

'National Education Policy 2020 is the backbone of India's future'

By Vasudev Devnani

India has a special place in the world in terms of knowledge. In ancient times, people from all over the world came to India to attain knowledge in Taxila and Nalanda. These centres of education were at top



position in the field of imparting spiritual knowledge along with science, medicine, vastu, art of living etc. The country became a slave in the intervening phase. Libraries of our universities were destroyed. Then a move to impart education started, but with a mentality of slavery as Macaulay's education indicates.

After Independence, there was a change in education system, but it failed to get liberated from Macaulay's education system. Several commissions were formed and a few suggestions were also implemented, but fundamentally changes did not come about. Students were caught in the race of obtaining a degree by mugging the syllabus and then became busy securing a job by getting a degree.

The 21st century underlined the need to equip the new generation accordingly and a new commission was formed. The New Education Policy 2020, which came into



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existence recently, is based on suggestions received from all over the country. The youth will not only get educated, but will also get employment.

In this policy, emphasis has been given on children's elementary and secondary education along with higher and technical education. Stress has been laid on 'how to think' in place of 'what to think' so that the inborn talent in the child comes out. Instead of 'searching for a job', the youth becomes a 'job creator'.

The child getting elementary education in mother tongue gets connected with his/her milieu and is linked with the vocational education from class VI, in which the student will be able to get associated with traditional industries and modern time IT and other businesses. The children in this age group have creativity, curiosity and a sense of commitment,

which will emerge from this policy and will give shape to new things.

In this policy, children have been kept free to choose any subject according to their thinking, ability and need and they have not been tied to choose science, commerce and arts streams. The student can opt for music along with physics and chemistry. Each subject will have the set credit points, which will keep accumulating in the account of the student, for which a credit bank has also been arranged. For this, the student has been allowed to enter and exit at any time. If a student quits any time due to some circumstances in a four-year course then the education received so far will not go waste. There is a unique provision of giving certificate on one year education, diploma on two years, degree on third year and degree with research on completion of four-

year education. The education received by the student will always be with him/her and can use it in taking admission again at any level.

Emphasis has been given on availability and quality of education in this policy. At present, 95% of students reach elementary education, 79% students reach middle education and up to 56% reach secondary education. Only 26.4% of students go for higher education. For this, a target of 100% gross enrolment in school education has been set by the year 2030, for which transport and hostel facilities will be given so that each child gets equal and inclusive education.

The policy aims to take higher education up to 50%. An additional 3.50 crore seats will be available in the country and students having all kinds of interest can get higher education. Currently, there are separate regulatory bodies for higher education and a single regulatory authority has been formed by combining all, which will work as an independent body for setting standards, funding, recognition and regulation.

Provision for online education, e-courses and virtual labs has been made in this policy for which it has been decided to increase the spending in education from 3.4% to 6% of the GDP.

(The writer is the former education minister of Rajasthan)