A Brief Comment On
A Note Concerning
Science Communication
Prepared By The First
Peoples Education Congress

I. On Its Preamble

In our view, the preamble's identification of Science Communication as the principal theme of the first Peoples Education Congress is simply a diversion of the existing state of affairs in the domain of human society and its natural environment.

The principle feature of human society today is the fact of the prevailing prosperity of a few and the deprivation of a vast majority of people, on the one hand, and a highly serious environmental degradation, involving all its components (air, water, forests, land and bio-diversity), on the other.

Naturally, such a living reality demands that the theme of this Congress should be to analyse the dimension of the prevailing two-sided crisis, find out its cause and suggest a proper answer to it.

II. On Its Context

We maintain that, despite India's constitutional vision of establishing a democratic, socialist and secular order, followed by 1958-scientific policy resolution's pledge to use science for removing centuries old poverty, illiteracy, backwardness and the establishment of a large number of research institutes and organisations, setting up of various expert commissions, countrywide programme of science communication and propagation, nothing has helped to make India free from poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, disease, communal hatred, supe-rstitions, violence, crime, fraud, corruption, etc. It can be safely asserted that not only the old ailments had continued but multiplied many times. This assertion can be easily confirmed by looking at India's performance in every field, may it be political, legal, diplomatic, economic, cultural or their sub-parts.

This state of affairs is fully confirmed even by the reports of various international corporate institutions. The just released 2005-UN Human Development Report says it will take India over 100 years (until 2106) to catch up with high income countries. It says the inequality levels between rich and poor in the world, including India, have today reached a record level. According to International Human Rights Commission, the violations of human rights in South Asia, with India as the leading entity, stand at a high level. Violence, crime, fraud and corruption too stand at a much higher level compared to many other parts of the world.

III. On Its Concept Of Science

We hold that its above-stated concept which defines science as only an objective knowledge is merely a one-sided idea. In fact, science has both an objective and subjective character. Its subjective side is obvious from the fact which expresses the exclusive human role in the exploring of entire objective aspect. Beginning with the providing of a hypothesis (i. e., a provisional explanation of anything) on the basis of which experiments are conducted and then the analysis and experiments of the data obtained in the phase of observation and experimentation are made, the subjective plays the primary role. Again, it is the subjective factor that decides about the positive or the negative use of any objective scientific formula or product. The moment one starts observations (on the basis of hypothesis) where the phenomena displays its characteristics to human sense organs, the objective acquires the first place.

The facts show that, while the essentials of a theory are reflected by the objective, their provisional explanation and the final analysis and systematisation as well as the good or bad use of that theory are made by the subjective.

IV. On Its Concept Of Communication

We regard that the above concept overlooks the facts that all vehicles of mass communication—Radio, T.V. Audio-Video, Satellite, newspapers, magazines, books, inter-personal exchanges, video conferencing, etc., are under the control of corporate or pro-corporate forces. The genuine pro-science elements are heavily constrained to communicate the realistic state of science to the people.

V. On Its Concept Of Science Communication

In olden times, Science Communication was performed by both the state as well as the social movements. But, today all such performers are linked to the corporate capital which solely controls and regulates all categories of Science Communication. Science Communication has in actual fact become a tool to overplay the scientific performance of the existing corporate system, on the one hand, and to cover up its mega misuse and abuse of science.

VI. On Its Concept Of Questions

Keeping in view the aforementioned facts, it is suggested that, apart from its stated stipulations under this head, it should give its first attention to the following points: what should be done to make science an instrument to serve the fundamental interests of the human community and its natural resources? Can this task be performed within the frame-work of existing corporate system which even disrupts the highly desirable social objective of complete disarmament for its petty profit?

VII. On Its Concept Of Thematic Structure

Under this head, we suggest that, while discussing its 25 sub-themes, it is necessary to correctly assess as to how much the stuff of its themes upholds and serves the interests of the privileged tiny corporate minority and in what manner it deals with the inhuman state of deprivation being faced by the vast majority of people in all the countries.

VIII. On Its Concept Of Approach

Here, our only proposal is that, while deliberating over its six categories, it should adopt a natural-human oriented approach which upholds the interests of natural phenomena, on the one hand, and of human resources, on the other.

This will enable it to view varying natural and human matters in their realistic forms. 14.09.2005