



Systemic reform and outcome based education -- two hallmarks of new education policy

The NEP, which got approval from the union cabinet, if implemented well, will reduce regulatory hassles and promote autonomy in the higher education sector, and make learning outcome a key part of India's school sector.

After a long deliberation, and a longer wait, India Wednesday approved a new National Education Policy (NEP) putting in place systemic reforms and outcome based education model in the sector that caters to almost 300 million students in the country.

The NEP, which got approval from the union cabinet, if implemented well, will reduce regulatory hassles and promote autonomy in the higher education sector, and make learning outcome a key part of India's school sector. On the face of it, it looks to benefit students, education providers and the larger labour market to which the education sector is a feeder.

The NEP promises to lighten up the education regulation by merging multiple higher education regulators like the University Grants Commission, All Indian Council of Technical Education and National Council of Teacher Education. But the single regulator will have multiple wings to deal with different sectors thus may reduce multiplicity of regulation.

The new policy will also change the name of human resource development ministry into Education Ministry, HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal said.

The new policy, talks about phasing out of the affiliation system in university level so that varsities can be unshackled from administrative work. Instead it

makes way for three category of institution -- research focused universities, teaching focused universities, autonomous colleges.

As suggested in the draft report, the final policy has done away with the M.Phil degree and makes graduation degrees either three or of four years durations. Besides, it will allow multiple entry and exit options and introduces a new concept of academic credit bank so that working professionals, can come back and pursue education from where they left.

Masters level degrees can be of one or two years of duration. Currently one year degrees are not recognized in India. And after masters, one can go for PhD degree. The new policy also talks about Special Education Zones (SEZs). The SEZs going forward may help bring in foreign universities to India to operate independently.

"We have gone for systemic reform than incremental reform. The multiple entry and exit system, less regulation, graded autonomy are significant steps" higher education secretary Amit Khare told reporters. Khare said centre and states will work together to increase the education spending to 6% of the GDP as against the current spending of around 4.4%, Khare said. A 6% of GDP spend has been a constant demand even before the first education policy came into force in 1968.

But the real challenge will be its implementation in a country that is heterogeneous in education delivery, focus and financial condition. A huge vacancy in teaching posts and untrained teachers pool can make this a difficult process.

At the school level, the policy redraws the schooling system on a 5+3+3+4 formula instead of the current 10+2 model. Besides, the high stake Board exams at Class 10 and Class 12 level, will be 'low stake' and may be conducted more than once a year. Students in the age group of 3-8 years will be part of the foundation stage, 8-11 age group for preparatory schooling, 11-14 years for middle school and 14-18 for secondary level.

It says vocational education will be integrated from Standard 6 and internship of 10 days in school level will be made part of the system. It reduces the rigid course structure between science and arts streams, curricular and extracurricular activities, and emphasizes the need to track the learning outcome of students from pre-school level to school leaving grade.

"This is an NEP that offers Choice, Chance and Change," said Meeta Sengupta, an education expert.

Anita Karawal, school education secretary said that board exams will be made low stake and it will be explored if they can be conducted more than once a year.

The NEP underlined that foundational learning in languages and mathematics will get a priority as this has been a huge drawback for Indian school students leading to accumulation of learning deficit. It says, the

education sector will have a massive usage of technology in teaching, learning and assessment, a point that has got amplified during the ongoing pandemic.

NEP said it aims to universalize the pre-school to senior secondary education and take gross enrollment ratio in higher education from around 27% currently to 50% by 2030. It also talks about bringing back almost 20 million school drop out to the education system and put in place a gender fund to support girls education.

"The NEP clearly acknowledges the need to embrace output focused reform than current input model. It has touched upon some key levers which will have high impact on student learning levels," Vishnu Kartik, chief executive of education firm Xperiential Learning Systems, and director of the Gurgaon based Heritage School.

[Link:https://www.livemint.com/education/news/systemic-reform-and-outcome-based-education-two-hallmarks-of-new-education-policy-11596032795159.html](https://www.livemint.com/education/news/systemic-reform-and-outcome-based-education-two-hallmarks-of-new-education-policy-11596032795159.html)



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AICTE asks colleges to be 'atmanirbhar', says develop apps, products, technologies

The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) has asked higher education institutes and universities to be self-reliant or as the Prime Minister in his national address had said, 'atmanirbhar'. AICTE asked

institutes to encourage teachers and students to develop “alternative apps, products, and technologies through innovative ideas and research”. This will not only “make India self-reliant but also propel India to the forefront as the primary source for meeting all global needs and requirements,” stated the letter.

The letter — signed by the AICTE chief Anil Sahasrabudhe — read, “COVID-19 pandemic will soon be a thing of the past...India will surge ahead overcoming the pandemic wave and the current financial crisis and will emerge as a strong, resilient, and proud nation.”

Talking about the recent tensions at the Line of Actual Control, the letter read, “The recent border turmoil, additionally, has forced the nation, as a whole, to introspect about the alternatives and to avoid dependence on other nations about our needs and requirements.”

“Time beacons us all to be pro-active and pitch in our best efforts to be self-reliant and ‘be vocal’ and ‘buy local’ to achieve the national goal of being ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharat’,” it added.

Taking the example of personal protective equipment (PPEs), the AICTE explained that India used to depend on imports for these items but after the COVID-19 pandemic hit India, the nation has not only become “self-reliant but also (started to) export them,” the letter claimed.

“AICTE approved universities / institutions have done phenomenally well during the pandemic in terms of making PPES, sanitisers, face masks, ventilators, and apps. AICTE has instituted an award for such well-performing universities / institutes in the form of Utkrusht Sansthan Vishwakarma Award.”

Link:<https://indianexpress.com/article/education/aicte-asks-colleges-to-be-atmanirbhar-says-develop-apps-products-technologies-6517952/>

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