

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

UNIVERSAL QUALITY EDUCATION TO CHILDRENNew Delhi, March 03rd, 2016

The Government is in the process of framing a New Education Policy (NEP) for meeting the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry; for which it has carried out nearly year-long consultations. The 33 identified themes across both the sectors on which inputs and suggestions were invited cover a spectrum of varied issues and challenges in education relating to access, quality of teaching and teachers, inclusion, skill development, employability etc.

A multi-pronged and multi-stakeholder consultative process was undertaken which included online, grassroots and national level deliberations. At the grassroots level, consultations spanned across Gram Panchayats, Blocks, Urban Local Bodies, Districts and States/Union Territories.

A number of consultations have been held with stakeholder Ministries in the Govt. of India and also with the State Governments. MHRD held thematic consultations through Apex level institutions and regulators, such as, UGC, AICTE, NCTE, AIU, NCERT, CBSE, IAS, NLMA, NAAC, NUEPA, IGNOU and Central Universities by inviting all relevant stakeholders including experts, academics, industry representatives, civil society etc.

Field practitioner engagement through the UN Solutions Exchange platform, online survey by CBSE with over 15000 responses, youth survey and focus group discussions covering 6017 youth by Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, UNESCO Category-I Institute in Asia Pacific were conducted as part of the public engagement.

Several themes under School Education address issues related to providing universal quality education to the children like “Ensuring Learning Outcomes in Elementary Education”, “Revamping Teacher Education for Quality Teachers”, “Promotion of Information and Communication Technology systems in school and adult education”, “New Knowledge, pedagogies and approaches for teaching of Science, Maths and Technology in School Education to improve learning outcomes of Students”, “Enabling Inclusive Education – education of Girls, SCs, STs, Minorities and children with special needs” and “Comprehensive Education – Ethics, Physical Education, Arts & Crafts, Life Skills”. Some themes under Higher Education are also relevant like “Improving State public universities”, “Promoting Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and online courses”, “Developing best Teachers”, “Promoting research and innovation” and “Opportunities for technology enabled learning”. The theme “Strengthening of Vocational Education” in School Education, underlines that the need for emphasizing on integrating skills in education and a renewed focus on vocational education in secondary education. Similarly “Integrating skill development in higher education” under Higher Education, mentions that

integrating skills within the higher education holds the key to reaping the demographic dividend. Another theme, “Engagement with industry to link education to employability” underlines the need for greater investment in research and focuses on the fact that industry academia linkages are essential to meet these ends and tries to find out how and what is needed for a more fruitful partnering with the industry.

The Government of India has constituted a Committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy and the suggestions received from all these multiple stakeholders have been sent to the Committee, which is expected to examine the outcome documents, recommendations and suggestions received and formulate a draft National Education Policy as well as a Framework for Action (FFA).

This information was given by the Union Human Resource Development Minister, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani today in a written reply to a Rajya Sabha question.

GG/RT/DS/RK/UNIVERSAL QUALITY EDUCATAION