

# TOWARDS A NATIONAL BOOK POLICY

# A Report



सत्यमेव जयते

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I. PREFACE

Constitution  
of this Working  
Group

This Working Group was constituted in response to the Questions asked in Parliament on 27 July, 1984 and 24 January, 1985 regarding the formulation of a National Book Policy. In the replies given by the then Education Minister, it was stated that this matter had been referred to the reconstituted National Book Development Council, one of whose functions is to draft a National Book Policy. The need for a National Book Policy arose from a number of imperatives in regard to books, namely, declining habit of serious book reading in the country, the concern expressed by the publishing trade about the lack of infrastructural facilities for book publishing and distribution outlets; the concern of the State and Union Territory Governments about the non-availability of books published by the public sector agencies such as the National Council of Educational Research and Training, National Book Trust, etc; and the concern voiced by educationists about single textbook situation and the quality of textbooks and non-availability of textbooks and reference books. From time to time concern has been expressed by authors and intellectuals about the need to stimulate authorship, particularly young authorship. There is also serious concern about the lack of libraries and the need for a strong library movement to support book development. Suggestions have been made to encourage authors' cooperatives and small publishers' cooperatives and for instituting incentive schemes for bulk purchase of books so

as to ensure wider accessibility of books at reasonable prices.

The National Book Development Council, in consideration of these various concerns and in consultation with the then Ministry of Education (now the Ministry of Human Resource Development), set up a Working Group for evolving a National Book Policy with the following terms of reference.

Terms of  
reference

- (i) Production of books covering wide range of subjects and their availability at reasonable prices to readers.
- (ii) Promoting creativity by offering incentives to authors and improving author-publisher relationship.
- (iii) Suggesting possible solutions to problems like shortage of paper and its non-availability, lack of credit facilities for book-publishing, the problem of book distribution, marketing, warehousing, etc.
- (iv) Development of a strong library movement.
- (v) Problems faced in the production of books in regional languages.
- (vi) Coordination of the activities of various Central and State agencies in the area of book production.
- (vii) Determination of scope and criteria for Government intervention in respect of production of books.
- (viii) Recommendation of steps to promote reading habit among the people.

- (ix) Any other relevant aspect which the Working Group may think it necessary to add.

Modus  
Operandi

Although our membership represented different interests and expertise, the working group in its very first meeting decided to visit some States and Union Territories on a selective basis, and initiated wide ranging consultations with persons with particular knowledge and experience in the field.

The Working Group reviewed the reports available upto date, took into consideration the ongoing debate on the new education policy and held several consultations among themselves.

Evidence  
Gathering

The Working Group sent a questionnaire to all States and Union Territories which was distributed among various universities. A number of submissions received in response to the questionnaire were taken into consideration in writing the report.

National  
Conference

The draft report of the Group was discussed in a National Workshop representing different educational, intellectual and book publishing interest groups at the time of the World Book Fair. The Workshop generally endorsed the Report.

National Book  
Development  
Council

The Report along with the minutes of the National Workshop were placed before the NBDC. The Council generally endorsed the Report.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the authorities of all States and Union Territories, universities, institutions, authors, publishers and individuals who took the time and trouble to send us written submissions and also discussed with us their concerns and anxieties.

We would like to place on record our deep gratitude to Dr. D.P. Pattanayak, Director, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, who has made a major contribution to the articulation and formulation of the report and also for placing the office facilities of the CIIL at our disposal. I place on record our appreciation of his contribution as the Technical Director of the Workshop on National Book Policy.

We would also like to record our appreciation of the generous hospitality and kindness extended to us by Dr. B.L. Amla, Director, Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore, who made our stay very pleasant and comfortable in the Guest House of his Institute.

Our thanks are due to all the members who responded to our invitation and gave us the benefit of their experience. We are grateful to the members of the NBDC for their valuable suggestions.

Our acknowledgement of help and assistance would be incomplete if we do not also bring on record all the kindness, assistance and guidance we received from dear Krishnada - Shri Krishna Kripalani, Chairman, National Book Trust, India, who has unhesitatingly acceded to all our requests

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and also placed at our disposal the premises  
and staff of his Organisation.

Kanti Chaudhuri  
Chairman of the Working Group





## II. NATIONAL BOOK POLICY

### Preamble

India has a remarkable system and tradition of oral creativity. It has also a tradition of manuscripts and inscriptions. All these form the backdrop of discussion on books which are crucial for education and culture.

Print media is acknowledged as store house, generator and transmitter of knowledge and information. It is through the printed word that space and time can be transcended and enduring values of a community can be preserved and transmitted, thus ensuring continuity of history and tradition in a more significant form than that of the oral tradition. As the International Commission on Education has observed: "With more children going to school and adult literacy programmes developing, more and more people have learned to use the written word to express their thoughts, to communicate. Furthermore, the written word becomes indispensable when knowledge has to be structured and ordered, or information assembled for reference in convenient and permanent form."

Books are the barometer of the cultural and spiritual well-being of a nation. But the near famine of books for millions of children in the country, dearth of books for millions of tribals and backward communities and books reflecting their life style, imbalance in publishing as 50% of the titles are meant for 2% of the population, education imprisoned in single textbooks indicate a state of

health of the nation which needs instant attention. India, which represents a mosaic of languages and cultures, suffers as much from hunger of books as malnutrition. With a view to ensuring human resource development in the country it is necessary that a National Book Policy be spelt out.

#### Aims and Objectives

The aim of National Book Policy is:

- to promote quality literature at all levels of education, formal, non-formal and informal;
- to provide equal opportunities for education to all segments of the population and to ensure easy accessibility to books, particularly to the first generation learners and people of low-income groups, taking into consideration their interest, ability and aspiration;
- to promote reading habit, especially among the children;
- to promote creative authorship throughout the country, especially young authorship;
- to make provision for infrastructural facilities for the production, distribution and sale of books;

Keeping the above aims in view, the Working Group undertook a survey of the prevailing book scene in the country in the context of plurality of languages in order to ascertain the gap between

requirement and availability of books for various interests at various levels, especially keeping in mind the challenges of the new education policy which accepts life-long education for all as a master concept.

Accordingly, the Working Group undertook visits on a selective basis to Hyderabad, Bangalore, Mysore, Trivandrum, Kottayam, Port Blair, Calcutta, Aizawl, Imphal, Shillong, Guwahati, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Bhubaneswar and Bombay and discussions were held with Governors, Chief Ministers, Education Ministers, educationists, educational administrators, individual authors and members of Authors' and Publishers' Societies. The Group also visited Anthropological Survey of India, Office of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Group also met officials of the Banking Division of Ministry of Finance at New Delhi and the Reserve Bank of India at Bombay. In so doing, the Working Group had in mind (a) to visit some places with strong publication programmes, (b) fairly organised library movement, (c) strong author cooperative movements for publication and sale of books, (d) a fairly developed readership and urban authorship and (e) backward areas with tribal concentration, with almost non-existent infrastructural facilities for publication and sale of books, non-availability of local authorship, absence of requisite textbooks for different levels of formal education and non-existence of non-formal education due to lack of initial or followup literacy material

The Working Group did neither review in depth the programmes of a single institution such as the NCERT or NBT, nor did it especially review the governmental programmes in specific areas. It took into consideration all available facts, initiated wide-ranging consultations and developed an overview necessary for evolving a policy frame.



### III. THE LANGUAGE SCENE AND THE BOOK SCENE

#### The Language Scene

There are 1652 mother tongues in India according to the Census of 1961. Depending on how one counts there are between 200 to 700 languages. These languages belong to four language families and quite a few are unclassified. There are ten major script systems and a host of minor ones. This plurality however is not reflected in the education system. Only 58 languages are used as school languages. The three-language formula, which represents the national consensus is not faithfully implemented by all and there is growing intolerance of minor and minority languages in different regions. As the education system is structured at present, the higher one goes in the education ladder, greater seems to be the demand for lesser languages.

Indian languages must be used in education to develop an integrated Indian personality. They must be used as carriers of knowledge to millions of illiterate and uneducated people in the country. Hindi as the link language has to play a very special role in our national life. It is to be developed and propagated both as the vehicle of the composite culture of the country, as well as an officialese for inter-state and Centre-State communication. Hindi language publishing must be such that it can act as a model for other Indian languages.

The English language, being the Associate Official Language of the Union, is still the language

or one of the languages of higher education, State and Central administrations and an important language of mass media. As such it enjoys a higher status in the psyche of the country. The colonial heritage and the international patronage that this language enjoys naturally adds to its prestige. No wonder that about 50 per cent of the titles published in the country are English titles when the English knowing population constitutes only two to four per cent of the Indian society.

Discrimination, however unintentional, has adverse effect on not only how a child views himself but how the people see themselves. In order to correct the imbalances and give meaning to Indian Independence through education for all, it is necessary to encourage publishing in Indian languages. Unless and until mother tongue media become legally obligatory, book promotion as well as knowledge explosion at the grass roots level is impossible.

The classical language: Sanskrit has enriched all Indian languages irrespective of their family affiliation. It has been the cultural gold standard against which literatures in most languages in India have been measured. It has been the carrier of both great and little traditions in Indian culture and is responsible for the creation of these traditions in regional Indian languages. The early Indian contribution to philosophy, to mathematics, to grammar, and other branches of learning has been well documented.

Sanskrit has not only enriched the languages in South and South-East Asia and been enriched by their

contributions; it has also influenced the cultures of China and Japan.

Persian and Arabic also have acted as classical sources for the development of modern Indian languages and literatures. They have brought Islamic cultural traditions into India and enriched Indian thought.

It is essential that classical languages be given encouragement for a better understanding of one's cultural roots. In fact, subjects such as Ancient and the medieval Indian History and culture, Indian Philosophy, Archaeology, Epigraphy and Numismatics cannot be studied without one's competent acquaintance with classical languages. Since in the school curriculum, sufficient time is not available for the study of these languages, it is essential that companions for these subject areas in classical languages be prepared.

It has been hinted that all modern Indian languages contain in themselves an element of Sanskrit. It is, therefore, necessary to design courses, keeping in view the commonality of the classical and modern Indian language concerned, so that the study of such a book could enrich the mother tongue and give an entry into the classical language. The Central Institute of Indian Languages has produced two Sanskrit books, one for Indo-Aryan languages and one for Dravidian languages as models which may be emulated for preparation of further books.

Classical Tamil presents as rich heritage as classical Sanskrit. Elements of this should form part

of literary study in any Indian language and for this purpose necessary books should be encouraged.

India's contact with foreign languages such as French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic are due to a host of historical factors. In order to benefit from the past historical linkage and provide opportunities to the future generations to maximise their opportunities in a pluralistic world, it is important that provisions are made to translate books from those languages into Indian languages. It is also important that books in Indian languages be translated into those languages with a view to making Indian culture a part of the larger world culture and projecting our national heritage to the wider world.

The importance of translation of world classics also in the modern Indian languages needs no emphasis. Efforts should be made by concerned agencies to prepare a shortlist of world classics that could be taken up for translation in the modern Indian languages, beginning with the 7th Plan period. This suggestion is made because with the growing accent on scientific and technological literature the gap between classics and science and technology is growing. This is detrimental to the cultural roots of education.

Recommendation

In view of the above, it is recommended that:

--- the Ministry of Human Resource Development in addition to the existing schemes should formulate a scheme which would vigorously promote translations from classics (including world classics) and preparation of specialised books as indicated above.



In this effort, wherever possible, the association of the book trade seems necessary primarily for distribution and sale purpose.

--- the Ministry of Human Resource Development may also formulate a scheme for giving support to selected books of outstanding merit written in the Indian languages to be translated into foreign languages other than English.

--- In order that the foreign readers and publishers have an opportunity to be acquainted with the outstanding Indian language writings, it is recommended that synopsis of such works in English and other foreign languages be made available in International Fairs where India is participating. It is hoped that this would promote publication of translations of outstanding Indian works in foreign countries.

--- It is recommended that Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) formulate a suitable scheme for providing financial support for production of such books either through suitable publication grants or bulk purchase for distribution in foreign countries through our missions.

--- The ICCR may formulate a scheme to promote Indian authored books in foreign countries.

#### The Book Scene

The Indian book scene is not only diverse but presents many contradictions. India is the

third largest country in scientific and technological manpower and yet it houses 50 per cent of the world's illiterate population. It is the eighth biggest country in terms of publishing in the world and the largest book producer in the third world. Although it has nearly 15 per cent of the world population, it accounts barely for 3 per cent of the world's book titles. While the world per capita consumption is about 2,000 pages in the world's leading publishing countries, India accounts for around 30 pages. In terms of print run, the picture is not only dismal but also contradictory. In cases where there is captive readership, such as the Bal Bharati first book in Marathi, the print run is as much as 40,00,000, whereas in respect of any average book in an Indian language the print run is 1,000 to 2,000. India ranks third after the USA and UK in the production of English titles, while the English knowing population of the country accounts for 2 to 4 per cent. In a country where there are thirteen languages with history and literature spanning over atleast 1,000 years, and these are accepted as major State languages, the printing scene reflects that 50 per cent of the total titles are in English and all the other languages account for the remaining 50 per cent. What is more, while English titles are mostly non-fiction, Indian language titles are mostly literary in content. There are not sufficient books to meet the book hunger in different linguistic regions of the country.

The Working Group during its survey observed that excepting for two or three States where there

is some effort at production of quality children's literature, there is a dearth of children's literature in general in the country. Not to speak of multi-coloured productions, there is a near absence of any concerted effort to build up a core of children's literature which could be commonly read for pleasure throughout India, a vital necessity for the integration of the country. Translations from one Indian language to another are almost non-existent, although the National Book Trust has made some efforts at translating children's books from English and Hindi into several Indian languages. As regards supportive literature at school stage, almost no systematic effort has been made for production of suitable children's books, with the exception of one or two States where a beginning has been made.

A statement of the book scene is not complete without a reference to the existing market distortions. All over the country, and in the Hindi-Urdu-Punjabi region in particular, the market is flooded by cheap, popular paperbacks which while aiding in the creation of reading habits, presents materials ranging from outright undesirable to less than desirable. The less than desirable material is possible to market as most of it is poor quality production and non-royalty book. The abnormally high pricing which leaves a large margin of discount to bookseller in such cases and large space of manoeuvre in case of other publications adds to this distortion. It has, therefore, become necessary to take a serious view and adopt measures

so that bad books do not continue to drive out the good ones from the market.

Another aspect of this distortion is promoted by the misuse of OGL. In the name of education, science and technology, such books as nude photography, decorative gardening are imported, besides books which are dated in different subject areas. We understand that while in the previous year the exports exceeded imports, during 1984-85, the trend has been reversed. An argument has been advanced that there has occurred substantial hike in the price of imported books due to devaluation of rupee and also cost escalation in the countries of the exporter. It could be well said that due to these factors there has actually been no real increase in the number of imported books. While it is necessary to import paper or wood pulp to ensure availability of paper at reasonable prices there must be some constraint on the indiscriminate import of non-essential books. Although there is a limit of 1,000 books per title per importer, booksellers circumvent this restriction by importing the same title under different names. It is our understanding that 45,000 copies of a certain book on India published abroad have been imported during this year under different names of importers. Even though this is a quality publication, this example is illustrative of a malady which needs to be remedied.

In the following pages children's books and educational books have been discussed separately. It is however interesting to note that in public

schools, private enterprise holds sway and there seems to be no dearth of books for different levels. It is only where competition is stifled by public sector monopoly that complaints about non-availability of books are heard. Arguments about the quality of alternate books for the same level is a healthy sign. Such arguments, however feeble, are raised within the public sector itself. It must be borne in mind that the public sector grew out of a historical necessity to meet book needs at certain levels. The private sector, which stimulates the cultural efflorescence, creates a want for good books and tries to meet this want through its programmes. Both have significant contributions to their credit. It is, therefore, necessary to explore joint sector ventures in book production and dissemination, where the Government retains some control over quality and cost and the private sector assumes the responsibility for production and dissemination.

One way to move in the direction of joint sector is for the book trade to take initiative and set up a foundation as a cooperative effort of publishers and booksellers. Such a foundation dedicated to bridge the book gaps, whether in the area of children's books or specialised subject fields, could not only command government aid, but also mobilise creative authorship.

#### IV. CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

I) Children's  
Books (General)

Children of India are as diverse as the population of India. There are 169 million children of the school going age who would be out of school by 2000 AD. From among those who would come to school, a large majority of them would be first generation learners. The drop-out rate being 70-82 per cent by the end of the 7th standard, a substantial number of school drop-outs would have to be provided with books if they are not to lapse into illiteracy.

About 43 per cent of the Indian population is below 15 years and a little over 18 per cent are children below 6 years. There is an urgent need to produce books for 6 to 15 age group.

The growing literacy may present a rosy picture to the publishers about the number of books to be printed. It must however be noted from the outset that Indian readership is defined by language use. In the absence of a clear-cut language policy, a book policy is bound to be lopsided. In the face of growing identity-assertion movements, it is realistic to assume that there would be tremendous pressure in the coming years for publication in a larger number of languages reflecting diverse cultural traditions.

The needs and aspirations of children and their levels of reading readiness are different. The growing field of knowledge and the media revolution are bound to affect the range of interest and imagination of children. To write books which

will combine cultural rootedness with scientific exploration, excitement about one's tradition with avocation, will make demands on writers which would be difficult if not impossible to meet, if no policy initiative is taken to stimulate authorship.

We have a vibrant oral tradition linking Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit and the modern Indian languages which could be utilized in many ways for children's literature. Not only value-based entertaining stories could be retold and dramatised in the media and through books but the format using both prose and poetry as a narrative technique could be experimented with.

The hunger for knowledge of Indian children can be met if children's Encyclopaedias are published in all languages. Shri Binode Kanungo of Jnanamandal Foundation of Orissa has done highly commendable and pioneering work in this area. This and other such experience may be utilised for this purpose.

It is not realistic to expect that the level of creative writing would be the same or even comparable in all languages. It would, therefore, be necessary to embark upon a massive programme of translation/transcreation. Since any literary translation and more particularly translation of children's books cannot be done mechanically, it is important that eminent children's book writers are associated with or commissioned for translation/transcreation of children's books.

There is very little research in the country about children's language. The language of the adult writer of children's books is taken for granted as the language of children. Even the education system has seldom produced age and grade specific vocabulary and language control of children. The control of language of a child learning it as mother tongue and learning it as second and further language is different. There is urgent need of research in this area. Book publishers' associations, educational institutions and Government agencies for publication of children's books need to initiate action in this area.

Those children fortunate to be in school would need books both for compulsory and non-detailed study. In the talk about textbooks, most discussions seem to overlook the importance of books in general. Reading of unimaginative drab and uninteresting textbooks may, instead of stimulating interest in reading, inhibit it. Children's school books should not mechanically be produced by Board members and guide-book authors, but by creative writers in different subject fields. Only the best authors should be asked to write children's books. As PKM Mathew, in his article "What is children's literature" says, "Children think and feel; they wonder and they dream. Their lives may be filled with love and terror. Much is known but little is explained. The child is serious about life and adult activities. He lives in the midst of tensions, of balances of love and hate within the family and the neighbourhood. The author who can fill these experiences with imagination and insight, and communicate them



to children is writing children's literature."

One of the major problems in children's books is the cost factor. Unless cost is drastically reduced and books are subsidised, most children would go without books. Studies in different parts of the world show that possession or non-possession of books makes material difference to the quality of learning. It is, therefore, necessary to introduce incentive schemes which would permit bringing down cost.

Each District Library should have a children's section. Children's book production should also be linked with the rural library movements, so that the needs of rural children can be met. One of the ways of reducing cost is the central production of sheets and selling them to the publishers in different languages. This has its limitation, but can be easily done for informative books and for books with core value as commonality and integration as focus.

Children's books suffer from low standard of production and high cost. Low standard production is due to the information-laden content which neither excites imagination nor stimulates intellect. Its presentational factors leave a lot to be desired. Whether it is the paper, the type face, the illustration or the colour, there is little to attract the child. The high price of the book is blamed on the team work that goes into the production and on the cost of production. Many small publishers have made a business success of

their children's book trade. The children's books published by the Kannada Sahitya Parishad and the Jnanamandal Foundation of Orissa have been successful propositions. However, the print run of Nehru Bal Pustakalaya series of the National Book Trust has substantially dwindled. There is little justification for this in face of the fact that Soviet books at very cheap prices are being sold in remote villages. Chinese children's books have already joined the competition and are available in small towns. Lack of proper distributional channels for Indian children's literature is one of the reasons responsible for this sorry state. During the tour of the Working Group in the North-East and Andaman Nicobar Islands, their attention was repeatedly drawn to the non-availability of children's books. Thus it will be seen that while there is a crying need for books for children, the supply falls far short of the demand. A vicious circle is created due to the import of subsidised children's literature. They hurt Indian publishing. The Indian publishers cannot compete with such books either in cost or quality of production, faced as they are with high production costs. The Indian child naturally prefers the inexpensive attractive book and in consequence faces a cultural anomaly.

Story telling is becoming a vanishing art day by day. It is important to capture the art through 'talking books', so that even if grandmother cannot be revived, tradition can be transmitted in personalised packages. What is of equal importance is the translation of children's literature so that

a core cultural value system is generated. Today, translation is neither accepted as an essential professional skill nor are translators adequately remunerated. Not to speak of children's book translators' organisation, there is not even a Directory of Children's Book Translators. No country can aspire to maintain its culture without giving priority attention to its children. It is, therefore, important that suitable national and state agencies be created, existing agencies be renovated and voluntary sector be encouraged for the production and distribution of children's literature on a massive scale to meet the book hunger of children speaking different languages.

The Nehru Bal Pustakalaya of the National Book Trust has done outstanding work on a limited scale as also the Children's Book Trust and similar organisations in the States. It is time that the Central and State governments make a firm commitment to undertake, and assist children's literature in all Indian languages. For this purpose, a central organisation may be created to act as the nodal agency of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. This will ensure fulfilment of the dream of Jawaharlal Nehru and Smt. Indira Gandhi who had the love of children at heart.

In the perspective of books for all children in the next decade, it is recommended that:

Recommendations

--- The Central nodal agency as proposed above be registered as a separate society to act as the nodal agency of the Ministry of Human Resource

Development for children's literature. It should be made responsible for creating and translating books, for monitoring, coordinating, planning and aiding publication of children's books in all its aspects in all languages of the country.

--- The proposed central agency during the 7th Plan period should make a beginning to produce a children's Encyclopaedia in different Indian languages, where necessary through collaboration with other agencies.

--- The proposed central agency, apart from having representatives from different languages on its Governing Body/Board of Trustees and Advisory panels, should actively coordinate its activities with the State agencies with a view to aiding them in preparing and publishing books in the regional languages. Wherever such State agencies do not exist, the proposed central agency should promote and aid setting up of such agencies.

--- To reduce cost of production, enable simultaneous production of books in different languages and to improve distribution, the proposed central agency and the State units may explore collaborative publication programmes with publishers and offer sheet deals wherever possible. The cost of art work and processing involved in the sheet deals should be borne centrally. The publishers in their turn will be responsible for publication in the regional language and distribution and also for payment of agreed royalty to the author and to the translator.



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production programme may be undertaken for integrating them into the other streams constituting the national stream.

II) Children's  
Books  
(Tribal)

The plight of the tribal children, whose languages are not recognised and bulk of whom are non-literates and whom education has bypassed is, to say the least, pitiable. There has been no national effort to systematically survey and identify the educational and consequent book needs of this segment. In most of these areas the infrastructure for book publication is either non-existent or ill developed, and tribal authorship has seldom been encouraged.

The prevailing pedagogy inevitably seems to result in filling the minds of tribal children with the wisdom of the teacher, most of whom are non-tribal. Even if some of them are tribal, there is no material which links the local with the regional and the regional with the national. Any introduction of books without reference to the regional and the local, creates identity crisis and a sense of anomie among the children. The tribal children, while studying Indian history, are hard put to place themselves in the total context of the national history as the history books do not relate to them and their area. There are isolated instances, such as a book published in 1975 by the NCERT giving the biography of some tribal heroes, but these are exceptions. There was neither sufficient publicity to bring these books to the attention of both tribal and non-tribal children nor was there follow up in producing more of such books.

In the field of education bi-literacy and bilingual education have been suggested for linking various languages. While producing books for tribal children it is important to bear in mind that books in tribal languages have to be linked up with books for non-tribal children. Books on tribal culture should be made available for non-tribal children as much as books on non-tribal children be made available to the tribal children in a suitable format. After initial introduction to their own language, culture, mythology, etc., there should be books giving parallel or comparable examples from non-tribal regions and slowly integrating the tribal children with the larger Indian culture in stages.

Both for tribal and non-tribal children it is important to bridge the widening gap between classics and books on science and technology. Children today can enjoy traditional tales as well as tales regarding the exploration of the moon. Unless traditional culture is linked with the ever growing scientific culture, there would be growing culture perception blind spots.

#### Recommendations

--- In view of the above, in addition to the recommendations made about children's books, it is recommended that:

--- A tribal children's unit be formed in the proposed central nodal agency for children's books so that there is proper coordination in respect of books published for tribal and non-tribal children.

--- With a view to attracting local talent and authorship, it is necessary that infrastructure be created in the tribal areas through the proposed Central nodal agency. The infrastructure should include as a priority item setting up of printing presses in tribal areas.

--- Special funds should be made available to the proposed Central nodal agency to commission writing of books, as far as possible with the involvement of tribal authors, tribal artists and folk story tellers, for this would help in linking the local with the regional and the national.





V. TEXTBOOKS - EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING

Primary Level

India is one of the rare countries that have given Constitutional guarantee of primary education through the mother tongue. But this provision appears to be respected more in the breach than in its observance. Only 58 languages out of 200 to 700 languages are used as primary school languages. There is a fear that many languages may lead to the disintegration of the State. This runs counter to the inclusive spirit which finds specific role for each of the elements in a multi-cultural set-up. To find persons speaking one language at home and another outside, one language to communicate with neighbouring states and another for inter-communication in the Union, one or more languages for international communication, does not pose any conflict in the common man's logic. The school system which imposes restriction on the language use is responsible for the growing estrangement between the masses and the elite, alienated from its own roots. It is, therefore, important with a view to meeting the rising identity assertion of groups and providing a sound pedagogical base to education, that the Constitutional guarantee of primary education through the mother tongue be implemented. It is equally important that having chosen 13 major languages as language of administration, education and communication in States and Union Territories, the primary schooling be linked up with these

major languages in order to provide higher mobility as well as greater integration. A book policy at the primary stage must therefore aim at producing books in as many mother tongues as are needed to be instructed in, and provide linkages of those mother tongues with school languages at the next higher stages.

At the primary level, just as there are schools without roof, and there are single teacher schools, in respect of textbooks also there are schools without textbook, and there are schools with single textbook. There is also a major difference between the English-medium schools and the regional language-medium schools. While the children in the English medium have access to alternate books, the regional language children have seldom got a choice. In comparison to metropolitan children, the rural children also suffer from comparable handicap. In any case, a large proportion of our learners being first generation learners, it is important that many alternate books be made available to them if they have to be creative and innovative and have equality of opportunity. Taking into consideration the paying ability of the child, many of these books should be either provided free or so subsidised that all of them come within the buying capacity of the child. Single textbook tends to produce average learners as it is aimed at wide ranging abilities.

So far, most textbook production at the primary level has been nationalised. Books prepared by the Government certified authors have a captive readership. But they are not always high in quality and in presentation. If, for example, a State produces 35 or 40

lakh copies of a single book without reference to the home language of the children, their learning environment, the abilities with which they come to school, then such a book may prove to be a greater handicap to learning than promoting learning. It is therefore essential that alternate books, some of which are for supplementary reading, aiming at providing same and similar ability as the textbook, are provided.

In some areas, primary education either in full or in part is imparted in the home language of the children and thereafter the school language is introduced without any effort to link the two. It is, however important and necessary to produce linked textbooks, linking the home language and the school language in a bilingual primary education framework.

Primary education is neither acquaintance with the alphabets and words nor just writing composition. As the Newsom Report on Education in UK points out, "All pupils, including those of very limited attainments, need the civilising experience of contact with great literature and can respond to its universality." An American educationist once criticised the sequential curricula as "afraid to go where the feelings, perceptions and questions of children would take them." The inquisitiveness of children and the creative intellect trying to find expression takes them in diverse routes of exploration. It is therefore a crime to imprison them in textbooks. A National Book Policy must aim at the liberation of children of the formal schools by providing them with books which will free them from the society broken by narrow

domestic walls and release them into the universe.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that:

--- Within the 7th Plan period, efforts must be made to implement the Constitutional guarantee of providing primary education through the mother-tongue to the extent possible; and books in as many languages as possible, must be prepared so that even if the languages are not used in school, it would enable the children to have reading readiness before entering the school.

--- multiple books for each level, both as textbooks and as supplementary readers, be produced so that the learning child is given options to enhance the universe of discourse. As the same truth can be expressed in different languages, the same material presented in different ways enhances the coping ability of the child to operate in a multi-lingual world. For the purpose of experimentation, a book production unit may be set up in the proposed model schools contemplated under the new education policy under the overall supervision of the NCERT and other national language institutions to prepare such linked textbooks after trying the same in the school and in the neighbouring school. This indeed will be a pioneering work in the production of linked textbooks, linking the home language and the school language in a bilingual primary education framework.

--- In order to ensure a balanced relationship with the environment and development of scientific temper, it is necessary that the primary level books relate to the children's ecology, synthesise traditional wisdom with experiential science and speak to the child in its own language.

--- Textbook production, by and large, has been the charge of public sector since after the Independence. It was a necessity and that necessity still continues in view of massive illiteracy prevailing in the country and the recent accent on science and technology, informal and vocational education. We need also to remedy single-textbook-situation prevailing in the regional languages and the fact that more and more books are required for non-detailed reading in the present context of situation. Considering the enormity and complexity of the task, it is recommended that publishers in the private sector may be associated to fill in the publishing gaps in book production, especially, in remedying the single textbook situation within the parameters of the predetermined syllabi, approach and expertise developed by the specialised agencies.

--- Taking into consideration the above recommendations, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, through appropriate agencies, should formulate a well conceived scheme for funding such efforts, to be undertaken jointly with the governments of States and Union Territories and the Book Trade.

Secondary and  
Higher Secondary  
Level

The relationship between secondary and primary is such that it should build up continuous experience whether in languages or in subjects. Since no specialisation is aimed at, at the primary level, the secondary stage should aim at giving global education with basic competence in languages so that the learner can cope with various disciplines at the subsequent stage of experience and cope with

exigencies of life in case education is terminated at the stage. One of the important focuses of education at this stage, therefore, should be good citizenship education, education with focus on democracy, secularism and socialism as enshrined in the Constitution. While speaking about the need to develop "Scientific Humanism" the International Commission on Education observed that it was essential for science and technology to become fundamental, ever-present elements in any educational enterprise; for them to become part of all educational activities designed for children, young people and adults, so as to help the individual to control not only natural and productive forces too, and in so doing to acquire mastery over himself, his choices and actions; and finally, for them to help man to develop a scientific frame of mind in order to promote the sciences without becoming enslaved by them". Such education roots one in the culture of the country and at the same time gives one the ability to rationally look at life.

At this stage of education the three-language formula is implemented. It is intended to ensure abilities to operate at the intimate level, the proximate level and at the level of the Union and also to establish communication with the outside world. Languages are not only element of culture but also carriers of culture and education. In spoken and in written words they express and preserve what, in the words of Carlyle, 'mankind has done, thought, gained or been.' It is therefore important to conceive the whole school as a book environment for the learning child. Books in different languages should be so displayed that the physical contact of the child with the book will motivate learning.

It is in this context that the need for books at the secondary education stage has to be viewed. A look at the textbook scene shows that there is a single textbook per subject. While in English more options are available, in Indian languages the options are limited to one. The languages and literatures are taught in isolation. Although there are thirteen literatures in major languages of India, the other literatures seldom form part of regional literature studies. It is important to acquaint the learner at this stage with linguistic and cultural diversity existing in India.

Higher secondary stage is a continuation of the secondary, with vocational specialisation. It is a terminal stage for those who do not wish to go into higher education systems. As we proceed towards the 21st century we are confronted with ever increasing impact of science and technology in the infrastructures of industrial production. Preparation at this stage should therefore be not for a stable situation, a particular trade, or a given job, but for changing skills in newer jobs. For this purpose, understanding of the role of science and technology must form part of the learning process. For example, while principles of science are universal, technology is what results from interaction of science with society. Therefore, the learner must be enabled to anticipate the kind of technological change that is proper and that flows from the educational and other policy formulations. A study shows that in many industrial countries around the world, half the wage earners are

in jobs which were not available at the beginning of the century. Introduction of computers in India, for example, has brought about widening of opportunity at the highly skilled level, and shrinking of opportunity at the unskilled levels. Education at the higher secondary stage must be able to cope with such situations (a) by producing self study kits through which one can move from one level of skill to another, and (b) through the provision of alternate courses by educational institutions and industry which should give a wide range of choices to learners to choose from.

#### Recommendations

Having regard to what is stated above, it is recommended that:

--- the single-textbook situation in regional languages in secondary and higher secondary level and the near absence of technology books at this level should be remedied. The Ministry of Human Resource Development should prepare a well conceived scheme, which should be funded and implemented singly by the Central Government or jointly with the State Government, for (i) the production of more than one textbook in each subject in regional languages and make it possible for the teachers and students to choose from the books so prepared, (ii) the production of educational literature for technological education at the secondary and higher secondary level in regional languages, keeping in view the fact that science and technology should be integral part of this stage of education, (iii) preparation of instructional materials and reference books to meet the emerging needs of industry in the context of



fast changing technology and upgradation of skills of the learners to enable them to adjust their job in a situation of flux, (iv) encourage the production of books on science, which would mainly deal with demonstration of the principles and concepts involved with simple equipment.

--- In view of the challenging task as envisaged above, agencies, expertise and resources of book trade may be fully availed of in the production and distribution of such literature while ensuring quality, pricing and availability of the books.

The Undergraduate  
& Postgraduate  
Level

Indian higher education, modelled after the western institutions and educational theories, promotes uniformity and mono culturalism. Ignoring the diverse needs of its divergent populace living in different eco-cultural regions, it seeks to create an artificial, homogenised want for Western life style. This is reflected in the greater demand for lesser number of languages as one goes higher and higher in the ladder of education.

In the clamour for text books we have forgotten books. There is no single book from which non-Punjabis can learn about Punjabi culture. In fact, there is not a single book from which a Punjabi, Bengali or Tamil can learn about Indian culture. Arguments for translating foreign text books has been an argument for the perpetuation of mediocrity and obsolete knowledge. Today wisdom is lost in knowledge and knowledge in information. Unless the trend is reversed and a book flood in Indian languages ushers in knowledge explosion, higher education will continue to be an elitist fort and hasten the disintegration of the Indian society without offering a substitute.

The success of higher education in India can be measured from the fact that according to an UNCTAD study on 1971 base line, it exported to the USA alone 900 crores of rupees worth of trained manpower. While this is its strength, this is also its weakness. Indian doctors man health services in UK while there is only one doctor for 17,600 persons of rural population in India. In 1973, according to a study, 96,400 billion US dollars were spent in research in the world. Out of this, ninety-seven per cent was spent in the developed countries and only three per cent in the developing countries. Under these circumstances it is only natural that the developed countries will be the producers of theories and the developing countries consumers. Whether we like it or not, in the interest of developed countries themselves, books will be dumped into developing countries. The problem of developing countries is to catch against obsolescence and to make a concerted effort for the creation of books appropriate to their needs.

In this connection, mention may be made of the Centrally sponsored scheme of the former Education Ministry of giving Rs.1 crore grant to each State for production of university level books in the regional languages. This scheme was conceived for ensuring switch over to regional languages as media of instruction primarily at the undergraduate level and also in some subjects at post-graduate level. The States were also asked to maintain a revolving fund of the sale proceeds of these books in order to keep it an on-going programme. For non-State languages like Urdu and Sindhi, a separate Board for Urdu was constituted.

The constitution of a separate Sindhi Board, we understand, is under discussion. In the course of our discussions with State education authorities and book akademies, it was brought to our notice that in some areas, such translated books are selling well as they have been prescribed as compulsory reading whereas in some States there are huge unsold stocks of such books as they have to compete with other recommended books in the university syllabus. Some States have created a revolving fund while others have not. But the fact remains that there are many areas in which books are not available in regional languages at the undergraduate level. A scrutiny of the position of production, sale and stock of Hindi Grantha Akademi and similar agencies engaged in the production of books under this scheme, reveals that the performance in Hindi zone has been unsatisfactory in comparison to other Indian languages. The five Hindi Akademies who had been given Rs.5 crores, have published 1,326 titles whereas the ten regional languages have published 4,965 titles. While Kerala has published 865 titles and Gujarat 725 titles, Uttar Pradesh has produced 269 and Bihar 275 titles. It appears that there is lack of firm commitment at various levels of educational authorities for making such a programme effective which calls for a continuous effort to make it an on-going programme.

A further dimension is presented by the fact that most of the Indian universities have accepted regional languages as media of instruction

at the undergraduate level and some at the post-graduate level in Humanities and Social Sciences. They demand books of higher standard to be produced in regional languages. Even if English continues to be a predominant medium of post-graduate education, regional languages are used for explanatory purposes. It has, therefore, become essential to produce special books of post-graduate standard in the major Indian languages.

English is a national asset and its neglect can only be detrimental to the nation. English is expected to continue to be the medium and support of higher education and research for a long time to come. It would, therefore, be necessary to produce books on different disciplines for higher education and research, more particularly books in science, technology and other technical subjects in English. Since there is a time gap between the writing of a book in a developed country and its general availability to students in a developing country, very often books become obsolete because of knowledge explosion. Instead of reprinting or importing obsolete titles, it is necessary to conserve our limited resources by: a) keeping ourselves abreast of knowledge especially in the field of science and technology and b) acquainting ourselves with the outside world and let the outside world know of our resources, through translation into English. This assumes that there would be original writing in Indian languages on science, technology and technical subjects which, when translated into English, would be useful for consideration of higher education through English

medium and also presenting the view of Indian scholars to the outside world. Within India, English also plays the role of language of communication among the educated, the language of intellection, and to a limited extent, a language of creative efflorescence.

It is unfortunate that the classical languages are mentioned only in the context of the debate about the three Language Formula at the secondary stage. Classical languages, which provide rootedness in culture must form part of disciplines dealing with ancient and medieval Indian studies at higher stages of education. For this purpose not only language companions to philosophy, polity, and literatures need to be published, but treasures and wisdom existing in ancient texts must be made available in modern Indian languages.

Today higher educational institutions should assume larger responsibilities than just meeting their own academic needs. These institutions should produce books for under-graduate, higher secondary and secondary levels in collaboration with teachers of these stages, wherever necessary. Higher educational institutions can do a lot for stimulating authorship. By providing facilities for authors in residence these institutions can stimulate both creative and critical writing.

There are some higher educational institutions of learning/research which besides writing specialised monographs have also produced books for popularisation of science. The Vikram Sarabhai Space Research Centre (VSSRC) is one such

institution. The Prasaraṅga of the Mysore University is another. The Sastra Sahitya Parishad of Kerala and Maharashtra Vidyān Parishad have done commendable work in this direction. Such work should be given support so that a scientific temper is created in the country.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that:

--- A Working Group should be immediately set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development for a comprehensive review of the results of the scheme popularly known as "Rupees One Crore Per Language Scheme". The Working Group, besides examining shortcomings in the operation of the scheme, the reasons behind non-creation of a revolving fund and the large unsold stocks of the books, should suggest on a ten-year perspective basis a new scheme suggesting measures which would remedy the existing non-availability of books in certain subject areas and to ensure progressive utilisation of Indian languages for higher education.

--- Cells should be created in universities and specialised agencies such as the IITs, and institutions like Indian Institute of Science (IISC), Institute of Mathematical Science (IMSC), Vikram Sarabhai Space Research Centre (VSSRC), Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Central Food and Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) and such other bodies to produce monographs on identified specialised areas which could then be integrated into teaching and find place in revised

editions of books dealing with those subjects. Such monographs should be encouraged both in English and Indian languages.

--- In order to encourage such writing, provision should be made for substantial lumpsum payment to the author to make it attractive for him to find time for writing such books. Special incentive should be provided for the same author producing the book in English as well as in mother tongue.

--- Such institutions as mentioned above should also be enabled to provide opportunities to invite writers in residence. They should be asked to write books in their areas of interest both for scientific research as well as popular consumption.

--- For the dissemination of contemporary scientific and technological knowledge in particular, and contemporary knowledge in all subjects in general, it is important that efforts are made to strengthen and improve the standard and quality of the existing journals being brought out by universities and specialised institutions and to bring out new journals to bridge gaps in knowledge.

--- For enhancing reading of popular science and technology literature as produced by the agencies mentioned above, they should receive consideration for subsidy from Central and State agencies, whether published by the author or the publisher.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development through its specialised agencies should on a

priority basis take up programme for long overdue publication of a comprehensive history of India and also for its adaptation in concise form for study at school and college level. We further recommend that such agencies should widely circulate selected chapters for inviting comments before finalising the book.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should prepare suitable schemes for the implementation of the above recommendations.





VI. LITERATURE FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION  
AND LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

The Declaration of the 4th International Conference on Adult Education states that the right to learn is not a cultural luxury to come only after the question of survival has been settled; it is an indispensable tool for the survival of humanity. "The right to learn is the right to read and write; the right to question and analyse, the right to imagine and create; the right to read one's own world and to write history; the right to develop individual and collective skills." Whether it is for economic competition or for developing a scientific temper, whether it is for integrating the diverse population of the country, whether it is for the eradication of illiteracy or providing coping abilities to societies in flux, education must be a lifelong process and it has been so recognised as a master concept in the educational strategy of India.

Non-formal education can be viewed at two levels - one is the quasi non-formal system of open university and open schools where formal education is conveyed through non-formal means. The other is the non-formal adult education which includes inculcation of literacy, functionality and awareness among the illiterate population of India, both children and adults. In the words of Smt. Indira Gandhi, "Literature as a tool of development and eradication of illiteracy is

important both for the conquest of poverty and for healthy functioning of the government system. Efforts should be made to cover the entire illiterate population of the age group 15 to 35 under the adult education programme by 1990." According to an estimate there were 245 million illiterates in the age group 15+ in 1981. The number of illiterates in all age groups was 437 million in 1981. Therefore, it is important that basic and supportive literature is provided in different mother tongues linked with the major regional languages. Unless materials are produced in the home languages of people for initial literacy, literacy cannot be a successful popular programme. Unless linkages are built with regional languages it would not permit speedy participation of the illiterate persons in the socio-economic development process and they will lapse into illiteracy because follow up material is available to the highest level only in these languages.

Resource constraint is a major stumbling block in the path of adult education. The Central education budget is about 4 per cent of the total budget of the Government of India and the adult (non-formal) education budget is 2 per cent of the education budget. Any major breakthrough in book publishing for literates and neo-literates cannot be brought about without some restructuring of our education. As Bhatt and Rama Rao in their book Adult Education for Social Change point out:

"Considering the fact that more than a lakh of rupees are spent by the Government for educating each medical student who in all likelihood helps

urban population or foreign countries, it looks that with the money spent on each medical student, 1800 adults can be helped to become literate and in addition 60 villagers (instructors) can be provided part-time employment in socially productive sector and two unemployed undergraduates can also be employed for a year." Under these circumstances it is not at all surprising that adult education programmes are demonstration prone and not experiment oriented and consequently the book and non-book material for adult education is stereotyped and fails to provide motivation for change.

Educational  
Resources  
Centres

It is our view that if the concept of life-long education is to be meaningful, then experiments, innovations and preparations must begin from the elementary stage. It is recognised by all that literacy education and elementary education are mutually supportive and complementary. In view of the complexities of issues involved and the fact that a number of institutions must collaborate to make non-formal adult education a success, it is necessary to decentralise authority as well as initiative. It is envisaged that the new education policy will not only spur the rural library movement but link these with the people's movement for non-formal education and cultural regeneration. Thus the Gana Shikshan Kendras at the panchayat level would act as the Gana Sanskrita Kendra, bringing together folk communicators both for preservation of culture and spread of education. It is suggested that the Centre should establish District Educational Resource Centres in each State/Union Territory

which should bring to a common head activities of all agencies working in this area in a district, prepare and publish teaching learning materials for all situations, urban, rural and remote backward, and all stages of education (from pre-school to adult learning), and by drawing upon the resources of all educational institutions in the district, should not only provide good teacher training for non-formal, the primary and secondary, but also for higher secondary and undergraduate collegiate stages. Besides housing libraries they would hold camps of writers and oral communicators and aim at an appropriate mix of the two streams for purposes of non-formal education. The production of material so achieved should take full advantage of folk art forms of the region. To begin with, these may be set up in districts where model schools are being established under the new education policy.

The International Commission on Education in its report 'Learning to be' points out that "regional difference can reach such considerable proportions that figures relating to the educational situations in two different geographical sectors, for example, may vary by more than 50 per cent in relation to the national average for the same item." In case of adult education also the same wide ranging variation can be seen in different States. Even within a single State there is variation among the forward and backward communities and among tribal and non-tribal communities. If adult education is to be viewed as indispensable for realisation of the human potential, if it is to bring about

awareness among the multitude of people about their fast changing environment, then it must use the languages of the people both for vertical and horizontal communication of ideas. If the Chinese slogan 'Let the masses educate themselves' is to be used as a model for our mass movement, we must spell out a language policy to act in consonance with our book policy. Brecht once gave a clarion call,

"You must prepare to take command now!  
Locate yourself a book, homeless folk!  
Go search some knowledge, you who freezed!  
You who starve, reach for a book,  
It will be a weapon!"

If the language of command is unknown, if people do not know how to wield the weapon, then it will not only be an irrelevant burden, but will become a disincentive and a disabling phenomenon. It is, therefore, important that adult education material of diverse range in different languages of the people has to be prepared at the initial level which at subsequent higher stages has to be linked up with major regional languages. For the school leavers and the adult neo-literate, further help should not be a matter of chance. Literacy and education should not cease to be public responsibility.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that:

--- As a part of National book policy, funds should be made available for creation of basic and supportive literature. The Ministry of Human Resource Development may propose a suitable

scheme through which Central initiative can supplement local authority provision and voluntary private schemes in this regard.

--- Adult non-formal education can be a success only through dynamic use of a people's planning exercise. It requires local talents and local involvement to produce initial literacy material, create necessary motivation as well as successfully implement the scheme. It is, therefore, recommended that in order to coordinate this grass root level activity, District Educational Resource Centres should be created by the Ministry of Human Resource Development on an experimental basis in a few districts where model schools are proposed to be set up to begin with, which should draw upon the expertise available in the district level educational and cultural institutions on the one hand, link up with the State Educational Centre on the other, and provide direct stimulation to grass root level activity. These centres would be so designed that they act as the district library and study centre, district cultural centre emphasising folk and performing arts, and plan and stimulate education, formal, non-formal and informal. These centres could make use of the college and school students for literacy work, draw upon the local talent for preparing books both for literacy and followup material for neo-literates, and collect the oral tradition which could be used for such purposes. They could also be a supportive centre for improving school education by utilizing the resources of the colleges and improving college education by utilizing the resources of the universities and

outside talents. In order that these centres provide leadership for innovation and experimentation, they must be manned by persons no less than those qualifying as professors in universities.

--- The resources of the book trade should also be exploited in the operation of non-formal education programme.



सत्यमेव जयते

## VII. ON CREATIVE WRITING

Creativity, both scientific and artistic, depends on imagination. When the mind goes beyond the objective facts to experience the mysterious, imagination is fired and results in scientific invention and artistic creation.

India with its variegated ecology, cultural mosaic and rich tradition, has for thousands of years released the creative energy which has caught the imagination of the world. Today, due to a break between the cultural legacy and the contemporary life patterns, creative literature has failed to mirror the authentic and dynamic Indian personality. Viewing Indian life through the narrow prism of a middle class outlook, this literature has failed to touch the marginal, the down trodden and the tribal and capitalise on their creative potential. An oral historian, an instant composer, a creative narrator, and oral interpreter of an oral text are as much creative as a poet, dramatist, or a fiction writer. But as the enduring aspects of traditional Indian world view do not mingle and mesh with the contemporary sensitivities the stream of creativity tends to dry up.

It is in this context that creative writing grows anaemic in India. The Indian author today does not live in the exciting times of the freedom struggle which provided him with a cause which was a satisfaction in itself. It created a Tagore



and an Iqbal, a Premchand and a Subramaniam Bharati. Today's disjunction from the sources of traditional cultural values, pressure for building a transnational image of contemporarity which comes into instant conflict with the need to reflect the life style of the victims of history trying to assert themselves as subjects of history has added to the economic plight of the author. Frustration and lack of encouragement are eating into the vitals of creative writing. The large illiterate population in the country, the growing declining reading habit among the literate and the educated, the avarice of certain publishers running after a quick return, and the prevailing general apathy to the problems of the writer accentuates the plight of the Indian author.

There is hardly a creative writer of merit who can live on his earning as an author. An author, in order to earn his living must either take up a service or join a profession, thus making writing only a part time venture. In the process he gets further debilitated and even lost to creative writing for good.

It is feared that unless urgent steps are taken to remedy the situation, creative authorship is nurtured and young authorship is stimulated, the quality of Indian authorship will deteriorate beyond repair. The Universities, State bureaus of languages and Akademies have to do a lot in this direction.

One significant way to solve authors' problems is the authors themselves taking initiative to form cooperatives. The Sahitya Pravarthak Sangh, a writers' cooperative, reported annual sale during the last year to the extent of one crore of rupees where the government purchase accounted for only 35 lakhs, the rest being individual sale through their retail outlet. They also paid up to 40 per cent royalty to their authors.

The situation in the country is different in different areas. The problem of the major languages is different from those of emerging languages. Even among the latter those which have been recognised as State languages and have access to State patronage are on a different footing from those aspiring that their creative talents be recognised. Therefore, it is not only necessary to augment the limited existing promotional measures, but diversify them to meet the challenges of a rapidly transforming society.

#### Holding Writers Camps

Writers Camps provide mutual stimulation to authors and gives stimulation to young aspirants. Besides holding camps for bringing together writers of proven merit, it is necessary to hold camps in languages which do not have sufficient quality literature. Such camps should be held involving writers from regions wherever talents are to be stimulated. Such camps should also lead to translations from one language to another.

Translations not only enlarge readership but also stimulate authorship. It is of immense importance that creative writing of outstanding merit in the regional language is translated into other Indian languages as promptly as possible. This would go a long way in fostering regional understanding and developing national consciousness. It should be our effort that outstanding writing in any Indian language is translated and published in other Indian languages within a period of three months in journals and a year in book form. It is also necessary that in some of the new emerging languages where there is a dearth of quality books, translations could not only fill<sup>a</sup> gap for meeting the current academic needs but also stimulate authorship.

Constraints on  
Authorship

There are many constraints in the way of authorship which need to be removed. One such constraint is financial. In some states the royalty receivable by a Government servant who is an author is limited to Rs.1,500/- to Rs.3,000/- per title. The rest is appropriated by the Government. This is a positive disincentive to authorship and needs to be removed.

Another constraint flows from lack of mutually agreeable contractual obligations of publishers and authors. A model contract needs to be adhered to by publishers and authors contracting manuscripts for publication. As a code of conduct no publisher should ask a writer to sell his copyright on payment of a nominal lumpsum amount or to finance his own

publication. The publisher should inform the author about the number of copies being printed in an edition. If a publisher decides to remainder a book, the first option to buy the book at the remaindered price must be with the author. The publishers should pay an advance against royalty, not less than 25% of the total royalty of the edition, to author at the time of signing the contract.

Authors are central to any programme of book development. The Indian Copyright Act, 1957 as amended in 1984 contains specific provisions for giving more effective protection for the authors' rights. However, the existence of a National Law on authors' rights is not enough to guarantee effective protection of these rights. There is need for a strong and well-knit authors' organisation to back up that law so as to ensure its proper implementation.

III It is recommended that:

--- In view of the many problems faced by individual writers in regard to publication and promotion of their books, collection of royalty, and sale of their books, it is recommended that a National Organisation of Writers on a cooperative basis be established at the national level, with units at the State level. There should be no objection to any of the existing national writers' organisations assuming this role by modifying their mandate. The existing State level authors' cooperatives may, if they so desire, seek

affiliation with the national body and act as its State units. The Central Government or the State Government as the case may be, should contribute substantially to the share capital of such an organisation to the extent of not less than 49 per cent as has been done by the Government of Kerala in respect of the Writers' Cooperative there. In addition to the subscription of share capital the Central Government or the State Government as the case may be, should provide initially for a period of 10 years an establishment grant to meet the staff and contingent costs. Such an authors' organisation should have a broad range of functions. It should protect the interest of authors and act as their literary agent. Besides bringing out low cost quality publications, its functions may include preparation of model contracts for agreement between authors and users of their works, collection and distribution of royalties, provision of legal advice and assistance to authors, collection and dissemination of information relevant to the requirements of its members, promotion of sales cooperatives, and management of social benefit fund for providing relief to the authors in indigent circumstances. One way of creating a fund for this purpose is through royalty from public domain books, which has been so recognised by different countries.

Books in  
Public Domain

Central Government should legislate for the acquisition of copyright of books which go in public domain and lease such rights to publishers at a royalty of 3% . The amount so collected should

be utilized for the welfare of writers.

--- Agencies like Sahitya Akademi (State and Central), National Book Trust and such other literary and cultural organisations should hold camps of creative writers and performing artists with a view to encouraging creative literature in those fields. These camps should have participation from both languages with literary tradition as well as those aspiring to develop literature.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should sponsor a scheme which would aim at:

- i) Commissioning authors for writing books on specific regions, or life styles of different groups, or on specific cultural expressions.
- ii) Award publication grants to promising authors, preferably to young and new authors.
- iii) Institute fellowships for authors/writers in residence in universities who should be provided with housing facilities, monthly honorarium, secretarial assistance and contingency grants. Such writers in residence, besides doing their own creative writing, should be enabled to hold young writers' camps in which they should provide necessary guidance to promising authors.

--- It is suggested that the Ministry of Human Resource Development in consultation with the National Book Trust extensively revise the scope of Aadan Pradan publication programme and ensure that outstanding contemporary writing in any language is translated into all other languages. For this purpose, keeping in view the magnitude of the task, we recommend that the authorities concerned may work out a co-publication programme with the language publishers in the regions.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should evolve a scheme for publication of out-of-print books and classics. It should have a subsidy scheme for bulk purchases of exceptionally good literature in different languages of India.

--- Constraints on authorship arising out of the requirement to surrender part of royalty to the Government may be removed by abolition of such rules.

--- In order to ensure that all MSS of excellence, especially those of young writers do not languish unpublished, the Sahitya Akademi at the Centre and those at the State level should set up consultative panels of litterateurs of undoubted integrity to opine on the scripts submitted and there should be provision of funds for subsidising these on the lines of National Book Trust Subsidy Scheme. The subsidy could be given to the author or his publisher. On publication, 25 per cent copies of the copies printed be purchased by the State for distribution to the libraries as is the practice obtaining with

Punjabi Akademi of Delhi Administration.

--- With a view to encouraging authors' cooperatives, the Centre and the State Governments should purchase their shares to the tune of 49 per cent as has been done by the Government of Kerala in respect of the Sahitya Parvartika. The authors' cooperatives should also be given outright establishment and contingent grants annually for the initial period of 10 years. In return the authors' cooperatives should publish low-cost quality books, bring out literary magazines and stimulate young and new authorship.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should provide funds to the universities to create chairs for Writers-in-Residence. It would go a long way in exposing the young talent to the established writers and may also help in improving the cultural climate in the University Campuses. The Fellowships should provide for housing facilities, monthly honorarium, secretarial assistance and contingency grants, etc.

--- Every important language should have at least one annual award of not less than one lakh rupees for the most outstanding literary work of the year. The work selected should be purchased in bulk for distribution to the libraries and also should be translated in other regional languages on priority basis.

--- As a measure of promoting literary activity liberal income tax concession to the tune of 50 per cent of the amount accruing by way of royalty



should be exempted for the purpose of tax assessment.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should formulate a scheme to provide the creative writers liberal travel grants to undertake study tours in the country and abroad. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations should also formulate a scheme to provide travel facilities to young authors invited to participate in International Conferences, Symposia, Seminars, etc..



#### VIII. PROMOTING READING HABIT

It is important to emphasise at the outset that reading is not mere recognition of shapes and sounds, but a thinking process beginning from early childhood. The London Declaration 'Towards a Reading Society', adopted at the UNESCO World Congress on Books in 1982 declares: "We seek a world in which books are more readily available to more people, and in which the ability to read and the will and desire to enjoy the fruits of reading are more widely sought by all societies. We seek a world in which there are indeed books for all, but one also in which all can read and all accept books and reading as a necessary and desirable part of daily life. We look forward not merely to a literate world but towards a universal reading society". Reading habits have to be inculcated from the very childhood. At home story telling has been a tradition in many parts of India and this has helped comprehension and promotion of reading habit.

In his Report, A Language for Life, Sir Alan Bullock recommends that every school should devise a systematic policy for the development of reading competence in pupils of all ages and ability levels, (56-69; 71-90; 93-96; 171). Every school should have a suitably qualified teacher with responsibility for advising and supporting his colleagues in language and the teaching of reading. (148-149; 171). Every child should spend part of each day in reading

and pre-reading activities. The teacher should give each child individual attention several times a week, helping him with his reading and keeping a meticulous check on progress. (7.31; 17.8; 17.12). At the school, unfortunately no distinction is made between teaching a language, and teaching about a language and teaching through a language. Therefore, skill-based teaching of languages in which reading would form a major component has been grossly neglected. Reading does not even form part of teacher's training curriculum. As Bullock rightly observes, it is unrealistic to expect every child to be a competent reader on leaving the infant school. But the foundations of reading should be firmly laid there and not left until the child reaches junior school (2.28). In order to develop this skill from childhood it is important that the story telling tradition is introduced in the school. For this purpose the media, both radio and television, could also be exploited. Introduction of a reading hour at the early stages of education would add to the inculcation of reading habit. Rewarding a child who reads more books would be a positive incentive.

Possession or non-possession of books makes a difference to the quality of reading. It is, therefore, important to see that at the beginning stages a child is provided with alternate reading material. Unless such material is interesting, it may discourage reading. Bullock Report tells us that, "In the middle years there should be an emphasis on (a) reading

for pleasure and personal development, and (b) extending the pupils' reading from the general to the more specialised. (8.1)". Nearness to a library makes books accessible and promotes reading habit. Book Fairs, mobile libraries and book clubs, all contribute to the growth of reading habit and creation of a reading society.

It is recommended that:

Recommendations

--- Every school should make a systematic arrangement for development of reading competence for all students of all ages and ability levels within the school curriculum. For this purpose it is recommended that every school should have a classroom library with multiple copies of books suitable for that particular class. The teacher should encourage discussion among students on the books they have read. Awards should be instituted for children reading maximum number of books over a period of time.

--- Teaching reading should become part of teacher training curriculum for developing ability in teachers to guide students to read.

--- Story telling and poetry recitation sessions should be an essential part of primary education which should also be an important activity of all book fairs and integration camps, such as national service camps, national integration camps etc. The media should organise story telling sessions.

--- In secondary schools the reading session/library period should promote guided reading as part of the curriculum. Besides loud reading and recitation, silent reading and comprehension should be encouraged.

--- We recommend that mobile libraries organised by State education authorities, authors'/publishers' cooperatives, and the proposed District Education Resource Centre, should augment libraries in schools and should open facilities for schools without libraries.

--- Radio and Doordarshan authorities should allot time every week for review of best books of the month in English and regional languages and outstanding works should also be serialised by them in dramatic or narrative form. The Radio and Doordarshan should allot time for reading from the writings of eminent writers. We also recommend that Government may provide funds to agencies like the Information Divisions in the Centre and the States to commission reviews of outstanding books and circulate these to newspapers and journals for publication. Publishers' Associations should also bring out journals of book reviews.

--- District book fairs for promotion of reading habit should be held. In this regard, the National Book Trust, besides holding World Book Fair, National Book Fair, Regional book fairs and State book fairs should financially assist voluntary organisations/institutions willing to

organise the District level Book Fairs. Such fairs should have children's corners where story telling should form an essential feature.

--- In view of the vast territorial distances book clubs go a long way in reaching reading materials to the interested readers in far-flung towns and villages in the countryside. One reason why book clubs have not made headway in India is the high postal rates which makes books beyond the means of an average reader if received by mail. It is recommended that the writers and publishers cooperatives, other voluntary agencies and institutions be encouraged to set up book clubs. Reading habit can be promoted by the publishers through the introduction of schemes like Book of the Month club and advance payment of 'classic serial', etc.

In view of the fact that the language as well as the content of language textbooks are generally uninteresting and more often than not beyond the comprehension of the reading child, it is recommended that a review of language textbooks in different parts of the country be undertaken by competent authorities. It is also recommended that the reading habit survey is undertaken in the country with a view to planning remedial measures.

## IX. CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLISHING

In the course of our survey and discussions we found that the main obstacle that hindered publishing industry appeared to be lack of adequate finance, rising cost of paper which accounts for 70 per cent of the cost of production of books, and inadequate outlets for sale. The inadequacy of sale outlets is especially felt for books produced in the public sector and by the publishers of books in Indian languages, even though for such language publishers there exists vast potential market in semi-urban and rural areas in the country. Non-availability of adequate finance is also a constraint for pre-publication sales promotion work. The Working Group came across a situation in West Bengal where in spite of availability of large grants to public libraries and rural libraries, the West Bengal publishers, by and large, could not supply the required number of copies against firm orders. This was so because they could not in a short time organise their publication programme to meet the sudden demand for lack of adequate finance. Besides, every hike in postal rates affects sale of books by post.

In our recommendations relating to publication of academic and non-academic books, as well as in our recommendations for promotion of authorship, it is visualised that the private publishing industry would have to assume a larger

role in the matter of publication of books. The Federation of Indian Publishers, in a letter to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, have made a strong plea that Government give particular attention to the problem of financial constraints they have to face in book publishing. The letter states: "Of all the media Radio and TV are fully subsidized by the Government. Newspapers and periodicals earn a substantial amount of their revenue from advertisements. Cinema and Books are the only two media entirely dependent on sales of their product. Surprisingly the Government thought it fit to set up a Film Finance Corporation (now the National Film Development Corporation) and ignored Publishers' pleas to set up a Book Finance Corporation." It is time that constraints including financial constraints that exist in the promotion of publishing industry should be removed as early as possible.

The major serious constraints which the Indian publishers face is non-availability of finance. The average print order of a book is around 1 to 2 thousand and for multi-volume books like encyclopedia etc. the print run would be around 5,000. The normal production cost of 160-page book with 3,000 print run will, on an average, be around Rs 25,000. In the case of multi-volume encyclopedia it will be around 2 to 2½ lakhs. The cost of production includes a) payment of royalty to the authors, b) cost of translation in the case of translated books, c) paper, d) printing, e) Designing/Block Making and f) Binding. In the absence of adequate



financing, the publishers either postpone or abandon publication of slow moving serious books.

Books, unless they are textbooks, are a slow selling commodity. Publishers in India therefore are unable to find adequate finance to take up for production a large number of books because they have to wait per force for the return of a substantial portion of the amount they have invested in production of earlier books. In fact, what is happening is that they abandon taking up new projects. Our inquiries indicate that normal bank finance facilities are not available to them unless they provide collateral security. Banks do not consider that the books are acceptable co-lateral security. Since the nation has accepted as a general policy that no worthwhile project will suffer for lack of finance, it is our proposal that funds to the publishers should be made available at a concessional rate of interest. Such finance should be made available either through Book Finance Corporation or through Nationalised Banks and the loan should be treated as an unsecured advance but the books so produced could be pledged with the Bank. The loan could be granted on certification by competent authority as may be designated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development that the project of production of books as submitted by the concerned publisher is a sound project. The project should indicate the expected sale of the entire stock within a reasonable period of time (around two years). The pricing policy and assurance of access to facilities for quick printing and binding and

having adequate sale outlets have to be clearly spelt out in the project.

In the matter of certification of a project of book publishing submitted by a publisher who seeks loan advances from banks, the certifying authority would undoubtedly be given by the Government of India a set of guidelines to follow. The guidelines would indicate certain considerations to be kept in view such as priority to be given for production of children's literature and literature for tribal children, works of young authors below the age of 30 years, works of fiction/non-fiction on matters relating to popular science, especially subjects relating to new discoveries, monographs written by specialists and other publication programmes in which books by Indian authors are not available etc.

In the end our proposal is that the Reserve Bank of India having considered the necessity of providing finances to the publisher, may give necessary directions under the provisions of Indian Banking Regulation Act to provide finance on the terms mentioned above:

It is recommended that:

Recommendations

Book Financing

--- Book Finance Corporation should be established in the matter of making available loans to publishers on the terms discussed below,

alternatively the nationalised banks be directed by the Reserve Bank under the relevant provision in the Banking Regulation Act to handle such loans. The Working Group prefers the banking industry to handle these loan arrangements because of their having branches all over the country.

--- The credit facilities should be available to cover publication of book projects as certified by the competent authority on the basis of guidelines stated earlier at low interest rates, say at 6 per cent per annum. The advance to be made should be treated as advance against manufacture as also advance against orders.

Credit facilities should also include financing for the payment of advance against royalty to the authors as a first charge on the loan as soon as the contract is signed.

Credit facilities should be available also for the following purposes:

For the purchase of Mobile vans by publishing industry, authors' and publishers' cooperatives, universities and institutions for purpose of organisation of mobile library service, book exhibitions and sales counters in rural areas.

--- The schedule for the repayment of loan on capital account should be spread over a period of 5 to 7 years.

--- Loan repayable in 12 monthly instalments may be made available to small publishers for paying royalty to authors on the basis of list of authors and royalty payable to them certified by chartered accountant.

We are happy to record that we had discussions with the concerned authorities in the Banking Division of the Ministry of Finance at New Delhi and on their advice with the Chief Officer, RCPD in Reserve Bank of India at Bombay. In the course of our discussion we urged that the designated banks situated at the State headquarters of each State may be advised to offer credit facilities <sup>for books</sup> as mentioned above, on project basis on the certification by duly constituted committee for such projects. The Reserve Bank officials mentioned that hitherto books have not been included in their priority sector for advancing of loans at concessional rate of interest. They are however at this juncture reviewing their existing policy relating to advances to priority sector and also assessing re-allocation of funds to this sector. They agreed that while so reviewing, they would certainly take into consideration our suggestion for inclusion of books in the priority sector and advancing of loans as suggested in our discussion. We found the authorities of the Banking Division of the Finance Ministry and of the Reserve Bank of India very understanding and helpful in their attitude towards financing book publication programme.

### Cost of Paper

Another major constraint which does not allow the book trade to bring down the cost of production, is the high cost of paper and short supply of paper with requisite grammage. Paper mills do supply some concessional paper for textbook publishing but the facility is not adequate and is also not available for general academic books. The resultant high cost of books does affect sale of books. It must be recognised that high cost of paper leads to the reduction in the number of titles and number of copies produced.

### Recommendations

While the Ministry of Commerce may be further approached for persuading the paper mills to bring down the cost of paper to the extent possible, in a situation of escalating costs in all sectors of production and distribution, it is recommended that:

--- Out of foreign exchange the book industry generates from the export of books, the Central Government may import paper through the Hindustan Paper Corporation at least to the extent of fifty per cent of the foreign exchange so earned, for supply to the private publishers. This will bring about an element of discipline in the pricing of indigenous paper. The allocation of paper quota to publishers could be made on the recommendations of the publishers' associations.

--- In the matter of import of paper, dried pulp import under the existing trade agreements may be given priority.

### Postal Rates

A major difficulty in the promotion of books has been making available books through mail order to individual buyers throughout the country, reader-members of home libraries or book club movement throughout the country. This movement is yet to grow in India. One estimate suggests that only 50,000 people in the country are enrolled as members of book clubs. It is imperative in the context of government's firm commitment to the removal of illiteracy by 1990 that such movement gets a filip. But the main constraint in the wide circulation of books and in the development of book club movement is the annual hike in the postal rates. It is understood that the Ministry of Human Resource Development and also the representatives of book publishers' associations have already discussed this aspect with the Union Minister of Communication and are awaiting a favourable response. The Working Group took up the matter with the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, New Delhi and they in their letter No.1-28/85-R dated 2 January 1986 replied that "while we appreciate the difficulties faced by the publishing industry in the transportation of books by post, at the same time, we have to take into consideration the cost of operation of the service. We have been incurring a loss on the service of "Book post containing printed books" amounting to 2 crores in 1982-83, Rs.2.6 crores in 1983-84 and now Rs.3.7 crores in 1985-86.

With these increases in loss year after year, it has become practically impossible to continue the service at the existing rates of tariff. We regret our inability to extend any concession with regard to the tariffs for this service." We realise that the postal authorities are incurring heavy losses. The Working Group did not have the opportunity, for want of time, to discuss about the feasibility of rearrangements of postal rates in a way which could put enhanced postal rates on certain items which could take such tariff rates for despatch by post so as to balance the loss incurred on books while continuing the most favoured treatment in the matter of postal rates for books despatched by mail order upto a ceiling of Rs.50/-. We, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry of Human Resource Development should get the matter considered at the highest level in the interest of promotion of reading habit throughout the country. We maintain that the postal authorities should consider to offer a most favoured treatment in the matter of postal rates on book despatch by mail order by charging concessional rate on VPP packet upto a mail order ceiling of Rs.50/-.

#### Delayed Payment

Uncertainty in the release of grants and delay in the payment of bills for books supplied to the Government Departments and libraries are also a serious constraint in publication of books, as it holds up investable capital. It is recommended that all payments against supply of books be made within 60 days after the receipt of bills/books.

#### X. DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS

Distribution of books is the weakest link in the chain of book publishing. So far the language publishers have not tapped the potential market in rural areas of India and have remained satisfied with their sales in the cities and larger urban areas-where there is a demand. The public sectors who have near monopoly of textbooks and have wide ranging publication programmes have also not succeeded in reaching out to the readers living in different parts of the country. During the visit of the Working Group to different States, it was pointed out by various State Governments and user agencies that even books of the NCERT and NBT were not readily available to them.

Many suggestions have been made for the setting up of a Book Distribution Corporation. We are convinced that centralisation of distribution could be counter-productive and would not lead to proper distribution of books. It is, therefore, our recommendation that multiple agencies be encouraged to create warehousing facilities and sales outlets. Opening of kiosks in important railway stations, bus stands and public places in different parts of the country would help <sup>in</sup> reaching out to the potential readers. It is, therefore, suggested that the National Book Trust, the proposed National Union of Authors, the authors and publishers' cooperatives in the Centre and in the States, the State authorities connected with book publishing should take steps to establish



regional warehousing facilities. Such facilities would not only ensure movement of books by rail in bulk and thus reduce the transportation charges but would facilitate supply of books to rural area.

Before one creates new avenues of distribution it is important to strengthen the existing book selling trade. Book sellers are a neglected lot, sometimes harried by the wholesaler or publisher directly supplying books and sometimes by a combination of factors including rising postal rates, low sales, prevailing corruption and lack of adequate quality publication. His protection is also a protection of authors and publishers.

We are convinced that it is beyond the reach of a single private publisher or a book seller to organise sales outlets throughout India. It is only through joint venture of quality books at reasonable prices can be ensured.

#### Recommendations

Keeping all these in view, it is recommended that:

--- Central/State Government should support any scheme of private sector and public sector for cooperative distribution which should envisage a well thought-out action plan for establishing retail depots, for sale of books through a sales representative/agent on salary and commission basis. Such organisations

should also be encouraged to run book mobiles, book clubs and organise local book fairs. Due care should be taken by such cooperatives that they do sell quality literature.

--- Important railway stations/bus stands are major points for sale of books. Such cooperatives should be encouraged to set up book stalls in railway stations/bus stands.

--- The Central/State Government should provide funds to such cooperatives, initially for a period of ten years for meeting secretarial costs and also for annual contingent expenditure. Centre/State Government should also provide loans to such cooperatives, to be repayable within a specified period to help them to have the necessary working capital. The repayment of such loans will be the first charge on the profits of such cooperatives.

--- The National Book Trust in cooperation with other National publishing agencies or on its own, should, to begin with, as a pilot project, over a period of time, develop show room and warehousing facilities in few district headquarters in each State/U.T. It could organise such warehousing either by hiring space from the State Warehousing Corporation where it exists or hire suitable building for this purpose. The National Book Trust could also arrange for warehousing of other private publishers' and booksellers' books on payment of charges at commercial rates for such

warehousing. National Book Trust should employ field representatives for sale of their books on commission basis from the warehouse, each one of them operating in a particular area of the State assigned to them. The commission should be so calculated that it may become possible for an unemployed graduate to earn on the basis of reasonable sales a commission of at least Rs.1,000/- a month. They will be commission agents and not direct employees of the National Book Trust. For the purpose of appointment of such commission agents one should look for young educated unemployed, teachers of schools, suppliers of newspapers and magazines operating in the locality.

--- The Ministry of Human Resource Development may conduct a market survey, through consultancy agencies such as the Tata Consultants and the Lever Brothers who have wide retail agencies in rural areas with a view to ascertaining sales potential through various outlets.

XI. LIBRARY MOVEMENT AND BULK PURCHASE  
OF BOOKS

A book environment is a necessary condition of learning. Therefore, in addition to State-Central and District-Central libraries, it is important that libraries/book corners no matter how small, are provided in each primary school upward in the formal education system. If books are to become central to the process of learning and not an occasional aid, then it is necessary that a minimum selection of books comprising encyclopaedia, a good dictionary and an atlas, a collection of books covering subjects of children's interest and touching on major areas of curriculum, books of fiction and non-fiction should be made available in each primary school. These localised resources should be supplemented by a central collection which might also include non-print materials of various kinds. The District Education Development Centre that we have proposed may, through its mobile library-cum-sales counter, assume the responsibility of circulating books among a number of schools as well as Gana Sikshan Kendras so that there is a constant replenishment of stock and the children come in contact with new books.

Many of our secondary schools, not to speak of class libraries, do not have even school libraries which could meet the demands of students. In secondary schools, in addition to

information books, books of general knowledge and a good supply of fictional materials for young students must become a necessary part of the school library.

The University Grants Commission makes available direct grants to the universities in every Plan period for the purchase of new books. This grant does assist the universities to augment the book supply in their libraries. But this is inadequate for acquisition of books of self teaching with the help of video/ computers, cassettes and books at an advanced level dealing with unconventional aspects of subjects. The colleges which are by and large dependent on State grants get from 1,000 to 3,000 rupees by way of annual grants for their library expenditure. This in itself is inadequate. At the time of economy it is the first casualty. Therefore, most colleges have inadequate library facilities or no library at all.

In the matter of public libraries in urban and rural areas, efforts were made in the beginning of our first Five-year Plan to establish State-Central libraries. Many such libraries came into being. Some States do not yet have State-Central Libraries. The main constraint in setting up of such libraries was the inadequacy of financial outlay.

The rural library as the rural information centre, the rural museum and the rural recreation centre need to be developed as a focal point for non-formal education. They may provide pre-recorded readings of books, radio and video programmes, in farming and health care, hold regular book and newspaper reading sessions for illiterates and neoliterates, hold film and slide shows for education and requests/complaints to the appropriate governmental agencies and voluntary organisations, and act as the focal point for collection and preservation of folk forms, arts, music and oral literature. This could be the reference point for educational material production, both formal and non-formal, at the grass root level.

There are two ways of financing public library movement - one, through annual appropriation from public funds; and two, from the imposition of special library cess through appropriate legislation. The developed countries have adopted generally one of these two methods for financing their libraries. In a country like India, where libraries are growing and expanding institutions, and require increased recurring grants, it is necessary that Government, whether Central or State, should take recourse to both the ways of financing library movement, i.e., by way of appropriation annually of specified funds in the budget for library development as well as by imposition of a library cess on land revenue, property tax, excise duty etc., through library legislation. The Advisory Committee for libraries set up by the Central Government in a report, inter alia, strongly

pleaded for library legislation in each State. According to their report, the library law should provide for the following:

- a) Free public library service with the following objectives:
  - i) to house materials giving reliable information and for wholesome recreation.
  - ii) to organise them so as to promote their use.
  - iii) to stimulate non-readers to become readers, and readers to be purposive students.
- b) Imposition of a library cess to be levied by the State Government, local bodies and Panchayat.
- c) State Government should aid the local bodies by a matching formula.

Such library legislation, however, has not been enacted by many States except Tamil Nadu (1948), Andhra Pradesh (1960), Mysore (1965), Maharashtra (1967), and West Bengal (1979). It is also felt that keeping in view the rising cost of books, Centre or State Government should appropriate at least 10 per cent of the annual expenditure spent on education for library development.

Our survey shows that the allocation of funds generally by the States for development of library service from their general revenue is very meagre.

Most of the money so allocated is spent on overhead expenditure other than books. Some States like West Bengal which are exceptions, are not entirely dependent for financing library movement through library cess; they make a regular appropriation in the State budget. In West Bengal, in addition to the State library, district libraries and sub-Divisional Libraries, it was reported, every block has five rural libraries. The State Government makes an annual grant of Rs.25,000/- to the State library, Rs.10,000/- to each district library, Rs.5,000/- to a block library. This ensures a steady purchase of books by these libraries.

Our attention was drawn to the fact that library purchases in some States are confined to authors and publishers from the State. This is unhealthy in so far as it bars quality books from other areas coming to the library and also acts as a barrier against national integration. Some States buy only Government publications and publication by Government aided agencies for their libraries. This militates against acquisition of quality books.

It was also represented to us that in the matter of purchase of library books, the purchase committee should consist of eminent persons from various disciplines and eminent writers. The list prepared by such committees should be published in the gazette or in the local newspapers for public information.



Having regard to the fact that finance is the major bottleneck in the development of a vigorous library movement and the fact of Government's commitment to the removal of illiteracy by 1990, it is recommended that:

Recommendations

- 10 per cent of the annual education budget of the Centre and States should be allocated for the purchase of books in libraries.
- Central Government should persuade all State Governments to pass Library Legislation as early as possible.
- Due care should be taken to set up high-powered purchase committees by the concerned agencies for periodic preparation of list of recommended books at least twice a year to be purchased by the public libraries and such list should be publicised from time to time.
- As a matter of policy, specific State funds should be allotted for purchase of books translated into the State language and for books of local authors translated into other languages.
- The Ministry of Human Resource Development should initiate a scheme for financing on a matching basis to enable all State Governments to set up at least four to five rural libraries in each block during the plan period.
- At least 80 per cent of the book grant should be earmarked for purchase of books by Indian authors. Further, it is recommended that 25 per cent of the total book grant should be utilised for purchase of children's literature.

--- Consideration in the matter of purchase should be given to books produced by authors' cooperatives and small publishers, provided they are adjudged books of quality.

#### Multilingual Libraries

All States and Union Territories of India are as multilingual as the Union. With modernisation of the society, it is visualised that there would be considerable movement of people from one region to another. It is, therefore, recommended that the Central Government in collaboration with State Governments may establish at least one multilingual library in each State.

#### National Bibliography

National bibliography is an important feature of library activity. Such a bibliography can only be prepared if the provisions of the Delivery of Books Act as currently obtained are faithfully implemented. We understand that a committee of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation is already looking into this matter. We would like to recommend to them among others, the following suggestions to consider:

- a) In view of the mounting postal charges, in the matter of delivery of books to 4 national libraries the postal charges should be borne by the receiving libraries.

- b) Provisions in Delivery of Books Act and Registration of Books Act should be reviewed with a view to reducing the number of free copies of each new title to be deposited by the publishers.

Libraries and Book Shops in Urban Complex

It is important that in any new urban development the project must compulsorily provide for building of libraries, reading rooms and book stores at the cost of the project. If necessary, suitable legislation may be enacted for the implementation of these recommendations. In the existing urban housing complex also provisions could be made for such services.



## XII. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

### Mobilisation of Resources and Tax Concession

--- A prevailing view is that apart from the budgetary provision, resources for book promotion and other educational effort always remain limited. Consideration should therefore be given for raising of resources through (a) Imposition of additional cess on excise, entertainment, import, land revenue at a graduated scale and (b) Raising of public donations by giving incentives such as tax concession.

--- A continuing discussion at the present moment is for curbing consumption by the imposition of an expenditure tax while giving relief on Income Tax. If a fragment of such expenditure tax, when imposed, could be diverted for book promotion, libraries and educational development, then supporting finance would be found for new projects and programmes in these areas.

--- It is also recommended that individual and corporate purchase of books be exempt from Income Tax.

### Registration of Publishers

The National Council of Applied Economic Research in their report on small publishing units have, inter alia, recommended that: "It is necessary that the publishers be registered with an appropriate authority and they file

annual returns giving details of their publications, sales, financial structure, employment, etc. For this purpose, a Book Publication Unit may be created under the Union Ministry of Education, with corresponding State-level units. The Units, in turn, can keep in touch with the publishers to look into their problems and help them from time to time on matters such as the sale of books to government agencies, exports and the available incentives and concessions."

In order to safeguard the interests of authors and bring about an orderly organisation of information relating to all publishers and publishing in the country, it is felt that registration of publishers is desirable. Existing registration of public limited book companies with the Registrar of Companies is inadequate. Small publishers, publishing books on individual initiative, on partnership basis or those publishing under different names are not covered by the above. Any comprehensive and compulsory registration will require legislative action by the Centre/State Government. The Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation established by the Government of India has already set up a Working Group to look into the feasibility of suitably amending the Delivery of Books Act 1954 in order to make it more effective. Book delivery could not be made comprehensive unless a complete inventory of publishers is available.

Recommendations

We, therefore, recommend that this aspect of registration of publishers be referred to them for consideration from the point of view of feasibility of having a provision of compulsory registration of publishers in the proposed amending legislation.

Development of Editorial Skills

One of the major deficiencies in book publishing is the lack of editorial expertise. In order to create a cadre of editors, particularly in Indian languages, it is recommended that Publishers' Associations in collaboration with expert institutions like the Central Institute of Indian Languages should organise training camps in order to provide expert editorial experience to selected persons who have aptitude for such work. The National Book Trust should also take initiative in organising and funding such camps. Taking into consideration all aspects of book publishing, it is recommended that an Institute of Training and Research in Book Publishing may be set up.

Translation

Translation, among other things, serves two major functions, namely, National Integration through translation from one Indian language to another, and International contact through translation from world languages to Indian languages and vice-versa. The Working Group noted that in spite of great need for translation in a country as diverse as India, there is not a single institute of translation. Translators are neither given professional recognition, nor

are they paid adequate royalty. It is, therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Human Resource Development give priority attention for setting up a National Institute of Translation and Interpretation, where not only theories of translation would be taught but also expertise would be developed for simultaneous interpretation and translation of books from one language to another. Such an Institute would solve the need of translators and interpreters in State Assemblies, Parliament, Institutions of higher learning and help public functionaries.

#### Institute of Book Evaluation

In India, publishing is recognised neither as a cultural nor as an ideological activity. Excepting for a few instances of hereditary publishing houses, who have cashed on the goodwill and made good in the trade, publishing is not even a serious professional proposition. Profitability being the major guide, and demand the major determinant of the printability of books, it is no wonder that books in minority languages, specialised books, classics and children's literature get low priority in the scheme of publication. Many publications are of indifferent quality as there is no quality control mechanism. One hears complaints against textbooks and reference books as well as about books for children and adults. In the absence of any mechanism for pre-publication review of manuscripts and post-publication review of

printed books, the criticisms go, by and large, unheeded. Evaluation demands specialised competencies. A book can be evaluated on the basis of factors such as microlinguistic factors, sociocultural factors, learner factors, presentational factors, etc.. Keeping all these in view, it is recommended that the Institution like Raja Rammohun Roy National Educational Resource Centre of the Ministry of Human Resource Development should be enabled to function also as a centre for book evaluation. The Centre should not only develop and perfect the instrument of evaluation on a continuing basis, it should also undertake review of all books including textbooks on a random sample basis, drawing on the expertise available in the country. This institution would also undertake pre-publication review of manuscripts directly submitted to them by authors or submitted by publishers if they so desire. This institution should publish, for wide circulation, their evaluation or pre-publication review report.

#### Books and New Technology

The new technology revolution has made micro chips and micro forms accessible to large audiences. This has posed newer challenges in storage and retrieval of information. The experience so far has been that such non-book material complements books but does not make book irrelevant.



It is visualised that not only awareness of science and its utilization for development purposes should form part of study at undergraduate stage, but it is estimated that the emerging electronic revolution will demand training and retraining of the existing technological manpower at least three times during their career which would make additional demands both on non-book and book material.

Assuming that there will be international hook-up of computers to bring upto date knowledge about subjects to the desiring scholar, unless preparatory steps are taken, the developing countries are bound to become permanent parasites on all the developed countries who produce knowledge. Our development is bound to be lopsided if we continue to be consumers of theories and knowledge created outside and do not contribute anything to the total store of knowledge. It would also result in saturation for those who have access to knowledge and deprivation for many who do not have such access.

In view of the above, while developing Indian language computers, it is important that knowledge available from foreign sources through satellites, computers, micro chips and micro forms should instantly be translated into as many languages of the people as possible, so that science can interact with society and technology appropriate to our development may emerge. This is an

important way to create a scientific temper in the country.

The rate of knowledge explosion is such that print material does not always keep pace with it. It is now visualised that many inventions and discoveries before they are available in printed format could be stored in computers for use of practising researchers. Such material created in one country, in order to be accessible in other countries, needs to be instantly translated into the languages of those people. It puts additional challenges before intellectuals, writers and researchers in our country. It is, therefore, recommended that within a specified time frame, the universities and centres of higher learning must be enabled to make use of such computerised facilities and contribute their knowledge to a world pool of knowledge.

Study Group (Copyright)

A multi media approach to the production of supportive literature for education at all levels would be most effective. Book and non-book materials are mutually reinforcing. The broadcasting media makes use of printed material for their broadcast material which could be fully exploited by schools and colleges if they are able to record programmes and use them at times when it suits their purpose. There will be growing demand for such literature as India's on-going programmes of lifelong education become increasingly operational. We are aware that writers and artists have rights protected by law.

Therefore, it would be necessary to make efforts to find ways and means to allow schools and colleges to copy certain types of broadcasts, dub them into languages of their requirements and include them in supportive print material. It is now nearly a decade and a half since amendments to copyright laws at international level and national level were first conceived to meet the challenges of education at that time. A fresh look at them seems desirable. We, therefore, recommend that a study group may be set up by the National Book Development Council to go into the copyright aspect and other allied aspects of this matter in all its ramifications and make recommendations as to what could be done to produce or obtain greater proportion of the copyright materials so produced and make it available to teachers and learners engaged at various levels of teaching learning situation. This group may also suggest, if necessary, required amendments to national copyright law to meet the new educational requirements.

#### State Book Development Councils

The setting up of the National Book Development Council has been a major step towards book promotion. The multilingual composition of the country dictates the setting up of such Councils at State level for coordinating and stimulating book development in all its aspects at the State level.

### Books for the Handicapped

With growing awareness of health and disease, specialised institutions are being set up for those having speech hearing defects and also for the blind. The problem of mentally deficient has also been attracting attention of medical men and social workers. Books for these unfortunate segments need greater attention than has been given so far to them.

It is recommended that while cells may be created in specialised institutions like the one for the blind at Dehradun and for spastic children in Delhi to produce books required for them, efforts must be made to integrate handicapped children in the normal school. Such exposure to normalcy will have salutary effect on the society and result in more human treatment of these children, besides being helpful in their education. Similarly, it should be ensured that there are libraries to meet specific needs of these groups in important centres and also books in public libraries at state and district levels. There should be provision for bringing out all texts and essential reference books in braille all over the country. For this, it will be necessary to set up braille presses in all States regardless of their maximal utilisation. नयन

The most important aspect of the education of handicapped children is the education of their parents. In India the parents of the handicapped children find no books to educate them. These provide a major opportunity and challenge to Indian publishing.

### Good Neighbourliness

Since historical times India has been pursuing a policy of good neighbourly relations with China, South Asian and South East Asian countries. Of late, pursuit of this policy has gained momentum and it has resulted with the organisation of SARC countries for promoting regional cooperation. Books and other printed material play a major role in promotion of such regional cooperation at various levels.

It is, therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Human Resource Development may prepare a scheme within the purview of existing Cultural Exchange Programmes to enable writers from India to go to neighbouring countries and writers from neighbouring countries to come to India for a length of time to write about the country and the people they visit. A core of such books will help to generate a climate of mutual understanding and cooperation among the people, specially among the younger generation.

### Export and Import of Books

#### Export

At present the exporters of Indian books get cash subsidy as well as replenishment licence. This subsidy etc. is available for export of books published in India, irrespective of whether the books are written by Indian authors or not. This is a welcome concession to exporter but in order to promote export of Indian authored books, we recommend that the rate of such cash subsidy etc. should be increased by 50 per cent over the existing rate only for Indian-authored books. We have been advised that

there will be no legal difficulty in the matter of extension of this facility only to Indian-authored books viewed in the light of problems of Indian authorship.

India has not yet significantly explored and exploited the international market, especially in the area of creative writing. Many books published in India have the potentiality of sale abroad including sale of reprint and translation rights. Indian books abroad could not only foster good neighbourliness, but also establish bridges of understanding. Energetic steps must be taken by the Government of India to promote exports not only to the neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, but also to Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana, Surinam and even other parts of the world.

The present policy of allowing foreign agencies to buy books and journals from India and price them and sell them at exorbitantly higher rates is weaning away foreign libraries and scholars from subscribing to our journals. Subscription to the journals must be made directly to the publishers, or through their Indian agents, to avoid this in future.

Complete bibliographical control of the world's output of books and acquisition of them has always been a dream of all national librarians. It is in this context that import

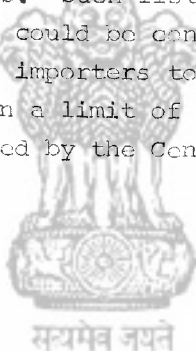
of all educational literatures takes place under "Open General Licence". Licence is required for importing other literature in the country. Pitted against this liberalism is the constraint of foreign exchange and the general claim that such import has adverse effect on the promotion of indigenous authorship and publishing.

Although wiping out of paperback publishing in English is often cited as a direct consequence of import of books, remainders and OGL, no studies have been conducted to conclusively prove that such import hampers the growth of indigenous writing. On the other hand, it is claimed that accessibility to various books on a subject having different approaches may have helped promotion of indigenous authorship and publishing.

There is, however, a shared opinion that our import of books are rather liberal and some of such titles may be obsolete and are not required in the country. Coupled with it is the problem of "Remainders" which are imported into the country, it is said, at the tenth of their original cost and sold at original marked up price. Subsidized foreign books tend to drive away indigenously produced books, both in English and Indian languages. There is, therefore, need to match the concept of acquisition of a large number of books on many subjects produced by world publishers with a restriction permitting only import of essential

literature. The NEBC may form a Standing Committee to monitor import of non-essential books.

We recommend that the Central Government in consultation with the University Grants Commission may consider and devise a scheme which will ensure quarterly despatch by world publishers, of an advance list of publications which would be available for sale in the coming three months to the National/State libraries, university libraries, libraries of National Institutions of Learning other than universities. The authorities mentioned above may from the catalogue of books supplied to them, prepare a list of books worthy of import and from that choose to acquire such books depending on their need and resources. Such lists prepared by those authorities could be considered as certification for importers to import some or all of them within a limit of copies per title as may be specified by the Central Government.





### XIII. CONCLUSION

There has been tremendous change in the Indian society during the last 40 years. But books have changed little. The cultural diversity in languages, religions, customs and life styles have not generated books which could counter the prevailing prejudices towards one another and build a system of education based on the multi-cultural foundation of the country. Many children do not find themselves reflected in the books they read. There are others who see diversity all round them but do not find it reflected in the books they read. Most children lack the means and opportunities to possess books. The monocentric portrayal of regions and cultures do not give coping ability to readers to live in a multicultural country and an interdependent world. Writers and books have a responsibility to ensure that they do not present biased and outdated views but accurately portray the people with diverse cultures living in ecologically varied environments and yet interdependent on one another. Publishers also have a responsibility towards authors and the reading public.

It is hoped that the recommendations contained in this report would result in healthy relationship between the author and publisher and create a climate of trust.

As one English writer has emphasized "neither reading nor writing takes place in a cultural vacuum, all authors bring to their work their own

values and attitudes; all readers relate to what they read in the light of their own perceptions. Each early reading experience validates the printed word...." It is some years before children learn to question the truth of what they read, and even then they are unlikely to identify and challenge biases which do not immediately threaten them, unless they are actively encouraged to do so.

The Working Group is aware that there is a resource constraint, but without adequate and appropriate resources, a psychological change in the prevailing circumstances cannot be brought about. Our recommendations have been modest and their implementation would have greater psychological than financial implications. We hope that this Report will contribute to the creation of a learning society in India and develop a pluralistic perspective to cope with the multilingual and multicultural realities of the country and the world.



सत्यमेव जयते

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ANNEXURE II

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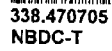
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