Cabinet Approves National Education Policy 2020, paving way for transformational reforms in school and higher education systems in the country

New Policy aims for Universalization of Education from pre-school to secondary level with 100 % GER in school education by 2030

NEP 2020 will bring 2 crore out of school children back into the main stream

New 5+3+3+4 school curriculum with 12 years of schooling and 3 years of Anganwadi/ Pre-schooling

Emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools; Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships

Teaching upto at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/ regional language

Assessment reforms with 360 degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes

GER in higher education to be raised to 50 % by 2035; 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education

Higher Education curriculum to have Flexibility of Subjects

Multiple Entry / Exit to be allowed with appropriate certification

Academic Bank of Credits to be established to facilitate Transfer of Credits

National Research Foundation to be established to foster a strong research culture

Light but Tight Regulation of Higher Education, single regulator with four separate verticals for different functions

Affiliation System to be phased out in 15 years with graded autonomy to colleges

NEP 2020 advocates increased use of technology with equity; National Educational Technology Forum to be created

NEP 2020 emphasizes setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups
New Policy promotes Multilingualism in both schools and HEs; National Institute for Pali, Persian and Prakrit, Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation to be set up

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the National Education Policy 2020 today, making way for large scale, transformational reforms in both school and higher education sectors. This 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.

Important Highlights
School Education
Ensuring Universal Access at all levels of school education
NEP 2020 emphasizes on ensuring universal access to school education at all levels- preschool to secondary**.** Infrastructure support, innovative education centres to bring back dropouts into the mainstream, tracking of students and their learning levels, facilitating multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and non-formal education modes, association of counselors or well-trained social workers with schools, open learning for classes3,5 and 8 through NIOS and State Open Schools, secondary education programs equivalent to Grades 10 and 12, vocational courses, adult literacy and life-enrichment programs are some of the proposed ways for achieving this. About 2 crore out of school children will be brought back into main stream under NEP 2020.

Early Childhood Care & Education with 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.

NCERT will develop a **National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE)** for children up to the age of 8. ECCE will be delivered through a significantly expanded and strengthened system of institutions including Anganwadis and pre-schools that will have teachers and Anganwadi workers trained in the ECCE pedagogy and curriculum. The planning and implementation of ECCE will be carried out jointly by the Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW), and Tribal Affairs.

Attaining Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

Recognizing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy as an urgent and necessary prerequisite to learning, NEP 2020 calls for setting up of a National **Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** by MHRD. States will prepare an implementation plan for attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy in all primary schools for all learners by grade 3 by 2025.A **National Book Promotion Policy** is to be formulated.

Reforms in school curricula and pedagogy

The school curricula and pedagogy will aim for holistic development of learners by 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. There will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams.

Vocational education will start in schools from the 6th grade, and will include internships.

A new and comprehensive **National Curricular Framework for School Education**, NCFSE 2020-21, will be developed by the NCERT.

Multilingualism and the power of language

The policy has emphasized mother tongue/local language/regional language as the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond. Sanskrit to be offered at all levels of school and higher education as an option for students, including in the three-language formula. Other classical languages and literatures of India also to be available as options. No language will be imposed on any student. Students to participate in a fun project/activity on 'The Languages of India', sometime in Grades 6-8, such as, under the *'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat'* initiative. Several foreign languages will also be offered at the secondary level. Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardized across the country, and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment.

Assessment Reforms
NEP 2020 envisages a shift from summative assessment to regular and formative assessment, which is more competency-based, promotes learning and development, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity. All students will take school examinations in Grades 3, 5, and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority. Board exams for Grades 10 and 12 will be continued, but redesigned with holistic development as the aim. A new **National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development)**, will be set up as a standard-setting body.

Equitable and Inclusive Education
NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. Special emphasis will be given on Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which include gender, socio-cultural, and geographical identities and disabilities. This includes setting up of **Gender Inclusion Fund** and also **Special Education Zones** for disadvantaged regions and groups. Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the foundational stage to higher education, with support of educators with cross disability training, resource centres, accommodations, assistive devices, appropriate technology-based tools and other support mechanisms tailored to suit their needs. Every state/district will be encouraged to establish **"Bal Bhavans"** as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in art-related, career-related, and play-related activities. Free school infrastructure can be used as **Samajik Chetna Kendras**

Robust Teacher Recruitment and Career Path
Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes. Promotions will be merit-based, with a mechanism for multi-source periodic performance appraisals and available progression paths to become educational administrators or teacher educators. A common **National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST)** will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education by 2022, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers and expert organizations from across levels and regions.

School Governance
Schools can be organized into complexes or clusters which will be the basic unit of governance and ensure availability of all resources including infrastructure, academic libraries and a strong professional teacher community.

Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education
NEP 2020 envisages clear, separate systems for policy making, regulation, operations and academic matters. States/UTs will set up independent **State School Standards Authority (SSSA)**. Transparent public self-disclosure of all the basic regulatory information, as laid down by the SSSA, will be used extensively for public oversight and accountability. The SCERT will develop a **School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF)** through consultations with all stakeholders.

Higher Education

Increase GER to 50 % by 2035
NEP 2020 aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio 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.

Holistic Multidisciplinary Education
The policy envisages broad based, multi-disciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with **flexible curricula**, **creative combinations of subjects**, **integration of vocational education** and multiple **entry and exit points with appropriate certification**. UG education can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period. For example, Certificate after 1 year, Advanced Diploma after 2 years, Bachelor's Degree after 3 years and Bachelor's with Research after 4 years.

An **Academic Bank of Credit** is to be established for digitally storing academic credits earned from different HEIs so that these can be transferred and counted towards final degree earned.
Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.

The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.

Regulation
Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. HECI to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National

Accreditation Council(NAC) for accreditation. HECI will function through faceless intervention through technology, & will have powers to penalise HEIs not conforming to norms and standards. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

Rationalised Institutional Architecture

Higher education institutions will be transformed into large, well resourced, vibrant multidisciplinary institutions providing high quality teaching, research, and community engagement. The definition of university will allow a spectrum of institutions that range from **Research-intensive Universities** to **Teaching-intensive Universities** and **Autonomous degree-granting Colleges.**

Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting **graded autonomy** to colleges. Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an Autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

Motivated, Energized, and Capable Faculty

NEP makes recommendations for motivating, energizing, and building capacity of faculty thorugh **clearly** defined, independent, transparent recruitment, freedom to design curricula/pedagogy, incentivising excellence, movement into institutional leadership. Faculty not delivering on basic norms will be held accountable

Teacher Education

A new and comprehensive **National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021**, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree .Stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

Mentoring Mission

A National Mission for Mentoring will be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty – including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages – who would be willing to provide short and long-term mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers.

Financial support for students

Efforts will be made to incentivize the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs. The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to support, foster, and track the progress of students receiving scholarships. Private HEIs will be encouraged to offer larger numbers of free ships and scholarships to their students.

Open and Distance Learning

This will be expanded to play a significant role in increasing GER. Measures such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs, etc., will be taken to ensure it is at par with the highest quality in-class programmes.

Online Education and Digital Education:

A comprehensive set of recommendations for promoting online education consequent to the recent rise in epidemics and pandemics in order to ensure preparedness with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible, has been covered. A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.

Technology in education

An autonomous body, the **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF),** will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration. Appropriate integration of technology into all levels of education will be done to improve classroom processes, support teacher professional development, enhance educational access for disadvantaged groups and streamline educational planning, administration and management

Promotion of Indian languages

To ensure the preservation, growth, and vibrancy of all Indian languages, NEP recommends setting an **Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI), National Institute (or Institutes) for Pali, Persian and Prakrit**, strengthening of Sanskrit and all language departments in HEIs, and use mother tongue/local language as a medium of instruction in more HEI programmes.

Internationalization of education will be facilitated through both institutional collaborations, and student and faculty mobility and allowing entry of top world ranked Universities to open campuses in our country.

Professional Education
All professional education will be an integral part of the higher education system. Stand-alone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities etc will aim to become multi-disciplinary institutions.

Adult Education
Policy aims to achieve 100% youth and adult literacy.

Financing Education
The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

Unprecedented Consultations
NEP 2020 has been formulated after an unprecedented process of consultation that involved nearly over 2 lakh suggestions from 2.5 lakhs Gram Panchayats, 6600 Blocks, 6000 ULBs, 676 Districts. The MHRD initiated an unprecedented 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.