Report on Literacy Rate

Why in News

Recently, the report on **'Household Social Consumption: Education in India as part of 75th round of National Sample Survey - from July 2017 to June 2018'** has been released.

- It is based on the **[National Statistical Office](#) (NSO) survey** and provides for state-wise **detail of literacy rate among the persons aged seven years and above.**
- The report comes before the **International Literacy Day** which is celebrated on **8th September** every year.

Key Points

- **Data Analysis:** India's **Overall Literacy Rate** is **77.7%.**

    - Urban Areas: 87.7%.
    - Rural areas: 73.5%.
    - Male Literacy Rate: 84.7%.
    - Female Literacy Rate: 70.3%.

        - The **male literacy rate is higher than the female literacy** rate among all states with a considerable gap in the worst-performing states.
    - **Best Performers:** Kerala > Delhi > Uttarakhand > Himachal Pradesh > Assam.
    - **Worst Performers:** Andhra Pradesh < Rajasthan < Bihar < Telangana < Uttar Pradesh.
    - **Digital Literacy:**

        - 23% of urban households and 4% of rural households possess computers.
        - Among persons of age 15-29 years, nearly 56% in urban areas and 24% in rural areas were able to operate a computer.
        - In the same age group, nearly 25% in rural areas and 58% in urban areas reported the use of the internet.

International Literacy Day 2020

- The importance of literacy was **first observed at the** [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's](#) **(UNESCO) General conference in 1966** and following this, the **first International Literacy Day** was celebrated on **8th September 1967** and the tradition has been held annually since then.
- **Objective:** To raise awareness and remind people of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights.
- **Literacy Day 2020:** It will focus on the [changes and challenges](#) **in learning during the** [Covid-19 pandemic.](#)

    - It will reflect on the innovative and effective pedagogies that can be used in youth and adult literacy programmes to face the pandemic and beyond.
- The international community is **focusing on 2030** with **[Sustainable Development Goals](#)** (SDGs) and has aimed to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong

learning" within its goals of **SDG 4.**

- The **50-year review of South Asia** (which includes Bangladesh, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal and Pakistan) states that the **large scale illiteracy is ever-present among adults.**

    ○ As per UNESCO, **India will achieve universal literacy by 2060.**

Government Initiatives

- **For Education and Literacy:**

    ○ **National Education Policy, 2020:** It aims at making "India a global knowledge superpower" by introducing several changes from the school to college level in the Indian education system.
    ○ **Samagra Shiksha:** It is an integrated scheme for school education extending from pre-school to class XII to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of school education.
    ○ Mid Day Meal Scheme**:** It provides that every child within the age group of six to fourteen years studying in classes I to VIII who enrolls and attends the school, shall be provided hot cooked nutritional meals, free of charge every day except on school holidays.
    ○ **Eklavya Model School and Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme** (RGNF): These aim to encourage the students belonging to **Scheduled Tribes** (ST) community to pursue higher education.

- **For Digital Literacy:**

    ○ **Digital India Programme:** It pulls together many existing schemes by restructuring and re-focusing them and then implementing them in a synchronized manner.
    ○ **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan:** It is one of the largest initiatives of the country with the target of making citizens digitally literate.
    ○ **National Digital Literacy Mission:** It aims to empower at least one person per household with crucial digital literacy skills by 2020.
    ○ **Bharat Net Programme:** It aims to have an optical fibre network in all gram panchayats.

Way Forward

There is a need for real emancipation of the people. Education systems across the world should provide the training required for children and working adults so that they can learn to read and write. National educational plans should include schooling for children and literacy training for adults as parallel elements.

Source: IE

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