

MAHARASHTRA AHEAD



RABHA

Education: Quest For Excellence

Abraham Lincoln's Letter to His Son's Teacher

He will have to learn, I know,
that all men are not just,
all men are not true.
But teach him also that
for every scoundrel there is a hero;
that for every selfish Politician,
there is a dedicated leader...
Teach him for every enemy there is a
friend,

Steer him away from envy,
if you can,
teach him the secret of
quiet laughter.

Let him learn early that
the bullies are the easiest to lick... Teach him, if you can,
the wonder of books...
But also give him quiet time
to ponder the eternal mystery of birds in the sky,
bees in the sun,
and the flowers on a green hillside.

In the school teach him
it is far honourable to fail
than to cheat...
Teach him to have faith
in his own ideas,
even if everyone tells him
they are wrong...
Teach him to be gentle
with gentle people,
and tough with the tough.

Try to give my son
the strength not to follow the crowd
when everyone is getting on the band wagon...
Teach him to listen to all men...
but teach him also to filter
all he hears on a screen of truth,
and take only the good
that comes through.

Teach him if you can,
how to laugh when he is sad...
Teach him there is no shame in tears,
Teach him to scoff at cynics
and to beware of too much sweetness...
Teach him to sell his brawn
and brain to the highest bidders
but never to put a price-tag
on his heart and soul.

Teach him to close his ears
to a howling mob
and to stand and fight
if he thinks he's right.
Treat him gently,
but do not cuddle him,
because only the test
of fire makes fine steel.

Let him have the courage
to be impatient...
let him have the patience to be brave.
Teach him always
to have sublime faith in himself,
because then he will have
sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order,
but see what you can do...
He is such a fine fellow,
my son!

Abraham Lincoln
Former President of United States of America

Knowledge Dispels Darkness...



Atmosphere in the month of July is always exuberant, cheerful and lively. Magic of drizzling in the Month of Shravan is seen all over. The Warkaris [Pilgrim from Pandharpur] return to home with hope and new energy. Schools are abuzz with chirping sounds of young ones. School admission process is almost over. People are beaming with joy-contentment. Guru Pournima also comes in this month. Hence we have dedicated this issue to 'Education Sector'.

Maharashtra has a very rich tradition of Guru Shishya(Teacher- Disciple) from ancient times. European style of education system introduced by British has witnessed many changes over the time. Education which was once fiefdom of elite class has now become accessible to all. The literacy rate was barely 5% in 1901, has now reached up to 75%. The credit goes to visionary leaders, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, our first Prime Minister and our first Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Social reformers of Maharashtra worked hard to spread reach of education at grassroot level. Efforts of Mahatma Jotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule were unprecedented in the field of education. The visionary approach of Savitribai Phule inspired women in Maharashtra. The ability to cope up with time and farsighted approach in setting standards in every field are the forte of leadership in Maharashtra. The State has proactively started modern courses alongwith traditional ones. Maharashtra has also zealously implemented all inclusive National Education Policy. Late Shri Madukarrao Chaudhary published a white paper on implementation of education policy in1966-67 paving way for universalization of education. Saniki School in Satara founded at the behest of Late Shri Yashwantrao Chavan opened an opportunity to join the Indian Armed Forces as officers for brilliant youths of Maharashtra.

Government Public Schools were started to impart quality education to talented rural children. Shaskiya Vidya Niketan was the extended form of these Public schools which proved to be instrumental in developing two generations of the State. On the lines of these Vidya Niketans, Model Schools were started in State for the students from deprived classes. This Quality Education Development Project was later emulated as 'Navodaya Vidyalaya' all over the country.

Late Shri Ramakrishna More, the then Minister for Education, initiated compulsory English from Std I starting a new era in the education sector of the State. The Programme 'SMART-PT' (Statewide Massive And Rigorous Training Programme for Primary Teachers) has boosted schools as well as improved teaching skills. Today's generation is cool, smart and has an ability to take any challenge and can conquer the world. We want to put forth this reality before readers in this issue.

Education has a major role to play in developing society as mature prudent and sensible which culminates in capable, competent and great Nation. Efforts of social reformers and Government in Universalization and imparting quality education have dispelled darkness which existed before independence. Now, Maharashtra is known as 'Education Hub' of the country.

The heat of fire in Mantralaya which took place on 21st June 2012 was felt by the Government machinery as well as by the entire State. The whole system is now geared up overcoming all odds. Readiness to take new challenges, undeterred by adversity is the distinctive characteristic of our Government Machinery and people of Maharashtra. We have published two features taking stock of this unfortunate event. This issue is graced by cover designed by Shri 'RABHA', the artist of high calibre from Aurangabad. We welcome him in the family of 'Maharashtra Ahead'.

We are confident that our readers will appreciate the issue as ever enthusiastically.

Pramod T. Nalawade
Editor-in-Chief, 'Maharashtra Ahead', DGIPR

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Editor-in-Chief

Pramod T. Nalawade

Managing Editor

Pralhad Jadhav

Team Maharashtra Ahead

Suresh Wandile

Kirti Pande

Kriti Lalla

Sales and Circulation

Digamber Palve

Vilas Bodke

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Director Operations: D.B. Sharma

Project Management Team

G.M. Operations: A. Shrinivas

A.G.M.: Dalvinder Singh

Manager: Ashok Shirke

Prepress

A.G.M. Prepress: Sachin Phulpagar

Art

Art Director: Mahesh Jadhav

Photos Correction: Siddhesh Sawant

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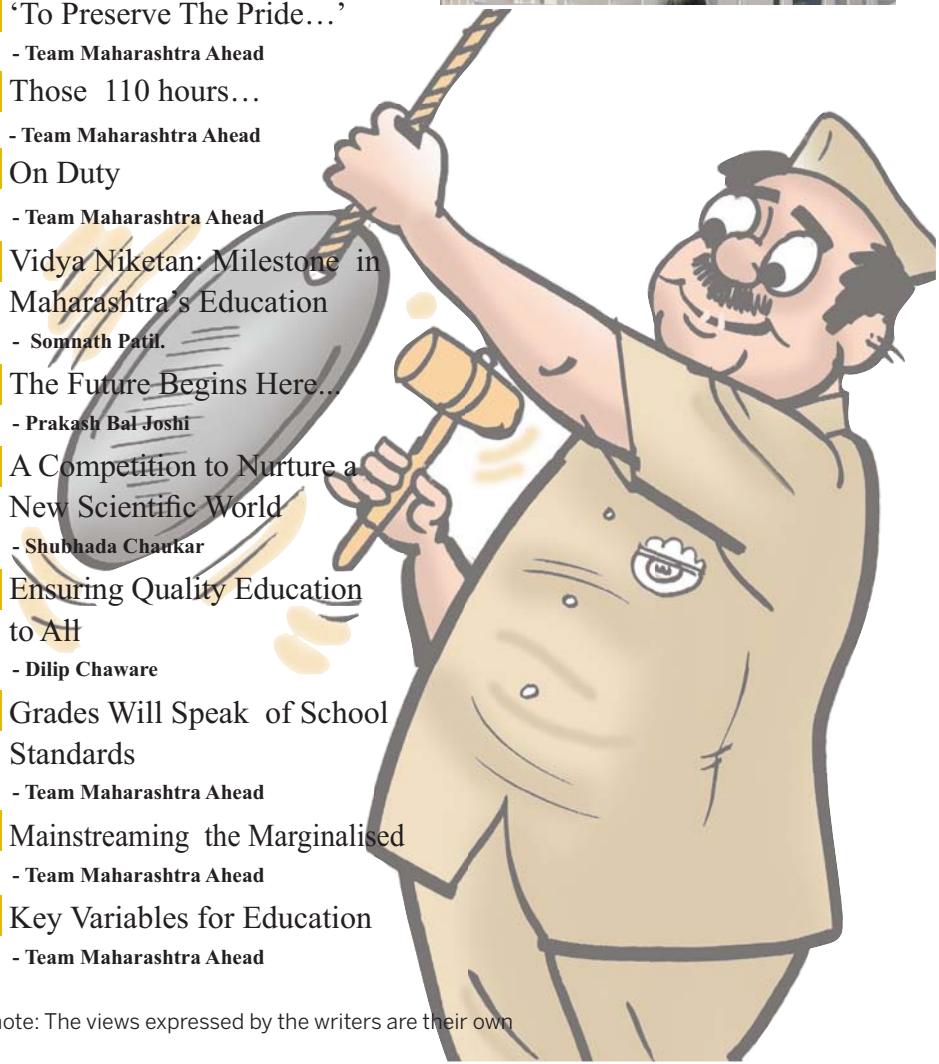
Letters should be addressed to
Directorate General of Information and Public
Relations, New Administrative Building, 17th Floor,
Opposite Mantralaya, Mumbai-400032.
Email: maharashtraahead.dgipr@gmail.com
Please visit the website
<http://dgipr.maharashtra.gov.in>



Directorate General of Information
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Pls note: The views expressed by the writers are their own



Access, Inclusion and Excellence in Education

Inclusive education is an important means to achieve the goal of overall development

We need the strong backing of education, that includes primary education, secondary education, higher education and most importantly skill based vocational education explains the Hon. Governor **K Sankaranarayanan**

Notwithstanding the global economic slowdown that has been affecting countries of the world, our economy is growing at an impressive rate of 6.9 per cent, and is poised to grow at an even faster pace considering our strong fundamentals and resilience of the economy.

At this juncture, we need the strong backing of education, that includes primary education, secondary education, higher education and most importantly skill based vocational education.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we need 'inclusive' education. Inclusive education is considered to achieve the goal of overall development, wherein all sections of society can participate in the process of growth. In the Indian context, inclusive education must

concern all sections of society, namely the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, religious and linguistic minorities, the nomadic groups, the child labour, the differently-abled persons, and particularly the women in each of these categories.

Access, inclusion and excellence must remain the backbone of our education system.

Higher education enrollment in India is only 13 per cent compared to more than 50 per cent in some of the developed countries and more than 70 per cent in North America and Western Europe. We have a long way to go in achieving the enrollment of 21 per cent envisaged by the National Knowledge Commission.

The universities in the State will have to assume greater responsibility



to increase the enrollment to the desired level. Although new colleges, private universities and deemed universities are coming up in large numbers, it is the State universities that will have to shoulder the responsibility of providing quality education to the majority of our people who cannot afford private expensive education. However, the advantage of the competition offered by private universities to our universities is that it will make our colleges and universities quality conscious.

The open universities have helped to bridge the gap between need for education and availability through the classic university system. Open universities have been providing convenient and affordable higher education to millions of students who cannot get access to traditional university education for one reason or



the other. The Open universities and distance learning departments have the potential to empower the people with higher as well as skill based education. But, they will have to reach out to newer sets of people by offering them value added courses and skills.

At present, quality of higher education remains an area of concern. The state of research and development leaves much room to desire. There are a few islands of excellence in the ocean of mediocrity. Nevertheless, each university has its own core areas of strength and universities must identify their strengths and develop their core areas to the fullest.

It is necessary that our Colleges and university undergo the process of assessment and accreditation on a regular basis. As a matter of fact, the Ministry of Human Resource Development and UGC have mandated such assessment and accreditation. Regular assessment will impel colleges and universities to strive for maintaining quality in higher education.

The recent amendments in the Acts of various Universities of Maharashtra have ensured that the selection process of the Vice Chancellors remains completely transparent and fair. The eligibility conditions and qualifications required for being a Vice Chancellor have enhanced the credibility of the selection process.

A robust and dynamic administrative framework is necessary for the universities to function efficiently. We need administrative reforms in universities also.

A large number of teaching posts are still lying vacant in colleges and universities in the State. Some colleges are operating with less than 50 per cent of sanctioned seats. Time has come for universities to prepare post graduate students for exams like NET and SET so that we will get a good number of qualified teachers to teach in senior colleges.

Universities must raise resources for research activities and consultancy



services and not solely depend on funds from the Government. Industries must also support research in key disciplines. For this purpose, there should be a constant interface between universities and industry associations.

The Examination system is one more area of major concern. This year there were many newspaper reports of leakages of question papers of university examinations. While we need stringent measures to curb such incidents, we also need to think of assessing the abilities of students using a set of different yardsticks.

Many years ago, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar had said, "No plan for the future development of the country can be deemed to be complete which does not provide for technical and scientific training. This is the age of Machine and it is only those countries in which technical and scientific training has risen to the highest pitch that will survive in the struggle that will commence when the war is over, for maintaining decent standards of living for their people."

Our universities are churning out graduates in large numbers, but with limited skills. As a result the number of educated unemployed is growing. Today we have 5 million unemployed persons registered with our employment exchanges

in Maharashtra alone. And there are many who don't go to enroll themselves.

Universities don't have to think of only those who are pursuing higher education. They must also do something to meet the skill development needs of those who are outside the system, including the school drop outs. Today it is easy to get an engineer, but very difficult to find a skilled plumber or an electrician or a carpenter competent to do small household jobs.

The Prime Minister of India has announced creating 500 million skilled workers by the year 2022. The share of Maharashtra in this is about 50 million. It is a huge task and there is a strong need for having a Vocational Education University to boost the efforts of the Government for skill development.

Finally, we must assess the growing need for education and infrastructure that we will require at least 25 years from now to meet the demand for higher education. For this purpose we must have a Perspective Plan for the growth and advancement of higher education in the State.

Education can help us improve the standards of living of our people and make development process truly inclusive. The time for action is now. ■

-As told to **Umesh Kashikar**



School Education :

Great Changes, New Challenges

We are heading towards an era of knowledge based society

Maharashtra has tradition of new and progressive thoughts in each field resulting in conducive environment for education. Primary education is always priority for the State Government says the Chief Minister **Prithviraj Chavan**.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

- Nelson Mandela

The great leader of South Africa Mr. Nelson Mandela who fought against racism has aptly described the importance of education. The first and foremost condition of development is education. Primary education is the base of personality development of each individual. A generation of well-educated citizens plays important role in the nation building. The great Social Reformer Mahatma Jotiba Phule already taught us how ignorance of knowledge will lead to. He wrote in one of his famous poem, *Lack of education leads to lack of wisdom, which leads to lack of morals, which leads to lack of progress, which leads to lack of money, which leads to the oppression of the backward classes. See what the lack of education can cause!*

Maharashtra is pioneered State in various fields including education sector. When the Mangal Kalash of the formation of the State brought in, the Government initiated visionary steps in various sector including education. Maharashtra has tradition of accepting new and progressive



thoughts in each field resulting in conducive environment for education and primary education is always priority for the State Government. Because of this we have successfully implemented Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Right to Education in State.

In the era of globalization it is our responsibility to design the curriculum which enables the student to withstand the global competition. Though we have been providing education which is relevant but still it has scope for improvement. The educational institutes should frame

their syllabus keeping in mind the demand of technical manpower in the Industrial sector and the local scenario.

Today, every sector including education is witnessing rapid growth. New branches of knowledge are being opened up. The field of research is ever expanding. We are heading towards an era of knowledge based society. Information technology have brought the world at our doorstep. The world has become a global village. To keep pace with the changing time young generation must prepare themselves to accept these challenges.

We have progressed in numbers in education field. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan enables us to take education at grassroot level. We have enough number of colleges, universities, technical & engineering institutes, medical and agricultural colleges. But our gross enrolment ratio of higher education is just 12.5 per cent. If we succeed in doubling the ratio then we will be able to create highly educated skilled manpower. Comparing the gross enrolment ratio in higher education USA has 50 per cent students studying in higher education. Japan has 90 per cent and in South Korea it is upto 95 per cent. It clearly shows the kind of

challenges before us. We have to take strong measures to stop the school drop out ratio.

We are not lucky in terms of natural resources. We are importing 86 per cent of crude oil and it will get increased in future. The rise in crude oil prices in the gulf countries gives shiver to our economy. Apart from this tension is brewing about other natural resources like land, water, sand, coal and other minerals. If we want to set up a new project then we have to face ire of the society regarding allocation of land, water and other minerals to the project. We can not become super power simply on the basis of natural resources. We have to create knowledge based economy then only we can able to achieve progress like Japan did. In Japan they do not have even a litre of oil or a kilo of coal or other minerals. But the Japan excelled only because of knowledge and we have to follow the same. To make it happen we have to create knowledge based society and knowledge based economy, where education will play a



crucial role.

We have to break the traditional barriers of knowledge if we have to become a super power and the younger generation has to play a major role in this process. Multi-dimensional personality is need of the hour to be in a global competition and everyone should develop it. It is

expected that the help in this process will come from education sector.

One has to enrich himself by collecting vast knowledge available on internet, Google, Wikipedia and via information technology. That is the mantra of the success in tomorrow's world. ■

- As told to **Satish Lalit**





Education: Shrine of Progress

Education must be given to build scientific temperament

The universalisation of school education was inspirational and it picked up pace with successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Government's emphasis on primary education reflects its increasing literacy rate. The State is also leading in higher education, unfolds the Deputy Chief Minister **Ajit Pawar**.

Maharashtra has made giant strides in education. The increasing literacy rate points to the success of State Government's efforts to cater education to the grassroot level. Over the last 50 years Maharashtra has seen many advances in the education sector i.e. universalisation of education, changes in the quality of education. In its early days catering education to all was a primary goal of the State due to which the State worked to boost the number of primary schools located in the rural areas and a number of technical institutes and universities in the State. The Government's emphasis on primary education reflects its rising literacy rate. The State is also leading in higher education.

The universalisation of school education was inspirational and it picked up the pace with an ambitious Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which is being implemented in the State since 2001-2002. Maharashtra's implementation of the scheme is excellent. According to the norms of SSA, there should be a school in the



radius of 1.5 km area.

To provide quality education to the children with special need along with normal, a programme Inclusive Education of Disabled is being implemented in the State. Under this programme such students are treated and educated at par with normal peer group. The programme also includes identification and medical assessment of Children With Special Needs and also provides rehabilitation and educational support services like Braille books hearing aids, spectacles, speech trainers, callipers etc.

Girls' education is a major concern for the State. The decision of the State Government to provide free education to the girls upto Std. XII proved to be beneficial to cope up with the gender disparities in the enrolment of girl students especially in rural areas. To give impetus to the enrolment of SC, ST and BPL girl students Attendance Allowance Scheme is being implemented by the State Government. Under the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya 43 residential schools for SC, ST, OBC and minority girl students in 10 districts are being run by the State Government.

State Government is spending almost 1/5th of its revenue expenditure on education. Right to education has made a tremendous change in the education scenario. The State is implementing the RTE in full spirit and letter. This has given an impetus to the primary and secondary education in the State.



This has resulted in a wide spread of education with a great ease. The State Government is endeavouring to provide quality education to the grassroot level. In tribal areas also the State runs residential schools for tribal students.

Education should not be given only to get employment, but it must be given to build scientific temperament so that the person could analyse the thing properly. Superstition is the curse of our society; we must overcome this issue through education.

Envisioning education as a shrine of progress is important. We should focus towards this objective; it will help in nation's progress. By embarrassing disadvantage sections of the society in this foundation building process of the country we can preserve intellectual tradition of our State. ■

- As told to **Vishal Dhage**

Coping With Challenges



Maharashtra's achievement in education sector is extraordinary

Education is ever changing and progressive. In this era of competition care has to be taken that no child is left behind. Minister for School Education **Rajendra Darda** has set an agenda, which includes bringing the deprived segment of society into mainstream of education, increasing educational merits of students and reducing gap between rich and poor student.

Education is ever changing and progressive. This is the era of competition and a care has to be taken that our children do not lag behind. Rajendra Darda, the Minister for School Education, Maharashtra State, worked on this issue right from the day he took oath of the office. He set an agenda for himself, which included bringing the deprived segment of the society into the mainstream of education, increase the educational merits of the students, reduce the

gap between the rich and the poor students. The impressions of social work he had and those he inherited surely played a role in setting the targets for him as a Minister. The successful implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act also helped in achieving the decided goal, he added.

Maharashtra has achieved numerical development in the field of Education. There are more than 75,500 primary schools in the State,

while number of secondary schools and higher secondary schools exceeds 21,000 and 7000 respectively. More than two crore students are imparted education in these schools. Maharashtra Government has taken many steps to provide not only the school education but also the technical and higher education to the children of the State. Similarly strong measures were taken to nip the malpractices in the field of education. It is the policy of the Government to provide primary education as nearer to the home as possible. A distance of 1.5 km is set as limit between the home and the school. The Government has spent more than Rs. 10,000 crore on primary education during the year 2009-10. Overall expenditure on education in Maharashtra during the year was about Rs. 19,000 crore.

The 2011 census of Maharashtra has brought to the fore that the number of girl children was declining as also the male-female ratio in the State population. This has also reflected in the school attendance. An in depth survey revealed that the school fees, distance of the school, availability of teachers and such many other





issues played a vital role in providing education to the masses, specially the rural children. The State Government recently took few important decisions to bring in balanced development in the field of education.

Maharashtra Educational Institutes (Regulation of collection of fees) Bill of 2011 was adopted unanimously by both the houses of the State Legislature, recently. There were too many complaints regarding extortion of heavy education fees by the private schools in the State. The Pre-Primary Schools or the nurseries and kindergartens attached to various private primary schools as well as the primary, the secondary and higher secondary schools and the teachers' training (B. Ed. and D. Ed.) colleges levied hefty fees. In order to prevent this unfair practice in the field of education, besides commercialization of education and also for the protection of the interests of students and parents, this bill was passed by the State Legislature.

Similarly, Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act was passed by the parliament of India, in the year 2002, as 86th Amendment to the Constitution of India. This Act became effective in the State from the year 2009 and provides for certain rules and regulations under it, which were brought into effect from 11th October 2011. Maharashtra has more number of schools than other States of India. However, a Master Plan for the Primary and Secondary Schools was prepared using Geographical Information (GI) to provide educational facilities to the far flung population. Accordingly it has been decided to open 1,579 primary and 142 secondary schools with Marathi Medium, in the rural areas additionally.

Similarly, in certain areas of the State, there were no Marathi schools though there was a demand for it. Jat Taluka in Sangali district has many primary schools with Kannad as medium of instructions while no

facilities were available for primary education in Marathi Medium. This is the part of disputed boundary region of Maharashtra, which Karnataka has claimed. In view of the requirement of the population, the Government approved establishing of 101 primary and 17 secondary schools, there. The State Government, for the first time, due to financial constraints, granted sanctions to primary, secondary and higher secondary schools on 24th November 2001, on the conditions of being Permanently Non-Grant status. Later, the word "Permanently" was deleted from the permission for non-English Medium schools by a Government Resolution of 16th June 2009. But these schools were required to be evaluated for getting the "Granted School" status. The Government is considering liberalization of the stringent criteria of evaluation of these schools, as demanded by various schools and also the people's representatives. There are about 5000 such schools in



the State.

As for the non-grant schools, so also for the Teachers on Contract or the “Shikshan Sevaks”, the Government in a Cabinet Meeting of 7th September 2011, decided to rename the “Shikshan Sevaks”, as ‘Probationary Assistant Teacher’. By a Government order of 15th September 2011, these teachers were given relief that on completion of the three year contract period, if they are appointed as regular teacher, they will not be reverted to ‘Contract Teacher or Shikshan Sevak’ status, on re-appointment in the secondary schools from primary schools . Instead, they will be appointed as ‘regular teacher’ only. Such teachers, if appointed prior to the year 2005, were made eligible for ‘Contributory Provident Fund’ scheme. Yet one more decision in favour of these teachers was taken by the Government, on 7th September 2011, to enhance the

salaries of the Shikshan Sevaks, by double.

Keeness of the Government in providing quality education is visible from many other decisions as well. Knowing all potentials and importance of computer education in the schools, Information Technology Training under Central Government ICT scheme is being implemented in majority of secondary and higher secondary schools in the State. So far more than 7000 secondary schools in the State are provided with computer laboratories.

PROGRAMME FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH

In view of the growing importance of Learning English, Maharashtra Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the British Council for teaching English. It is a tripartite programme between the Ministry of Education, the School

Education Department and the British Council. It will provide Global School Partnership with certain schools in the United Kingdom and also the facilities of Connecting Classroom programme.

The schools joining this programme were encouraged to achieve International School Award and four of these schools have obtained it.

The State Government in order to improve quality of education as part of the programme to prepare children of Maharashtra Globally Competent, has taken many more important decisions including increasing the eligibility criteria of the primary school teachers from being D. Ed. to B. Ed., payment of salary through banks to the teachers, in service training of the teachers for improving teaching skills etc. All these measures will definitely take Maharashtra Ahead once again. ■

- Narayan Haralikar



Education to Empowerment

The RTE Act provides assurance that no child will be denied admission to any school

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act makes it mandatory on all the States to provide free and compulsory elementary education to children aged 6 to 14 years, says Minister of State for School Education **Fauziya Khan**.



Maharashtra is the pioneer State to implement this Act... However it's our liability to make this Act work.

The above said Act is going to prove very constructive and helps in brighten future of upcoming generations. Without collective efforts of local governing bodies, administration, educational institutes, parents as well as teachers this Act could not implemented in proper manner.

The Act states that school should be near to the student's residence. School for the Children of first to fifth standard must be located within area of 1km and distance is relaxed to 3km for the Std VIII. To keep eye on the distance of schools Government had already started their work with the help of satellite technology. It is amended in both urban and countryside of the State.

This Act made possible for the students from disadvantaged classes to get free education. Government has set up mechanism to find out exact data of students and their parents who belong to socially and economically backward classes. This amendment made possible for poor children to get

free admission in private school. It is mandatory to all private institution to fulfill the demand of this particular bill for that special allocation has been made.

Schools, whether private or Government, will have to hold to some common minimum standards, have play fields, good drinking water, clean toilets, classrooms and a library as well as it has provision to get fund to build new schools. If there is any mismanagement while implementing this act Deputy Director of Education department can be contacted. If grievance is not solved satisfactorily at Deputy Director level Commission for Protection of Child Rights can be contacted.

The Act is not only willing to strengthen the infrastructural amenities of the school but also it primarily focuses on improvisation of standards and quality education system. The Act provides assurance that no student child will be denied admission to any school on the basis of their caste, creed, class or physical disability. Every child must get admission in the school. No child can be expelled from school as well cannot failed. It helps students to focus on studies not on exams. It designed to increase to overall knowledge of the students. However, the State administration is trying hard to achieve their goal but the stronger implementation of this law needs collective efforts from citizen as well. ■

As told to **Ajay Jadhav**

The Fundamental Rights of Indian constitution guaranteed us that every citizen live their life's in peace. Article 21 assures the right to live with human dignity. Because Human life so precious. And Education made it very beautiful one. Directive principles of the Indian constitution abide the State Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children between ages of 6 to 14. Central Government has passed "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act". The Act makes it mandatory on all the States to provide free and compulsory elementary education to children aged 6 to 14 years in their respective States. To pass this bill constitution has been amended.





Perspectives on Education



Our curriculum is on par with CBSE and ICSE schools

School management committees in 85,000 schools have been set up and being provided with money to buy two sets of uniforms for every child. Ensuring good infrastructure in every school is our main objective assures Additional Chief Secretary for School Education. **J S. Saharia** in an interview to **Clara Lewis**.

Give us an overview of the education system in Maharashtra.

We have the second best literacy rate in the country after Kerala as per the 2011 census report. The male literacy rate is 89 per cent while the female literacy rate is 79.48 per cent. The average is 83 per cent. The access to education is fairly good in the State. Of the 76000 villages, 73000 villages have a school

within 1km. In case of the balance 3000 villages they do not fit into the criteria for, a school such as population is low, there is a school nearby etc. We have 63,000 upper primary schools. In terms of school infrastructure, 99 per cent of the schools are housed in all weather buildings.

What are your plans for schools

in the current academic year?

This year for the first time we have ensured that students receive their school textbooks and notebooks before the start of the academic year. We have ensured it in 90 per cent of the schools. The rest will be completed shortly. We have set up school management committees in 85,000 schools and have provided them the money to



buy two sets of uniforms for every child. Ensuring good infrastructure is our main objective. We want to ensure that by the end of the year all school buildings are all weather. We have allotted Rs 800 crore for the purpose.

The Government has promised to ensure that every school will have a functional toilet. What is its status?

One of the chief reasons why parents do not send their girls to school is the absence of toilets. We have constructed functional toilets that have assured water supply in 76 per cent of the schools. In case of boys it is 89 per cent. We have provided drinking water in 94 per cent of our schools and 60 per cent of the schools have a boundary wall. We are working on achieving 100 per cent compliance in all our schools.

How well are schools that have Marathi as a medium of instruction doing?

There is a decline in the number of students who attend Marathi medium schools. In 2006-07, the percentage of enrolment was 79 per cent. In 2011-12, it is down to 73 per cent. At the same time the enrolment in English schools is up from 10 per cent to 16 per cent during the same

period. The sharpest decline is in Std I where it has fallen by 10 per cent in Marathi medium schools and there is a 10 per cent increase in admissions in English medium schools. This is a part of a process of increase in general awareness amongst the people and linked to the perception that English is the gateway to success.

How does the Government plan to tackle the issue?

It is true that while number of Marathi Medium schools is increasing, the enrolment of children is declining. A correction cannot be done overnight, it will come with the passage of time. We have started Semi-English schools on an experimental basis where Science and Maths is to be taught in English. We have introduced it in some existing schools in Sindhurg, Buldhana and Aurangabad.

There is also a rush for CBSE and ICSE schools as the perception is that the curriculum is better than SSC?

I do not agree. Our curriculum is on par and we are not inferior to them. We have already revised curriculum of our Std. IX and X and it is extremely good. Our pass percentage is 77 per cent. What is needed to be understood is that the CBSE and ICSE schools cater to children who come from

urban, highly educated families and so the students are good. We cater to largely students from rural and backward areas. We cannot shy away from these realities.

Tell us about the implementation of the Sarva Shikshan Abhiyan in the State?

Sarva Shikshan Abhiyan is being implemented in the State for the last ten years. The Right To Education Act lists 10 infrastructure facilities to be provided and more needs to be done. In first year under SSA we spent Rs 430 crore, in 2011-12, we spent Rs 2600 crore. The basic objectives of SSA are providing basic infrastructure, Gender equity, quality education and community participation. We have provided all weather schools in 99% cases, for the first time books have reached before school starts to 97% of the schools. We have set up school management committees in 85000 of our schools. In every SMC, 75 per cent members are parents of wards studying in that school. Their job is to monitor the activities of the school, ensure that children receive the things they are entitled to as well as quality education. Last year we had asked SMCs to provide details of children who do not attend schools. They have helped us locate 2,32,372 students who have never been to school by name and village or ward where they live. Most of these are children of farm labourers working in sugarcane, cotton, sweetlime fields and tribals. This data will help us now to work towards ensuring that they are sent to school.

Could you shed some light on the e-governance projects being implemented in the State.

e-Governance brings transparency to the working of the entire system. The e-Governance systems that have been launched are already bearing fruit, and in times to come their scope will be much wider. We have taken up a pilot project to disburse teachers' salaries electronically. This was done





in Mumbai and we plan to extend it to all districts. Beed has also started disbursing salaries through the electronic clearing system. This will ensure that the money goes directly into the teacher's bank account and they will get the salary on the first.

The other advantage is that all the administrative machinery that is tied up for 15 days every month for this job, will be free and can be entrusted with other tasks. We also want that all applications from the public be it for a new school, new divisions are received online and decisions are conveyed online. Similarly, even disbursement of scholarships is planned to be done through ECS. We are developing a child and teacher tracking system which we plan to link it to the Unique Identification System (UID).

How do you plan to ensure quality in education?

We want to use technology to closely and effectively monitor schools. software is being developed for the same. As of now, 98000 schools have submitted a School Development Plan. The software will throw up schools that are lagging behind and which we will then follow-up.

Also we want to empower our supervisory staff. There are 6000 cluster co-ordinators and we want to give them ready access to all Government Resolutions and circular pertaining to their work sphere so they can take quick decisions. Nearly 40 per cent schools have a computer, in the next few years all schools will be equipped with a computer. We want to set up a computer based learning system in every school. For this our teachers must be trained to impart such education.

How do you plan to address the problem of non-performing schools?

A survey carried out last year gave a figure of 20 lakh children missing from schools. Nearly 12000 schools had absenteeism of 20 per cent and 2600 schools had absenteeism of 50 per cent. We filed police cases, derecognised schools, dismissed teachers and initiated action against supervisory officers. Our action was challenged

in the Aurangabad high court. The court appreciated our strategy. We will carry out surprise inspections but it is an expensive proposition. One or two firm actions will serve as a deterrent. We also plan to empower our supervisory staff.

What about private schools that indulge in profiteering?

The growth of education in Maharashtra as a movement has been through the private sector and it was never about profiteering. Most of our good schools are in the private sector. There are some black sheep and to check profiteering the State Legislature has already passed the Fee Regulation Bill. It has been sent to the President for approval and we have received some queries from the Union Human Resource Development Ministry. Once approved it will become the law of the land and will be applicable to all higher classes. Upto Std VIII, the Right to Education Act is anyway applicable. Also if there are any malpractices, parents will have to be bold and complaint and later not withdraw their complaint. We become more helpless if they withdraw the complaint. But this menace can be checked only when we bridge the gap between demand and supply for quality education.

How do you envision education in Maharashtra in the future?

Maharashtra should be known as a knowledge hub. Every school should branch off, concentrate on science, literature, open up minds and give all possible support to its students. There should be no restriction on the child exploring her/his talents and potential. We have already roped in Vedanta Foundation to train students from very poor backgrounds for the IITs. It is being entirely funded by the foundation. The fact that every year 25 percent of the awards in the National Talent Search exams come to students from Government schools tells us that we are moving in the right direction. ■



RTE: Quality With Equity

The State has good network of primary and upper primary schools

The learning levels in the State schools vary to a great extent. Community has an important role in ensuring effective implementation of RTE Act, points out **Sanjay Deshmukh**, Project Director, Textbook Production and Curriculum Research Board.

The historic Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act passed in 2009 is being implemented from 1st April, 2010. The Act applies, except Jammu and Kashmir to all States and Union Territories of India. The Act has provided an impetus to Government of India's efforts in universalization of elementary education in India.

Since the inception of our Republic, Universal Elementary Education (UEE) has been perceived to be essential for strengthening equity based democratic fabric of the society. At National level programmes for achieving UEE were taken up as including Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as Centrally Sponsored Programme through State partnership. There has been significant improvement in number of Elementary schools. Access and enrollment has reached near universal levels; the number of out-of-school children is reducing. Yet, we have not been able to achieve universal education. A very high percentage of children from disadvantaged sections drop out at upper primary level. For those who are able to complete elementary education, the quality of learning is not always satisfactory.

It is on this backdrop and through a series of deliberations and amendments "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009" was passed. Act promises free education of good quality, reduce fear, anxiety and stress with emphasis



on ending discrimination and on inclusion.

BASIC PREMISES OF THE RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

- 1) Teachers, Parents, Children and the community at large shall be aware of the rights of the children.
- 2) Teachers, Parents and Community not only are aware of the children's rights, but are able to accept them as logical, human and essential.
- 3) Every child is capable of learning and completing elementary education.
- 4) The school curriculum shall be such that it enables children to learn without fear and anxiety.
- 5) There shall be effective mechanism in place for monitoring the enforcement of child rights and redressal of their grievances.

The right to free and compulsory education provides a legal framework

that entitles all children between 6 to 14 years free and compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education equitable quality.

FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Free education is generally perceived as waiver of tuition fees. Definition of free in this act goes beyond tuition fees. It includes child's other entitlements such as text books, self learning material, uniform, transportation, educational and support materials to disabled children or even library fee, laboratory fee, sports fee, etc. in short it includes any kind of expenses required to ensure completion of elementary education of every child such as residence for children whose parents migrate.

The compulsion to provide



elementary education is on the State rather than on parents. The State is compelled to provide free education and ensure completion of elementary education i.e. admission, attendance and completion of elementary education. It also means Government has to ensure children (6-14 years of age) can no more be engaged in any activity other than education. The act makes it the duty of the parents to ensure that their children go to school without prescribing any punishment.

The State Government would have to bring all children (6-14 years of age) who are out of school, as never enrolled or dropouts and admit them in age appropriate classes in regular schools. Such children would have a right to complete elementary education even after attending 14 years of age.

SALIENT FEATURE OF THE RTE ACT 2009

1. All Children between 6-14 years age group irrespective of Caste, religion, gender, ability or background have a right to education.
2. Every school will have one trained teacher for every 30 children at the primary level and for every 35 children at the upper primary level.
3. School environment are child friendly and free from fear.
4. Adequate infrastructure including

safe building, separate toilets for boys and girls, clean drinking water, a library, a playground and sports equipment is available in every school.

5. Effective teaching, learning materials, methods and tools are made available to help children learn better.

School Management Committees are set up to facilitate parents to play an active role in School Management and monitoring.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RTE ACT 2009 IN MAHARASHTRA

In Maharashtra State the implementation has started from academic year 2010-11. The State has issued various Government Resolutions regarding admission process, no screening for admission, no detention, formation of School Management Committee and implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, etc. The Maharashtra RTE State Rules have been notified and recently notification regarding “25% reservation in admission to children from disadvantaged section of the society in the neighborhood in private institutions” has also been issued.

The implementation deadline set by the act in respect of provision of school in neighborhood, minimum norms and standards for private and Government schools and provision of teachers is March-2013. The Government of India as part of SSA implementation has directed States to undertake Shiksha Ka Haq Abhiyan to disseminate information through public outreach efforts, State, district, block and village consultations and mass media campaign. A plan of action for compliance up to village level on various aspects of act is urgently required.

The “Act” gives every child (6-14 years of age) a right to free and good quality education until he completes at least Class-VIII. The Act directs all the State holders to provide such facilities to every child

that are necessary for him to be succeed. The children, whose parents migrate, should be allowed to change the school and take admission any time during the year. Problems of Homeless children, child beggars, rag pickers and pavement dwellers need to be addressed. The school calendar should be suitable to children. The difficulty of some children who for reasons beyond their control are not regular and punctual in attendance should be understood. All such children should be given opportunity to learn on par with others. The Act in short has put the child in the forefront.

In Maharashtra there is good network of primary and upper primary schools, mostly run by Local Self Government i.e. Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporation and Municipal Councils. Recent DISE data analysis shows that although 98% eligible students are enrolled in Class-I, only 83% are able to complete elementary cycle (Source: DISE-2011-12). One also notices a shift of children population from Local Self Government schools to Private schools. The learning levels in the State schools vary to a great extent. The Act now enforces to bring all schools in the State of a comparable quality and minimum standards and norms prescribed. The Government machinery of the Education Department alone will not be able to monitor quality education for all. Community has important role in ensuring effective implementation of RTE Act. A strong partnership with civil society, local community and participation of School Management Committees only can ensure that all children (6-14 years of age) are in school and are not engaged in any other activity during school time. Teachers perform their duties regularly, efficiently, so that children are able to complete elementary education. The Continuous and Comprehensive system of evaluation is in place and children learn in an atmosphere free of fear, anxiety and trauma. ■



For A Better Tomorrow

Education must aim at building capable human beings

V.V. Chiplunkar is a well-known and revered figure in the educational field of Maharashtra. He was Director of Education for a long time and was instrumental in developing 'Shaskiya Vidya Niketan' - Government Residential School in Aurangabad. His association with this school is fondly recalled even after almost four decades. After retirement he is busy in working for Senior Citizens in Aurangabad. He shared his experience, thoughts about education.



Sir, there is curiosity to know more about your personality, upbringing.

I proudly mention that this is my parent's gift. The thoughtful efforts taken by them are now paying off. Especially my father was very attentive and serious to make us multifaceted. If we consider that the period which I am referring to, you would agree, that efforts were rare. At that time learning means, making things by heart and it was very common. Chanting rhymes, shlokas and prayers was our usual routine as my parents were very religious. But what was uncommon, was their keen interest in developing skills in their children. He zealously developed qualities like studiousness, sportsmanship in me. These great

efforts developed my multifaceted personality. I still enjoy life by learning, playing, singing which was part of my that golden old. I recall these things with very deep sense of gratitude. I feel I inherited everything from my father.

Sir, you lead Government public school in Aurangabad. We know many students who fondly recall your association with the school. Tell us something about it.

Government public school is a residential school, today there are many such schools in and around but in those days, it was a new experiment. We received good

response from the students. Total 200 students came here from rural areas of Maharashtra. Our school was like a big family and students were like my own children. We raised students in homely atmosphere so that no one could feel homesick. Personal touch, individual communication were the factors which were not only preached but practised.

Tell us about some initiatives and experiments of the Vidya Niketan.

As I said that the boys were away from their home so it was our responsibility to take care of them and keep them in homely protected atmosphere. The



mornings at GPS were starts with the tunes of prayers recited by students in a decorative assembly hall. Prayers from all religions were scripted on the walls. I vividly remember prayer used to be started with Omkara, a humble student Ganpat Arrak, used to begin this and others used to follow him. Uttamrao Agnihotri guided these students. I feel music plays a great role in this. A poem by Sane Guruji was part of our prayer. Students were very enthusiastic to participate in daily prayers. With this we could inculcate sense of discipline in these students from the very beginning. Students were instructed to remove their shoes outside the hall, and one could find, well arranged rows of shoes outside the hall. I used to say that, 'let our legs have some sense of discipline, and then our heads would fall in line' and it was well appreciated.

Sir, tell us more about your other activities.

It is very difficult to recall any

selected activity. As I told you, these students came from distant villages and some of them never left their home before, so sometimes they became homesick especially, during lunch break or in the night. Some of them even used to cry remembering their parents particularly mother. We handled such emotional moments carefully. We never scolded students for homesickness. In fact I used to call these students and would ask them to close his tearful eyes and imagine, what his mother must be doing at that time. You know every mother has her domestic timetable and accordingly, I would get answers from the students. If it was morning, they would say, she is cooking, if it was evening they would say she is in prayer. Some would say, she is milking the cow. Then I would tell them that, look if you are appropriately telling, how busy is your mother in her daily routine, then she must be around you also. And with the words of Sane Guruji, I would tell them that, for time being though physically mother may be at a distant

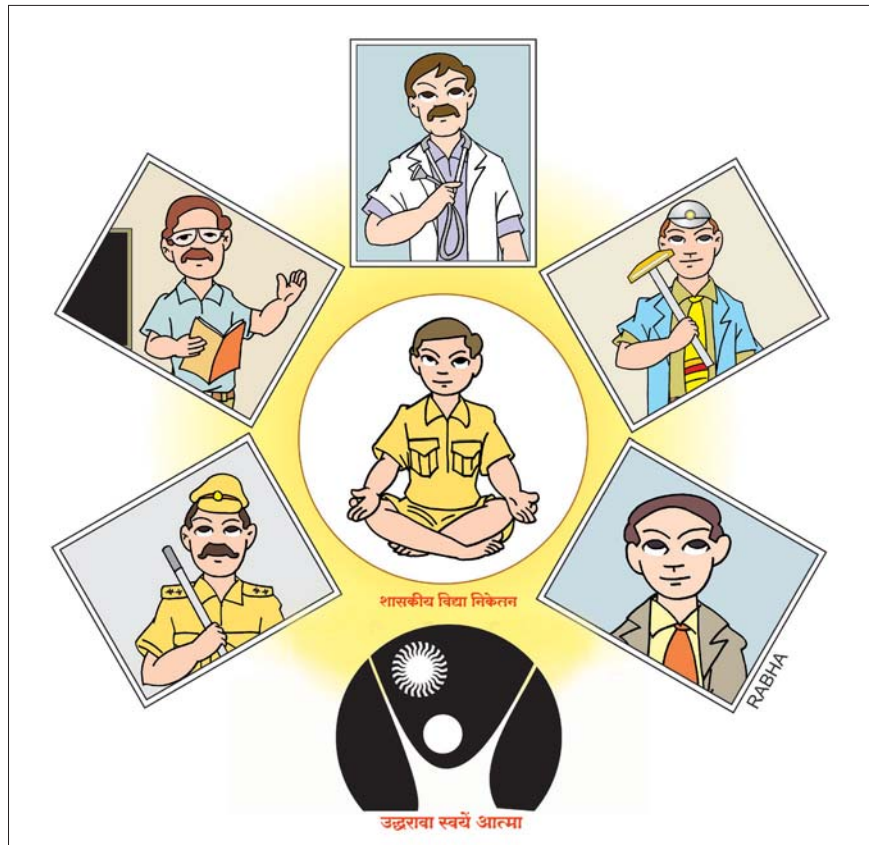
place but she is around us every moment. We call this as Matrushakti in Marathi and this Sanskar of Matrushakti played very vital role. I insisted that everyone should write diary everyday. This practice in turn created sense of accountability, which has vital role in our life. The students were asked to recall their mistakes at the end of the day.

The practice emphasised importance of honesty. Making mistake is not a crime, but hiding them is a crime. Another effort was, expression of power. Every student must have this power, and to achieve this we would ask them to tell us about good thoughts of their minds. You know good thoughts are foundation of good actions and expressing such thoughts would always help in building not only expression power but thoughtful actions.

Sir, tell us about some memorable moments in the school.

Again it is very difficult to recall, one or two moments as many of them are always in my mind. I remember, the then Minister for Education Madhukarrao Chaudhary once visited the school. He sat down among students and started chatting with them; he told me that he was literally moved while listening prayers and songs. After this visit, we met several times and he was particular in asking about the progress of the students and the institute.

As you know, our efforts were aimed at building social connectivity, sense of belonging and creating Nationalistic feelings. On one occasion we came to know how these values are percolated among the students. On one fine morning I had a call from renowned Prof. Vasantrao Kumbhojkar. He told me that, a foreigner lady who then was on tour to Aurangabad asked him to arrange a visit to a school. I readily agreed and welcomed the lady. After going through our classrooms, extensively discussing the educational scenario with my colleagues, she addressed



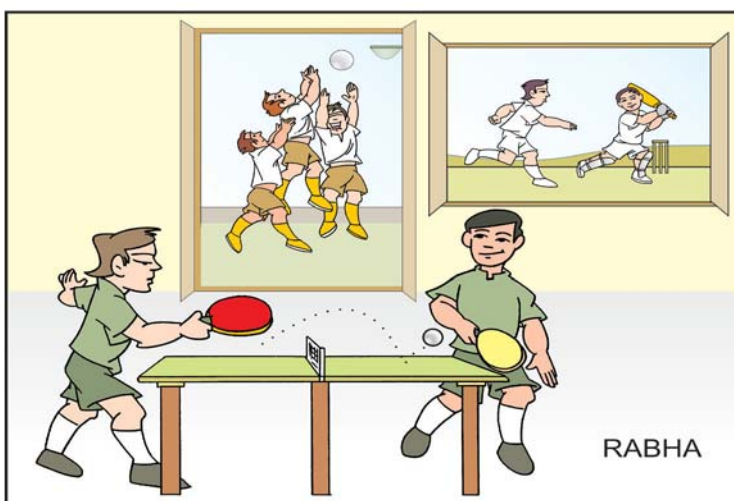
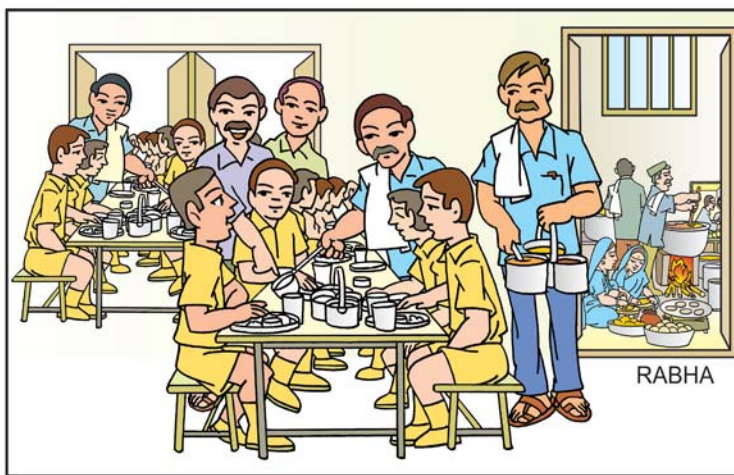


our students. At the end, she came with an offer and asked students to accompany her for further education. She would arrange everything in her country so that they could get quality education and promising a better life. This was a life time opportunity and any student could have responded. But even after repeated efforts and even getting translated her appeal in Marathi, there was pin-drop silence. That lady was amazed. Finally our school captain Ganpat Arrak stood up, in a very polite manner he said, how the Government and the society is spending money on the institute. Moreover, he said that he and fellow students are bound to repay as there are many other students who are not fortunate

enough to get into such institute. Hence, he and his friends can't imagine to go abroad which according to him would be high irresponsibility. His words were translated for the lady and she was in tears. On that day, I thought that our efforts would never be wasted.

Sir, generally it is said that one can't have innovative experiments in Government institutes due to many hurdles, restrictions, rules-regulation and norms. What has been your experience?

I know, such kind of perception prevails in the society. But this is far from truth. Yes, there are rules, regulations and norms. But all these are related to financial and administrative aspects of the institutes. And let me tell you that they



are bound to be there for financial and administrative matters. But there are no restrictions in adopting any kind of innovation in teaching methods. If you are doing right things with noble intention nobody objects. Nobody will say that teachers should not have personal contact with students and their parents. Nobody would object to any effort which is aimed at creating harmony, social connectivity. We allowed students to have healthy fight among them and we did ask them to evaluate their behaviour. So there was no question of any kind of restriction from higher authorities. On the contrary our innovations, our experiments had a positive impact and many times others were asked to follow.

Sir, you worked in various capacities in educational

administration. What would you like to tell us about our education and the method?

Education must have values. In fact, our text books are based on value system which we want to inculcate. Patriotism, self-reliance, fearlessness and healthy-broad outlook towards society as a whole, must be taught. Secondly and most importantly teachers must believe that there is a magic hidden in the fingers of their students. Their job is to make students aware about this. Let students feel that they can do something and yes, they can do it with their own efforts. They can do it with supreme quality. Purity of mind, purity of thought and purity in

action are the qualities which we aim at. This sense must be developed from the beginning. Education has role in binding or connecting a student with society. In short, education must aim at building capable human beings.

What do you think about Right to Education Act?

It is consistent with our policies. Quality education must be core of the Act. As we say that we have good provisions always mentioned in laws and rule books. But the question is of implementing them at the ground level. For this we must make collective efforts and society should always respect teachers. If you take care of your teachers, teachers would take care of our new generations. ■

- AS told to **Radhakrishna Muli and Nishikant Todkar**

Flare and Thereafter









‘To Preserve The Pride...’



Whenever any calamity whether it is natural or manmade, struck on the State, Mantralaya is always first to rise the occasion. In the hour of crisis the Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary wherever they are, always rushed to the Mantralaya to initiate and coordinate a determined fight against the calamity by activating machinery at all levels. An effort of compensation is also launched

from this very premise after the fight against the calamity. The exteriorly stony and motionless building is always full of enthusiasm and work tirelessly, whenever calamity like earthquake, drought, flood, bomb-blast or railway accidents struck, with never say die attitude. For last 50 years it is the sole hope for the 10 crore population of the State.

But, the nature had stored something different for this pride of Maharashtra.

The morning of 21st June, 2012 was as usual, there was an aura of enthusiasm. Everything was running smoothly until that cruel short circuit on the fourth floor at around 2.30 pm caused fire. The fire started spreading widely and engulfing papers, files, cupboards, computers, chairs, tables whatever came into its way. In the next two hours the entire 4th, 5th, 6th and half portion of 7th floor turned into ashes. It was a time when Mantralaya had to rise the occasion for



itself as it did to tackle all the calamities in the past and the building and the system in it did it splendidly as ever.

The structure of the Mantralaya which is a testimony of many calamities for the past 50 years, stood like a rock. But alas, no one ever thought that such a structure itself had to undergo such a calamity. The well designed layout and construction of Mantralaya is so well planned that during such inferno the thousands of staffers, visitors safely came out of the building. But unable to bear the intensity of fire few officers, employees gathered courage and tried to come out of windows through pipes on parapet and were later rescued by the fire brigade personnel with the help of snorkel. But it was irony of nature that five persons who could not make to come out safely lost their lives in the tragedy. Everyone was in tears and so the building!

It was a war like situation and in the war the generals doesn't have right to shed tears. Mantralaya rose to the occasion and decided to give a determined fight closing the ranks. The Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister, Ministers, the Chief Secretary, the Secretaries, officers..all staffers of the building put in their efforts in unison. The scenario was like same what Maharashtra saw at the time of earthquake in Killari in 1993 when

within three days the Government machinery right from the Chief Minister upto the labourers tirelessly became successful in placing infrastructure and civic amenities in their place. The same spirit, zeal and enthusiasm was witnessed once again.

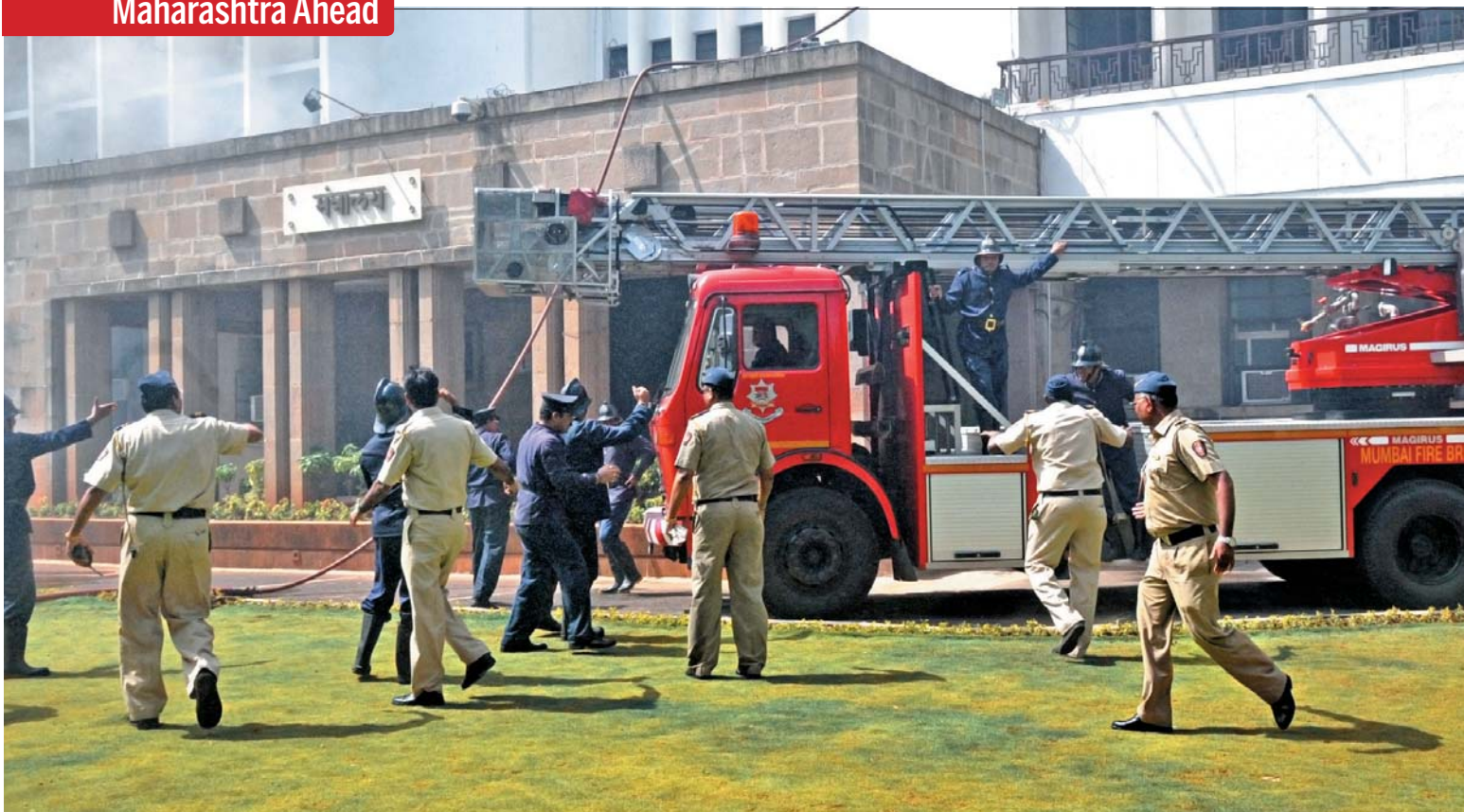
In the next three days i.e. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the work of trying to soothe the pain and healing the wounds of Mantralaya was being done at various levels. Hundreds of tonnes of debris was removed with the help of 135 trucks. Four Chief Engineers, 8 Superintending Engineers, 10 Executive Engineers, 40 Deputy Engineers, 125 Sub Engineers and 1300 labourers employed by the Public Works Department worked on war footing alongwith the help of personnel of other departments for removal of the debris, restoration of drainage system, water and power supply. The gutted area got a facelift by a fresh coat of paint.

The Chief Minister was determined to restart the work in the Mantralaya from Monday, 25th June 2012. Precisely on that day the remaining 3 floors of the Mantralaya started work including the offices of the Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister, other Ministers and the Chief Secretary. The building of Mantralaya is not just mass of stones, cement and bricks but it is the pride of the State as rightly said by the



Chief Minister. The planning and the decisions originated from this building propelled Maharashtra as the number one State in the country in terms of growth and development. The building is witness of the many careers in politics and bureaucracy were nurtured, got direction, attained ability to work with commitment and face any challenges steadfastly while serving in the building. It is also witness of the many historic empowerment schemes launched and coordinated for the benefit of needy and poor, women and downtrodden sections





of the society in the State. The fire gutted numerous papers from the 2 to 3 lakhs files, more than 2000 computers, many cupboards, table, chairs, wooden partitions.

The Mantralaya which consists of the main building and its extension have an area of 5,17,000 square feet and out of which 1,38,000 square feet area of the main building and 16,500 square feet of annexe building was gutted in fire which is 30 per cent of the whole building. But the original structure due to its solid construction withstood the fire.

RECREATION OF GUTTED FILES

- The experts opined that the gutted files can be recreated with the use of the latest technology called 'Data Magnetic Ferrous Microscope' by retrieving data stored on hard discs of gutted computers.
- Burnt files can be traced due to 'Document Journey Monitoring System' placed in the Mantralaya. The system contains information about files like date, subject of file, name of department and where it is directed.
- Sudhir Kumar Srivastava, Principal

Secretary, Finance Department said that data of 90 per cent files can be traced in his department as many files get directed to Finance Department.

- According to an estimate there are around 30 lakhs files in Mantralaya of which 2,25,000 files i.e. 3,25,00,000 papers were scanned.
- Original documents of many files are secured at taluka and district level.
- There were many files that may not be important as there is a practice in Mantralaya to generate a file whenever any application or letter gets received for its redress.
- Few files were kept for sake of records after implementation is completed.
- The debris also contained numerous letters, periodicals, magazines used to received by various departments on daily basis so people doesn't have to worry about their important files at Mantralaya.
- Special cells are created at offices of Tehsildars and District Collectors to receive applications of the people where one can resubmit his or her received copy of applications/petitions/rejoinders. These papers can

be used to recreate files at Mantralaya level.

- Orders are issued to various offices of the State Government to resubmit their pending files at Mantralaya in 15 days. All the District Collectors have been entrusted the task to send all the pending proposals to Mantralaya. The files which were destroyed in the fire are scheduled to be recreated within a month.
- The orders have been issued to make a time-bound programme to recreate gutted documents.
- The Chief Minister has clarified that the 15,000 papers with his office are very much intact. It contains letters received from MLAs, MPs and other VIPs and the action taken by the Chief Minister's office on them. It also contains the letters written by the Chief Minister to the Prime Minister on subjects like Indu Mill, Cotton and Onion issues. Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet and MLAs, MPs are also safe. The files at the Chief Minister's offices at Varsha bungalow and Sahyadri Guest House are also safe. ■

- Team Maharashtra Ahead



Those 110 hours...



The Mantralaya inferno started on 21st June 2012 at 2.40 pm from fourth floor. With resolute and collective efforts the Government machinery was back to its regular functioning in the morning of 25th June 2012. Those 110 hours of crisis was a period of worry and concern but also period of accurate planning to overcome the tragedy and efforts to put on track the regular work in the building which is seat of power and prestige of Maharashtra. Reportage on the unfolding events of the period...

- The fire started at 4th floor of the Mantralaya at 2.40 pm on Thursday 21st June 2012.
- Fire spread on 5th, 6th and 7th floors.
- The Deputy Chief Minister and other ministers left their offices and gathered at the compound of the building.
- The Chief Minister arrived at the scene and gave necessary instructions to the concerned agencies.
- Mantralaya staff and visitors came out of the building safely.
- Firefighting machinery started action.
- Persons trapped in the Deputy Chief Minister's office and elsewhere were rescued.
- Injured were rushed to different hospitals.
- Special cell of Disaster Management was activated in New Administrative Building opposite Mantralaya.
- The Chief Secretary took control of the Disaster Management cell.
- At 6 pm media was briefed about the incidence.
- Efforts on war footing to control the fire. The Chief Secretary and other senior officials were camping in Disaster Management cell.
- On Friday 22nd June 2012 at 6.15 am the Chief Secretary chaired a meeting for coordination of the efforts. Next plan of action finalized.
- After 6.30 am the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister visited and inspected Mantralaya and held meeting with officers.
- Some dead bodies were found.
- Removal of debris speeded up.
- Cleaning, removal of debris and restoration of power cables was done on Saturday and Sunday.
- The Chief Minister announced his resolve to restart the work in Mantralaya from Monday.
- After the Chief Minister's announcement the Government machinery swung into action, scouted places and 19 departments from 4th to 7th floors were given temporary office spaces around Mantralaya and elsewhere.
- On Monday the Chief Minister had a word with staff of Mantralaya at 10.30 am and appealed them to restart the work with a new zeal.
- The office of the Chief Minister started functioning from Vidhan Bhavan building
- The offices of the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister started functioning from the first floor of the Mantralaya.
- For speedy restoration temporary ban put on entry of general public in Mantralaya building. Special counters of various departments were opened at Janata Janardan gate of Mantralaya to receive applications from general public.
- The decision was taken to give financial assistance of Rs. 25 lakh to the next of kin of five persons died in the fire.
- Structural audit of Mantralaya was ordered.
- Orders were issued to make fire audit and strengthening of firefighting equipment in all important Government buildings including Mantralaya, across the State.
- Regular work of three floors of the main building and all floors of annexe building of the Mantralaya started with zeal from Monday. The 'Spirit of Mantralaya' which was alive and kicking was witnessed by the world.

- Team Maharashtra Ahead



Hemant Khaire, Assistant Director, with Directorate General of Information and Public Relations was seriously injured in the fire. He was immediately rushed to J. J. Hospital and admitted in Intensive Care Unit. He is recuperating now in the hospital. The Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister, Minister of State for Health, the Chief Secretary and others have paid visit and enquired about the health of Khaire in the hospital. Under the leadership of Dr. Tyatarao Lahane, the Dean of the hospital, the team of doctors comprising Dr. Priya Patil, Dr. Mustafa, Dr. Tejas, Dr. Swaleha, H. H. Jadhav are treating Hemant Khaire.

The fire which started at 2.40 pm on 21st June 2012 on 4th floor of the Mantralaya building was spreading on upper floors. On the terrace of the Mantralaya building tricolour was furling uninterruptedly. Fire was slowly reaching towards the tricolour. On that opportune time seven warriors came to the rescue of the tricolour. Braving the fire they stood steadfastly near the tricolour. The scene was frightening. The dense smoke of fire was engulfing the seven warriors. Flames were spreading. And then the warriors received order to bring down the tricolour. With due respect they complied obediently and gracefully. But they were trapped on the terrace. Fear gripped on the onlookers, fire brigade came to the rescue of these daredevils. They were brought down with the help of snorkel. These bravos are: Rajendra Kanade, Pandit Kendale, Surendra Jadhav, Ganesh Munj, Deepak Adsul, Suresh Baria and Vishal Rane. We salute them for their dedication to duty, respect and love for the National Flag!

On Duty



Tributes...



Tukaram More



Mohan More



Umesh Potekar



Mahesh Gugle



Shivaji Korde



Vidya Niketan: Milestone in Maharashtra's Education

Vidya Niketans changed the concepts of the schools

The stature of public school, ample scope to pursue other activities and best teaching faculty were the attraction for the students. Brilliant students from rural areas were the strong point of Vidya Niketans, states **Somnath Patil**.

Duke Of Wellington, the British general who defeated Napoleon, the French Emperor at the Battle of Waterloo once said about his victory that the progress of winning of the Battle of Waterloo was started on the playground of his Eton Public School! Very few people get chance in life to say that they are lucky because they achieve the capacity to win the battles of the life due to their school education. Much depend upon the quality of the education imparted in the school as well as efforts of the teachers taken on the students. Thankfully thousands of students in rural Maharashtra can boast about their schools. They hailed from villages and now pursuing distinguished careers which is matter of pride for them as well as their

schools. Interestingly they are all Government Schools! I am talking about the Shaskiya Vidya Niketan (Government Public School) project which was part of the experiment in residential schooling initiated by the Maharashtra Government.

Today there are thousands of aided, and semi-aided residential schools and Ashramashalas being run by Maharashtra Government. Huge funds are being made available for other schools also. So residential Government school is not an unusual thing now. But 45 years ago the scheme to open Government Public residential school for young, bright students of rural Maharashtra was itself unique concept. With the visionary initiative the then Education Minister Madhukarrao Chaudhary, it

was decided to open four Government Public Schools or Shaskiya Vidya Niketans in four revenue divisions of the State. In academic year of 1966 three Vidya Niketans were started at Koynanagar (Satara), Aurangabad and Chikhaldara (Amravati) and fourth in Nashik in 1967.

A special exam was conducted for the admission in Vidya Niketan which was as tough as Middle School level Scholarship or Open Merit Scholarship exams. Initially students were afraid of the exam because of less number of tutors who can prepare them for this exam. But the awareness campaign in 1965-66 bore fruits. The stature of public school, ample scope to pursue other activities and best teaching faculty were the attraction for the students. Brilliant students

from rural areas were the strong point of the schools.

Vidya Niketan attracted attention of every strata of society. Other prominent schools were also curiously looking at this project. What lies in Vidya Niketans? I will answer these questions with mine and my batchmates experience. Though these Vidya Niketans were Government run residential schools, they had something elite like. It had residential facility, spacious canteen, healthy diet, limited 30 but bright students in each class, well known teachers as principals, committed teachers combinedly raised the bar of the Vidya Niketan. The teachers were getting more salary than their counter parts in other Government schools but at the same time they had to work at least 12 hours and more. The laboratory was as good as any lab in Convent schools. Library, playground, sports material, compulsory daily exercise, personality development courses, extra curricular activities, hobby classes and also compulsory study and reading at night time were the features of the Vidya Niketan. Visits of eminent persons were arranged and students were able to have dialogue with them. The sitting arrangement in classroom was not back to back but as such that the students and teacher can have

VIDYA NIKETANS: FOR SOCIALLY COMMITTED GENERATIONS

'The dream behind establishment of Vidya Niketans was to search talent from rural area through some test and create a system which will help the overall development of the bright children of the rural area at a very young age and to ensure that the poverty, Backwardness should not come in the way of their development. The goal was the development of these youths through physical, mental and spiritual way. The country should get socially and ethically committed citizens. With their overall development they excel in different fields of life and give leadership which make the country prosperous.'

- Late Madhukarrao Chaudhary

dialogue among themselves. The environment was such that anybody can feel jealous. There were many students who had not seen benches previously except in examination centers. Proper text books, wearing of Chappals or Shoes were the first experience for many. Those who were eating bhakris (bread) of jowar and bajra were contained to eat Chapatti and rice. The most important thing was that the concept of school was changed. Previously school means four hours listening of what teachers were speaking. The Vidya Niketans changed this concept. There were ample of facilities, activities but no show off. Everything was meticulously planned. Hence Vidya Niketan became the school of nurturing the students and each student was its art form.

We were using the same text books, following same school boards but we were getting more than other students. We were getting the facilities in this Government school as students of any rich English medium residential schools were getting. We were prepared to take challenges in the school which helped us in our future life. Painting, sports, handicrafts were treated as non-school subjects in other schools but we were taught the subject equally with other opportunity to learn from carpentry to watch repairing in 'Do it yourself house'. We used to publish school magazine which is written and hand composed by us, the students. We were taught journalism, stage performances. We were able to learn violin, harmonium. Our school band was as good as any Military band. We learnt to click photos and print it. The school was having a projector where we saw films. Students double up as operator for the projector. In our quarterly exams all these subjects were included and the result book contains gradation in athletics, gymnastics, and country sports. Viva was compulsory for each subject and teachers from other prominent schools came for conducting Viva. We also used to speak with them in

VIDYA NIKETAN - AT GLANCE

Started in - 1966 - 1967

Total schools - 5

1. Government Vidya Niketan Dhule (Nashik Division)
2. Government Vidya Niketan - Aurangabad (Marathwada Division)
3. Government Vidya Niketan - Chikhaldara (Vidarbha Division)
4. Government Vidya Niketan - Pusegaon - Satara (Pune Division)
5. Government Vidya Niketan - Kelapur - District -Yavatmal - (special school for tribal students)

FACILITIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- Every year 40 students selected from competitive examination for Std V
- Facilities of hostel, canteen, library, laboratory, playground
- Merit based scholarships after Std. X for further study
- Guidance from well-known teachers and ex-students
- Under 'Give Bank', in last two years material of Rs.25 lakh given by ex-students

In schools we had a specially designed song on Vidya Niketan. Every day we used to sing that prayer. The song is being sung today also :

Like how Krishna , Sudama likes their Sandipani Ashrama, The same way we like Shaskiya Vidya Niketan, God has given us hand, mind, health and heart Using them appropriately we want to get expertise in it.

In this song four Hs : Head, Hand, Health and Heart is woven.

English as a matter of practice. Lingua phone records of British Council were used by us to study English language. A teacher from Briton's Voluntary Services Overseas Programme used to come frequently in the school for teaching.

Students used to organize most of the sports competitions, get-togethers and picnics which created a strong bond of comradeship among us which is still intact since last 40 years. It is not limited to batch mates but us also encouraging present students to join us in our activities.

Our class teachers never expected great performance in board exam from us. We were taught that whatever you



do, do it with confidently and make progress on your own. Still many Vidya Niketan students were toppers in SSC examinations. They received gold medals and scholarships. But in higher studies some of us couldn't find the environment like Vidya Niketan and fumbled but we recovered and excelled in our respective fields thanks to the learning and confidence infused by Vidya Niketan.

Many ex-students of Vidya Niketan are pursuing distinguished career not only in India but abroad also. One of the aims behind foundation of Vidya Niketan was to prepare students from rural areas for competitive exams meant for entry in higher Government bureaucracy.

We, the past students of Vidya Niketan haven't forgot our institution and our teachers. In 1992 the Silver Jubilee function of Vidya Niketan, Nashik (which was then shifted to Dhule) was celebrated and many ex-students were present at the function. Late Madhukarrao Chowdhary, founder of Vidya Niketan, was the chief guest of the function. That time he was Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly. He was very satisfied when he saw the sapling he planted had become a full fledge tree now.

But our frequent visits to the Vidya Niketan noticed a stark reality which we conveyed to the State Government also. Nowadays the quality of education in Vidya Niketan is not being maintained. There are no full time teachers or principals or hostel superintendents. We were shocked to learn that some students were not able to clear SSC exam! We have decided to do some benevolent interference in the functioning of Vidya Niketan. Past students who are staying in Nashik and Dhule have provided computers, uniforms, sports materials and books from their own pocket. They have also provided funds to the Vidya Niketan.

We want to do what alumni associations have done for IITs. But for this we need cooperation

WE THE STUDENTS OF VIDYA NIKETANS

Today, many ex-students are occupying higher positions in State as well as Central Government. Ravindra Jadhav, Secretary to President of India, Anil Kale, R. N. Joshi, Pramod T. Nalawade, IAS, Secretaries, Government of Maharashtra; Tukaram Kasar, Krishnarao Shelar are working in senior capacity in Government of Maharashtra. V. V. Hoshing, Gulabrao Mali, Sudhakar Borse, Vivek Ghanekar are from engineering fraternity, Dr. Satish Kulkarni, Aurangabad; Dr. Rajendra Malose, Chandwad; Dr. Vinod Nalawade, Buldhana; poets like Ramesh Ingle- Utradkar, Mangesh Bansode, Makarand Bharambe, talented artist like RABHA are from Vidya Niketan. Dr. Vasant Kataria who is now eminent doctor is alumni of Vidya Niketan like IITian Mohan Pawar who is now staying in USA. Arun Patil who is also from the school is a renowned name in insurance sector. Balwant Kalbhori of Brilliant Classes is guiding students for IIT entrance test. Machindra Chate of famous Chate coaching classes have studied in Vidya Niketan. Many architects and builders constructing houses on social concepts and industrialists area also from Vidya Niketans. Former Member of Parliament Dr. Ulhas Patil, Member of Legislative Council Sajay Kelkar Head of Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini Vinay Sahastrabudhe are also from Vidya Niketans. Many ex-students are in IT field and now working in Europe, America and Australia. In Marathi journalism myself, Yamaji Malkar and Datta Patil are the alumni of Vidya Niketan.



from education department. We had discussions with Minister for Education. He is very polite, cooperative but there is hardly any progress. Fortunately many teachers who have a great contribution in the development of Vidya Niketan are still available for their valuable contribution. We can use their services. Among the five Vidya Niketans some are still managed to succeed in present situation but some have been affected badly. We are trying to help these institutions to regain their reputation. We also want to set up a system which can give guidance to the passed out students. We want to form a coordination committee of

all five Vidya Niketan alumni students associations to extend effective support to the institutes.

Vidya Niketans are a milestone in the education sector of the State. Some years back, the Centre started Navodya Vidyalas on the lines of Vidya Niketans. Now some sugar factories have started Public schools on the model of Vidya Niketans. Some international schools are also started but they are catering only rich. For talented poor and rural students there is only one option i.e. Vidya Niketan. We hope the Government will remove the impediments faced by the Vidya Niketans and restore its glory. ■

The Future Begins Here...

Trained manpower is one of the important catalysts for planned national growth

Maharashtra has a long tradition and history in imparting education is contributing its mighty share in national endeavour to provide education to all children in the country explains **Prakash Bal Joshi**.



the important catalysts for planned national growth. As a result the Government has given top priority for SSA as the country's growth picked during last decade as a result of initiatives taken in economic field. Illiteracy is the main cause for many social ills and unless the country ensures education for all, these maladies cannot be tackled on priority basis. Since April 2010, the Government has given fundamental right to education to all children in age group of 6 to 14. It is easier said than done as it requires massive preparation and creation of infrastructure to ensure that all children get primary education without any hurdle. The Abhiyan envisages that child should not be made to walk more than 1.5 km. This means that school should be available within the periphery of 1.5 km and Maharashtra has lots of hilly and difficult area habitations, it is very difficult task.

The planners believe that with SSA, the authorities will be able to remove all sorts of social, economic and gender inequalities prevailing in the society due to lack of basic primary education. Maharashtra Government began implementing SSA since academic year 2007-08 by allocating adequate funds. In year 2010, the State earmarked Rs.1600 crore for SSA implementation in the State. The authorities also plan to reach out to the children from the specified age group who cannot reach schools due to various socio-economic reasons.

The education department of

When we talk about overall development, especially inclusive growth, the first criteria for such development starts with free and fair universal education to all. India has taken a big stride in this direction by ensuring free and compulsory education to all children upto the age fourteen by awarding Constitutional commitment. The Parliament has recently passed Right to Education Act (RTE) making education a fundamental right of all children in the country of age group 6-14 year.

Maharashtra which has a long tradition and history in imparting education is contributing its mighty share in national endeavour to provide education to all children in

the country.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2001 in the country is one major step in the direction. This recent initiative presents its guidelines, planning methodology, and creates data on elementary education created under District Information System for Education (DISE). The scheme does not merely remain on paper by also collecting data about school attendance, teachers' absenteeism, out-of-school children, mid-day meal and many other aspects of elementary education. Absenteeism is one of the maladies afflicting today's education system involving students as well as teachers.

The planning experts have realized that trained manpower is one of



the State Government has made many strides in the direction and the Human Resources Development Ministry of the Union Government has recommended other State Governments to implement programmes devised by the Maharashtra Government in the field of education for imparting SSA.

Imparting education for children residing in hilly tribal area and backward nomadic communities is a great challenge. It is found out that students are weak in English and Mathematics which affect them at advanced stage. With the help of the British Council, a programme has been devised to train school teachers so that they can take special care about this deficiency. Teachers need special skills to deal with disadvantage children and ensure their proper education. These students are prone to drop outs and unless their socio-economic conditions are understood, one cannot ensure their continued education.

When we talk of education to all, the system has to go beyond school buildings as all children cannot walk up to such education centers. Some lack knowledge some lack interest while some due to economic conditions cannot afford to go to schools and start helping economically backward parents in earning money for survival.

Maharashtra is one of the leading States in the country trying to implement the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in its true sense. There are many hurdles but efforts are being made to ensure education to all. There are 1, 84,000 schools giving education to 1.60 crore students from Std. I to Std VIII. There is need to start more schools and plans are afoot to identify areas where such new schools should be started. There are disadvantaged groups which have to be covered under SSA to admit children in the school. For such groups, schools cannot close annual admissions in the month of May and must keep register open for such students to get admitted



after monsoon is over. Many families in rural Maharashtra travel for farming activities and return to their homes only after harvesting is over. They migrate along with their young children and these children cannot be accommodated ever if school admission is closed in the month of

June.

There is major challenge to improve quality of education in the existing schools and also start new schools to accommodate more students. There are more than 12000 English medium private schools but it is difficult say that their standard of education is



satisfactory. Efforts will have to be taken to improve education quality in these schools as well as some schools run by the Government agencies like Zilla Parishads. Some of the schools run by ZPs are also of high standard which can be used as quality centers for other schools in the vicinity.

Educating primary teachers is also another task if quality of education in primary schools is expected to be improved. There are 5.5 lakh primary teachers who need to undergo refresher course and acquire required skills for better education. The State organized refresher courses for over 1.5 primary teachers during 2010-2011. The idea is to cover all the existing primary teachers and prepare infrastructure for continuous education for primary teachers in the State.

The authorities have also detected reduction in dropout rate due to vigorous implementation of SSA in the State. The dropout rate of primary students was 15 per cent in 2008-09 but it has come down to 2.5 per cent last year. Similarly, dropout rate in upper primary level has been reduced from 20 per cent to 7.6 per cent. With the help of the funding under SSA, the State Government is now spending more than Rs12,000

crores on primary education in the State and with increase in the allocation of funds in coming year; it aspires to achieve targets fixed under SSA.

Institutions are using funds made available under SSA for buying computers, books, equipment for playground and other activities to improve education given in these schools. The students need to be encouraged in sports and other extracurricular activities alongwith academic education if the authorities want to reduce dropout rates.

The SSA also takes care of handicapped and mentally challenged children and provide them special training and make them able to face life after school. The schools provide brail books, spectacles, hearing aids, and other facilities. More than four lakh handicapped students have benefited through the scheme.

Education of girls has been a high priority for the Government of Maharashtra as the gender disparities persist in enrolment of girls, especially in rural areas and among disadvantaged groups. It is further noticed that the gender disparity is more in the enrolment of SC and ST girls in the school. The progressive decision by the

Maharashtra Government to provide free education to girls' upto Std XII is helping to reduce this disparity.

Maharashtra has a long tradition of social reformers who took special interest in education field. Even saints of Maharashtra have all along been emphasizing need to become educated and lead enlightened life rather than remain illiterate and lead a life of an ignorant. Mahatma Jotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule had long back opened school doors for children from down trodden and other than backward classes. So when the schools offer special support and drive for children who are disadvantaged due to social conditions, such efforts is appreciated by the society. Shahu Maharaj, Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil are some of the visionaries who had taken great pains to ensure education for children from backward classes.

If the SSA remains as a scheme launched by the Government authorities then there is a possibility that it will remain wrapped up in red tape or die down in due course of time. Unless, students, teachers and specially parents take keen interest in the Abhiyan and make efforts to make it a real success, it will not be possible to keep the tempo and push it ahead. A recent survey conducted by Pratham shows encouraging results.

The survey covered 925 villages of 31 districts in the State covering 18,504 households with 30,438 children from the age group 3 to 16 years. The percentage of children of age 6 to 14 years enrolled in schools in rural areas was 99 which are quite admirable. One only hopes that there is not many dropouts in the coming years and children grow up and are lured to take up some economic activity despite stringent anti child labour laws.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has to be continued for few more decades to make it successful and bring all children under its coverage. This will go a long way in the growth story of India. ■



A Competition to Nurture A New Scientific World

The process of competition enables students to understand the process of research methodology.

Dr. Homi Bhabha Young Scientist Competitive Exam is intended to spot and nurture students' interested in science at a very early age. The competition is held for students of Std. VI and Std. X by the Mumbai Science Teachers' Association says **Shubhada Chaukar**.

From the moment of birth, like even before, humans are drawn to new things. The curious questions of children's can be answered in scientific manner only when parents are aware about it. But most of the times parents fail to answer. Dr. Homi Bhabha Young Scientist Competition is intended to spot and nurture students' interested in science at a very early age. From year 1981 the competition is held for students of Std. VI and Std. X by the Mumbai Science Teacher's Association. Students have option to write the answers in English or Marathi. Every year nearly 40,000 students appear for this competition from all over Maharashtra.

This competition is intended to get basic knowledge of science and its fundamentals. The questions that are designed for this competition are very interesting. For example, why cloves are used to get relief from tooth ache? Which important material is used in gel pen? Which waves allows TV's remote control for its functioning? etc.

The competition is held in four different stages. First, students have to give written test. 7.5% students from total number of students are selected through written test conducted in the month of September of every year. It is followed by practicals. Students have option to do practical at home which they do very enthusiastically. Again only

10 per cent students selected through this test. Third step is preparation of research project. For this students are assigned a subject. The students have to choose their research project based on these subjects. This process enables students to understand the procedure of research methodology. Finally students have to go for an interview and after that the winners are selected.

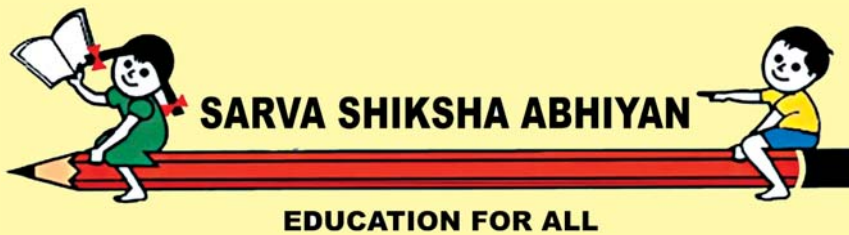
If you want to see the creativity of students of Maharashtra you must see the project they have done. Chaitanya Shirang Vaidyaa student of Std. IX from Ratnagiri has invented different uses of scrapped lead acid battery used in motor vehicles. He showed that the lead extracted from the scrapped batteries can be melted and used to make new led sheets. Sulphuric Acid is the main ingredient of the lead batteries. This Sulphuric Acid can be extracted from the scrapped batteries and used to create table reagent in the laboratories in school and colleges. Industrial chemicals like Calcium Sulphate, Sodium Sulphate, Copper Sulphate, uric acid can be made by using this extracted Sulphuric acid. Kaushal Gavankar a student from Std VI has farmed mushrooms at his home by using coconut fibre and sugarcane bagasse. Another student prepared a Whey drink by using leftover water after making Cheese and Paneer in the home.

Winners of this competition get felicitated by great scientists. They are awarded with gold medals, silver medals, certificates and prize money. A seminar of all successful students is organised in Homi Bhabha Science Center in Mumbai.

The Mumbai Science Teachers' Association has designed a guide for the students about this competition. It includes paper solution of previous year's examination, sample question bank for more practice. detailed information about the written test, practical exam, research procedure and interview as well. It is published by Menaka Publication in both Marathi and English Languages.

Since last 31 years students who succeeded in this competition has also excelled in various challenging fields of career. A small article on those successful students is included in this book. A must read article for every children and parents. ■

For more information you can log on www.msta.in or www.menakaparakashan.com You can visit at office of The Mumbai Science Teachers' Association at Malad. The contact number is 022-28806995. You can order brochure by calling on following number also : 020-24336960 or 982369660. Or you can buy it online from the websites.



Ensuring Quality Education to All

The concept of SSA is that children should be more interested in coming back to school

One of the main priorities of UNESCO includes ensuring quality education for all and lifelong learning, addressing emerging social and ethical challenges, fostering cultural diversity, a culture of peace and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication, states **Dilip Chaware**.



Education for All is a national goal which has a chequered international history. First adopted by UNESCO, it is now implemented by most countries around the world. India is one of the major participants in this massive human endeavor.

The principal objective of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture. UNESCO has 195 Member States and eight Associate Members. UNESCO pursues its objectives through five major programmes: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication and information.

One of the main priorities of UNESCO includes ensuring quality education for all and lifelong learning, addressing emerging social and ethical challenges, fostering cultural diversity, a culture of peace and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication.

The Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME) began meetings in London after the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration of the UN were signed following conclusion of the Second World War. The necessity for an international organization was expressed in subsequent conferences. The Constitution of UNESCO was signed by 37 countries, and a Preparatory Commission was established. The UNESCO constitution became effective from 4 November 1946.

As member countries have been working together to implement UNESCO's mandate, political and historical factors have shaped its activities. The milestones in this journey include the Cold War, the decolonization in the Third World and the disintegration of the USSR.

After taking up pilot projects in countries like Afghanistan, UNESCO recommended that Member States should make free primary education



compulsory and universal. In 1990, the World Conference on Education for All was held in Thailand. Accordingly, it launched a global movement to provide basic education for all children, youths and adults. A decade later, the 2000 World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal led member governments to commit to achieving basic education for all by 2015.

UNESCO supports research in comparative education and provides expertise and fosters partnerships to strengthen national educational leadership and the capacity of countries to offer quality education for all. This includes:

- Eight specialized Institutes in different topics of the sector
- UNESCO chairs, an international network of 644 UNESCO Chairs, involving over 770 institutions in 126 countries.
- Organisation of the International Conference on Adult Education in an interval of 12 years
- Publication of the Education for All Global Monitoring Report
- UNESCO ASPNet, an international network of 800 schools in 170 countries

Keeping in with the UNESCO initiatives, the Right to Education Act has been adopted by the Centre. This Act has become the engine to accelerate the process of bringing about fundamental changes in Education for All. Various States are making impressive strides in this direction of universalisation of elementary education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All) is the National flagship programme to achieve universal elementary education in a mission mode. The goals of SSA are:

- All 6-14 age children in school/EGS (Education Guarantee Scheme) center/bridge course by 2005;
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010; universal retention by 2010; and
- Focus on elementary education of



satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

For the 11th Plan period, SSA has been progression on a funding pattern between Centre and States in a pre-determined ratio. The outlay approved for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for the 11th Plan is Rs. 71000 crore.

The Maharashtra Government has taken up this challenge with due seriousness. One factor in this campaign is to increase the number of teachers in each school in the State. At present, the proportion between the number of students and teachers is on the higher side. The State is planning to appoint about 30000 more teachers in schools across the State. In privately-aided schools in the State, improving the student-teacher ratio is given a top priority.

The Union Government had asked the Maharashtra Government to submit a proposal for strengthening this ratio. About 12000 new primary school teachers and 11000 head teachers will be required in the initial phase of this plan.

Under SSA, more than 60000 classrooms have been constructed throughout the State over the past decade. During the ten years, over 8000 new primary schools have come up and upper primary schools, too, are increasing in number. Special emphasis is on enhancing

the educational infrastructure and on ensuring that the number of dropouts is reduced through a variety of measures. The concept is that children should be more interested in coming back to school than just attending it due to parents' or peer pressure.

One crucial step in this massive effort is to map all schools across the State. This statistics will enable the authorities to identify the areas which have no schools or where more school facilities are required. The objective is to create at least one school is available in a radius of one kilometer. If children are not compelled to walk long distances, they tend to attend school regularly and evince an interest in the allied activities like sports and personality development. A Geographical Information System (GIS) has been developed for educational mapping of Maharashtra. This is considered a major initiative.

Alongwith mapping, individual attention will be another major step in improving school attendance by every student. Information Technology packages are being contemplated to track the attendance and progress of each student. After encouraging results noticed through a pilot scheme in some districts, the initiative is being applied in all districts. This effort is supplemented by regular surveys and monitoring.



School management committees have been set up all over the State. They undertake training the teachers and trainers. Suitable training modules have been developed for the purpose. Basic changes have been introduced to make the training courses student-friendly.

Thanks to these concerted efforts, Maharashtra's rank among all the States in composite Educational Development Index (EDI) has improved. The National University of educational Planning and Administration and the Ministry of Human Resource and Development every year measure EDI, which is based on the District information System for Education (DISE) and relevant parameters. The EDI uses State-specific indicators in addition to bringing out many new facets of elementary education.

Male literacy in the State is 89.8 percent against female literacy which is 75.5 per cent. The gap between male and female literacy is narrowing. It has come down to 14.3 percent from

29.5 percent in 1961.

In the latest development in vigorously implementing SSA, Sanjay Deshmukh, State Project Director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, signed an agreement with the British Council on behalf of the Maharashtra Government. This partnership will take the programme ahead. The initiative called the 'Maharashtra English Language Initiative for Primary Schools' (ELIPS), the agreement is a major initiative. Its principal object is to facilitate quality English language teaching in lower primary classrooms around the State.

ELIPS will be implemented in Maharashtra in a phased manner. The first phase will be starting in Pune. It will be followed by Kolhapur, Mumbai, Nashik, Nagpur, Amravati, Latur and Aurangabad. The British Council has partnered for similar projects in Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Assam.

The programme has been devised into two parts and its duration will be

of two years. It will impart training to 920 Master Trainers, who in turn will provide training to nearly 67000 primary teachers. Its intent is to build language proficiency skills to a designated level. Also, teachers will be trained in children-centric lessons. Under the Master Trainer Training part of the programme, short-listing will be done by scrutinizing 1700 applicants who will appear for a written assessment, will participate in group tasks and finally face-to-face interviews will be held by the British Council. Through this procedure, 920 of them will be selected as Master Trainers. The project will also support in-service teacher training in the State.

Maharashtra has sought about Rs.1180 crore under the SSA from the Centre. This shows an increase of over Rs323 crore over the previous year. Looking at the State's good performance, more and more funding is expected to be granted by the Centre for this humongous human campaign ■



Grades Will Speak of School Standards

Maharashtra Government's spending on education has doubled during past five years

In order to mitigate the gap between urban and rural education, evaluation of school education is necessary. The State Government has taken the schools to the doorsteps of migratory and seasonal contract labours.

The State Government's decision to implement 'Right to Education' is a step in right direction that befits its reputation as the 'Progressive State'. Earlier the Government has also taken the schools to the doorsteps of migratory and seasonal contract labours for their children by starting 'Sakhar Shala' (Schools for the children of seasonal migratory sugarcane cutters) and 'Pashan Shala' (School for children of workers in the stone quarries).

Yet there exists a void between standards of education in rural and

urban schools as well as between the Zilla Parishad and Municipal Schools and those run by private institutions and organizations. The Government-run school children have out shone their counterparts from private schools in urban areas. It provoked educationists and the others concerned including the administrators to ponder over many things. An important question raised in this regard, was, did the present education system really achieve a wholesome or all round development of a student?

While evaluation of school education system in vogue was necessary on one hand, a different approach, on the other hand, has become necessary for education in rural areas, in order to mitigate the big gap between urban and rural education. The Rural Development Department took initiative to appoint a taskforce to study the issue in depth and suggest necessary measures to overcome the shortcomings.

The taskforce, true to its responsibility, worked meticulously to understand the changeovers in the



field of education in rural areas. It made many constructive and useful suggestions and recommendations to resolve the problems. These were aimed at providing quality education and educational facilities to the students. Important recommendations of the taskforce were, (1) Every village, its Headmaster; (2) Student Enrichment Programme; (3) Creation of Leave Reserve Posts of Teachers, as an alternate to teachers on long leave. (4) Objective Evaluation of Primary and Secondary Schools run by Zilla Parishads and their gradation (5) Awards for Best Schools etc. The taskforce believed that these measures would help in increasing quality of schools and school education as well as reduce the gap between Urban and Rural Education System.

While implementing free and compulsory education for all eligible students in the State, it envisaged to provide schooling facilities within a radius of 1.5 km from residence of the

student, the “Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya” scheme provides Rs. One, as daily attendance allowance to girl students with more than 75 per cent attendance. The “Ahilyabai Holkar Scheme” provided free transport to girl students on the state-run buses to attend to schools if there was to school in the village.

In Maharashtra more than 49089 primary schools have been included in the ‘Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan’ (Education for All) programme. About 39.60 Lakh students including 18.80 lakh girl students receive education in these schools. The number of students in the secondary schools is 56.33 Lakh including 25.80 Lakh girl students while number of secondary schools in the State is 20,470.

Maharashtra Government’s spending on education has doubled during past five years. Expenditure on primary education was Rs. 5,508 crore in the year 2006-07, which increased to Rs. 12,450 crore in the year 2010-11, according to the latest

Economic Survey of Maharashtra.

The educationists in the State, however, are not satisfied with these figures. This expenditure should have been much more, they say, to provide quality education, since large part of it is spent on salaries and wages of staff and other non-educational administrative expenses. The State Government, of course, has something else to say.

It implemented many ambitious programmes for the benefit of students, which included school health programme, Jeevandayee Arogya Yojana (Life Saving Health Scheme) for students affected or infected with incurable diseases, and Mid-day Meal Scheme. Government also endeavours to provide education to the children of migratory workers.

The department of Social Justice runs Ashram Shalas (Residential Schools for tribals and children from remote areas). While implementing various schemes and providing educational facilities, qualitative





development of education in Maharashtra was constantly reviewed. This resulted in appointment of the taskforce. The taskforce studied the root causes of the issue and suggested many important measures to tide over the short-comings and improve the prevailing educational system in the State. Many steps were taken by the State Government to implement select recommendations and suggestions of the taskforce. Various workshops were conducted by the taskforce to understand the system of school inspection, Chavadi Vachan (Public Review of the students) Evaluation of the schools as well as teachers and students, utility of Teacher – Parents Meetings, responsibilities and roll of Block Education Officer etc. A detailed report and recommendations on the subject were submitted by the taskforce to the Government recently.

A major and revolutionary recommendation of the taskforce was Accreditation of Schools and their Gradation in categories from A to E, after objective evaluation of each of the primary and secondary schools run by the Zilla Parishads. Gradation of schools will be based upon a 200

point scale, with 35 points for physical and civic facilities, 65 points for School Management and Administration and 100 points for teaching and teaching-related activities. Grades obtained by the schools will be displayed prominently on the main wall or the frontage of the school building, so that all concerned, including parents and guardians as also the students will know the standards and completeness of their schools.

It is expected that these gradations will evoke a spirit of competition among the schools for better accreditation which in turn will help betterment of school education standards. The schemes of Awards to the Best Schools at Taluka, District and State levels is also expected to yield better results.

In order to remove lacunae and shortcomings pointed out in the original Inspection Report of the Primary Schools and take measures to improve educational standards, an Improvised Comprehensive Inspection Evaluation Report has been finalized by the taskforce. It aims at preventing or at least reducing the percentage of school

drop-outs and pressure of non-school work load of the teachers. A review of attendance of the students as well as their educational progress is expected to be discussed at Parent-Teacher Meets. Inclusion of villagers in such meetings is aimed at understanding expectations of the village community in general and parents in particular, about standards of education imparted and prevention of drop-outs. The taskforce has recommended increased usage of computers to reduce pressure on teachers and also to save their time for extra-school work and sending the reports and certificates and other documents to the office of the Deputy Directors. Another major recommendation is to stop Chavadi Vachan or public review of students' progress, to relieve underdeveloped students of the pressure of such programmes. Instead, an Enrichment Programme for students has been suggested. It will be a Happy Learning programme through events such as story-telling, poem reciting, question bank, drama, Bhendya (Antakshari) etc., it is hoped. ■

Team Maharashtra Ahead

Mainstreaming The Marginalised

The State Government decided to open Government Residential School in every tehsil

Maharashtra Government is implementing various schemes for marginalised sections of the society to improve their percentage in the education and to empower them to take quality education in the State as well as abroad. A cursory look on these schemes...



GOVERNMENT HOSTELS FOR BOYS-GIRLS

The Government has started Government hostels to facilitate boys-girls from Backward Classes to take higher education, also school and college education for girls from economically backward classes. Presently there are 271 boys-girls Government hostels at Divisional, District and Taluka level benefitting 21800 students.

Apart from lodging, boarding students gets maintenance amount per month for their daily needs. Text books, note books, stationery are being provided to students. Those

who are studying in schools gets 2 set of uniform per year. Equipments like stethoscope, drawing board, boiler suite is provided to the students studying in Medical and Engineering fields. Colours, drawing board, brush, canvass like material is provided for the students who are pursuing arts.

Admission is given on merit basis, student should be resident of Maharashtra, annual income of parents should not be more than Rs. One lakh. Students studying in Std. VIII and further can apply for the admission. School students should apply before May 15; College students can apply before June 30 or within 15

days of declaration of results.

Monthly Maintenance Amount:
Divisional Level- Rs.200, District Level-Rs.75, Taluka Level-Rs.50.

GOVERNMENT HOSTELS FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

Many students are deprived from admission to hostels, keeping this in mind, Government in 2007 decided to build one each at divisional level hostel with capacity of 1000 students and at taluka level 353 hostels having capacity of 100 was taken. Decision has been taken to start 100 Government hostels in first phase.

100 RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The Government has decided to open Government Residential School in each taluka. Accordingly, approval has been given undertake construction work of 100 hostels in first phase.

Admission will be given to students studying from Std V to Std X belonging to Scheduled Caste and Neo Buddhists. Free lodging, boarding and education material will be provided to the students who get admission in these schools.

SCHOLARSHIPS AFTER MATRICULATION

Those Scheduled Caste students who secured admissions in vocational courses like Medical, Engineering,



Agricultural are eligible for this scholarship which ranges from Rs. 235 to Rs. 740 per month according to courses. Students who got admission in Government hostels or hostels of their colleges or any other hostels are eligible for this scholarship.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR VOCATIONAL COURSES

Scholarship of Rs. 740 per month for 10 months pursuing vocational courses of four to five years duration such as Medical, Engineering, Veterinary, architecture; Engineering diploma of two to three years MBA, MSW, etc-Rs.600 per month for 10 months; B.Ed, D.Ed. of two years or less duration Rs.500 per month for 10 months.

Those Schedules Caste students who are eligible but couldn't get admission in the Government hostel can apply for this scholarship. Study allowance of Rs. 1000 per month for 10 months is provided for those students who secured admission in the courses like Medical, Engineering, Architecture with duration of 4 to 5 years. Students studying in courses like diploma in Engineering, Master of Social Work, and Master of Business Administration which have duration of 2 to 3 years can eligible for monthly study allowance of Rs. 700 per month till 10 months. The students admitted in courses with duration of 2 years or less than that are eligible for monthly allowance of Rs. 500 for 10 months under this scholarship.

RAJARSHI CHHATRAPATI SHAHU MAHARAJ MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is awarded those Schedules Caste students who have secured more than 75 per cent in Std. X and wants to take admission in Std XI. Students studying in Std. XI and Std XII will get Rs. 300 per month for 10 months under this scholarship.

BOOK BANK SCHEME

Under this scheme colleges gets

money to provide 1 set of books for each 2 students from Schedules Caste and are admitted in higher studies. For Medical and Engineering courses Rs. 7500, for Veterinary Rs. 5000, for Agriculture courses Rs. 4500 and for diploma courses Rs. 2400 is provided to colleges. For courses like Chartered Accountancy, Law, MBA Rs. 5000 is provided to colleges to buy 1 set book for each Scheduled Caste students.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Those students whose parents are working as scavengers are get admitted in these public schools situated at Pune and Nagpur with Std. I to Std. VII. Presently 375 students are benefitted from this scheme.

PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship is meant for children of persons who are in profession of scavenging irrespective of any caste. Certificate from either Sarpanch or Municipal Councilor is required for those who don't belong to Scheduled Caste category.

Students who are studying in Std. III and upto Std. X and are staying in hostel are eligible to get Rs. 700 per month for 10 months and Rs. 1000 as yearly grant in aid. Students who are not staying in hostel will get Rs. 110 per month for 10 months and Rs. 750 as yearly grant in aid.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR HIGHER STUDIES WITHIN THE COUNTRY

100 students get selected under this scholarship yearly for study at premier education institutes across the country free of cost. Rs. 10,000 is granted as yearly basis to these students who belong to Scheduled Caste/ Neo Buddhists and who are resident of the State. The students whose parents have yearly income of less than Rs. 4.5 lakhs are eligible for this scholarship.

IMPROVING EDUCATION STANDARD OF SCHEDULED TRIBE STUDENTS

In 1973 Ashram schools under



residential schooling were started in the State in the tribal areas with population of 5000 to 7000 one school is granted and in hilly or remote region one school is granted for 3000 population. There are 2,10,244 students currently studying in these Ashram schools out of which 1,10,922 are boys and 99,322 are girls. In each class in each Ashram schools 40 residential and 10 non-residential students gets admission. Apart from free lodging-boarding, uniform, education material is provided free of cost in these schools for residential students. For non-residential students per day a day meal plus uniform and educational material is provided by the Government. Books for library, sports material, entertainment facilities like television sets and Video Cassette Recorder (VCR) is provided by the Government.

126 secondary Ashram schools are upgraded till junior college level and 144 Ashram schools were upgraded as Kendra Ashram schools for improving the standard of primary education.

The Central Government has sanctioned 9 residential schools in the State of which 4 schools were



established as Eklavya Public Schools were established at Kambalgaon in Thane district, Peth road in Nashik District, Chikhaldara in Amravati district, Khairiparsoda in Nagpur district. Classes from Std. VI upto Std.XII have started in these schools under Central Board School Education (CBSE) pattern. Entrance exam is held between month of February to March for these schools in each district which comes under Tribal sub plan and those students who have passed Std. V are eligible for the exam. Apart from free lodging-boarding, uniform, education material is provided free of cost in these schools for the students.

EMPOWERING THE MINORITIES

Students who are studying in vocational and non-vocational courses can get this scholarship by filing online application and endorsing it by the Principal of the college. Those students whose yearly income is less than Rs. 2.5 lakh are eligible for these scholarships. More information can be obtained from -www.maharashtra.gov.in

FREE UNIFORM SCHEME

Students studying in Std I upto Std IV can apply for the scheme via Headmaster of their schools. Those students who are studying in Std V to Std VII are eligible for daily encouragement allowance.

EDUCATION LOAN SCHEME

Education loan up to Rs. 3 lakh is provided by Maulana Azad Minorities Financial Development Corporation with just 3 per cent interest. Application can be made at the district level offices of the corporation at prescribed format. Admission letter of the educational institute, one surety letter and copy of income and expenditure of education expense are the only papers which have to get submitted with the application.

RS. 2 LAKH GRANT FOR MINORITY SCHOOLS

For improving infrastructure i.e. drinking water, toilets, Computer centre grant of Rs. 2 lakh is provided to schools of Minority Communities. To avail this grant the Headmasters of the schools has to prepare a budget for these infrastructure facilities and

after rechecking of the proposal by the local education inspector submit it to the Minority Department via District Collector.

SPECIAL CLASSES FOR STUDENTS OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN ITI AND POLYTECHNIC

Special classes are opened in 43 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in every district and 7 polytechnics situated in Jalgoan, Nanded, Solapur, Yavatmal, Mumbai City, Mumbai Suburb and Thane districts for imparting vocational training to the youth of Minority Communities.

TRAINING FOR RECRUITMENT IN POLICE FORCE

Two months of training is imparted to the youths selected under this scheme and Rs. 1500 is given to the each candidate as stipend and Rs. 1000 towards expense on uniform.

HELPLINE

A dedicated helpline have started by the Minorities Development Department to give information about their schemes. The helpline number is: 1800 22 5786 ■



Savitribai Phule Scholarship for Girls

This scholarship is being given to girls students who are studying in secondary schools. There is no need for any formal application. Disbursement of money under this scholarship is takes place 3 times in a year i.e. 26th June, 22nd September and 3rd January. For 5th to 7th standard Rs. 60 per month is given up to 10 months and for 8th to 10th standard Rs. 100 is given on per month basis up to 10 months.



Scholarships for Higher Studies Abroad

Per year 50 students from Scheduled Castes are awarded this scholarship for pursuing post graduate or doctoral degree at reputed premier educational institutes in abroad. The income limit of the parents to avail this scholarship is Rs. 2.5 lakhs and the student should be resident of the state. He or she needs to submit admission letter and approximately expenditure on



education and other activities certified by the institute. The age of the students must be below 35 years & has to secure at least 50 % marks in post graduate degree exam in the first attempt. The institute which the student wants to study should be recognized institution.

For study at USA and other countries yearly allowance of \$14, 000 is given to the students. For UK the allowance is £9000 per year. For contingency expenditure \$1375 is given for study in USA and other countries while £1000 is given per year for students studying in UK. Reimbursement of to and fro air ticket can be avail after submission of the same at the office of Director of Social Welfare, 3 Church Road, Pune - 1/Maharashtra State

Training of Hospitality Management for Tribal Students

The course is conducted since last year by the Tribal Development Department for girls and boys who belong to Scheduled Tribes. Rs. 1.5 lakh is spent on each student for this training by the department. 37 girls out of 100 who have completed the training secured jobs in hospitality sector.



Grant for Tribal Students

Every year 2500 tribal students from 1st up to 12th standard are given grant of Rs 50, 000 to study at reputed English Medium Public Schools at nearby city. The income limit for the parents of the students who wish to avail the grant is Rs. 2 lakhs per year. There are no separate divisions for the tribal students and they are studying with general students under the public school.



Key Variables for Education

Education is the key parameter for inclusive growth and is the key instrument for social and economic transformation. Use of technologies in the delivery of education services and promotion of technological interventions in this sector is likely to have a significant impact not only on the quality of education services but also on its accessibility to the rural poor, in particular the disadvantaged sections of the society. Access to quality basic education will reduce the social and regional disparities, so as to achieve balanced growth and development. 'Right of children to free and compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009' will facilitate children to demand eight years of quality elementary education. During 2010-11, the expenditure incurred by State on education was 2.9 per cent of GSDP.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

Elementary education, consisting of primary and upper primary is the foundation of the pyramid in the education system and is well established in the State through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The



programme of Universalisation of Primary Education requires that the facilities should be available within walking distance of 1.5 km. from the residence of the students. To implement this policy, grants are being disbursed to the Zilla Parishads.

in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB) where the level of rural female literacy is less than the national average & the gender gap is above the national average, in blocks of districts having at least 5 per cent SC/ST population and where SC/ST female literacy is below 10 per cent and in selected urban slums. It gives emphasis on improving access to quality education to upper primary level girls from SC, ST, OBC, minority & BPL families residing in EBBs through innovative programmes like vocational training, life skill development, early childhood care and education, etc.

GIRLS' EDUCATION

Education of girls has been a high priority of the Government. Gender disparities persist in enrolment of girls, especially in rural areas and among disadvantaged groups. The disparity is more acute in the enrolment of SC and ST, especially at upper primary level. The decision of the State Government to provide free education to girls upto Class XII, has proved to be a boon for the promotion of girls' education. Some of the schemes that are being implemented for the promotion of girls' education are :

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EDUCATION OF GIRLS AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL (NPEGEL)

The Government of India launched NPEGEL to promote girls education. NPEGEL provides additional resources

KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA (KGBV)

This scheme was launched in 2004 for setting up





residential schools at upper primary level with an objective to ensure access and quality education for out of school girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC and minority families from EBBs. In 10 districts of State 43 KGBVs are operational with capacity of 100 girls each.

ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE SCHEME

In order to reduce the drop out rate of the girls studying, in Primary Schools, the State Government introduced 'Attendance Allowance Scheme' in January, 1992. Under this scheme Rs. One per day and maximum Rs. 220 is paid to the parents of the girl studying in standards I to IV with attendance more than 75 per cent of working days in an academic year. It covers all girls from Tribal Sub Plan Area, and those belonging to SC, ST & BPL families in other areas.

AHILYABAI HOLKAR SCHEME

This scheme is being implemented in the State since 1996-97 to provide free travel concession to girl students. Under this scheme, girls from the rural areas studying in standards V to X are provided free travel in buses run by Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation to attend school, if school facility is not available in their village.

MID DAY MEAL SCHEME

With a view to enhance enrolment, attendance & retention and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children studying in primary schools, the GOI launched the 'Mid Day Meal Scheme' in 1995. During 2008-09, the scheme was extended to the students of upper primary schools under the name of 'National Mid Day Meal Scheme'. The objectives of this scheme are:

- Improving the nutritional status of students in Government, Local Body & Government aided schools, vasti shala, Alternative & Innovative Education centers, Mahatma Phule Education Guarantee Scheme centers, ashramshalas and aided schools for blind and handicapped.
- Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
- Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation.



SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN



Since inception (2001-02) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has made considerable progress in universalization of elementary education (UEE) by providing elementary education to children in the age group 6-14 years. It aims to bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage with focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality.

'Inclusive Education of Disabled' programme is being implemented in the State to ensure quality education to Children With Special Needs (CWSN) in normal set up with normal peer group, to integrate them socially and to progress emotionally. This programme includes identification and medical assessment of CWSN, providing rehabilitation & educational support services like Braille book, spectacles, hearing aids & appliances, speech trainer, etc. During 2011-12, upto February 2012, in all 3.86 lakh children were benefitted and total expenditure of ₹ 59.55 crore was incurred.

MAHARASHTRA CADET CORPS

'Maharashtra Cadet Corps' scheme was introduced by the State Government for development of spirit of nationality, co-operation, discipline, leadership, self-confidence, valour and patriotism amongst the students. The scheme is being implemented on optional basis in all the schools for students of standard VIII and IX. During 2010-11, this scheme covered around 24 lakh students.

SAINIKI SCHOOLS

There are 42 Sainiki schools in 33 districts of the State, of which, five schools are exclusively for girls, 33 schools are exclusively for boys and four are for co-education. Two schools are unaided and total enrolment in these 42 schools is 15,032.



SPORTS EDUCATION

The State Government has established 'Shiv Chattrapati Kridapeeth' at Pune in the year 1995 with the motive of promoting sports and develop excellence by upgrading the skills of sports persons. This Kridapeeth conducts sports skill tests for the students of age group 8 to



14 years and imparts specific training for about 8 to 10 years to selected students in 17 different games. There are 11 sports academies in the State. So far, 17 students from these academies have received 'Shiv Chattrapati State Sports Award' and 46 players had represented the nation in International Competitions. The State Government spends on an average Rs. 6,000 per trainee per month. During 2011-12, the number of trainees selected was 598.

SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMME



School Health Programme (SHP) under NRHM is being implemented in coordination with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Under this programme, students of standard I to X from rural schools and students of standard I to IV from urban schools are examined every year and medical services including major operations like cardiac surgeries and other surgeries like orthopedic surgeries, appendicitis, dental surgeries, etc. are provided to them free of cost.



EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT INDEX

The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) and the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) computes Education Development Index (EDI) for primary and upper primary levels of education and also a composite index for the entire elementary education which is exclusively based on the 'District Information System for Education (DISE)'. The EDI not only uses state-specific indicators but also brings in many new dimensions of elementary education. According to Elementary Education in India and Progress towards Universal Elementary Education Report (Flash Statistics 2009-10), the State ranks 14th at primary level and 13th at upper primary & composite level with EDI 0.58, 0.75 and 0.66 respectively.

[Source : Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2011-12]

Eleven Point Oath for Teachers

First and foremost, I will love teaching. Teaching will be my soul.

I realize that I am responsible for shaping not just students but ignited youths who are the most powerful resource under the earth, on the earth and above the earth. I will be fully committed for the great mission of teaching.

As a teacher, it will give me great happiness, if I can transform, an average student of the class to performance exceedingly well.

All my actions with my students will be with kindness and affection like a mother, sister, father or brother.

I will organize and conduct my life, in such a way that my life itself is a message for my students.

I will encourage my students and children to ask questions and develop the spirit of enquiry, so that they blossom into creative enlightened citizens.

I will treat all the students equally and will not support any differentiation on account of religion, community or language.

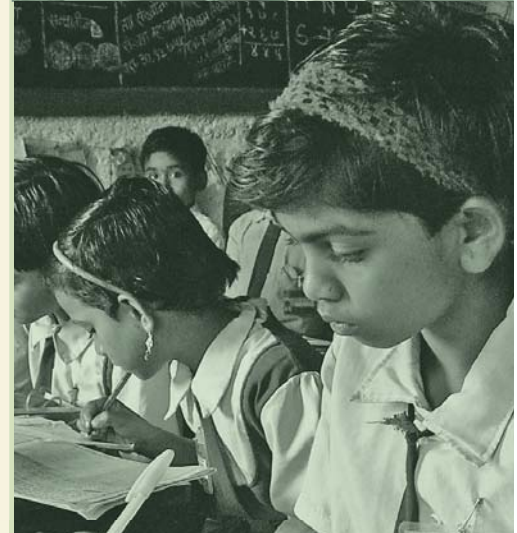
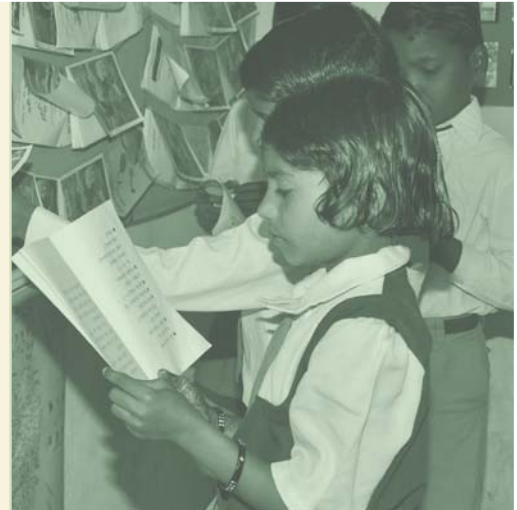
I will continuously build the capacities in teaching so that I can impart quality education to my students.

I will celebrate the success of my students.

I realize by being a teacher, I am making an important contribution to all the national development initiatives.

I will constantly endeavour to fill my mind, with great thoughts and spread the nobility in thinking and action among my students.

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam



Resurgence..



O.I.G.S. Presented by The Government of India

MAHARASHTRA AHEAD

Digamber W. Palve

Senior Assistant Director, Directorate General of Information
and Public Relations, Maharashtra Government,
Barrack No. 19, Free Press Journal Marg, Mumbai 400 021.

