

Fulcrum: National Education Policy -2020

M. G. Science Institute, Ahmedabad organises a two-day webinar on 3rd & 4th December 2020.

The webinar was thrown open by the remarks of the officiating principal Prof. Vivek Upasani. He said that a few months ago, the Central Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Modi, presented the new National Education Policy 2020. The academic circles were abuzz with social networking sites suddenly working overtime, to find out the smallest piece of information about NEP-2020. There would be a lot of conflicting ideas coming out of the policy, till we implement it. But having said that, it was clear that the initial information coming out was unbelievable & stunning. It was sheer freedom, flexibility and a fair amount of justice done to all the sections.

On this occasion, Prof. Amar Kalro, the Academic Advisor, AES said that the new education policy has come as a breath of fresh air. He recalled that last time when the government would bring second education policy in 1986, he was the dean of the "Indian Institute of Management" Ahmedabad. And with many colleagues worked on many topics of NEP1986 but there was not much change. He was all praises for the ancient Indian education. Talking about the modern education system of India he said that there is something we must have committed, that, year after year, India's higher education produces highly talented and capable people who blossom in the country or abroad. The CEO's of at least 20 big companies are those Indians who have completed their primary education and foundation in higher education in India. A total turnover of these companies is more than the GDP of many big countries. But when

we look around except individual pools of excellence; there is a lot of mediocrity in the country that needs to be addressed through this remarkable document NEP 2020. He cautioned that there would be roadblocks ahead, education is a concurrent subject both state and the Centre have a say into it, who would implement to what extent? How would it be treated? That we would know once it comes to the table. But I am optimistic that we are prudent enough to use the beautiful recommendations of the national education policy 2020 to help regain the glory that India was when the first international University happened to be Indian.

Hon. Prof. Yogesh Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Delhi Technological University, welcomed NEP 2020 calling it pathbreaking policy document. Still, he also cautioned that these are simple statements yet to be adapted into legal documents. He said that just now there are 42,000 institutions of higher learning in India, most of them are tiny units, in place of that policy suggests that India should have large multidisciplinary, multi-faculty research/teaching-intensive universities, autonomous colleges or cluster of colleges. He said the teacher is in the epicentre of the whole process. So the teacher must be empowered. If teachers don't participate, then we would not achieve anything. So he suggested that happy, motivated, inspired, proud teachers would be needed. What is the expectation from a teacher? Teaching, research and service (Community engagement). We should motivate the teachers to plan, design & execute new courses. The

biggest hurdle in this process is the idea of affiliation. The Vice-Chancellor reminded that in 1857 the British had established three Universities Bombay, Kolkata and Madras Universities, and several colleges were affiliated to these Universities. In this way, these Universities were mainly affiliating from the beginning.

The idea of affiliation is designed to produce Clerks who can work with British people. Explaining how teaching-learning suffers in the whole process, He said that curriculum is drafted by first, it is sanctioned by second, it is applied by third, it is taught by the fourth, papers are set by the fifth, the papers are corrected by sixth. This way, the teaching-learning process has to be compromised due to lack of coordination in the entire process. The method of affiliation has destroyed the guru shishya Parampara and Gyan Parampara. Instead, if your college is an Autonomous College, then you will do all these procedures yourself, and the teaching-learning process will be more effective. The teacher should design the curriculum; the teacher should decide how to evaluate; this is the meaning of empowering the teacher. He said that affiliation should be removed at the earliest.

Shri Yogesh Singh said that the main objective of the National Education Policy is to develop a large and multidisciplinary college or group of colleges or universities in India which are either research-focused or teaching-focused. He advised that prominent colleges should be converted into universities by becoming autonomous.

The third speaker of the webinar, Dr Jigar Inamdar, Director of the Department of Leadership, talked about how this policy can be helpful

for students. He told that apart from multiple entry and exit, the idea of academic bank credit will be beneficial to the students. Apart from this, the exit allowed in degree programmes and giving a certificate at the end of the first-year exit, giving the diploma at the end of the second-year exit would be a beneficial idea. He welcomed the introduction of multidisciplinary in NEP 2020.

Speaking on occasion, Dr Shashiranjay Yadav said that some aspects of traditional education should be brought back due to their relevance in 21st-century education. Education is a combination of knowledge of 64 arts. The 64 arts not only include subjects like singing and painting but also - science subjects like mathematics and chemistry, vocational subjects like carpentry and tailoring, technical subjects like medicine and engineering, and Soft skills like communication and debates. All the above subjects have an Indian origin and would be considered as 'art'. In today's times, the combination of these arts is called Liberal Arts, which means the liberal notion of art.

The purpose of NEP 2020 is to assess educational approaches in U.G. education where the arts will be integrated with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Such practice has always been successful and enhances creativity and innovation, problem-solving ability, higher-order thinking skills, communication skills, teamwork, social and moral awareness, deeper learning.

Delivering the valedictory address was Sri Atul Bhai Kothari, the national secretary of Shiksha Sanskriti utthaan nyanas. We had the privilege of Listening from the leader himself. His observations were as under.

This policy put India at the focus. The earlier policies contained good policy material, but they were not India centric.

The main objective of the National Education Policy 2020 is to create citizens who are Indians by mind, Intellect and karma.

When the Second Education Policy came in the year 1986, the name Department of Education was changed to the Ministry of Human Resources, since then there was massive demand from the people that the Ministry of Human Resources should be renamed as Ministry of education. Atul Bhai expressed happiness that this policy has accepted 34-year-old demand. Does it make a difference in answer to this question Mr Kothari said that when the Ministry of Human Resources was the name, the human being was treated like a resource, the name change had an impact, and a progressive, optimistic, futuristic policy was created? He said that there are words in the name, words have emotions, and everything rests on the feeling itself. He recalled Swami Vivekanand. When Swamiji was asked what is the meaning of teaching. Swami Ji said - Man making, character building.

He said that Takshshila was considered the first international University about 2700 years ago. This huge University was a guiding force to the world with a complete system of residential and Academic infrastructure for 10 thousand students and 3 thousand teachers. Nalanda after Taxila, Vallabhipura after Nalanda were global institutions. Universities such as Taxshila and Nalanda were instrumental in promoting holistic and multidisciplinary education. After

this, Mughal, Dutch, Portuguese and British attacks continued on India. The Recognised institutions were destroyed in the attacks, and the world-famous educational system of India fell apart.

When the British arrived in India in 1757, India had no formal educational system. The British saw that India was prosperous, Intellect and full of the workforce. The British stole \$ 45 trillion from India and aimed at destroying the wisdom of India, giving higher education of English medium to Indian citizens and making the workforce ready from it to serve as subordinates of British in India and Britain (1835-Macule Minute, 1854 - Wood's Dispatch). The higher education of English medium was clearly in English, and there was no mention of spatial knowledge, culture, science, arts, songs and most importantly Indian scientists, artists, dancers, scholars, poets in this higher education, On the contrary, the British heroes were mentioned. The graduates who got out of this higher education would have been cut off from Indian roots. And surprisingly, the post-independence governments did not attempt to evict Indian higher education from the Maclean grip that led to intellectual suffocation in society. The present Modi government allowed getting out of that suffocation from the age-old intellectual slavery. NEP aims to promote an imaginative and flexible course structure that will enable creative combinations of the subjects of study. Through this method, students will have the choice of multiple entries and exit options. Universities and colleges will offer attractive course options for students in addition to compulsory specialisation in a subject. Through this method, institutions will have autonomy in creating curricula.

In the end, Principal Vivek Upasani guided the faculty for the further course of action.

The two-day sessions were attended by principals and senior faculty of colleges belonging to AES and other managements.

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