

# THE JAWAHAR JYOTI



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# Autonomous Colleges—A challenge

Principal J. C. Nath.

In India, the concept of Autonomous Colleges is of recent origin and gained currency after the Education Commission 1964-66 recommended that outstanding colleges be granted autonomous status. It marks a radical departure from the existing system of affiliating colleges to a university in India. The idea of autonomous colleges is indeed very fascinating and has since gripped the imagination of intellectuals, thinkers, educational planners and education managers. Even the National policy on Education, 1986 has recognized the need for granting autonomy to colleges on selective basis.

## **Drawbacks of the affiliating pattern :**

The affiliating pattern was adopted in India from the University of London (1835) when the Universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were established in 1857.

What does an affiliating university do ? It simply lays down the condition of affiliations, designs courses and prescribes syllabi, conducts examinations and confers degrees. Obviously the affiliating pattern has certain drawbacks. The courses, for all affiliated colleges are uniform, leaving hardly any scope for variation ; the syllabus is rigid, often outmoded, missing the grain for the husk ; teachers who have no hand in making the syllabus of a subject, hardly take active interest in teaching it effectively ; then again evaluation of the attainments of the students in a subject is done by teachers other than those who teach it. Thus the teacher is responsible neither for the course he teaches nor for the evaluation of the attainments of the students in his subject. His motivation is therefore obviously low. Under the existing pattern

the affiliated colleges are simply a passive agency for preparing students for examinations on the results of which the university confers degrees or diplomas on the students. They are devoid of any initiative in matters of changes in the educational system and curricula. A number of colleges takes an easy shelter under the university umbrella irrespective of the quality of instruction provided by them, thus bringing credit neither to the parent university nor to the colleges themselves. Moreover, there is always a communication gap between the University and its affiliated colleges and as a result, a lot of valuable time is lost. It is also a fact that the existence of a large number of affiliated colleges in a University—at varying stages of development—has proved to be a drag on the process of modernization and improvement of standards.

#### **Need of autonomy :**

After independence, the outlook on national education has changed. Educational institutions are no lon-

ger considered agencies for preparing students for examinations and degrees only but as instruments of social changes. As our society is diverse and its problems vary from place to place, variations in approach are needed. At the same time acute problems call for quicker solutions to meet the new situation, academic decisions for making innovations and designing curricula and methods more relevant to the area in which an institution works should also be quick. The decision for bringing about innovations and effective implementation can be taken more expeditiously by a smaller body than the University. Hence the need for autonomy. "The autonomous status for colleges aims at giving opportunity to the teachers and students to make innovations, utilize their creative talent, improve the standards of teaching, examination and research and quickly respond to social needs".

#### **What kind of autonomy :**

The autonomy recommended is academic. The autonomous colleges

will have the freedom to (a) determine its own courses of study and prescribe the syllabi; (b) frame rules of admission; (c) evolve methods of teaching and learning; (d) conduct examinations; and (e) devise its own methods of evaluation.

The autonomy is contemplated as a means to achieve higher standards and greater creativity in future, and to make an autonomous college responsible for the quality and content of education it imparts and also for assessment of the attainments of students for award of degrees.

**Autonomy for all ? And for what period ?**

Autonomy is not be given to all and sundry colleges. Only those colleges which have attained considerable maturity, have resources, physical facilities, have the determination to do quality teaching reputation for good management and conducting examinations, and have shown good results in University examinations, can direct their efforts towards modernization and

improvement and are prepared to accept responsibility for consequences. are to be considered for granting autonomous status. It must not be taken for granted that once a college is selected for granting autonomous status, autonomy is conferred on it once for all. It is to be reviewed from time to time and if any autonomous college fails to maintain the desired standard it will be open to the university to revoke the autonomous status at any time. The Education Commission (1964-66) is very clear when it declares—

‘The privilege cannot be conferred once for all and it will have to be continually earned and deserved and it should be open to the University, after careful scrutiny of the position to revoke the autonomous status if the college at any stage begins to deteriorate in its standards.’

**Relationships with the parent University ?**

What will be the relation of an autonomous college with the parent University ? First, autonomous status

will be conferred on a college by the parent university with the concurrence of the state government and the U. G. C. for a specific period of time, say for 5 years, which may be extended on an application made by the college. Secondly, the University shall have power to revoke the autonomy conferred at any time after scrutiny and after giving the due notice of such intention to the college concerned before the expiry of the period for which autonomy is granted in case of deteriorating standard or for any other good cause. Thirdly, the University will confer degrees, diplomas or other distinctions on persons who successfully completed an approved course of study in an autonomous college and on the results of examinations conducted by the college. The name of the autonomous college shall however be indicated in the diploma issued to the candidates. ( It is also contemplated that selected autonomous colleges may, in due course, be allowed to award their own degrees by considering them

under the deemed university provision of the U. G. C. Act. ). Fourthly, there shall be nominees of the university to the different Bodies of an autonomous college, namely, Governing Body, Academic Council, Board of studies etc to represent the university in these Bodies. Lastly, notwithstanding conferment of autonomous status to a college, all provisions of the Act, the Statutes, Ordinances and the Regulations of the parent University shall be applicable to the college except those relating to matters specified in the terms and conditions of autonomy. The University shall continue to exercise its general power and supervision over the College.

#### **A Challenge to be met :**

The idea of autonomous colleges is a challenge to the educational policy makers and educational planners who should be bold enough to encourage autonomous status to the colleges so as to improve the quality of teaching, learning and examinations. Already several states in India like Tamil Nadu, Andhra

Pradesh and Maharashtra have granted autonomous status to some of their outstanding colleges, Tamil Nadu having the largest number of autonomous colleges. The two Universities of our State—Gauhati and Dibrugarh—should take immediate decision on the matter and move the State Government to effect necessary amendments to the respective University Acts in order to accommodate the provisions for creation of autonomous Colleges. To begin with at least three prominent colleges of the state, namely, Cotton College at Guwahati, J. B. College at Jorhat and G. C. College at Silchar should be granted autonomous status on experimental basis from the ensuing academic year. Necessary statutes on the model of Madras University Statutes for autonomous Colleges, should be made without delay. I am convinced that autonomous colleges are worth having. The authorities should be mentally, intellectually and organizationally prepared for it.

A word of caution is however

necessary. A proposal for autonomous college should be considered only on merit and not on political or any other consideration, keeping in view the raising of standards in teaching, learning and examinations. A clamour for autonomy for colleges is not unlikely. But under no circumstances undeserving colleges should be considered for granting autonomous status. Political interference on the matter should be resisted at all costs. There should be considerable spade work for attaining autonomous status. No college should be considered for autonomous status before expiry of 10 years from the date of its establishment. On attaining autonomous status, the management of the college should take a decision to run a good college and should not interfere with the Principal in any way. The Principal must be a strong man intellectually and morally and must be capable of carrying with him the largest number of his teachers to put in his ideas and programmes into action.

He is the pivot in the college as Vice-Chancellor is in the University and much of the success of the scheme will depend on the personality and vision of the Principal.



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[ Read in the Seminar on Autonomous Colleges ( April 19-20, 1988 ) sponsored by the U. G. C., New Delhi, organised by G. U. ]



# Administration of Co-operative Societies in Assam

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Co-operative Society means an organisation of a body of members who voluntarily associate themselves to promote mutual interest in the shape of profits accrued as dividend on items of purchases. The word Co-operation connotes self-help and mutual aid and as such it implies : each for all and all for each.

The idea of Co-operative credit Society had been borrowed from Germany and was introduced in India by Mr. Fredrick Nicholson. The co-operative movement in Assam started after the enactment of the Co-operative Societies Act of 1904. Subsequently, Co-operative Societies Act, 1912 provided for formation of both credit and non-credit societies. At present all the states in India have their own Co-operative Societies. These Co-operative Soci-

eties under the patronage of the Govt, march ahead to achieve the desired goals as per principles of Co-operation.

Co-operative Society aims at the socio-economic advancement of the members and prosperity of the society as a whole. The following are the basic principles of Co-operative Societies adopted by the international Co-operative alliance—

1. Voluntary, open and active membership. ( Without restriction of social, political and religious discrimination. )
2. Democratic control.
3. Limited interest on Share Capital.
4. Patronage dividend.
5. Promotion of education.
6. Mutuality.

The Co-operative movement in Assam received a serious set-back

during the great depression of the thirties. However, due to timely efforts of the Govt. the movement managed to survive. But, the position further deteriorated at the time of Independence when the movement was virtually on the verge of decay and decline.

After independence, Co-operative Societies Act, 1949 was passed repealing the old Act. During the First Five Year plan financial assistance from the Reserve Bank of India was duly accorded to revitalise the institution of Co-operative Societies. As a result, the Assam Co-operative Apex Bank was set-up in 1948 and was entrusted with the onerous task of supplying credit to the Co operative Societies. During the Second Five years plan, the Co-operative organisation was re-oriented on the lines of recommendations of the Rural Credit Survey Committee of the Reserve Bank of India. During the Third and the Fourth Five year plan emphasis was laid on the rationalisation of the credit structure at primary level on

the basis of viability. During the Fourth Five Year plan, the policies and procedures of credit—Co-operative Societies and land development banks were oriented in favour of small cultivators. The Co-operative societies have thus made a phenomenal progress during the plan period. Besides the primary credit societies, various categories of Service Co-operative Societies, Industrial Co-operative Societies, Farming Co-operative Societies, Co-operative marketing Societies and Producers Co-operative Societies have been established. The Govt take-over of food grains trade in paddy which is being implemented through the Co-operative is note worthy in this context. To carry out the trade some new types of Co-operatives have been organised throughout the state.

Now it is said that the Co-operative Societies provide balanced direction and a sense of value to our economy more particularly. Co-operative is considered to be the principal form of organisation in the field of agri-

culture and allied enterprises—cottage and small-scale industries, consumer distribution and myriad other economic activities. The Rural Credit Survey Committee Report (1955) recommended what has come to be known as an integrated scheme of Rural Credit. The scheme envisaged that Co-operative Credit institutions would be the principal agency of agricultural finance. Co-operatives are involved in the procurement and distribution of food grains and other essential commodities of good quality at fair prices to the common man. After the Chinese aggression in 1962, the centrally sponsored scheme was launched to set up Co-operative whole sale and retail stores throughout the country. Following the devaluation in 1966, departmental stores were established in major cities to make a massive impact on the situation created by inflation and scarcity.

Co-operative development depends, as development in other spheres and sectors, on professional management. According to the Co-operative

Societies Act, the management power is vested to the General Body, Managing Committee, President and the Secretary. The supreme authority is vested with the General Body of the society. It consists of those who are eligible to vote at General Meetings of the society. The meeting of the General Body should be held every year. In this general meeting the body elects the Managing Committee, the President, the Secretary and other members of the society.

The management of the affairs of a Registered Society is directly entrusted to the Managing Committee elected by the General body of the members of that society. The tenure of office of the Managing Committee is one year.

The main functions of the President of the society are—(i) to preside over the meetings of the General Body and the Managing Committee. (ii) to keep control over the Secretary of the Society. (iii) to execute the decisions taken by the Managing Committee.

The main functions of the Secretary of the society are—(i) to carry on the day to day affairs of the society in conformity with the decisions of the Managing Committee. (ii) to summon meetings of the society, attend the meetings and record their proceedings etc.

An Internal Auditor is also appointed by the General Body to audit the accounts of the society.

To carry out different works of the society in different spheres some personnel are appointed in various branches. In every branch there is one in-charge and under him many sub-ordinate employees are appointed as deemed necessary. There is also scope for training and promotion for the employees.

The capital of a Co-operative Society is collected from different sources. The members of the society should pay their share capital and entry fees as fixed by the Co-operative Rules.

Sometimes the societies can accept deposits from the members or other people to increase the amount of capital. Loans from the Govt. and the Bank are another source of capital. Besides these, the Govt. also allows grants-in-aid for the management of the business of the society. But the main source of the fund of the Co-operative is derived from the profits of its own business.

The development of the Co-operative Societies depends on healthy and sound management. Members should take the societies as their own institutions and should work together for a common objective i. e. mutual benefit. The aim, object, principle etc. of the societies should be broadly circulated among the general people and sincere effort should be to popularize the societies. Co-operation of the Govt. and the general people is of utmost necessity for its progress. ●

# Jawaharlal Nehru College : Past and Present

Principal J. C. Nath

Our College has just completed 24 years on 3 August '88. Born as a night college in 1964, under the shelter of the local Boys' High School, with only 60 ( sixty ) students on roll in the one year Pre-University Course in Arts of Guwahati University, it moved to its permanent home two kilometres west of Boko Police Station on the northern side of N. H. 37 on August 13, 1967. It was accorded first Degree Affiliation in Arts by Guwahati University in 1967 and made history when it was brought under Deficit Grant-in-Aid System in September, 1969 with only 72 ( seventy two ) students on roll ! Guwahati University was pleased to accord permission to open Honours in Assamese and Economics in 1977. The college has opened Science Stream in 1986 with permission of Assam Higher Secondary Education Council.

## Initial difficulties overcome :

When the college started functioning, it had to face a number of difficulties. The entire area between Chhaygaon and Dudhnai was predominantly tribal and undeveloped ; the people were educationally, socially and economically most backward ; feeder schools were few and enrolment was very low ; fund position was weak ; qualified teachers at meagre salary offered were not easily available. The college was without a regular and qualified Principal for the initial year. The then Secretary of the sponsoring Committee and Head Master of Boko High School, Sri A. K. Adhikary, B. A. was placed in charge of the college as honorary acting Principal until 1st Sept. '65 on which date the present incumbent took over as its regular and permanent Principal after resigning his teachership in Cotton College.

In 1966 there was a financial crisis and the college faced a virtual closure. It was Late P. K. Choudhuri, the then M. L. A. of Boko and President of the G. B. who came to its rescue first by launching a collection drive and later as a Member of the Chaliha Cabinet, by bringing the college under Deficit Grant in Aid System from 1st September, 1969. The college suffered yet another setback in 1972 when the enrolment fell considerably for introduction of Assamese as medium of instruction in colleges under Guwahati University as the local Garo students migrated to Barapani, Tura and other colleges in Meghalaya, and also for the establishment of two more colleges in the neighbouring areas of Nagarbera and Dudhnoi.

But good days were not very far off. With the establishment of many new High schools in the neighbouring areas, development of communication and motorable roads, consolidation of financial position due to improved enrolment and introduction of Deficit Grant in Aid System and stability of Staff, the

college steadily moved ahead. An atmosphere of discipline and dedication both among the teachers and the students as well as a sense of willing co-operation among them also helped the authorities in its smooth management and future development.

#### **Provision for instruction :**

The college is affiliated to Guwahati University in Arts Faculty. It has provision for teaching Degree Major Course in Assamese and Economics and Pass course in Assamese ( M . I. L. and Elective ), English, Economics , Political Science, History, Geography, Anthropology and Education. The college has been permitted by A. H. S. E. C. to open Science Stream upto +2 stage since 1986. The college authorities are making necessary preparations for starting Degree Course in Science from the ensuing academic session in June, 1989.

#### **Teaching Staff :**

There are altogether twenty nine members on the Teaching Staff of whom twenty four are in the Arts

Faculty and five are in the Science Faculty. Of the twentyfour teachers in the Arts Faculty, twenty three are appointed against sanctioned posts in the U. G. C. scale of pay and allowances admissible under the rules and the remaining one is maintained by the college out of its own funds. All the teachers in the Science Faculty are appointed at consolidated salary borne by the college as no grant, recurring or non-recurring, has so far been received from the Govt. Eight teachers—four each in Arts and Science subjects possess First Class Master Degree and the rest are 2nd class Master Degree holders in their respective subjects. It will not be out of place to mention that Govt., University, and U. G. C. rules and regulations regarding conduct, discipline, duties and responsibilities of college teachers are strictly enforced here. Teachers' attendance Register, recording arrival and departure, has been maintained ever since the establishment of the college. Instruc-

tions have been issued to the Teaching Staff to follow the latest U. G. C. guidelines regarding minimum workload of activities expected of college teachers. Attendance of teachers in the college library for study, research and preparation of class lectures has been made compulsory. The teachers have, by and large, responded favourably to these guidelines.

#### Welcome to the New Teachers :

A batch of young enthusiastic men and women with brilliant academic career have joined our college in different Departments during the past two years. They are :

1. Miss Mridusmita Sharma, M. Sc. ( High 2nd class ) Dept of Biology.
2. Sri Abani Kumar Das, M. Sc., Dept of Geography ( 1st class )
3. Miss Minati Barman, M. Sc., Dept of Physics ( 1st class 1st )
4. Sri Jatin Medhi, M. A. Dept of Assamese ( High 2nd class )
5. Sri Kamaleswar Thakuria, M. A. Dept of Assamese (High 2nd class)
6. Sri Shahjahan Ali, M. A. Dept of Economics ( 1st class )

7. Sri Meraj Khan, M. Sc., Dept of Chemistry (1st class)
8. Miss Ujjala Devi, M. Sc., Dept of Mathematics (1st Class)
9. Sri Jitendra Kr. Choudhury, M Sc. Dept of Biology (1st class)
10. Sri Jugal Kishore Nath, M. Sc. Dept of Geography (High 2nd class)

We offer our warmest felicitations to all of them and welcome them to the happy family of Jawaharlal Nehru College. We also remember the association and services of the undernoted teachers who left our institution during the period under review,

1. Sri Khagesh Sen Deka, M. A., Dept of Assamese.
2. Sri Madan Das, M. Sc., Dept of Chemistry
3. Sri Kamini Mohan Sarma, M. A., Dept of English
4. Sri Jaysankar Hazarika, M. Sc., Dept of Geography
5. Miss Chitralekha Talukdar, M.Sc., Dept of Physics.
6. Miss Nibha Talukdar, M. Sc., Dept of Mathematics.
7. Miss Manisha Bhattacharya, M.A. Dept of Education.

We wish them well in life.

### Enrolment

In the initial years low enrolment was a dismal feature of the college and had hampered its rapid growth. Now the problem is just the reverse. From 60 in 1964, the enrolment has risen to 820 in 1988. Of the 820 students, 580 are boys and 240, girls: 260 belong to scheduled tribes, 32 to scheduled castes, 135 to other Backward classes and the remaining 387 to General category. To avoid conjection and over crowding, and to make teaching more effective, a new section in the 1st year H. S. class in the morning shift has been opened from the session 1988-89. This has, however, added to the financial burden on the college authorities.

### Classroom accommodation :

The college has a total floor area of 10,180 sft. consisting of two halls and sixteen rooms of various sizes for holding the classes, tutorials and seminars and accommodating the laboratories and a museum. With the introduction of the Three Year Degree Courses more rooms



are needed to hold the classes. The State Government agreed to provide building grants to the colleges for construction of additional class-rooms and accordingly sanctioned Rs. 50,000/ each to a number of colleges. But this college has not yet received any grant for this purpose from the Government of Assam. Denial of legitimate due to a college situated in a tribal and backward area is a clear case of discrimination and has been rightly resented by the people.

#### **General discipline and teacher-taught relationship :**

Now-a-days educational institutions are very often rocked by students' indiscipline and mass copying in examinations. We are proud to say that this college is free from the twin evils. Ragging and drug-addiction are unheard of here. Every year at the close of new admissions students are warned against ragging and any case of ragging brought to the notice of the authority, is promptly dealt with and drastic punishment is meted out to the

guilty person or persons. Similarly, every year before the commencement of University Examinations, meetings of the teachers are held to acquaint them with their duties and responsibilities. They are reminded that prevention is better than cure i. e. to say they should see that no chance is given to the candidates to adopt unfair means in the examination hall and then to expel them. We are glad to say that we receive full co-operation from the Students' Union, the public and also the police authorities in the smooth conduct of University examinations. We are also happy to mention that the teacher-student relationship in the college is very cordial. There is no confrontation between the college authorities and the students and we solve all internal problems through discussions, dialogues and persuasions. As a result complete peace prevails in the campus.

#### **Examination results :**

Students admitted to this College as also those admitted to other

colleges in the rural areas are mostly third divisioners. Some second divisioners and very few first divisioners come for admission to these colleges. All the brilliant students with distinction and most of the first divisioners from these areas migrate to the colleges in the urban areas, particularly to the colleges

of Guwahati for Science as well as Arts education. Bearing in mind the above fact, we can legitimately claim that pass percentage in University examinations of our College is satisfactory. The following is the results of examinations held in 1987 and 1988

1987.	appeared	passed	p. c.
H.S. (A. H. E. C. )	297	62	21%
P. U. ( All casual )	93	32	34%
T. D. C. Part-I	72	23	32%
T. D. C. Part-II.	17	9	53%
B. A. Two Yr.	57	17	30%

1988.	appeared	passed	p. c.
H, S. Arts.	272	109	40%
H. S. Science.	30	13	43%
P. U.	56		
T. D. C. Part-I Total 90 (Gen. 60) (Major 32)			
T. D. C. Part-II Total 41 (Gen. 26) (Major 15)			

Results  
not out.

#### Extra-Curricular activities :

The extra-curricular activities are carried on under the auspices of the College Union Society formed in accordance with the provisions

of a written constitution. The Union Society organises competitions in sports, games, races, songs, dramas, debates, extempore speeches, recitations, quizzes etc. during the

annual college week and the winners are awarded prizes. The College Union Society also sends teams to various competitions like Inter-College Football Tournaments, Inter College Youth Festivals and Inter College Sports Festivals. In 1988 our College team joined the Inter College Foot Ball Tournament held at Dudhnai College and moved upto third round by defeating Habraghat College and Cotton College. In the Inter College Sports Festival held at Guwahati in December 1988 Sri Jiten Kalita of our College won a gold medal and became 'Mr. Guwahati University' in the best body competition. It may be mentioned that Sri Kalita earned the title of 'Mr. Guwahati University' in 1986 also.

#### **N. S. S. activities :**

We have a Unit of 100 cadets under the National Social Service Scheme which has been rendering commendable services to the rural community since its inception. This year a special camp at Chhamaria Satra—a seat of Vaishnavite religion and culture was organised

from 26th unprecedented to 31st October 1988. The unprecedented and devastating floods of August this year ravaged the entire village, damaging houses, properties and crops in the fields, snapping roads including the P. W. D. road connecting Boko with Chhamaria and thus disrupting communications with neighbouring areas. Our volunteers collected donations and materials, mainly bamboos and thatches, set up a camp at Chhamaria High School and in collaboration with the local youths and students of the High School repaired roads, built houses of some poor and helpless families, repaired school buildings, raised their compound fences and planted trees in the Satra proper and in the neighbouring villages of Baralimara and Balijhar inhabited by religious and linguistic minorities. Besides these constructive works, our boys and girls organised cultural functions of songs, dances, recitations, debates, quizzes and held meetings to enlighten the village folk about problems of health, sanitation, illiteracy etc.

Dr. D. Konwar of Chhamaria Public Health Centre gave a valuable talk on the 'Problems and Preservation of Rural Health'. Our volunteers could earn spontaneous appreciation of the local people by their strenuous and selfless activities. It may be recalled that our N. S. S. volunteers rendered commendable job during the period of floods, by organising relief camps rescuing marooned people and distributing relief materials in close co-operation with the Government agencies and other public organisations.

The valedictory meeting at the close of the camp held on 31.10.88 under the presidentship of the Principal of the College was well-attended by the N. S. S. volunteers, students and teachers of the local High School, youths and other villagers and also some members of the teaching staff of our college. Several speakers appreciated the valuable works done by our cadets and stressed the need of such camps rendering social service to the rural community and establishing a link

between the village folk and the enlightened section of our society, namely students and teachers of colleges.

It may be recalled here that introduction of N. S. S. in this College in 1976 was an exciting experience to us, both students and teachers. From our own experience we can say without fear of contradiction that students who are usually branded as anti-social elements, averse to physical work and devoid of social obligation, can be used as instruments of social transformation through schemes like N.S.S. Introduction of N. S. S. has taught our young boys and girls dignity of labour, love for their Alma Mater and the community, and has instilled into their mind a desire to work among their co-villagers for their betterment and to identify themselves with the rural-folk, in their joys and sorrows. As an integral part of the community, they now realise their obligation to society to work for social advancement and communal harmony. It is our firm