**MACAULAY’S MINUTES OF 1835**

By the early 19th century, the East India Company faced the question of which language and system should be used for educating Indians — Orientalists favored classical Indian languages (Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic) and traditional learning, while Anglicists argued for English education based on Western knowledge.Thomas Babington Macaulay, as Law Member of the Governor-General’s Council, presented his Minute on Indian Education on 2 February 1835 to settle this debate.

2. Main Provisions

Macaulay’s proposals, which influenced Lord William Bentinck’s decision, included:

1. Medium of Instruction
   * English to be the medium for higher education in India.
   * Vernacular languages could be used at the primary level.
2. Purpose of Education
   * To create a class of Indians “Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.”
   * This intermediary class would help disseminate Western knowledge among the masses.
3. Funding & Policy
   * Government funds (the annual ₹1 lakh sanctioned by the Charter Act of 1813) to be spent on English education rather than supporting Sanskrit/Arabic colleges.
4. Curriculum Focus
   * Emphasis on European literature, science, and philosophy.
   * Traditional Indian learning was seen as outdated and not worth public expenditure.

3. Significance

* Introduction of English Education Policy — Laid the foundation for the spread of Western knowledge in India.
* Cultural Shift — Accelerated the growth of an English-educated Indian elite, which later played a key role in political and social reform movements.
* Administrative Utility — Produced English-speaking clerks and officers to aid the colonial administration.
* Literary Impact — Opened access to European science, rationalism, and literature.

4. Critical Evaluation

Positive Aspects

* Modern Knowledge Access — Enabled Indians to engage with modern science, political thought, and global ideas.
* Nation-Building Role — Created leaders like Raja Rammohan Roy’s successors, who used Western ideas to challenge social evils.
* Global Connectivity — English connected India to global trade, politics, and education.

Negative Aspects

* Cultural Denigration — Macaulay dismissed Indian literature and knowledge systems as “worthless,” undermining native traditions.
* Elite-Oriented — Education policy focused on creating a small elite, neglecting mass education and rural literacy.
* Instrument of Colonial Control — Aimed at producing a loyal bureaucratic class, not empowering the masses.
* Language Divide — Created a lasting social gap between English-educated elites and the vernacular-speaking majority.

5. Legacy

Macaulay’s Minute shaped Indian education for decades, but it also sparked debates that continue today about:

* Balancing English and vernacular languages in education.
* Preserving indigenous knowledge alongside global knowledge.
* Making education inclusive rather than elite-focused.