

# OVERVIEW

By *admin*

Created 06/13/2011 - 11:18

The essence and role of education articulated in the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986/92 continues to be relevant even 25 years after its formulation. NPE states:

- In our national perception education is essentially for all. This is fundamental to our all-round development.
- Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit - thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution.
- Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. It is also the substrate on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance.
- In sum, education is a unique investment in the present and the future. This cardinal principle is the key to the National Policy on Education.

In 2010 the country achieved a historic milestone when Article 21-A and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 became operative on 1st April 2010. The enforcement of Article 21-A and the RTE Act represented a momentous step forward in our country's struggle for universalising elementary education. The RTE Act is anchored in the belief that the values of equality, social justice and democracy and the creation of a just and humane society can be achieved only through provision of inclusive elementary education to all.

In keeping with the vision of providing education of equitable quality to fully harness the nation's human potential, the Department has laid down the following objectives to:

- Reinforce the national and integrative character of education in partnership with States/UTs.
- Improve quality and standards of school education and literacy towards building a society committed to Constitutional values.
- Universalise elementary education in keeping with the rights conferred under the RTE Act.

- Universalise opportunities for quality secondary education.
- Establish a fully literate society.

These objectives are intended to be accomplished through the following major programmes of the Department:

- Elementary level: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Mid Day Meal (MDM).
- Secondary level: Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Model Schools,
- Vocational Education, Girls' Hostel, Inclusive Education of the Disabled, [ICT@School](#) [1].
- Adult Education: Saakshar Bharat
- Teacher Education: Scheme for Strengthening Teacher Education
- Women's education: Mahila Samakhya
- Minority Education: Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madarasas (SPQEM)
- Infrastructure Development of Minority Institutions (IDMI)

## **MISSION**

The Department endeavours to:

- Provide free and compulsory education to all children at elementary level.
- Become a partner with the States and Union Territories to reinforce the national and integrative character of education.
- Build a society committed to Constitutional values with the help of quality school education and literacy.
- Universalise opportunities for quality secondary education.

## **OBJECTIVES**

In order to make the dream of secondary education a reality for every deserving student in the country, the Department's objectives are clearly marked. It has to:

- Increase access to quality school education by expanding the network of schools, through existing as well as new institutions.

- Bring equity to the system of secondary education by including disadvantaged groups as well as weaker sections, who were kept deprived hitherto..
- Ensure quality and improved standards of education by supporting the existing institutions and facilitating setting up of new ones
- Initiate policy-level changes in terms of institutional and systematic reforms, which further create a world-class secondary education curriculum that is able to generate brilliance among the children.

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