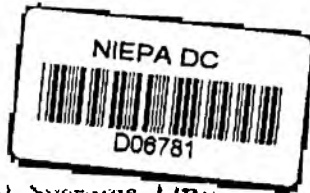


**RECOMMENDATIONS
OF
STATE EDUCATION MINISTERS
CONFERENCE**

**HELD AT NEW DELHI
ON NOVEMBER 10—12, 1963**



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
1966**



Sub. Personal Systems Unit,
National Institute of Educational
Planning and Administration
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**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATE EDUCATION MINISTERS
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NEW DELHI**

A Conference of State Education Ministers, Vice-Chancellors and some eminent educationists was held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on 10th, 11th and 12th November, 1963. The Union Education Minister, Shri Humayun Kabir presided over the Conference. Shri Shriman Narayan, Member, Planning Commission, Shrimati Soundram Ramachandran, Deputy Education Minister and Dr. D. S. Kothari, Chairman, University Grants Commission also participated in the deliberations of the Conference.

The following attended the Conference :

Education Ministers

Shri P. V. G. Raju	Education Minister Andhra Pradesh
Shri D. K. Barooah	Education Minister Assam
Smt. K. K. Baruah	Dy. Education Minister Assam
Shri S. N. Sinha	Education Minister Bihar
Shri Girish Tewari	Minister of State Bihar
Smt. Indumati Chimanlal	Education & Social Welfare Minister Gujarat
Shri Harbans Singh Azad	Education Minister Jammu & Kashmir
Shri R. Sankar	Chief Minister Kerala
Dr. S. D. Sharma	Education Minister Madhya Pradesh
Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam	Chief Minister Madras
Shri S. H. Shah	Education Minister Maharashtra
Shri H. G. Vartak	Dy. Education Minister Maharashtra
Shri S. R. Kanthi	Education Minister Mysore
Smt. Grace Thucker	Deputy Education Minister Mysore
Shri S. P. Mohanty	Education Minister Orissa

Shri Mohan Lal	Education Minister Punjab
Shri Hari Bhau Upadhyaya	Education Minister Rajasthan
Shri N. N. Acharya	Deputy Education Minister Rajasthan
Shri Kailash Prakash	Education Minister Uttar Pradesh
Shri Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri	Education Minister West Bengal
Shri S. M. Misra	State Education Minister West Bengal

Vice-Chancellors

Shri P. D. Gupta	Agra University
Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar	Annamalai University
Mr. Justice N. H. Bhagwati	Banaras University
Dr. P. L. Srivastava	Bihar University
Shri Bidhubhushan Malik	Calcutta University
Dr. C. D. Deshmukh	Delhi University
Dr. H. J. Taylor	Gauhati University
Dr. A. C. Chatterji	Gorakhpur University
Shri L. R. Desai	Gujarat University
Shri Thakorebhai Desai	Gujarat Vidyapeeth
Shri Satyavrat Sidhantalankar	Gurukul Kangri Vishvavidyalaya
Shri V. R. Sen	Jabalpur University
Dr. T. Sen	Jadavpur University
Dr. S. N. Das Gupta	Kalyani University
Dr. Umesha Mishra	Kameshwar Singh Darbhanga Sanskrit University
Shri D. C. Pavate	Karnatak University
Shri Birbal Singh	Kashi Vidyapeeth
Shri Samuel Mathai	Kerala University
Shri Suraj Bhan	Kurukshetra University
Dr. A. L. Mudaliar	Madras University
Shri K. K. Datta	Magadh University
Shri S. R. Dongerkery	Marathwada University
Dr. J. M. Mehta	M. S. University of Baroda
Sardar K. M. Pannikar	Mysore University
Shri M. C. Pradhan	Orissa University of Agricul- ture & Technology

Dr. D. S. Reddi	Osmania University
Dr. A. C. Joshi	Panjab University
Dr. G. Jacob	Patna University
Shri Mahamahopadhyaya D. V. Potdar	Poona University
Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh	Punjabi University
Dr. M. S. Mehta	Rajasthan University
Shri G. B. K. Hooja	Rajasthan Agriculture University
Shri Sarangdhar Sinha	Ranchi University
Shri G. Pande	Roorkee University
Dr. M. D. Patel	Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth
Shri Ganesh Prasad Bhutt	Saugar University
Dr. A. G. Pawar	Shivaji University
Dr. (Smt.) Premmila V. Thackersay	S. N. D. T. Women's University
Shri S. Govindarajulu	Shri Venkateswara University
Dr. P. K. Parija	Utkal University
Shri S. N. M. Tripathi	Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya
Dr. G. L. Datta	Vikram University
Dr. A. Appadorai	Indian School of International Studies

Eminent Educationists

Mrs. A. J. Mathai	Chairman Central Social Welfare Board
Smt. Raksha Saran	Chairman All-India Council for Women's Education
Smt. Renuka Ray	Member of Parliament
Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyay	Chairman All India Handicrafts Board
Shri Sri Prakasa	Chairman Standing Committee on Moral & Religious Education, Mini- stry of Education
Shri V. S. Jha	
Shri A. E. T. Barrow	Member of Parliament
Dr. B. V. Keskar	Chairman National Book Trust

Dr. S. Bhagwantam	Scientific Adviser, Ministry of Defence
Shri P. N. Sapru	Member of Parliament
Shri A. C. Roy	³ Principal, Bengal Engineering College, Howrah
Shri G. V. Sapre	Director (Technical Education) Govt. of Maharashtra, Bombay
Shri Madan Mohan	Chairman Universities Grants Committee Uttar Pradesh, Allahabad
Shri K. S. V. Raman	Deputy Chairman, Bihar Universities Commission, Patna
Dr. H. N. Kunzru	Member University Grants Commission
Shri B. Shivrao	Member University Grants Commission

Ministry of Education

Shri P. N. Kirpal, Secretary
 Shri R. P. Naik, Joint Secretary
 Shri L. O. Joshi, Joint Secretary
 Shri G. K. Chandiramani, Joint Secretary (Science Department)
 Shri J. P. Naik, Adviser (Primary Education)
 Dr. P. D. Shukla, Deputy Educational Adviser
 Shri T. S. Bhatia, Deputy Secretary
 Shri Nauhria Ram, Deputy Educational Adviser
 Dr. Vikram Singh, Deputy Educational Adviser
 Shri A. H. Hemrajani, Assistant Educational Adviser
 Dr. H. C. Gupta, Assistant Educational Adviser
 Miss S. Rajan, Assistant Educational Adviser
 Shri N. S. Bhatnagar, Under Secretary
 Shri* P. N. Natu, Secretary, National Council of Educational
 Research and Training

University Grants Commission

Shri K. L. Joshi
 Shri P. J. Phillip
 Shri R. K. Chabra
 Shri V. S. Patankar
 Shri S. Bhattacharya

State Governments

Shri L. N. Gupta	Education Secretary Andhra Pradesh
Shri L. Bullayya	Director of Public Instruction Andhra Pradesh
Shri S. N. Rehman	Education Secretary Assam
Shri G. C. S. Barooa	Director of Public Instruction Assam
Shri N. D. Buch	Education Secretary Gujarat
Shri D. L. Sharma	Director of Education Gujarat
Shri P. K. Abdulla	Education Secretary Kerala
Shri Kanti Chaudhuri	Education Secretary Madhya Pradesh
Shri V. S. Krishnan	Director of Collegiate Education Madhya Pradesh
Shri S. P. Varma	Director of Public Instruction Madhya Pradesh
Shri V. Balasundram.	Education Secretary Madras
Shri N. D. Sundaravadivelu	Director of Public Instruction Madras
Shri V. M. Joshi	Education Secretary Maharashtra
Shri E. R. Dhongde	Director of Education Maharashtra
Shri T. R. Jayaraman	Education Secretary Mysore
Shri S. Misra	Director of Public Instruction Orissa
Shri C. D. Kapur	Education Commissioner-cum- Education Secretary Punjab
Shri J. D. Sharma	Director of Public Instruction Punjab
Shri Balwant Singh	Joint Director of Education Punjab
Shri V. D. Sharma	Education Secretary Rajasthan
Shri J. S. Mehta	Director of Education Rajasthan
Shri Uma Shankar	Education Secretary Uttar Pradesh

Shri C. N. Chak

Director of Education
Uttar Pradesh

Dr. S. N. Mehrotra

Deputy Director of Education
Uttar Pradesh

Dr. D. M. Sen

Education Secretary
West Bengal

Shri B. Datta

Director of Public Instruction
West Bengal

2. The Conference was inaugurated at 10-00 A.M. on Sunday the 10th November by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India. After welcoming the Prime Minister and the Education Ministers, Vice-Chancellors and other educationists participating in the Conference, Shri Humayun Kabir said :

“Elementary education for the age-group 6—11 has made considerable progress quantitatively during the last 15 years. From about 14 million, the enrolment has gone up to 40 million and it is expected that by the end of the Third Plan it will be almost 52 million. This would mean over 90 per cent so far as boys are concerned and therefore a special effort must be made to see that enrolment of girls is brought in line with those of boys.

“Even more important is the question of improving the quality of elementary education in two ways. There are still a few States where a four-year elementary course obtains but we should at least have a five-year compulsory course throughout the country before the end of the Third Plan. An attempt should also be made for introducing science at the elementary stage both as an intellectual discipline and as a measure for creating a proper scientific climate in the country. Obviously this would have to be in a simple way, with perhaps special emphasis on nature study.

“The next aim in elementary education must be to extend the period of elementary education from 5 years to 8 years. In fact till this is attained, the Directive Principle of the Constitution would remain unfulfilled. Most countries are no longer satisfied with compulsory education up to the age of 14, but in India we would need special effort to fulfil even this target. If by 1976 we can have 80 per cent of the children of 6—14 in elementary schools, this would be a great achievement.

“The crux of the matter of course is the quality of the teacher. Today we have an inadequacy of teachers and even the few we have are very often inadequately trained and almost invariably dissatisfied. I realise the financial difficulties involved but a nation must be prepared to pay for good education. The Centre has offered to help the States for improving the salary scales of elementary school teachers but I regret to say that that offer has not been fully utilised. The difficulty is acute in respect of women teachers. In this connection, I should like to invite your attention to the suggestion made for the appointment of “School Mothers” as a short-term measure to fill up the gap till a sufficient number of trained women teachers are available.

"Most modern States are agreed that not only elementary but also secondary education should be recognised as the birth right of every citizen. We are far short of that ideal yet and in fact there have been difficulties and doubts about the concept of secondary education itself. Different States follow different patterns. Some diversity is perhaps inevitable in a country so large and so varied as India. Nevertheless there was no room for diversity on two points. One was that the end of the secondary stage should mean roughly the same thing throughout the whole country. In olden days, matriculation which was taken at 16 was more or less of a uniform standard for pupils throughout the country. Today there are school certificates and higher school certificates. Such distinctions should be abolished and we should define a uniform standard for the completion of secondary education throughout the country.

"The standard for the completion of secondary education would obviously depend upon the age up to which such education must extend. In almost all countries of the world secondary education is co-terminus with adolescence. With the exception of India and a few other countries, almost throughout the world, 18 years is recognised as the proper age for the termination of secondary school education. There may be individual differences here and there but by and large young men and women of 18 would attain roughly the same intellectual and physical maturity in different countries of the world. By prescribing secondary education up to the age of 18, most countries have therefore been able to attain a standard where a young person is fit either to go for higher education in a university or institution of higher learning or alternatively enter into the responsibilities of life. It seems almost self-evident that neither of these objectives can be attained before the age of 18.

"Unfortunately in India, there has been more discussion about the duration of the secondary education course than the standard which it ought to attain and the age at which it should come to an end. We have been told of States which have a 12-year course where the pupil takes the school leaving examination at the ripe age of 14 and 15. It is obvious that at 15 a person is still a child and not fit to incur the responsibilities of life or the demands of higher education. We cannot claim that all Indian children are geniuses and the children in the rest of the world lack in intelligence. If therefore throughout the world the age of termination for secondary education is 18, we can resist a demand for the same in India only at our peril.

"It is of course true that our financial and other resources will not permit the raising of the secondary school leaving age up to 18 immediately. One step in that direction has been taken by prescribing that no one can enter a university or an institution of higher learning before 16 plus. Perhaps the target should be that the school leaving age ought to be 17 plus by the end of Fourth Plan and we should work to make it 18 by the end of the Fifth or Sixth Plan.

"Once there is agreement about the terminal point of secondary education, we can also decide on the standard which pupils should attain at the stage. In most countries of the world secondary education includes much of what is taught in the first degree classes in our country. This is perhaps inevitable as we have children of 15 or 16 studying in degree classes whereas in other countries no one can normally enter a university before 18. If therefore we desire 18 (or immediately 17) as the terminal age and prescribe standards for the school leaving certificate which compare with standards in the U.K., the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R., we can immediately establish the equivalence for all States within the country. Once this is done, it may be left to the States whether the pupils are to reach that standard and that age in 11 or 12 years.

"Along with the question of defining the terminal point for secondary education, we have to consider its content and syllabus. The multipurpose secondary school is in many respects a great advance as it offered children an opportunity of pursuing secondary education according to their special taste and aptitude. The various streams in such schools from that point of view are welcome, but I think two shortcomings have already revealed themselves. The first is that the variety of courses enable some children to go through secondary education without adequate grounding in some of the essential disciplines. Social studies has been substituted in place of history and geography, and in some cases, this has led to a definite lowering of standard of knowledge in these subjects. Similarly, mathematics or fine arts is a discipline which many secondary school leavers can largely avoid. One may not go as far as the Napoleonic tradition which makes every subject compulsory for everyone up to the end of secondary education, but one should at least provide that each school child has some basic knowledge of language, literature, history, geography, mathematics, science and one of the fine arts. I think it would be desirable if some rethinking on the question of syllabuses is undertaken and I am glad that the National Council of Educational Research and Training has already undertaken studies in this behalf.

"The second drawback is in some ways more relevant to our immediate needs. The technical and agricultural streams were planned with the two-fold purpose of enabling the pupils either to pursue higher studies or to take to a vocation. It appears that the pursuit of two aims has led to an unsatisfactory realisation of either. It is common knowledge that engineering or agricultural colleges prefer pupils from the science courses rather than from the specialised vocational courses. On the other hand, the pupils undertaking the technical or the agricultural course cannot take up a profession immediately as their training is too academic for the purpose.

"I would, therefore, suggest that we may remodel these courses by making them far more practical and recognising that the large majority of those who take the technical or the agricultural course will not go for higher education. The experience of the junior

technical school with its emphasis on workshop practice has proved that three years' training after 14+ can turn out skilful mechanics and craftsmen. If a similar pattern is adopted for technical and agricultural streams in multipurpose schools, we can be sure that the products will find immediate useful employment in agriculture or industry. In order to ensure that the talented among them are not denied opportunity of higher education should they later on develop interest and aptitude for it, a special provision may be made for such pupils to take an additional year and then qualify for entry into colleges or similar institutions.

"Our ultimate aim must be to ensure that at least 40% of those who enter secondary education are diverted to useful employment immediately at the end of the secondary stage. The present tendency of 70% or more to enter colleges and institutions of higher learning would be extravagant even for the richest countries of the world. We simply cannot afford it and the result has been an undue proliferation of ineffective and inefficient arts colleges where students receive the stamp of a degree without the education which should precede it. It is absolutely certain that standards in universities can never be raised unless only the select among the secondary school leavers opt for Universities.

"To provide such technical and agricultural education for 40% of the pupils would involve a huge expenditure which we cannot immediately afford. We must however make a beginning and I would suggest that provision for about 15 to 20% should be made during the Fourth Plan. Simultaneously we should take advantage of the courses offered in Industrial Training Institutes run by the Ministry of Labour and come to some agreement with them by which the minimum age for entry may be 14+ and not 16+. In order to meet the requirements of the Factory Act, some kind of pre- or post-diploma courses may be introduced in such institutes for middle school leavers who join them. The main point is that we must have about 30 to 40% of our secondary school pupils trained in some craft or trade which would offer profitable employment and thus prevent their drift to the universities.

"Once the question of school leaving age at the secondary stage and its standard are settled, many of the problems of the universities will become much easier to tackle. I do not wish to enter into details about the duration of the first degree course, for enlightened opinion throughout the world is unanimous that two years does not offer a sufficient period for the transition from studies at the school level to the attainment of a degree. In fact, in many of the advanced countries of the world, the duration of the course is four or five years after 18+. This matter has been debated in the country for almost fifty years and any attempt to reopen the question of a two-year degree course would, to my mind, be a symptom of atavism and backward thinking.

"I have placed very briefly my views in the matter before you in respect of elementary, secondary and university education. I

know that it is for the States to take the final decision in the matter, as education is essentially a State responsibility. I am, however, convinced that meeting of minds between the Centre and the States and arriving at a consensus by discussion and agreement are essential if we are to attain uniformity of standards and aims for education in the country. In fact, I would go further and say that the achievement of such uniformity is essential for the unity of the land. It was because educated people from different parts of the country thought on similar lines and acted according to their convictions that freedom has been attained. It is again through the concerted action of the enlightened leadership that unity can be maintained and our strength and prosperity increased. I am not for a moment suggesting that we can neglect or ignore the masses of the people, but in a democracy more than in any other form of State organisation, the initiative for advance and progress of the country must come from the leadership. We are fortunate in having a man of vision and imagination as our Prime Minister. He has been a symbol of unity and stability of the country and we feel that it will be one of his greatest gifts to give unified educational thinking to the events so that the future generations are trained up in common ideals for reaching towards a better and more equitable social order".

3. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister said:

"Dr. Humayun Kabir and Friends :

"I am glad to be here at your Conference but at the same time somewhat embarrassed too. Everybody is interested, I suppose, in education. All of us want education to grow quantitatively and qualitatively in India. The question is how to do it, what to do exactly. And, in regard to that, many of you who are connected directly with education are more competent to say something than I am. All I can do is to lay stress on my own desire and I think the Government's, on the importance of the spread of education. We talk about Five Year Plans and development schemes etc. I am quite convinced in my mind that the first Plan is universal education. Everything else, whether it is industry or agriculture or anything which are so important for us, will only grow adequately if there is the background of education, mass education, and then of course, specialised education, higher up. So the problem then becomes one of how to bring this about.

"Two things come in the way—lack of trained people and lack of money and these are formidable obstacles. The only way to remove the lack is to train them and produce enough competent people to be able to do this job. As for finances, it is a very difficult question. And yet I was much pained by the fact that owing to this Emergency in some States education suffered because they were trying to save money or divert money to some other object. I think that is not a very happy outlook of thinking education less important than anything including soldiering. Today you want even a soldier to be educated. You don't want an illiterate person to be a soldier.

"But I am sure there are many ways of your reducing the cost of education in so far as buildings are concerned. I do not want reduction at the cost of our teachers' salaries and the rest. I think they should progressively go up to get competent men and women. But I do think, more specially in regard to primary education, that much can be done in regard to construction work to save money. The best thing is you can save money by adopting more modern methods than are usual, traditional methods which are used. The traditional methods, in so far as I know, have a remarkable way of being costly and horribly ugly. The average schools are not things of beauty but they are things of great costliness. I do not know from what period this has come down to us but we still follow. Today schools can be put up much more rapidly and much more cheaply than ever before by housing factories, pre-fabricated methods or even traditional methods applied in a wiser way.

"I came here this morning from a large colony that is growing up. It happened to be government houses, government offices entirely constructed of pre-fabricated material from the Delhi Housing Factory and it is cheaper, considerably cheaper, and much swifter than the other houses. I believe schools in Delhi are largely made from pre-fabricated material. So, that is a matter which requires consideration because our housing programmes have become bigger and bigger not only for education but for everything. And it is very difficult to keep pace with them unless you adopt some methods like these, like having pre-fabricated materials, production of which will be cheaper and speedier.

"Then there is the other thing. I am all for good schools and buildings for schools. I think it is important that you should have good and attractive buildings but there can be such a thing as a school without a building. And it is far better to spend money on teachers' salaries than on brick and mortar. You want some kind of shelter certainly. I once saw some plans where a little central building was put up. A little building is a big word for it, a small structure which was really meant to be divided into four diagonally and each side in front had a platform, only a ground platform. This little structure divided up into four was really meant to keep the books, charts and equipment of the school and not meant for people to go into it at all. They kept these things and they sat on the platform of cemented floors in front. They began with that. They could build up that whenever they have the chance, the opportunity and the resources to build it up. They could have a temporary structure. It is not very good against monsoon rains of course, but certainly for the sun, very temporary structures as they have in the South, very artistic structures, that can be easily done. This is the basis and that would cost very much less than others. The point is I really don't know how we can go ahead fast enough in primary education and especially in the rural areas if we have to shoulder the burden of construction and costly construction in a big way. I am sure there are many ways of facing this if you would be good enough to apply your minds to it and not think of education

as inevitably connected with costly buildings. In Shantiniketan, as you perhaps know, most of the classes are held under the trees. Although they have buildings, yet they hold them under the trees. They prefer them. They hold their Convocation in a mango grove. Once or twice they reverted to a hall and every body disliked it so much and I protested so much against the hall which did not compare at all with the lovely surrounding of the mango grove that we went back to the mango grove. I do think much can be done if we could get out of certain grooves of thought and much can be done especially, apart from the artistic element in it, which I think has great effect on the mind of the students. The cost element is very important.

"Then there is one thing I should like to draw your attention to Prof. Kabir said something about quality. That is obvious that mere quantity minus quality is no good at all, may be worse than no quantity and nothing at all. If there is no quality, it may lead to only trouble. These are the problems which you have to face.

"Then there is the question, apart from mass education, of higher grades of education. There you come across the difficulty of the poor student, not having any place to sit even, practically, any home surroundings or anywhere else and how can you expect him to study hard and competently without any place where he can do some work properly. I don't know. It was suggested some years ago, and it has been given effect to in some places, of what is called day hostels, not a place where a student can sleep but where he can spend the day, library with reading rooms, with places where they can take their meals and have a bath etc. Of course, one building could serve a large number, while in a place where they have to sleep, accommodation is much more limited. And I think we could have day hostels like this serving hundreds and hundreds of students who come there, sit and study and have some rest etc. That will be a better way than trying to build up proper hostels for everyone although the latter will be good. I am merely suggesting this to get over the difficulties of providing accommodation quickly to large numbers of students because the numbers are likely to grow and they are growing rapidly.

"And I do not wish to say very much about conditions in some of our universities because of student indiscipline. I don't know where the fault lies. Sometimes it may be teacher indiscipline. But obviously what students do some times, hurts one, not a particular incident but the mere fact of that mentality growing in the country, of the idea of just setting fire to a bus and breaking it up. I cannot conceive of this type of mind doing any good, destructive, mind, and I don't know what good they are doing to the University.

"So these are the day-to-day problems with which you are acquainted, I am not acquainted. I read about them and people sometimes come and talk to me about them. You have to deal with them as Vice-Chancellors, as Ministers of Education, etc. You know more about it than I do and suggest remedies for it. The only thing

is that remedies must be something which are within our grasp. Remedies outside, financially and otherwise, quite outside our capacity, are not much good. But, on the whole, I do agree that it is better, far better, to spend much more on education to remove these drawbacks than to stint money there and spend it on something else because I do believe that education is the most important thing. Everything else depends, all of us know that, the future generation depends on education, our planning, our industry our agriculture.

"The question of what type of education you give is another matter. In India although much has been said about industrial development, still the proportion of our students, I understand, who take law or arts course is very considerable. I am all for humanities although one sees precious little humanity being taught in higher educational institutions today. I suppose the discipline of science would probably be a greater discipline, anyhow, apart from the humanities. On the whole one finds that a technologically trained person finds it relatively easy to get employment. It is the arts graduate who finds some difficulty.

"I do not wish to take up your time when you have important work to do. Why I came here was to give you my good wishes and such encouragement as I can on behalf of Government and hope that you will help in solving these many problems that we have.

"Thank you".

4. Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar then thanked the Prime Minister for his address. Afterwards, the Conference proceeded to consider its Agenda (Annexure) and the Memoranda.

5. The discussion on item No. 1 of the agenda, namely, acceleration of the programme of elementary education with *special emphasis on the education of girls* was taken up at 11.30 A.M. and was discussed till 1.30 P.M. when the Conference adjourned for lunch. The discussion was resumed at 3.00 P.M. when the Conference met for the second session and continued till 4.30 P.M.

The following observations were made :

General Observations

(1) The nature of problems to be faced in elementary education varies from State to State. In Kerala, for instance, the problem of expansion has practically been solved; but there is still the problem of improving quality. In Uttar Pradesh on the other hand, the problem of expansion is still the most formidable. The problem of the backward classes or the scheduled tribes is very acute in States like Madhya Pradesh or Orissa. The problem of girls education is acute in a number of States such as Punjab, U.P., Bihar or Rajasthan. The general feeling, therefore, was that the problems of elementary education in each State should be examined separately and comprehensively on their own merits.

(2) There was a general demand on the part of all the six less advanced States that their problems were immense and that they

could not be solved by their own unaided efforts. They all pleaded for special Central assistance.

(3) The advanced States have been able to solve the problem of expansion to some extent; but they still have very difficult problems to solve in improving the quality of education by raising the salaries of teachers and providing buildings and equipment. They also pointed out that they had a very big load to carry as committed or non-plan expenditure. They, therefore, pleaded that Central assistance should be made available to them also on an adequate scale.

(4) In West Bengal and Rajasthan, there was an unprecedented increase in population in the decade 1951-61. This has considerably upset the plans of these States and special assistance would be needed to enable them to meet its implications.

(5) With regard to the education of girls there was a general agreement that special efforts will have to be made, from now on, to enrol more girls into schools and to provide women teachers. The following were the more important programmes suggested for this purpose:

- (a) providing free education to girls to the end of the secondary stage;
- (b) appointment of school mothers;
- (c) improving the training facilities for women teachers;
- (d) provision for hostels for girls from rural areas;
- (e) condensed courses for adult women;
- (f) construction of quarters for women teachers; and
- (g) provision of creches and Balwadi.

There was general agreement that funds for the special programmes for the education of girls would have to be substantially increased. It was also proposed that these funds should be kept in the centrally-sponsored sector.

(6) Regarding the training of teachers, the general view expressed was that facilities for the training of teachers would have to be increased in most States and steps would have to be taken to improve the quality of training institutions. This programme, combined with proposals for improving the remuneration of teachers, should be emphasised in the next few years.

(7) The views expressed on basic education were divergent. Bhai Jodh Singh suggested that the whole programme of basic education should be reviewed as it has not worked satisfactorily. Most of the speakers, however, supported it in principle and suggested that its implementation should be improved by modifying programmes to suit local conditions.

(8) There was a general regret expressed over the fact that funds allocated for education were cut down during the national emergency. The general opinion was that education is of the highest national

importance and should receive more, rather than less, funds on account of emergency.

(9) Every State complained of inadequate resources. The expansion achieved was far beyond the original targets in almost every area. The demands of this unprecedented expansion had to be met and steps had also to be taken simultaneously to improve quality. Additional funds were therefore, needed on a large scale and the basic problem in elementary education was to provide them.

Observations on Schemes

(10) Some States pointed out that it would not be possible for them to utilise the funds allocated to them under the Ministry's grant of Rs. 2 crores for the appointment of additional teachers because they cannot raise their matching contribution. It was clarified that they could make their contribution within their ceiling. The Central contribution should be in addition and outside the Plan.

Several States, however, announced that they had utilised the allocation made to them in full and wanted additional funds.

(11) Regarding the scheme of granting loans for construction of buildings for elementary schools and quarters for women teachers, a number of suggestions were put forward :

- (a) There should be no interest in the first year of the loan as the time would be taken up for construction of the building.
- (b) It was pointed out that, in the scheme, the repayment would start only from the first year of the Fourth Plan.
- (c) The loan should be free of interest. If that is not possible, the rate of interest should be as low as possible and under no circumstances, should it exceed $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ at which the Government of India itself borrows funds.
- (d) The period of repayment of the loan should be increased from 15 to 30 years.
- (e) The scope of the loan should be extended to cover secondary schools as well.

6. Next day discussion on items 2, 3 & 4 was taken up and continued the whole day. Although these three items were put on the agenda separately they were found to be so inter-linked that all the three were discussed together.

In his opening remarks the Education Minister had already stressed the following points :

- (a) There should be uniformity in the standards to be attained by the pupils leaving Secondary Schools. These standards could perhaps be best specified with reference to the age at which secondary education should end—for example, 18+ could be taken as the terminal age for secondary

education ultimately; for the present (say up to the end of 4th Plan) it may be fixed at 17+ all over the country.

- (b) In regard to the multipurpose courses the known shortcomings such as inadequate instruction, particularly in practical work, and ambiguity of objectives should be removed. Diversified courses could be started at 14+ and should be provided for a substantial proportion (30% to 40%) of the relevant age-group. At the end of the courses the students in technology and agriculture particularly should be well-equipped with necessary skills to get employed in the relevant sectors of our economy. Of course some room could be left for the "late bloomers" amongst them to take to higher studies with such additional instruction as may be provided.
- (c) The fixation of age of entry into universities and the duration of the first degree course were closely linked with the problem mentioned at (a) above. In regard to the duration, 3 years instruction should be the minimum for the first degree course.

Some of the points concerning secondary and university education were referred to in the speeches made before the formal discussions on these items. These in brief are as under :

- (i) The cost of adding one more year to the secondary school should be entirely borne by the Central Government.
- (ii) Special attention should be paid to rural and tribal areas and to the education of girls/women.
- (iii) At the school stage children should be given craft and practical training in such a way that no hiatus is created between the home and the school; the children should not regard the business of their parents as being low or backward.
- (iv) In the Third Plan period, a good deal of discretion has been given to the State Governments to divert funds from one scheme to another within the same main Head of development. This discretion should not be so exercised as to lead to the dropping of, or drastic reduction in, essential schemes. Inevitable cuts, if any, should fall on items like expensive construction.

In regard to item 2 of the agenda, several speakers emphasised the desirability of fixing the age of completing secondary education at 18+, 4 years being the secondary stage. There was considerable diversity of opinion about the break-up of the 4 years course into 2+2 or 3+1. Diversity also existed in regard to the institution in which the last one or two years (as the case may be) of this course should be imparted. For example, while some favoured the institution of "junior colleges" as separate entities, and others suggested that the pre-university course should be covered in a college or a

university, there was almost equal, if not more, emphasis from many speakers on the point that junior colleges will not get good teachers and that these years of instruction should properly belong to the school so that the universities are not required to cater to the needs of immature young persons.

While there was no direct opposition to the 18+ suggestion, it was strongly urged by several speakers that the immediate programme should be to consolidate and strengthen the 11 year higher secondary school with standard distinctly above the present matriculation of S.L.C. level. Thereafter at a later stage it should be possible to add one more year either to the school (or as a transitional step to the college) when funds and personnel were available. In this context a point was raised that it may not be necessary or desirable to fix the age of passing the secondary course or entry into the university course. Some speakers recalled their experiences of waiting before taking an examination because they were under-age; they mentioned that this period was utilised most profitably by them but they were not sure whether the present generation of students would be equally patient.

All the speakers agreed that the standard to be attained at the end of the secondary school must be very much higher than the present Matriculation level and that this could be achieved by adding one or two years to the schooling period and by providing better teachers, textbooks and equipment, it was found difficult to describe this standard in precise terms because most of the terms had become associated with certain fixed notions. It was referred to as roughly equal to the old Intermediate standard, the first year of the three-year degree course, or the VI form in the U.K.

There was complete unanimity in regard to the urgent need of improving the standard and quality of secondary education by such measures as the following :

- (i) attracting more competent persons to join the teaching profession by offering better salary scales to them;
- (ii) improving teacher-training by raising the period of training to 2 years and including content education in the syllabus;
- (iii) strengthening science laboratories, libraries and workshops;
- (iv) reorganising the school curriculum by replacing less useful elements by more important and modern knowledge and introducing courses which are practical in nature and are for employment and work after leaving the school;
- (v) improvement of textbooks;
- (vi) establishing a certain number of quality schools with residential and day-boarding facilities and available within reach of the common man.

In regard to item No. 3 of the agenda; viz. the multipurpose (technical) courses in secondary schools, most speakers expressed

the opinion that this scheme had by and large not received a fair trial and that it was necessary to take the following steps :

- (i) Aim at providing diversified technical courses to about one-third of the students joining the secondary school;
- (ii) As the diversified courses involve larger outlays and require qualified teachers in special subjects the entire programme should be planned and phased properly;
- (iii) The courses should be so designed as to be terminal in character i.e. to equip the students with sufficient skills in practical work in the field of their choice viz. industry or agriculture. The second objective namely preparation for higher studies should not influence these schemes to the detriment of practical work. In fact only a very small proportion of the students passing these courses may pursue higher studies and in their case additional instruction of about one year should be provided to make up their deficiencies in the theory and academic side.

In regard to item 4 of the agenda, it was generally agreed that the duration of the first degree course should be three years and also that the pre-university courses which have been started in several colleges and universities should be treated as a transitional step only with a view to transfer this extra year of schooling to the secondary schools as soon as the 11-year higher secondary courses in those schools is stabilised and strengthened.

The financial difficulties envisaged in reorganising secondary education and introducing the 3-year degree course was referred to by most speakers—particularly those from States which had not made any or substantial headway in these matters. It was felt that this was the largest single factor responsible for the tardy progress towards the goal which was accepted nine years ago. Most of the State representatives strongly expressed the view that even though they were supporting the resolutions, the pace and manner of implementing the suggestions will depend almost entirely on what funds the Central Government could find for assisting the States to conform to the national uniform patterns of education.

7. On the third and concluding day of its deliberations, the Conference adopted the following resolutions on elementary, secondary and university & higher education :

I. ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The Conference resolves that every effort should be made to achieve by the end of the Fourth Plan universal and free primary education of the duration of 5 years commencing at 6+ on compulsory basis, admission at 5+ being permissible. The special problems of the States which are lagging behind others in this programme should be examined and solved expeditiously.

2. Noting with satisfaction the rate of increase of enrolment at the primary stage and the desire of our people belonging to all areas and sections of the population to send their children to the school, the Conference resolves that special efforts should be made

and appropriate programmes, such as the following, may be launched or strengthened in order to bring all girls of the relevant age group to school :

- (a) Construction of quarters for women teachers;
- (b) Improvement in the training facilities for women teachers;
- (c) Recruitment of women teachers on a larger scale and as an interim measure, appointment of school mothers;
- (d) Provision of hostels for girls in rural areas;
- (e) Provision of free education to girls to the end of the secondary stage with a view to increase the supply of teachers;
- (f) Utilisation of the services of adult women on a part-time or whole-time basis; and
- (g) Provision of suitable incentives to students wherever necessary.

The Conference further recommends that the special programmes for girls education should be taken up as centrally sponsored schemes on the basis of 100% grant, outside the State plan ceilings.

Similar measures should be undertaken for the weaker sections of the community, particularly the scheduled tribes.

3. Realising the overriding importance of universal education of children both for social progress and economic development of the country and the crucial importance of improving the quality and content of education at the primary stage with special attention to the introduction of science, the Conference resolves that adequate funds should be provided not only for the requisite expansion but also for achieving reasonable qualitative standards of education, for improving the training and increasing the emoluments of teachers.

4. While affirming the merit of Basic education and its particular suitability for children, the Conference resolves that the content of Basic education should be constantly reviewed in order to ensure that it serves effectively the needs of changing society and the advance of industry, science and technology.

5. The Conference welcomes the new scheme of granting loans for the construction of elementary school buildings and quarters for women teachers, and recommends that :

- (a) the loans should be free of interest; and if that is not found feasible, the rate of interest should be as low as possible, in any case not above 3%;
- (b) No interest should be charged for one year from the date the loan is advanced;
- (c) The period of repayment of the loan should be increased from 15 to 30 years; and
- (d) The scope of the loan should be extended to cover primary teacher training institutions.

4. The Conference further resolves that suitable built-in schemes should be included in the programme for support of State and voluntary effort to prevent the relapse of children into illiteracy.

II. SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Having surveyed the state of secondary education in the country, recognising the need for improving its quality by prescribing a higher standard, by using better textbooks and providing for more qualified and better trained teachers, recognising further that there must be equivalence of standard while permitting room for flexibility and experiment in the pattern of education, the conference expresses its agreement on the following points:

- (a) That a 12-year course of secondary education is the goal towards which the country must work, even though considerations of finance and manpower may not make it possible to implement such a scheme in all States in the immediate future;
- (b) That the standard to be achieved at the end of secondary education in the country should for the present be raised so as to be equivalent at least to the Intermediate examination of the former 4-year colleges;
- (c) That except for the academic courses in humanities and sciences, the other courses should be job-oriented with a view to make the products of secondary education fit for employment in agriculture, industry, trade, commerce or other vocations and also provide them with opportunities of higher education should they later so desire;
- (d) That the age of entry into the universities and comparable institutions should generally be 17+ and in no case less than 16+;
- (e) Special assistance from the Centre should be given to all States who have to increase the educational period by one year at the secondary level. This assistance should cover teachers, textbooks, libraries and laboratories and should be given through a grant on comparable basis by the U.G.C. in case the class is attached as a pre-university class to a college and by the Central Government directly in case the class is attached to a school, but in either case the syllabus and standard of teaching must be equivalent;
- (f) That the duration of the first degree course in arts and science should be 3 years throughout the country and special assistance from the Centre should be given wherever this involves the addition of one year;
- (g) That the Central Ministry of Education should take steps for the review of curriculum and the preparation and production of better textbooks on a national basis by utilising the services of available experts; and
- (h) That a scheme of loans similar to the one introduced for primary education should be formulated and implemented for secondary education and it should cover construction

tion of buildings and teachers' quarters for secondary schools as well as teacher-training colleges.

2. The conference further resolves that immediate steps should be taken to raise the standard and quality of secondary education by :

- (i) attracting more competent persons to join the teaching profession by offering better salary-scales to them;
- (ii) improving teacher-training by raising the period of training to 2 years and including content education in the syllabus;
- (iii) strengthening science laboratories, libraries and workshops;
- (iv) reorganizing the school curriculum by replacing less useful elements by more important and modern knowledge and introducing courses which are practical in nature and are for employment and work after leaving the school;
- (v) replacing the existing courses provided in the technical stream of the multipurpose schools by a course which is more or less the same as the junior technical school course; and
- (vi) establishing a certain number of quality schools with residential and day-boarding facilities and available within reach of the common man.

III. GENERAL

The conference resolves :

- (a) that the States may prepare their 4th Five Year Plan on the basis of the above recommendations and seek for this such help from the Central Government as may be necessary to fulfil the objectives; and
- (b) that the outlay on Education in the 4th Plan should be substantially increased so that sufficient resources are available for implementation of the recommendations.

3. In his concluding remarks, the Chairman said that it was inevitable in a Conference of educationists that there should be a great deal of difference, but he was happy that they had at the end arrived at certain consensus. He appealed to the Education Ministers and Vice-Chancellors to give all co-operation to improve the standard of education as a whole. He expressed his thanks for the co-operation and support which he had received from all participants.

9. Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair which was approved unanimously. The Chairman then declared the Conference as closed.

ANNEXURE

AGENDA

1. Acceleration of the programme of elementary education with special emphasis on the education of girls.
(Government of India)
2. Determination of a uniform standard for the School Leaving Certificate or corresponding examination at the end of secondary education.
(Government of India)
3. Provision of technical education at the secondary level.
(Government of India)
4. Fixation of the age of entry into universities and the duration of the first degree course.
(Government of India)

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