

A DRAFT OF ALTERNATE NATIONAL POLICY ON SCHOOL EDUCATION

**DRAFTED BY
CENTRE FOR CHILD AND THE LAW
NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY
NAGARBHAVI, BENGALURU**

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH
KARNATAKA STATE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (R)
BENGALURU**

**CONCEPTUALISATION, IDEATION AND GUIDANCE
DR. NIRANJANARADHYA. V. P**

**DRAFTED BY
MS. KRITHIKA. B. S
MS. SHRUTHI RAMAN**

**ASSISTANCE
MR. CHAITANYA TEJAS
MR. UTSAV SAXENA**

ALTERNATE DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY ON SCHOOL EDUCATION*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SL No.	CONTENT	PAGE NO.
1.	Prologue	3
2.	Chapter 1 - International Framework	4
3.	Chapter 2 - Review of Earlier Education Policies	10
4.	Chapter 3 - National Framework	13
5.	Chapter 4 - The Essence and Role of Education - Epistemology	17
6.	Chapter 5 - Education as tool	19
7.	Chapter 6 - National System of Education	22
	7.1. Early Childhood Care and Education	22
	7.2. School Education	25
	i. School Facilities	25
	ii. Home-Based Education	26
	iii. Content of Education	27
8.	Chapter 7 - Aims and Objectives of building a National System of Education	31
9.	Chapter 8 - Key Priorities in School Education	34
	9.1. Compulsory and Free Education	34
	9.2. Quality Education	34
	9.3. Inclusive Education	37
	9.4. Equal Opportunity and Treatment	39
	9.5. Child-Centered Approach	39
	9.6. Safety and Security in Schools	40
	9.7. Health and Nutrition	41
10.	Chapter 9 - Language Policy	42

* By Centre for Child and the Law, National Law School of India University – Drafted by Ms. Krithika. B. S., with Ms. Shruthi Raman, Research Assistants, Centre for Child and the Law, NLSIU and assistance from Mr. Utsav Saxena and Mr. Chaitanya Tejas, Interns and under the guidance of Dr. Niranjanaradhya. V. P., Fellow and Programme Head, Universalisation of Equitable Quality Education Programme, Centre for Child and the Law, NLSIU.

11.	Chapter 10 - Information and Communication Technology	47
12.	Chapter 11 - Examination and Evaluation Process	50
13.	Chapter 12 - National Authority for School Education	53
14.	Chapter 13 - Management, Administration, Monitoring and Redressal Mechanism and Authorities	56
	14.1. National Level	56
	14.2. State Level	57
	14.3. District Level	57
	14.4. Local Level	57
	14.5. Grievance Redressal	58
15.	Chapter 14 - Resources	60
16.	Chapter 15 - Review	62
17.	Epilogue	63

PROLOGUE

“All that we lack at birth and need when grown up is given, to us by education. This education comes to us from nature, from men or from things. The internal development of our faculties and the organs is the education of nature. The use we learn to make of this development is the education of men.”

- Jean Jaques Rousseau (Cahn 155)

1. Education is fundamental to both individual evolution as well as the development of the society. Education is the means of expressing, protecting and promoting the unique socio-cultural identity of the country and to meet the challenges of the changing needs of the society.
2. Indian education system is plagued with inequality, discrimination and hierarchy both in structure and contents of Education. It is appropriate to recall the statement made by the Education Commission in 1966 which states that “Indian education needs a drastic reconstruction, almost a revolution. We need to bring, about major improvement in the effectiveness of primary education; to introduce work experience as an integral element of general education; to vocationalise secondary education; to improve the quality of teachers at all levels and to provide teachers in sufficient strength; to liquidate illiteracy and so on.”¹
3. Further, as part of building the national system of education, the 1968, 1986 and 1992 policies on education promised the people of the country with the assurance of building Common School System based on the principle of neighbourhood schooling. We are yet to fulfil the promise after 68 years of Indian independence.
4. In this background, the proposed New National Policy for Education to be formulated by the Government of India to address the needs of education of the country’s populace and to make the fundamental right to education of all on an equal basis a reality based on the constitutional values and the international commitment of the nation hereby promises to build a national system of education based on the principle of Common School System rooted in the neighbourhood principle.

¹ Kothari Commission Report, Vol. 1 Pg. 7

Chapter 1.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- 1.1. Education as a fundamental human right has been extensively recognised in the international legal arena. Various conventions and treaties have time and again stressed the importance of human right to education and have accorded ample recognition to the same.
- 1.2. The right to education has been universally recognised since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and has since been enshrined in various international conventions, national constitutions and development plans. Article 26.1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948²; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960; Article 13.1 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966³; Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966⁴; Articles 28⁵ and 29⁶ of the United Nations

² “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”

³ ICESCR Article 13.1 - “The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”

⁴ Article 18(4) of ICCPR - The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

⁵ Article 28 of UNCRC –

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
 - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
 - (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
 - (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
 - (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
 - (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.
3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

⁶ Article 29 of UNCRC –

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
 - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; Millennium Development Goals⁷; Rules 38⁸ and 39⁹ of the Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty; Articles 2¹⁰ and 6¹¹ of the ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for employment,

- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

⁷ Goal 2 of the UN Millennium Development Goals was to Achieve Universal Primary Education under which one of the major targets was to "Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling."

⁸ Rule 38 - Every juvenile of compulsory school age has the right to education suited to his or her needs and abilities and designed to prepare him or her for return to society. Such education should be provided outside the detention facility in community schools wherever possible and, in any case, by qualified teachers through programmes integrated with the education system of the country so that, after release, juveniles may continue their education without difficulty. Special attention should be given by the administration of the detention facilities to the education of juveniles of foreign origin or with particular cultural or ethnic needs. Juveniles who are illiterate or have cognitive or learning difficulties should have the right to special education.

⁹ Rule 39 - Juveniles above compulsory school age who wish to continue their education should be permitted and encouraged to do so, and every effort should be made to provide them with access to appropriate educational programmes.

¹⁰ Article 2 of ILO Convention No. 138 –

1. Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall specify, in a declaration appended to its ratification, a minimum age for admission to employment or work within its territory and on means of transport registered in its territory; subject to Articles 4 to 8 of this Convention, no one under that age shall be admitted to employment or work in any occupation.
2. Each Member which has ratified this Convention may subsequently notify the Director-General of the International Labour Office, by further declarations, that it specifies a minimum age higher than that previously specified.
3. ***The minimum age specified in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years.***
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article, a Member whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, initially specify a minimum age of 14 years.
5. Each Member which has specified a minimum age of 14 years in pursuance of the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall include in its reports on the application of this Convention submitted under article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation a statement--
 - (a) that its reason for doing so subsists; or
 - (b) that it renounces its right to avail itself of the provisions in question as from a stated date.

¹¹ Article 6 of ILO Convention No. 138 - This Convention does not apply to work done by children and young persons in schools for general, vocational or technical education or in other training institutions, or to work done by persons at least 14 years of age in undertakings, where such work is carried out in accordance with conditions prescribed by the competent authority, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, and is an integral part of -

- (a) a course of education or training for which a school or training institution is primarily responsible;
- (b) a programme of training mainly or entirely in an undertaking, which programme has been approved by the competent authority; or
- (c) a programme of guidance or orientation designed to facilitate the choice of an occupation or of a line of training.

1973; Articles 7¹² and 8¹³ of the ILO Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999; Article 24¹⁴ of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

¹² Article 7(2) of ILO Convention No. 182 - Each Member shall, taking into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour, take effective and time-bound measures to:

- (a) prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour;
- (b) provide the necessary and appropriate direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration;
- (c) ensure access to free basic education, and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour;
- (d) identify and reach out to children at special risk; and
- (e) take account of the special situation of girls.

¹³ Article 8 of ILO Convention No. 182 - Members shall take appropriate steps to assist one another in giving effect to the provisions of this Convention through enhanced international cooperation and/or assistance including support for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education.

¹⁴ Article 24 of CRPD –

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:
 - (a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
 - (b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
 - (c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - (a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
 - (b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
 - (c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
 - (d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
 - (e) Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
 - a. Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
 - b. Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
 - c. Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

Disabilities (CRPD); Article 10¹⁵ of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Articles 5¹⁶ and 7¹⁷ of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1966; Article 30¹⁸ of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW); Article 77¹⁹ of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; Article 22²⁰ of the Convention relating to the Status of

¹⁵ Article 10 of CEDAW - States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- (a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;
- (b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;
- (c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;
- (d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;
- (e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;
- (f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;
- (g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;
- (h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

¹⁶ Article 5(e)(v) - In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

(e) Economic, social and cultural rights, in particular:

(v) The right to education and training;

¹⁷ Article 7 - States Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and this Convention.

¹⁸ Article 30 of CMW - Each child of a migrant worker shall have the basic right of access to education on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State concerned. Access to public pre-school educational institutions or schools shall not be refused or limited by reason of the irregular situation with respect to stay or employment of either parent or by reason of the irregularity of the child's stay in the State of employment.

¹⁹ Article 77 -

- (1) Provision shall be made for the further education of all prisoners capable of profiting thereby, including religious instruction in the countries where this is possible. The education of illiterates and young prisoners shall be compulsory and special attention shall be paid to it by the administration.
- (2) So far as practicable, the education of prisoners shall be integrated with the educational system of the country so that after their release they may continue their education without difficulty.

²⁰ Article 22 -

- (1) The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.

Refugees; Article 4²¹ of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, 1992; Articles 14²², 17²³ and 21²⁴ of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, 2007 and finally Goal 4²⁵

-
- (2) The Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favourable as possible, and, in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances, with respect to education other than elementary education and, in particular, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships.

²¹ Article 4 –

- (3) States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue.
- (4) States should, where appropriate, take measures in the field of education, in order to encourage knowledge of the history, traditions, language and culture of the minorities existing within their territory. Persons belonging to minorities should have adequate opportunities to gain knowledge of the society as a whole.

²² Article 14 –

- (1) Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
- (2) Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
- (3) States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

²³ Article 17(2) – States shall in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples take specific measures to protect indigenous children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, taking into account their special vulnerability and the importance of education for their empowerment.

²⁴ Article 21(1) - Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

²⁵ Goal 4 of UNMDGSD - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Targets

- 4.1. By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2. By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.3. By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- 4.4. By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 4.5. By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.6. By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy
- 4.7. By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
- a. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
 - b. By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for

of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals for Sustainable Development, 2015 all recognise and establish the fundamentalism of the right to education.

- 1.3. Normative instruments of the United Nations and UNESCO lay down international legal obligations for the right to education. These instruments promote and develop the right of every person to enjoy access to education of good quality, without discrimination or exclusion. These instruments bear witness to the great importance that Member States and the international community attach to normative action for realizing the right to education. It is for governments to fulfil their obligations both legal and political in regard to providing education for all of good quality and to implement and monitor more effectively education strategies.

enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

- c. By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States
-

Chapter 2.

REVIEW OF EARLIER EDUCATION POLICIES

- 2.1. Education has throughout received its due recognition and honour in the Indian society. The significance and the fundamental role of education in national development were appreciated during the course of the nation's independence movement. The leaders of the Indian Freedom Struggle advocated for free and compulsory universal education by emphasising that education is not the asset of a particular section or few classes of the society but is a right of the masses. An effort was made to make education directly relevant to the life of the people.
- 2.2. After the achievement of independence and the establishment of a democratic republic, education received significant attention as a vital factor to attain national progress and security. Consequently, the problems of educational reconstruction were reviewed by various educational committees under the auspices of the newly formed Government and various efforts were made accordingly. The Education Commission²⁶ under the chairmanship of Dr. D. S. Kothari was appointed in 1964 to review the existing educational system and "to advise Government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects." Having been convinced that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the education commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realising the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society, the Government of India formulated the National Policy on Education in 1968.
- 2.3. The National Education Policy of 1968 marked a significant step in the history of education in post-independence India. The Policy aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration and laid stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the education system, to improve its quality at all stages, and gave much greater attention to science and technology, the cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. The policy called for fulfilling compulsory education for all children up to the

²⁶ Indian Education Commission (1964-1966), popularly known as Kothari Commission, was an ad hoc commission set up by the Government of India to examine all aspects of the educational sector in India, to evolve a general pattern of education and to advise guidelines and policies for the development of education in India. The terms of reference of the commission was to formulate the general principles and guidelines for the development of education from primary level to the highest and advise the government on a standardized national pattern of education in India. The Commission submitted its report in 1966.

age of 14, as stipulated by the Constitution of India, and the better training and qualification of teachers.²⁷ It also emphasised on learning of regional languages, outlining the "three language formula" to be implemented in secondary education - the instruction of the English language, the official language of the state where the school was based, and Hindi, the national language. A common structure of education of 10+2+3 format was widely accepted and implemented in majority of the States.

- 2.4. The adoption of the 1968 policy paved the way for considerable expansion in educational facilities in the country accompanied with various economic and technical developments. However, the formulations of the 1968 policy were vague and not practically implemented at the ground level due to the failure to assign specific responsibilities and financial and organisational support thus, leading to the problems of access, quality, quantity, utility and financial outlay.
- 2.5. The necessity to overcome the existing drawbacks in the education system and the requisite to derive maximum benefits of the economic and technical developments being attained in the country was felt and improved education was understood to be the path to reach this goal. With this aim in view, the Government of India introduced a new National Education Policy in 1986 for establishing a national education system which not only effectually addresses the needs of individual development but also effectively protects and promotes the goals of secularism, socialism, democracy and professional ethics by reducing the disparities in the society and promoting spread of literacy, humane values and social justice. Further, a Programme of Action for the implementation of the 1986 National Policy on Education was adopted in 1992.
- 2.6. The National Policy on Education, 1986, which was modified in 1992 envisages, inter alia, a National System of Education to bring about uniformity in education, making adult education programmes a mass movement, providing universal access, ensuring retention and improving quality in elementary education, special emphasis on education of girls, establishment of pace-setting schools, like Navodaya Vidyalayas in each district, vocationalisation of secondary education, synthesis of knowledge and inter-disciplinary research in higher education, starting more Open Universities in the States, strengthening of the All India Council of Technical Education, encouraging sports, physical education, Yoga and adoption of an effective evaluation method.²⁸

²⁷ Policy document of National Policy on Education, 1986

²⁸ Manual for Grassroot Level Consultations on New Education Policy, MHRD

- 2.7. Though the National Policy on Education, 1986, as modified by the Programme of Action, 1992 paved the way for the realisation of various idealistic goals in the educational sector, it also led to the commercialisation of education, although to culminate commercialisation of education was one of its major objectives. This in turn has led to the menace of capitation fees consequently, complicating the problem of access to education. Ironically the policy prosed well equipped Navodaya Schools on the lines of Kendriya Vidyalaya for the rich and elite class in each district in the name of so called excellence centres and proposed low quality part time Non Formal schools for the children coming from the downtrodden and marginalised sections. This is proving to be a major barrier to the goal of universal education thereby deepening the social disparities. The rapid privatisation and commercialisation of education has also resulted in deterioration in the educational quality.²⁹
- 2.8. In order to address the issues threatening the ideals of education and to revive the collapsing national education system and building a strong educational base in the country, the Government of India has proposed to formulate a new National Education Policy based on the ideals of social justice, and in line with the Constitutional principles and the international standards and commitments.
- 2.9. Hence, the Government has initiated the process of formulating a New Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry.³⁰

²⁹ Yashpal Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education, constituted by MHRD, Government of India

³⁰ Manual for Grassroot Level Consultations on New Education Policy, MHRD

Chapter 3.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. Right to education of children in India is not only a constitutional right but also a fundamental right.
- 3.2. Under Article 21A³¹ of the Constitution of India, it is the duty of the State to provide by law "free and compulsory education" to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.
- 3.3. Article 45³² of the Constitution of India further provides that "The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years."
- 3.4. Further, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 enacted pursuant to Article 21A of the Constitution of India, is a child centric act which intends not only to guarantee right to free and compulsory education to children, but also envisages imparting of quality education by providing required infrastructure and compliance of specified norms and standards in the schools.
- 3.5. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 has been enacted keeping in mind the crucial role of Universal Elementary Education for strengthening the social fabric of democracy through provision of equal opportunities to all. It makes the right of children to free and compulsory education justiciable; envisages that each child must have access to a neighbourhood school; provides for right of children to free and compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school; lays down the norms and standards relating inter alia to Pupil-Teacher Ratio, buildings and infrastructure, number of working days of the school etc.; and prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment, screening procedures for admission of children, capitation fees, private tuition by teachers, running of schools without recognition, etc. the Act provides for development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution, and which would ensure the all-round development of the child, building

³¹ Article 21A of the Constitution of India was inserted through the 86th Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2002, to give effect to the then Article 45 of the Constitution which stated that "The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." The 86th Constitutional Amendment and the consequent insertion of Article 21A and the corresponding amendment of Article 45 were the result of the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the case of *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh & Others* [(1993) 1 SCC 645].

³² As amended by the 86th Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2002

on the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child-centred learning. Further, the RTE Act makes it the obligation of the appropriate government to provide free elementary education and ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the six to fourteen age group and also specifies the duties and responsibilities of Appropriate Governments, local authority and parents in providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.

- 3.6. The right to education in India has also been accorded due recognition in different policies pertaining to children and various schemes have been implemented to enable the realisation of this right.
- 3.7. National Policy for Children, 2013, which defines child as any person below 18 years of age, attaches ample significance to the right to education of children. According to the policy, "Every child has equal right to learning, knowledge and education. The State recognizes its responsibility to secure this right for every child, with due regard for special needs, through access, provision and promotion of required environment, information, infrastructure, services and supports, towards the development of the child's fullest potential."
- 3.8. In order to achieve the goal of universal elementary education, the Government of India launched the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan³³ in 2002 to provide quality elementary education including life skills. The scheme has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs and also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide. The programme pursues to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants. It also envisages provision of additional teachers to existing schools with inadequate teacher strength, along with strengthening the capacity of existing teachers by extensive training, grants for developing teaching-learning materials and strengthening of the academic support structure at a cluster, block and district level.

³³ Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. It is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. Source - <http://ssa.nic.in/>

- 3.9. Further, the Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013 has been formulated to promote inclusive, equitable and contextualized opportunities for promoting optimal development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age. The Policy focuses on early preschool learning for every child below six years. The key areas of this policy include universal access with equity and inclusion, quality in ECCE, strengthening capacity, monitoring and supervision, advocacy, research and review.
- 3.10. Similarly, the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan was launched by the Government of India to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality. The scheme envisaged to achieve increased enrolment rate by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of any habitation. The other objectives of the scheme include improving quality of education imparted at secondary level through making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms, removing gender, socio-economic and disability barriers, providing universal access to secondary level education by 2017 and achieving universal retention by 2020.
- 3.11. Likewise, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme initiated by Government of India with the overall goal of the Scheme is to celebrate the girl child and enable her education, proposes to ensure education of the girl child. The scheme, inter alia, envisages universal enrolment of girls; decreased drop-out rate; girl child friendly standards in schools; strict implementation of Right to Education Act; construction of functional toilets for girls.
- 3.12. Also, the Saakshar Bharat³⁴ programme was launched by the Government of India in 2009 to create a literate society through a variety of teaching learning programmes for non-literate and neo-literate of 15 years and above. The programme aims at extending educational options to those adults, who have lost the opportunity and have crossed the age of formal education, but now feel a need for learning of any type, including literacy, basic education, skill development (Vocational Education) and equivalency.

³⁴ Saakshar Bharat, the new variant of earlier NLM, a centrally sponsored scheme of Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI), was launched on the International Literacy Day, 8th September, 2009 with the following goals: to raise literacy rate to 80%, to reduce gender gap to 10% and minimize regional and social disparities, with focus on Women, SCs, STs, Minorities, other disadvantaged groups. All those districts that had female literacy rate below 50% (as per census 2001) including Left Wing Extremism affected districts (irrespective of literacy level) are being covered under the programme.
<http://saaksharbharaat.nic.in/saaksharbharaat/aboutPage.action?reqToken=6oNWiuwAzcyCQOnRChQ7Jcd6>

- 3.13. Additionally, the National Population Policy, 2000 provided that school education up to the age of 14 years must be made free and compulsory, and reduce drop outs at primary and secondary school levels to below 20% for both boys and girls.³⁵
- 3.14. While all these schemes aim at ensuring universal access to quality education, the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 was implemented by the Government of India to set quality standards in school education. The NCF was formulated as a means of evolving a national system of education, recommending a core component derived from the vision of national development enshrined in the Constitution. Seeking guidance from the Constitutional vision of India as a secular, egalitarian and pluralistic society, founded on the values of social justice and equality, certain broad aims of education like independence of thought and action, sensitivity to others' well-being and feelings, learning to respond to new situations in a flexible and creative manner, predisposition towards participation in democratic processes, and the ability to work towards and contribute to economic processes and social change were identified in the framework. The NCF provides the framework for making syllabi, textbooks and teaching practices within the school education programmes in India based on the broad Constitutional principles like equality and universal elementary education and documents like Learning without Burden (1993) to achieve the fundamental right to equitable quality education of all children in India.
- 3.15. The New Education Policy is intended to act as an umbrella document covering all aspects of the right to education and converging the principles, formulations and provisions of all the previous laws and policies pertaining to the right and hence, pave way for realising the goals of education.
- 3.16. The new education policy assures quality care, nutrition, protection and education to all children from womb to 18 years through appropriate structures rooted in the neighbourhood principles of providing equal care, protection and equitable quality education without any discrimination on the basis of social status, caste, creed, colour, religion, race etc. The policy is further committed to build Common School System based on the neighbourhood school principle fully funded by the state.

³⁵ http://populationcommission.nic.in/PublicationDetails/11_984_1.aspx

Chapter 4.

THE ESSENCE AND ROLE OF EDUCATION - EPISTEMOLOGY

- 4.1. Although the World Education Report 2000 cautions that, as used in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 'elementary education' "did not intend to refer to any particular stage or level in the systems of formal education that were then in existence. It broadly meant an education that would give all children a good start in life" it also acknowledges that the 'concept of 'elementary education' itself was broadly understood in most countries to mean primary schooling.
- 4.2. The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights. Human rights education should be a comprehensive, life-long process and start with the reflection of human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children.³⁶
- 4.3. Combining learning, training, information and action, education should further the appropriate intellectual and emotional development of the individual. It should develop a sense of social responsibility and of solidarity with less privileged groups and should lead to observance of the principles of equality in everyday conduct. It should also help to develop qualities, aptitudes and abilities which enable the individual to acquire a critical understanding of problems at the national and the international level; to understand and explain facts, opinions and ideas; to work in a group; to accept and participate in free discussions; to observe the elementary rules of procedure applicable to any discussion; and to base value judgments and decisions on a rational analysis of relevant facts and factors.³⁷
- 4.4. Education should stress the inadmissibility of recourse to war for purposes of expansion, aggression and domination, or of the use of force and violence for purposes of repression, and should bring every person to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace. It should contribute to international understanding and strengthening of world peace and to the activities in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism in all their forms and manifestations, and against all forms and varieties of racialism, fascism, and apartheid

³⁶ The Committee on the Rights of the Child

³⁷ UNESCO's recommendation on Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

as well as other ideologies which breed national and racial hatred and which are contrary to the purposes of this recommendation.

- 4.5. The education of a child shall be directed towards the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of India³⁸; respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; respect for the natural environment; and the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.³⁹
- 4.6. It is necessary to ensure that the content of education is relevant, non-discriminatory, embodies the constitutional principles, culturally appropriate, and of quality; that the school itself is safe and the teachers are professional.

³⁸ Principles of the Constitution of India are to be embodied in the educational purview to promote national integration and respect for the country. Hence, added this phrase to the text to address the national needs.

³⁹ Article 29(1) of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

Chapter 5.

EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

- 5.1. Education is a powerful tool by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully as citizens. A glance at the existing treaties regarding human rights leaves little doubt that education should produce responsible citizens participating in the advancement of civic life equipped with critical knowledge of national and international problems and imbued with values such as respect for human dignity, for the natural environment, for diversity, for peace, for solidarity etc.
- 5.2. Education is very often seen as a means of attaining other objectives (such as a better job or increased earnings) and that education as a human right in and of itself is often lost sight of. Few groups and social movements, including the NGOs defending the oppressed and the neediest, have acquired a thorough mastery of the international human rights instruments and their potential use at the national level. Katerina Tomasevski, former United Nations Special Rapporteur⁴⁰ on the right to education, points out that "There are a large number of human rights problems, which cannot be solved unless the right to education is addressed as the key to unlock other human rights. Education operates as multiplier, enhancing the enjoyment of all individual rights and freedoms where the right to education is effectively guaranteed, while depriving people of the enjoyment of many rights and freedoms where the right to education is denied or violated."
- 5.3. As UNESCO rightly observes, "The word 'education' implies the entire process of social life by means of which individuals and social groups learn to develop consciously within, and for the benefit of the national and international communities, the whole of their personal capacities, attitudes, aptitudes and knowledge. The process is not limited to any specific activity."⁴¹

⁴⁰ A Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme. This position is honorary and the expert is not United Nations staff nor paid for his/her work. The Special Rapporteurs are part of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council.

⁴¹ *Education for International Understanding, Peace, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, General Recommendation, adopted 19 November 1974 by the UNESCO General Conference, § I.1.a.

- 5.4. Likewise, the General Comment No. 13 of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁴² justly establishes, “education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities. Education has a vital role in empowering women, safeguarding children from exploitative and hazardous labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment, and controlling population growth. Increasingly, education is recognized as one of the best financial investments States can make. But the importance of education is not just practical: a well-educated, enlightened and active mind, able to wander freely and widely, is one of the joys and rewards of human existence”.⁴³
- 5.5. In addition to community building, other important functions of the education system include addressing not only the psychological and social needs of the children, but also the well-being of the whole community, by helping to organize the population and by providing structure for the children and their families; provide important support to lifesaving activities; disseminating survival and life skills messages - simple messages can be spread through the school system, on issues such as health, sanitation, nutrition, and looking after the local resources (fuelwood for cooking) so they do not become too rapidly depleted; provide parents with extra time to work on family survival needs; serve as an important protection tool in certain circumstances, e.g. through providing an alternative to military recruitment; and provide continuity of education that can help reintegration in the country of origin.
- 5.6. Hence, as well as being a right in itself, the right to education is also an enabling right. Education ‘creates the “voice” through which rights can be claimed and protected’, and without education people lack the capacity to ‘achieve valuable functioning as part of the living’. If people have access to education they can develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights. Education gives people the ability to access information detailing the range of rights that they hold, and government’s obligations. It supports people to develop the communication skills to demand these rights, the confidence to speak in a variety of forums, and

⁴² The body in charge of monitoring the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the States which are party to it

⁴³ Special Rapporteur on Right to Education

the ability to negotiate with a wide range of government officials and power holders.

Chapter 6.

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

- 6.1. The foundation for a National System of Education is laid down by the Constitutional principles.
- 6.2. As defined in the 1986 Policy, the concept of a National System of Education implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality.
- 6.3. To achieve the goal of national system of education founded on constitutional principles, measures shall be taken to establish a Common School System as recommended by the Education Commission and subsequently endorsed by the 1968 and 1986 National Policies on Education. The instrumentality of Common School System will be the neighbourhood school funded solely by the government but controlled by the neighbourhood. The schools under the Common School System shall be co-owned by the Government and the Community with both of them being responsible for the management and administration of the schools. Measures shall be taken towards the establishment of Government as the sole provider of education through the medium of Government schools with the community participation. The schools will operate with the neighbourhood principle and provide and promote inclusive education.
- 6.4. A Common School structure of 10+2+3, as has been accepted and established in all parts of the country, shall be continued. The further break-up of the first 10 years of education shall be made as 2 years of pre-primary education, comprising of Grade 0 which includes LKG and UKG, 4 years of lower-primary education of Grades 1 and 2 including classes I and II and III and IV respectively, 3 years of upper-primary school from classes V to VIII and 2 years of High School of classes IX and X. +2 stage of education shall be accepted and established as a component of school education and shall be made compulsory to all children equally.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

- 6.5. The EECE Policy and the National Policy on Children lay emphasis on the care, development and education in the early childhood stage.
- 6.6. Early childhood is a very crucial stage with rapid growth and development of a child's

brain. Growing scientific evidence demonstrates that there are crucial stages of development of brain which influence the physical and mental health and behavioural pattern of the child throughout the life span. Hence, this period of development is crucial for survival and any deficit during this period has a substantive impact on human development.

- 6.7. As observed by the ECCE Policy of 2013, “Early Childhood Care and Education encompasses the inseparable elements of care, health, nutrition, play and early learning within a protective and enabling environment. It is an indispensable foundation for lifelong development and learning, and has lasting impact on early childhood development.”
- 6.8. Crèche facilities shall be established by the Government along with lower primary schools to provide institutional care for children in the age group of 0 - 3 years, in convergence with ICDS. The centres shall be accessible equally to all children in need of quality substitute care. The facilities shall be made available to the children of working women, both in organised as well as unorganised sectors, or ailing mothers across all socio-economic groups who are in need of substitute quality care for their children. The establishment, administration, functioning and maintenance of these centres shall be the responsibility of the local authorities. District specific programmes shall be developed for the establishment and effective functioning of the Crèches within the district.⁴⁴
- 6.9. A full integration of the care and pre-primary education of children in the age group of 3 to 6 years shall be brought about and merged with lower primary education by establishing Grade 0 (i.e., LKG and UKG) in all lower primary schools in consonance with ICDS.
- 6.10. Measures shall be taken for the effective implementation of the ECCE Policy, 2013 in consonance to the following:
 - 6.10.1. Programmes of ECCE shall be child-oriented, focused around play and the individuality of the child.
 - 6.10.2. ECCE centres shall be provided with comprehensive childcare supports, infrastructure and other necessary services aimed at the holistic development of children.

⁴⁴ Crèches are important means for ensuring care to children while parents are at work or are unable to care for them due to illness or otherwise. Crèches are meant to ensure protection of children under an able care-provider and provide adequate age-appropriate recreational facilities. Effective day care for young children is essential and a cost effective investment as it provides support to both the mothers and young children.

- 6.10.3. All ECCE centres shall have a system of inclusion where equal access is provided to all programmes without any discrimination.
- 6.10.4. The early childhood care and education shall focus upon all aspects of development, including emotional, social, intellectual, moral, spiritual, physical as well as creative, with the goal of holistic development based on knowledge, skills, dispositions and attitudes.
- 6.10.5. Education at this stage shall involve activities so as to facilitate thinking, investigating, experimenting, discussing and responding.⁴⁵
- 6.10.6. Interactive learning that allows children to explore new ideas with other children and adults who are able to converse with them and satisfies their innate yearning to know, to learn, to explore and discover is to be practised. Learning process shall be in such a way so as to convey to the children that their thoughts are valued and they are respected as persons.⁴⁶
- 6.10.7. An integrated curriculum which facilitates children's exploration, discovery, problem-solving, critical thinking and experimentation in a meaningful context and promotes the linking of learning experiences across developmental domains, as well as, across content/subject areas is to be adopted.
- 6.10.8. Learning at this stage shall be associated with play by providing children opportunities to explore, experiment, manipulate materials, solve problems, think critically, make decisions and take risks, practice skills, display dispositions, and test hypotheses without fear or failure, which provide the foundation for representational thought and language, cognition and socialization.

⁴⁵ Three and four-year-old children gain knowledge, skills, dispositions and feelings as they construct personal understandings about phenomena they encounter while they are actively engaged in their environment, interacting with people, a variety of materials and representations. Positive relationships with people and the relevance of activities to children's lives and interests foster positive feelings, while many dispositions are shaped during the active play experiences based on the teacher's positive feedback and their encouragement to question, investigate, and innovate as they learn. (Source: National Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Guide, Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago)

⁴⁶ Malaguzzi (1993) stated that interaction among children is a fundamental experience during the first years of life. Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (2003) also consider such relationships to be the fundamental organizing strategy of an educational system for young children, and small groups as the most favourable type of classroom organization for an education based on such relationships. Through interactions, teachers also scaffold children's learning enabling them to go to another level, as they help the children to make better, deeper and more accurate sense of their experiences (Katz and Cesarona, 1994). Interactions facilitate developmentally appropriate practice, as the children's group, individual and cultural needs are met. Based on children's daily experiences, interactive learning ensures acquisition of knowledge, skills, dispositions and attitudes. (Source: National Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Guide, Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago)

6.10.9. Focus shall be laid upon the interrelationship between children and their environment and healthy responsive and reciprocal relationships shall be maintained.

6.11. Emphasis shall be laid on strengthening co-ordination of ECCE with primary school by establishing ECCE as a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development in general. The School Health Programme and mid-day meal schemes shall be strengthened, in continuation of this stage. Harmonisation of ECCE and primary education will be facilitative both for older girls' participation in schools and for creating a better ECCE environment. It is also a protection measure as it addresses issues such as child labour, school drop outs, child prostitution, outreach for medical and health programme, female literacy etc.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

6.12. The school education of children commencing from Grade 1 and continuing up to the completion of +2 shall lay emphasis on the following aspects, along with the broader goals of education:

- i. Universal access and enrolment.
- ii. Universal retention of children up to 18 years of age.
- iii. A substantial improvement in the quality of education to achieve essential levels of learning.
- iv. Application of appropriate approaches of education to facilitate the holistic development of children.
- v. Safe, secured and enabling environment for learning.

School facilities

6.13. Provision shall be made for availability of essential facilities in all primary as well as secondary schools. One classroom for each grade up to lower-primary level and each class or 40 students from upper-primary school, as the case may be, useable in all weather; blackboards, maps, charts, toys, other necessary learning materials; separate useable toilets for boys and girls, playground, office, staff room, head-teacher's room, fully equipped library, computer and other labs for higher primary and secondary schools; safe drinking water, electricity, mid-day meals, kitchen, store room; and

other fundamental and infrastructural facilities as mandated by the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

- 6.14. At least 3 teachers shall be appointed in lower-primary school with minimum one teacher for one Grade wherein one of them shall be from Science background. At the higher-primary and secondary education levels, one teacher for every 40 students shall be appointed and there shall be present subject-wise and class-wise teachers. One teacher each for Physical Education, Art, Music, Computer Science etc., shall be there in each higher-primary, high school and +2 educational institutions. All teachers recruited shall be permanent full-time staff.
- 6.15. Each school shall employ the required number of helpers and attendants based on the number of students in the school. The lower-primary school shall have at least one clerk while the upper-primary and secondary schools shall employ one clerk of 1st Grade and two each of 2nd and 4th Grades. There shall be so many mid-day meal workers as necessary based on the strength of the children in the school.
- 6.16. Hostel facilities with separate hostels for boys and girls with minimum basic facilities like safe drinking water, sufficient number of useable toilets, electricity, food and other health safety measures shall be provided to the students of higher primary and secondary schools. Travel facilities for the students and teachers of the school are to be provided.
- 6.17. The school shall conform to all the other norms under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

Home Based Education⁴⁷

- 6.18. A Home-Based Educational Programme to provide supplementary assistance to schools in providing home-based learning services to students with severe disabilities and comorbid fragile health shall be developed. The programme will be available in exceptional circumstances where the student is unable to attend their enrolled school for an extended period of time due to the nature and impact of their disability and health needs.
- 6.19. The Home-Based Educational Programme shall provide assistance to schools:
 - i. In the provision of the educational programme being provided for the student,

⁴⁷ The children will have to be enrolled in the neighbourhood school compulsorily. However, they can avail the benefit of the programme based on necessity and after conforming to the conditions to be laid down for a defined period of time after which the child will return back to school.

- ii. To maintain ongoing relationships with enrolled students with severe disabilities and consequential fragile health and their families; and
 - iii. To foster the student's engagement with school and to plan and implement their transition back to school.
- 6.20. Provision of support through the Home-Based Educational Programme will be for a defined period of time, and shall be intended to support the student's return to school and mainstreaming the student along with the support of the parent/ guardian.
- 6.21. A Home-Based Education framework to define the beneficiaries, process, procedure, conditions and other concerned issues under the programme shall be formulated by the Central Government.

Content of Education⁴⁸

- 6.22. The education imparted by the Common School System of the nation shall be in lines with the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 and the Constitutional ideals containing a common core along with other flexible components essential to nurture national identity. It shall be based on the constitutional vision of India as a secular, egalitarian and pluralistic society, founded on the values of social justice and equality, seeking to achieve the broader goals of education including independence of thought and action, sensitivity to others' well-being and feelings, learning to respond to new situations in a flexible and creative manner, predisposition towards participation in democratic processes, and the ability to work towards and contribute to economic processes and social change.
- 6.23. Content of education shall be as such to make education a tool for the cultivation of social and moral values. Education shall foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people by facilitating the elimination of obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism. Apart from this combative role, value education has a profound positive content, based on our heritage, national and universal goals and perceptions. It should lay primary emphasis on this aspect.
- 6.24. Emphasis shall be laid on inculcation of awareness on social issues through education. Promotion of values such as India's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism,

⁴⁸ Adopted with suitable changes from National Education Policy of 1986, Revised Policy of 1992 and the National Curriculum Framework, 2005

democracy and secularism, gender equality, environmental consciousness, removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm and inculcation of the scientific temper. All educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity with secular values.

- 6.25. Prominence shall be laid on bridging the existing schism between the formal system of education and the country's rich and varied cultural traditions need to be bridged. Education can and must bring about the fine synthesis between change-oriented technologies and the country's continuity of cultural tradition. The curricula and processes of education will be enriched by cultural content in as many manifestations as possible. Children will be enabled to develop sensitivity to beauty, harmony and refinement. Resource persons in the community, irrespective of their formal educational qualifications, will be invited to contribute to the cultural enrichment of education, employing both the literate and oral traditions of communication. To sustain and carry forward the cultural tradition, the role of old masters, who train pupils through traditional modes will be supported and recognised.
- 6.26. School education shall be guided by the following principles:
- i. Connecting knowledge to life outside the school;
 - ii. Ensuring that learning shifts away from rote methods;
 - iii. Enriching the curriculum so that it goes beyond textbooks;
 - iv. Making examinations more flexible and integrating them with classroom life;
 - v. Nurturing an overriding identity informed by caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country.
- 6.27. Teaching should aim at enhancing children's natural desire and strategies to learn by organising classroom experiences in consonance with the child's nature and environment, and in a manner that permits them to construct knowledge thus, providing opportunities for all children. Knowledge needs to be distinguished from information, and teaching needs to be seen as a professional activity to enable children to express themselves, handle objects, explore their natural and social milieu, and to grow up healthy. The role of teacher shall be that of a facilitator who encourages learners to reflect, analyse and interpret in the process of knowledge construction.
- 6.28. The curriculum of school education shall focus upon making education more relevant to present day and future needs. The core areas of school curriculum, language,

mathematics, science and social sciences shall be guided in a manner that enables children to get a taste of integrated knowledge and the joy of understanding. Focus shall also be laid upon other curricular and co-curricular areas of education including arts and heritage, crafts, health, physical education, games and sports, yoga, meditation and peace.

Maths Education

- 6.29. Mathematics education shall be visualised as a tool to enhance the child's resources to think and reason, to visualise, formulate and solve problems, to pursue assumptions to their logical conclusion and to handle abstraction. It shall aim at facilitating the development and honing of the skills of visualisation and representation in the learners.

Science Education

- 6.30. Science education shall facilitate the children to develop and hone the skills of inquiry, creativity, objectivity, the courage to question, aesthetic sensibility, problem solving and decision making and to discover the relationship of science with nutrition, health, environment, agriculture, industry and other aspects of daily life thereby enabling them to examine and analyse everyday experiences.

Education of Social Sciences

- 6.31. Social Science perspectives and knowledge carry a normative responsibility of creating a strong sense of human values, namely, freedom, trust, mutual respect, and respect for diversity and are indispensable to building the knowledge base for a just and peaceful society. The content should aim at raising students' awareness through critically exploring and questioning of familiar social reality and generating in them a critical moral and mental energy, making them alert to the social forces that threaten these values. Emphasis has to be laid on developing concepts and the ability to analyse socio-political realities rather than on the mere retention of information without comprehension.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Learning Without Burden (1993)

6.32. The content of education under the Common School System shall be in consonance with the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. The States can formulate a curricular framework of their own within the boundaries of the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 and based on the Constitutional principles and values, to address the specific needs of the States.

Chapter 7.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF BUILDING A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

- 7.1. Learning is cumulative and every stage in the educational process is as important and critical for the learner's development as preceding and succeeding ones.
- 7.2. Education is founded on four pillars which form the most important ideals of learning. They are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.⁵⁰ Learning to know means that young children will be learning to learn so as to benefit from the opportunities education provides throughout life. Learning to do ensures the acquisition of skills and competencies to deal with situations. Learning to live together is achieved by developing an understanding of other people, working together, respecting others and living in peace. Finally, in Learning to be, children will develop their personality and act responsibly as all aspects of their potential are addressed.
- 7.3. Education shall have the following objectives:
- i. To enhance the development of the maximum capability.
 - ii. To be the greatest safeguard of the rights and freedom of the people and the best guarantee of their social, political and economic well-being.
 - iii. To impart the fundamental ethical and moral concerns such as “decency”, “justice”, “respect”, “kindness”, “equality”, “love”, “honesty” and “sensitivity” which are essential for human development and the survival of the society.
 - iv. To provide curricular arrangements and choices that ensure that cultural, ethnic, class and other needs are appropriately addressed.
 - v. To provide, for all students, programmes which are adapted to varying abilities, and which provide opportunity to develop differing personal and socially useful talents, considering the varying natural abilities of students.
 - vi. To be responsive to, and stimulate the searing human spirit and the emphatic quest for human communication, interaction, love and trust. From a psychological perspective education is a means of looking out beyond the boundaries of the immediate. It can be the viable means which creates individuals with the intellect capacity to develop and lead societies, communities, villages, and or neighbourhoods and families of the future.

⁵⁰ International Commission on Education (1996)

- vii. Facilitate not only the achievement of personal goals but also the fulfilment of the obligations of the society.
 - viii. To develop democratic tolerance in the people and a sense of being truly free.
 - ix. To produce citizens who are free, responsible, and politically aware, who feel to belong to the country in which they live, who are sensitive to what happens around them.
- 7.4. Education in its wider sense implies not only acquisition of knowledge, but also development of abilities, skills, personality qualities which are important in individual's personal and social life.
- 7.5. Education shall aim at achieving both the ultimate as well as the immediate goals along with realising the social and individual aims.
- 7.6. Education should focus upon arousing the people to an awareness of their own worth, dignity and responsibility, making them the source of all the strength and sustenance of society, creating a society which will provide a healthy milieu for the development of character and personality of all its children.⁵¹
- 7.7. It should be the foremost aim of education to inculcate the sense of co-operation in the child to enable him to enjoy the amenities of life and utilize his own innate powers for the benefit of the other.
- 7.8. Education must secure for every one the conditions under which individuality is most completely developed.
- 7.9. The other aims of education include:
- i. To train the learners to be self-sufficient and enables one to lead an independent life.
 - ii. To attain refinement of personality. Education should lead that quality of mind which may be reflected in daily conduct. Speech, behaviour and manner must be refined.
 - iii. To accomplish harmonious development or perfection of nature. Harmoniously developed person is that who adjusts to his life and environment.
 - iv. To inculcate the qualities of spirit of courage, self-sacrifice and to will rightly and efficiently in the learners to enable them to imbibe humanistic and social spirit and uplift the society.

⁵¹ Swami Vivekananda

- v. To secure for every one the conditions under which individuality is most completely developed and attain total human development.
 - vi. To inculcate the sense of co-operation in the learners to enable them to enjoy the amenities of life and utilize their own innate powers for the benefit of the other.
 - vii. To serve as the basic means to solve national problems and strengthen democracy.
- 7.10. The ultimate aim of education should be to build character and attain self-realisation. True education should result not only in the material gains but also in spiritual uplift. Emphasis, in the process of education, should be on development and self-realisation rather than on 3 R's.

Chapter 8.

KEY PRIORITIES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

- 8.1. Article 26 of the UDHR states that "... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among ... racial or religious groups. ..."
- 8.2. Ensuring access to education is a precondition for full realization of the right to education. Without access, it is not possible to guarantee the right to education. While providing access to schools secures only one part of the right to education, quality of education is the other side of coin.
- 8.3. The realization of the right to education comports six aspects: compulsory and free education (at least at the primary level); quality; education in human rights; the principle of non-discrimination.⁵²

Compulsory and Free Education

- 8.4. Education shall be compulsory and free of cost to all children up to the age of 18 years.
- 8.5. The raising of school-leaving age to 18 years through prolonged compulsory education prevents children from venturing into adulthood too early, which is particularly important in combating child labour or child marriage.
- 8.6. Also, prolonged compulsory education provides all children with the common core schooling which is becoming increasingly demanded by the shift towards knowledge-based societies and economies, reinforced by the interplay between globalization and localization in education; in an ideally inclusive model of schooling, all children socialize in the same school and classroom regardless of their sex, race, provenance, religion, wealth or poverty, or disability.

Quality Education

- 8.7. It is not sufficient to have adequate buildings or duly trained teachers to have quality education. While the content of the subject matter is an essential part, the conditions

⁵² ICESCR, the primary international instrument dealing with the right to education

and the process of the teaching must also be taken into account. These aspects are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

- 8.8. The right to a quality education implies a need to direct learning processes and the entire school environment and infrastructure towards the development of knowledge, abilities and skills within a body politic primed to respect dignity and the higher values of humanity, diversity, peace, solidarity and mutual cooperation. Quality cannot be reduced to a matter of quantifiable efficiency; rather, it encompasses the depth of human commitment to the present and future generations.
- 8.9. Quality Education shall comprise of the principles of availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. These principles form the criteria for measuring the quality of education and teaching.⁵³

Availability

- 8.10. Availability implies that education is free and government-funded and that there is adequate infrastructure and trained teachers able to support education delivery.
- 8.11. Educational institutions and programs should be sufficient in number.
- 8.12. The physical facilities should be properly kept up and equipped with electricity, running water, sanitary facilities (for boys and for girls) and other infrastructural norms as contemplated by the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and the corresponding rules.
- 8.13. Teachers, duly trained, should receive a salary that is competitive at the national level.
- 8.14. The number of students per class should not be excessively high and the norms prescribed by the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and the corresponding rules are to be strictly adhered to.
- 8.15. The teaching material should be adequate, including where appropriate a library, computers and information technology.
- 8.16. The development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established, and the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved.⁵⁴

⁵³ Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 13, E/C.12/1999/10, 8 December 1999, § 6.; [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument); Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Annual Report, 55th Commission on Human Rights, E/CN.4/1999/49, 13 January 1999, §§ 51-74: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/rapporteur/annual.htm>.

Accessibility

- 8.17. Universal access to education is the cornerstone of the right to education.
- 8.18. Educational institutions and programs should be accessible to everybody, without discrimination on the basis of sex, language, religion, nationality, caste, class etc.
- 8.19. The teaching should take place in a reasonably accessible place in a neighbourhood school.
- 8.20. The educational system is to be non- discriminatory and accessible to all, and positive steps are to be taken to include the most marginalized.

Acceptability

- 8.21. The form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, have to be acceptable (e.g. relevant, culturally appropriate and of good quality) to students and, in appropriate cases, parents subject to the educational objectives required by Article 13(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and such minimum educational standards set by the Government based on the necessities of the society.⁵⁵
- 8.22. Education must be in the native language (mother tongue) of the students at least up to IV standard.
- 8.23. The mainstreaming of human rights throughout the contents and process of education is to be accomplished.⁵⁶
- 8.24. Education should be a free space for the exercise and study of all human rights, responsibilities and capacities⁵⁷ and the ideal solution is to invest in education not only to facilitate economic development but also, and above all, to build values and knowledge aimed at developing human dignity and proactive citizenship committed to the rights of the individual.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Article 13.2(e) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

⁵⁵ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 13, § 6, c:
[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument)

⁵⁶ Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Annual Report, 55th Commission on Human Rights, E/CN.4/1999/47, 13 January 1999, § 13: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/rapporteur/annual.htm>

⁵⁷ Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Annual Report, 61st Commission on Human Rights, E/CN.4/2005/50, 17 December 2004, § 44: <http://www.iidh.ed.cr/Documentos/Informes/Informe-relator-dic04-ingles.pdf>

⁵⁸ Ibid., § 46

- 8.25. The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights.

Adaptability

- 8.26. Education has to be flexible so it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities and respond to the needs of students within their diverse social and cultural settings.⁵⁹
- 8.27. Efforts shall be made to ensure that history textbooks and other educational materials provide a fair, accurate and informative portrayal of the societies and cultures of indigenous people.⁶⁰
- 8.28. Education and public information programs, which will help eliminate prejudices and current practices that hinder the full operation of the principle of the social equality of women are to be adopted.⁶¹
- 8.29. Teaching on the rights of the child is to be incorporated in the school curriculum and in teacher-training programs.
- 8.30. School textbooks should adopt suitable messages to combat inequalities, stereotypes and social apathy.
- 8.31. The educational system should be such that it can evolve with the changing needs of society and contribute to challenging inequalities, such as gender discrimination, and that it can be adapted locally to suit specific contexts.

Inclusive Education

- 8.32. Education is not simply about making schools available for those who are already able to access them. It is about being proactive in identifying the barriers and obstacles learners encounter in attempting to access opportunities for quality education, as well as in removing those barriers and obstacles that lead to exclusion.

⁵⁹ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 13, § 6, d:
[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument)

⁶⁰ Article 31 of ILO Convention No 169 concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries - C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, adopted 27 June 1989, entered into force 5 September 1991:
<http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C169>

⁶¹ Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women General Recommendation No 3 (sixth session, 1987):
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm#recom3>

- 8.33. A tangled web of socio-cultural, economic and physical factors excludes children from education. Schools exclude when they do not welcome families as partners; the education bureaucracy excludes by failing to adequately support teachers; and governments exclude by failing to pursue pro-child policies.
- 8.34. The excluded children of today become tomorrow's marginalized youth. Many unreached children enter adolescence unequipped with the basic skills necessary to fully join society. It is imperative to ensure that all learners have access to quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives.
- 8.35. The national education system is to be non-discriminatory and should reach the children on the margins of society. It should be inclusive so as to provide easy access to the most vulnerable groups including abandoned children; asylum seeking children; beggars; child labourers; child mothers; child prostitutes; children born out of wedlock; delinquent children; disabled children; displaced children; domestic servants; drug-using children; girls; HIV-infected children; homeless children; imprisoned children; indigenous children; married children; mentally ill children; migrant children; minority children; nomadic children; orphans; pregnant girls; refugee children; sans-papiers (children without identity papers); sexually exploited children; stateless children; street children; trafficked children; war-affected children and working children.
- 8.36. Special focus shall be laid on making quality education accessible to girls, children with special needs, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other socially and educationally backward classes including the children who come under the purview of the juvenile justice system. Education for disadvantaged groups shall be prioritised by creating enabling environment through necessary legislative measures, policy and provisions.
- 8.37. The State shall ensure that all out of school children and drop-outs such as child labourers, migrant children, trafficked children, children of migrant labour, street children, child victims of alcohol and substance abuse, children in areas of civil unrest, orphans, children with disability (mental and physical), children with chronic ailments, married children, children of manual scavengers, children of sex workers, children of prisoners, etc. are tracked, rescued, rehabilitated and have access to their right to education
- 8.38. Non-discrimination and inclusive education form an indispensable necessity for the

complete realization of the right to education as iterated in the Constitution of India and various other laws and policies both at the national and international levels.

Equality of Opportunity and Treatment

- 8.39. Equality of opportunity and treatment is a requisite of right to education
- 8.40. All children are to be provided with equal opportunities to access quality education irrespective their caste, class, sex, or status.
- 8.41. Full and equal opportunities for education for all are to be provided on the basis of merit alone.
- 8.42. Equality of opportunity alone does not suffice the realization of right to education. Once in school, all students should be treated alike and in the same manner without any distinction or discrimination. The essence of right to education lies in the identical and equal treatment of all the students.
- 8.43. Address discrimination of all forms in schools and foster equal opportunity, treatment and participation irrespective of place of birth, sex, religion, disability, language, region, caste, health, social, economic or any other status.

Child-centered Approach

- 8.44. Child-centered approach is an important foundation of education. The focus of education should be the learners i.e., the children.
- 8.45. Education shall focus on skills and practices that enable lifelong learning and independent problem-solving. Education of children is not to be confined to academics but has to be directed towards their holistic development and enabling them to grow and be committed members of the society.
- 8.46. Everyone concerned in the learning process of children should share solicitude for the needs of the child which is the best motivation for the child to attend school and learn.
- 8.47. The guidelines of a child-centered educational approach include:
 - i. All children have a right to an education that helps them grow and develop to their fullest across all domains including social, emotional, physical, linguistic, and intellectual.
 - ii. Every child is a unique and special individual. Education must be directed so as to be respectful of and take account for their individual uniqueness of age,

gender, culture, temperament, and learning style.

- iii. Children are active participants in their own education and development. They should be mentally involved and physically active in learning what they need to know and do.
- iv. Children's ideas, preferences, learning styles, and interests are to be considered in the planning for and implementation of instructional practices.

8.48. Children's interests must find the first place in education and their voices should become central to learning experience by making them active, responsible participants in their own learning and with their own pace of learning and by laying emphasis on each student's interests, abilities, and learning styles, placing the teacher as a facilitator of learning for individuals rather than for the class as a whole.

Safety and Security in Schools

8.49. A safe, secure and protective environment in schools is essential for the realisation of right to education. Children have a right to be protected and be treated with dignity.

8.50. A caring, protective and safe environment is to be maintained in schools to keep all children safe at all times and reduce their vulnerabilities in all situations. Children shall be protected from all forms of violence and abuse, harm, neglect, discrimination, exploitation, maltreatment or any other vulnerabilities and enable them to learn and develop in conditions of freedom and dignity.

8.51. No child shall be subjected to any kind of physical punishment or mental harassment in schools. The disciplinary methods in schools shall be in conformity with the child's human dignity.

8.52. All children shall be treated equal and given equal opportunity and treatment. There shall be no discrimination against a child on any grounds including gender, religion, caste, class, place of birth, disability etc. Stigmatising vocabulary or language will also not be used in class or in the school.

8.53. Every child has a right to protection of her/his privacy and confidentiality, in matters that call for such. Confidentiality shall be maintained when there has been abuse, especially when there has been sexual abuse.

8.54. All States shall formulate guidelines and model child protection policy in lines with the Guidelines of Safety and Security of Children issued by the Central Government to address the local conditions and necessities.

- 8.55. All schools shall have a Child Protection Policy in place and due care shall be taken to implement the same so as to create a child-friendly environment in the schools. A monitoring, review and reporting mechanism shall be in place for the effective implementation of the policy by the concerned stakeholders.
- 8.56. A Security Cell shall be established in each school to deal with all cases of safety and security of children studying in the schools. Likewise, a Children Security Cell shall be established at the State and district levels for monitoring and reviewing the effective implementation of Child Protection Policy and the corresponding guidelines and also to deal with the cases concerning the safety and security of children and related issues.
- 8.57. A convergence shall be created among the concerned departments and agencies in providing required services to ensure a safe, secure and child-friendly environment in schools and enable the children to attain holistic development without any fear.

Health and Nutrition

- 8.58. The right to health and nutrition of children is of utmost significance.
- 8.59. The State shall take the requisite measures to ensure that the children are provided proper health care and nutrition in schools.
- 8.60. All schools shall design and implement a school health programme on a regular basis to ensure that children's health is regularly monitored and arrangements are made for health and emergency care of children.
- 8.61. The ICDS and mid-day meal schemes shall be effectively implemented in accordance with the prescribed norms so as to provide the nutrients essential for the healthy development of children.

Chapter 9.

LANGUAGE POLICY

- 9.1. Language permeates each sphere of human activity. The decisions on language policy and practices, therefore, have historical consequences for any country and tremendous impact on the development of the individual. Thus, a stirring policy on language learning as part of the formal education is the need of the hour.

Mother-tongue as medium of instruction

- 9.2. Efforts shall be made to impart lower-primary education in the mother tongue of the children. In other words, the medium of instruction for lower primary education shall be the mother tongue of the child in all schools.
- 9.3. Measures shall be taken towards the introduction of mother-tongue based education up to the higher secondary level with other Indian and foreign languages included as subjects of study.
- 9.4. It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his/ her mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in works automatically for expression and understanding in the child's mind. Sociologically, it is means of identification among the members of community to which he/ she belongs. Educationally, the child learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium.⁶² In similar lines, UNESCO time and again reiterated that the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in education is quintessential and the same is to be extended to as late a stage of education as possible.⁶³
- 9.5. Various studies and research initiatives around the world have time and again proved that the success in education which can be achieved through mother tongue medium cannot be achieved at all through a foreign language medium. A higher proportion of children who are introduced to schooling in their vernacular and later bridged into the second language, develop literacy in their mother tongue, achieve higher level of content mastery and second language proficiency and remain longer in school than children who are schooled exclusively in the second language. The abstraction level of the mother tongue is important for mastering the conceptual operations connected with science and mathematics for the mother-tongue based education builds a strong

⁶² UNESCO, 1953:11, International Opinion on Language Issues by Dr. Joga Singh, 2013

⁶³ UNESCO, 1968:691

foundation for understanding and the ideas of science and concepts of mathematics are not bound by one language and one culture. Further, one's own language enables a child to express him/herself easily, as there is no fear of making mistakes.

9.6. The social and developmental impacts of neglecting mother tongue based education include:⁶⁴

- i. In modern times, the life and development of a language depends on its being the medium of instruction. A language can sustain itself only if it is used in various domains of human life; The way English is occupying the language domains, the life of Indian mother tongues is under a severe threat;
- ii. The English medium instruction is producing a generation which has no appreciable mastery either over their mother tongues or over English and neither can it connect intimately with their own culture, tradition, history and people. It is not wrong to call these children as English children because by the time they complete their schooling their competence in English is more than their mother tongues, it is meagre though in English too;
- iii. A successful delivery of any kind of service is not possible without the language of the people it is meant for;
- iv. Almost all of the countries start teaching foreign language after the age of ten. The foreign language skill of their children is not less than Indian children. Also, most of these countries are ahead of us in education and development as well;
- v. Recently, there have been reports that European banks are not recruiting British citizens because they know only English and Britain is suffering trade losses to the tune of 48 billion pounds for not knowing languages other than English.

9.7. As explained by Dr. Joga Singh, "The poor international ranking of Indian educational institutions, the constant fall of Indian share in world trade, the expert opinion on language issues and the contemporary international linguistic scene and practices provide irrefutable evidence that India has suffered great losses by handing over mother tongue domains to English language. One significant reason for India's lagging behind countries such as South Korea, Japan and China, etc. is the intrusion of English language in Indian education and other important domains." He further proceeds to state that "It is true that in the present globalized world, foreign language skills are an essential ability. But even here, the experience and research show that a

⁶⁴ "*Why Indian Languages are Essential for India's Development?*" by Dr. Joga Singh

student imparted education through mother tongue and studying foreign language as a subject learns the foreign language better than the one imparted education through that foreign language from the beginning.”⁶⁵

- 9.8. The experts on language and education opine that if the child’s mother tongue is not the medium of education, child wastes many of his/her years in learning the language, because in this way the young learners and their teachers will concentrate on the language and not on the concepts and literacy which is more fundamental to learning.
- 9.9. Further, the mother tongue as medium of education is essential not only for the success in education but also for the better learning of a foreign language. As children grow into their mother tongue, they learn to conceptualize their world and have fully grasped the symbolic function of language; learn to communicate; learn to speak and use their voice; acquire an intuitive understanding of grammar and have become aware of many of the finer points of language; and also acquire the secondary skills of reading and writing. The mother tongue is, therefore, the greatest asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning. It provides an indispensable Language Acquisition Support System and makes instruction possible in the first place.⁶⁶
- 9.10. Also, the wisdom of thousands of years preserved in our mother tongues needs to be imbibed and passed on to the coming generations. This is our utmost moral responsibility. A little delay can result in civilizational losses. Language loss also takes place due to the absence of local languages in the educational system. Schools play a key role in preserving languages and consequently the culture. Thus, it is vital to embrace mother tongue based learning in the educational system.⁶⁷
- 9.11. Hence, it is not incorrect to state that successful education is possible only when it is mother tongue based.
- 9.12. The legal foundation for the same is provided by the Constitution of India, which is considered an epitome of wisdom of the freedom movement, which provides a right to every Indian citizen to receive education and services in the mother tongue under Articles 347 and 350A.
- 9.13. Hence, a policy to strictly introduce and implement mother tongue based education at least at the school level, which is to be continuously expanded to include higher levels of education, is the need of the hour.

⁶⁵ Why Indian Languages are Essential for India’s Development? – by Dr. Joga Singh

⁶⁶ International Opinion on Language Issues by Dr. Joga Singh (2013)

⁶⁷ International Opinion on Language Issues by Dr. Joga Singh (2013)

Multi lingual Education

- 9.14. Multilingual education implies the education method where mother tongue is the medium of instruction and other language is taught as a subject.
- 9.15. The growing economies of the world demand the knowledge of multiple languages. To keep up in the competitive world, it is essential that one is acquainted with more than one language and adhering to one language results in great amounts of diversified losses to both individual as well as the nation. In the backdrop of the changing scenarios around the world and the growing importance of native languages and mother tongues thereby phasing out the dominant English language, it becomes necessary to equip children with the knowledge of multiple languages and not just adhere to English language learning.
- 9.16. The failure of the Government to accept the ethnolinguistic diversity acts as a major destabilising factor in the development of the country. The multilingual character of Indian society should be seen as a resource to promote multilingual proficiency in every child, which includes proficiency in English. Special emphasis shall be laid on the study of other foreign languages along with that of English. In order to keep up with the tremendous growth in the world knowledge and significantly contribute to the same, the study of multiple languages needs to be strengthened.
- 9.17. Measures shall be taken to establish courses in the officially recognised Indian languages and other foreign languages at the higher primary level and made available to all students. Such courses can be made optional and the interested students are to be given opportunities to learn the desired language.
- 9.18. A mother tongue based multilingual education has several advantages including the following:
- i. Multilingual education encourages active participation by children in the learning process because they understand what is being discussed and what is being asked of them. They can immediately use the first language to construct and explain their world, articulate their thoughts and add new concepts to what they already know.
 - ii. Multilingual education empowers the teachers as well, particularly when they are more fluent and adept in the local language than in the languages of wider communication. Because the students can express themselves, the teachers can

more accurately assess what has been learned and identify areas where students need further assistance.

- iii. Multilingual education creates the conditions for the integration of the people's community knowledge into the school system. Multilingual education makes it possible for the community to produce its own culturally relevant reading materials and teaching aids, together with the local writers, illustrators, cultural groups and other stakeholders in the community.
- iv. Multilingual education also empowers the parents who can take an active part in the education of their children because the school's and the community's language are also their language. Multilingual education brings the community closer to the school and its programs.

9.19. In the light of the above, efforts shall be made to make available to all children education in multiple foreign languages as optional subjects of study and the students can choose the language they wish to learn. English also shall be one such subject of study and the medium of instruction shall be the mother tongue of the students.

9.20. Accordingly, efforts shall be made by the Government to introduce mother tongue based multilingual education at the school level and strictly implement the same. The Government may formulate a law or frame rules to implement this provision.

Chapter 10.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 10.1. Information and Communication Technology plays a vital role in the establishment, sustenance and growth of a knowledge society leading to all round socio-economic development of the nation and global competitiveness. It also serves as an important tool for bridging social divides. ICT should be used in such a way that it becomes an opportunity equaliser by providing information, communication and computing resources even in the remote areas.
- 10.2. To achieve this, ICT shall be integrated with the larger goals and processes of educational programmes rather than viewed in isolation or as an add-on without compromising the principles of interaction and intimacy which are key to quality education.
- 10.3. Possibilities of teaching and learning at varied paces, self-learning, dual modes of study, etc. could all benefit from the use of ICT. Providing children more direct access to multimedia equipment and ICT, and allowing them to mix and make their own productions and to present their own experiences, could provide them with new opportunities to explore their own creative imagination.
- 10.4. Opportunities shall be provided in higher primary, secondary and higher secondary schools for students to build their capacity on ICT skills and make them learn through computer aided learning process. ICT shall be employed as a support system for education to improve access, quality and efficiency in the school system.
- 10.5. Emphasis shall be laid on providing computer aided education in all schools. Education in computer skills shall be provided at the higher primary, secondary and higher stages of education to all children along with the core curriculum. Information and Communication Technology in school education shall be directed towards the provision of a broad set of generic skills and conceptual knowledge and not focus on mastering the use of specific software applications.
- 10.6. Measures shall be taken towards the establishment of smart schools to act as Technology Demonstrators and lead in propagating ICT skills among students of neighbourhood schools. Measures shall be taken towards the development of curriculum based e-content for higher primary, secondary and higher secondary education to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

10.7. Measures shall be taken for the effective implementation of the National Policy on Information and Communication Technology in School Education, 2012 in consonance to the following:

- 10.7.1. Provision shall be made for employment of suitably qualified full time computer teacher in each higher primary, secondary and higher secondary school.
 - 10.7.2. Measures shall be taken towards the development of e-content for the school curriculum for higher secondary education, which can be gradually expanded to include secondary education and then subsequently for higher primary education.
 - 10.7.3. Provisions shall be made for in-service training for all teachers to equip them to impart ICT enabled teaching.
 - 10.7.4. A model Curriculum for ICT in Education shall be developed to facilitate the imparting of computer aided or technology aided education at school level. While the curriculum shall be developed at the National Level, it will be the responsibility of the State to adopt it with suitable modifications based on the specific needs of the State for its effective implementation.
 - 10.7.5. Measures shall be taken towards the establishment of an ICT literacy programme in higher primary, secondary and higher secondary schools. A curriculum for ICT literacy in school education system shall be developed to provide for the process, planning, administration, resources, guidelines and suitable scheme of evaluation.
 - 10.7.6. Computer equipment and labs shall be made available in all schools open for use by the students.
 - 10.7.7. A dedicated teacher with appropriate qualification will be engaged in each school for ICT education that will also function as the ICT coordinator of the school. A suitably qualified technical assistant shall also be provided in each school.
 - 10.7.8. All teachers in shall be trained to become advanced users of ICT integrating ICT skills into their professional development as well as their teaching learning practices across all areas of the curriculum.
 - 10.7.9. Libraries with computer facilities and professionally qualified staff shall be established in all higher primary, secondary and higher secondary schools.
 - 10.7.10. The use of ICT and other technologies shall be institutionalised for improving school management and teaching-learning process.
- 10.8. Effective use of ICT and other technologies shall be made for improving access to education, enhancing the quality of teaching-learning process, training of teachers,

and strengthening educational planning and management and shall be extensively used to achieve the National Literacy Goals.

Chapter 11.

EXAMINATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

- 11.1. Assessment of performance is an integral part of any process of learning and teaching. As part of sound educational strategy, examinations should be employed to bring about qualitative improvements in education.
- 11.2. The major goal of examination reforms should be to improve the reliability and validity of examinations and to make evaluation a continuous process aimed at helping the student to improve his level of achievement rather than at 'certifying' the quality of his performance at a given moment of time. The examination system is to be devised in a manner so as to ensure a method of assessment that is a valid and reliable measure of student's development and a powerful instrument for improving teaching and learning.
- 11.3. The examination and evaluation process for both external as well as internal evaluations shall be guided by the following guiding principles:
 - 11.3.1. The elimination of excessive element of chance and subjectivity.
 - 11.3.2. Laying emphasis on thought process and holistic learning and de-emphasise memorisation.
 - 11.3.3. A flexible scheme of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation so as to make the evaluation process an integral part of teaching and learning which will cover cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas of children's growth and will employ a variety of tools and techniques of evaluation for collecting evidence on different dimensions of children's growth. Each school shall evolve a flexible and implementable scheme of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, primarily for diagnosis, remediation and enhancing of learning.
 - 11.3.4. Effective use of the evaluation process by teachers, students and parents.
 - 11.3.5. Integration of the assessment of performance with the process of learning and teaching and utilizing the process of evaluation to bring about qualitative improvement in education.
 - 11.3.6. Using evaluation for improvement of students' achievements and teaching-learning strategies on the basis of regular diagnosis followed by remedial measures.
 - 11.3.7. Making the process of teaching and learning a child-centered pedagogy which is

sensitive to the individual learning needs of each child.

- 11.3.8. The devising of appropriate procedures for ensuring reliability, validity, objectivity and transparency of the evaluations.
- 11.3.9. The introduction of concomitant changes in instructional materials and methodology.
- 11.3.10. Along with external examinations, continuous institutional evaluation of scholastic and co-scholastic aspects of education will be introduced.
- 11.3.11. Evaluation of students' performance in form of a cumulative grading system evaluated through a series of curricular and extra-curricular evaluations along with academics and awarding grades based on work experience skills, dexterity, innovation, steadiness, teamwork, public speaking, behaviour, etc. to evaluate and present an overall measure of the student's ability.
- 11.4. A no-detention policy wherein no child shall be retained in the same class for more than one academic year shall be implemented up to Secondary Level (Class X). Class examinations will be conducted for Classes X and XI and immediate retests shall be conducted for the students who fail in the examinations upon giving extra training and the option of delayed promotion will be made available to them.⁶⁸ Board exams shall be introduced only from Class XII.
- 11.5. Students shall be promoted to the next grade irrespective of their level of progress. If students underperform, a 'targeted intervention' is to be made and the teachers shall analyse the reason for poor performance and find solutions to help the child perform better in the future. After a short period of such focused special training retests are to be conducted reassess their progress.
- 11.6. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, which continuously monitors the learning levels of the child and helps in timely intervention and takes into account the interests, abilities and talents of the child beyond the school subjects that must be recorded while issuing the completion certificate at the end of the elementary stage shall be adopted for evaluating the progress of the students in school education. The CCE will be combined with class examinations for Classes IX, X and XI and with the board exam for Class XII.

⁶⁸ Class examinations at the school level will be conducted for Classes X and XI. In case of students who fail in these examinations, special training will be given to them and retests conducted after short periods of focused training for the weak areas. The option of delayed promotion will be made available to these students after clearing the retests. The onus of providing the necessary training and preparing the student to become eligible for promotion to the subsequent class will be on the teacher.

11.7. Evaluation at the school level should be streamlined and the predominance of external examinations reduced by focusing on holistic learning of the children than on achieving job-oriented academic excellence.

Chapter 12.

NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION⁶⁹

12.1. A National Authority for School Education shall be constituted by the Central Government as nodal agency for overall monitoring, administration and management and funding of School Education Programmes and institutions. It shall be established as an independent and autonomous wing of the Central Advisory Board for Education to continuously administer, monitor, recommend corrective measures wherever necessary, and to exercise powers and perform other functions assigned to it for the realisation of universal equitable quality free and compulsory school education to all children up to the age of 18 years.

12.2. The National Authority for School Education, shall comprise of:-

- i. A Chairperson, who shall be an eminent person with proven record of service in the field of education
- ii. The Joint Secretary (School Education) shall be the ex-officio member of the National Authority for School Education.
- iii. One member each having expertise in the fields of elementary education, secondary education, higher secondary education; development of disadvantaged groups, migrant children and children of migrants, children in the juvenile justice system, street children, refugee children and children of refugees, child victims of various kinds of abuse, children of manual scavengers, children of prisoners, orphans, abandoned children, minority children; children of sex workers, child prostitutes, child mothers, pregnant girls, sexually exploited children, children born out of wedlock; children in areas of civil unrest, asylum seeking children, delinquent children, displaced children, homeless children, indigenous children, nomadic children, stateless children, war-affected children; child labour, trafficking of children, child marriage; children with chronic ailments and children with special needs; child development/child rights; finance and law
- iv. A Member-Secretary having experience/expertise in educational management.

12.3. The Authority shall perform the following functions, namely:

- i. To monitor all aspects, including quality of school education;

⁶⁹ Adopted from the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2005 with suitable changes in the lines of National Literacy Mission Authority for Adult Education

- ii. To act as Ombudsman for the purposes of school education and related legislations and policies, and to direct appropriate authorities to redress grievances of parents/citizens relating to school education;
 - iii. To present an annual report to Parliament on the status of realisation of universal equitable quality free and compulsory school education and the implementation of the related laws and policies and such other issues pertaining to school education as may be prescribed;
 - iv. To render policy advice to Central Government/appropriate government/local authorities regarding effective implementation of the laws, legislations and policies relating to school education;
 - v. To commission such surveys, studies and research as it considers necessary for the discharge of its functions, especially in regard to provision of free and compulsory education to disadvantaged groups, and to disseminate their findings;
 - vi. To act as a grievance redressal authority wherever necessary;
 - vii. To bring coordination among the administrative and academic authorities for efficient provision of free and compulsory school education to all children equally; and
 - viii. Such other functions as may be prescribed.
- 12.4. The National Authority for School Education shall be vested with full executive and financial powers with respect to School Education. In the discharge of its functions, the Authority shall have the following powers, namely:
- (1) All the powers of a civil court trying a suit and, in particular, in respect of the following matters, namely:-
 - i. summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
 - ii. requiring the discovery and production of any document;
 - iii. receiving evidence on affidavits;
 - iv. requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any office of the Central Government or an appropriate government, Local authority or any organisation running schools,
 - v. issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents.
 - (2) To forward any case to a Magistrate having jurisdiction to try the same and the Magistrate to whom any such case is forwarded shall proceed to hear the complaint

against the accused as if the case has been forwarded to him under Section 346 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

(3) If an enquiry by the Authority discloses a serious default in complying with the provisions of any law relating to school education, the Authority may:

- i. Recommend to the concerned Government or Local authority the initiation of disciplinary proceedings, or such other action as the Authority may deem fit, against the concerned person or persons.
- ii. Approach the Supreme Court or the High Court concerned for such directions, orders or writs as that Court may deem necessary.
- iii. Recommend to the concerned Government or authority the grant of such compensation to the children affected by the violation of the right of free and compulsory school education or non-implementation of any related laws, as the Authority may consider appropriate.

12.5. Guidelines shall be formulated laying down the constitution, composition, procedures, functioning of office, appointment, tenure and removal of members, conditions of service, monitoring, finance, administration and reporting, and duties, powers and functions of the National Authority for School Education.

Chapter 13.

MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION, MONITORING AND REDRESSAL MECHANISM AND AUTHORITIES

- 13.1. A revamp of the system of planning, administration, monitoring, grievance redressal and the management of education will receive high priority. The guiding considerations will be:
- i. Evolving a long-term planning and management perspective of education and its integration with the country's developmental and manpower needs;
 - ii. Decentralisation and the creation of a spirit of autonomy for educational institutions;
 - iii. Giving pre-eminence to people's involvement, including association of non-governmental agencies and voluntary effort;
 - iv. Inducting more women in the planning and management of education;
 - v. Establishing the principles of transparency and accountability in relation to given objectives and norms.
- 13.2. Within a multilevel framework of educational development, Central, State and District and Local level agencies will participate in planning, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation.

National Level

- 13.3. The Central Advisory Board of Education will play a pivotal role in reviewing educational development, determining the changes required to improve the system and monitoring implementation. It will function through appropriate Committees and other mechanisms created to ensure contact with, and co-ordination among, the various areas of Human Resource Development. These shall include:
- i. National Authority for School Education for monitoring, administration, grievance redressal and management of education.
 - ii. NCERT for devising the curriculum.
 - iii. NCTE for matters relating to teacher education.

State Level

13.4. State Governments shall establish State Advisory Boards of Education on the lines of Central Advisory Board of Education. The State Advisory Board of Education shall include:

- i. State Authority for School Education, for monitoring, administration, grievance redressal and management of education within the State, in the lines of National Authority for School Education.
- ii. SCERT, for devising the State Board Curriculum, in the lines of NCERT.

13.5. Effective measures should be taken to integrate mechanisms in the various State departments concerned with Human Resource Development.

District Level

13.6. District Boards of Education shall be created to manage education up to the higher secondary level which shall include:

- i. District Authority for School Education, for monitoring, administration, grievance redressal and management of education within the State, in the lines of National Authority for School Education.
- ii. District School Education Officer/ Director of Public Instruction answerable to the District Authority for School Education and Deputy Director for Public Instruction and Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat answerable to the DSEO/ DPI shall function at the District level. Block Education Officers, answerable to the DDPI, shall function at the Block level.
- iii. District Institute of Education and Training under whose authority shall function Block Resource Centres at Block level and Cluster Resource Centres at Cluster level.

Local Level

13.7. Local Authority for School Education shall be created at the Gram Panchayat/ Ward level to manage, administer and monitor school education under whose authority shall function:

- i. Village Education Committees answerable to the Local Authority for School

Education.

ii. School Management Committee answerable to the Village Education Committee.

13.8. The head of an educational institution (Head-teacher) shall be assigned an important role in realisation of universal equal quality free and compulsory school education to all children. Head-teachers will be specially selected and trained.

13.9. Local communities, through appropriate bodies, will be assigned a major role in programmes of school improvement.

13.10. Special attention shall be paid to the training of educational planners, administrators and heads of institutions. Institutional arrangements for this purpose should be set up in stages.

13.11. The Departments of Education at the Centre and in the States will be strengthened through the involvement of professionals.

Grievance Redressal

13.12. A comprehensive mechanism for the redressal of grievances, relating to school education, of various stakeholders including teachers, students, parents and SDMC members is vital for the effective functioning of the school education system and the realisation of universal quality free and compulsory school education to all children.

13.13. The grievance redressal mechanism for the school education system shall be as follows:

13.13.1. A Complaint Committee shall be established in all schools as part of their School Management Committee as the first level of grievance redressal.

13.13.2. A Complaint Cell under the authority of Local Authority of Education shall be established as the second level of grievance redressal after SMC at school level.

13.13.3. The third level of the redressal mechanism shall comprise of Redressal Committee established as part of District Authority for School Education at the district level.

13.13.4. Any appeal against the order of the Redressal Committee of District Board of Education shall lie to the State Advisory Board of Education and subsequently to the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

13.13.5. Appeals from the SCPCR shall be made to the National Authority for School Education and subsequently to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

13.14. While the SCPCR and NCPCR shall exercise only appellate powers, the State Advisory Board of Education and the National Advisory Board of Education will have original as well as appellate jurisdiction.

13.15. Redressal mechanisms at the district, State and National levels shall be strengthened by involving professionals including legal professionals, counsellors and doctors.

Chapter 14.

RESOURCES⁷⁰

- 14.1. The Education Commission of 1964-66, the National Education Policies of 1968, 1986 and the revised 1992 policy and other policies and practically all others concerned with education have stressed that the egalitarian goals and the practical, development-oriented objectives of Indian society can be realised only by making investments in education of an order commensurate with the nature and dimensions of the task.
- 14.2. Resources shall be the primary responsibility of the Government. However, to the extent possible, resources can be raised by mobilising donations, asking the beneficiary communities to maintain school buildings and supplies of some consumables, raising fees at the higher levels of education and effecting some savings by the efficient use of facilities. Institutions involved with research and the development of technical and scientific manpower should also mobilize some funds by levying a cess or charge on the user agencies, including Government departments, and entrepreneurs. All these measures will be taken not only to reduce the burden on State resources but also for creating a greater sense of responsibility within the educational system. However, such measures will contribute only marginally to the total funding, up to a maximum of 10 percent of total investment for education and the primary funding shall be from the primary budget of the Government. The responsibility of resources for education will be divided among the Central and State Governments of the respective States, to the extent possible. The Government and the community in general will find funds for such programmes as: the universalisation of school education; liquidating illiteracy; equality of access to educational opportunities to all sections throughout the country; enhancing the social relevance, quality and functional effectiveness of educational programmes; generating knowledge and developing technologies in scientific fields crucial to self-sustaining economic development and creating a critical consciousness of the values and imperatives of national survival.
- 14.3. The deleterious consequences of non-investment or inadequate investment in education are indeed very serious. Similarly, the cost of neglecting vocational and technical education and of research is also unacceptable. Sub-optimal performance in

⁷⁰ Adopted from the National Policy on Education, 1986 as revised in 1992 with suitable changes

these fields could cause irreparable damage to the Indian economy. The network of institutions set up from time to time since Independence to facilitate the application of science and technology would need to be substantially and expeditiously updated, since they are fast becoming obsolete.

- 14.4. In view of these imperatives, education will be treated as a crucial area of investment for national development and survival. The National Policies on Education of 1968 and 1986 had laid down that the investment on education be gradually increased to reach a level of 6 per cent of the national income as early as possible. Since the actual level of investment has remained far short of that target, it is important that greater determination is shown now to find the funds for the programmes laid down in this Policy. While the actual requirements will be computed from time to time on the basis of monitoring and review, the outlay on education will be stepped up to ensure that during the Thirteenth Five Year Plan and onwards it will uniformly exceed 6 percent of the national income. A similar investment with respect to education shall be made in the State Government budget as well, which shall at least be to the extent of 6 percent of the State income.

Chapter 15.

REVIEW MECHANISM

- 15.1. A comprehensive review of this policy will be taken up every five years in consultation with all the stakeholders, including children through a bottom-up approach.

EPILOGUE

1. Despite several laws, policies and recommendations, a lapse is seen on part of the ruling class and the bureaucracy in building a strong and efficient National Education system by implementing the Common School Structure to provide free and compulsory school education of equitable quality to all children up to 18 years of age without discrimination of any nature. The existing education system is watering the stigma of social inequalities by promoting unequal and multi-layered school education system which is proving to be highly unfair to the masses. The glaring discrimination in existence within the education system is continuously tearing up the society into pieces by promoting social unrest, widening gap between the haves and have-nots and instilling anti-social values in the young minds.
2. The establishment of Common Education System is essential to realise the Constitutional goals and values of social justice and equality and fundamental objectives behind the recommendations of the Education Commission followed by 1968, 1986 and 1992 revised National Education Policies which call for the immediate establishment of the Common School System for providing equitable and quality education to all children without any discrimination based on class, caste, creed, sex, place of birth, social or economic status or any other aspect. In spite of the implementation of the Constitution of India providing for the fundamental values and principles and ensuring various rights and enactment of various laws and policies to uphold the Constitutional mandate and facilitate the realisation of the Constitutional fundamental rights, the lack of political will and the sheer negligence of the masses to demand their rights has led to a failed system of educational governance which is adversely affecting the young lives and consequently the society and the nation at large.
3. This calls for an urgent need to restructure and rebuild the National Education System wherein all are treated equals and everyone is provided with equal opportunities and receive equal treatment. An education system on the foundation of the Common School Structure will not only ensure the provision of equitable and quality education to all children but also upholds the service nature of education by arresting commercialisation and privatisation of education. Hence, it is imperative that a National System of Education based on the lines of the Common School Structure, where the different players irrespective of their affiliation type and nature of management can co-exist as

long as they are committed to providing an equitable quality education to all children which is genuinely free, honestly empowering and truly nation building on the principles of egalitarianism is established.

4. Restructuring the existing education system into a Public Education System by placing the onus on the Government as the prime provider of education is the only way to ensure equitable quality education to all children on the principles of social justice and equity, and thereby the survival of our constitutional values by protecting and promoting the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.
5. To conclude in the words of Walter Cronkite, “Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.” For “He who opens a school door, closes a prison” as observed by Victor Hugo.