CHAPTER IV
EDUCATIONAL POLICY FOR TRIBAL POPULATION
CHAPTER - IV.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY FOR TRIBAL POPULATION.

4.1 EDUCATION THE ONLY HIGHWAY:

Education has continued to evolve, diversify and extend its reach and coverage since the dawn of human history. Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. There are moments in history when a new direction has to be given to an age old process. The country has reached a stage in its economic and technical development when a major effort must be made to derive the maximum benefit from the assets already created and to ensure that the fruits of change reach all sections. Education is the highway to reach this goal.

Different educational policies have been formulated for the development of the country and her citizens in all respects.

4.2 NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION - 1968.

The National Policy of 1968 emphatically asserts the positive role of education for regeneration of Indian society. It laid stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the
education system. The policy makers were completely aware that a human being is a positive asset and a previous national, resource which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care coupled with dynamism. They also rightly observed India's political and social life is passing through a phase which poses the danger of erosion to long accepted values. The goals of secularism, democracy and professional ethics are coming under increasing strain.

In the light of such socio-cultural scenario, the National Policy of Education - 1968 emerged as a land-mark in the sphere of educational endeavour.

The National Policy of Education - 1968 envisaged no clear cut policy for the tribals. It only reiterated the recommendations of Kothari Commission and expressed its determination in implementing the programmes laid down therein.

It laid emphasis on establishment of Ashram schools in sparsely populated areas and that the teachers must be conversant with the tribals languages. The medium of instruction during the first two years should be the tribal language and during this period the children should be given oral instructions in the regional languages. The regional language should become the medium of education by the third year and the programmes of the schools should be according to the tribal life and atmosphere.

It suggested to develop a cadre of persons who will
devote themselves to the service of tribal people. Outsiders might be employed in the initial stages and the tribal should replace them in due course.

At the secondary stage provision of schools, hostel facilities and scholarship have to be greatly extended.

Non-official organisation in tribal areas should be encouraged and subcadres with sufficient emoluments be formed among the official ranks to work in tribal areas. Promising youths from the tribals should be selected and trained to work in tribal areas. Too much emphasis need not be given over the minimum qualification in recruitment of the young men.

However, sufficient number of Ashram schools could not be established and a cadre of teachers recruited from tribal communities could not be formed and there was non-availability of educated and qualified tribal people for recruitment.

4.3 NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION - 1986:

In spite of pious desires and noble ideas solemnly expressed by Kothari Commission and National Policy on Education - 1968, the nation utterly failed to do anything substantial or concrete in setting the Education System on the right track. Lack of political will and determination and paucity of fund were the
chief factors which ended every educational effort in fiasco. The period from 1968 to 1986 was a pretty long period in which our educational system just could not reform or revamp itself to meet the challenges of life - individual and national. As such the new Government under the leadership of Sri Rajiv Gandhi ventured to launch a laudable programme for reconstructing the whole system of Indian education. Consequently, the National Policy on Education come into existence. This policy of 1986, was unique in its all embracing scope a dynamic and integrated approach. The watchwords of this policy were "ensuring equality of opportunity and education for all."

The National Policy on Education - 1986(1986) has solemnly observed:

"Each individual growth present a different range of problems and requirements at every stage from womb to tomb. The catalytic action of Education in this complex and dynamic growth process needs to be planned meticulously and executed with great sensitivity." (P. 2)

The policy makers have significantly remarked in the N.P.E. - 1986(1986):

"A variety of new challenges and social needs make it imperative for the Government to formulate and implement a new Education Policy for the country. Nothing short of this will meet the situation." (P. 3)

4.3.1 MAIN PLANKS OF 1986 POLICY:

To cope with the new situation and tackle with the plethora of problems, the policy makers of 1986, contemplated
total reorganisation and reorientation of Indian Education with a view to ensuring qualitative and quantitative improvement in every sphere of education. It aims at embracing all sections of Indian population irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex. Proposition for introduction of norm of minimum levels of learning for different stages and provision of threshold facilities was a laudable thing. It also cherished to develop a national system of education with a common structure and national curricular framework. Examination reform and introduction of evaluation as an ongoing process in schools for improvement of teaching - learning process, development of culture specific curricular and instructional material for the tribal people and educationally deprived minority groups and strengthening of the technological resource, support structures in connection with teacher education decentralisation of education administration and autonomy for educational institutions encouraging innovative ideas and practices and mobilisation of resources through popular non-governmental efforts, effective use of modern communication technology for generation and dissemination of educational programmes were the salient features of the policy.

By this an ambitious plan was envisaged to tap and harness the precious human - resources of the nation. Consequently high aspirations were set forth and efforts were directed towards the educational development of scheduled tribe
people who suffered prolonged neglect and were deprived of legitimate rights.

4.3.2 NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION-1986 AND ITS STRATEGY FOR TRIBALS:

National Policy on Education 1986 has devised special privileges for Scheduled Tribe students in order to make them equal with the non-Scheduled Tribe students. They were as follows:

(1) All the students in the age group of (6-11) (Class I-V) would complete their primary education by 1990. This would mean enrolling approximately 7.5 millions Scheduled Tribe children in the age group of 6-11 by 1990.

(2) Incentives/assistances would be provided to the S.T families in consultation with the State Government. In Programme of Action, National Policy of Education-1986 (1986 PP-110-111) it has been clearly mentioned-

(i) To ensure timely payment of pre-matric scholarship funded entirely and administered by the State Government (except the centrally sponsored scheme for
children of families engaged in the so called occupation which is funded by the centre and the State Government on 50:50 sharing basis), the amount of continuing scholarship should be released by the first of the month to which it relates. To avoid delays new scholarship would be sanctioned on the basis of sale affidavit furnished by the parents of the candidate.

(ii) A single nodal agency would be identified for disbursement of scholarship State Governments would be requested to draw plans within a month to work out details of disbursement and ensure prompt payment.

(iii) Payment through banks, post offices or other agencies like DRDA, SC/ST Corporation would also be explored.

(iv) Rates and amounts of scholarships would be raised to make them adequate from the point of view of helping to ensure universal enrolment of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe children.

(v) Measures to ensure prompt payment of Post-matric scholarship provided by the Government of India (Ministry of Welfare) would be introduced along the lines as mentioned above for pre-matric scholarships.
(vii) The financial estimates in respect of post-matric scholarship would be worked out after final decision is taken by the High level committee set up by the Ministry of Welfare for revision of rates of scholarship.

(viii) In respect of the scheme of incentives like provision of uniform books, stationary etc., detailed financial estimates would be worked out by State Government and implemented effectively.

(4) All the benefits which have been mentioned earlier would be given to all children from Class-I onwards from the beginning of the academic session- 1986-87. Benefits under this scheme would also be extended to cover day scholar.

(5) Enrolment, retention and successful completion of course would be adhered strictly. Plan and programme would be made from village level upto block level to educate the children. Parents would be motivated to send their children to school with the involvement of teachers, parents, local leaders and social workers.
Special coaching classes would be given to all classes for preparing children for professional courses.

(6) Recruitment of teachers from Scheduled Tribe would be undertaken to remove existing imbalance. Educational qualification for women’s teachers should be relaxed.

(7) The socio-cultural milieu of Scheduled Tribes has its distinctive characteristics, e.g. their own spoken languages. This necessitates the need to develop the curricular and devise instructional material in tribal language at the initial stages, with arrangements for switching over to regional language.

(8) Hostel facilities would be provided to the Scheduled Tribe students. Residential schools would be established on a large scale. All district headquarters should have hostel. By this more students would be admitted. The Ministry of Welfare would take up this scheme under centrally sponsored programme.

(9) More school building and adult education centre would be built in tribal village. The construction of school building would be undertaken in these areas on priority basis under normal funds for education as well as under the N.R.E.P., R.L.E.G.P., Tribal Welfare Scheme etc.
The curriculum at all stages of education would be designed to create an awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people as also of their enormous creative talent. The N.P.E. - 1986 (1986) says:

"The centre and the State Government would constitute committees at appropriate level to review the contents of the existing curricula to ensure that caste and other prejudices do not come in the way of integration leading to establishment of an egalitarian society." (P. 113)

In this way the National Policy on Education - 1986 has stressed the educational development of the tribal people. But it is quite obvious that the authorities have miserably failed to implement all the provision incorporated in the N.P.E. 1986. It has never achieved its target of enrolling 7.5 millions of Scheduled Tribe children in the age group of (6-11) by 1990. The number of drop outs are so large that it becomes quite clear that the enrolment has not been conducive to Scheduled Tribe children.

The stipend money is quite meagre to defray the expenses of day to day life. A female boarder receives an amount of Rs.155/- per month and a boy gets an amount of Rs.150/- per month. It is quite an insufficient amount to provide decent meals to the boarders. Sometimes on grounds of administrative inefficiency the sanctioned money lapses or is diverted to other heads of expenditure.
The curricula framed so far have not been designed in keeping with the needs of Scheduled Tribe students. And the curricula have never taken account of their rich culture and creative talent.

But the school building as a component of educational infrastructure are more or less in good condition.

After having a thorough review of the N.P.E. 1986, another committee known as Rammurti Committee recommended for the educational development of tribal people in 1990.

4.4. RAM MURTI COMMITTEE - 1990:

Article 46 of the constitution providing for social justice and promotion of education reads, "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker section of people and in particular of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe shall protect them from social justice and all forms of exploitation."

Basing upon this, Ramamurti Committee has recommended for equality of opportunities (quantitative form) and equity in terms of social justice. By this Scheduled Tribes will be equal with non-scheduled Tribes. For their economic development it is badly essential. Unless they are put in possession of means of
production and livelihood through measures such as land reforms and unless they are meaningfully provided the essentials of life such as food, fuel, fodder and are assured of the fair wages for their labour, imparting education will go in vain. So this committee has stressed the need for taking measures for educational development of the Scheduled Tribe.

1. This committee has given maximum stress on incentives schemes implemented in different State on enrolment and retention of Scheduled Tribe children in school.

2. The Fifth All India Education Survey shows that there is no school within a walking distance for the students (1 K.M. in case of primary and 3 K.M. in case of middle school). During the year 1989-90, the department of Education brought forth a scheme to provide financial assistance to various States to start non-formal education centres in the areas predominantly occupied by Scheduled Tribe/Scheduled Caste. But scheme has come to a stand-still position during the year 1990-91. Rammurti Committee had recommended for the coverage of these unserved areas with schools as per norms before the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan.

3. It has given stress on remedial coaching classes. The coaching should be given throughout the year instead of giving two or three months of pre-examination period. A strategy to
enrich learning environment and the socio-economic conditions in the tribal regions as distinct from mere remedial coaching should be evolved and brought under implementation.

4. This Committee has recommended for the establishment of school linked libraries. Relating to the establishment of libraries Rammurti has rightly remarked (1990):

"For reaching out to smaller habitations without schools a dynamic programme of bicycle-borne mobile libraries or para-school-based libraries should be brought under implementation. These libraries need to be enriched with creative childrens' literature. While the children's literature would be primarily in the regional languages, efforts should be made to increase the availability of children books in the local dialects or languages spoken in educationally backward areas". (P. 75)

5. All kind of talents should be recognised not only in academic subjects but also in co-curricular and socio-cultural spheres. School complex/work camps should be organised to encourage the students. In curriculum Science, Mathematics, History and Sociology of Scheduled Tribe should be introduced. Stress should be given both on oral and written work. The rich diversity of the tribal cultural identities should be included in the common cultural heritage which is one of the elements of the core-curriculum envisaged in NPE-1986.

6. Every year, alongwith the Annual Plan, the Department of Education submits to the planning commission, Tribal Sub Plan
(T.S.P.) for Scheduled Tribe in respect of education programmes coming under the central sector. But in practical terms it has been a paper exercise. This has been seriously viewed by Rammurti Committee. It has recommended for the exhibition of Tribal Sub Plan and execution of the scheme meant for this.

7. Implementation of educational programmes for Scheduled Tribe should appropriately be based on a careful identification of their habitats and activities. But the department is yet to identify the area. Rammurti Committee has recommended to identify the area strictly by which the educational programme will be implemented for their education.

8. The committee has recommended for the recruitment of teachers from Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste in the school for the better understanding of the students. Rammurti (1990) has rightly observed:

"It should be ensured that in Government and Government aided schools teachers from Scheduled Tribe/Scheduled Caste communities are invariably in order of 15% and 7.5% respectively. Recruitment to reach these levels should also be closely monitored". (P. 77)

Rammurti Committee has impressively highlighted the problems of tribal education and focussed on the obstacles on the path of educational expansion. Although it has offered valuable suggestions and proposals for upliftment of the tribals through education and has forcefully highlighted the inter-relation and
interaction of education and economic development, no sincere or systematic endeavour has yet been made to implement the policies laid down by the Rammurti Committee.

Bereft of conducive socio-economic environment for the tribals no amount of efforts can bring forth any fruitful results in educational sphere. Hardly any effective measures has been taken in social or economic field to enhance the standard of living of the tribals, consideration for livelihood always gets the better of educational matters.

The incentives provided to Scheduled Tribe students in the form of scholarship, free lodging and boarding facilities are not adequate, often scanty and sub-standard quality.

The unsuitable ways of living in the hostel and the make believe world in it often estranges the Scheduled Tribe child from real community life and he proves himself misfit in the future. The remedial coaching classes recommended by Ramamurti Committee have not yet been introduced in Orissa. Although the facilities of remedial coaching classes are there in some tribal Secondary schools of Phulbani District, they are not upto the mark and hardly serve the purpose. School-complexes are also not functioning.
The gradual inclusion of the matters of rich diversity of the tribal cultural identities in the core-curriculum are hardly impressive or conspicuous.

Lethargy and apathy on the part of the Administration is one of the factors that fail the developmental plans.

Educational programmes for Scheduled Tribe have been thrust upon them by the whims and caprices of top bureaucrats. As such they often fail on account of lack of need-based programmes.

Teacher candidates from the tribal community are not sufficiently available for different tribal schools.

In this way various policy makers have prescribed various measures for the tribals in order to bring them in par with the non-tribals. About one in every four citizens in Orissa is a tribal. Tribals along with their distinct physical and diverse cultural traits, have some common characteristics like nature of rurality, speciality in illiteracy, economic backwardness and social deprivation. The policy makers are unanimous in their view that a multi-pronged attack should be made against socio-cultural maladies of the tribals.

The strategy for eradication of ignorance and
obscurantism would be so planned where education would play a vital role and provide powerful thrust to achieve the goal i.e. to facilitate the all round progress and prosperity of the tribals.

***