

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE CITY OF CALCUTTA

By
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EDUCATION COMMISSION
U.G.C. Building, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
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The existing provision for primary education in the City of Calcutta is far from happy and a good deal of dissatisfaction is being expressed over it, both in the press and on the platform. According to the census of 1961, the total population of the City was about 30 lakhs. On the assumption that the number of children in the age-group of 6-11 would be about 10 per cent of the population, provision will have to be made for 300,000 children of this age-group in recognised primary schools. The latest available figures for 1959-60, however, show that the total enrolment in classes I-V in the City of Calcutta is 1,78,074. Allowing for the estimated increase for one year on the basis of an average of the last five years, the probable enrolment on 31-3-1961 would be 1,85,000 only which works out to about 62.0 per cent of the total population of the children of the age-group of 6-11. This is even below the average for West Bengal as a whole and much below the average for urban areas or for other Corporations.

2. The public of Calcutta seems to be agitated, not so much over the existing unsatisfactory provision for primary education, but over the very slow rate of increase maintained at present and over the absence of definite plans for expansion of primary education in the City. By 1966, the population of the City of Calcutta

is expected to be 35 lakhs and, if compulsory primary education is to be provided, facilities for primary education will have to be provided for 3.5 lakhs of children in total (or for 1,65,000 of additional children which works out at about 31,000 per year). As against this need, the present rate of increase is only about 6000 a year. The Calcutta Corporation has taken the stand that it has put in the maximum possible effort for primary education and that it will not be able to provide any additional facilities during the third Plan. The Government of West Bengal also has not yet put forward any plan for the development of primary education in the City of Calcutta. The public is, therefore, rightly agitated over the future of primary education in the City and demands have recently been made that the whole position should be examined without delay and that immediate and adequate steps should be taken to provide universal and compulsory primary education for children in the age-group of 6-11 in the City of Calcutta during the third Plan.

3. Historical: Before turning to the proposals of reform, it is desirable to review the development of primary education in the City of Calcutta and to analyse the reasons that have led to this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

The Calcutta Corporation is the oldest in India and was established as early as 1727. Till 1888, however, it had no authority to incur any expenditure on primary education*. It is worthy of note that the moffussil

* The Bombay Corporation did not also have this authority but it was given to it in 1864-65.

Municipalities in Bengal were given the authority to incur expenditure on primary education in 1873. But even at this late hour, no step was taken to authorise the Calcutta Corporation to do so. The first occasion for the purpose arose in 1888 when certain suburban Municipalities were amalgamated with the Calcutta Corporation. In pursuance of the provisions of the Act of 1873, these suburban Municipalities were already incurring an expenditure of about Rs. 3,000 a year on primary education. In order that this advantage might not be lost in the amalgamation, the Calcutta Municipal Act of 1888 introduced a permissive clause authorising the Corporation to incur expenditure on the promotion of primary education (Section 36). In practice, however, this permissive clause was interpreted with reference to the suburban area only and till 1900, the total expenditure on the Corporation on primary education never went much beyond the amount of Rs 3,000 and it was used exclusively for the suburban areas. It would, therefore, be correct to say that till 1900, the Calcutta Corporation did not incur any expenditure on primary education in the City proper.

The first change in this disastrous policy came about in 1901-02 as a result of an admonition from the Government of India who commented upon " the very inadequate fulfilment of the Corporation's obligations towards primary education". Consequently, the Corporation provided a primary education grant of Rs 10,000. In the absence of any fixed basis of grant-in-aid to schools, it

was distributed arbitrarily to the different wards of the City for some time. Very soon, however, the question of defining the basis of municipal grants came up for discussion and in 1905, it was decided that the system of capitation grants should be adopted and that the municipal grant to primary schools should be at the rate of Rs. 1 per boy and 1½ per girl, calculated on the basis of approved daily average attendance. With the acceptance of this basis for grant-in-aid, the idea of a ceiling for the municipal grant to primary education was naturally abandoned and the expenditure of the Corporation on primary education steadily went up with the increase in the number of boys and girls on rolls.

6. It has to be pointed out that this grant-in-aid given by the Corporation was in addition to the expenditure which the Government of West Bengal was already incurring on primary education in the City of Calcutta. Prior to 1901, almost all the primary schools in the City were provided by private enterprise and were assisted only by Government. Even when the Corporation came into the picture, the financial allocation made by it was so small that Government continued its policy of having direct grants-in-aid to private primary schools in the city. Thus arose a system of two agencies - Government and the Corporation - simultaneously assisting primary schools in the City area. This naturally led to a number of anomalies: some schools received grants from neither of the sources; others received from both; some received grants

from Government only and others from Corporation alone. The system was obviously anomalous and its weakness soon became patent. But as the attempts to evolve a common and uniform system of primary education for the City as a whole have consistently failed so far, it continues to hold the field even today.

7. The expansion of primary education in the City of Calcutta between 1901-21 was a little better than in the earlier period, due partly to increasing assistance from the Corporation and partly to increasing grants from Government. A good review of the whole position is provided in the Report of Mr. Dunn, the then Inspector of Schools, Presidency Division (1918). Mr. Dunn estimated the population of the city at 8,96,067 and hence the number of children in the age-group of 6-11 would be about 90,000. As against this, he found 74 high schools and 57 middle schools whose primary departments enrolled 16,570 pupils and 464 primary schools (including Maktabs) which enrolled 28,242 pupils. The total enrolment thus was 44,712 or 49 per cent of the population of the school-going age. The total expenditure of the Corporation on primary education was only Rs 62, 328 out of which Rs 35,829 was in the form of cash grants and Rs 26,499 was in lieu of the exemption from Municipal rates. (Prior to 1909, the educational institutions in Calcutta were exempt from the payment of municipal rates. In that year, it was decided that this exemption should not be given, but that a grant-in-aid equal to the amount of exemption, should be specifically granted from year to year). It must be pointed out in this connection that

this total cash expenditure of Rs 35,829, small as it was, included, not only grants-in-aid to primary schools, but also grants to middle, secondary and other types of schools, the expenditure for primary education being only Rs 17,718. In addition, the Government expenditure was Rs 32,664. The total expenditure on primary education from public funds was thus only Rs 50,382.

8. In the meanwhile, the conscience of the City was awakened and a demand was made to the effect that there should be a more vigorous programme for the development of primary education in the City of Calcutta; that there should be only one agency to administer primary schools; and that it should preferably be the Corporation. As early as 1907, Sir Charles Allen suggested that "the Corporation should assume responsibility for primary education, receiving from Government an annual grant of expanding revenue, sufficient when added to the municipal allotment, to pay for primary education which he thought should be free and compulsory." At this time, the total cost of free primary education in Calcutta was estimated at Rs 5 or 6 lakhs and the proposal was abandoned, partly on the ground that the Corporation would not be able to afford it and partly because Government would not commit itself for a grant-in-aid. The question was, however, reopened, when Gokhale's Bill for Compulsory Primary Education was referred to the Corporation for its opinion (1910-12). Mr. Hornell, the then Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, wrote a paper in 1914 in which he entirely blamed the Corporation of

Calcutta for its inability to make adequate provision for primary education in the City. The Corporation, on its side, argued that the responsibility for providing primary education in the City of Calcutta have always rested with Government; that expenditure on primary education had not been taken into consideration at the time when its system of taxation had been devised; that it would not be possible for the Corporation to take over primary education unless plebiscite of rate-payers in the City was held; and that the blame for the poor progress of primary education in the City was entirely due to the apathy of the Education Department of Government. The one good result of this controversy was the decision that the Corporation and the Education Department should together review the whole position and frame proposals for proper development of primary education in the City.

9. A scheme for the development of primary education in the City was accordingly prepared by Mr. Dunn. This scheme visualised (1) the establishment of a limited number of model schools, (2) the taking over a few new schools every year, (3) the improvement of a certain proportion of existing schools which were capable of improvement, and (4) the provision of a Training College for primary teachers. The total cost of the scheme, spread over five years, was estimated at Rs 20.75 lakhs non-recurring and it would have resulted in a net addition of about Rs 4.75 lakhs recurring expenditure at the end of five years. The Corporation proposed that the entire

capital and recurring expenditure involved in the scheme should be apportioned between Government and the Corporation on a 50:50 basis and that a Joint School Committee be established consisting of the representatives of the Corporation and of the Government. The proposal was obviously inspired by the establishment of a Joint School Committee which had been made in the City of Bombay a little earlier. Unfortunately, Government would not agree to the proposal. In their letter No. 554 dated the 9th March 1920, Government refused to give any undertaking to meet any part of the recurring expenditure. It agreed however, to provide 75 per cent of the capital cost of the scheme. In addition, it also agreed to bear the entire capital cost of the Training College for Primary Teachers and to give a recurring grant-in-aid of Rs.10,000 per year for a period of three years for the same. Obviously, the Corporation could not accept these disappointing proposals and the scheme had to be dropped.

10. In the meanwhile, great things were happening in the Corporation. Rashtraguru Surendranath Banerjea, who was the first Minister for Local Self-Government in Bengal, got through the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, under which the constitution of the Corporation was liberalised on democratic lines, its powers were enlarged and the fetters of government control relaxed. Moreover, Section 91 of the Act provided that "the Corporation shall spend annually a sum of not less than a lakh of rupees* for the purpose of

* This has been raised to Rs 5 lakhs under Section 124 of the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1951.

promoting primary education among boys between the ages of 6 and 12 years and girls between the ages of 6 and 10 years residing in Calcutta". But the main feature of this Section was that it made primary education an obligatory duty of the Corporation instead of the earlier provision which mere permitted it to incur expenditure on the promotion of primary education. The first elected Corporation under this Act took office in 1924 and the late Shri Chittaranjan Das became the first Mayor, and one of the earliest problems he took up for reform was that of primary education in the City. He was extremely unhappy at the inadequate provision made for primary education in the City and, therefore, decided to take prompt action and not to attempt to solve the thorny problem of coming to an agreement with the Government of Bengal regarding the administration and finance of primary education in the City. He took the view that the Corporation should go ahead on its own and provide as many free primary schools in the City as its resources would permit and leave Government severely alone to follow its own ideas. This policy of a 'division of empires' and of 'co-existence in isolation' was the only alternative possible in those early days of strained relations between a 'nationalist' Corporation and an 'imperialist' Provincial Government. But curiously enough, the position is not much altered even today.

11. Once this basic policy was decided, further progress was easy. Under the lead given by the late Shri Chittaranjan Das, the Corporation decided to frame

a scheme of expansion of free primary education and to launch it with its own resources. The scheme prepared by Mr. Dunn was no longer valid, partly due to increase in population, partly to increase in costs of living, and partly to the passing of the Bengal Primary (Municipalities) Act, 1919 which authorised Municipalities, subject to certain conditions, to introduce compulsory primary education. A new scheme was, therefore, prepared which included (1) the enrolment of 60,000 children in schools (i.e. 60 per cent of the total estimated population of 100,000 in the age-group of 6-11; (2) the establishment of one model school in each ward; (3) the establishment of the Teachers Training College; and above all, (4) the creation of a regular Department of Education for the Corporation. This last proposal was really epoch-making. Prior to 1919, the main task of the Corporation had been to distribute small grants to schools and this needed no special administrative arrangement. Between 1919 to 1924, the rates of grant-in-aid to schools was raised to Rs. 1-8-0 per boy and Rs. 2-0-0 per girl in average attendance; 17 part-time schools were opened; and in 1923, two day schools were also started on receipt of endowments. These could somehow be managed without supervision. But with the acceptance of the large programme of expansion described above, it became essential to have a regular system of administration and supervision and hence an Education Department of the Corporation was created in 1925. The Teachers Training College was established in 1927.

Compulsory primary education for boys in the age-group of 6-10 only was introduced in Ward Nos 30, 34, 43 and 44 in 1934-35. Goaded by its own desire and by the pressure of public opinion, rather than by the legal obligation to spend a lakh or even five lakhs of rupees, the Corporation went on developing its programme and achieved a good deal of expansion as the following statistics will show:-

Year	Primary Schools	Enrolment			Expenditure
		Boys	Girls	Total	
1925-26	51	7,230	3,078	10,308	2,61,737
1930-31	220	16,217	11,585	27,802	11,03,342
1935-36	227	18,564	14,474	33,038	13,39,432
1940-41	234	20,196	15,944	36,140	15,86,108
1945-46	234	16,700	16,521	33,221	14,44,705
1950-51	215	20,285	20,506	40,791	17,80,751
1955-56	245	25,142	25,408	50,550	21,94,280
1959-60	254	30,240	25,454	55,694	28,35,400

12. With the decision of the Corporation to build up its own exmpire of free primary schools without any reference to Government, the State Education Department was left with one task, financial assistance to private schools, a task which it had been performing since 1823. Mr. Dunn's report had shown the major evils of the exclusive dominance of the system of private enterprize, viz. poor salaries of teachers (the average salary was only Rs 15 p.m.); large proportion of untrained teachers (only 17 per cent of the teachers were trained);no

provision for old-age; and general insecurity of tenure. Since 1921, and particularly since 1946-47, the Department has been consistently trying to improve these conditions. It has now been able to give a minimum wage to all teachers in aided schools; to introduce a provident fund system; to ensure a fair security of tenure; to raise the standard of general education of teachers and the proportion of trained teachers; and also to secure a good deal of expansion. In 1946-47, the Department looked after 387 primary schools (inclusive of the primary departments of secondary and middle schools) with an enrolment of 46,020. In 1959-60, these had increased to 513 schools with an enrolment of 1,22,380 in classes I-V. The Department, however, made no large-scale attempt to establish schools of its own and even at present, it only conducts six schools - 4 for boys and 2 for girls. Its direct expenditure on primary education stood at Rs 13,23,641 in 1959-60.

13. There is another interesting point that comes out from the historical survey. It will be seen from Appendix III that the Corporation went on increasing its expenditure between 1921-22 (when it was only 0.67 per cent of its revenue) and 1941-42 (when it reached the high water-mark of 6.39 per cent). Naturally, the expansion was also the highest in this period. Then the proportionate expenditure of the Corporation begins to decline till it reaches the low figure of 3.73 per cent in 1959-60. Naturally, the additional expansion secured in this period is also comparatively less. A reference to Appendix IV will show that even the other municipalities

in West Bengal are spending much more on education. On the other hand, the Government activity has shown great advance after 1946-47, the enrolment in Government aided schools rose from 46,020 in 1946-47 to 1,22,380 in 1959-60 and, in the meanwhile, scales of pay were also materially improved. It appears that the State expenditure on primary education in the City was increased to about six times between 1946-47 and 1959-60. In other words, there have been cycles of spending. Between 1921-22 and 1946-47, Corporation spent more and Government spent less. Between 1946-47 and 1959-60, Government has increased its expenditure very largely while Corporation has been spending less and less.

14. It will be seen from the foregoing review that the main reasons for the present unsatisfactory state of affairs are: (1) the failure to evolve an educational plan in which the Corporation and the Government would properly collaborate to achieve common ends; (2) dualism in control and administration; (3) an over-emphasis on private enterprise; and (4) small expenditure incurred at present, both by Government and the Corporation.

15. Existing Position: Let us now turn to a detailed analysis of the existing position and its main strengths and weaknesses.

(a) Administration: At present, there is an absolute dualism in control and administration. The Corporation maintains its own free primary schools and receives no direct aid from Government for primary education. The State Government gives a grant-in-aid of 80 per cent of the dearness allowance paid to all municipal employees.

Thus the Corporation gets an indirect subsidy on the dearness allowance paid to teachers, etc. This is estimated at about Rs 7.2 lakhs in 1961-62. The State Government maintains six schools of its own and has no contact whatever with the schools of the Corporation. The only common point is the aided schools. Both the Corporation and the Government give aid to these schools; but even here, the two operations are separated in water-tight compartments. The officers of both the Corporation and the Government visit and inspect the schools separately; the rules of grant-in-aid are different and there is no common consultation or policy between them.

(b) Schools and Pupils: All Corporation Schools have a five-class system; but all aided schools of the Department have only four classes. This, however, creates no practical difficulty because the children of the four-class aided schools join the middle schools or high schools for class V and the syllabus for class V in Municipal Schools is the same as that in class V of the middle and high schools aided by Government.

The total number of primary schools is 767(519 for boys and 248 for girls). Of these, 5 are conducted by the Central Government (Railway Schools), 6 by the State (4 for boys and 2 for girls), 254 by the Corporation (158 for boys and 96 for girls), 379 are aided (289 for boys and 90 for girls) and 11(9 for boys and 2 for girls) are unrecognised. Besides, there are 8 Junior Basic Schools - 2 conducted by State Government and 6 by private bodies. The main difficulty

is that schools are not adequately distributed in the different wards. The three factors which make planning difficult are: (1) the non-availability of accommodation; (2) the uncertainty of private enterprise which, being mainly fee-supported, is generally restricted to well-to-do areas; and (3) political and other influences in the Corporation.

The total enrolment in classes I-V in 1959-60 was 1,78,074. But that in recognised primary schools was only 1,43,627 and that in the Junior Basic Schools was 1,000. The following table will show the relative role of the different agencies in providing primary education in the city.

Management	No. of Schools			Enrolment		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Central Government	5	-	5	205	-	205
State Govt.	4	2	6	1352	306	1658
Municipality	158	96	254	34554	21140	55694
Aided	259	90	379	42143	18586	60729
Unaided	54	58	112	12617	12724	25341
Total	510	246	756	90871	52756	143627

It will be seen that the bulk of the educational effort is provided by private enterprise.

The distribution of the pupils according to classes is shown below:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
I	27,592	24,264	51,856
II	18,734	15,173	33,907
III	20,562	14,192	34,754
IV	17,645	11,916	29,561
V	17,210	10,786	27,996
	<u>1,01,743</u>	<u>76,331</u>	<u>1,78,074</u>

As pointed out earlier, this enrolment works out at about 62 per cent only of the total number of children in the age-group of 6-11. This low enrolment (judged by urban standards) is due to (1) lack of proper distribution of schools in the different wards of the City; (2) the absence of an adequate number of free primary schools; and (3) the heavy fees charged in private schools which are largely fee-supported - the minimum monthly fee seems to be Rs 2 in class I and Rs 4 in class V. The parents in the lower income-groups can hardly afford to pay such fees.

(c) Teachers: The total number of teachers is 4,011 - 1701 trained and 2310 untrained. Of these 408 are graduates, 2903 have passed Matriculation and 700 are non-matriculいたes. Since 1949, no untrained matriculates are being recruited.

The scales of pay in the Corporation are good. T headmasters/headmistresses get Rs 100-225; the assistant headmaster/headmistreeses get Rs 80-170; the teachers get

Rs 70-160. This is exclusive of dearness allowance which is fairly good. The women teachers get an additional allowance of Rs 10 p.m. The main difficulty is with the aided schools. Here, the State ensures that teachers in category A (trained matriculates) get a minimum total remuneration of Rs 72.50, those in Category B (untrained matriculates) get a minimum of Rs 62.50 and those in category C (untrained non-matriculates) get a minimum of Rs 52.50. These are low, especially as compared to standards of living in Calcutta and an increase is possible only if grants-in-aid are raised. It was a pleasure to find that an ad hoc increase of Rs 8 p.m. has been given to the teachers with effect from 1-4-1960, pending the report of the Pay Committee. This will mean an additional expenditure of Rs 2.5 lakhs a year. Provident fund is not yet provided compulsorily for all teachers.

The Corporation can really get much better teachers with its attractive scales of pay. But the recruitment machinery and rules are defective. It is really possible to recruit even graduates on a large scale. This is, therefore, an important aspect of the administration that will have to be looked into.

(d) Buildings: As usual in Corporation areas, one of the major problems is buildings. The Corporation has only 21 buildings of its own, the rest being rented. In the aided schools, the position is better in cases where secondary schools conduct primary departments by a shift arrangement in the morning. In other cases, conditions are very bad. The Corporation could have

a loan programme for buildings, but it does not have one. Most of the private schools have no resources to put up buildings.

(e) Finances: In 1959-60, the expenditure of the various types of schools was met as follows:-

Source	Government Schools	Municipal Schools	Aided School	Unaided Schools	Total
	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs
Government Funds	62,021	7,25,850	5,35,770	-	13,23,641
Municipal Funds	-	26,33,763	2,50,267	-	28,84,030
Fees	43,670	-	16,63,093	11,14,944	28,21,707
Endowments	-	-	1,08,917	10,616	1,19,533
Other sources	-	-	12,685	1,06,985	1,19,670
Total	1,05,691	33,59,613	25,70,732	12,32,545	72,68,581
No. of pupils	1,863	55,694	60,729	25,341	1,43,627
Total cost per pupil	56.73	60.32	42.33	48.63	50.6
Cost to Govt. per pupil	33.29	13.03	8.82	-	9.21

It will be seen that the total expenditure on primary education in the City of Calcutta is low, especially as compared by Corporation standards. It works out to less than Rs 2.5 per capita of population. This is the main reason for the unsatisfactory condition of primary education in the City.

The main source of financing primary education in the City is fees and they account for about 40 per cent of the total expenditure. The fee per pupil comes to about Rs 20 which is fairly high. There is hardly any possibility or justification to increase the income from this source. If funds are needed - as they urgently are - they will have to come from either the State Government or the Corporation or both.

The State spends only about Rs 13.2 lakhs on primary education in the City. This is on the low side. The Corporation also spends only about Rs 28.8 lakhs from its own funds. This is about 3.7 per cent of its total revenues. This is very low, judged by the standards of other Corporations or even by that of smaller Municipalities in West Bengal.

The cost per pupil is very high in Government and Municipal Schools. This is mainly due to good salaries offered to teachers. The total cost in aided schools is much lower, again mainly due to the comparatively lower emoluments offered to teachers. The grants-in-aid from State funds is a little less than Rs 9 per pupil in aided schools, a little more than Rs 4 from municipal funds (This includes the cash grants paid at the rate of Rs 1.50 per boy and Rs 2 per girl as well as the grant-in-aid in lieu of exemption from taxes). The total grant-in-aid from all sources comes only to Rs 13 per pupil and the rest of the cost - which is about double this amount - is met mainly from fees.

The unaided schools fall into two categories. In the first category are included those schools where high rates of fees are charged, which maintain efficiency and which are not given any grant because they do not need it. In the second category are included those schools which are not aided because they are too inefficient. Fortunately, this is a comparatively smaller group of schools.

16. Proposals for Reform: It is now possible to formulate some concrete proposals of reform in the light of the historical review and the analysis of the present position.

(1) Educational Survey: Owing to the division of authority between the State Government and the Corporation and in the absence of a single authority to administer primary education in the City as a whole, the essential data required for planning is not readily available. For instance, we do not know the exact number of children in the age-group of 6-11. This is generally calculated at 12.5 per cent of the total population. In Calcutta, however, the actual percentage appears to be lower - as in other industrial areas - because of a large floating or non-family population. There is, however, no data on the basis of which this percentage can be fixed with a fair degree of accuracy. Secondly, there is also no

data on the basis of which this percentage can be fixed with a fair degree of accuracy. Secondly, there is also no complete picture of the distribution of the existing schools in the different parts of the City with a view to locating the deficiencies of schooling facilities in the different parts of the City with a view to locating the deficiencies of schooling facilities in the different areas of the City. It is, therefore, suggested that an immediate educational survey of the City should be carried out. This should show clearly the existing schools and the probable requirements of additional schools or extensions to existing schools in the different wards. It should also include a census of all children in the age-group of 6-11, showing those who are attending and those who are not attending, and also an analysis of these children according to their mother-tongue. At present, this data is not available - and there is no relevance between the figures of population speaking a given language and the schooling facilities provided through it. For instance, it is said that the Oriya speaking population in the City is about 4 lakhs; but there are only 2 Oriya Schools. The Survey should also include an enumeration of open or available sites where new schools could be planned. It would not take much money or time to complete such a survey. If the Department and the Corporation were to work together it could be completed in less than three months and at a cost of about Rs 40,000. It is, therefore, suggested that an Educational Survey of the

(contd....)

City should be jointly carried out by the Corporation and the Education Department so that further planning could be made on some realistic basis.

(2) Single Agency for Administration and Control: The second important reform would be to create a single agency for administration and control of primary education in the City. The anomalies and difficulties of the existing position in which the State Education Department and the Corporation operate in complete isolation from each other have already been pointed out. It would, therefore, be a major programme of urgent administrative reform to abolish this dualism.

There are three possibilities. The first is ~~historically the oldest solution~~ the establishment of a Joint School Committee for the City consisting of representatives of both the State Government and the Corporation and administering fund jointly contributed by both. There are some obvious points in favour of the proposal; but it has probably outlived its utility although it was good enough in 1918 when it was first put forward. The other alternative is that the entire administration and control of primary education should be taken over by Government. This has some points in its favour; but there are also immense difficulties in implementing it. It will hardly be possible for the Government of West Bengal, which has entrusted the administration of primary education to local bodies throughout the State, to take this major

step without serious repercussions on the administration of primary education in the State as a whole. In fact, such a step would eventually lead to a resumption of direct administration of primary education throughout the State, a contingency which is neither possible nor desirable. Secondly, the scales of pay of primary teachers in Municipal Schools are much better than those which are prevailing in Government Schools all over the State. Under these circumstances, it would neither be possible for the State Government to reduce the existing scales of pay, nor to upgrade the scales of pay of other primary teachers to the present level which obtains in the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, or to retain two different scales of pay and two different categories in the ranks of its primary teachers. The only other practical alternative is to transfer the entire control of primary education in the City of Calcutta to the Corporation. This has some obvious and well-known drawbacks which are common to administration of primary education under all local bodies. But the advantages are much greater. The most important advantage will be that larger funds for primary education would be more readily available under the Corporation which is more susceptible to local demands and local pressures. It is, therefore, recommended that early steps may be taken to place the entire control of primary education in the City under the Corporation. The present system of divided control arose at a time when the relations between the Corporation and the State Government were

extremely strained for political considerations. This historical justification has long ceased to exist and it is, therefore, proper that a new era of cooperative endeavour should be started as early as possible.

This major step will involve a number of other measures. The Calcutta Municipal Act, 1951, will have to be suitably amended (See Appendix II for details). The State Government will have to place, at the disposal of the Corporation, all the expenditure which it now incurs on primary education and also to give it a larger and expanding recurring grant. Steps will also have to be taken to strengthen the existing Education Department of the Municipal Corporation. But these are details which can be easily thought of and provided for, once the major decision is taken.

(3) Provision of Additional Funds: Even more important than the administrative reform is the necessity to provide additional funds for the development of primary education in the City. As stated earlier, these funds will have to be provided both by the State Government and by the Corporation. In so far as the Corporation is concerned, it may be difficult to find a larger amount from the existing sources of taxation and it may be necessary to have recourse to additional taxation for the purpose. There is no provision in the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1951, for the levy of an educational cess. It is, therefore, suggested that such a provision should be made and that an educational cess at 2 per cent of the annual letting value of

properties in the Calcutta City is estimated at Rs. 22 crores. This educational cess would, therefore, bring in an annual income of Rs. 40 lakhs (after allowing for the usual exemptions). This will be adequate to meet the needs of primary education in the City for the next five years. It is true that the recurring expenditure on primary education will not suddenly rise by Rs. 40 lakhs immediately. It is, therefore, suggested that, in the initial stages, a part of this revenue should be invested in the provision of buildings which are very badly required. This investment may be reduced as the recurring expenditure rises.

On its side, the Government should also increase its grant for primary education. At present, it spends about Rs. 13 lakhs. It is suggested that this should be raised at least to Rs. 25 lakhs per year.

The income from fees stands at Rs. 28 lakhs at present. This amount may not increase in future. In fact, it may even go down a little when larger facilities for free primary education are provided.

If the above steps are taken, the total funds available for primary education in the City would be about plus Rs. 120 lakhs (as against Rs. 75 lakhs at present) - Rs. 70 lakhs from the Corporation, Rs. 25 lakhs from the State Government and Rs. 25 lakhs from fees and other sources. The net increase would thus be of the order of about Rs. 45 to 50 lakhs a year and this would make it possible to implement a reasonable programme of expansion and improvement of primary education in the City.

(4) Preparation of a Development Plan (1961-65): Another important need is to prepare a Development Plan for Primary Education in the City of Calcutta. In view of the low percentage of enrolment in the City and in view of the difficulty of getting sites and buildings, the idea of introducing compulsory education may not be feasible in the third Plan. A more modest and a realistic plan would be to reach enrolment of 85 per cent of children in the age-group of 6-11 by 1965-66. Even this target would mean an enrolment of about 100,000 additional children during the next five years, at the rate of about 20,000 children a year, as against the present annual rate of increase of 6 or 7 thousand at the most.

A very careful and detailed Plan will have to be prepared for this purpose. It will have to include proposals for the provision of sites and buildings, opening of new schools, strengthening of existing schools, improvement of the remuneration to teachers in private schools, provision of equipment etc. A reference has already been made to the holding of an Educational Survey. In the light of the findings of that Survey, it should not take long to prepare a Plan of this type. It is suggested that the two ideas of holding the Educational Survey and the preparation of this Plan may be combined and taken up for immediate implementation. If a Special Officer with the necessary subordinate staff is appointed for the purpose this part of the programme can be carried out in about six months at a cost of not more than Rs. 50,000.

(5) Appointment of a Committee: It may be worth while for the Government of West Bengal to set up a high-powered Committee to enquire into the problem of primary education in Calcutta and to submit a report thereon. This Committee should be presided over by a person of high status and it should include educationists, representatives of the public, representatives of Government and also representatives of the Corporation. The Special Officer, whose appointment has been referred to in the preceding paragraph, should be the Secretary of this Committee. The terms of reference of this Committee should include (1) surveying of the existing conditions of primary education in the City of Calcutta, (2) working out a detailed plan for expansion and improvement of primary education in the City with a view ultimately to introduce universal, compulsory primary education, and (3) suggesting ways and means in which the necessary finances for the programme can be raised. The Committee should be required to submit its report in about six months' time so that action on its recommendations can be taken from 1962-63.

(6) Interim Proposals: For the year 1961-62, it is too late to undertake any major programme. But even now, it should be possible for the Corporation to set up a few more free primary schools and to appoint a few additional teachers. It is possible, if all available resources of teachers and space are fully utilised, to accommodate about 5,000 additional children in the schools of the Corporation. Even this would be a very great relief in the present situation.

17. Summary of Findings and Conclusions: The main findings and conclusions of this study can briefly be summed up as follows:

(1) The existing provision of primary education in the City of Calcutta is far from satisfactory. Only about 62 per cent of the children in the age-group of 6-11 are at school; the existing schools are not properly distributed in the different wards of the City; education is largely free-supported with the result that parents in the lower income-groups find it difficult to send their children to schools; the facilities for free primary education are inadequate; the largest part of the existing provision is in aided schools where the salaries of teachers are on the low side and there is no adequate provision for old age; the present rate of expansion in enrolment is only about 6 or 7 thousand children a year which is far too inadequate as compared to the increase of about 20,000 a year that is needed; the total expenditure incurred on primary education is comparatively small; and the contribution from the Municipal and Government funds is low.

(2) The Calcutta Corporation is not doing its duty to primary education. Although it was established in 1727, it incurred no expenditure on primary education till 1900. Even as late as in 1921, its total expenditure on primary education was less than Rs. 1 lakh. Since 1924-25, it began to incur a larger expenditure on primary education, which reached a peak of 6.39 per cent in 1941-42. Then it began to decline and today, its total expenditure on

primary education is less than 4 per cent of its total revenues! There is no educational cess.

(3) The State Government also has to increase its grant-in-aid for primary education in the City. Its expenditure on primary education in this area is only Rs.13 lakhs which is low as compared to what is happening in the areas of other Corporations.

(4) Another weak point in the existing situation is the dualism in the control of primary education. The Corporation maintains its own schools and the Government has nothing to do with these schools. The State Government maintains a few schools of its own in the City with which the Municipality is not concerned in any way. Both the Municipality and the State Government visit and aid private schools; but there is very little coordination between these two efforts.

(5) It is, therefore, suggested that a single and unified authority should be constituted at an early date for the administration, control and development of primary education in the City of Calcutta. For this purpose, the Calcutta Municipal Act of 1951 should be amended and the Corporation should be placed in charge of all primary education within its area.

(6) The responsibility for primary education has never been squarely placed on the shoulders of the Corporation. It is no use merely saying that the Corporation should incur a minimum expenditure on primary education. What is really needed is to provide a clause in the Corporation Act to the effect that it is the responsibility of the Corporation

to provide free primary education in the City. The role of the State Government is secondary and its responsibility is restricted to financial assistance and general supervision.

(7) Provision should be made in the Corporation Act for the levy of an educational cess. It is also suggested that a cess at the rate of 2 per cent on the annual letting value of the properties in the City should be levied at an early date.

(8) The State Government should give a grant-in-aid to the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. A beginning should be made in this direction by placing, at the disposal of the Corporation, all the sums which the State Government is spending at present on primary education in the City and this grant-in-aid should be increased to Rs. 25 lakhs as early as possible.

(9) A Special Officer should be appointed, with necessary subordinate staff, to carry out an Educational Survey of the City and to prepare a Plan of Development of Primary Education covering the period 1961-62 to 1965-66. The object of this Plan should be to enrol 85 per cent of the children in the age-group of 6-11 by 1965-66 and it should be prepared jointly by the State Government and the Corporation during the current year. Its implementation should, however, be left to the Corporation.

(10) A Committee may be immediately appointed to enquire into and report on the problem of primary education in the City. It should consist of representatives of Government, the Corporation, the public and educationists. It should

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be required to submit its report in about six months' time so that action thereon can be taken in 1962-63.

(11) Even during the current year, the Corporation should be able to expand its activities and provide for the additional enrolment of 5 or 6 thousand children. If this is done, it would be a great relief in the existing situation.

APPENDIX IPROGRESS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION UNDER THE CALCUTTA CORPORATION
(1901-61)

Year	Total expenditure on education	Percentage of the total revenue	No. of schools maintained by the Corporation	Total Enrolment in Municipal Schools			No. of Teachers		
				Boys	Girls	Total	Men	Women	Total
1901-02	10,000	0.16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1906-07	19,485	0.27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1911-12	51,644	0.55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1916-17	80,285	0.69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1921-22	1,07,724	0.67	10	-	-	1,056	-	-	-
1926-27	4,45,771	2.05	139	10,695	5,956	16,651	363	150	513
1931-32	11,68,753	4.79	229	17,415	12,649	30,064	624	362	986
1936-37	14,91,420	6.31	230	19,141	15,145	34,286	687	426	1,113
1941-42	16,12,583	6.38	234	17,390	14,048	31,438	733	413	1,146
1946-47	16,04,407	4.06	227	13,680	13,485	27,165	630	420	1,050
1951-52	17,80,751	3.21	216	21,471	20,584	42,055	599	441	1,040
1955-56	21,94,280	3.48	245	25,142	25,408	50,550	792	539	1,331
1959-60	28,84,030	3.73	254	30,240	25,454	55,694	849	627	1,476

(R.E.)

APPENDIX II

Proposed Amendments to the Calcutta Corporation Act, 1951

1. Under the present Act, the strictly legal position is that the Corporation is not responsible for the provision of primary education within its area. It is permitted to incur expenditure thereon and further, an expenditure of at least Rs. 5 lakhs is obligatory under section 124. This is a very unhappy legal position. It is, therefore, suggested that the Corporation Act should be amended and the provision of primary education, inclusive of universal compulsory primary education, should be an obligatory duty of the Corporation.

2. At present there is an Education Standing Committee in the Corporation. This should continue, but its composition may be changed. It will be better to have an Education Standing Committee or an Education Committee or a School Board consisting of 16 persons of whom 9 should be members of the Corporation elected by the Corporation and seven should be non-members and educationists, also elected by the Corporation.

3. There should be a separate primary education fund for the Corporation and the necessary legal provision for this may be made, if necessary.

4. The Corporation would now be incharge of primary education in the City, inclusive of assistance to private schools. It is, therefore, necessary to retain certain powers of supervision over it. These would be inspection of schools, authority to prescribe

curricula, approval to rules of grants-in aid etc.

Provision for this will also have to be made in the Act.

5. There is no provision for the levy of an educational cess at present. It is true that it might be possible for the Calcutta Corporation to levy it under the Bengal Primary Education Act, 1919. However, it is more desirable to provide a clause to that effect in the Corporation Act itself. It is suggested that the educational cess should be tagged on to the consolidated rate on the annual letting value of the properties.

The law should provide that such an educational cess shall be levied at not less than 1% and at not more than 3% as the Corporation may decide. The levy of the cess may be at a flat rate as suggested here or it might also be graded as in the present Municipal Act. In the latter event, it may be provided that the educational cess shall be not less than 5% and not more than 15% of the consolidated rate as the Corporation may decide from time to time.

APPENDIX III

EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY THE CORPORATION ON
PRIMARY EDUCATION

Year	Total revenue of the corporation.	Total Expenditure on Primary Education	Percentage of Col. 3 to Col. 2
Col. 1	2	3	4
1901-02	62,32,369	10,000	.16
1902-03	59,26,109	15,000	.25
1903-04	62,15,180	15,000	.24
1904-05	66,48,729	15,000	.23
1905-06	67,85,557	15,704	.23
1906-07	70,96,984	19,485	.27
1907-08	74,27,668	22,872	.30
1908-09	79,00,000	20,251	.26
1909-10	83,66,000	22,179	.28
1910-11	86,97,000	45,408	.52
1911-12	92,60,884	51,644	.56
1912-13	97,53,875	56,603	.58
1913-14	1,04,96,020	48,602	.46
1914-15	1,15,97,427	51,678	.45
1915-16	1,14,30,725	77,050	.67
1916-17	1,16,04,590	80,285	.70
1917-18	1,23,18,132	85,525	.69
1918-19	1,35,69,257	99,801	.74
1919-20	1,40,90,950	1,20,720	.86
1920-21	1,52,03,872	99,337	.65
1921-22	1,59,35,725	1,07,724	.67
1922-23	1,67,04,999	1,12,364	.67
1923-24	1,84,27,539	2,12,812	1.15
1924-25	2,07,47,650	1,91,972	.93
1925-26	2,23,09,890	2,61,737	1.17

1.	2.	3.	4.
1926-27	2,16,84,402	4,45,771	2.10
1927-28	2,23,96,925	6,25,426	2.80
1928-29	2,28,43,155	8,50,254	3.72
1929-30	2,37,07,607	9,13,936	2.86
1930-31	2,45,04,947	11,08,342	4.50
1931-32	2,43,55,575	11,68,753	4.79
1932-33	2,41,71,607	13,94,203	5.77
1933-34	2,41,48,695	11,88,443	4.92
1934-35	2,43,15,697	12,43,491	5.11
1935-36	2,37,79,993	13,39,432	5.63
1936-37	2,36,10,102	14,91,420	6.31
1937-38	2,47,47,094	15,35,178	6.20
1938-39	2,49,35,502	15,28,391	6.13
1939-40	2,52,76,533	15,30,216	6.06
1940-41	2,52,88,794	15,86,108	6.23
1941-42	2,52,50,997	16,12,583	6.39
1942-43	2,59,72,818	14,39,450	5.54
1943-44	2,82,60,039	13,82,269	4.89
1944-45	2,73,69,391	13,87,234	5.01
1945-46	3,06,57,727	14,44,705	4.71
1946-47	3,94,81,382	16,04,407	4.06
1947-48	4,42,36,707	16,26,611	3.68
1948-49	4,55,55,107	18,53,000	4.07
1949-50	4,81,55,606	19,64,000	4.02
1950-51	5,04,12,597	19,55,200	3.88
1951-52	5,53,95,326	17,18,751	3.21
1952-53	5,78,18,789	18,42,506	3.19

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1.	2.	3.	4.
1953-54	5,78,22,062	19,42,909	3.36
1954-55	6,10,82,775	20,91,278	3.42
1955-56	6,29,78,238	21,94,230	3.48
1956-57	6,63,25,414	23,10,339	3.48
1957-58	6,76,46,376	24,92,798	3.70
1958-59	7,29,53,638	26,30,734	3.60
1959-60	7,60,62,000 (Revised).	28,35,400	3.73

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APPENDIX IV

Income of Municipalities and their expenditure on education

(Data given by the L. S. G. Department)

I (a) Revenue of Municipalities (other than Calcutta)

<u>1956-57</u>	<u>1957-58</u>	<u>1958-59</u>
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
2,32,34,924	2,40,68,167	2,65,29,325

(b) Expenditure incurred on education as a whole

16,88,481	19,35,988	19,82,655
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(c) Percentage of (b) to (a)

7.3	8.0	7.5
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II. Corporation of Calcutta

(a) Revenue Receipts

5,35,98,506	6,01,19,922	6,06,86,000
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(b) Expenditure on Education as a whole

36,32,976	36,54,491	40,92,434
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(c) Percentage of (b) to (a)

6.7	6.0	6.7
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Note 1. The total revenue given here is exclusive of Government grants.

2. The total education expenditure given here is that on all education and not on primary only.

APPENDIX V

Rules of Grant-in-Aid to Primary Schools
Calcutta City.

The Grant-in-aid to primary schools in the C. Calcutta include the following :-

(A) Grant-in-aid for increasing the emoluments of teach.

These include a variety of grants whose net effect is to give a minimum salary to teachers. These minimum are fixed as follows :

A-category teachers (Matriculate and trained) - Rs. 67.50

(plus Rs. 5.00 for Headmasters); B-category teachers

(Matriculate and non-matric trained) - Rs. 62.50;

C-category teachers (non-matriculate untrained teachers

appointed before 1.4.1949) - Rs. 52.50. If the salary

given by the school is less than these minimum, the

difference is given as grant-in-aid. Over and above

this, every teacher is given Rs. 5 as D.A. and Rs. 3 as

pay from 1.4.1961.

(B) Maintenance Grant: This grant is given on the basis of 100% deficit. This is calculated on the basis of approved expenditure.

To calculate approved expenditure -

1. One teacher is allowed for 30 pupils.

2. Salary on the basis of the minima is ordinarily taken. In special cases, higher salaries may be allowed.

3. Rent and taxes as actually paid.

4. Contingencies as approved subject to a maximum of $\frac{1}{4}$ of teachers salaries.

5. In special cases, other staff teachers, peons, library, etc. is allowed.

The income from all sources is considered; and the entire deficit is paid as a grant-in-aid. The rates of fees assumed is a minimum of Rs. 2 for classes I-II and Rs. 3 for classes III and IV (10 per cent concession allowed). Higher fees may be charged. Even if a school is free, it is expected to contribute this amount from other sources such as donations. There are a few schools of this type - about 10 or 15.

More than 95 per cent of the grant-in-aid is in lieu of salaries.