Education is treated as the most influential factor in the process of human resource development which leads to economic, social, cultural, and political development. Human resource development does not cover merely the higher level manpower, such as Engineers, Doctors, Administrators, etc., but also industrial workers, farmers, and housewives. Most of these group of people are the adults who never went school in their childhood or dropped out too early without acquiring any useful knowledge. The education and training of these people is expected to lead to increased productivity and greater participation in the developmental process.

To facilitate developmental changes in the economic front, education must impart necessary knowledge and instill the desire for better ways of living on the part of the people. Education must also help people to improve their vocational efficiency to help them become efficient economic producers. Another thing which is necessary for economic development is readiness on the part of the masses to take to new ways of production in place of the old traditional types. In this regard, education can enlighten the people to adopt new scientific technology to the processes of production, particularly in the field of agriculture which is indispensable in a agrarian country like India.
In the social front also education can play a vital role by inculcating the modern and necessary values and attitudes to bring the required social change. Social development requires that there is an awareness of social obligations and awareness of the fact that being born in society, one is not free nor one can think wholly of oneself. For necessary social development the down-trodden must made socially conscious and should help them to come out of the darkness by shedding their miseries, to lead an active and energetic life. For ensuring these requirements of social development education is a necessary pre-condition.

To sum up, without education there can be no adult franchise; without literacy there can be no worthwhile social or economic development. This human factor which is an important instrument for the promotion of economic and social development and which simultaneously is the main beneficiary of economic and social development requires that the masses be educated on a mass scale. (1).

Democracy to be true and successful demands intelligent and politically conscious electorate. A Government resting on popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and those who obey their governors are educated. Democracy is meaningless in a land of illiterates. An illiterate will not be able to enjoy adult franchise in the true sense of the term.

A democratic citizen must understand his social and civil obligations, as well as the rights implied in adult franchise. Education alone enables a man to earn his rights and to discharge his obligations in an efficient manner.

India is known to be the biggest democracy in the world. Being convinced of the fact that there can be no democracy without literacy or fundamental education; it requires immediate attention – attaining as well as maintaining national literacy. The system of primary or elementary education is the foundation of national literacy. Adult education supplements and consolidates the task of elementary education.

When India attained freedom in 1947, its literacy was 14 percent. The census of 1951 put the literacy figure at 16.67 percent and the number of illiterates at 174 million as a result of the various attempts made in the country to raise the literacy percentage increased to 34 in 1971 and to 36 in 1981. The 1991 census put the literacy rate at 52.11 percent. However, the total illiterate population in the age group of 5 to 7 years increased from 174 million in 1951 to about 420 million in 1981. (2)

Table 1.1 shows the literacy rate in India from the year to 1991.

(2) Adult Education in Third World - S.C. Dutta - p 128}
Table 1.1

Literacy Rates of India (by sex) in percent.
Population aged 7 years and above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>19.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>42.96</td>
<td>16.32</td>
<td>30.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>48.92</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>36.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 Excluding Assam</td>
<td>56.92</td>
<td>29.75</td>
<td>43.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 Excluding Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>39.42</td>
<td>52.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source - Literacy Digest - Premchand
The Education Commission 1964-66 has aptly observed that India was more illiterate in 1961 than in 1951, with an addition of about 36 million illiterates. In 1966, it had 38 million more illiterates than 1961. This has happened despite unprecedented expansion of primary education and the implementation of many literacy drives and programmes. Though the percentage of literacy has risen from 19.74 percent in 1951 to 52.11 percent in 1991, a faster growth of population has pushed the country far behind in its attempts to reach universal literacy. The lack of adequate resource also may be cited as one of the causes of slow growth of literacy. The population is growing fast, and the educational facilities which can be provided is inadequate in relation to the growth of population. So there is actually a race between the growth of population and literacy. The situation demands an all out attack on mass illiteracy.

During the last three decades population of the country has been increasing at the growth rate of 2 percent per annum. While the expansion of educational facilities increased the number of literate persons in the country, the number of illiterates also increased. This can be attributed to the faster growth rate of population. The growth rate of population was so high that the literacy rate failed to keep pace with the growth rate of population.

1991 Census for the first time adopted
population of 7 years and above only should be regarded as literate or illiterate. In view of the above decision literacy rate for population for age group 7 years and above have been worked out for 1981 and 1991 census. Comparative position for the census years from 1951 to 1971 was available for population of age group 5 years and above. A statement of growth rate of population and increase in literacy rate from 1951 to 1991 is presented on Table No. 1.2

The table 1.2 shows that during 1961-1971 population increased by about 89 million i.e. by about 25.8 percent whereas increase in literacy rate was only 6.38 percent. Similarly during 1971-1981 the growth rate of population was that of literacy was 28.6 and 7.07 percent and during the period 1981-1991 it was 26.0 and 8.55 percent respectively. It proves that the growth rate of literacy was much lower than the growth rate of population in the country.

Besides there is the acute problem of wastage of large number of children drop out from school before completing their education. The main reason of which is cited as poverty. The problem of illiteracy and poverty are to some extent interdependent. Both these problems go together everywhere in the world. 70 percent of the world illiterates live in 11 developing countries. The countries are India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Egypt, Afghanistan and Sudan. Raising of the standard of the people is impossible without education and

:: 6 ::
Table No. 1-2

Growth of population and Increase in Literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Population (in million)</th>
<th>Decadel increase in population</th>
<th>Percent of increase</th>
<th>Percent of literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>288.6</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>19.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>343.6</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>30.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>432.4</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>36.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>556.2</td>
<td>123.8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>43.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>144.8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>52.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1981 - Excludes Assam where no Census was held in 1981.

1991 - Excludes Jammu and Kashmir where no Census was held in 1991.

Source - Literacy Digest - Prem Chand.
otherhand, good education cannot be provided unless there is economic development. The only way to break this vicious circle is to make concerted efforts to eradicate illiteracy.

The census report of India reveals that the magnitude of illiteracy is still very high in India. Its magnitude is so large that India is the only country (excluding China) where the number of adult illiterates is more than one million. Of the estimated total number of 814 million adult illiterates in the world in 1980, 243 million illiterates, forming 29.8 percent of the total were in India. The number of adult illiterates in India was more than eight times the number of illiterates in any other country in the world (excluding China). (3)

Besides the school going students, a considerable number of illiterates adults are there in India, who for some unavoidable reasons had to discontinue their school education or did not at all get opportunity of having school education, should undoubtedly be called illiterate. This system of education which has been introduced with a view to educate these illfated drop-outs is known as Adult Education. Thus adult education steps in to seal the gap left by the educational system. Hence, adult education is regarded as a package of educational activities outside the formal educational system. Adult education should be distinguished from all other type of education in so far as it is more functional and more closely related to economic and social

development than the education given in the schools and colleges. Prof. V.K.R.V. Rao, Member, Planning Commission, remarks: "Without adult education and adult literacy, it is not possible to have that range and speed of economic and social development which we require, nor is it possible to have that content or quality or line to our economic and social development that makes it worthwhile in terms of culture and welfare. A programme of adult education and adult literacy should, therefore, take a front place in any programme of economic and social development".

In many countries where nearly two-thirds or more adults above 15+ are illiterate, programme of eradication of illiteracy occupy an important place in the development programmes of the country. Thus adult education is regarded as the most urgent necessity all over the world. It is known by different names in different countries - mass education in Indonesia, community education is West Indies, Folk schools in Denmark, Fundamental education propounded by UNESCO, people's education in Russia etc.

Adult education has been defined by different educationists and national leaders in different ways. According to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation, "Adult education is education for life and not for the sake of literacy, but it includes everything" (4).

C.D. Ledge writes - "We interpret Adult Education as simply the education of adults i.e. all the educational experiences of an adult and all the educational influences which bear on him. Our definition therefore, includes formal and informal classes in any subject, informal adult education work in clinics and association and the direct or indirect effect of the mass media".

In 1945, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) came into existence and since then development of adult education became one of its specified responsibilities. The world conference of education ministers on the eradication of illiteracy organised by UNESCO in the year 1965, concluded that rather than an end in itself, education should be regarded as a way of preparing man for social and economic role that goes beyond the limits of rudimentary literacy training, consisting merely in the teaching of reading and writing". (5)

The field of adult education was identified and defined in various ways. Most definitions include all learning in adults, from the casual incidental learning occurring in natural setting to the systematistic learning accomplished in formal educational institutions.

Originally, adult education used to mean only the teaching of 3 Rs, i.e. reading, writing and arithmetical skills.

along with the development of science and technology there is tremendous social change and this has changed the concept of adult education. Today the scope of adult education is as wide as life itself. Its requirements are somewhat different from the formal educational system. Teaching of reading and writing is not end in itself. It should lead to training for greater participation in civic life, a better understanding of the surrounding.

The scope of adult education has now expanded in such a way that it is difficult to define it, except by saying that anything which citizens of a country wish to learn is within the purview of adult education and any way in which they learn, what they learn is a method of adult education. Thus formal adult classes, correspondence courses, open series, university extension, public library service, adult schools, broadcasting services, refresher courses for lawyers, scientists and men in business and in-service training - all are forms of adult education.

It is wrong to equate adult education with lifelong 'treating the two as the same thing'. Attainment of knowledge is considered not as a goal in itself, but it is treated as means to an end - life long education from cradle to grave.

(6) (Social Education - Concept and Method Sohan p 19).
(7) (Adult Education in India N.A. Ansari, Ramna Delhi).
The ability to write simple letters or message or ability to stammer through a school primer does not hold even in practical purposes. Therefore, literacy may be regarded as a first essential step towards greater education but is not the end of all. According to Mahatma Gandhi - 'Literacy is not the end of education, nor even its beginning. It is one of the means whereby men and women can be educated.' But literacy is still a place of its own and a very important one. It is regarded as the gateway of acquiring skills and knowledge necessary for one, for one's own development as well as for the community."

The United Nations Population Commission defined literacy as ability both to read and write a simple message in any language.

This definition has been reviewed by UNESCO -

"Literacy is to help men and women to live fuller richer lives in adjustment to the changing environment, to develop the best elements in their culture and to achieve social and economic progress, which will enable them to keep their place in the modern world, and to live together in peace."

Literacy by itself has no meaning, unless it is taught and used rightly. Retention of literacy is also not enough.
is the utilisation of literacy, which should be the most important function of adult education. Besides, it is wrong to equate literacy with mere ability to read and write. Literacy, if it is to be worthwhile must be functional - it should enable the adult to acquire relevant knowledge that will help him to pursue his own interests and needs. Functional literacy training lays emphasis on content. It is a method for improving the productive capacities of an individual or a worker by enabling him to acquire, through the skills of reading and writing, the requisite knowledge that is needed for his effective participation in a developmental activity.

The linking of functional literacy to development not only motivates the learners to participate in the programme but also motivates its organisers to adapt the programme to the needs of development. Functional literacy is directly integrated with the occupation of the learner and directly related to developmental programmes, while literacy may not have access to written communication. According to Dr. M. A. Hussain, the ex-president of India, - "Functionality of literacy could enrich the individual, raise the standard of living and thereby contribute significantly to the general development of the nation."

The programme of adult education which was confined to 'literacy drives' only failed to motivate the learner. Consequently it had little impact on the programme of liquidation of illiteracy. So it was felt that the programme should be re-planned with the wider object in view.
making the adult, a responsible and able citizen in the democratic society that has been taking shape in India in the post-independent period. This necessitated the acceptance of the broader concept of adult education. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) appointed a sub committee under the Chairmanship of Mohan Lal Saxena. This committee opined in its report that greater emphasis should be laid on general education to enable every Indian Citizen to participate effectively in the new social order. This concept of general education was further developed by Late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of free India, who termed it as 'Social Education.' This concept of Social Education encompasses a five-point programme -

1) Programme of adult literacy.
2) Improvement of economical condition.
3) Betterment of health and sanitation.
4) Education for democratic citizenship.
5) Proper use of leisure through cultural, recreational and aesthetic activities.

The First Five Year Plan defined this newly-coined term of 'Social Education' as a 'Comprehensive programme of community upliftment through community action'. Thus social education became a part of community development projects.
when it was launched in 1952. The social education programme is intended to influence the life of the people, their understanding, outlook and attitude towards the building of a new and better life. The new concept of social education meant to serve four-fold purpose -

1) Promoting social cohesion by creating a culture in which all national elements participate and also creation of common climate for their co-operative efforts,

2) Conservation and improvement of national resources - material and humane,

3) Building up co-operative groups and institutions

4) Including a social ideology. (9).

The objective of social education was to educate common man to understand the rights and duties of a citizen to improve his productive capacity and to enable him to lead a fuller and richer life. It aims at producing such people who will learn and come forward to use the common resources for the good of all. They will learn to work not to fulfil their own selfish interest, but to sacrifice their own welfare for the welfare of the group, the community and the country.

(9) (Adult Education in India - Ansari N A - 1990 - P
The Central Ministry of Education published a pamphlet which defines the concept of social education as follows:

1) Social Education is adult education.
2) Adult education is education for a desirable social change.
3) Adult education is education for betterment of the individual's social, economic, political and moral life.
4) Adult education is education which enable the community to assume direction for its development.
5) Adult education is education for better work, better rest, better use of leisure and better recreation.

This is accepted in India as final.

Thus the objective of social education is to provide for desirable social change making the citizens conscious of their needs and demands of both the nation and the community. In the programme of social education various methods were used to impart the necessary knowledge to Indian people. These included literary camps and classes, health education and citizenship education, provision of periodicals, local libraries, Radio broadcasting, mobile exhibition etc. Besides this,

some other activities for creating awareness against some undesirable customs and practices and about family planning are also connected with this programme. It has been reasoned that to bring about desirable social change the development of the underprivileged groups, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women, harijans etc. are urgently needed. Nothing without bringing these group of people at par with mainstream, achievement of a desirable social change is unthinkable.

Another milestone in the field of adult education is the launching of a three dimensional integrated programme, Farmers' training and Functional literacy in 1967-68. This is for the first time that the three central ministries, namely Education, Agriculture and Information and Broadcasting co-ordinated their efforts in implementing functional literacy to the farmers in the high-yielding variety programme areas.

In recent years, in most of the developing countries concerted efforts are directed towards linking literacy, development and important national task. In India also some attempts have been made to link literacy with some of the major developmental activities and significant national programmes. In India, there are many development scheme projects whose efficient implementation is hampered by low level of educational attainments of the people, particularly true of the enormous scheme of High-Yi...
variety crops, since the modernisation of the agricultural practices has to be accompanied and supported by a program of man-power development.

This is an integrated approach to a comprehensive development programme, to the 'Green Revolution'. The main goal of the scheme is to support and strengthen the national objective - self-sufficient in food, increased crop production and growth of agriculture productivity.

The project has three major components - (1) farmer's training (2) functional literacy and (3) farm broadcasting. The responsibility of implementing each of these three components lies on the concerned ministries, i.e. Ministry of Agriculture for 'farmer's training, the Ministry of Education for 'functional literacy' and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for 'farm broadcasting'.

The three-in-one project aims at improving the efficiency of the farmers for increasing agricultural production and this largely depends upon the appropriate application of fertiliser and the adoption of improved and scientific methods and practices in place of the old traditional methods. The 'farmers' training' programme of the Ministry of Agriculture provides these essential inputs for the success of the joint project. But this training will fail to do much if the people are illiterate. Hence the 'functional literacy' programme of the Ministry of Education to fill
illiterate farmers not only in acquiring literacy in terms of reading and writing, but also the agricultural knowledge needed by the farmers. The third component, the 'broadcasting' of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, supports the 'farmers' training' and 'functional literacy programme by establishing a two-way channel of communication between the farmers and those responsible for helping them in their agricultural production work.

The programme of functional literacy had covered about 30,00,000 farmers during the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974) and about 50,000 attended the functional literacy classes every year. The Farmers' Functional literacy programme has been in operation in India for quite sometime. However, several deficiencies and drawbacks have also been observed. One of them is the lack of integration between the components of agriculture, education and information. It is evident that without integrating all these parts, the functional literacy component cannot be really functional.

Most of the educationally advanced countries of the world have made elementary education free, universal and compulsory. India is also fully conscious of the need for providing free education to all school-going children. They fulfill this need after attaining independence in 1947. The Directive Principle of the Constitution lays down in the directive principle of the Constitution to provide free and compulsory education for all children till they complete the age of 14 years. This was to have been
by 1960. But in view of the immense difficulties such as lack of adequate resources, tremendous increase in population, resistance to education for girls, general poverty of the people, illiteracy and apathy of the parents it was not possible to make adequate progress in primary education, and the Constitutional Directive has remained unfulfilled. Due to the affirmative policy of the country there has been substantial increase in enrolment in all levels of education. Enrolment at the primary level increased from 73-78 millions in 1980-1981 to 101.58 millions in 1991-1992. The growth ratio of enrolment at the primary level began to increase since 1951. (Table No. 1.3)

**Table No. 1.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>I - V Primary</th>
<th>VI - VIII Upper Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>73.78</td>
<td>20.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>99.12</td>
<td>33.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>101.58</td>
<td>34.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Enrolment growth in classes I-V from 1986 to 1992 was 13.77 percent whereas in case of girls it was 20.17 percent.
But this growth rate is not much encouraging so far as universalisation of primary education is concerned. (See No. 1.4)

Table No. 1.4

India

Enrolment Growth
1986 to 1993

Primary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Classes I - V Total</th>
<th>Classes I - V Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>8,59,13,478</td>
<td>3,50,59,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>9,77,41,738</td>
<td>4,21,31,982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increase Percent 13.77

Besides the low rate of increase in enrolment at elementary school level, the problem of drop-out particularly at primary level makes the literacy scheme of India complicated. The drop-out rate though declining over the years still continue to be fairly large. Due to this, the national plan for increasing the ratio of literacy amongst the population has fallen far behind the target.
The drop-out rates from 1985 to 1989 is shown on Table No. - 1.5. The drop-out rate for the scheduled Castes primary level, which was 52.53 in 1985-86 came down to 49.62 in 1988-89, i.e. decreased at the rate of 2.91 only a case of all communities the decreasing rate was 1.03. The high rate of drop-out is adding to the number of illiterate adults every year.

India (Table No- 1.5)
Drop-out Rates of Sc.s and All Communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Scheduled Castes</th>
<th>All Communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>52.53</td>
<td>72.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>50.79</td>
<td>69.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>51.38</td>
<td>68.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-</td>
<td>49.62</td>
<td>67.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a country like India with enormous educational needs, formal education through full-time institutionalised education could not by itself be expected to achieve major educational objectives. Hence, there is need for an educational system, which is flexible and suited to...
needs of learners. So a new dimension was added to education with the introduction of Non-formal education for the age group 6-14. This educational enterprise is to be undertaken in such a way that the formal and non-formal systems complement each other with a view to achieve universalisation of elementary education. The educational strategy in the Fifth plan was mainly built on this assumption that formal and non-formal education should be co-related and integrated.

Unlike the formal institutions, which are rigidly structured, chronologically graded, the cardinal principle of non-formal education is elasticity and motivation for self-effort and self learning. It is in this system of education that a learner can learn at his own pace and according to his own capacity. Non-formal education is an organised and systematic learning activity carried on outside the formal school system. This system of education also calls for a stronger, more integrated and community based approach to education, especially in rural areas, to meet the basic needs of the poor, the school drop-outs, youths and adults. Due to the rigidity in the structure of the formal school system, children either could not attend it, or there were many drop-outs. Formal school system was dissociated from the needs of the people and had become inaccessible to a majority. To cope with this situation a flexible system was needed, which will make it accessible to all categories of learners - children, youths and adults in accordance with their needs and priorities.
The Central Advisory Board of Education at its meeting in November, 1974, had recommended that "the exclusive emphasis on formal system of education should be given up and a large element of non-formal education should be introduced within the system. Multiple entry and programme of part-time education have to be adopted in a big way". The CABE also suggested that 'at the secondary and university stages part-time and correspondence education should be developed and all encouragement should be given for programmes of self-study". (11)

Since the Fifth Plan gave high priority to non-formal education, the programme was launched during 1975-76 and focuses on pupils in the age-group 9-14, who either cannot join regular school or drop-out prematurely.

The following non-formal education programme were started:

1) Functional literacy programme for the age group 1

2) Non formal education programme for drop-outs and outs in the age group 6-14 through part-time education and adopting multiple entry system.

3) Correspondence courses for those who cannot afford to join the regular classes in school and colleges.

4) Satellite Instructional Television programme for children in primary schools and adults.

(11) (History of Adult Education in India - Dutta S.C. P 105).
Government and non-government agencies, universities, youth bodies, developmental and welfare organisations, voluntary adult education agencies had together promoted adult education activities. Initially the programme was confined to educationally backward States but from 1987 onwards it was extended to all States and union territories. In the initial stage the expansion of the non-formal education centres was very slow, but it picked up from 1983-84 onwards. The number of centres increased from 56 thousand in 1982-83 to 114 thousand in 1983-84 and to more than 241 thousand in 1988-89.

Thus the history of adult education in India shows that many literacy drives and programmes had been organised under different five year plans. One direct result of the failure of this programme is the presence of a large number of illiterates in the country. According to 1971 census the total number of adult illiterates persons in the country was 10.3 million (above 14 years of age) of which 98.2 million were in the age group of 15-35 years. Most of the efforts in the field of adult education is nullified by the high rate of growth of population. If there is no change in the rate of growth of population and the rate of spread of literacy, there will be 500 million illiterates in India in the year 2000 A.D. A World Bank Report says - "By 2000 A.D. India will not only have the largest number of illiterates but also the largest number of graduates in the World". Today the majority of illiterates in the world are Indians. By the end of that century 60 percent of world's illiteracy will be in India. (12)

(12) (Adult Education in North East India - Indian Council for Social Science Research - North Eastern Regional Office - 1992)
According to another report, out of every 20 people in the world, 3 are Indians, of whom 2 are illiterates.

This being the situation of literacy in India, the 1977 plan laid emphasis on providing minimum essential education to all citizens particularly to the age group 15-35 years who constitute the main 'work-force' of the nation. Adult education appeared in the 1977 election manifesto of many political parties. The Janata party which came into power in 1977 decided to put the promise into action. According to the then Education Minister, Shri Pratap Singh Chander introduced a Bill of Adult Education in the Parliament and subsequently the House accepted the Bill, which came into force from 2nd October (Gandhiji's Birth Day), 1978 as 'National Adult Education Programme'.

The National Policy Statement of adult education emphatically stated the resolution of the Govt. of India to wage a clearly conceived, well planned and relentless struggle against illiteracy to enable masses to play an active role in social, cultural and economic transformation of the country. To bring about this social, cultural and economic transformation, the Govt. of India launched the most ambitious and revolutionary Adult Education Programme on 2nd October with the object of providing adult education to ten crore adults in the age group 15-35 years, within five years. This also sought to enable the bulk of our population to play an effective role as citizens of this country and to participate in various development programmes of the country.
The NAEP had three main components - awareness, functionality and literacy. Functionality was regarded as an essential component of NAEP to enable the learners to function in a better and effective way, both in their life and work situations. The professional skills of the workers, in industrial and agricultural had to be upgraded, so that they can increase production and at the same time improve their economic condition. They should also learn to adjust themselves to the changing environment, which is taking place in the society due to development in science and technology and due to urbanisation. They should also be taught about health care, family welfare and to discharge their responsibilities.

Adult education while emphasising on acquiring literacy skills also required to be:

1) relevant to the learners' environment and needs.
2) flexible regarding duration, time, location and instructional arrangements etc.
3) diversified with regard to curriculum, teaching-learning materials and methods.
4) systematic in all aspects of organisation.

(13) History of Adult Education in India - Dutta S.C. -
More specifically NAEP focussed on -

1) making a substantial part of the work force literate and better skilled.

2) involving people in various development programmes which make it possible to achieve optimum potential and minimise waste, and

3) creating awareness among them regarding laws, policies and schemes of Govt. and about better nutrition and ways to achieve them.

NAEP was conceived as a mass programme to combat the most basic problems of poverty and illiteracy in the country. Poverty and illiteracy are regarded as two sides of the same coin. It was realised that it is impossible to overcome one of these two without the other and hence programme was designed accordingly -

1) Teaching adults the 3'Rs. - reading, writing and simple arithmatic.

2) Teaching adults functional competence to pursue an occupation.

3) Making them aware of history, culture and developmental schemes.

The NAEP is being implemented through different agencies, such as Govt. departments, Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Voluntary Agencies, Universities and Colleges, National Service units, Industrial and Commercial Organisations through individual efforts.
After the launching of this programme there has been steady increases in both centres and adults enrolled over the years. While in 1977-78 there were 15,842 centres, ten years later the number of centres increased to 2,85,535. Similarly, enrolment was multiplied manifold. Before the NAEP, the size of the adult education programme had a total enrolment of 675,000. In the preparatory year, this increased to 2,171,000 or about three times, against a projected coverage of 1,500,000. In 1979-80 it has risen to 3.6 million against the projected enrolment of 4.5 million. (14).

While there has been an overall expansion in the effort of the NAEP, it is difficult to say how far its objectives have been achieved. To review the working and progress of the NEAP, a committee was appointed in October, 1979, a year after the formal launching of NAEP, under the Chairmanship of D.S. Kothari. The Committee indicated that the performance of the NEAP was far below the targets set forth. The committee stated "The programme so far have remained confined to literacy, even the literacy programme has not been as effective as it should be".

A comprehensive strategy to make adult education programme has been prepared for the Seventh Plan (1985-90). As a result epoch making developments were evident in the field of education in particular. The Govt. had allotted 20% for adult education for the plan period. The National Policy in Education laid down - "The whole nation must pledge..."

(14) ('Challenges in Adult Education' - S. Saiyadain, N. and J.P. Singh. P-13)
through the National Literacy Mission to the eradication of illiteracy particularly in the 15-35 age group through mass means, with special emphasis on total literacy campaigns. Central and State Governments, political parties and mass organisations, the mass media and educational institutions, teachers, students, youth voluntary agencies, social activist groups and employees must reinforce their commitment to mass literacy campaigns, which include literary and functional knowledge and skills and awareness among learners about the socio-economic reality and the possibility to change it". (15).

As an offshoot of the New Education Policy, a large number of adult education and continuing education schemes were implemented. The programme of Action 1986 launched an adult education programme on May 1, 1986, known as the programme of functional literacy (MPEL). The programme involves two lakh NSS (National Service Scheme) and one lakh non-NSS students in the universities and colleges. The scheme volunteers will teach two to five adult illiterates in the neighbourhood during the summer vacation according to convenience. The MPEL programme emphasises on the development, creating awareness of the national goals and for liberation from oppression.

During the Seventh Five Year Plan, the Central government planned the Mission Areas Programmes, aimed at solving the problems of five areas: water, literacy, immunisation, oilseed and telecommunication. The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on 5th May, 1988 by the then Prime Minister, Rajib Gandhi with the objective of imparting functional literacy to 80 million illiterate adults of the age group 15-35, 30 million by 1990 and additional 50 million in 1995. NLM was based on thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of NAEP. The NLM is intended to focus on rural areas, particularly on women and those belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

The implementation of the programme of adult literacy and education in the mission made during the last four years has confirmed that eradication of illiteracy is possible, feasible and achievable. This has been ascertained from the figures of the 1991 census, which revealed that the literacy rate for the population aged 7 years and above in the country increased from 43.56 percent in 1981 to 52.11 percent in 1991 registering an increase by 8.55 percent. The country achieved for the first time the distinction of having larger number of literate persons - 352 million than that of the illiterate ones - 324 million. A statement of literacy rates of different states of India is presented on Table No. 1.6

Analysis of the literacy level of different states of India as per 1991 census reveals disparities in literacy.
Table No. 1.6
Literacy Rates of the States of India
of the age group 7 years and above - 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>44.09</td>
<td>55.13</td>
<td>32.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>41.59</td>
<td>51.45</td>
<td>27.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>53.42</td>
<td>62.34</td>
<td>44.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>38.48</td>
<td>52.49</td>
<td>24.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>75.51</td>
<td>83.64</td>
<td>67.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>73.13</td>
<td>49.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>55.85</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td>40.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>75.36</td>
<td>52.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>56.04</td>
<td>67.26</td>
<td>44.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>89.81</td>
<td>93.62</td>
<td>86.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>44.20</td>
<td>58.42</td>
<td>29.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>64.87</td>
<td>76.56</td>
<td>52.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>56.89</td>
<td>71.63</td>
<td>47.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>49.10</td>
<td>53.12</td>
<td>44.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>82.27</td>
<td>85.61</td>
<td>78.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>61.65</td>
<td>67.62</td>
<td>54.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>34.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>65.66</td>
<td>50.44</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>56.94</td>
<td>65.74</td>
<td>46.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>62.66</td>
<td>73.75</td>
<td>51.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>60.44</td>
<td>70.58</td>
<td>49.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>41.60</td>
<td>55.73</td>
<td>25.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd....
### Literacy Rates by State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>57.70</td>
<td>67.81</td>
<td>46.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>A &amp; N Islands</td>
<td>73.02</td>
<td>78.99</td>
<td>65.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>77.81</td>
<td>82.04</td>
<td>72.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>D &amp; N Haveli</td>
<td>40.71</td>
<td>53.56</td>
<td>26.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Daman &amp; Diu</td>
<td>71.20</td>
<td>82.66</td>
<td>59.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>75.21</td>
<td>82.01</td>
<td>65.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Lakshadweep</td>
<td>81.78</td>
<td>90.18</td>
<td>72.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>74.74</td>
<td>83.68</td>
<td>65.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Database for Literacy Volume 1, Premchand.

The situation in the country. Literacy rates among the states varies from 89.81 percent in Kerala (the highest) to 41 percent in Bihar which is the lowest in India. The difference between the highest and the lowest literacy rate is 48 percent, which is even higher than the literacy rate of 83 percent in 1991. It is observed that 22 states and union territories have a literacy rate higher than the national level, 9 states and union territories besides Jammu and Kashmir where 1991 census was not held have literacy rate below the national level of 52.11. The states which have crossed the 80 percent level of literacy are Kerala, Mizoram and Lakshadweep where as states like Bihar and Rajasthan still have below 40 percent level of literacy. This indicates that after 50 years...
attaining independence India could achieve only fifty percent success so far as spreading of literacy is concerned. The situation called for a new strategy to be undertaken in the field of adult education to accelerate the spread of literacy in the country.

After experimenting with different literacy programmes, a new programme has been started which is known as Campaign for Total Literacy. This programme is area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome-oriented. This programme has been launched in the districts (either fully or partially) during the last five years. Though the target group for NLM is the age group of 15-35, potential learners in the age group 9-14 and above age of 35 years have also been enrolled in these campaigns. Taken together about 55 million potential learners are presently covered in these campaigns. (16)

The Total Literacy Campaign approach constitutes the principal strategy NLM and would continue to be so for a time till the goal of universal literacy has been achieved.

NLM would be strengthened by making it a mass movement and involving educational institutions, teachers students, youth, military and para military personnel, housewives, ex-servicemen, employees, trade unions, voluntary agencies, social activities group etc.

(16) (Programme of Action 1992 (Draft). Govt. of India)
There is a trend that many neo-literates tend to forget what they learnt and due to lack of appropriate post-literacy programme, the neo-literates relapse into illiteracy. Consequently, it is realised that continuing education is an indispensible aspect of the human resource development and of the gradual creation of a learning society. Continuing education includes post-literacy for neo-literates and school drop-outs - the retention of literacy skills, continuation of learning beyond elementary education and non-formal education. A comprehensive programme of post-literacy and continuing education was incorporated into the NLM - known as Shikshan Nilayam in February 1988. The JSN is established as a permanent continuing education centre in clusters of villages, the total population of which makes up about 5000. The programme would include:-

1) establishment of continuing education centres of diverse kind to enable adults to continue education of their own choice.

2) Arranging workers' education through the employees' trade unions and government.

3) Wider promotion of books, libraries and reading rooms.

4) Use of mass media of communication - TV, Television, Films etc.

5) Creation of learners' group and organisations.

6) Programme of distance learning.
Adult education was also included in the Prime Minister's 20-point programme while designing this programme. The lot of the weaker sections like women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and agricultural labourers as well as slum dwellers were to be given priority. This programme envisaged larger involvement of students and voluntary agencies in a programme of removal of adult illiteracy. These are to be strengthened in co-operation with other development departments and employment agencies. In pursuance of this 20-point programme, the University Grants Commission (UGC) decided to actively involve universities and colleges of the country in the programme of adult education. It is to be implemented in two phases - the first phase will cover the period ending March 31, 1985 and the second phase will cover the period ending March 31, 1990. In the first phase, affiliating type of universities and about 1500 colleges were involved to organise 15,000 to 20,000 centres. In the second phase the number of centres is expected to rise to about 50,000. (17).

Now, it is realised that to make the programme of adult education successful, it should be made mass-based. Adult education is by nature a voluntary activity; therefore, the driving force is therefore, the individual motivation must be able to create enthusiasm among people. There must be fullest involvement of each one of the society, with the privilege of education.

(17) (History of Adult Education in India - Dutta S.C.)
Most of the adult education programme in India are lacking in these qualities, that is why though they were launched with considerable drive and enthusiasm, achieve little success in eradicating illiteracy from the country. The Russian example is most inspiring in the annals of education. In 1926 Russia had an illiteracy rate of 20 percent, within a decade the back of the monster illiteracy was broken. Russia achieved success in its drive against illiteracy with a mass movement which evinced boundless enthusiasm. Millions came forward to get educated and it got support from all sections of the population.

In India too concerted efforts will have to be directed towards creating enthusiasm and motivation among all sections of the population. From 1978 onwards, India is also putting emphasis on making the programme of adult education a mass movement, involving people from all corners of the society. Besides for the success of a literacy, the essential condition is that, it should be carefully planned and instead of launching it hastily all preparations should be made ahead in time.

*****
AGE GROUP 5 YEARS AND ABOVE FOR 1961 AND 1971.
GRAPH NO - 1.2

Growth of Population and Increase in Literacy

Years


P.G Inc. in Pop. Gr Inc. Literacy rate
GRAPH NO - 1.3

INDIA

Enrolment in million

Years


Primary  Upper Primary
GRAPH NO - 1.5

INDIA
Dropout rates of SCs and All Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Schedule Castes</th>
<th>All Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years

Schedule Castes  All Community