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**DAILY EDITORIAL
ANALYSIS**

TOPIC

**ROLE OF EDUCATION IN NATION
BUILDING**

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ROLE OF EDUCATION IN NATION BUILDING

Context

- As India approaches the **75th anniversary of its Constitution**, the role of education, as it remains a fundamental pillar for nation-building in India, remains as crucial as ever.

About

- The framers of the Constitution envisioned education as a cornerstone for the development of a democratic, equitable, and progressive society.
- They believed that an educated populace was essential for fostering democracy, promoting social justice, and driving economic development. **Education** was seen as a powerful tool to **bridge social divides and empower citizens**.
- Education was recognised as a **key element** in achieving the goals of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- Over the decades, education has evolved to meet the changing needs of the nation, but its fundamental importance in shaping India's future remains unchanged.

Historical Background

- Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution, the concept of education in India has undergone significant evolution, playing a crucial role in nation-building.
- First Commissions:** The **University Education Commission (1948)** and the **Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)** laid the groundwork for modernising education, emphasising democratic values and vocational training.
- Kothari Commission (1964-66):** This commission's recommendations led to the **National Policy on Education (1968)**, which aimed to promote a uniform education system and address disparities.

Key Constitutional Provisions Related to Education in India

- Article 15:** Prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. It extends to educational institutions as well.
- Right to Education (Article 21A):** The Constitution recognizes the right to education as a fundamental right. It guarantees free and compulsory education for children between the ages of 6 and 14 years.

Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)

- Article 41:** It highlights the importance of ensuring equal opportunities for education and minimising inequalities.
- Article 45:** The DPSP under Article 45 emphasises that the state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14.
- Article 46:** Promotes the educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalised sections.

Fundamental Duties (Article 51A)

- Article 51A(j):** Citizens are duty-bound to strive for excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity, including education.

Language and Education

- Article 350A:** Ensures the right to instruction in the mother tongue at the primary level.
- Article 29:** Protects the cultural and educational rights of minorities, including the right to establish and administer educational institutions.

Autonomy of Educational Institutions

- Article 30:** Grants religious and linguistic minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- Article 32:** Provides the right to move the Supreme Court for the enforcement of fundamental rights, including educational rights.

Role of the State

- Article 41:** The state shall make effective provisions for securing the right to work, education, and public assistance.
- Article 44:** Encourages the state to promote a uniform civil code, which could impact personal laws related to education.

Educational Reforms and Policies

- Post-independence, India undertook significant educational reforms to create a unified national identity.
- The colonial curriculum, which focused on creating clerks and civil servants, was replaced with one that instilled pride in India's history and cultural heritage.
- The introduction of the **three-language formula** aimed to promote unity while respecting linguistic diversity.

Education as a Pillar of Democracy

- Education plays a pivotal role in sustaining democracy. An **informed and educated electorate** is better equipped to participate in democratic processes, make informed decisions, and hold leaders accountable.
- Over the decades, India has made significant strides in improving literacy rates and expanding access to education. It promotes the values of justice, equality, and freedom, which are fundamental to India's democratic ethos.
 - ♦ However, **challenges** such as quality of education, regional disparities, and gender gaps persist.

Social Justice and Inclusion

- Education has been a key instrument in uplifting marginalised communities, reducing inequalities, and promoting social mobility.
- Initiatives like the **Right to Education Act (2009)** have further reinforced the state's commitment to ensuring that every child has access to quality education irrespective of their socio-economic background.
- By teaching the values of tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding, education plays a vital role in **maintaining social harmony**.

Economic Development

- A well-educated workforce is essential for innovation, productivity, and competitiveness in the global economy.
- India's emphasis on science and technology education has positioned it as a global leader in information technology and other high-tech industries.
- The proliferation of educational institutions, including the IITs and IIMs, has produced a skilled workforce that drives the nation's economic engine.
- Technical and professional education, in particular, has been emphasised to fully utilise the country's natural resources and boost employment, GDP, and overall economic growth.
- **India's demographic dividend**, with a large proportion of its population being young, presents both an opportunity and a challenge.

Related Initiatives

- **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009:** The **86th Amendment Act (2002)** made education a fundamental right for children aged 6 to 14, leading to the RTE Act, which mandates free and compulsory education.
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** which includes Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE); Foundational Literacy and Numeracy; Curriculum and Pedagogy; and Equity and Inclusion etc.
- **Infrastructure Development** aiming to improve school infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas, which includes building new schools, upgrading existing facilities, and ensuring access to basic amenities.
- **Teacher Training and Development** to enhance the quality of education, the government has prioritised teacher training programs, and aims to equip teachers with modern teaching techniques and improve their overall effectiveness.
- **Digital Integration** which includes initiatives like e-learning platforms, digital classrooms, and online resources to make education more accessible and engaging.
 - ♦ Programs like **PM eVidya** and **DIKSHA** have been launched to bridge the digital divide and ensure continuity of education, especially highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Way forward (Focus Areas)

- **Quality of Education:** Improving the quality of education at all levels, from primary to higher education, is essential. It includes better teacher training, updated curricula, and enhanced infrastructure.

- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education.
 - ♦ Special focus is needed on girls' education and education for children with disabilities.
- **Skill Development:** Aligning education with the needs of the job market and focusing on vocational training and skill development to prepare the youth for future challenges.
- **Innovation and Research:** Promoting a culture of innovation and research in educational institutions to drive progress and address societal challenges.
- There is a need to look on challenges like Access and Equity, Quality of Education, Teacher Training, Dropout Rates, and Skill Development *etc* ahead of education in India and the **NEP 2020** is the right step that focuses on Holistic Development, Multilingualism, Flexible Curriculum, Technology Integration, along with Professional Education.

Conclusion

- Education in India is not just about imparting knowledge; it is about building a nation. It shapes the minds and aspirations of millions, driving the country forward. By fostering economic growth, social cohesion, and democratic values, education remains a powerful tool in India's nation-building efforts.
- As India stands on the cusp of its 75th year of independence, the role of education in nation-building cannot be overstated. It is the bedrock upon which the future of the nation is built.
- By continuing to invest in and reform the education system, India can ensure that it remains a beacon of progress and innovation, fulfilling the dreams of its founding fathers and paving the way for a brighter future.

Source: IE

Mains Practice Question

[Q] Since the adoption of the Indian Constitution, how has the concept of education evolved to contribute to the nation-building process? Discuss the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in ensuring that education plays a pivotal role in shaping a just, equitable, and prosperous India.

