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Meeting of Education Ministers of E9 Countries

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Why in News

Recently, a **consultation meeting of Education Ministers of E9 countries** was held.

The meeting was held on the theme 'E9 initiative: **Scaling up digital learning to accelerate progress towards SDG4**'.

Key Points

- **Scaling up Digital Learning to Accelerate Progress towards SDG4 (Concept):**
 - The **United Nations (UN)** is **spearheading a global initiative on digital learning and skills for all**, targeting marginalized children and youth and aiming to close the digital divide and drive rapid change in education systems.
 - This initiative **focuses on three of the five priorities of the 2020 Global Education Meeting (GEM) Declaration**: supporting teachers; investing in skills; and narrowing the digital divide.
 - **E9 countries offer a starting gate** to accelerate progress on digital learning and skills in the immediate term and ultimately on the SDG4 agenda in the longer term.
- **E9 Countries:**
 - **E9 Partnership** was first established in **1993**, formed to achieve the goals of **UNESCO's Education For All (EFA)**.
 - A group of **E9 countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan)** aims at strengthening political will and collective effort to ensure quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
 - E9 Partnership is working for the achievement of **SDG4 – Education 2030**.

- **Education For All (EFA):**

- An international initiative, first launched at the **World Conference on Education for All** by **UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF** and the **World Bank** in **Thailand in 1990**.
- Participants endorsed an '**expanded vision of learning**' and pledged to **universalize primary education** and **massively reduce illiteracy** by the end of the decade.
- Ten years later, with many countries far from having reached this goal, a broad coalition of national governments, civil society groups, and development agencies **met again in Dakar, Senegal**, and **affirmed the commitment to achieving EFA by the year 2015**.

They **identified six key education goals** which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015 (e.g. the Dakar Framework for Action).

2020 Global Education Meeting Declaration

- As part of the Decade of Action to accelerate progress on SDG4 and in response to Covid-19, the 2020 GEM Declaration **identified five priorities** for urgent action:
 - Education financing;
 - Safe school reopening;
 - Supporting teachers as frontline workers;
 - Investment in skills; and
 - Narrowing the digital divide.
- The **Covid-19 crisis** revealed the weakness and unpreparedness of the current education systems worldwide, prompting the deployment of **digital learning** during mass school closures across almost all countries.

SDG4

- To bring sustainable development in the mainstream, the **United Nations (UN) member states, in 2015, adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
 - There are **17 goals and 169 specific targets to be achieved by 2030**.
 - SDGs are **not legally binding**.
- **SDG4** is to **ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities** for all.

<p>TARGET 4-1</p>  <p>FREE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION</p>	<p>TARGET 4-2</p>  <p>EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION</p>	<p>TARGET 4-3</p>  <p>EQUAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION</p>	<p>TARGET 4-4</p>  <p>INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH RELEVANT SKILLS FOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS</p>	<p>TARGET 4-5</p>  <p>ELIMINATE ALL DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION</p>
<p>TARGET 4-6</p>  <p>UNIVERSAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY</p>	<p>TARGET 4-7</p>  <p>EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP</p>	<p>TARGET 4-A</p>  <p>BUILD AND UPGRADE INCLUSIVE AND SAFE SCHOOLS</p>	<p>TARGET 4-B</p>  <p>EXPAND HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</p>	<p>TARGET 4-C</p>  <p>INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</p>

Source: PIB