



6th East Asia Summit Education Minister's Meeting

For Prelims: National Education Policy 2020, PM SHRI scheme, PM- eVidya, East Asia Summit

For Mains: Education and related issues in India, Government Policies & Interventions

Why in News?

Recently, India participated in the 6th East Asia Summit Education Minister's Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

What is the East Asia Summit?

▪ About:

- Established in 2005, it is a **forum of 18 regional leaders for strategic dialogue** and cooperation on the key political, security, and economic challenges facing the Indo-Pacific region.
- The concept of an East Asia Grouping was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.
- There are **six priority areas of regional cooperation** within the framework of the EAS.
 - These are – Environment and Energy, Education, Finance, Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases, Natural Disaster Management, and ASEAN Connectivity.

▪ Membership:

- It comprises the ten member states of the **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** which are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, along with 8 other countries namely Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA.
 - It is an ASEAN-centred forum so it can only be chaired by an ASEAN member.
 - Brunei Darussalam is the chair for 2021.

▪ EAS Meetings and Processes:

- The EAS calendar culminates in the annual Leaders' Summit, which is usually held alongside ASEAN Leaders' meetings in the fourth quarter of every year.
- Meetings of EAS Foreign Ministers and Economic Ministers are also held annually.

▪ India and EAS:

- India is one of the founding members of the East Asia Summit.
- At the East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019, India had unveiled India's **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)**, which is aimed at forging partnerships to create a secure and stable maritime domain.

What are the Issues Related to the Education Sector in India?

- **Inadequate Infrastructure in Schools:** According to the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) for 2019-20, **only 12% of schools have internet facilities and 30% have computers.**
- **High Dropout Rate:** The **dropout rate is very high in primary and secondary levels.** Most

of the students in 6-14 age groups leave the school before completing their education. It leads to wastage of financial and human resources.

- **Problem of Brain Drain:** Due to cutthroat competition for getting admission in top institutes like IITs and IIMs, a **challenging academic environment is created for a large number of students in India**, so they prefer going abroad, that makes our country deprived of good talent.
- **Mass Illiteracy:** In spite of constitutional directives and efforts aimed at enhancing education, around **25% of Indians still remain illiterate**, which also leaves them socially and digitally excluded.
- **Lack of Technical and Vocational Education: Development of technical and vocational education is quite unsatisfactory**, due to which the number of educated unemployed persons is increasing day by day.
- **Gender-Inequality:** Despite the government's effort to ensure equality of opportunity for education for both men and women in our society, **the literacy rate of women in India, especially in rural areas, still remains very poor.**

What are the Education Initiatives taken by India?

- **National Education Policy 2020:**
 - NEP 2020 encourages a holistic, flexible & multidisciplinary approach to education and it is based on foundational pillars of access, equality, quality, affordability & accountability & is aligned with **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.**
- **PM SHRI scheme:**
 - Under the scheme, more than 14,500 schools will be developed across India with all components of NEP 2020 as exemplar schools.
 - These schools will offer mentorship to other schools in their vicinity.
- **PM- eVidya:**
 - The Central government had launched the PM e-Vidya programme in 2020 to boost online learning.
 - It unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access for imparting education by using technology to minimise learning losses.
- **e-Learning Platforms:** Government had also launched various e-learning platforms like DIKSHA, SWAYAM MOOCS platform, Virtual Labs, e-PG Pathshala and National Digital Library.

Way Forward

- There is a **need for inclusion of problem-solving and decision-making related subjects** in the school curriculum to offer a hands-on learning experience to students and prepare them to face the outside world when they enter into the workforce.
- India's educational setup **needs to be enhanced by integrating vocational learning** with mainstream education and providing right mentorship at school (especially in government schools) to ensure that students are guided in the right direction from the start and are aware of career opportunities.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement. **(2020)**

Source: [PIB](#)

