

I am extremely happy to participate in the pleasant function today. I am thankful to the distinguished members of the Rotary Club of Madras for electing me as a Honorary Member of your prestigious institution. I shall certainly be avail myself of the opportunities that this membership will offer to me in the days ahead.

India today is one of the many developing countries in the world. Even after 50 years of independence we have around 30 of the people below poverty line. In terms of gross national product we rank 132 in a list of 174 nations and again we are in Human Resources Development among 174 nations.

Accordingly to the system of expertise in the field a country like India would take about 50 years to reach the status of a developed nation. But you are aware that we are aiming to achieve that status by 2020 i.e. within 20 years. We may have to consider the implication of this decision or this objective.

As for the global scene the world stands divided into two unequal camps. Advanced countries that have about 20% of the world population on one side and so called developing countries which house about 80% of the world population. 20% of the people in advanced countries have access to 80% of the total wealth of the country. It is imbalance that it is crossly unfair, unjust and the world has does not seen in the past a comparable situation. Added to this the advanced countries are introducing such institutions as WTO, GATS and GATT to ensure their interest are protected. It is against this world scene that we have to consider the measures we have to take for moving towards the developed status in a period of 20 years.

It has been well established that education is the key for social, political and economic development and it consist of three major factors, (1) Supremacy of knowledge establishing in Science and Technology (2) Creation of new

knowledge (3) Capacity of the people at to make use of the new process and products developed in science and technology for the benefit of the society.

Supremacy of knowledge and creation of new knowledge depends on the status of higher education and research. The eligibility of the people to utilise the products and processes of science and technology depends on universalisation of education.

Now let us examine the two aspects: First I may consider literacy during the period from 1960-1975 to the Board GNP people double but the benefit of this two fold increase is not been uniformly distributed among the countries of the world.

The facts between mostly to countries its 90% literacy. In other words countries with universal education. I may quote another example. The World Bank undertook the services of the economic development in 34 advanced countries for the period from 1850 to 1960. It was observed that each of these countries economic development started only after it was obtained universalisation of education.

We talk about the advanced of Japan among the ancient countries. We must realize the Japan made elementary education compulsory as early as 1870.

Now let us consider the position in the case of advanced countries. They have 100% literacy. They also have reached universalisation of secondary education and when it comes to higher education in most of the countries 50% of the eligible age group goes for higher education. Against this background we may consider the position of India. Even as per 2001 census our literacy level is close to 65%. We still have about 35 crores of people who are illiterate. This

population is later keep entire population to any country excepting China and India.

I said advanced countries have already reached universalisation of secondary education. In India only 10% of the people have completed education upto the level of 10th standard. When we come to university education even though we have 245 universities, 12300 colleges and 80 lakhs of students, in our higher education system only 7% of the age group is able to proceed higher education. We can well perceive the educational gap that exist between us and the advanced countries. It will not be possible for us to fulfill the educational requirements for us to achieve the developed status . It will followed the conventional procedure that we followed so far. Fortunately for us certain revolutionary changes have taken place in the field of education towards the end of the last century.

Industrial revolution has brought about increase in productive because transform of craft into technology. This has happened in all piece of activity and productivity as considerable increase however this has not happened in the field of education.

Education remained in craft technology did not entered the class room and further productivity remained glow. The recent development of distance education is the result of application of technology to education and it promotes vastly increased productivity under reduction in cost. Distance education is a new field by itself and I do not want to go in detail now.

Suffices to state that increase the productivity and reduce the cost. Secondly knowledge has become a resources by itself. It is now possible to convert knowledge directly into wealth consequently education establish. Higher

education has become an investment for private individuals. In other words education has become a marketable commodity and education material has become a commercial products.

Private enterprise has come into education in a big way in advanced countries. A university of Phoenix in the USA has listed its shares in the New York stock exchange. University in the advanced countries are establishing in developing countries. Monash University of Australia has established a campus in Malaysia. Like multi national corporation, multi national universities are coming up. Like the industrial fare we have world educational fare now being organized and they are attended by a large number of universities, educational institutions and representatives of Governments. Now this trend is already witnessed in India. I have to sound the note of caution as far as privatization of education is concerned. It is welcome to certain but at the same time it does not mean that Government can have made it as fashion to quote examples from advanced countries. Very often it is an execution of immaturity to compare countries which are not uncomparable in many respects. Advanced countries have resorted to privatization after they have achieved 20% to 30% of the age group has enter the higher education. Of that point Government support was fully utilized. In our case the age group in an higher education is only 7% as already mentioned. The Government cannot on any account abdicate the responsibility for supporting the higher education. At the same time we may promote the entry of private providers of education with reasonable safe guards as may be needed.

Thirdly formal system alone will not help us to reach the target. We have to think in terms of carry nation knowledge and there is no opportunity to people in an informal way making use of the resources available in the Government, in the private sector and in the non-government organizations. In other words we

must organize our battle to promote literacy to promote education and to impart knowledge people mobilization of the strength available in three sectors i.e., the government departments, private sector and in the non government organizations.

I only want to conclude to say that if we really mean to achieve the developed status in the next 20 years we need totally

system in the manner that we help to realize the entire productivity forms in the society to help the full utilization of the talents available in the country and replaces departmental action by massive movement.

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