



Army will emerge as a technology-enabled, future-ready force to deal with security challenges. Dangers and challenges before us are likely to get complex in future...



## NEP will play a pivotal role in propelling India

As the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 completes three years of implementation this week, it stands as a milestone in India's pursuit of universal access and quality education. The policy has encompassed diverse aspects of equitable education, assessment reforms, teacher empowerment and technological integration, and is proving to be a catalyst in giving India's education system a new dimension and making it an inspiration globally. NEP 2020 brought unprecedented flexibility to the education system and its curricular revamp bridged gaps between different streams and activities, creating a more balanced and integrated educational framework. By introducing the National Credit Framework (NCrF), NEP 2020 empowered learners across levels with increased flexibility. Multiple entry and exit options, assessment frameworks, and multidisciplinary curricula granted students the freedom to shape their learning paths.

In higher education, the implementation of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) was a game changer. With 10 million students enrolled, the ABC system has been pivotal in the seamless transfer of credits, ensuring student mobility, and personalised learning paths. This reform has empowered students to choose their preferred institutions and complete degrees based on their preferences. In IIT Kanpur, for example, the revamped undergraduate curriculum has significant flexibility in programme template with new interdepartmental majors, honours, management track and online courses as open electives. The curriculum also mandates a course on ethics and an increase in credits from social sciences, humanities, environment, economics, and management science. There is an evident shift from mere problem-identifying to finding solutions.

NEP 2020 is helping schools and colleges, too, to become enablers of solution-driven grassroots innovation. The Vidya Amrit initiative is helping students to become problem-solvers, while the 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs and the Smart Indian Hackathons are grooming the next generation of young innovators. The striking correlation between the policy and aspects of Education 4.0, which prioritises inclusivity and skill-based learning, and aims to transform teachers from mere educators to collaborators and enablers, is noteworthy. The DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) platform, hosting nearly half-a-million collections of e-content in 33 Indian languages, including Indian sign language, has catered to 150 million students, teachers, par-

ents, and other learners nationwide.

NEP 2020 recognises the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and remote learning platforms in enriching academic excellence and skill development of students. The integration of AI through personalised learning, automated grading, and improved teacher-student interactions, is a big push for the Indian education system. The AI for All platform, educating millions in 11 regional languages, demonstrates its broad reach. The policy's emphasis on the formation of a digital university that focuses on personalised learning experiences and content availability in various Indian languages and ICT formats, is noteworthy. The upcoming National Digital University, operating under a networked hub-spoke model, will integrate cutting-edge ICT expertise and collaborate with public universities and institutions nationwide.

NEP 2020 acknowledges the role of research and innovation in driving sustainable growth. The recent approval by the Cabinet for setting up the National Research Foundation (NRF) will foster collaborative research and development endeavours among academia, industry, and the government. NEP 2020 has brought a paradigm shift in entrepreneurship and skill development among students. IITs are now leading in providing credit-based entrepreneurship opportunities to students. Various IITs are either giving semester breaks for entrepreneurship or have integrated it as part of curriculum. At IIT Kanpur, we have a student entrepreneurship policy, where pupils can launch entrepreneurial ventures either by taking a semester off or by opting for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Credits (IEC).

Despite the steady advancements and growth in the past, India's education system was lacking international impact. NEP 2020 opens up a new path with the provision of international collaboration, and the scope to open offshore campuses. The establishment of the first offshore IIT campus in Tanzania marks a significant development in this regard. This global recognition, especially among the Global South, marks a shift. By embracing a holistic, multidisciplinary, and technology-driven approach, NEP 2020 is set to propel India through a comprehensive academic as well as research-oriented transformation. The policy can play a decisive role in shaping the future of the nation.



Abhay Karandikar

Abhay Karandikar is director, IIT Kanpur. The views expressed are personal