

## **SALIENT FEATURES OF NEP 2020: HIGHER EDUCATION**

NEP 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. Built on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability, this policy is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student. The policy has been formulated after a very detailed consultative process, unprecedented in depth and scale. Consultation involved over 2 lakh suggestions from 2.5 lakhs Gram Panchayats, 6600 Blocks, 6000 ULBs, 676 Districts. The MHRD had initiated a collaborative, inclusive, and highly participatory consultation process from January 2015. In May 2016, 'Committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy' under the Chairmanship of Late Shri T.S.R. Subramanian, Former Cabinet Secretary, submitted its report. Based on this, the Ministry prepared 'Some Inputs for the Draft National Education Policy, 2016'. In June 2017 a 'Committee for the Draft National Education Policy' was constituted under the Chairmanship of eminent scientist Padma Vibhushan, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, which submitted the Draft National Education Policy, 2019 to the Hon'ble Human Resource Development Minister on 31st May, 2019. The Draft National Education Policy 2019 was uploaded on MHRD's website and at 'MyGov Innovate' portal eliciting views/suggestions/comments of stakeholders, including public.

### **New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure:**

With emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education, the 10+2 structure of school curricula is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively. This will bring the hitherto uncovered age group of 3-6 years under school curriculum, which has been recognized globally as the crucial stage for development of mental faculties of a child. The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre schooling. The new system will cover four stages: Foundational Stage (in two parts, that is, 3 years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and Secondary Stage (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18). The curricula will aim for holistic development of learners, equipping them with the key 21st century skills, reduction in curricular content to enhance essential learning and critical thinking and greater focus on experiential learning. Students will have increased flexibility and choice of subjects so that they choose their own paths according to their talents and interests. There will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and 23 extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams. The objective is to give equal emphasis on all subjects-science, social sciences, art, languages, sports, mathematics - with integration of vocational and academic streams in school.

### The fundamental principles of the policy:

- **recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student**, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres.
- according the highest priority **to achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** by all students by Grade 3.;
- **flexibility**, so that learners have the ability to choose their learning trajectories and programmes, and thereby choose their own paths in life according to their talents and interests;
- **no hard separations** between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning.
- **multidisciplinarity and a holistic education** across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge;
- **emphasis on conceptual understanding** rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams.;
- **creativity and critical thinking to encourage logical decision-making** and innovation;
- **ethics and human & Constitutional values** like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice;
- **promoting multilingualism and the power of language** in teaching and learning;
- **life skills** such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience;
- **focus on regular formative assessment for learning** rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's 'coaching culture';
- **extensive use of technology** in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, increasing access for Divyang students, and educational planning and management;
- **respect for diversity and respect for the local context** in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy, always keeping in mind that education is a concurrent subject;
- **full equity and inclusion** as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the education system;
- **synergy in curriculum across all levels** of education from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education;
- **teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process** – their recruitment, continuous professional development, positive working environments and service conditions;
- **a 'light but tight' regulatory framework** to ensure integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out-of-the-box ideas through autonomy, good governance, and empowerment;

- **outstanding research** as a corequisite for outstanding education and development; □ continuous review of progress based on sustained research and regular assessment by educational experts;
- **a rootedness and pride in India**, and its rich, diverse, ancient and modern culture and knowledge systems and traditions.
- **education is a public service**; access to quality education must be considered a basic right of every child;
- **substantial investment in a strong, vibrant public education system** as well as the encouragement and facilitation of true philanthropic private and community participation.
- NEP 2020 aims to **increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education** including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. 3.5 Crore new seats will be added to Higher education institutions.

\*\*\*\*\*