

## **Chapter IX**

### ***DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT AND SOCIAL EDUCATION CENTRES ALONG WITH SOME SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRES IN DARJEELING HILL AREAS***

"India is the second most populated country of the world, next only to China. Nearly 48% of Indian people are groping in the dark because of their illiteracy.... Although the liquidation of illiteracy of 48 per cent of illiterate adult is not a simple task yet success can be achieved by adopting social education." The Central Advisory Board of Education at its 1949 session at Lahore adopted a new definition 'Social education' for adult-education. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in a seminar organised by UNESCO at Mysore in 1949 defined social education as 'by social education we mean an education for the complete man. Social education would give him literacy, would give him ability to adjust with the society by achieving skill in crafts and means of production and thus to achieve economic betterment. Through social education he gets training in citizenship and thus learns to take decision for the progress of the society.'(1)

Social education in the form of religious congregation, folkdances, folk songs hymns and folklores existed in our country from the time immemorial. In olden days home or joint family then neighbouring areas were the main school of social education.

During British period some isolated efforts were made when education was transferred due to constitutional reform to the control of elected Indian ministers in 1919.

There were hardly any formal agencies of social education though individual effort was there such as M.M. Visvesaryaya, a great philanthropist from Mysore and Rabindranath Tagore who did remarkable work in the field of adult or social education.

With the rise of middle classes in the country political consciousness developed. Some social and religious group also demanded adult education such as in 1863 Kuka movement, Akali movement etc.(2) "The then Congress wanted mass contact in order to carry on freedom struggle. At that time the Indian National Congress was also a party with social motives and it was only in 1929 that it took an essentially political character." Later Indian nationals who returned to India after first world war also started pulling their demand for adult education and so some co-operative movement for social and adult education started in India. Later provincial autonomy gave some scope for adult education. Adult education committee was formed in 1939. However, it should be mentioned that All India Library Conference was held and as a result of its deliberations All India Library association was formed. The association encouraged people to open new libraries.(3) Universities also took up this work through extension lectures and research in social education and by producing grade-wise literature. Adult education programme got setback in 1927-37 due to economic depression in the entire world.(4)

Popular ministries in 1937-42 however, were eager to develop mass education centre throughout the country. In Assam, mass literacy movement was launched and the education department of the State opened literacy classes and a journal entitled Jana Shikshak was also started. A provincial Adult Education Council was formed in Bombay in 1937. The Sergent Committee emphasised a programme of total literacy in 50 years. But no remarkable progress was observed during that period and India's literacy in 1951 stood at 17% only. In Orissa the Government formed the "Provincial Mass literacy committee" in 1939. In Punjab, Dr. Laubach did tremendous work for adult education. He was deputed by UNESCO in Phillipines but because of Indian Government's invitation he came to India for his work, 12 adult education centres started working in Punjab. During this time Jammu, Kashmir, Bengal, Baroda and Mysore also did some commendable

work for adult education. But again in 1942-46 there was setback due to 2nd World War.

During that time communal tension and also Quit India Movement brought down the number of adult education centres.(5) As for an example "In Assam, the schools fell to 400 with 1100 students. In Bengal the number of adults came down to 11000 from 22000."(6)

After Independence in 1948 the Central Advisory Board of Education in 14th January recommended some important issues for the development of adult education. Sri Mohanlal Saxena was the Chairman of the Sub-Committee and he emphasised for general education and for that all provincial government should give funds for adult education. So that within 5 years 50% of adult literacy would be achieved. However, all the states in their own way carried on adult education programme such as Delhi through education caravans; Bombay and Madhya Pradesh through its library service and literacy programme. Madras also through its library service tried to develop adult education, West Bengal and Bihar through cultural activities contributed to this field.(7)

In the First Five Year Plan Government provided Rs.6 crores for organizing literacy classes, community centres, libraries and Janata Colleges, State and District libraries. It was stated that out of 55 lakhs of adults 35 lakhs attained literacy. "6300 Literacy centres, 454 school cum community centres and 55,000 youth clubs were established during the period. One hundred District libraries were set up. There were nearly 32,000 public subscription libraries in the country, the majority being in the rural areas. Besides, five Social Education organisers Training Centres were established for the training of S.E.O.S. (8)

In the 2nd Five Year Plan again Rs.5 crores were sanctioned. Another additional amount of Rs.10 crores was also provided for community development. 8 more S.E.O.S. were started to train District Social Officers. National and

Fundamental Education Centre was established in New Delhi. A Library Institute was set up in Delhi University in 1958 for the training of librarian.

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting also through documentaries started spreading adult education. Film libraries were established by the central and by many State Government Production of suitable literature for the Neo-literate adult were also given importance by the State and the Central Government. The Ministry of Education sponsored literary workshops for the writers of books for neo-literates.(9)

The third plan made Rs.25 crores as a total provision "About Rs.92 lakhs at the centre, Rs.540 lakhs in the States and the estimated allotment of Rs.9 crores for social education under the community development programme." The progress observed in the development of community centres, village reading rooms, youth group organization, Mahila Mandals village Panchayats and the co-operatives. At the Block and village levels and in every town and city mobilisation of voluntary workers were pooled. Village schools in co-operation with Panchayats and co-operatives and voluntary organisations started extension work to spread adult education.(10)

In the fourth plan efforts were made to spread literacy amongst adults through mobilisation of voluntary effort and local community resources. On experimental basis some selected district were taken as pilot projects.

In the Fifth plan importance was given on strengthening the existing programme of adult education.(11) In the sixth five year plan emphasis was given on developing peoples physical intellectual and cultural development through existing plan so that they can cope with the social change.

In the 7th five year plan Government planned to cover 90 million illiterate adult for that required the sincere work of the Government agencies, voluntary social organisations, educational Institutions, libraries, students, teachers employees of

commercial and industrial undertaking and the community. All the programme should be undertaken in link with Village Panchayats, Mahila Mandals, community centres, employers, Nehru Yuval Kendras, N.S.S. Attaining library service, taking the help of books, making proper text books for the neo-literates were given importance.(12)

"As a part of post literary and follow up services, short education, condensed training course will be organised for upgrading the skill of the neo-literates and for increasing their awareness about social realities citizenship education of adults will be a necessary part of entire system of education."(13)

A country cannot be regarded as socially progressive where millions of people remain uneducated. The nationwide programme for the adult literacy has been launched by the Government in 1978 to remove the illiteracy from the country. In Darjeeling also adult literacy programme began and side by side with Government effort many non-government agencies have come forward to help. These two agencies worked as supplementary force.

The State Government gave priority to adult Education programme and has included it under its 34 points programme as the Central Government desired a plan which could cover 9 million illiterates of the state by 1990. Accordingly the State Government furnished a record of the Central Government.(14)

In all 15 central Sector Rural Functional Literacy projects, 30 state sector rural Functional Literacy projects have been operating in the field of adult education upto 1983-84 Rs.46.60 lakh has so far been spent on Central Sector R.F.L.projects and Rs.36.63 lakh on other state adult Education projects like consolidated Pilot projects, Farmer's Functional literacy projects, Non-formal adult Education programme for 15-25 age-groups have so far been spent. The total number of centres are about 22000(West Bengal, Vol.XXVI, No.12 1984). In West Bengal we have the state adult Education Board and the Directorate of adult Education for

wiping out illiteracy. The R.F.L. project came into operation in the state in 1980."(15)

The whole of Darjeeling District has been divided into ten blocks by the State Government to carry on the adult education programme into ten-blocks. In all these blocks we find normal centres providing functional literacy courses for adults. That means that their teaching programmes are integrated with developmental activities such as agriculture, nutrition, health and hygiene. The location of the centre is given below :

- (I) In Darjeeling Phulbazar Block there are twenty-four centres
- (ii) In Jorebunglow-Sukhiapokhri Block there are twenty-three centres
- (iii) Gorubathan Block has sixteen centres
- (iv) Mirik as Separate Block has eleven centres
- (v) Kurseong has twenty-five centres
- (vi) Siliguri-Naxalbari block lags behind with only six centres
- (vii) Kharibari-Phansidewa Block has five centres
- (viii) & (ix) Kalimpong has been divided into - Kalimpong I and Kalimpong II with normal centres in each.

In each block there is an adult education Board Sponsored by the State Government. Both Government and non-Government centres admit adults from 15 years."(16)

All these centres duration of the course is generally ten-months. Curriculum included 3 R's with the knowledge of health and hygiene and some vocational education. The medium of instruction is generally mother-tongue and in the hill areas Nepali-language is used as medium of instruction. Text books are provided by the Block-education Officer. Both Government and Hayden Hall authorities have taken School Final Pass and Matriculation pass students as instructor in adult education centres. A short ten-day training course given to the instructors. The

teachers were selected by the Village Panchayat and the authority in charge of running the scheme. Government used to give Rs.75/- per mensem with Rs.12/- as contingency allowance. Hayden Hall used to give the same basic pay but with Rs.25/- as allowance.

Government and non-Government Centres running their institution according to their own schedule. Generally these centres give education daily for two hours. Some voluntary centres run during week-ends. The Government teachers are supposed to submit their weekly report to the Project Officer and on the basis of their report they get salary. The Project Officer sends it to the District Education Officer.(17)

There are many non-government agencies. Several voluntary Social Service organizations working for the women, children and destitutes. Such a well known centre under the Diocese of Darjeeling, Roman Catholics named as Hayden Hall was established in 1974 at Darjeeling. This has conducted adult literacy centres in the hill areas and also functional literacy programme mainly to training women in weaving, knitting, sewing and carpet-making. The Hayden Hall has undertaken its work in the village areas of Darjeeling hill region. The Hall also translated many books into Nepali language. Their text book "Nia-deep" has been adopted in Government centres. Many medical books regarding health and hygiene have also been translated in Nepali. Many other projects have been undertaken such as mother and child care programme, weekly Health check-up programme and for this a Health team visits every weekend. They also opened a school for mentally retarded children in the Hayden-Hall premises but have closed the centre at present. They also provide with follow up programme for the neo-literates.(18)

As a member of a new adult education centre I would like to state that another centre for the disadvantaged women also was established as a registered body in 1988 at Northview, Darjeeling and functioning under the able leadership of

Miss Rita Ghose(Secretary). The plan for this type of institution was first given by late Sm. Bina Nandi. She was then a senior teacher of Maharani Girls High School. The institution was known as Hemlata Memorial Society after the name of Hemlata Sarkar. Hemlata Sarkar the daughter of the great scholar, Shivnath Sastri, was the founder of the oldest girls institution in Darjeeling. Maharani Girls High School at a time, when Indians were debarred from participating in the only English Missionary school for girls, namely Loreto Convent. Despite all this, she did a door to door campaign, motivating residents of Darjeeling to the greater need of educating the girl-child, with the mother playing a leading role in such a participation. No wonder, some of the very senior citizens of Darjeeling belonging to diverse communities - Nepalese, Lepchas, Sherpas, Tibetans, Adivashi and Bengalis made up some of the earliest students .. Another remarkable fact that Hemlata Sarkar was also the first women commissioner (then undivided Bengal) goes unnoticed.... It is only in 1988, under the auspices of Col. Mohini Mohan Bose, Hemlata's grandson, that Hemlata Memorial was established.”

At present 15 working mothers come everyday between 4.30 to 6.00. Education given on 3 rupees including some ideas on English language. The learners are free to decide what they want to learn. Education imparted was not always text-based formal way but problem-based informal way because the learners also wanted to discuss and deal with the day to day problem. Some volunteers, come and help in teaching. A free clinic Homeopathic Charitable dispensary also has been started every Saturday morning and evening manned by an ex-Maharani Dr. G. Guha(Homeo) and Dr. P.K.Rana. This institution is running on donations as it is not yet recognised by the Government.(19)

After the formation of Gorkha Hill Council, Department of Mass education extension came under it and on 25.9.95 first conference was held on total literacy campaign at Tourist Lodge, Darjeeling. It was decided that in Darjeeling District a

time-bound programme has to be fixed after proper survey of all adult education centre according to the instruction of National literacy mission T.L.C. programme is a national phenomenon and this programme was undertaken in all the districts in West Bengal which emphasised that involvement of all functionaries both at Government level and non-Government level is necessary to make the programme a success. It was realised that in Darjeeling for educating approximately 2 lakhs illiterates three committees should be formed such as

1. Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Literacy Committee (D.G.H.C. Saksharta Samiti)
2. Area Literacy Committee
3. Constituency/Municipal Literacy Committee  
(Kshetriya Saksharata Samiti)(Samasta Nagarpalika Saksharta Samity)

(20)

In the Conference Sri I.P.Rai, District Social Education Officer, Darjeeling requested all those who work in different categories of committees to submit different informations from time to time in three copies invariably meant for (1)Ex-councillor-in-charge (2) Secretary, Mass Education Extension D.G.H.C.,Darjeeling (3) District Social Education Officer, Darjeeling. He also requested the Deputy Magistrate, Darjeeling to appraise those of the B.D.O.S. who were absent in the meeting convened for the purpose.(21)

Smt. Hema Lama, Executive Councillor-in-charge, Agriculture, D.G.H.C. Darjeeling indicated that "all types of areas like village - (in rural and urban) tea-estate, Cinchona Plantation Forest areas are tagged with the constituency and as such the committee should be under constituency and since this programme has a direct link with the grass-root level population and therefore the B.D.O.S. have in all fairness have to contact the Councillor concerned to work for the success of the social scheme. She also indicated that since D.G.H.C. is an autonomous body, a

separate and special project report is necessary. Sri D.Chakraborty, Principal Secretary,D.G.H.C. gave some suggestion for proper functioning of adult education centre also further pin-pointed that the identification of key-officers is essential at various levels and preparations for guidelines of the Department concerned. Dr. R.K.Vats, Secretary, Department of Education, D.G.H.C. also highlighted on some important points regarding preparation of project report on the basis of which only the scheme will be sanctioned by the Government of India/N.L.M. and requested for cordial co-operation from all concerned.(22)

2nd Conference on Total Literacy campaign was held on 18th June,1996 by D.G.H.C. As decided in the first Conference, identification of illiterates and survey work was taken up with the assistance and under the leadership of the councillors of the D.G.H.C. So far survey reports have been received from 9 (nine) out of 28 constituencies. The target group was determined to be the illiterates of age group 6-50 which was again sub-divided into three parts viz., the age groups 6-8, 9-14 and 15-50. The list of the surveyors was prepared with the assistance of the executive councillors and other area councillors and training was imparted one by one in each constituency. In this, 1000 volunteers name was enlisted who wanted to be surveyors. For training of the surveyor the first constituency covered was Giddhapahar Pankhabari Constituency on the 7th December,1995. The 28th and the last constituency was Chotagong-Rishihat constituency which was covered on the 21st May,1996. Along with the survey training Seminar on Total Literacy Campaign was held on the same day in case of each constituency in which the executive councillor-in-charge, the area councillors, respectable persons of the locality and the representative of different organisations participated.(23)

It was expected that compiled reports from all the 28th constituencies would be submitted within June 1996. After that D.G.H.C. Project report would be prepared and then will be sent to the Government of India through the State

Government. After the acceptance of project report - T.L.C. would start. At present, the formal criterial will be the formation of Saksharta Samitis at different levels i.e. D.G.H.C. constituency and Kshetriya levels. Suggestion as regards induction of members to these Saksharta Samiti was invited and volunteers were needed (approx. 4,000) as key resource persons, Master-trainers and voluntary teachers. D.G.H.C. invited resourceful Government officials, N.G.O.'s V.A. and individual social workers; we solicit suggestions from them as to how they will be able to mobilize the human resources and utilize their services in better day.(24)

It is to be pointed out that non-formal education is actually older than formal education. Education continues to take place outside schools, colleges and Universities. Actually, by formal education system alone educational needs of a society or need of an individual cannot be met. Non-formal education is good for everybody i.e. students, educated unemployed, professionals, labourers etc. Non-formal education is meant for children who for one reason or other could not continue in formal education system. For such purpose 7,530 centres are running in West Bengal, through which 1,59,970 students in 1980-81, 2,33,230 students in 1981-82 and 3,61,325 students in 1982-83 have been taught. For the follow up studies West Bengal Government has started 1,500 new libraries throughout the State. According to District Census Handbook - of Darjeeling 1961, there was only one high school for adults in Kalimpong and the school was located at the Kumudini Homes. In 1972-73, three more adult High Schools were set up in Darjeeling Sadar and Kalimpong Sub-divisions subsequently.(25)

In 1980-85, the Development and planning department of the Hill Affairs Branch took up a project for the part-time education for the children of 11-14 age group. By 1985,a total 314 non-formal education centres started functioning.(26)

In 1970 the national Board of Adult Education has been established to co-ordinate the programme and the work of the adult education between State and

Central Government. From October 1978, the national Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was launched as a nationwide campaign through various agencies such as State Government union territories, voluntary agencies, university and colleges, Nehru Yuva Kendras and public undertakings etc.(27) "The Ministry of Social Welfare has expanded its programme of Functional Literacy of adult women as part of the integrated child development services(I.C.D.S.) The Union ministry of education has formulated central and centrally sponsored schemes for the implementation of adult Education Programme. The main schemes of central government are the rural Functional Literacy programme under its erstwhile schemes of Farmers Training and Functional Literacy programme started in 1967-68 and non-formal Education for the age-group 15-25 started in 1972 were merged in 1978."(28)

However, N.L.M.(National Literacy Mission) set up in 1988 ultimately took over national adult education programme which was set up in 1978. The National adult Education programme followed the centre-based policy under the rural Functional literacy projects. The centre-based approach consisted of one RFLP of 300,200 or 100 centres and almost each district has one project sanctioned to it. One paid instructor was to cater 30 learners but it was not found adequate. Therefore, some changes and modifications were made. However, activities of the N.L.M. began to function properly from 1990 onwards and till July,1994, literacy projects covering 275 districts in the country were sanctioned out of which 100 districts were in post literacy phase.(29) "Literacy rate at the national level reveals only a part of story of disparities in literacy situation in the country. Literacy rate in 1991 for rural areas varied from 88.92 in Kerala to 30.37% in Rajasthan and for urban areas it varied from 92.25 in Kerala to 61.0 in UttarPradesh. While literacy rate for male population varied from 93.62% in Kerala to 51.45% in Arunachal Pradesh and literacy rate for female population varied from 86.17 in Kerala to 20.44% in Rajasthan." From July 1995, D.G.H.C. introduced Mass Education extension

according to notification of Government of West Bengal in April, 1995. Various programmes were chalked out and action plan prepared. The most important programme was total literacy campaign and the first part of the campaign was held for identification of the illiterates. Seminar on total literacy campaign was held on the same day in each constituency in which the executive councillor-in-charge (MEE), the Area Councillor respectable persons of the locality and the representatives of different organisations participated. Thus motivation and environment building work was also done simultaneously with the training programme.(30) "It is expected that compilation reports from all the 28 constituencies would be complete and submitted with the month i.e. June, 1996. Then it will take some time to prepare the completion report at D.G.H.C. level. Then most important task of preparation of project report will be taken up." Later project report will be sent to the Central Government through the State Government. The T.L.C. will start after the acceptance of the project report. Now the formal criteria will be the formation of Saksharta Samities at different levels i.e. D.G.H.C. constituency and at Kshetriya levels. Actually 1400 volunteers whose services will be utilised as key Resource persons, mastertrainers and voluntary teachers.

D.G.H.C. Secretary invited resourceful Government Officials, N.G.O., VA and individual Social workers and also solicited suggestions from them regarding mobilization of the human resources and utilization of their services in a better way.(31)

So, analysis on the adult education programme shows during British period some isolated effort were made. When education was transferred to constitutional reform to control of elected Indian Ministers in 1919. The then Congress wanted Mass contact in order to carry on freedom struggle. Later provincial autonomy gave some scope for adult education. Adult education committee was formed in 1939. A provincial adult education council was formed in Bombay in 1937. The Sargent

Committee envisaged a programme of total literacy in 40 years. But no remarkable progress observed during that period and India's literacy in 1951 was 17% only.

In free India, the education minister in 1948 wanted 12 point scheme of adult education and in the Education Minister's Conference 1949, resolution was taken to make at least 50% people literate within 3 years. However, literacy was combined with 'Fundamental Education' to make it social education. Fundamental education means literacy, knowledge on health and sanitation. Vocational education with financial upliftment, citizenship training and training on proper utilisation of leisure. Moulana Abulkalam Azad in the fifth session of C.A.B.E. 1949 formally brought the term social education. Emphasis and financial help was given on adult education by different plans under five year plan scheme. Government engaging Gram Panchayats co-operative societies and private enterprises for the spread of education.

At present a new term has come in the field of education is popular all over the world known as non-formal education. In India a large number of people live below the poverty line and majority of them live in rural areas or tribal belts and mainly for them NFE is taken as a major Governmental endeavour. This is taken as a step towards helping the students to join the formal system. Of course this will not make it a complementary of the formal system. The idea behind NFE is improving the quality of life of students by making aware of their environment, health and hygiene problems etc. "The non-formal Education programme originated in India through a resolution of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) adopted in 1974." We have already discussed about non-formal centres in Darjeeling and other places. It is to be mentioned many Colleges also doing extension work like National Social service doing valuable work for the society. Loreto College by organizing (1) Especial camp (2) Regular activity every Saturday and undertaking few project in the rural areas of Darjeeling Rambi, Rambhang and near town Gol-Ghar Taxi stand doing praiseworthy work for adult non-formal education.(32)

Another new concept has come to our country as well as in Darjeeling, known as open university. This is an important innovation of this century and now it is a global phenomenon. The first open University was established in England in 1969. In 1985, sixteen years later IGNOU was established by an Act of Parliament to achieve the following objectives :

- (I) To democratise higher education by taking it to the doorsteps of the students
- (ii) To provide access to high quality education to all those who seek it irrespective of age, religion or formal qualification
- (iii) To offer needbased academic programmes by giving professional and vocational orientation to the courses
- (iv) To promote and develop Distance Education in India
- (v) To set and maintain standards in distance - education in the country as an apex body.

The University follows the multi-media approach in imparting instruction to its learners such as self-instructional printed course material packages, assignments for assessment and feedback, supporting audio-video programmes, project work in some programmes, Telecast on Doordarshan and Broadcast of audio-programmes by All India Radio, Interactive-Satellite aided communication network.(33)

In Darjeeling a Centre of IGNOU doing valuable service to the society by imparting higher education to the working girls and boys.

### *Some special Education centre in Darjeeling Hill areas*

#### Physical Education

District Officer for physical education and Youth Welfare are in charge of organising sports, physical culture and youth welfare activities. In 1952 an Auxiliary

cadet corps for army training was established but it was withdrawn in 1955 again in 1962 National Cadet Corps was introduced.

#### Forest School Kurseong

This school was established in 1907 in Dow Hill to give forestry education to develop foresters and Rangers. The curriculum includes forest management, Botany, survey, forest utilization, protection, laws, accounts etc.

#### Blind School and the School for deaf and mute

In Darjeeling district only Scottish Mission in Kalimpong founded the blind school. It was a junior High School. Recently IXth and Xth classes have been introduced. Vocational subjects are also introduced. In 1972, the Superintendent of the school for the blind opened a school for deaf and dumb children.

The school is run by a trained teacher and his assistant. The method of teaching is lip-reading, gesture and action with hands, sewing, using machines, carpentry, radio and car mechanism. Another school is also run since 50's by St. Joseph's convent.

There is no Government school imparting training in music, dancing, painting etc. But one Government agency is there which is known as 'Song and Drama Unit'. Some private organisations are however, doing some important work for aesthetic education such as Himalayan Kala Mandir, Darjeeling; Shruti Niketan, Sangit Mahavidyalaya, Darjeeling (which impart North Indian Classical Music), Lalit Nritya Chhandam, Darjeeling (North Indian Classical Music and Kathak Bharatnatyam) Chhandagikita - a socio-cultural organization which was established in 1977 as a centre for mainly spreading Tagore song and dances but changed its curriculum and later from 1990 decided to do social service in the form of helping needy children and by organizing cultural programme encouraging talented youth to take part in the programme. The organisation also gives financial help to distressed

people, people suffering from natural calamities and to any kind of needy organisations. This organisation works in close co-operation with Hemlata Memorial in North View, as an N.N.H.P. Hall is a very old organisation which organizes cultural programmes from time to time to develop the cultural sense of the youth. As an active member of Chhandagitika I would like to say Chhandagitika is doing a valuable service to the hill society.

Sangit Kala Niketan, Kurseong and Gitigunja Sangit Mahavidyalaya, Kurseong imparting education in North Indian classical vocal and instrumental music. Other similar organisations include Saipatri Club cum Library and Musical Training Centre, Kalimpong. The art academy, Darjeeling the Ava Art Gallary, Darjeeling, the craft teaching centre, Chitrabhanu, Kalimpong, the Kala Sangha, Kalimpong, the Kalimpong arts and crafts etc. - It is to be noted that Shruti-Niketan Gitigunja, Kurseong has been preparing students for the classical music under Prayag Sangit Samiti, Allahabad. (34)

### **SUMMARY**

The nationwide programme for adult literacy has been launched by the Government in 1978 to remove illiteracy from the country. The State Government gave priority to adult Education programme and launched it under its 34 point programme. Government wanted to continue the programme through non-formal education. In fact process of education continues to take place outside formal education centres. It is good for every drop out students, educated unemployed, professional labourers etc.

During British period some isolated efforts were made - when 'education' was transferred due to constitutional reform to the control of elected Indian ministers

in 1919. The then Congress wanted mass contact in order to carry on freedom struggle. Later Provincial Autonomy gave some scope for adult education. Adult Education Committee was formed in 1939. A provincial Adult Education Council was formed in Bombay in 1937. The Sergent Committee envisaged a programme of total literacy in 40 years. But no remarkable progress was observed during that period and India's literacy in 1951 stood at 17% only.

In free India, the Education Minister in 1948 wanted 12 point scheme of adult education and in the Education Ministers Conference 1949, resolution was taken to make at least 50% people literate within 3 years. However, literacy was combined with 'Fundamental Education' to make it social Education. Fundamental education means literacy, knowledge on health and sanitation, vocational education with financial upliftment, citizenship training and training on proper utilisation of leisure. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad in a seminar organised by UNESCO formally brought the term 'Social education'. Emphasis and financial help was given on adult education by different plans under five year plan schemes. Government engaged Gram Panchayats, co-operative societies and private enterprises for adult education.

In the hill areas of Darjeeling there was only one high school for adults in Kalimpong and the school was located at the Kumudini Homes. Gradually, by 1972-73 three more adult High Schools were set up in Darjeeling Sadar and Kalimpong Sub-division. By 1985 , 314 non-formal centres started functioning because, in 1970 the national Board of Adult Education has been established to co-ordinate the programme between State and Central Government and from October 1978, the National Adult Education programme was launched as a nationwide campaign through different agencies, University and Colleges, State Government and Union territories, voluntary agencies and Public undertakings etc. All other former adult education programmes were later merged in 1978. Again N.L.M. was

set up in 1988 (National Literacy Mission) which ultimately took over national adult Education programme set up in 1978.

The rural functional literacy project came into operation in 1980 and the whole of Darjeeling District has been divided into ten blocks by the State Government to carry on the work. In all these blocks, functional literacy for 10 months course was provided.

It has been observed side by side with the Government organisation several voluntary social service organization working for adult men and the women and children and destitutes. Such as Nehru Yavak Kendra, m a Government organisation, Diocese of Darjeeling, Roman Catholics Mission through Hayden Hall and Hemlata Memorial and other private adult education centres.

After the formation of Gorkha-Hill Council, Department of Mass Education extension came under it and on 25.9.95 first Conference was held on total literacy. However, three committees were to be formed to educate 2 lakhs illiterates - which include (1) Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council literacy Committee, (2) Area Literacy Committee (3) Constituency Municipal literacy Committee. Second Conference was held on 18th June, 1996, D.G.H.C. chalked out various programmes and action plan was also prepared. It is expected that the compilation reports from all the 28th constituencies would be complete and submitted soon. Thereafter it will prepatre compilation report at D.G.H.C.level. D.G.H.C. is, however, firm on bringing 100% literacy in the Hill areas of Darjeeling.

At present through non-formal education system which was originated in India in 1974 by CABE many Colleges also with the extension work like National social service doing valuable work for the society. Loreto College by organising (1) Especial camp (2) Regular activity every Saturday and undertaking few project in the rural areas of Darjeeling in Rambni, Rambhang and near town Gol-Ghar Taxi stand doing praiseworthy work for adult education.

Open University is another new concept which is now introduced all over the world. In Darjeeling also this centre is imparting higher education to the working boys and girls.

There are few Centre for physical Education. Forest school, Kurseong to give forestry education, Blind school and school for deaf and mute in Kalimpong.

Few private social service centers and school for classical music and dance are found working in Darjeeling hills.

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