

**Focal Theme**  
**Of**  
**XLVIII Indian Social Science Congress**  
**‘Science Education and Research in Indian Languages’**

**Preamble**

The Indian Social Science Academy (ISSA) has resolved that the deliberations of 48<sup>th</sup> Indian Social Science Congress will highlight on ‘**Science Education and Research in Indian Languages**’. This is with a view to stimulating and flowering creative and innovative potentiality of young minds in Science and Technology for enabling peoples of India to be fully *atmnirbhar* and learn Science and Technology for enjoying higher quality of life - material, social and cultural while living in peace and social harmony.

**Context**

**New Education Policy 2020**, for the first time in the history of 76 years of independence and formation of Democratic Republic of India, seeks to do away with the British-borne Education Policy in English by introducing education in several Indian languages. However, it does not state whether and how education and research in English will be replaced by education and research in Indian languages. Nevertheless, the proposal for education and research in Indian languages ought to be welcomed by majority Indians in general and scientists in particular. All out nation-wide massive collective efforts ought to be made for its success.

Two major questions need to be addressed appropriately by all the stakeholders and concerned governments to initiate a viable innovative process of education and research in Indian languages for teaching science and technology like medical, engineering, pharmacy, architecture etc and also subjects of humanities:

**Firstly, India did not switch and adopt science, technology and subjects in humanities to be taught in Indian languages after independence in 1947.** Prior to the takeover by the East India Company, India indeed had a good education and research system in place which were in local Indian languages and vernacular. This was evident from a rich heritage of art, science, culture and architecture. The economy was strong – there was no begging as reported by the British traveler

Macaulay himself in 1829. Poverty struck soon after the British led East India company started ruling the country and Dada Bhai Naroji described it in his book in 1870. In order to align the Indians with the British and alienate them from Indian culture and family values, Convents and English led education system was launched and propagated on the behest of Thomas Babington Macaulay, a British historian of *Whig* party, Secretary at War who studied at Trinity College Cambridge who stayed in India from 1834 to 1838. Such English educated men and women in India surely attained positions of power and strength but largely remained distant and alienated to Indian culture and value system. The teachings of science, engineering, medical subjects, architecture, nuclear science are mostly in English language until today. Constitution and laws are in English. Bureaucracy and judiciary function in English. There is no research journal, monographs and very few science books in any Indian language. Several Indian languages either died or were dying in Democratic Republic of India. As a result, a large number of people of India have been deprived of knowledge of modern science of Nature-Human-Society. None of the three Science Academies except the Indian Social Science Academy pleaded Science Education and Research in Indian languages. Seventy five years of such a policy and only of late it was recognized that teaching science, technology, humanities in Indian languages shall create a human resource which will make India *atmanirbhar*.

### **Secondly, what efforts, so far, have been made to promote Science Education in vernacular or Indian languages?**

Indian Social Science Academy focused the deliberations of XV Indian Social Science Congress on 'Society, Language and Development: Indian Context' in 1990 at Berhampur University, Orissa. Indian Social Science Academy (ISSA) tried to promote Science Education and Research in many Indian languages through State/Regional Conferences/Seminars/Symposia in Indian languages after its establishment on August 15, 1974. It set up its Regional Centres in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka which organized conferences/seminars/symposia in Bengali, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil. Alagappa University, *Karaikudi* gave its 2.5 acre land for construction of Tamil Nadu Social Science Centre and an old building - free from rent till the construction of new building. But no progress has been made till today. Initially, regional conferences were largely attended. But these have to be stopped as respective State Governments did not extend appropriate financial support. Later on, ISSA resolved to establish autonomous State Academy like Bengal Social Science Academy, Bihar Social Science Academy, U.P. Social Science Academy, M.P. Social Science Academy, Punjab Social Science Academy, Tamil Nadu Social Science Academy, etc. in all Indian States. Till date no satisfactory progress has been made. ISSA

started publishing its Journal called *Samayik Samajik Chintan* which became popular for some time only. It was difficult to continue to publish this because but even the scientists of Hindi Speaking States wrote their research papers in English.

ISSA reconstituted subjects' committees of Indian Social Science Congress as Research Committees and Thematic Panels having members from all over India in a hope that each Research Committee shall translate and edit papers presented at Indian Social Science Congress in several Indian Languages. This too did not succeed as members of the Research Committees did take much interest in this activity of translating the proceedings and manuscripts in respective regional languages. ISSA also set up National Translation Centre with a view to creating trained translators in Indian languages and sought collaborative support from several Indian Universities. This effort has also remained on paper. ISSA on its own does not have enough funds and resources to perform this yeoman task of translating science technology research manuscripts. The State and the Central Governments have not come forward in extending support for such an activity of publication of research journals, monographs and reference/text books in Indian languages.

It remains to be seen that **New Education Policy 2020** will take up all round effort to create Journals, magazines, textbooks and reference books in Indian languages for better understanding of science, technology and humanities.

## **Objectives**

Deliberations on 'Science Education and Research in all Indian Languages' during the 48<sup>th</sup> Indian Social Science Congress seek to focus on the following:

1. To examine/assess the necessity, relevance and validity of shifting the well-established language policy of Science Education and Research in India from English to Indian Languages.
2. To assess the potentiality of each Indian Language for science education and research.
3. To assess the competence of teachers and students for teaching and doing research in each language.
4. To draw a roadmap for production of textbooks, reference books, monographs and research journals in each Indian language.
5. To work out plan for translation of research papers, monographs, books in English in all Indian Languages.

## **Questions**

Scientists of all disciplines of Science, thinkers, philosophers, policy planners and social activists convinced that science education and research largely in Indian languages ought to be done will need to answer the following questions :

1. Does Swaraj India need to say goodbye to Education and Research in English? If yes, why? If no, why? Or English language education should continue as such and Indian language education should exist in parallel?
2. Does Swaraj India need to switch over to education and research from English to all Indian languages or few Indian languages – which Indian languages should be taken up first?
3. Will commodified education in Swaraj India facilitate or block the project of education and research in all Indian languages? If yes, what to do?
4. What are the threats perceived when Science Education and research is done in Indian languages rather than only English language?
5. Will Central Government and respective State governments provide sufficient funds for translational work in Indian languages? implementation of the policy of Education and research in all Indian languages happily?
6. Will Central Government and respective State Governments facilitate appointments of faculty and staffs in Universities and Colleges for translational work in Indian languages?
7. Down the line changes of private coaching centers, examination and selection boards, job oriented courses will also need to switch from English to Indian languages – is that feasible? Will that not lead to difficult inter-state employment opportunities? Will it not create problem of too much statehood?
8. Massive publications of text books, reference books, monographs and research journals in all Indian language will be needed for education and research in all Indian languages. How to do it? What will be role of Central and State Governments in it?

## **Approach**

Massive national, State, Regional and Local level deliberations on ‘Science Education and Research in Indian Languages’ ought to be held in most congenial, free and fearless environment. It involves huge financial and organizational support which the Indian Social Science Academy does not have. However, the Indian Social Science Academy does have nation-wide members and connection with universities, colleges and research institutes. It also has intra and interdisciplinary base essential for such deliberations. These deliberations have to be kept free of politics and fully devoted to science and methods of science.

Indian Social Science Academy, therefore, proposes to initiate a process on scientific deliberations on ‘Science Education and Research in All Indian Languages’ during the XLVIII Indian Social Science Congress in 2024-25 in a hope that all scholars speaking diverse languages, all political parties, State and Central Government, all science Academies, *Sahitya Akademi*, State Governments *Academies*, subjects, Associations shall join. ISSA will try to hold one national conference with all political parties in order to comprehend their thoughts and policies of Science Education and Research in Indian Languages.

ISSA will constitute a National Academic Advisory Committee comprising eminent scientists, thinkers, philosophers, policy makers and social activists. All the Vice-Chancellors, Directors of CSIR, ICMR, ICAR, DST, ICSSR institutes, Directors of ISERS, NISERS, AIIMS, PGIs, etc. too will be invited.

All the 28 subjects Research Committees and Thematic Panels will deliberate on it. Eight plenaries and several public lectures too shall deliberate on it. Besides, pre-post-XLVIII ISSC national, local and regional deliberations will be held.

### **Outcome and Plan of Publication**

The outcome of the deliberations will be prepared and published in several Indian Languages.