

Speech of the Honourable Governor for inauguration of a one-day seminar on “New Education Policy 2019’ organized by Intellectual Forum of North East (IFNE) at the Centre of Educational Technology of IIT-Guwahati on 10th August 2019

Namaskar,

Director IIT Guwahati Prof. T.G.Sitharam, senior officers of the Department of Higher Education, Govt of Assam, members of IIT Guwahati community and other resource persons.

I am happy to be here in the midst of this prudent gathering. It is really heartening that we have assembled here to discuss the New Education Policy 2019 from different perspectives and evaluate its pros and cons. Hope after deliberations we will be able to put forward concrete feedback plan of "National Education Policy 2019 (Draft)", to submit to MHRD, Govt. of India. I moreover, hope that this deliberation can prepare some suggestive measures for the policy in context of Assam.

Education is the most important national activity and the backbone of a country's progress. It helps to strengthen the very fabric of nation "to produce men of education, enlightenment and character". The New Education Policy 2019 envisions an India-centered education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all.

The draft policy is divided into four parts namely, School Education, Higher Education, Additional Key Focus Areas and Transforming Education to cater to different needs in the changing scenario of India.

Unlike earlier policies, the policy does not start with the focus on 6 to 14 but gives utmost importance to "Access of children aged 3 - 8 years to a

flexible, multifaceted, multilevel, play-based and activity-based education. The mandate of the NCERT will be expanded to include the development of a Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Education. A prestigious National Tutors Programme will be instituted across the country to enable high-quality peer tutoring among students.

Students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study across the arts, humanities, sciences, sports, and vocational subjects; no hard separation between 'arts' and 'science' streams, or between 'academic' and 'vocational' streams which is going to be the hall mark of the New Education Policy 2019.

To wipe out regional disparities Special Education Zones will be set up in disadvantaged regions across the country. Higher education will happen in multidisciplinary institutions with teaching programmes across disciplines. To facilitate the system of education and to help the students to become specialists, a liberal and broad-based undergraduate education will be accompanied by rigorous specialization in chosen disciplines or fields in order to develop deeper expertise in one or more subjects.

Under the New Education Policy 2019 a new National Research Foundation will be set up through an Act of Parliament, as an autonomous body of the Government of India, to fund, mentor, incentivize, and build capacity for quality research across the country in all disciplines, primarily at universities and colleges, both public and private.

Under the New Policy, efforts have been made for regulation which is responsive, minimalistic, light but tight - to ensure public spiritedness, equity, excellence, financial stability and probity, along with good governance.

Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog will be created to implement the entire policy with integrated approach.

Gentlemen, I feel it is redundant on my part to harp on New Education Policy 2019 in midst of this august gathering. I hope the proposed technical discussion which has brought together several participants, including various actors and national partners involved in the sector, as well as experts from National Level will do well in having a detailed understanding of all its technical aspects, of the Education Policy and then suggest suitable measures of the policy in context of Assam. Hope the New Education Policy goes down well in building a foundational pillar of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability to bring about a paradigm shift in the delivery of quality education in our country. With this I inaugurate the symposium.

Jai Hind