demands is fundamentally related with the problems of educational system of our country.

Finally, the convention concluded with the call to connect the struggle of democratic education system with the main-stream of peoples' democratic movement to bring revolutionary changes in society.

The structure of the 'District Primary School Council' according to the revised Primary Education Act of West Bengal 1980 is given below. The example is given of such a district which no sub division or Mohakuma.

1.	Member by virtue of Post	3
2	Government Nominated	6
(i)	Female	1
(ii)	Schedule Cast	1
(iii)	Scheduled Tribe	1
(iv)	Religious Minority	1
(v)	College Teacher	1
(vi)	Madhyamik-School Teacher	1
3	The elected members from among the members of the Zilla Parishad	3
4	The elected members from among the members of the Municipality	4
5	The elected members from among the members of the Panchayat Samiti	3
6	The elected members from among the teachers of the Junior Basic Training Institute	1
7	The elected member from among the teacher of the State of Bidhan Sabha	9
8	The elected members from among the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State or Bidhan Sabha	6
9	The elected member from among the employees of the District Primary School Council	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

"Among the 35 members of the District primary School Council 11 members are directly elected. Indirectly elected members are 15 and 6 members are nominated by the Government and 3 members are in the Council by virtue of their posts. The Chairman of the Council of the District Primary Education is also elected by the members from within"<sup>22</sup>.

## The Organizational structure of the State Primary Education Parishad:

1	Elected Primary Teacher	14
2	Elected Teachers of the Teacher' Training Institute	2
3	Elected members from among the members of the Zilla Parishad Municipality and Calcutta Corporation	13
4	By Virtue of posts	2
5	Nominated by the Government	13
(i)	Women Representative	2
(ii)	Anglo-Indian	1
(iii)	Scheduled Caste	1
(iv)	Scheduled Tribe	1
(v)	Linguistic Minority	1
(vi)	Nepali Speaking people	1
(vii)	Madhyamik Teacher	1
(viii)	College or University Teacher	1
(ix)	Chairman of the District Primary School Council	3

Following the basic principle of the above mentioned policy, the organizational structure of the West Bengal Madhyamik Parshad has also rearranged. A comparative picture of the earlier and the recent pattern of representation is shown below:

<b>The Act of 1963</b>		<b>The Revised Act of 1980</b>	
1	Chairman	- 1	1
2	Govt. official by virtue of post	- 7	6
3	Dean of University and the Head of the Academic Institute	- 8	8
4	Government Nominee	- 8	9
(a)	Teacher of the Vocational Institute	- 2	10
(b)	Heads of the Schools	- 2	2
(c)	Education Patrons	- 4	5
(d)	College Teachers	- 0	1
(e)	Primary Teachers	- 0	1
5	Representatives of the Teachers' Association	- 3	0
6	Members of the State Legislative Assembly	- 2 (elected)	2 (elected)
7	Elected members from among the Heads of the Schools	- 2 (elected)	0
8	Elected members from among the Teachers' Training Colleges	- 0	2 (elected)
9	Representatives of the Madrasah Board	- 0	1
10	Elected members of the Parishad employees	- 0	1 (elected)
11	Elected members from all the Madhayamik School teachers including Heads. of Institutions.	- 1	32(elected)
<b>Total</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>71</b>

From the above comparative study of the Acts we notice that among 31 members only 4 were elected in the old Act of 1963, but, whereas, in the new Act of 1980, out of 62 members, 37 members are elected. "This proves the fact that the Left Front Government has established a bright example of democratic representation by including teachers and employees from the various sections of the academic spheres"<sup>23</sup>.

Coming next to the question of democracy, decentralization of administrative powers and decision making, we should consider the composition of the Senate and the syndicate. "The difference may be best understood from the following columns:

<b>Act of 1966</b>	<b>Bill of 1979</b>	
(a) Ex-officio members including professor. (Professional posts have gone upto 165 in the last decade. It would be physically impossible to accommodate all these ex-officio members)	87-114	21 elected by Professor from amongst themselves
(b) Nominated by Chancellor	-10	5
(c) Elected	- 52	80
(Principals of affiliated Colleges)	- 8	(10)
University Lecturers and Readers	- 7	
Teachers of Undergraduate Colleges	- 12	(17)
Members of Governing bodies of Colleges	- 6	X
Teachers of Professional Colleges	- 7	(5)
Registered Graduates	- 5	(5)
Total	221	

"It is evident that while the number of elected members of the old senate constituted less than 30% of the total, the new Senate is proposed to have 75% of its members elected from different categories"<sup>24</sup>.

Coming to the question of the participation of the teachers in the apex-body of decision making at the University level, the comparative study of the Act of 1966 and the Revised Act of 1980 shows:

<b>Act of 1966</b>	<b>Bill of 1979</b>	
(a) Ex-officio	- 11	11
(b) Chancellor's nominee	- 2	2
(c) Elected by Academic Council	- 5	X
Elected by Senate	- 8	3
Elected by Senate	- 8	3
Elected by P.G. Teachers	- x	4
Elected by U.G. Teachers	- x	5
Elected by Principals	- x	4
Total	-26 (of which only 8 were teachers)	29 (of which 19 will be teachers) <sup>25</sup>

Other major aspect of Left Education in India is to lay emphasis on Education of women. Realization of the importance of the education of women can be traced back in the writings of the Nationalist leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru. To him: "Education of boy is education of one person, but education of a girl is the education of the entire family"<sup>26</sup>.

#### IV

"The past perspective of women's education shows that this sector was badly neglected. While here position in Vedic times or even the Upanishadic era was good, there is no doubt that the period after about 1000 A.D. was a dark age for her"<sup>27</sup>. Whatever, the historic reasons, her social positions began to deteriorate during the period and had considerable repercussions on her education. According to S.K. Kochhar "the real impetus to workers' education came with the political awakening of the country and the great push Mahatma Gandhi gave to women's movement"<sup>28</sup>.

The subject of women's education was thoroughly discussed in the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) Report. The report emphatically

said: "For full development of our human resources, the improvement of homes, and for moulding the character of children during the most impressionable years of infancy, the education of women is of even greater importance than that of man"<sup>29</sup>.

The recommendation of the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) laid emphasis on two major aspects: (1) "The first is to emphasis the special programmes recommended by the National Committee of Women's Education and the second is to give attention to the education of girls in all stages and in all sections..."<sup>30</sup>.

But the emphasis of the Left Front Government in West Bengal, on Women's Education is not only laid on the social perspective but also on the economic aspects of the society. They think, "The scopes of the development of the girl-child are wide-amongst the present state of affairs of economy, in West Bengal. Almost everyone would agree that certain economic development have been ushered in the rural sector of West Bengal. The opportunity to work has increased in the villages, even for the women, the rate of daily wages have increased, the rate of economic uncertainty has come down considerably as a direct effect of 'Barga-Record' system. Probably, this has increased the number of school-going girl-child in the rural sector of West Bengal. During 1979-86, the percentage of girls in school education, in West Bengal increased to stand 64 p.c., which is highest in India. Free education and increase in the number of schools in village areas has also helped to increase the number of girls in school education"<sup>31</sup>. But the Left Front Government thinks apart from the limited scopes of rural economic development, inflationary growth of prices, certain other social factors are creating obstacles to the fast rate of growth of women's education in West Bengal as well as India. Some of these are listed below:

- (i) Conservatism of parents;
- (ii) Tradition-ridden social customs;
- (iii) Shortage of women teachers;
- (iv) Lack of hostel and school building;

- (v) Outdated text books;
- (vi) Purposeless curricula;
- (vii) Inadequate transportation etc.;
- (viii) Early marriages in rural areas and in certain strata of society;
- (ix) The feeling that highly educated girls would be less amenable to family disciplines; and
- (x) The feeling that higher education for girls is not necessary to run a home"<sup>32</sup>.

After the Left Front Government came to power, novel thought and new ideas have been introduced in the formulation of the syllabus and the curriculum and new text books have been prescribed. The equality of man and woman can be gauged according to the texts of the curriculum. We can discuss the subject following four steps or formulae.

- “1. Education justifies our individual entity in the society.
2. If we can prepare a positive model on the differences on man and women, it would have a lasting effect on the thought process of our traditional outlook in a developing country like ours.
3. The government is trying to obliterate this so called difference between man and women within school periphery and in the society also.
4. The State Government has positive role to play to formulate the education policy, composing text books etc. Our prayer to those who will formulate education policy is to obliterate this discrimination of men and woman”<sup>33</sup>.

#### **Total Number of Girl-Student only in Villages Class I to V**

	Entire India		West Bengal		Entire India		West Bengal	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
Class I	25118584	10615448	2419036	1069217	19996672	8302594	1991060	874380
Class II	18439574	776436	2362992	598467	14326953	5855792	1059016	460252
Class III	16565648	1155457	504532	12753448	5079187	878898	878898	378419
Class IV	14181399	5672072	973622	422198	10693886	4098312	731295	311211
Class V	12378084	477564	922804	375141	9026984	3308433	648637	253829
Total(I-V)	86683289	35676643	6833911	2968555				

**Source:** 5<sup>th</sup> All India Education analysis, September, 30, 1986

The Above picture is deplorable, in all India level the number of girl-student from class I to class V is one-third of the total students; whereas the condition of West Bengal is a shade better. The number of girl-student is half of the total number.

**The number of student belongs to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe in West Bengal during 1984-85.**

The difference stages of schools	Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
H.S. School 91072)	46621	12496	59117	5933	2727	8650
Higher School	129514	60675	190186	28186	11082	39268
Madhyamik School	8834	43129	131469	20059	8774	28833
Primary School	738361	407051	1135412	155335	15530	250865
Pre-Primary School	2050	1140	3190	365	237	602
Handicapped Section	91	35	126	-	-	-
Adult-Education	61999	24775	86774	11914	5656	17570
Oriental Study	124	25	149	18	04	22
Music /Arts	06	07	13	-	-	-
Vocational Training	182	61	243	25	01	26
Nursing and Matron Training	-	75	75	-	31	31

**Source:** Financial Analysis 1990-91, West Bengal Government.

On the different academic institutions of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe the number of boys in double or triple than girls. The girls are ahead slightly only in the filed of Art and Music. The condition of the 'Adibasi' or tribal girl-child is pathetic.

In the year 1915, Rabindranath Tagore, Acharya Profulla Chandra Roy, Ramananda Chatterjee had established 'Bharat Hith Sadhani Sabha'. The ultimate truth revealed by their realization was that by inculcating education from within, a total awareness could be developed. "As a consequence to all these endeavours 'the Bangiya Sakhsharata Prasar Samiti was established on 8<sup>th</sup> September or 1987 ... According to the Census Report of 1991, the total number of illiterate in West Bengal is around 3 crores. Although, West Bengal Government, Zilla Parishad

and District Administration already has involved 1.2 crores people of ten districts under the programme of National Literacy Mission ... The Bangiya Saksharata Prasar Samiti is a mass-movement. The basic premises of the organization are as follows:

1. It is a joint endeavour of all the mass organization;
2. It is a combined effort of all organizations, institutions and individual enterprise;
3. Cultural enterprises;
4. Voluntary involvement;
5. To destroy all the sources of illiteracy;
6. To assemble people in favour of literacy campaign to continue effective propaganda.
7. Apart from making them literate, to increase consciousness in them to take active part in the struggle for establishing themselves in the society.
8. To make the Primary education free and compulsory;
9. To take appropriate efforts with regard to women's education and
10. To ensure right to employment as a result of the literacy mission<sup>34</sup>.

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## CHAPTER VI

### RE-ENVISIONING SOCIALISM

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For the last two decades great many events took place; but only two events shook the world, viz., the end of Soviet era and the end of American capitalism. Hence both the isms require self-evaluation in retrospect.

Socialism and economic liberalism (read capitalism) paradoxically, of the same intellectual-origin, namely Adam Smith's idea of bourgeoisie society as a self-acting, self-driven economic order<sup>1</sup>. Adam Smith, J.S. Mill and Herbert Spencer these three main exponents of capitalism in the guise of Individualism shunned "any restriction by meddling Sovereigns or Governments saw this order as being in conformity with the law of nature...being and productive of 'progress' in the sense of an augmentation of the "Wealth of Nation". Therefore, Francis Fukuyama drew the implicit conclusion that nothing lay beyond capitalism, that we had come to the end of history<sup>2</sup>. The echo can be heard immediately after the end of Soviet Era with these confident words from a confidant of liberal democracy: "The legitimacy of liberal democracy [read capitalism] .... Conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently Communism... liberal democracy may constitute the 'end point of mankind's ideological evolution' and "final form of human government", and as such constituted the "end of history"<sup>3</sup>. But the unprecedented Economic Recession in the U.S.A. and the Western World literally shattered the day-dream and encouraged to quote Karl Marx once again to say of Classical political economy: ... there has been history, but there is no longer any"<sup>4</sup>.

Impression of capitalism and supportive liberal democracy like socialism is under the scanner. The quest of human civilization is the maximization of freedom. According to Professor Prabhat Patnaik: "True,

it took mankind's quest for freedom ... This quest necessarily entitled going beyond capitalism"<sup>5</sup>.

Capitalism, according Marx, is inimical to human freedom precisely because within it mankind is trapped in a self-acting and self-driven order where individuals become the objects of external coercive forces. This is not just of workers, but even of the capitalists whom Marx in *Capital* (Volume I), described as "capital personified".

Marx's argument however was not just this; it went deeper. For Marx, human beings under capitalism become 'objectified'. Marx did not see productive forces exclusively in materials terms. Rather a 'revolutionary proletariat' in short is not just a productive force, but represent the highest level of development of the productive forces in a bourgeoisie society. Both capitalism and socialism talk about 'Human Freedom', both want to ensure highest level of "Democracy".

Freedom remains elusive under capitalism in spite of its tall claim because human beings under capitalism are actually indistinguishable from things. According to Jean paul Sartre and Saul Bellow: "Human beings under capitalism became *Objectified*. This objectification is in one way related to *Reification* and *Alienation* and in other way this objectification is a denial of freedom.

Soviet form of socialism, according to S. Schram, could not ensure the freedom once envisaged by Marx, Engles and Lenin. Alex Kosygin once remarked that socialism was synonymous with a 7 percent growth rate<sup>6</sup>. Universal adult franchise the means of human freedom in a bourgeoisie society introduced in remarkable Democracies nearly three quarter of a century while the bourgeoisie rule consolidated their position.

In most of the cases the elected government becomes ornamental and the praxis of rule is dividing people into ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. And, finally, denial of meaningful choices to the electorate - appeasement of middle class constituencies by adopting almost identical pro-capitalist polices.

Professor Prabhat Patnaik elaborated this mindless business of liberal democracy by citing example of Iraq war and its background where popular mandate was against invasion of Iraq by the super powers – "...shows the scout respect shown to popular opinion in capitalist democracies"<sup>7</sup>. He justified that *socialism is the full flowering of democracy*. For him, the socialist agenda remains as relevant to day as ever. He also admitted the fact that "this revival of socialism of course will take time", placing the view of George Lukacs in an interview in the New Left Review professor Patnaik is of the opinion that transition from feudalism to capitalism traveled almost 300 years; likewise, the transition from capitalism to socialism will be a long drawn out one. Thus the collapse of the Soviet Union or the ongoing distortions of Marxism in China are simply passing phases of long transition.

At the out set we want to analyze the role of Communist Party of India (Marxist). The making of the left ideology in India and particularly in West Bengal chartered a long struggle through an unraveled path. Before 1967, the left built a deliberative democratic tradition in Bengal. It is comparatively difficult for the social scientists to assess the post colonial agrarian sector of Bengal on the basis of colonial factor. With the departure of the colonial power the dynamics of the power and social structure was also changed.

The partition changed the very basis of demography of West Bengal. The resultant of partition created an agony of separation. The Western World feels the pain of the separation of Germany and Korea after 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Ism created schisms. But the world kept absolute mum on the separation of Bengal and Punjab but shed gallons of crocodile tears on the issue of Kashmir. Anywhere, any part of the world separation leads to pathetic diasporic existence. The diasporic existence of Bengal in India magnifies with its post-colonial and post-independent existence by its new nomenclature – West Bengal.

This new Bengal called West Bengal covers an area of 87,853 square km. losing a huge portion of highly fertile land suddenly caused it

to face an acute shortage of food. The arrival of huge number of refugees from Pakistan and migrants from other states to West Bengal shattered the basis of Bengal's economy, social texture and value system.

A few statistics will illustrate the gamut of the situation and the profound crisis in economy and society immediately after the partition years in this part of India.

Total population of West Bengal	26.30 million
Original inhabitant of West Bengal	21.3 million
No. of non-displaced person from erstwhile Pakistan	0.51 million
Immigrants from other states to Bengal	1.85 million

Thus the gift hamper at the end of the colonial rule was the slice of Bengal and almost 2.09 million refugees<sup>8</sup>.

Without going into much elaboration of statistical figures one can easily understand the sudden flux of population as a huge burden on the agrarian economy of West Bengal. It would not be an exaggeration of the fact that undivided Bengal was economically more independent than independent India. This kind of dependence is there due to "... adverse land-man ration acute food shortage, severe agrarian crisis and class-tension, which influenced qualitatively, the political perspective of the state in the late 1960s"<sup>9</sup>. Sudden flux of population growth in partitioned Bengal was, however, one of the many reasons for ensuring ground for the leftists in Bengal. The magnitude of the rapid and sudden population in West Bengal created many problems:

Firstly, the agrarian sector could not accommodate the extra population because the rural Bengal did not witness any capitalist transformation. Moreover, the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy were over populated to accommodate the diasporic population from the erstwhile East - Pakistan and immigrants of the states in Bengal.

Secondly, the disguise unemployment became rampant and their minimum subsistence was also provided by the rural economy. The extra

expenditure did not allow the agrarian sector to grow on diversity. "After independence, the agrarian sector of West Bengal provided 47 percent of employment"<sup>10</sup>. This imbalance of land-man ratio had a cascading effect on economy and deterred its growth.

Thirdly, Lack of Irrigation Facility was another cause of rural dismal situation in West Bengal during 1947-1977.

#### **Total Irrigation Land in West Bengal**

1951 - 1965	30 p.c. land
1965 - 1966	26 p.c. land
1976 - 1977	28 p.c. land

[N.B. An analytical study by the Bengal Chambers of Commerce and Industry' and Census of India 1981 (W.B.).

Professor Chandan Basu has rightly pointed out in his masterly work, "The Making of the Left Ideology in West Bengal: Culture, Political Economy, Revolution - 1947-1970" that neither proper modernization nor proper method of agricultural science was applied, as a result the average production of principle crops in West Bengal was very low. Even the proportion of double-cropped area in comparison with agriculturally developed states like Punjab and TamilNadu was also low. Professor Basu also pointed out that lack of favourable institutional framework and above all administrative negligence, mishandling of resources and non-chalant attitude of the Central Government was very profound. One report of Techno Economic Survey of West Bengal, 1962 shows that between 1956 and 1961, the annual cereals in West Bengal was to the extent of 4,00,000 to 5,00,000 tons.

Dr. Chandan Basu opined that the agrarian structure and pattern of land ownership in West Bengal remained unchanged though the big landlord class or the Zaminder, an offshoot of Permanent Settlement Act, 1793, lost their ground in the rural power structure before the end of colonial rule in India. It ensures the emergence of middle category of peasantry. Moreover, in spite of the presence of two powerful Act (a) Estate Acquisition Act, 1953 Land Reform and (b) West Bengal Land Reform Act, 1953, the distribution of land ownership did not change at all. Government inertia to implement land reform was profound.

The dominance of middle peasantry and their terms, conditions were against only for the marginalized and agricultural labourers but also against the spread of capitalist mode of agricultural production. The reflection of rural discontentment became prominent during late 1960s.

To quote Dr. Chandan Basu: "The class unrest did not articulate in a large scale until 1967-68 in rural West Bengal. In the late 1960s the political ideology of class struggle was significantly able to deconstruct the hegemonic value of dominant rural classes .... It was the failure of predominant political economy either to implement radical structural change in land ownership or to improve the basic standard of living of the lower orders of the agrarian society. The eventual result was the translation of rural discontent into political of resistance and social change in late 1960"<sup>11</sup>.

The central objective is the quest for human freedom which requires a transcendence of capitalism. Professor Prabhat Patnaik stresses the belief: what is important, however, is the over all vision that we have of the socialism that will emerge, one which accords centrality to human freedom, which remains continuously 'open' and untrained by ossification in any form, and which constitutes an unleashing of democracy and a perennial engagement of the people with politics.

To justify "The case of socialism" Professor Prabhat Patnaik wrote: "To say that the quest for freedom can not be satisfied within capitalism is not the same as saying that socialism is inevitable. The matter in short is one of praxis not of prediction ... it is (i.e., capitalism) friendly to human freedom precisely become the objects of external coercive forces ... whom Marx in capital (Volume I), described as "Capital personified"<sup>12</sup>". The immanent tendencies of capitalism can be seen in Industrial Sector of West Bengal which also extended the cause of socialist movement in West Bengal and helped in a great way the leftists in West Bengal to get their ground.

In his search to develop a 'Histography of Industrialization' Dr. Chandan Basu resorts to the theory of underdevelopment of Andre

Gunder Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein. For them, "the rise of the west", "the development of capitalism", "the hegemony of Europe". "The Rise and fall of Great Powers" are to be seen from a global perspective. To Andre Gunder Frank: "All of them were part and parcel of the structure and development of a single world economic system"<sup>13</sup>.

Apart from the much talked about Centre – peripheral dependency in third world countries like India, "It always makes compromise with the feudal property relation and feudal production relations ... The feudal method of labour control is mingled with the compradorial industrial capitalism"<sup>14</sup>. Some analysts like Dipesh Chakraborty, B.R. Tomilson emphasized the presence of community consciousness of the working class instead of class – consciousness. The identical views can be sighted from their works:

Dipesh Chakraborty and B.R. Tomilson writes in the same vein: Historian after debate "changes" and "continuities" in working class history but politics of labour movement is basically governed by re-conceived culture which a hierarchical and in-egalitarian by nature subordinated to imagined communities of a distinctly pre-capitalist character<sup>15</sup>.

Dr. Chandan Basu and Krishna Bharadwaj although dealt the nature of labour movement from a different point of view. They criticized Dipesh Chakraborty and B.R. Tomilson with this language: "it ignores completely how the social relation of production"<sup>16</sup> and "In developmental theory ... in the analysis of agrarian change that the Marxist approach has advanced extensively in India"<sup>17</sup>.

**The rise of left – Ideology: The saga of lop-sided economy: Colonial and Post-colonial industrialization and Regional inequality**

The saga of industry before and after partition is the story of plethora, pain and pathos. The writing of Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy, Professor S.N. Bose and Professor Suniti Chattaphdyay reflects the ground reality that how potential was Bengal industrially and in its know-how and trade but painful experience of colonial and-reform and

annihilation of several intricate industries in Bengal created plethora of pathos and unmatched unemployment. The diasporic existence of skilled artisans in their own country led to an another level of self-alienation<sup>18</sup>.

In India, the spate of industrialization could be witnessed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Mirza Galib, the great poet and close associate of Bahadur Shah Jafar – II, during his short stay in Kolkata, seeing the steam ships floating in the river Ganga realized the strength, ability and inevitability of an imperial rule in India. The lively vivid description can be found in Professor Pramathanath Bishi's historical novel Lal Killa written decades ago much before the Last Mughal by William Dalrymple. Bengal from that time period had an industrial economy primarily, jute, engineering and tea industries. The industries were mostly localized. The other areas were mainly agrarian ensuring the supply of raw materials and food-grains to the industrialized zones<sup>19</sup>.

Dr. Chandan Basu opined in his masterly work: The tragic partition even could not imbalance the industrial structure during 1948. West Bengal had a 'superior position' in heavy industries like, engineering, minerals and metals. A comparative figure will project the case more elaborately:

**Number of Employment in Factories of Mumbai and Bengal in 1948<sup>18</sup>**

<b>Name of Industries</b>	<b>Mumbai</b>	<b>West Bengal</b>
Textile	442,411	3,45,010
Engineering	54,798	1,07,495
Minerals and Metals	6,941	28,940
Food, Drinks and Tobacco	28,957	27,09d1
Chemicals	2,200	7,654
Paper and Printing	16,899	18,959

**Source:** (a) The Bengal Chamber and Commerce, West Bengal an analytical study, 1971; (b) The Left ideology in West Bengal by Dr. Chandan Basu, page 41<sup>20</sup>.

Another important aspect which be observed during 1960s, the number of industries and their employability experienced sudden recession. A few statistics can help to understand the crisis:

Firstly, during 1950 the number of jute workers were 2,85,585. where as lack of raw materials and rise of new competitors like, Pakistan, Thailand reduced the employability of jute workers in West Bengal. As a result, during 1958 the number of jute workers were 2,21,398.

Secondly, some specialized industries like transport and transport equipment's the number of industries reduced to 258 in 1970 but statistic shows that the number was 268 during 1968-69. Thus, the increase in employment in this sector also marginally increased from 79,621 in 1968 to 80,559 in 1970.

The number of Basic Metal Industries in West Bengal was 558 in 1966. The figure reduced during 1970 to 550. This industry employed 88,149 people during 1966. It reduced the ability to employ people to 85,246 in 1970.

The number of Cotton Mills in West Bengal was 167 in the year 1969 could employ 49,416 people. The number decreased to 161 in 1970 and as a natural cascading effect employability reduced to 42,656 in 1970<sup>21</sup>. These can be exemplified in case of Iron and Steel Industry, Chemical Industry and Tea Garden and other Industry projects more or less the same dismal picture was observed.

In the discussion of Industrial Economy in West Bengal during 1947-1970, Dr. Chandan Basu shows that how maternity benefits and introduction of new machinery and improved technology reduced the number of women and forced them to be obsolete in the organized industrial sector. Moreover, the per capital income of workers in West Bengal were lower than that of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Delhi.

The immediate effect of all these despondency leads to the increase of Trade Unions, Shree N.N. Chatterjee shows that the number of Trade Unions in West Bengal during 1950-51 were 967 only. But the figure reached upto 5,020 during 1970. The number of Industrial disputes were 6,39,293 during 1950. Within 1958 it touched the astounding figure of 20,96,668. As a result of Industrial dispute West Bengal lost 20,51,012 man-days in 1961. The loss of man-days in 1970 reached 94,25,300<sup>22</sup>.

It should be admitted that the industrial economy in West Bengal due to capital-labour mis-match between 1947 to 1970, a long-term crisis put the state in trouble. Thus, the study of political idiom demands over all change in the economy and politics. The unprecedented unemployment, price rise put the polity of Bengal to compromise with their standard of living. The ground was ready for the change of dispensation in West Bengal during 1967 and 1969 Bidhan Sabha Elections. The first of its kind a coalition government (break away congress, Bangla Congress with other left and democratic parties) came to power.

## II

In the process of re-envisioning socialism since 1977 till the much vaunted 'Winds of Change', proclaimed by Mrs. Mamta Banerjee the modest effort on my part will be made to sketch the situations, forces and the political education that lead the country, broadly speaking, the left political movement from strength to strength. Ms. Monobina Gupta, a prominent journalist proclaimed as a S.F.I. activist and finally a ruthless critic of left front, especially, CPI(M) after Singur-Nandi Gram episodes, and in her masterly work "Left Politics in Bengal: Time Travels Among Bhadrolok Marxists" tried to pin-point the maladies of the system in a Parliamentary democracy. She also rightly indicated that a robust, vibrant and theoretically sound political platform became viciated by the whirl pool of power politics. They joined a system to change it from within, but the system changed them from within. They have realized the pit fall, but will the uncompromising time and public demand with new political equations allow them to fill in the pits. It's not time alone but conscious and righteous political manoeuvre and political education that can bring back the lost glory and put the socialist movement in Bengal and India in the right track.

In our earlier chapter we have discussed the background achievements, obstacles and failures of the education endeavour of the

left front government in West Bengal as integral part of left-front government's policy perspectives.

Unlike Kerala or other state of India, West Bengal established a political tradition which is unique: after independence except a short-break the Congress ruled West Bengal as a political dispensation for about 28 years. The Left Front Government in West Bengal this year completed their long 34 years of rule, which is certainly a world record.

It was a tumult – and that tumult was a worldwide phenomenon. Everything was upside down from 1950 to 1970 the recognized social sciences were accepting a paradigm shift which was so long not unknown to them but consciously ignored. This paradigm shift was the demand and requirement of the changed time to meet the new challenges. This phenomenon was common to both the world: West and East. At least for the first time they meet each other for their mutual convenience.

In our part of the world, the former Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu took the reader down memory lane in his autobiography: *Jatadur Mone Pore* and captured the time period between the 50s and 70s. "It was the best of time; it was the worst of time". Possibilities and despair were holding the breath: small and big several mutinies were disrupting the state and affairs in West Bengal and beyond the state across the world. The turbulent 60s – "the decades of the moody blues, of defiance and resistance – had arrived, in their full glory<sup>23</sup>". Monobina Gupta in her "Left Politics in Bengal" termed, broadly modern times as "terror" cyber innovation", "market", "consumerism" age. For her the 60s and 70s witnessed dance of rebellions, of defiance...; unfair wars, passionate protests spilling from one country to another, embracing a thousand causes<sup>24</sup>".

The turbulent and rebellious time traveled through uncanny, uneasy and certainly unhealthy path. The list of upheaval is quite long. It is sometimes struggle against apartheid in South Africa, civil rights movement in America; Latin America's protest against U.S. intervention; Vietnam War; Man landed on Moon, the strumming of Bob Dylan, the

Beatles, Pink Floyd Spell bound the millions across the world: "How many miles must a man walk down before he's called a man – The answer my friend is blowing in the wind..." That was certainly the wind of change; and it is now in West Bengal there is a clarion-ate call for change. How potential this clarion-ate call was, we will discuss, but before we get into the subject matter of change in contemporary West Bengal, we will focus on West Bengal during 60s and 70s which could enable the people of West Bengal to install an elected Government called Left Front Government.

The Whirlpool of political change dashed the shores and hills of West Bengal from South to North. The 'Khadya Andolan' or movement asking for food security, release of political prisoners, raising salaries, dearness allowances of school-teachers under the Secondary Board of Education, and unemployment dole resonated through the state. In July 1953, the hike of a one paisa by a British Tram Company backed by the Bidhan Chandra Roy's Government led Calcutta's into a tizzy. The relation between the Congress and left became bitter day by day. The series of political events, e.g., dismissal of the first CPI government in Kerala in 1957 by Jawaharlal Nehru; Police firing on rallyists on 31 August 1959 created a sharp polarization but its reflection was not shown in the electoral battle although CPI could increase its vote sharing from 18 per cent in 1957 to 25 per cent in 1962 but the party could secure only 46 seats against 152 seats secured by the Congress in 1957. Even in 1962 India- China war could not upset the electoral and organizational prospect of the left in West Bengal. In 1964, the ideological conflict finally led to a split. The United Communist Party fractured into Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist)<sup>25</sup>.

The fundamental difference between the two parties were in their perceptions on the character of the Indian State and relations with Congress. "The CPI perceived the Congress as a party of the national bourgeoisie; CPI(M), on the other hand, believed Congress represented the interests of land lords and the bourgeoisie ... The two communist parties parted ways, with mutual animosity intensifying in 1975 when

the CPI chose to back the Emergency. Down the line the CPI conceded its mistake and over time the gulf between the communist parties narrowed till their political stands became indistinguishable from each other<sup>26</sup>.

1966-67, was a turning point in West Bengal politics. A debate over participation in the upcoming synthesis of the prolonged movement in the United Front Government raged within the party. Promode Dasgupta and Jyoti Basu, two iconic figures in Indian Communist movement were holding diametrically opposite views, Ms. Monobina Gupta writes: "It is not without irony that even as far back as 1967, Jyoti Basu was arguing in favour of participation, stressing it would tactically help the party expand its base. Three decades down the line, in the summer of 1996 a similar debate split the CPI(M) wide open, when Basu came tantalizingly close to wearing the mantle of India's first Communist Prime Minister. Back in 1967, Promode Dasgupta provided leadership to the group, known as "Leftists" and later as "hardliners", opposing participation<sup>27</sup>.

Ms. Monobina Gupta also asserts that after intense debate, the CPI(M) decided to join the United Front Government with 18-point programme committed to improving food supply, creating more jobs and better health facilities.

"In this period that GHERAOS, an indelible feature of the history of labour militancy, acquired legitimacy. Labour Minister Subodh Banerjee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI) secured cabinet sanction, legitimizing GHERAOS, as an acceptable form of protest<sup>28</sup>. The United Front Government could not survive for long time. The Centre imposed President's Rule in 1968. Ajoy Mukherjee as chief Minister, a breakaway Bangla Congress member, and Jyoti Basu, as the Deputy Chief Minister with their United Democratic Front Government faced the eventual end in 1968. Meanwhile, a government under the leadership of P.C. Ghosh and his party "Progressive Democratic Front", experienced a short spell in power. T.G. Nossiter in his "Marxist State Governments in India: Politics,

Economics and Society" wrote that civil disorder reached its zenith point and around 30,000 people were arrested<sup>29</sup>.

The political bipolarization as Left and Right and in recent years as 'AAMRA' (we) and 'ORA' (they) began during February 1969 with the declaration of the midterm elections. The United Democratic Front could secure 214 seats and Congress only 55. The CPI(M), for the first time, emerged as the single largest party with 80 seats.

The CPI(M) did not get the post of Chief Minister, but was "put in charge of critical portfolios like land and land revenue, labour, relief and rehabilitation and transport ... of the 32 points on the Government's charter of commitments, land distribution was perhaps the most successful, the most talked - about - programme<sup>30</sup>.

The political analysts often say that the 13-month in the second phase of UDF Government CPI(M) paved the way for 34 years of rule [Mamta Banjee says: Misrule] in West Bengal. "In many ways a precursor to 1977, ... the CPI(M) created new aspiration among the landless underclass, disturbing entrenched power relations in the country side Bengal continued to be in turmoil: industrial unrest was escalating; Gheraos were becoming routine, the political landscape in villages was altering beyond recognition Naxalbari was born as armed radicals killed and got killed ... 'power flows from the barrel of the gun", not proved as axiomatic truth at least in West Bengal<sup>31</sup>.

Ideological Debate and Democratic Centralism are the two cardinal principles of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The party plays the role of a catalyst to build public opinion with a hope to capture political power to pursue the cherished policy and to enhance its area and area of influence in parts of the country.

But a group of party workers believe that there is "the negative role of democratic centralism .... Almost without exception, the democratic element, in every crisis, at every political juncture, tends to be guillotined. What rears its head is centralism ... over the years the spirit

of nourishing debate that firms up the ideological backbone of the party has been killed<sup>32</sup>.

For Monabina Gupta, it was not an aberration. In 1977, after Mrs. Indira Gandhi declared general elections, a section of the West Bengal Party were against participating in the poll in the back drop of the farcical 1972 elections which were at that time too vivid.

The inner-party debate sparked by a rally at Sahid Minar when party joined a public meeting by Jay Prakash Narayan, the first and the last rally the CPI(M) participated without party flag. The third occasion the party debated in 1979 on 'July crisis'. The question was to extend or withdraw the support to the Morarji Desai Government.

Monobina mentioned in this respect "I also recall an interesting debate on retaining the word "Socialism" in the SFI constitution: Should the SFI, a mass organization, have the word in its constitution<sup>33</sup>.

The growth of left movement was also accompanied by the growth of disillusionment. "The revolution, it is often said, devours its children". The despondency was very high when Monabina Gupta writes: "The Left movement in India particularly in West Bengal – coursing through a wild and hard terrain seems to have reached a withering plateau<sup>34</sup>.

However, 1977 was a special year in India as well as for West Bengal politics and governance. The infamous atrocity of the Siddhartha Shankar Ray government prepared the Marxists in Bengal to face teeth of violence unleashed during emergency declared by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. In the language of Partha Chatterjee: "The intensity of state repression unleashed in the city (Calcutta) between 1970 and 1973 was of such magnitude that, unlike many other parts of India, Calcutta saw little in the year and a half of the Emergency to add to what it already knew about the way of an authoritarian regime<sup>35</sup>.

The description of West Bengal's academic atmosphere was also the reflection of that uneasy time. It is often said against the left rule in West Bengal that the people in power spoilt everything good in West Bengal. But history writes something different. "When the left Front won

the people's mandate it inherited a state in tatters, where everything apart from violence seemed to have come to a standstill<sup>36</sup>.

Monobina continues the description of the sorry state of West Bengal during Congress misrule: "Once considered among the best educational institutions in the country, Calcutta University was hemorrhaging Examination Schedules were running late by more than a couple of years. Results were delayed long enough to prevent students from applying to Universities outside West Bengal<sup>37</sup>. Sri Jyoti Basu led Left Front Government took time to revamp the system. "The Chief Minister said the government was doing its best to bring the examination schedule back on track. The backlog was stunning high. The result almost never came on time. It was not just the education system that was mangled...<sup>38</sup>.

Chief Minister Jyoti Basu promised to run his government not from Writers' Building the imposing red brick building constructed by British architect Thomas Lyon in the year 1780, but from scattered but integrated villages and mafussil towns of Bengal. But following the formula of conflict and compromise; rejection and acceptance, very common approach in any parliamentary system, that euphoria, that 'language of assurance and promise that eventually disappeared<sup>39</sup>.

Although Mr. Monabina Gupta admits that Jyoti Basu had inherited a badly messed up state from his earlier congress dispensation .... "The educational system had to be overhauled on a priority basis. Bit by bit University examinations reclaimed their schedules on the academic calendar students received degrees in time .... But the spirit of violence, like the spirit of resilience, has a way of surviving... West Bengal till today has the highest incidence of political violence ... The Left Front's *raison d'être* which actualized itself with operation Barga, was lost forever at the barricades of Nandigram<sup>40</sup>.

"Prior to 1977, only some 2,75,000 sharecroppers had bucked the rural power structure and registered. By December 1985 as many a 1.3

million of the estimated 2 million West Bengal sharecroppers – 96 per cent of all ‘tenants’ – were recorded<sup>41</sup>.

Primarily, CPI(M) never thought that they will be allowed to do with the government business for a good long-time by the Congress Government in the Centre. ‘Once it became clear that the party would have to rule and produce results and not just for a brief period<sup>42</sup>, Their policies changed with the times, ‘the strategies diversified, some conflicting with the CPI(M)’s essential political philosophy<sup>43</sup>. In the 1980s M. Basavapunniah, in an article in *Desh Hitaishi* posed a relevant question: “How much has the CPI(M) been able to do in West Bengal? Has the party been able to provide relief, rally the people and scale up their consciousness? ... The fall of the socialist bloc subsequently lent weight to the debate on whether socialism can flourish in a multi – party democracy ...<sup>44</sup>.

Parliamentary democracy is characterized by electoral uncertainty. In the summer of 1996 A.K. Gopalan Bhavan became the hub of activity when about a dozen regional party leaders and the Congress leadership ‘beseeched’ Jyoti basu to lead them and the United Front Government. The situation made Jyoti Basu the Man of the Match’ but he not being made the Prime Minister was later described as a ‘historical blunder’.

What a contrast to 2009 when the party ‘plummeted’ to its lowest ever tally in three decades, Ms. Monabina Gupta describes as Sitaram Yechury told the media, the first time since 1989 when the party had no role to play in the formation of a secular government at the centre. West Bengal to-day, in the backdrop of Singur – Nandi gram episodes, at the threshold of Assembly Election and feebly vying to come back to power for the consecutive 8<sup>th</sup> time. Professor Bhaskar Dutta writes that initial euphoria dissipated long ago, only to be replaced by growing disenchantment with the Left Front rule. Like M. Basavapunniah in 1980s Professor Bhaskar Dutta raised the question: Is this bitterness and disappointment of the typical voter in West Bengal unreasonable?

Professor Bhaskar Dutta in his article "Hard road ahead" in the Telegraph, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011 praised the Left Front Government for their successful implementation of operation Barga and Land Reform measures. But he said that the left in West Bengal could not out shine other states in any other area.

According to Professor Dutta, the ratio of the state's per capita net domestic product in comparison with per capita national product has remained virtually at just below one, between 1977-78 and 2008-2009.

Agriculture sector performed very well but there has been deindustrialization of the state. In the analysis of Professor Bhaskar Dutta, in 1978, the ratio of the rural and urban populations in the state below the poverty line were 58 and 39 per cent, while analogous figures for India as a whole were 51 and 41 per cent.

The corresponding figures in 2005 are 38.2 (rural) and 24.4 (urban) per cent for West Bengal, while in India perspective 41.8 (rural) and 25.7 (urban) per cent. But Professor Dutta's expectation was much higher from a left front government whose USP is 'caring for the people'. In the opinion of Professor Bhaskar Dutta life expectancy in the state is roughly the same as the all India figure.

But he became critical where education is concerned. He wrote: in contrast, its performance in the education sector has been pretty dismal for a state which takes great pride in its literary and cultural traditions. Bengal's relative position in terms of literacy rates amongst the major states is much lower today than it was in 1981.

He shrugged of the blame of 'step-motherly attitude' of the central government to West Bengal and highlighted the control and clout of the leftist over the first United Front Government and he also blamed the left leaders for their inability to utilize that influence to further the economic prospects of the state during the period.

For Professor Dutta, no large, overpopulated, land scare economy can grow without a sizeable industrial sector. West Bengal has been no exception. Professor Dutta depicted that until very recently, there had

hardly been any attempt to attract capital into the state at a time when other Indian states were falling over each other to get fresh investment projects for themselves. For him, the leaders of the left front must have been extremely myopic and unbelievably naïve to believe otherwise.

Professor Bhaskar Dutta finally suggested, "Elections are a great disciplinary device. The threat of losing power can induce good governance. The lack of credible opposition has enabled the left to come back to power repeatedly, and has resulted in arrogance and inability to learn from the past mistakes. Perhaps a spell on the opposition benches is just what doctor should order for the left<sup>45</sup>.

Then he added: "Do the preachers of change think that parties ruling in states like Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka or Rajasthan are the torch bearers of democracy? Can the dubious models of governance upheld by these states be an alternative to the Left regime in Bengal?"<sup>46</sup>

Bengal's attitude towards education, culture, tradition and over all political out-look is, perhaps, correctly depicted by Shree Swapan Dasgupta in his article: "The Middle Kingdom" in the Telegraph, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2011. The uncertainty of the time, specially, during 70s, is nicely reflected.

To avoid year loss he expressed his willingness to join a Delhi College to pursue his study in history. To his utter surprise, a 'grand-uncle' asked: "Are there College in Delhi?" Apart from Oxbridge, for a section of Bengali in those days, recommended the Presidency College as the ultimate destination to study history. These group of Bengali neither heard of St. Stephen nor did they want to know. He termed these proud Bengalis as "Umbrellas".

Shree Dasgupta suggests that this can be an interesting subject matter for historians to find out the time period when Bengali bhadralok first started viewing himself as 'the intellectual master race' of India. Even, according to Shree Dasgupta, the much talked about partition of 1947 could not stop Bengali pretensions. The famine of 1943 and partition of 1947 unsettled the Bengali bhadralok intellectuals that

ultimately brought two fundamental changes; Shree Swapan Dasgupta described these changes as distortions.

First with their innate disbelief in capitalism, Bengal's intellectuals detached themselves from the wealth creation process. The virtues of Swadeshi entrepreneurship took back seat when in the 1950s Bengalis accepted 'socialism' as the preferred alternative. He termed it as 'progressive' current.

Secondly, this progressive thought was challenged by multiple intellectual current in Bengali. He charted, during the last decade of Raj there had been several competing trends, viz., loyalism, nationalist conservatism, Hindutva, Muslim separatism, Gandhism Revolutionary terrorism, and Marxism.

After 1967 with the down fall of Congress hegemony and dispensations, the debate became a tussle between shades of either socialism or Marxism. According to Shree Swapan Dasgupta's contention it created 'an intellectual straitjacket and contributed to an intellectual ossification" in Bengal.

Siddhartha Sankar Ray's effort to tackle both the CPI(M) and CPI(ML) and Miss Mamta Banerjee's disastrous 2006 election campaign were tuned with the same line 'a combination of muscle power' and 'progressive posturing'. For Shree Dasgupta in the ongoing election campaign Mamta Banerjee consciously took a middle path by rejecting hardline of leftism during her opposition to the Tata Motor Project in Singur and by promising political Sobriety and development with a human face. But Shree Swapan Dasgupta's contention is that 'the mere fact that she had to genuflect before Left populism to achieve her electoral breakthrough in the 2009 parliamentary election is indicative of the Communist movement's success in making "the political culture of West Bengal drearily monochromatic".

The contention of Professor Bhaskar Dutta is also reflected in the thinking of Shree Swapan Dasgupta. The Left Front succeeded in power equations in the country side. Operation Barga made the share-croppers

the de-facto owner of the land. Literally, empowered the poor complemented by militant unionism triggered the nervous flight of capital from 1967.

With the advent of deregulation, while other states are creating investment friendly environment to woo the ultimate investors for industrialization, Bengal played street cricket during state sponsored bandh holidays. It was observation Shree Das Gupta.

The Left Front intellectuals, according to Shree Swapan Dasgupta, fallaciously thought - 'a more equitable rural society would trigger a new wave of industrialization' since the purchasing power of the people had increased. But this idea did not give any dividend to the left front government.

As a result, Bengal was left far, far behind in the race. The reason according to Swapan Dasgupta was that the environment for investment was not thought to be conducive. The problem was Bengal.

Shree Dasgupta compared in his article Shree Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee with Kautsky but Sri Bhattacharjee was helpless to pursue his 'do it now' culture in an environment of 'chalbe na' culture. Dasgupta believed that any change of dispensation will not bring any radical change until Bengali invites a 'counter revolution' at their head level.

With the effect of globalization and great economic down turn worldwide, like other parliamentary parties, CPI(M) also showed some kind of deviation in its policy perspectives. A section of Indian Press is often active to expose these aberrations. Moreover, it is found that this section of media keeps no stone unturned to prove prevarication of the left from the classical Marxism and Leninism. But they maintain a stoic silence while other major Indian parties deviated from the path of Gandhism became over burdened with corruption, utter in-efficiency and myopic vision problem.

One such startling news is published by the Annand Bazar Patrika on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2011. The news reads: after BJP it is the turn of CPI(M) to be exposed by the Wikileaks. This will, according to the news paper, raise the

old debate inside the CPI(M) about the question of liberalism and related market economy.

The reporter of the story writes that just a few days ago the CPI(M) polit-bureau member Sitaram Yechuri delivered a lecture in Colombia University and he stated over there that in the name of economic liberalism the United States is persuing the imperialist policy world wide.

Immediately after that Wikileaks exposed a cable report (128590: Sensitive) sent to Washington by Henry Jardin, American Consul General in Kolkata about the exchange of ideas, between the Chief Minister of West Bnegal,Sri Buddhadev Bhattacharya and Mr. Henry Paulson, the then U.S. Finance Secretary. The whole incident took place sometime in October, 2007.

According to Shree Jayanta Ghoshal, the reporter from New Delhi reports that there had been a meeting between Shree Bhuddhadev Bhattachayaya, the Chief Minister of West Bengal and Mr. Henry Paulson, the then U.S. Finance Secretary on October, 2007. The cable discloses that Shree Bhattacharya supported the cause of economic liberalism. The communist parties in India are also adopting with the changed reality. In future all will follow the same route or they will be routed. In this changed economic situation reforms is a must even for the communists. The journalist added that on the eve of Assembly Election in Bengal the Left Front is prioritizing the interest of the peasants and the development of agriculture keeping aside the subject and issue of Industrialization and economic liberalization. The pertinent question is thus: which one is the CPI(M)'s official stand?

It would not be irrelevant here to mention that the Left Front Government in West Bengal declared very clearly: Agriculture is our base; and standing on the firm ground of agricultural success we want to touch the sky, i.e., Industrialization. "Industrialization is not at the cost of agriculture but progress in both the sectors".

The reflection of the same opinion in also expressed by professor Amartya Sen. In an interview with Ms. Swati Bhattacharya published in

Anandabazar patrika on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2008 Professor Sen advised: "I don't believe the possibility to increase production and income in agriculture is over. Nor I believe there is any antagonism between agriculture and industry<sup>47</sup>.

Professor Sen stressed on that in West Bengal the land taken for industrialization is very meager, e.g. in Singur only 1000 acres of land is being taken. The pertinent question here is those who will be removed from agriculture, how would they earn for sustenance after their dispossession of land? The question is pertinent.

Professor Amartya Sen emphasized on the complementary nature of agriculture and industry. Mentioning about an article of Shree Ashok Mitra, an eminent economist, writer, columnist and first and former finance minister of the Left Front Government, 'Kayekti Artha Abong udbigna yagasha, Anandabazar Patrika, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2007, raised a very pertinent question: Is the possibility of agriculture as revenue earner really over?

Professor Sen admitted that agricultural yield can be increased by adopting various modern methods of agriculture and more emphasis should be given for marketing and also to establish a close link with modern industries by minimizing the role of the middle man. With the help of the industrialization the agro-production can be increased.

Professor Amartya Sen also identified a truth and has been airing it for last 40 years that our different abilities help to grow and strengthen the economy. In his words: I am for last 40 years sensitizing the cause of education and health. One of the reasons, the standard of living and general physical ability of the public depend much upon education and health facilities. But another reason is that the overall progress of our economy is closely related to education and health services. Thus, progress in agriculture, industry, education and health should be addressed simultaneously<sup>48</sup>.

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## CHAPTER VII

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

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Before the establishment of the 7<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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'<sup>1</sup>.

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"<sup>2</sup>.

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"<sup>3</sup>. 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"<sup>4</sup>. 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”<sup>5</sup>. 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?”<sup>6</sup>. 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”<sup>7</sup>.

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 29<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2006. The report says that private schools are doing very well for the advancement of education with the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> 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 resurrection<sup>8</sup>.

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.

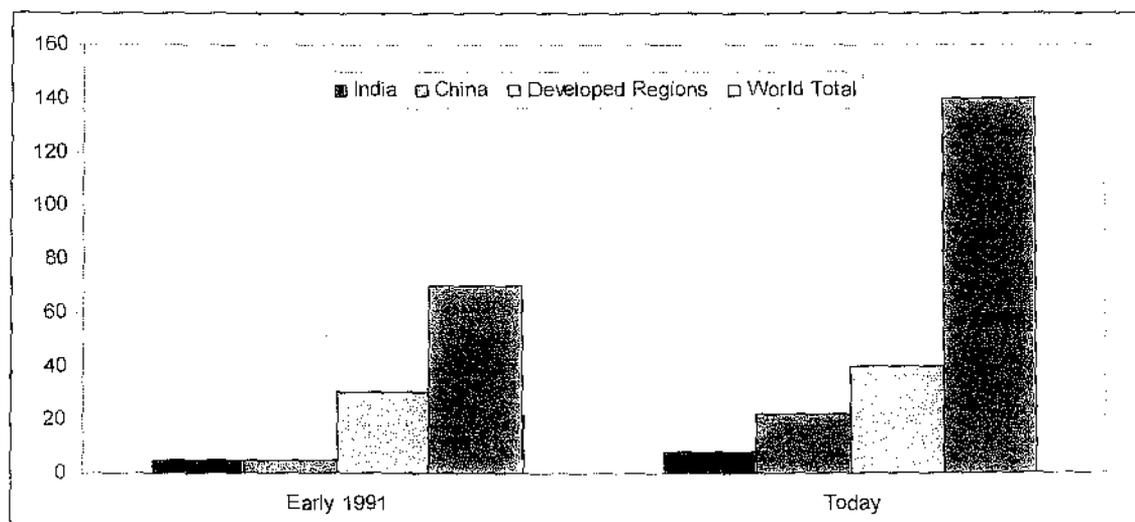
Here is an excerpt of the article by Professor Philip G. Altbach on: The Giants Awake: Higher Education Systems in China and India.

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

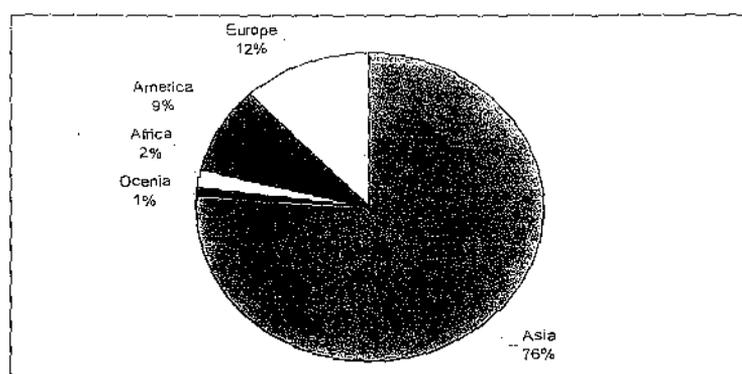
And finally, the economic ability of the growing middle class is increasing considerably. The parents are increasingly sending their wards abroad for studying.

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).

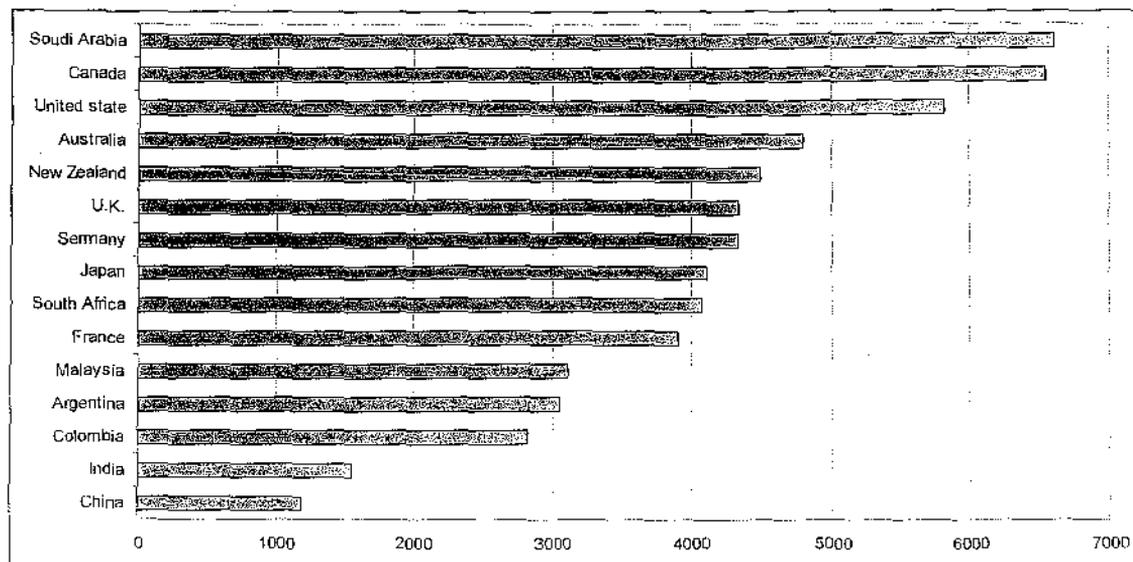
The salary professionals are receiving at an average of \$1,182 for China and \$1,547 for India. These salaries are 25% of U.S. averages and modestly, less for most Western European countries'. The academicians are middle class people in their respective countries.

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**

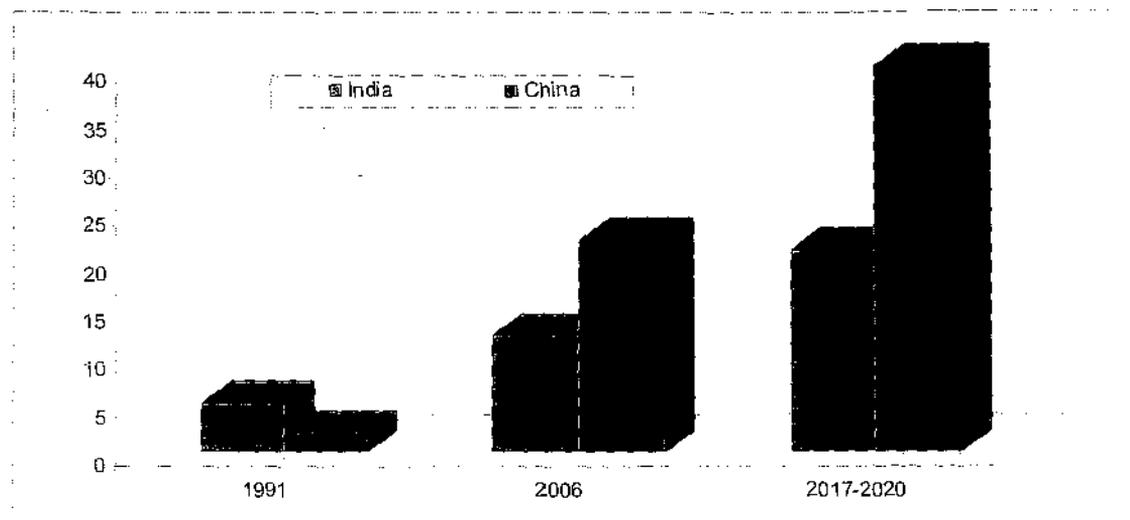
Both China and India are over populated. Thus greatest challenge is to give, all segments of population, access to higher education, and especially post-secondary higher education. Another challenge is to provide equity to population groups which remain till date under represented. India, at present, 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 high<sup>9</sup>.

### **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 level"<sup>10</sup>.

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"<sup>11</sup>.

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"<sup>12</sup>.

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”<sup>13</sup>.

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?”<sup>14</sup>

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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”<sup>15</sup>. 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"<sup>16</sup>.

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 Front<sup>17</sup>.

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%"<sup>18</sup>. 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"<sup>19</sup>. 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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"<sup>20</sup>. 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 Jyotiprasad 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"<sup>21</sup>.

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 is headed by their Supremo Miss Mamta Banerjee, who being a woman 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 policy<sup>22</sup>. 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"<sup>23</sup>.

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"<sup>24</sup>. 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'<sup>25</sup>.

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"<sup>26</sup>.

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"<sup>27</sup>.

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"<sup>28</sup>.

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"<sup>29</sup>.

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"<sup>30</sup>.

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"<sup>31</sup>.

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 7<sup>th</sup> 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"<sup>32</sup>.

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"<sup>33</sup>.

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"<sup>34</sup>.

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'<sup>35</sup>. 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"<sup>36</sup>.

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"<sup>37</sup>

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"<sup>38</sup>.

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"<sup>39</sup>. 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 immature<sup>40</sup>.

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 (14<sup>th</sup> 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 116<sup>th</sup> again in the Man-Woman Deprivation Index among 130 countries India's position is 113<sup>th</sup>. 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 128<sup>th</sup>. 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 53<sup>rd</sup>. 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 96<sup>th</sup>. In the World Hungry Index among 88 countries India stand at the 66<sup>th</sup> position.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dreamt of a resurgent educationally illustrious India. In the Educational Development Index among 129 countries the position of India is 105<sup>th</sup>. 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 74<sup>th</sup>. 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. 12,000<sup>41</sup>. 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 Sourth-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'<sup>42</sup>.

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"<sup>43</sup>.

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"<sup>44</sup>.

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"<sup>45</sup>.

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'<sup>46</sup>.

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"<sup>47</sup>.

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"<sup>48</sup>.

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 education<sup>49</sup>.

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'<sup>50</sup>.

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"<sup>51</sup>.

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 Elections"<sup>52</sup>.

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"<sup>53</sup>.

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”<sup>54</sup>. But it is worthy to mention that Mr. Sibal stated that “all recommendations of the NKC need not be implemented”<sup>55</sup>.

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"<sup>56</sup>.

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'<sup>57</sup>.

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"<sup>58</sup>.

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..."<sup>59</sup>.

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"<sup>60</sup>.

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"<sup>61</sup>.

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"<sup>62</sup>.

**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% p.a 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 = 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of 6% of GDP (while 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 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"<sup>63</sup>.

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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> pay commission’<sup>64</sup>.

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 model<sup>65</sup>.

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"<sup>66</sup>.

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"<sup>67</sup>

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](http://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"<sup>68</sup>.

"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"<sup>69</sup>.

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"<sup>70</sup>.

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"<sup>71</sup>.

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"<sup>72</sup>. His bold question is: "How did they get away"?<sup>73</sup>

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"<sup>74</sup>. 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"<sup>75</sup>. 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"<sup>76</sup>. 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 parked 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 state<sup>77</sup>.

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”<sup>78</sup>. 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 Minister<sup>79</sup>.

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"<sup>80</sup>.

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 pittance<sup>81</sup>.

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”<sup>82</sup>.

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”<sup>83</sup>.

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”<sup>84</sup>.

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”<sup>85</sup>.

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?”<sup>86</sup>

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?

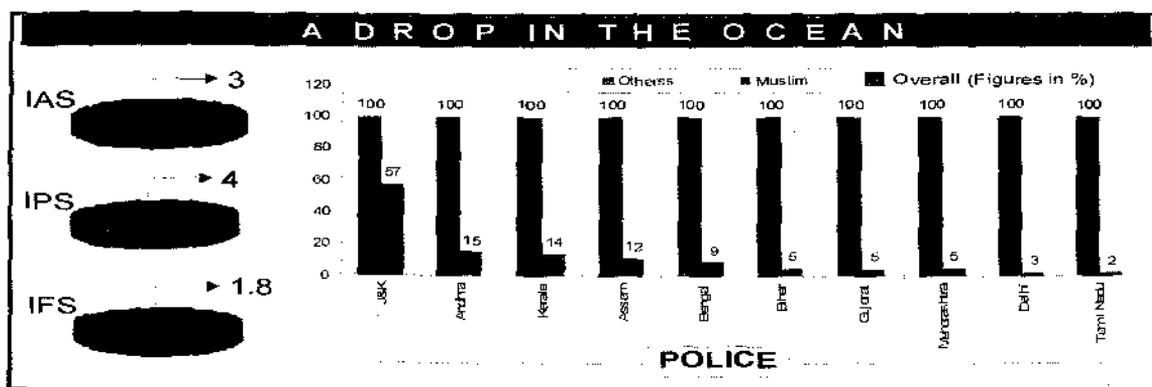
He argued that to-day, Muslims, as a monolithic block, comprise the weaker section of the society and West Bengal Muslims are worst off.

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'<sup>87</sup>.

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: 10<sup>th</sup> 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<sup>ss</sup>.

It is to be noted that the UPA Government on 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 stage<sup>89</sup>.

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 Report<sup>90</sup>.

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"<sup>91</sup>

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"<sup>92</sup>

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"<sup>93</sup>.

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%, respectively<sup>94</sup>.

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 groups<sup>95</sup>

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"<sup>96</sup>

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%<sup>97</sup>.

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 uneven<sup>98</sup>.

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 5<sup>th</sup> plan period to 18.6% during the 5<sup>th</sup> plan period ended in 2006-07. Table 3 will project the expenditure trend of Kerala in recent decades"<sup>99</sup>.

### **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"<sup>100</sup>. 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"<sup>101</sup>.

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"<sup>102</sup>.

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 Madrasas<sup>103</sup>.

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 state<sup>104</sup>.

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”<sup>105</sup>.

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 practice<sup>106</sup>.

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 17<sup>th</sup> 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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## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING OVSERVATIONS

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Indian Society and politics run in an environment of plural framework. Multilingual, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural backdrops in one sense, kept the demographic picture alienated one from the other. This segmented picture offers to political ideologies and political parties to unite apparently disunited population forces.

The National Political Party like Congress since the very beginning showed the path of balancing among the different factors to increase its mass-base. To increase the popular support the policy of populism comes to the fore. The segmented factors play havoc in the sphere of populism. The choice of a Yadav candidate by all contesting political parties in Yadav majority areas or a Muslim in a Muslim majority area or a scheduled caste or scheduled tribe candidate in scheduled caste or scheduled tribe prone area is a common practice in Indian Polity or in body-politic. The place of ideology or political policy perceptions in a broad framework works least or not at all. The characteristic of pluralism in Indian body-politic is not at all above segmented feelings, nor do the political parties of Nationalist feelings try to take the stake to come out from the narrow and immediate parliamentary gains. The Indian lefts are to adjust and adapt their broad universal theory within this narrow framework and to keep their existence alive as well as march forward to lead in the major political scenario.

After the debacle in the socialist camps in the East European countries and also in the erstwhile U.S.S.R., the Indian Political Parties with absolute nationalist feelings wanted to corner the Indian lefts at the political level about its justification and relevance in the present day world. The irony of fate among these 'left-chasing' political parties is that they are ostensibly attacking the imperialist plans and programmes and economic programmes of the imperialist countries of the West, on the

other hand; they support the debacle of socialists worldwide by the constant intrigue of the imperialist forces against the lefts.

Like other countries, a section of Indian Press also pressed the cause of debacle of the socialist camps in Indian perspective. "For the Left, there is of course no questioning the importance of Lenin. But, as Thursday's quite celebration shows Lenin – or Marxs, Engles or Stalin for that matter – is no longer as effective a slogan for rallying the Indian people together as it once was"<sup>1</sup>. To them deprived of its Soviet-era symbols, the Indian Left is delving into the country's past for new symbols. The news tells the tale-tells of the Indian Left, especially the CPI is for instance, greatly engrossed in the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago address. It is busy organizing Padayatras through districts of West Bengal with large cut-outs of Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, Rabindranath Tagore and Nazrul Islam adorning king-size tableaux. And these days, it is embroiled in a better argument with the Bharatiya Janata Party on whether or not Vivekananda was secular.

But from the part of the Indian Left it is nothing new, they have just renewed the stress. In words of CPI Secretary M. Farooqi "There is nothing wrong in our citing th examples Vivekananda or the epics. We are doing it for years"<sup>2</sup>. CPI(M) Politburo member Sitaram Yechury explains: "We do not see it as a search for new symbols, but it is an attempt at preventing the hijacking of a certain culture of which Indian Communists are as much a part as anybody else"<sup>3</sup>.

Farooqi admits that "after the initial euphoria of the freedom movements, the Left failed to take note of the disillusionment of the people"<sup>4</sup>. Thus, M. Farooqi said "This section which felt let down by the degeneration of the Congress in the Post-Nehru period and was, therefore, searching for an alternative to the Congress. This section took refuge in religion and in the BJP which seemed to emerge as an alternative"<sup>5</sup>. To beat the BJP on its own ground, the Left has launched its offensive using the same weapon. "We realized that it is a potent

weapon"<sup>6</sup>. "Indianness is not the monopoly of the BJP. Marxists of India have always attempted to imbibe its own culture. If a Marxist forgets the characteristics of his own country, he is not a Marxist"<sup>7</sup>. "Left's search for new slogans should have begun 10 years ago. It was a serious lapse on the part of the Left that we did not draw on the rich heritage of our Bhakti and Sufi movements, of the Bengal renaissance and so on"<sup>8</sup>. The Left leaders seek to stress that the propagation of Vivekananda or Ramakrishna does not imply that Lenin or Marx have been rendered irrelevant. "We are using an Indian context to only enrich the Marxist concept. Somewhere we have to use the symbol of Vivekananda, somewhere else the slogan of Lenin"<sup>9</sup>.

To combat this immanent enemy of Communalism and Fascist force like the BJP and the RSS Sitaram yecheri said, 'In not allowing the BJP to hijack this tradition the two-pronged strategy of the BJP has to be first understood. On the one hand, the BJP is trying to create a false sense of monolithic unity in Hindu diversity. On the other hand, it is attempting to consolidate this unity by creating hatred against an enemy image. And to combat this, we have to take the bull by the horns"<sup>10</sup>.

The attempt of the BJP Governments can be seen in the BJP ruled provinces where they are manipulating the syllabus of schools to steer the young minds of the students. "So the BJP is merely formalizing our political parties' shared ideology into an academic discipline when it 'corrects' history or inflicts 'Vedic Mathematics', for example, on children. An exercise asks the child 'If 15 Kar Sevaks can demolish the Babri Masjid in 300 days, how many Kar Sovaks can then demolish it in 15 days?'

The States that have experienced BJP Government, children have already been doped with 'history' as 'corrected' by the RSS/ Samples: (i) the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and Upanishads are definitive history; (ii) the Aryans alone constitute the architect of Indian civilization; (iii) the Indian (i.e. Hindu) soldiers should be regarded as the first

freedom fighters since they inflicted an ignominious defeat on Alexander the Great"<sup>11</sup>.

It is not enough to note that these blatant lies being passed off as "history", are calumny against a whole community. What is worse, these are intended to brainwash our children so as to make them inveterate believers not in Hinduism, nor in Ram, but in the Big Brothers, who insists: don't ask questions; hear and believe. Swami Vivekananda's life and teachings demand the opposite. When he tested his guru Ramakrishna Paramahansa's dislike for money and matter the latter said: "That's it: Test your Guru before you trust him"<sup>12</sup>. Vivekananda said, "The only power is in realization and that lies in our selves and comes from thinking ... the glory of man is that he is a thinking being ... and therein he differs from animals. I believe in reason and follow reason having seen enough of the evils of authority"<sup>13</sup>.

However, three conclusions are unavoidable. One, the battle for what Vivekananda called "Man-making education" must start in the field of politics. Indira Gandhi's Emergency has shown us the havoc that dictatorship can play with the lives and liberties of common people. There is no question of exchanging democracy for dictatorship. So, two, we need politicians but, three, we must either reform them or they will bring on dictatorship - and concomitant evil, fascism - destroying the bases of democracy like education.

The left politics of true secularism has paved the way. If we have eyes to see, our students are ready to acquit themselves creditably. "Look at the BJP affiliate, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad's bastions in Uttar Pradesh - Benaras Hindu University, Allahabad University and Himachal University the ABVP was routed in the last students' union election in these three Universities. The All India Student Association which won had drummed up only this slogan: "End Politics of religion and violence"<sup>14</sup>.

### **Setting a Policy in Practice**

A section of Indian Press always follows two pronged strategies to combat left influence in India. When Left Front in West Bengal first time in Indian constitutional history introduced Panchayat Raj System, the initial step towards an untraveled path in an environment of static rural set up it created some administrative static backlogs, the Press of the particular kind became arrogant and fastidious to Left-Front. They never admitted openly, despite World Bank's recognition of the success of Left approach to implement a purely Gandhian far sight. But secondly, with the recent decision of the Left Font to reintroduce English in the Primary level. Ananda Bazar, the leading Bengali Newspaper wrote: "In the rural regions of the District of Burdwan, a very common feature that is noticed over the last few years is, farmers are cultivating their agricultural fields with their own tractor"<sup>15</sup>. But Ananda Bazar also states: "Another startling feature that is noticed in Santinikatan, the brain-child of Ranindranath, the ideal seat of learning through mother tongue, the number of mushrooming English medium schools, the long ques of eager parents for an English medium school admission form shows us the transformation of the entire educational as well as economic scenario. The demands are changing with the development of the rising "new class" at the village level. Thus, the left Front in the State once again reintroduced English at the lower level in schools .... Though, the argument to support to the cause of not introducing English in the lowr primary level was "The children will learn better if only mother-tongue is introduced in the primary level. The solid base of mother-tongue will help them to learn English better in the Madhyamik level. The existence of two languages will not help the other to learn any one of the language'. This explanation of the one language theory in the Primary level by the Left Front was purely academic. Behind it, there was far-reaching effective political interest. It was fit with the then village demand. As a matter of fact, popular slogan of the eighties is taken back for same cause of retaining popularity"<sup>16</sup>.

### III

#### **Assessment of the Left Front Government Education Policy in the First years: A brief overview:**

For the last 34 years a Left Government despite different odds was in power in the State of West Bengal. Certainly, this is an alternative approach in the body polity of Indian plural society. So far we have discussed almost elaborately the different aspects of Left perception of education that they are following amidst much criticism on certain aspects. The arrangement they have made after coming to power in 1977, to analyze and evaluate those arrangements and set up of their education system, they appointed an "Education Commission" in the year 1991 in August headed by Dr. Ashok Mitra, the former Finance Minister of West Bengal Left Front Government along with eight other learned members. The Government asked to submit the Report within six months. But after consecutive two amendments of that instruction, the tenure of the Commission had been increased. The Commission has submitted their report in the month of August of 1992. The extension of the tenure of the Commission also happened in the case of the Commission of 1981 headed by Dr. Bhabotosh Dutta. The Commission only dealt with Higher Education. The Bhabotosh Dutta Commission finally submitted their report in the year 1984.

In the assessment and analysis of the Ashok Mitra Commission Report, we find the different constructive criticisms and suggestions of the left perspective of education of the Left Front Education in West Bengal.

#### **The Subject-matter of Consideration and the Periphery of Suggestion**

The subject-matter of consideration of the Commission was specified most elaborately by the Government. In the 1.2 paragraph of the Commission Report has stated to evaluate and analyze "The entire spectrum" of the education of "the State". But the Government put stricture to limit the area of suggestions. In the area of reference, the portion of 2(d) has categorically said to suggest "a feasible programme in

the light of social and economic circumstances obtained in the country of the state. It has again said in part 2(g) to the commission to suggest "an outline of the appropriate institutions and policies consistent with the existing social milieu. Despite the strict instruction of the Government, the commission said in their suggestions in the 7<sup>th</sup> paragraph of the 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter, 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter and the 19<sup>th</sup> Chapter "The ailments that the present education system is suffering from, they can not be eradicated by the segmented approach. What is essential that is total transformation of social ethos and the general attitude of the community".

Once again at the end of the second Chapter of the portion 2.48-2.51, the Commission said, there is no substantial change brought in the qualitative term after Independence. It is altogether the continuation of the imperial education system introduced by the British Government. They have stated, "No radical alternative has been given a trial".

In the Para no. 4.5, the Mitra Commission said, the State Government has not taken sufficient initiative in the sector of literacy during 1977-1987. In the last two years although some initiative has been taken but the population of the districts where people from the age group of 9 to 55 come under the literacy enterprise and 80 per cent of them become literate are called "Complete Literate" districts. (Para 4.7). The Commission has given stress on 'Universal literacy' of the boys and girls of the age group of 14 years and expected that all the right-thinking people will agree with their point. The Commission said the number of Primary Schools has increased 25 per cent during Left Front Government and number of School going children has increased 80 per cent since 1977. The number of teachers has been increased considerably. The present ratio is 1:40; the government is thinking to change the ratio by increasing number of teachers and wants to make it 1:30. The organizational and institutional set up has been rearranged in an elaborate fashion, the salary of the teachers has been increased considerably well (Para 3.2 - 3.6). The government has allotted one thousand crore rupees for only primary education. Though to evaluate the policy of the Left Front Government the Commission put the note

that 95 per cent of the money is being spent just for disbursing salary and if the Government makes the student-teachers ratio 1:3-, their 100 per cent of money will be spent for salary purpose (93.8 Para). In the Para 3.11 the Commission categorically stated that some teachers at the primary and other stages are not giving full attention to their teaching assignment rather they 'sub-contracted their teaching function to a number of chronics'.

The Commission praised the State Government in the Para 2.4 for increasing plan and non-plan expenditure for education. In 1976-77, the non-plan expenditure was 12.89 per cent on education. During 1991-92, the non-plan expenditure was 21.10 per cent. In addition to it planned expenditure the proportion would be 25 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively. Though this is a marked development in the State of West Bengal, but still, the Commission has stated that in comparison to other state it is still behind. Rather West Bengal is trying to 'catch up' with the other states. The Commission has further stated that the norm decided by the 9<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission for the expenditure on education, in accordance to it West Bengal in the field of Primary education has spent 84 crores of rupees less in the non-plan expenditure.

The statistics it has given in the 4.1 column of the 47 page is that in 1981 according to the population ratio the percentage of literacy was 48.65 in 1991, the ratio has increased and has become 57.41 per cent. The rate of increase of the percentage is 18.6. To make it 100 per cent, with this rate of development it will take 23 years. The literacy rate among women in West Bengal has increased from 36.07 to 46.57 per cent and with this rate of development it will take 53 years to reach the goal of 100 per cent. West Bengal is much ahead than all other Indian states. But the rate of development is very slow in West Bengal itself (Column 2.28).

In column number 2.12 we get the percentage of children in the age group of six to fourteen years who belong to the classes of standard I-V and VI and VII. If we analyze this statistics a little carefully we will

realize that since some students belonging to Class I to V and also VI and VII, are older than the rest of the students of the class; therefore, even if the ratio is one hundred per cent still it cannot be concluded that all children belonging to the age group of six to fourteen years are going to school. Though it is difficult to assess, what the ratio should be to be absolutely certain of the number of school going students but it is presumed that 125% would give a fairly good idea. The 2.12 columns of the Mitra Report shows that in West Bengal in the session 1987-88 in the classes of I to V the ratio was 118.1, Tamilnadu's ratio was 131.8, Maharashtra 121.7. The position of West Bengal was fifth. In the area of classes VI and VII, West Bengal occupied the ninth place with a ratio of 57.6%, Kerala's ratio was 96.9% and Himachal Pradesh 9.9% in the field of girl education in classes V and VI West Bengal stood 8<sup>th</sup> with the ratio 57.6% whereas Kerala's ratio was 95.7% and Himachal Pradesh's ratio was 76.4% and Tamilnadu's 71%.

Commending highly about West Bengal's effort for the spread of literacy over the past two years, the Mitra Commission also stated that the whole praise should not go to West Bengal alone since the Central Government's National Literacy Mission authority played the role of a catalyst.

The Commission report has repeatedly praised the West Bengal Government for increasing the budget to be spent on Education. The page 15 of the Commission Report Column 2.1 we get the difference the expenditure on education in West Bengal in the year 1976-77 and 1992-93. In the area of Primary Education Government had spent 53.64 crores. It is certainly a substantial increase but the inflationary rate and devaluation of money demands more expenditure and allotment to fulfil requirements. This should be kept in view.

### **Recommendations suggested by the Ashok Mitra Commission Report**

The different suggestion and recommendations made by the commission's report in its various Chapter have been compiled briefly in the 19<sup>th</sup> Chapter. In total there are 108 suggestions, some of them are:

1. Stress should be laid on the repair and the construction of the School building and basic teaching-aids should be provided (19.10).
2. Tiffin should be provided and minimum clothing for girl-children should be given (19.15)
3. Timely distribution of free books which are readable and not torn (19.11).
4. Play-grounds and equipments to be provided for their physical development (19.16).
5. More stress to be laid on the education of Muslim and Adivasi girls from the poorer and backward sections of society (19.19).
6. There should be a proper library and librarian in every school (19.85, 19.88).
7. Proper arrangement should be made for regular inspection of schools (19.14, 19.29, 19.30).
8. 220 working days should be scheduled for every school per year (19.28).
9. Payment of salary of teachers at all levels should be disbursed on the first date of every month. This responsibility should be shouldered by the Government (19.109).

If we look back a little in the year 1977, dated 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October, at Mabalankar Bhavan, New Delhi, a Left Front Student Organization, popularly known as S.F.I., had made similar demands as mentioned above as well as in the previous chapter mentioned by me. The same suggestions made by Mitra Commission after 15 year of Left Front Administration, does it not throw enough light on the state of affairs or is not the suggestions made by the Leftist Ashok Mitra Commission enough criticism?

Apart from the above mentioned suggestions, the Commission also suggested a few changes to be made in School, College and University

education. Among them one is that the subject called compulsory Additional in the name of teaching language is termed as an oddity and should be removed, instead definite books should be recommended and examinations conducted (19.47 and 8.43).

The Commission also stated that the question setting pattern should be changed thoroughly. The so called objective questions should be removed and questions should be based on comprehension, so that the student can be tested on the expression of their thoughts and ideas clearly and logically (19.77, 11.22).

Regarding the function of the College Service Commission the Mitra Commission stated that the College Service Commission or C.S.C. would only prepare a list of eligible candidates on their educational qualification for College teaching. They should have no role what so ever to decide which College the lecturers should be appointed to. The C.S.C. enlisted candidates would apply to different Colleges seeing advertisements, and College authorities from among the enlisted applicants would selected the best one. (19.47).

Accordingly for certain critics this is an ideal suggestion to check the nepotisms and the corruption at the Party level. But I personally feel that corruption would still prevail, only the power would be transferred from the C.S.C. to the respective College authorities. So the condition of the eligible candidates would be from the fire to the frying pan. Ostensibly we see that the Left Front Government is vehemently protesting against the Central's decision of autonomous colleges. Whereas if this Mitra Commission's suggestion in this sphere is accepted then it shows that left Front is not only falling in the trap but also tacitly advocating the Central Government's decision on autonomous Colleges.

The Commission has also suggested that the Government should not interfere or intrude in the daily affairs of any educational institutions. This policy should be observed meticulously by the Government. The Government should only look after the financial matter (19.68).

In the 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter the Mitra Commission has also mentioned the relation between state and Central Government with regard to education, which we have discussed in the earlier chapters. Now, the commission stated about the introduction of 'Navadaya Vidyalaya' or 'Model School' in the state (16.12, 16.14) in the 16.15 paragraph, the Commission has expressed hopes that the Central Government would change their opinion and make the Navadaya Scheme acceptable to the State. In 19.108, the Commission has stated "if the Navadaya Schme is to be made acceptable ...." Then the whole set up has to be changed. Now the question arises to whom is the Commission directing its question? If I know correctly, the Central Government has not asked for any suggestion in this context. And the State Government does not have the authority to make and modification in the 'Navadaya Scheme'. Then, "If the Navadaya Schme is to be made acceptable. ..." then what are we to follow? Is the State Government trying to pacify and mould the opinion of their ardent student and youth wings who are protesting vehemently against the 'Novodaya Schme' or are they trying to reap the harvest of overflowing money that is being procured for the elitist Navadaya Scheme? Are the bureaucratic lefts trying to balance precariously on two boats?

#### **Certain Suggestions which has raised a storm of Controversy**

1. The pass marks are to be increased to qualify for Madhyamik Examination. The pass mark for every subject should be 40 and average percentage should be 50 (19.27). The Commission presumes in the next 5 to 10 years there will be an up-gradation in the level of teaching and other essential matters (5.37).
2. At present two papers are allotted for mother-tongue. The Commission suggests that one and half papers should be kept for mother-tongue (19.35) and half paper should be allotted for any classical language, for example, Sanskrit, Arbi and Parsi etc. (5.64).
3. Regarding the teaching of English the Commission has stated that instead of introducing English in Class VI which is prevalent now,

it should be introduced in Class V. The Commission also suggests that the book prescribed at present named 'Learning English' should be changed thoroughly (19.36). Two members of the Commission Dr. Gouri Nag and Sunanda Sanyal have differed in their opinion and have expressed their suggestion to introduce English from the third form.

4. The expenditure regarding education is increasing and to implement the Commission's suggestion it is going to increase further. Keeping these points in mind the Commission has decided to increase tuition fees and examination fees. In the secondary and Higher Secondary levels let the prevailing condition of no-tuition fees remain. But a development fee should be taken in an uniform manner in the whole state. Keeping in mind the students coming from poor families, 30 per cent of students should be exempted from this fee. Out of the 70 per cent of students, 500 rupees are to be taken yearly from the student of urban areas and 250 rupees per annum from the students of rural areas. In the undergraduate level 50 rupees per month should be charged and in the graduate and post-graduate levels 75 rupees per month should be charged as "tuition fees". Again the exemption should be given to those 30 per cent poor students. Suggestions have been made to hike the fees considerably in the Engineering and Medical courses. Examination fee, library fee, laboratory charges and also the hostel seat rents have been exempted from this hike (19.112, 19.13, 19.101).

To provide mass-education and to make education for all was the prime slogan of the left in India. Based on this foundation they refuted the 1986 Central Education Policy as it termed its education for the few in expanse of all i.e. elitist education. Now, if this suggestion of the Mitra Commission is accepted by L.F. Government would it not be following the same much protested footsteps?

5. The Commission has also suggested that teachers from the Primary level to the University level should retire at the age of sixty years and there should be no exceptions; the Government should make categorical announcement on this issue. It has also mentioned that the retired teachers should get their P.F., pension and gratuity in regular manner (19.102).

The argument put forward by the Commission supporting the retirement age of teachers at the age of 60 is: it will increase the scope of employment. At present, this State of West Bengal has 50 lakhs of unemployed youth (are they all still young?). Out of which 20 lakhs are educated unemployed (do they still remember any text of their school days? — it is a matter of conjecture (15.37). The Commission says if the teachers retire at the age of sixty, it can provide employment for some educated unemployed. We support this noble thought. But the teacher community who represented the Commission if they glanced a little beyond their Commission Report, they would see that the educational institutions of the state have various positions lying vacant year after year. Right under their very nose we have the glaring example of Calcutta University which has four vacancies in each department. The whole esteemed University has more than hundred posts of teachers lying vacant<sup>17</sup>.

Part-times worth Rs. 120 to 150.00 per class are carrying out the farce of educating the students under the direction of the State Government. Deaths, retirements or when some teachers leave their jobs voluntarily the vacancies are never filled up. Probably, the teacher members of the Commission who helped to formulate the report became acclimatized with those vacant posts in their one's own institution. So the noble suggestion of the Commission to procure employment, it is another historical myth?

In the beginning of this Chapter we have noted that politics and need for politicians can not be ignored. And citing the statement of Swami Vivekananda we wanted to bring real and man-making education

for every strata of the society including the political leaders irrespective of their ideological leanings and party allegiances. We have also said that Mitra Commission wanted to bring change in the entire spectrum of political system. Unlike Bhabatosh Dutta Commission, they have been asked to suggest evaluate and recommend future educational properties within this given set up. Despite limitations, they have addressed new words to all sections of population irrespective of their ideological biasness to be good to bring final good in the education policy for men ultimately. Thus, Prof. Jyoti Bhattacharyya said that "the members of this Commission is a type of good men"<sup>18</sup>.

### **The Suggestion on the Rearrangement of Allotment of Expenditure of Education**

The last but not the least, the Commission has put forward its suggestion on the rearrangement of budgetary allotment on education in the paragraph no. 19.118. As mentioned earlier the greatest emphasis should be laid on Universal literacy and the education till the age of 14 years. Overriding priority should be given on this issue. Immediately after this the Commission has stated to bring down the expenditure on the Dearness Allowance in the Primary level from 95 per cent to 75 per cent and in Madhyamik level from 80 per cent to 55 per cent. The reason put forth for this argument is that if the lion's share of the money is spent on D.A. and salary then next to nothing is left for repairing of the school building, library, laboratory, black board, atlases and books. But the Commission has not suggested any means or way out to execute this above suggestion. Professor Jyoti Bhattacharya in the famous Bengali magazine "Desh" showed some way out. To him (1) to increase the money allotted for education in a considerable amount and the lion's share of it should be spent on basic amenities required for the school. (2) If expenditure cannot be brought down in this way, then another procedure is, to cut down substantially the different allowances of the teachers and non-teaching staffs. And to formalize these aspects, (a) D.A. should be brought down; (b) number of teachers and non-teaching staff should be brought down. But from among these three ways, which way should the

State Government adopt? The first one is beyond the financial capacity of Government. The next one will hurt the interest of the teachers and non-teaching staffs and immediately it will hurt the vote-bank of the Left-Front Government. The third proposal is within the capacity of the State Government. But the Government is bound with the promise of spreading education. To fulfil this promise the Government is liable to increase the number of schools and to recruit new teachers and non-teaching employees. But the encroachment or educational expenditure can only ensure the qualitative development – Nanhya Pantha Vidyate Ayanaya.

But one note of lamentation is that the Commission has not shown the way out from this jigsaw or riddle.

### **The Problem of Discussion the Mitra Commission Report**

The CPI(M) West Bengal State Committee Publishes a highly esteemed cultural and literary magazine 'Nandan'. In its February 1993 issue, the Party said with a tone of complain when the second issue on "Education Commission" was published on December, 1993 and they had an expectation to get sufficient response and storm of debate on the various suggestions, analysis-evaluation and recommendations on the Ashok Mitra Commission Report. But nothing happened of that sort. Nandan magazine questioned – "but why" Are we not thinking about education? Are we hesitating to express our opinion? Thus, where is the opportunity or scope to develop our education?"<sup>19</sup>

To this I have an answer from my own personal experience: while writing this thesis on The Educational Development and Marxian Philosophy: Policy Perspectives and Strategies of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). I faced a serious obstacle to catch hold of this "Ashok Mitra Commission Report". I sought help from teachers who are so called Left Leaders with radical and progressive eloquence. I shuttled from desk to desk of bureaucratic left academician and I am sorry to state that even the highest position holders of a university who happened to have the copy of the Ashok Mitra Commission report, refused to part with it even for half a day, lest a poor student should know more, now a very relevant

question arises, why I did not go to the university library, the answer lies in the fact that the librarian then realized after query that the report should be on the shelves. If I am not mistaken a copy of the Mitra Commission Report should be in every school, college and university library, especially in West Bengal for the left party professes that democratic participation is the crux of real democracy to move ahead with 'People's Democratic Movement'. My genuine effort to seek out the commission report proved to be futile, so how is it expected that lay people will comment on it when they are ignorant of its existence due to its non-availability. Red Tapism and bureaucratic attitude have eaten up even the educational field of the Leftist West Bengal. Can we lay the entire blame on the prevalent system? Though, somehow I managed to get hold of a copy of the Mitra Report, I feel fruitful participation requires dissemination of knowledge and for this ample supply of material and their easy availability is necessary. Otherwise the whole affair is like Don Quixote's fighting with imaginary windmill.

The other impediment pointed out by Sri Jyoti Bhattacharya is that although the Left Front long propagated for the massive introduction of mother tongue, but in case of their said Commission Report, they have prepared it in English language and that English language is fit for the erudite world only. Professor J. Bhattacharya being a well known professor of English of the University of Calcutta raised a very apt question "Are their participation not required those who do not know English"?<sup>20</sup>

In fact, the Mitra Commission has, by implication at least, left us in no doubt about what it thought of the state of education in West Bengal.

"But perhaps this was not the government of West Bengal had actually bargained for, or even what the commission had anticipated when it has started to write its report"<sup>21</sup>.

The advantage of democracy is the adjustability and tremendous power of acclimatization with the changing demand of the polity. The examples are not meager.

The greatest example of it is the birth of the notion of 'Welfare State'. Shri Jyoti Basu told in one interview in London in the "Meet the press" programme that ours is a welfare government providing relief to the people within the existing structure. This adjustability gives the birth of governance which is based on patch-work. The Ashok Mitra Commission rightly said that nothing of radical sort can be expected within this structure (Parliamentary Structure). Only thorough change in the socio-economic ethos can bring radical change in the education policy. The question is related with the system. What is common to the Congress, the Janata Dal or the BJP, the point that is also common to a left party sitting in power in a Parliamentary form of government? All the Policy perceptions centres round the vital point of vote-bank and survival and continuation. So, nothing is unexpected in the Left Front Education Policy perception. It is old wine in new bottles where the whole system is suffering from acute bottleneckness.

In recent years the greatest complaint against left rule in West Bengal, especially in the field of education, was the politicization of education. All India Trinamool Congress often described this tendency as the 'Anilization of Education' named after late Anil Biswas, the former State Secretary of the communist Party of India (Marxist), West Bengal State Committee and also the former Left Front Chairman.

The urge for science education is another trend among the young Indians and West Bengal is no exception. But lack of good number of Engineering and Medical Colleges in Bengal has seen exodus of students from West Bengal to other states. Recent initiatives and introduction of good many engineering colleges could control to some extent this exodus. But there is enough room for improvement, specially, in this sector and also in the field of Medical Sciences. An effective PPP model can only break this stagnation.

It is a fact that the Left rule in West Bengal could successfully develop an inner urge among the people for education. The parents are ready to sacrifice their comfort for the better education of their children. Parallel education in the form of 'Private Tuition' is a case in point.

The reality says, keeping in mind the all India perspective on education that when the students are to compete nationally to grab berths in good colleges then thorough changes are required in syllabus and medium of instructions as well as in infrastructures. Through the years the rural students are performing well in Secondary examinations than their urban counterparts in West Bengal. To retain the same trend proper infrastructure and appropriate dissemination of knowledge is also needed for plus 2 level as well as higher education to stop the inflow of students from rural Bengal to the urban Bengal. Serious attention should be given to this subject.

In the realm of technical education substantial development has taken place in the last 30 years. A few more Polytechniques and ITI Colleges are in the pipe line including Women's Polytechnique Colleges.

But the demand of the time is to establish a two way Communication between the Industrial Houses and the institutes to upgrade the syllabus to fulfil the need of the market. This condition is also equally applicable in relation to management courses. The University- industry linkage is the need of the hour.

Some states of India introduced All Women's University. West Bengal is yet to get one. Like other states of India, the fees structure and also the pay structure of the teachers and non-teaching employees of the ever enlarging private sectors of West Bengal are not justifiably equal. Except a few aberrations the private sector education initiatives are fully profit oriented. The government can do a lot in this grey area.

The recent voting patterns show the dejection of the minorities towards the left. The unprecedented unemployment and lack of education among the minorities is the real reason of their aversion to the existing political system. This is certainly alarming.

The hills, the terai, some highly underdeveloped districts, the tribal dominated jungle mahal demands special attention. The problem is two pronged: (a) The identity crisis; (b) Lack of proper training and education leads to unemployment and abject poverty. They became easy pray to rebel causes. The effect of the left front government was not enough to solve these problems of the body-polity.

But above all, the highest criticism against the left-rule education policy is its all partisan attitude. Although non-left political parties have equally vitiated education in many ways but the expectation of the people of Bengal from the leftists were little different.

The exasperation of over politicization of education in the name of democracy is reflected in many ways. "The red hammer of Alimuddin street had hit not only Calcutta University", Writes Shree Abhijit Guha, "as portrayed so vividly by the late Professor Santosh Bhattacharyya in his book, Red Hammer over Calcutta University .... It also affected the other Universities of West Bengal during left rule". The author has gone to that extent by saying, "Academic excellence was ruined in the name of democracy and the university administration was controlled by the party apparatchiks from their district and Kolkata headquarters"<sup>22</sup>.

The political scenario of West Bengal with regard to education is torn between the two opposite ideas but with a basic aim to control it. In the language of Shree Abhijit Guha in the article: "Both camps are essentially advancing political arguments, one in the name of "de-politicization" and the other in the pretext of 'democracy'<sup>23</sup>.

Thus the author commented, "Suffice it to say that "de-politicization" is in itself a political poly similar to unionization of campus in the interest of 'democracy'<sup>24</sup>.

Ragging takes place when generally the student-body is not politically motivated.

Campus violence is closely associated with the student politics.

Long back, during freedom struggle movement Mahatma Gandhi once qualified the student-struggle with the impending and eminent freedom struggle of the country with these words: "Education can wait but not the freedom of the country". It has encouraged the Indian students to get involved in direct politics.

Now after long 64 years of independence one recommendation of the Lyngdoh Commission was that "no candidate should have a political affiliation".

In a country where 35 crores of people live below the poverty line and equal number of people are illiterate, thus it can be said with all wisdom that Indian student now, henceforth, follow the age-old saying: Chhatranang Adhayanang Tapa' (Student's upright responsibility is to study). At least Lyngdoh Commission Report on Student Politics implies the same spirit.

No one would argue that students are the most perceptive and active body of any living society. They are like live-wires. The Telegraph editorial of 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2012 reads: Everybody would agree that the root cause of college and university violence is the result of the rivalry among political parties, a rivalry actually located outside the campus.

Suggestions are many. But in a vibrant democracy the spirit of democratic movement are to be carried by the young generation and certainly the students should maintain a pro-active role in the whole process. However, they should not forget their priorities with regard to academics.

However, in this age of '21<sup>st</sup> century socialism', a group of socialist school believes that 'they delineate their ideas and praxis as different from '20<sup>th</sup> century socialism'<sup>25</sup>.

This Latin American project of 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism suggests that support of a larger population can be achieved by mobilizing a coalition and by remaining the oppressed beyond narrow class terms.

Infact, the relative success of a few experiments in Latin America encouraged the Left in South Asia. It is a project well worth examining and learning from.

Though Amrita Basu compared Parliamentary Communism with that of northern European social democracy. But concept of '21<sup>st</sup> Century Socialism' is broad based. "The CPI(M) now seems to be deliberating upon the merits of the Latin American experiment, as seen in its draft ideological resolution document that was released recently"<sup>26</sup>.

While one group of political scientists "Analysing the theoretical debates about parliamentary socialism in Europe to elucidate the CPI(M)'s approach in West Bengal. How successfully had parliamentary communism achieved radical reform? To what extent do structural conditions determine political parties' strategic choices" Might other strategies have produced more progressive outcomes?"<sup>27</sup>

One the other hand, comparatively a new group of political scientists puts emphasis 'by staying true to electoral democracy and by rejecting the notion of Vanguardism by a political party that supposedly represents only the interests of the working class"<sup>28</sup>.

It is to be noted that the Partido Socialist a Unido de Venezuela led by Hugo Chavez, the Morimiento al Socialismo led by Evo Morales in Bolivia and the Alianza PAIS led by Rafael Correa in Ecuador - "differ from social democratic parties elsewhere in their strong rhetoric against imperialism, the formation of alternative political alliances..."<sup>29</sup>.

The editorial article of the EPW says: "The success of the Latin American socialists projects elsewhere"<sup>30</sup>.

It writes with a grumbling note: "China is socialist only on paper, relying on state capitalism and market forces for its development. Cuba has also initiated limited market reforms to address its economic stagnation". And for long North Korea has been on autocratic dictatorship"<sup>31</sup>.

Thus the paper suggests: "As the Arab spring and the occupy Wall Street protest suggest, any acceptable alternative to both authoritarianism and formal liberal democracy can only be a perceptive, deliberative and substantive variant of democracy that is able to correct the iniquitous tendencies of unfettered capitalism"<sup>32</sup>.

To conclude with the valuable words of Bertrand Russel he saw the aspect of "Education and the social order" from his own point of view. In the concluding two paragraphs on the subject he wrote in 1932 which is still very relevant even today "Everything deliberately planned is likely to suffer from undue simplicity, leading to momentary and even to a kind of insecurity from perpetually learning the same note struck. It may be that life itself will avoid this danger; at any rate, in Russia, there is still so much surviving from before the Revolution that Communist planning cannot introduce undue simplicity for a long time to come. But in education, if there were not such obvious and interesting practical tasks to be accomplished, the danger of over-simplification would lie very real. The world is more rich and varied than the Marxian formula. A generation confined within the philosophy of *Das Kapital* may be useful, happy, and formidable, but cannot be cocksure and shallow. But in saying this I am speaking from the standpoint of philosophy, not of politics"<sup>33</sup>.

### **Thus Bertrand Russel Continues**

"From the standpoint of politics (in the widest sense) I think our verdict must be different. Communism offers a solution of the difficult problem of the family and sex equality - a solution which we may dislike, but which does, at any rate, provide a possible issue. It gives children an education from which the anti-social idea of competition has been almost entirely eliminated. It creates an economic system which appears to be the only practicable alternative to one of masters and slaves. It destroys the separation of the school from life which the school owes to its monkish origin, and owing to which the intellectual, in the west, is

becoming an increasingly useless member of society. It offers to young men and women a hope which is not mechanical and an activity in the usefulness of which they feel to doubt. And if it conquers the world, as it may do, it will solve most of the major evil of our time. On these grounds in spite of reservations, it deserves support"<sup>34</sup>.

The above opinion passed by Bertrand Russel with regard to the Philosophical basis of a Marxism and its relevance may raise questions it has its pros and cons, in the face of recent developments in the world perspective. But keeping in tally with the opinion of Russel with regard to the relevance of Marxian concept of Politics it can not be ignored completely.

The nature of the Indian government and politics requires a broad discussion. But here in this discussion we have a very little scope to deal with this subject. Nonetheless, in the face of viciously fomenting communal demons, the low profile of economic development, the arrogant social condition of various sorts – economic disparity, the influence of caste, creed and religion in every spheres of social and political life and the role played by the ruling class is not wholly satisfactory, so far. Though, the so called democratic and liberal forces are vehemently trying to corner, the lefts citing the recent debacle of their various camps. Still, the lefts in India, a step aside, with their certain exceptions in view point are not in the lurch but constructively trying to pave their way in the mind of the people. Their varied programmes certainly catching the centre point of discussion. The liberals in India is suffering from setback in their liberally arranged so called secular education. The leftist in India are staying within the same political-administrative framework assuring among many other things communal harmony and steady administration. Thus, the need for left ideology and politics cannot be ignored fully in the present perspective of the Indian government and politics.

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