

Literacy And Egalitarianism

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Abul Quasem Rasulpuri

LITERACY is the first step towards functional education which in turn is condition precedent for construction of a developed and Egalitarian society. In our country about 80 p.c. of the population or about crore 20 lakh people are illiterate to remove illiteracy from such a massive population and to impart functional education to them is a gigantic task. Not only total commitment but also effective mobilization of huge resources over a long period of time on national basis would be necessary to achieve this objective. Needless to say, this is worth to achieve the objective at such a big cost as it is the only way to build up the Egalitarian Society.

Removal of illiteracy totally and imparting of functional education to the whole population would perhaps require macro approach. These activities cannot be wedded in isolation because of our Socio-Economic underdevelopment. For achieving the objective, mobilization of huge resources by all sectors of the economy, building up an appropriate institutional framework and linking literacy and functional education drive with productive activities and synthesizing the total development effort with the drive would be necessary.

Since the segment of the population to which the literacy drive is directed is pre-

occupied and too busy with the effort for earning their living, they have very little time to spare for learning. Moreover, essentially, their enthusiasm for literacy would be at a very low key. If, therefore, the literacy drive would be linked with their normal productive activities and if literacy would lead them to functional education in order to increase their productivity they would be aroused and motivated to participate effectively with the effort. The marriage of literacy drive and functional education with productive activities is not very difficult to make. What is needed is composition of books with subject matter based on scientific method of production and imparting functional education by the experts in the fields.

The crucial problem is that the whole effort is to be institutionalised. If proper institutional framework would be developed linking literacy functional education and productive activities in urban and rural sectors of the economy on co-operative basis the literacy and functional education effort would not only be effective but would also create necessary dynamism for development of national economy as a whole.

Such institutional framework would be establishment of village literacy education and training centres. Under

the umbrella of village cooperative societies all over the country the local Government like G. a. m. Sarkar etc. would guide lead and direct this institution to better the lot of the people through literacy education and training and co-operative development ventures primarily based on self-help.

In fact, to make the literacy drive dynamic and sustained and at the same time to infuse required dynamism through the national development effort the village literacy education and training centres should be made the focal point round which other superstructure like village cooperative and local Government like G. a. m. Sarkars etc. may be built up to create appropriate thrust for literacy educational and socio-economic development. Perhaps only through this matrix, literacy drive and for that matter national development effort would be institutionalised and made a self-going process for total success.

This institutional framework may be extended slowly but steadily to all the sixty eight thousand villagers of the country. If this would be done in a planned manner in foreseeable future the ideal of literate, educated nay egalitarian society would be firmly established.