



EDUCATE TO EMPOWER

Founded in 1966

CBCI OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

NEWS AND VIEWS

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1 August, 2023

His Eminences

His Beatitudes, His Excellencies

Your Graces,

Dear Regional and Diocesan Secretaries of Education

Dear National Coordinators of Education (from Religious Congregations and Associations)

Greetings from the CBCI Office for Education and Culture!

May I share with you some information?

1. We have a revised version of the All-India Catholic Education Policy, provisionally approved by the CBCI Standing Committee on 09 May 2023.

2. Similarly, we have a revised version of the CBCI Child Protection Policy, definitively approved by the Standing Committee of the CBCI on 09 May 2023

Both these policies will be released in September 2023 and will immediately be ready for distribution.

3. We have a set of brochures prepared on the Preamble of our Constitutions, named "Living by Constitutional Values" - 12 of them- on the values set out by the Constitutions. We are sharing the soft copy of the same with this Newsletter for August 2023. Please display them and distribute them for educational purposes.

4. We plan to inaugurate a National level plan for implementing Global Compact on Education - a call given by the Holy Father to the Universal Catholic Schools. As part of the plan, we shall have a "National Symposium on Catholic Education in India" on 23-25 November 2023 at St. John's Medical College, Bengaluru. We have invited the Regional Bishops in charge of education ministry along with the Regional and Diocesan Education Secretaries and the National Coordinators of Education from various Religious Congregations. Please register at the earliest! We shall send you the details soon!

Please let me know if you wish our office to animate your region or diocese on various current education issues!

Please read our Newsletter and share with us your feedback!

With best wishes,

Fr. Maria Charles SDB

National Secretary

CBCI Office for Education and Culture

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Fr. Maria Charles SDB
National Secretary,
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Living by Constitutional Values

As citizens, we promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India, transcending diversities based on religion, language, caste, or gender and the like. As Educators, it is our duty to educate this generation of students, the fundamental principles and the constitutional values embedded in the Preamble of the Constitutions of India. Moreover, we need to initiate programmes to cultivate the many qualities and attitudes mentioned among the fundamental duties of every citizen. Under Fundamental Duties, 51A, the Constitution of India lays down the following ten normative directions for every Indian citizen.

"To empower youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations"- National Youth Policy, 2014.

The Constitution gave the citizens of India the power to govern themselves by choosing their own government. The principle of equality embodied in the Constitution forms the bedrock of our democratic setup. In an incredibly diverse society like India, the values like social justice, equality, liberty, and fraternity cherished by the Constitution act as the binding force. Living by Constitutional Values is about the Preamble, instilling in the students a sense of democracy, and a sense of the values of the Constitution of India. You can find the 12-set brochure as an attachment in the mail that was sent. The 12 points for the 12-set brochure to guide you in making your choice of values are:

1. Making Equality a Reality for All.
2. Good Governance for Progress of the Nation.
3. Protection & Preservation of Nature is My Future.
4. Respect Traditional Knowledge. Ensure Survival.
5. Building a Truly Secular Nation.
6. Social Justice for Human Development & Peace.
7. My Country is my Family.
8. My Volunteering is my Investment.
9. Duties for Healthy Democracy.
10. Universalization of Education is Empowerment of Nation.
11. We are the Nation. We are the Youth.
12. Right to Freedom of Speech & Expression.

Report on the Meeting with the CBCI Education Experts

The CBCI Office for Education and Culture held a consultation meeting with the CBCI Education Experts on **8 July 2023**. The meeting started with Fr. Xavier leading the participants in a short prayer. After the prayer, all the participants wished our Chairperson, Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, a belated happy birthday. Then Fr. Charles, the National Secretary for the CBCI Office for Education and Culture, explained the agendas of the meeting to the participants. The Agendas were:

- Welcome and Introductory Talk by the Chairperson of CBCI Office for Education and Culture
- Presentation of Revised Catholic Education Policy 2023
- Discussion on Catholic Education Policy
- Presentation of National Plan of Global Compact on Education
- Discussion on Global Compact on Education
- Issues of Educational Concerns
- Concluding Remarks and Prayer

The Chairperson gave the introductory words to the meeting. He said that he was glad to meet this group of education experts. We are going through this crisis/challenging time and also are going through persecution. We cannot be silent spectators. Awakening is a must at this hour. We have skeletons in our cupboard too, so let us work on that, all the while preparing for the difficulties ahead. The Global Compact on Education is also a blessing for us which the Pope has sent us and let's work on that. The Chairperson also advised the participants about Respect, Suspect, and Inspect. He told us to respect whatever comes to us, but at the same time, suspect if it is good for us, is it going to be helpful for us, how it is going to make us and our institutions better. Let us make sure how we can win the solidarity among us. He then thanked everyone for coming and welcomed them. He said we need more common good.



All the participants Introduced themselves one by one. Fr. Charles then **presented the All-India Catholic Education Policy** and explained the topics and subtopics of the Policy to the participants. He then asked the participants to share their feedback and suggestions for the All-India Catholic Education Policy in a general sense. There was a long

discussion on the Catholic Education Policy. The Chairperson said that the Policy was very well done, and one recommendation he gave was to add a chapter on education for the disabled/specially abled children. Another participant suggested that since our institutions are being attacked, we should also add the preparedness for these attacks in the context part of the policy.

A participant asked that in the priorities of the policy, we should explain who the Stakeholders of the school are. Another participant asked if we could add something in the policy about the false rumours of forced conversions of students in our schools. Fr. Charles said that when making a policy, we have to be very careful about what we add and include in the policy. Another participant said that we should be sensitive towards the prayers for the non-Catholics in our schools. A participant also asked if it was necessary to have so many quotations in the policy. He said some quotations can be edited out. Fr. Charles explained that we kept it to the old policy as it is a revision of the policy, and we would not make a completely new policy.

One of the participants said that the policy needs more writeups about Higher Education, and another participant said that since Catholic Education played a major role in bringing education in India, we should include the history of Catholic Education in India in the Policy. Fr. Charles said that we can add a paragraph of history of Catholic Education. Another participant said that we cannot have the history in the policy itself, but we can have it in the Introduction. A participant also suggested that the word 'Admission' should be emphasized in the policy.

One of the participants said that the quotations should be in the starting of the policy and not in all the chapters. She said that instead of having large quotes in the policy, we can have them in passive voice sentences. Another participant said that admission policies and such should be with another body in our institutions, and this should be included in the policy. It should be mentioned in the policy that the separate body should be responsible for the admissions. A participant suggested that vulnerable adults should also be added in the policy under the subtopic of protection of children, and Holistic Education can be defined more thoroughly. Another participant suggested that we should not go out of context and the flow should be maintained in the policy.

The conclusion of this discussion was that the Catholic Education Policy will have to touch up a bit, and the suggestions given by all the participants will be taken into consideration and the appropriate and apt suggestions will be added to the Policy.

Fr. Charles then **presented the National plan of the Global Compact on Education** and told all the participants to look at the papers. The Chairperson suggested that all the participants should read a paragraph of the Global Compact on Education. Then Fr. Charles presented all the 7 posters for the global compact on education and explained them each individually. He suggested that it would be better to change the word 'Advance the Women' to 'Empower the Women'. A participant said suggested to keep 'Advance the Women' as it is and not change it to 'Empower the Women'. Another participant asked not to change anything from the original document as it is an official statement from Rome. So, it was decided that the original document will not be changed and will remain as it is from the Vatican.





The **discussion on the Global Compact on Education** started after Fr. Charles asked for suggestions on how to go forward with the Global Compact on Education. A participant said that we should include 'Laudato Si' and 'Fratelli Tutti' while going forward with the Global Compact on Education. She said that the focus on children should be there, and we need to keep a check on who's doing what for the Global Compact on Education. The Chairperson informed all the participants that they are already working on it and need to take it ahead step by step. It was decided that the participants will come up with plans and ideas on how to move ahead with the Global Compact on Education and send it to the CBCI Office for Education and Culture.

Then Fr. Charles presented the posters/brochure for Living by Constitutional Values. He said we have to start somewhere, and he will be happy to have the participant's suggestions. If the participants prepare some resource material, then Fr. Charles asked the participants to pass it on to them. He wants the participants to spread the brochure to everyone they can. He said we need to circulate it as much as we can. The Chairperson said that we are heading somewhere. We're taking steps to move ahead. He then went on to explain the larger groups of the CBCI. He said we will try to make some strategic shifts.

The Chairperson thanked the participants for attending the meeting and giving their valuable feedback. Fr. Charles advised all the participants to cooperate and contribute their ideas and suggestions. Then the Chairperson gave his blessings and **concluded the meeting with a prayer.**

Introduction to Planet Fraternity



The PLANET FRATERNITY project has just experienced a year 2022-2023 rich in emotion and incredible moments of fraternal sharing. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with feedback and give you an outlook for 2023-2024. This project has indeed been presented to you on several occasions at previous councils, but the significant advances and new proposals deserve a period of information so that you can be fully involved in this fraternal process.

We would like to thank all those who played a decisive role in the development of the project. We

are aware that there is still a lot of progress to be made, and that the project will be even better in a year's time. We are moving forward with the full force of our energy, and with boundless enthusiasm. The joy of young people discovering each other and exchanging ideas is already enough to make us happy. The letter to Planet Fraternity is sent as an attachment in the same mail.

15 schools from different States of India have joined the International Movement of Planet Fraternity. Congratulations to them all. If in case any of you had tried to register but were not able to, please let us know immediately. The International Office for "Planet Fraternity" is willing to guide them to register. (Fr. Maria Charles)

Education News

Delhi HC dismisses PIL seeking introduction of Legal Studies as a subject in Schools

India Today Education Desk: New Delhi, May 17, 2023

In a recent ruling, the Delhi High Court dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) that sought the introduction of legal studies as a subject in schools. The court, headed by Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, stated that the decision fell within the jurisdiction of authorities responsible for academic policymaking, and the court couldn't substitute their expertise. While acknowledging the petitioner's concerns, the court maintained that the new education policy of the Government of India adequately addresses the country's educational needs.

Although the PIL was dismissed, the court allowed the petitioner to submit a representation to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the competent authority for curriculum designing, regarding the inclusion of legal studies as a subject in schools. The court highlighted that the relevant educational authorities possess the expertise to address academic policy matters, including the choice of subjects, educational standards, and the quality of education provided.

The court noted that legal education and legal studies are already offered as optional subjects in school education. It stated that the curriculum and syllabus have been developed by experts in the field, and the court couldn't impose its views on such matters. The court's order emphasised the importance of expert opinions and the need to respect their expertise in shaping educational policies.

While the petitioner's plea was dismissed, the court's ruling has directed attention to the relevant authorities, inviting further discussions on the subject and highlighting the need for comprehensive deliberation and consultation in matters of educational policymaking.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/delhi-hc-dismisses-pil-seeking-introduction-of-legal-studies-as-a-subject-in-schools-2380527-2023-05-17>

US mission to India set to interview highest ever number of Indians for student visas between July-August 2023

India Today Education Desk: New Delhi, June 8, 2023

On Tuesday, the US Mission in India held its seventh annual Student Visa Day countrywide with Consular Officers from New Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Mumbai interviewing almost 3,500 Indian student visa applicants.

"Last year, a record-breaking 125,000 Indians were issued student visas, surpassing the number issued to any other nationality. In fact, one out of every five student visas issued last year was granted to Indians. This year, we will conduct interviews with more students than ever before," remarked Brendan Mullarkey, the acting Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs in India.

This year, the US mission to India is expected to process over one million visa applications and has processed over one-tenth of the worldwide visa volume since the beginning of 2023. According to the US embassy in India, the US mission will interview their highest number of students ever between June-August 2023. Over 50 percent of Indian students studying in the US are enrolled in graduate programmes, though there is a steady rise in the number of students opting for the US to look at the undergraduate level as well.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/us-mission-to-india-set-to-interview-highest-ever-number-of-indians-for-student-visas-between-july-august-2023-2390257-2023-06-08>

Education Dept Secretary and CBSE Chairman interact with school principals on NEP Adaptation

India Today Education Desk: New Delhi, June 1, 2023

Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy along with CBSE Chairperson, Nidhi Chhibber, IAS, held a productive meeting with principals of CBSE-affiliated schools today in the capital. The interaction took place both physically, with over 250 principals from Delhi and NCR region, and virtually, as principals from across India and abroad joined the live session through the CBSE YouTube channel.

The meeting aimed to gather insights and experiences of schools in adapting to the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which was launched three years ago. Nidhi Chhibber emphasised the crucial role of schools in transforming and keeping pace with changes to maintain the educational ecosystem. Sanjay Kumar delved into the challenges of ensuring basic minimum proficiency among students and enabling them to make informed choices based on their interests and aptitudes.

As the education system adapts to the changes introduced by NEP 2020, the interaction between education officials and CBSE principals serves as a valuable platform for sharing experiences, addressing challenges, and aligning efforts toward providing quality education in line with the policy's objectives.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/education-dept-secretary-and-cbse-chairman-interact-with-school-principals-on-nep-adaptation-2387618-2023-06-01>

After Darwin's evolution theory, NCERT removes periodic table from Class 10 textbooks

Milan Sharma: New Delhi, June 1, 2023

After NCERT's decision last month to remove Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution from Class 9 and Class 10 science textbooks, it has courted controversy once again by removing the periodic table from Class 10 textbooks. Only students who elect to study chemistry in the final two years of education (before university) will learn about the periodic table. Students, though, can still learn about these subjects, but only if they opt for the relevant subject in Class 11 and Class 12.

While the specific rationale behind this decision has not been explicitly stated, it is believed to be part of the ongoing syllabus rationalisation process initiated by the NCERT. However, the permanent removal of these scientific topics has raised concerns among scientists and teachers. The periodic table forms the foundation of chemistry education, providing a systematic understanding of elements and their properties. Its exclusion from the Class 10 syllabus can hinder students' grasp of essential chemical principles.

NCERT textbooks have been the subject of debate and controversy in the past. Critics have accused them of promoting a particular political ideology aligned with the ruling party. Since its establishment in 1961, the NCERT has been entrusted with the responsibility of advising central and state governments on academic matters related to school education.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/after-darwins-evolution-theory-ncert-removes-periodic-table-from-class-10-textbooks-2387369-2023-06-01>

Prime Minister Modi launches 100 Books in 12 Indian Languages at a 2-day Education Summit

The second Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the International Convention Centre in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 29-31 July. PM Modi presented a selection of 100 books in 12 Indian languages during the first session, including Bengali, Hindi, Assamese, Kannada, Gujarati, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Tamil, Punjabi, Urdu, and Telugu.

This project emphasized the value of local languages and encouraged their usage in education. The UGC intends to produce another 1,500 books in various Indian languages. The UGC has urged higher educational institutions to conduct teaching-learning activities through correspondence and other mediums to boost the use of the home tongue and Indian languages. It has assembled a group of subject matter experts, academics, and translators to create textbooks in Indian languages.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "I express hope and confidence that our universities will play a pivotal role in the development of high-quality textbooks and teaching-learning materials in Indian languages."

<https://news.careers360.com/pm-modi-launches-100-books-in-12-indian-languages-at-2-day-education-summit>

Education in mother tongue initiating new form of justice for Indian students: Modi

By Fareeha Iftikhar: July 29, 2023

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that the use of the mother tongue in education under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 initiated a “new form of justice” for the students in India and termed it as a “very significant step” towards social justice.

PM Modi inaugurated the Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi on Saturday to mark the third anniversary of NEP 2020. Emphasising that the biggest injustice to any student is judging them based on their language instead of their capabilities, Modi said, “Education in the mother tongue is initiating a new form of justice for the students in India. It is also a very significant step towards social justice.” In the event, the prime minister also released education and skill curriculum books translated into 12 Indian languages.

“India has now begun to shun this belief with the advent of the National Educational Policy...Even at the UN, I speak in the Indian language,” PM Modi added. He said that we have to create an “energetic new generation” in the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal which will be free from the “mentality of slavery” and eager for innovations and ready to bring laurels in fields from science to sports, willing to skill themselves as per the needs of the 21st century, a generation filled with a sense of duty. “NEP will play a big role in this,” Modi added.

He mentioned Eklavya Schools in tribal villages, internet facilities in villages and students receiving education through modes like DIKSHA, SWAYAM and Swayamprabha. “Now, In India, the gap of resources needed for education is being covered rapidly”, Modi said. He appealed to teachers and parents to prepare students for confident curiosity and flights of imagination. “We have to keep an eye on the future and think with a futuristic mindset. We have to free the children from the pressure of books,” the PM added.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/pm-modi-hails-use-of-mother-tongue-in-education-as-new-form-of-justice-101690622581241.html>

Introduction to Transformative Reforms for Higher Education Institutions in India

Over the years there has been an increasing emphasis on strengthening the Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in the country, as is evident from the relevant pronouncements of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), the National Conference of Chief Secretaries held in June 2022 at Dharmashala, the 341st Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee (held in July 2022) on Education, Women, Children, Youth & Sports, and the Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam organized in July 2022 at Varanasi. Further, Vision India@ 2047 envisages Indian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to rise to figure in Top World Rankings. You can find this attachment in the mail sent.

Introduction to Quality and Innovation Report 2022

The quest for quality has been a persistent challenge in the context of school education. Notwithstanding the remarkable strides taken by our country in providing access to schools and a quantum jump in the number of students enrolled in schools, quality in education has remained elusive. Numerous initiatives have been rolled out to enhance the quality of education imparted in schools.

The main thrust of the scheme is on the provision of quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students: Bridging Social and Gender Gaps in School Education; Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education; Ensuring minimum standards in schooling provisions; Promoting Vocationalisation of education; Support States in implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009; and Strengthening and up-gradation of SCERTs/State Institutes of Education and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) as a nodal agency for teacher training. The main outcomes of the Scheme are envisaged as Universal Access, Equity and Quality.

Under Samagra Shiksha, a wide range of interventions are being approved to improve the teaching-learning process in schools and access to school education. The scheme is committed to supporting and empowering individual students and enabling their holistic development. An attempt has been made to highlight such innovations and best practices, undertaken by Autonomous bodies States and UTs concerning the quality and innovation component of Samagra Shiksha, at the National level. This booklet brings together the innovative practices adopted by states and UTs with a special focus on managing learning loss during the pandemic and improving learning outcomes. You can find the full report as an attachment in the mail sent.



Introduction to India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development

Ministry of Education, Government of India and US Department of State today launched the India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development in virtual mode, with the aim to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the two countries in the field of education and skill development. Ms. Neeta Prasad, Joint Secretary for International Cooperation, Ministry of Education, Government of India, and Mr. Donald Lu, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, US Department of State co-chaired the Working Groups from India and US respectively.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of skilling and vocational education in the industry centred era. Recognizing the need to align skills training programs with industry requirements, both sides agreed to foster partnerships between educational institutions, industry stakeholders, and relevant government agencies. This collaboration aims to address skills gaps, enhance employability, and promote entrepreneurship in both the countries. Noting that student and faculty exchanges are at the heart of the knowledge partnership between both countries, Indian side highlighted the need for expeditious visa issuance and reaffirmed their ongoing efforts on this issue. The delegations from both sides expressed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in education and skill development between India and US. The Joint Working Group agreed to continue regular meetings and explore concrete avenues to further advance education and skill development collaboration between India and US. You can find this as an attachment in the mail sent.



Pope on African Education Compact: 'We look to Africa with great confidence'

By Deborah Castellano Lubov

"We look to Africa with great confidence," said Pope Francis on Thursday praising the African Compact on Education, as he addressed a delegation of organizers of the African Compact on Education from the International Religions and Societies Foundation.

"I am happy to welcome you today together with the important novelty you bring with you, that of the African Compact on Education," the Pope said.

The Compact, he recalled, is the fruit of the International Symposium held in November 2023 in Kinshasa, under the patronage of the Congo Bishops' Conference and organised by the International Religions and Society Foundation and the Catholic University of Congo.

Numerous bishops, priests, scientists, and scholars from various African countries and beyond attended that event, inspired by the Pope's Global Compact on Education, which he launched in September 2019.

"I congratulate you, because you were the first to realise a continental Educational Compact. You have shown that you have well understood what I was aiming for with this initiative, namely that the Global Education Compact should become a local reality."

African wisdom

From the start, the Pope said, he conceived this project under the banner of an African proverb, to "emphasise that community dimension of education that has always been part of your millenary educational tradition: 'To educate a child, it takes a whole village.'"

This is, he explained, "an educational alliance ideally signed by all the members of the village, for whom the task of accompanying each child is not the exclusive responsibility of the father and mother, but of all the members of the community."

"Everyone, therefore, has a duty to support education, which is always a joint endeavour."

Duty to support education

"In education we have to take more risks and act as a choir," the Pope said.

The African Education Compact, he underscored, should contribute not only to recovering and strengthening a "communitarian and horizontal dimension of relationships," but also to highlight "the vertical dimension," namely "the relationship with God."

The African continent, the Pope reflected, has opened up to the Christian proclamation with great enthusiasm and is currently the continent that sees the greatest increase in the number of Christians and Catholics.

"Therefore," Pope Francis commended, "the African Compact on Education is founded, with justifiable pride, on the motto: 'I am because we are.' Faith is present there."

Investing in young people, teachers

The Pope urged them to continue investing energy into the education of young people.

"After the policies of mass education, which characterised the first decades of post-colonialism," he recognized, "it is now time to work together with local governments for the ever-increasing qualification of education, especially by training teachers well, valuing them and creating the necessary conditions for the dignified exercise of their profession."

"We look to Africa with great confidence, because it has everything it needs to be a continent capable of charting future paths."

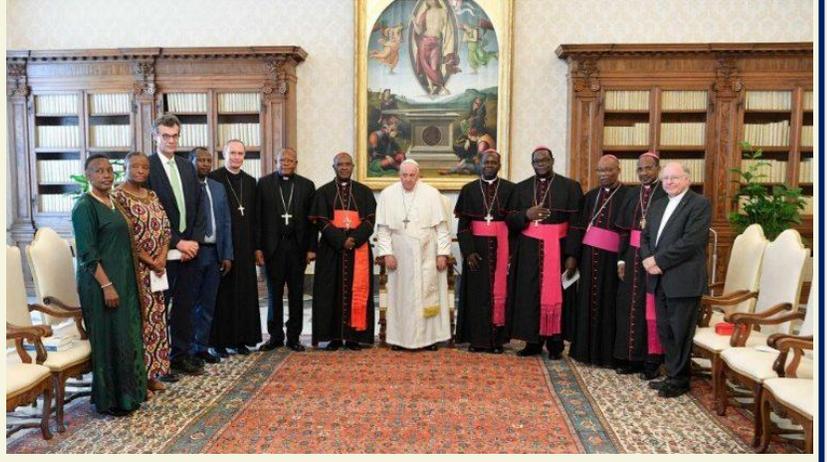
"I am referring," the Holy Father clarified, "not only to the great mineral resources and economic progress and peace processes. I am thinking above all of educational resources: the values of traditional African education, especially those of hospitality, welcome, solidarity, are values that fit perfectly into the Educational Compact.

Christianity, he added, "matches the best part of every culture and helps to purify what is not authentically human, and therefore not even divine."

Model for other continents

"Dear brothers and sisters, with the African Education Compact," he observed, "you confirm once again what Pliny the Elder used to say: 'Ex Africa semper aliquid novi' ('Something new always arises from Africa')."

Thanking them for their commitment, the Pope expressed, "I hope that the African Compact on Education will be followed by other continents." Pope Francis concluded by praying that the Virgin Mary, Mother of Africa, accompany those promoting the Compact.



Pope Francis receives promoters of African Educational Pact

Introduction to the Ministry of Education Annual Report 2020-21

The Ministry of Education came out with the Annual Report of 2020-21. The report consists of two parts: School Education and Higher Education. The Ministry of Education comprises of the Department of School Education and Literacy, and the Department of Higher Education.

The Department of School Education and Literacy include Elementary Education, Basic Education, Bal Bhavan, Children's Museum, Social Education and adult education, Audio Visual Education with reference to entries in this list. Books and Book Development with respect to the items in the list, Educational Research with respect to items in the list, Publications, information, and statistics with reference to the items in the list, Teachers training with reference to the items in the list, National Council for Teacher Education, Charities and Charitable Institutions, Charities and Religious Endowments pertaining to subjects dealt within this Department, Secondary Education and Vocational Guidance, National Council for Educational Research and Training.

The Department of Higher Education includes University education, Institutions of higher learning, Books and Book Development with respect to the items in the list, Audio Visual Education with reference to the items in the list, Production of University level textbooks in Regional Languages, Educational research, Publications, information and statistics, Development and propagation of Hindi, Grant of Financial assistance for the teaching and promotion of Hindi, Propagation and development of Sanskrit, Rehabilitation and other problems relating to displaced teachers and students, Central Advisory Board of Education, UNESCO and Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO, Matters relating to all scholarships, Education and Welfare of Indian Students overseas, Educational Exchange Programmes, Admission of foreign students in Indian Institutions, Endowments pertaining to subjects dealt within this Department, Adhoc scientific research, Vigyan Mandirs, School of Planning and Architecture, Regional Schools of Printing, National Research Professorships and Fellowships, University Grants Commission, National Book Trust, Regulation of Engineering Professional Services, The Architects Act, 1972 (20 of 1972), etc.

Kindly find the full report as an attachment in the mail that was sent.



शिक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION

Forced displacement hits new record of 110 million globally

By Deborah Castellano Lubov

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is calling for concerted action as forced displacements hit a new record of nearly 110 million.

According to UNHCR's annual report, Global Trends in Forced Displacement 2022, by the end of 2022, the number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence, and human rights abuses, reached a record 108.4 million.

This, increase of 19.1 million since the previous year, marks the greatest-ever increase.

In a statement, the UN Refugee Agency asserts that the upward trajectory in global forced displacement showed no sign of slowing in 2023, especially as the eruption of conflict in Sudan triggered new outflows.

Urgency for collective action

UNHCR highlights that the war in Ukraine, conflict elsewhere, and climate-provoked upheaval, meant more people than ever remained uprooted from their homes last year, "heightening the urgency for immediate, collective action to alleviate the causes and impact of displacement."

Of the global total, 35.3 million are refugees -people who crossed an international border to find safety - while a greater portion, of 58 per cent, representing 62.5 million people, were displaced in their home countries because of conflict and violence.

War in Ukraine top driver

The war in Ukraine was the top driver of displacement in 2022, as the number of refugees from Ukraine soared from 27,300, at the end of 2021 to 5.7 million at the end of 2022, representing the fastest outflow of refugees anywhere since World War II.

By the end of 2022, estimates for the number of refugees from Afghanistan increased significantly, given revised estimates of Afghans hosted in Iran, many having arrived in prior years.

The report likewise reflected upward revisions of the number of Venezuelan refugees, by Colombia and Peru, categorized mostly as "other people in need of international protection," hosted in those countries.

The report's figures confirm that the world's low and middle-income countries, not wealthy states, host the most displaced people.

The 46 least-developed countries account for less than 1.3 percent of global Gross Domestic Product, UNHCR asserts, yet, it notes, they hosted more than 20 percent of all refugees.

Funding for the numerous displacement situations and to support hosts lagged behind needs last year, remaining sluggish in 2023 as requirements increase.



Possibility, desire to return home

Despite the total figure of displaced continuing to grow, the Global Trends report observes that those forced to flee are not condemned to exile, but can, and do, return home, voluntarily and safely.

For example, in 2022, over 339,000 refugees returned to 38 countries, and though this figure was lower than the previous year there were significant voluntary returns to South Sudan, Syria, Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire.

Also, the UNHCR report illustrates, some 5.7 million internally displaced people returned in 2022, notably within Ethiopia, Myanmar, Syria, Mozambique, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Pope Francis laments the spiritual poverty in a culture that leads to teen suicides

By Courtney Mares

Pope Francis has said that the rise in teen suicides points to a deeper spiritual poverty in our culture today that leads young people to believe they are failures.

In his message for the 2023 World Day of the Poor, the pope wrote that he could not fail to mention “an increasingly evident form of poverty that affects young people.”

“How much frustration and how many suicides are being caused by the illusions created by a culture that leads young people to think that they are ‘losers,’ ‘good for nothing,’” he said.

“Let us help them react to these malign influences and find ways to help them grow into self-assured and generous men and women.”

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among Americans between ages 10-14 and 20-34. Data released this year by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 22% of high school students reported seriously considered attempting suicide in 2021.

The pope warned that a culture of “haste” can prevent us from stopping to care for others. He added that Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan “continues to challenge each of us in the here and now of our daily lives.”

“It is easy to delegate charity to others, yet the calling of every Christian is to become personally involved,” Pope Francis said.

The pope noted that youth are particularly vulnerable to cultural changes that have led people to “disregard anything that is unpleasant or causes suffering and exalt physical qualities as if they were the primary goal in life.”

“We are living in times that are not particularly sensitive to the needs of the poor. The pressure to adopt an affluent lifestyle increases, while the voices of those dwelling in poverty tend to go unheard,” he said.

Pope Francis established the World Day of the Poor in 2016 at the end of the Catholic Church’s Jubilee Year of Mercy. The day is celebrated each year on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, a week before the feast of Christ the King.

The seventh World Day of the Poor will be celebrated on Nov. 19 with the theme “Do not turn your face away from anyone who is poor,” taken from the Book of Tobit 4:7.

In the message, signed on the June 13 feast day of St. Anthony of Padua, the pope highlighted how “dramatic price increases” have further impoverished many families.

“If a family has to choose between food for nourishment and medical care, then we need to pay attention to the voices of those who uphold the right to both goods in the name of the dignity of the human person,” he said.

Pope Francis also lamented problems affecting workers, including “the inhumane treatment meted out to many male and female laborers; inadequate pay for work done; the scourge of job insecurity; and the excessive number of accident-related deaths, often the result of a mentality that chooses quick profit over a secure workplace.”

“We are reminded of the insistence of St. John Paul II that ‘the primary basis of the value of work is man himself... However true it may be that man is destined for work and called to it, in the first place, work is ‘for man’ and not man ‘for work,’” he said, quoting John Paul II’s encyclical *Laborem Exercens*.

Francis, who is currently recovering in the hospital after a hernia surgery, wrote that “caring for the poor is more than simply a matter of a hasty handout.”

He said that caring for the poor requires “reestablishing the just interpersonal relationships that poverty harms” and leads us to “enjoy the benefits of mercy and charity that give meaning and value to our entire Christian life.”

University Conducts Workshop for Rural Women

By Dr. Somak Sen

In a humble effort to empower rural women, Centre for Social Outreach (CSE), a unit of St. Xavier’s University, Kolkata (SXUK) in association with Seva Kendra, Kolkata started a 10-day workshop on tailoring from June 12, 2023, in the university campus. This workshop aims to promote the economic condition of rural women from neighbouring villages by imparting hands-on training on tailoring. It would continue up to June 23, 2023. While inaugurating the programme, Father John Felix Raj, S.J., Vice-Chancellor of SXUK said, “This is one of the many programmes we plan to conduct. A university as a temple of knowledge must always be in touch with neighbouring villages. 15 sewing machines will be handed over to the participating women after they complete the training programme.”

He further added, “Such workshops will continue for the women of the nearby villages. Experienced trainers from Seva Kendra would conduct the workshop. All the participants will receive a training completion certificate. SXUK has a plan to set up a vocational training centre for rural women in the second phase. The West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL) sponsored the project as a part of its CSR initiative.

Fr. Anthony Rodrigues, Director, Seva Kendra and Mr. Subhasish De, Regional Manager, WBSEDCL were present in the inaugural programme. Thanks to Mr. Sukhendu Bank, Coordinator, CSE, SXUK and student volunteers for their active and efficient organisation of the programme.

Visit for more

info: www.sxuk.edu.in, www.goethals.in, www.felixrajsj.com

National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023

National Curriculum for School Education 2023 released by the Ministry of Education is quite exhaustive in bringing in all elements pertaining to school education excluding that of pre-primary education. Taking the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as its basis, the NCF addresses education strategies for the age group of 3 to 18 years across institutions in India. The 628-page framework has been prepared by the National Steering Committee under the chairpersonship of Dr K Kasturirangan, former head of the Indian Space Research Organisation. Serving as a guideline for developing the syllabi, textbooks and teaching practices in India, the document presents a four-stage (5+3+3+4) curricular and pedagogical restructuring of school education, a change from the 10+2 format.

Anita Rampal, former dean, Department of Education, Delhi University, finds a problem in the way the NCF has been designed. “The detailed document goes to the extent of indicating how a lesson has to be planned, how much time should be spent in the assembly, etc. Such elaboration of what a curriculum is and how it should be enacted is not the purpose of the NCF. Ours is a federal structure. The frameworks are meant to offer only broad guidelines, and it is for the states to develop their own curricula, based on their specific regional requirements. But, in this case, the whole process has been upturned. Most states will simply comply with the elaborately laidout guidelines, without changing much.”

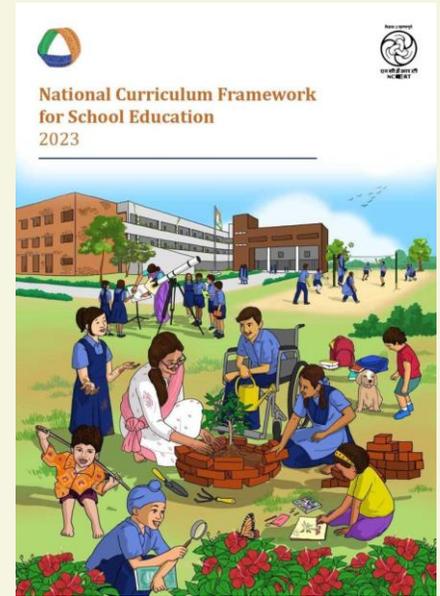
It is an attempt to centralise education, which is not ideal for a diverse country like ours, says Vikram Dev Singh, state president of the Democratic Teachers Front, Punjab. “The NEP 2020, on which the NCF is based, is not a democratic policy because the suggestions sought from the education departments of various states during the draft release of NEP in 2019 were a mere formality. Due to Covid-19, all educational institutions were closed then and a proper feedback may not have been received. The policy was passed without any discussion. The NCF takes this NEP draft into consideration as well.”

Another concern that has evoked much debate is the change in the course format. To complete Grade 10, students will have to complete two essential courses from each of the eight curricular areas, a total of 16 essential courses across Grade 9 and 10. Besides humanities, mathematics and science, these would include subjects like vocational education, physical education, arts and social science.

According to Dr Pyare Lal Garg, former Registrar of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot, “The present educational system has helped our country produce the best doctors, engineers, researchers, scientists and thinkers in the world. The multi-disciplinary education will not help in the development of the skillset required for specialised courses like medicine and engineering, which require a strong foundation. The emphasis on an alternate medicine system like ayurveda, which does not have a global recognition, will take away all the progress we have made so far. Subjects like social sciences can be added to professional courses but only for basic knowledge, and not as a serious discipline. The emphasis on using mother tongue for teaching too may not be practical.”

“The NCF seems to offer much choice and flexibility through a range of subjects, but these courses will not get the students anywhere beyond Class 10. Only a few students will get a chance to take admission in actual academic courses while the rest will be kept happy with mere paper degrees that will be useless,” says Professor Rampal.

Arguing that this is a much-needed change, former NCERT director JS Rajput says, “The NCERT is on the right path by merging vocational with the academic education. We have so many courses in the syllabi which lay unnecessary



stress on children. This curriculum change will only affect the business of coaching institutes and education mafia.”

Educationists have also raised concerns over the NEP’s goal to transform higher educational institutions into large multi-disciplinary universities and colleges, ‘each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students’. “Our country has a diverse terrain and people live here in far-off places. Aiming for colleges with more than 3,000 students will make higher education unapproachable for students living in far-flung hilly, tribal, desert, coastal and forest areas,” says Garg.

Targeting 100 per cent enrolment by 2030, the NEP 2020 has put on record the increasing number of school dropouts, especially after Class 8. According to NEP 2020, the GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) for Grades 6-8 was 90.9 per cent, while for Grades 9-10 and 11-12, it was only 79.3 per cent and 56.5 per cent, respectively — indicating that a significant proportion of enrolled students drop out after Grade 8. As per the 75th round household survey by the NSSO in 2017-18, the number of out of school children in the age group of 6 to 17 years is 3.22 crore, the NEP states. “The dropout rate is quite high and very few students go for higher education. Making vocational education part of schooling will lead to most poor children opting for these courses. This will further deprive them of the chance to go for higher studies, worsening the rich-poor divide,” says Ashok Agarwal, president of the All-India Parents Association.

Vikram Dev Singh points out that the NCF lays emphasis on the need to introduce students to our glorious past. “History needs to be taught in totality, including all its black spots. Recently, the NCERT rationalised textbooks and deleted many crucial topics of Indian history that are important to understand our social system. In the latest course books, topics like varna, caste system, untouchability, status of women in society have been tampered with while chapters on people’s movements like Dalit Panthers, Chipko Andolan, Narmada Bachao Andolan, besides Mughal history, have been removed. This indicates attempts at saffronisation of education.”

To this, Professor Rajput says that there’s much more to Indian culture beyond aberrations like Sati and caste system. “Even today, the Panchang cannot be challenged. We need to tell students about our traditional subjects. NCF is a faithful translation of NEP 2020 in all its aspects,” he adds.

Even as the feedbacks and debates over the NCF continue, a major curriculum change is imminent.

The key points of National Curriculum Framework

- Based on the vision of the National Education Policy 2020, the NCF is likely to be implemented by 2024. It divides schooling into four parts: Foundational Stage (3-8 years), Preparatory Stage (8-11 years), Middle Stage (11-14 years) and Secondary Stage (14-18 years).
- Besides structural changes that replace the 10+2 model, the framework lays emphasis on ancient Indian knowledge systems. It makes a provision for learning at least three languages, including a local language or mother tongue.
- It lays stress on an in-depth understanding of the Indian knowledge systems, including recognition of important mathematical contributions of the country as well as traditional medical practices like ayurveda and unani.
- The NCF has undergone four revisions in the past — in 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005. The proposed revision, if implemented, would be the fifth iteration of the framework.

States are free to contextualise the NCF, says NCERT director Prof Dinesh Prasad Saklani.

The NCF is a detailed document. How much authority do the states have in bringing about any changes in it?

Education is on the concurrent list, meaning both the Central and state governments have jurisdiction over it. States have the freedom to contextualise the NCF according to their needs, without compromising on curricular goals and cross-cutting issues. The NEP 2020 says that states can prepare their own curricula (which may be based on the NCF SE prepared by the NCERT to the extent possible) and textbooks (which may be based on the NCERT

textbook materials to the extent possible), incorporating state-specific content as needed. However, the NCERT curriculum is considered the nationally acceptable criterion.

To what extent has the NCERT been involved in the NCF?

The NCERT is responsible for coordinating the entire process of developing the NCF, seeking inputs from states and UTs through consultations and surveys, as well as from different stakeholders such as various ministries, universities, and civil society groups. Faculty members from the NCERT provide their inputs in various meetings related to NCF.

How and by when is the NCERT going to implement the NCF?

The implementation of the NCF is not solely the responsibility of NCERT. It will, however, play a leading role in implementing it, along with SCERTs under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and the National Steering Committee. It will initiate teacher training based on the NISHTHA model as soon as the NCF SE is released in its final form. The NCERT will also prepare syllabus and textbooks for the entire school stage. It will work in collaboration with the NCTE and the CBSE to implement the recommendations in the area of teacher education and assessment.

How equipped are the states in teaching subjects in the mother tongue? What kind of infrastructure is needed?

Schools will have to adopt different strategies, such as collecting teaching-learning material in various mother tongues, involving community volunteers, parents, creating a pool of teachers from nearby schools familiar with different mother tongues, and exploiting the potential of digital education. The necessary infrastructure will be determined by the schools according to their needs.

The draft says we need to teach students about our glorious past. What about the uncomfortable truths from history like varna, caste system, besides some parts which have already been removed from textbooks?

In history, the periods are clearly defined and curriculum takes care of ancient, medieval, and modern periods. Each period will have its specific elements, which will be included in curriculum in age-appropriate manner. Moreover, textbooks are not the sole resource of learning. NEP 2020 focuses on experiential learning which includes group discussions, field visits, debates, learning through digital modes, etc.

In a multi-disciplinary pattern, how will students develop skillsets for professional streams like medicine or engineering?

The perspective of providing “flexibility” in the policy intends for students to learn both the breadth and depth of the areas they select, rather than limiting themselves to specific streams. While engaging in disciplines, students will receive greater attention to their personal and career aspirations as they prepare for higher education or work. The curricular goals and competencies approach provides scope for students to develop their prerequisite skills for pursuing professional courses, such as medicine, engineering, architecture, etc, in the future, by selecting subjects of their own choice for undertaking specific careers.

Please find the attachment in the same mail.

Seema Sachdeva in Tribune India 04 August 2023

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/features/ncf-reopens-debate-on-education-policy-497887>

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