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REPORT

1978-79

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND SOCIAL WELFARE
(Department of Education
and Department of Culture)
NEW DELHI



ANNUAL RI

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTORY

Policy and Approach

The year 1978-79 was marked by efforts to translate into action the new policies and approaches identified in consultation with the States during 1977-78 to give a meaningful egalitarian orientation to the educational efforts of the Government. The national objective of universal literacy has now been spelt out in time-bound action programmes for universalisation of elementary education and spread of adult education. The content of education is being revised at all stages of education to base it upon the best in our tradition and make it relevant to local needs and environment. The emphasis will be on the development of the total personality of the individual and promotion of social and moral values.

Education Ministers' Conference

A Conference of Ministers of Education of States and Union Territories was held in July 1978 to discuss the programmes of action drawn up to implement the policies and priorities that emerged during 1977-78.

The Conference approved the framework of action for the implementation of universalisation of elementary education on a time-bound basis based on the recommendations of a working group set up in collaboration with the States and the Planning Commission. The framework of action envisaged a national target of enrolment of 320 lakhs of children in the age group 6—14 during the next 5 years 1978—83. This will imply enrolment of 90 per cent of the children in the age group 6—14. The Conference emphasised the need for special efforts for the enrolment and retention of girls, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through, wherever necessary, a properly designed programme of incentives.

The Conference agreed that school education should comprise elementary, secondary and higher secondary stages of 12 years' duration; the undergraduate stage of higher education may be of 3 years' duration. However, where a State so desires it can have 2-years' pass and a 3-years' honours course. The Conference welcomed the efforts to recast the content of education at all the stages.

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The Conference supported action to be taken for the implementation of National Adult Education Programme and resolved to give the highest priority to the programme.

Draft National Policy on Education

Based on extensive consultations and discussions the Ministry had attempted a draft National Policy on Education which was placed before the Conference of Education Ministers. The Conference while broadly approving the outlines of the policy wanted time for the communication of the remarks of the State Governments. These remarks have since been received. The draft Policy has since been revised keeping in view the remarks of the State Governments and other Central Ministries. It is hoped to finalise the draft Policy very soon and place it before the country and Parliament.

Universalisation of Elementary Education

Elementary education has been accepted as one of the high priority areas of action by the Government along with adult education. Time-bound plans have been drawn up for the universalisation of elementary education in the country. In line with the recommendations made by a working group set up in collaboration with the Planning Commission and the States, a provision of Rs. 900 crores—nearly 46 per cent of the total provision for education—was made in the draft Five Year Plan for Education. This represents a substantial increase from the provisions made in the previous plans which have ranged around 30 per cent. It also meant nearly doubling the provision of Rs. 410 crores made for elementary education in the Fifth Five Year Plan. The States were requested to draw up plans for universal elementary education in their jurisdiction and the plans were discussed in regional conferences with the authorities of the State Governments. These plans emphasised not merely enrolment but also efforts to stabilise attendance and efforts to bring down the dropout rates. An entirely new feature has been the emphasis on non-formal education programmes for the older children who have dropped out of school and those who have not been to school. These non-formal education programmes designed to suit the needs and requirements of these children who are mostly girls and drawn from weaker sections of the population, are expected to ensure extension of educational opportunities to the weaker sections and at the same time reduce the dropout rates. Particular attention is being given to the 9 States which

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have lagged behind in elementary education and which have 75 per cent of the non-enrolled children. These are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The States have also been advised during the discussions on the draft Five Year Plan 1978-83 and Annual Plan 1979-80 to ensure that adequate provision is made for the elementary education sector. However, it must be mentioned here that due to difficult resources position some of these States are encountering difficulties in providing adequate funds for elementary education. It may, however, be possible through more intensive utilization of educational facilities and also redeployment of the resources available to the Education Departments to secure greater impact. Government of India are aiming at 90 per cent enrolment of the children in the age group 6—14 by 1982-83.

Content of Education

The Report of the Committee to review the curriculum at the school stage has been accepted by the Central Government. It was discussed at the Ministers' Conference and broadly approved. The Central Board of Secondary Education has reviewed its curriculum dropping the academic load on the lines recommended by the Committee. The Conference of Chairmen of the State Boards of Education has also accepted a majority of the recommendations which are under various Stages of implementation in the State. Government objective is to move towards a revision of the contents of education basing it on the best in our traditions and making it relevant to our needs and environment.

Adult Education

The National Adult Education Programme, which was drawn up after detailed and wide ranging discussions at various levels was inaugurated on 2nd October, 1978. A provision of Rs. 200 crores has been made for the adult education programme in the Plan 1978—83 which represents nearly 10 per cent of the total plan provision for education.

Discussions have been held with the State authorities for the implementation of the programme in the States. The State Boards of Adult Education are in position in all the States and Union Territories. The Administrative infrastructure has moved into position in most of the States and Union Territories. Volun-

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tary organisations are being mobilised in most of the States and they are seeking the assistance of the Central Government through the State Governments on a large scale. The Ministry is also setting up an evaluation and monitoring machinery to ensure that the impact of the programme is being carefully evaluated and monitored.

Vocationalisation

The programme of vocationalisation of secondary education has picked up momentum during the year under review. The Centre's role in the scheme is mainly to ensure countrywide acceptance of this concept and to assist the State Governments in establishing the relevance of vocationalisation to our socio-economic needs. The provision of funds in the Central sector for assisting the States in their efforts in the field of vocationalisation of higher secondary education, has been utilized in full and the general response of the State Governments has been quite encouraging. Financial assistance has been released to 80 districts in 14 States for taking up vocationalisation.

Higher Education

The University Grants Commission finalised the policy frame for the development of higher education in India for the next 10—15 years and also the approach to development of higher education for the next 5 years. The policy framework envisaged a flexible and dynamic system of education providing for opportunities for life long learning and reduction of disparities. The approach paper lays emphasis on quality improvement programmes designed to raise the standards of teaching, research and expansion of educational facilities will receive very low priority.

Two regional conferences of vice-chancellors endorsed the policy and priorities accepted by the U.G.C. These conferences emphasised that the universities must give greater importance to extension programme. The State Governments have been advised to set up inter-university coordination boards so as to make use of all available resources and expertise for the coordinated development of the academic programmes of the various universities in each State.

The Commission has appointed a standing committee to advise it on the general policy regarding restructuring of courses at the undergraduate stage. A set of guidelines have also been com-

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municated to the universities for restructuring of courses of study at the first degree level with the general principle of relevance and flexibility so that they would be related to local needs and environment.

The Commission has agreed to implement the scheme of adult education through universities and a beginning has been made in selected universities. The Commission has also suggested to universities the inclusion of Gandhian studies as one of the themes under foundation courses as part of the reorganisation of the courses of study. The Commission has agreed to provide assistance to universities and colleges to help them to provide remedial courses to students coming from weaker sections of the society.

Apart from these measures, Government have over the past one year dismantled the authoritarian structure developing in the education system and provided for the democratic institutions to function at all levels. The students' unions and organisations of various categories of staff have all started functioning normally. The State Governments and universities have also been advised to set up suitable representative bodies to look into the grievances of the various groups and provide for prompt remedies.

Physical Education, Games and Sports

The All India Council of Sports was reorganised to make it more functional and effective. The Council has been asked to advise the Government on a draft National Policy on Games and Sports. The Central schemes for the development of sports and physical education were reviewed by a working group which has recommended the continuance of the existing schemes with suitable modifications to make them more broad based and rural centered.

The All India Rural Sports Talent organised with a view to involving the youth in the rural areas in sports activities has now become a regular annual programme with a participation of about 12 lakhs rural youth from the block to the national level. The National Sports Festival for Women first organised in 1975 has also become a significant annual feature of the current sports calendar. This year the festival was organised in January 1979 in Calcutta in which 1600 sportswomen belonging to 27 States and Union Territories took part. Our improved

performance at the Asian Games is an encouraging sign of our progress in sports.

Government have agreed to stage the Asian Games 1982 in New Delhi and preparations are underway for organising these Games.

Technical Education

The efforts aimed at consolidation, diversification and faculty development in the sector of technical education were continued last year. The report of the Working Group set up to review the present status of the nations' needs during the coming decade and to make recommendations in regard to existing programmes was fully endorsed by the All India Council for Technical Education in February, 1978. Action is being initiated on the recommendations of the Working Group for which the main responsibility is with the State Governments. Action has been taken by the Ministry through an Expert Committee for the identification of 28 polytechnics in the country as community polytechnics which will be used as focal points to promote transfer of technology. The rural development and advance research programmes adopted by the Indian Institutes of Technology are progressing satisfactorily.

Book Promotion and Languages

The National Book Trust was reconstituted. The Trust has made a beginning by publishing in a few Indian Languages in collaboration with the Adult Education Directorate books meant for neo-literates. The Ninth National Book Fair held at Bangalore was the largest ever National Book Fair.

A Seminar was organised on the theme of Publishing in the Next Decade. The Trust has taken several measures to improve its sale programme. During 1978-79 the import policy for books was rationalised and liberalised and considerable simplification of the procedures was also effected.

At the invitation of the Government of India, UNESCO and WIPO jointly organised a Regional Seminar on Copyright and Neighbouring Rights for Asian and Pacific States and Territories in New Delhi in December, 1978. The Seminar was attended by fifteen countries from the region.

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The diverse programmes undertaken for the development of languages in the country were continued during the year.

Youth Services

The National Youth Board was reconstituted to advise the Government on the formulation of a National Youth Policy. The Board has undertaken a critical review of the programmes for the welfare of student and non-student youth. It held its first meeting in December, 1978. The coverage of the National Service Scheme Programme is likely to reach four lakh students at the end of the current year and it is now in operation in all the States and Universities. The N.S.S. students did commendable work in the wake of natural tragedies in different parts of the country.

UNESCO

An Indian Delegation of officials and non-officials participated in the 20th Session of the General Assembly of UNESCO in Paris from 24th October to 28th November, 1978.

Culture

The year under review has been significant on account of the steps taken to reorient policy and programming in the Department of Culture. The Department recognised that it was not enough to look after the national institutions in the field. It was also necessary to make full use of cultural manifestations as an educational tool. With this in view, the Department set up a Working Group on Art and Culture, as also several Sub-Committees and Functional Groups. The task of these Working Groups and Functional Groups was to devise ways and means by which there could be a long range programme of the preservation and conservation of the cultural heritage, its fostering and dissemination at various levels, specially at the rural and tribal levels. The Working Group on Art and Culture and the several Functional Groups made a series of recommendations on different facets of the development of culture. Their recommendations could be divided into two broad categories :—

- (i) The linkages of culture with other developmental programmes specially those of education of rural and tribal population.

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- (ii) The development and strengthening of the national institutions in the field of culture, such as Archaeological Survey of India, Anthropological Survey of India, National Archives of India, the National Museum and the other functional museums, the institutions of higher Tibetan Studies, the National Library and other functional public and specialised libraries, memorials.

The Working Group also gave its recommendations in regard to programmes and schemes which would foster and disseminate various aspects of Indian Culture and encourage talent. Action on these recommendations will be initiated in 1979-80.

During the year under report, a National Advisory Committee was set up to advise the Government on the preservation of folk and tribal art.

Cultural Exchange

Till the end of last year, cultural agreements had been concluded with 51 countries. During the period under report, cultural agreements were signed with Malaysia, Zaire, Vietnam, Syria, Republic of Korea, Cuba and Tunisia.

Archaeology

The Archaeological Survey of India and 13 Universities and one Research Institute have undertaken a village-to-village survey of antiquarian remains in the country.

The Survey set up a laboratory in Agra to conduct tests as also to study the air-pollution problems in and around the monuments in Agra.

The other activities and programmes in the different areas of the Department of Culture, are recorded in the relevant chapters in this Report.