

# **The National Education Policy 2016: A Critical Appraisal**

THE MINISTRY of Human Resources Development (MHRD) has come out with a 43-page document called “Some Inputs for Draft New Education Policy” (NEP-2016), available in the website <http://mhrd.gov.in/nep-new>. This is the third education policy to be formulated since India’s independence, the first one was in 1968 and the second was in 1986 (revised in 1992). Naturally it has raised hopes in the education-loving people that the new policy will address the real issues confronting education in our country and will take positive steps in realizing the long-cherished dream of a universal, secular, democratic and scientific education system.

So, in this appraisal, we will first take a look at what the real issues are, and then will evaluate how the policy takes note of them and proposes to address them.

## **The problems that need to be addressed**

The first problem is that, in spite of repeated declarations and lofty pronouncements, education has not reached a vast section of the Indian populace. According to the government’s statistics, “the absolute number of out-of-school children remains high and “India currently has the largest non-literate population in the world with the absolute number of non-literates among population aged 7 and above being 282.6 million in 2011. India also hosts the largest number of youth and adult illiterates in the

world with the youth literacy rate (15-24 years) and adult literacy rate (15 years and above) in India in 2011 being 86.1 percent and 69.3 percent respectively” (page 7).

The NEP-2016 document acknowledges “In the last 40 years, a number of programmes have been started, such as, Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP), National Literacy Mission (NLM), Saakshar Bharat Abhiyan, etc. Despite all these efforts, India still has over 280 million adult illiterates which is about one-third of the total number of adult illiterates in the world” (clause 4.7).

This is the bleak situation almost seven decades after India’s independence, where a large fraction of the population is sieved out without any scope of being intellectually productive. Moreover, it seems literacy has been equated to ‘functional literacy’ which is taken as the ability to sign one’s name.

The children, who are fortunate enough to get into a school, face a challenging situation that causes high drop-out rates. Most school buildings are unfit to be called ‘buildings’, many do not have a roof over their heads, most schools do not have toilets (especially for girls), and if they exist are in a unusable state. Many primary and lower secondary schools have just one teacher for four classes. Naturally the standard of education imparted is abysmally low. The NEP-2016 admits that “In 2014-15, the retention rate at primary level was 83.7 per cent and it was as low as 67.4 percent at the elementary level. This

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indicates that roughly, four in every 10 children enrolled in grade I leave the school before completing grade VIII” (page 12).

In addition to that, the deliberate degradation of the examination system, the abolition of the pass-fail system, and the abolition of English learning at the primary and lower-secondary levels have created a condition where the standard of education at the government-run schools has hit rock bottom. High-charging private English medium schools have mushroomed to fill the void. It is felt that the void has been deliberately created so that these schools can do a roaring business peddling education. Even poorer people prefer their children to go to the so-called English medium kindergartens. Parents do not want to admit their children in government-run schools; but many cannot afford to admit their children in private schools.

This has created two classes of students: those who are educated in the government-run schools and receive a low quality of education, and those who are educated in private schools and have the advantage of having examinations and English education. Naturally the ‘haves’ have an advantage over the ‘have-nots’ when it comes to entry into higher education. Thus a large number of students are deliberately deprived of the scope of furthering their education.

The school curriculum has been made heavy with jargon and superfluous material that do not give the students any conceptual understanding. Just take a look at any school textbook, and you will wonder about 20-30% of the material “why do students have to learn this?”

One of the most damaging developments in recent years is the degradation of language teaching. With the emphasis on multiple choice questions, a condition has been created where students can score

high marks without learning to express clearly their thoughts verbally or in written language. Since language is the vehicle of thought, this weakening of language learning has in turn weakened the ability of the students to grasp higher ideas. And without adequate exposure to the treasure house of literature, students lack exposure to the high standard of ethics, morality, and culture that are reflected in great literature.

The course content of the higher secondary level has been made so heavy that most schools cannot complete the course within the allotted teaching time. Things that should normally be taught in college or university are now included in the school curriculum. Most students have to rely on private tuition to learn what is supposed to be taught in school. Those who cannot afford it, fall to the bottom or out of the class. Those who somehow can complete the syllabus get only superficial knowledge. There is emphasis on learning by rote, not concept building, logical thinking, and solving the problems of life and society with the help of science.

Add to this the fact that practically no government school has any facility for experimentation. The students have to confine their learning to textbooks, the quality of which is often sub-standard. Naturally their understanding becomes truncated. The science textbooks are crammed with facts, figures, and theories, but nowhere do we see any mention of how we learnt these to be true. We teach students what science has found, but do not teach how science has found them. The method of science and the life-struggle of great scientists are not included in the curriculum. Naturally, students learn science just as any other subject, without understanding that it is a guide to thinking. That is why we see so many persons who are science literates subscribing to all sorts of unscientific be-

liefs and superstitions.

Most of those who are fortunate enough to get some sort of schooling cannot advance to the next ladder: “the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education remains low at 23.6 percent in 2014-15.” This is not because students do not want to go into higher education. The actual reason is that the number of colleges and universities is hopelessly insufficient to provide higher education to all those who aspire for it. The NEP-2016 declares as its target “to increase GER to 25.2 per cent in 2017-18 and further to 30 per cent in 2020-21” (page 7). If the target itself is set so low, the chance of any real increase in higher education is marginal. It also contradicts its pronouncement in a later section on ensuring that all secondary students have “equitable access to higher education”.

Why this reluctance to increase the reach of higher education? The fact is that the Indian industry is unable to put this vast number of educated individuals to productive use, and most will remain unemployed. Even in a job-oriented discipline like engineering, there is a big mismatch between the number of engineers being currently produced and the number finding gainful employment. This is a curse of the capitalist production system: the more it advances the less it employs. Thus, in this society, a large section of the population is doomed to remain outside the ambit of money and commodity circulation, in perpetual misery. And the system is better off if it manages to keep these people uneducated, so that they believe they are ‘unemployable’.

Still, a large number of students get education in colleges and universities—a number that is larger than the employment capacity of Indian industries. That is why we see a shrewd design in the Indian higher education scenario. The standard of the universities have been gradually eroded by

depriving them of the flow of funds required to sustain a healthy environment of teaching and research, and through political intervention in the day-to-day functioning. On the other hand, systems of “favoured” institutions have been created—the IITs, NITs, IISERs, etc.—which receive the lion’s share of educational funding and are projected as “centres of excellence”. Only a handful students receive education in these centres of excellence, and the vast majority is left to flounder in the sea of mediocre education. They are then branded as “unemployable”.

Thus we see that the dream of universal, secular, democratic and scientific education system is far from being met. Instead, the Indian education system is in a state of rot and needs an urgent and drastic overhaul—which clearly shows the failure of NPE-1968 and NPE-1986.

But if we read through these two documents we find no dearth of high-sounding verbiage. For example, the National Policy on Education (1968) laid stress on “the need for a radical reconstruction of the education system, to improve its quality at all stages, and the development of science and technology, the cultivation of moral and social values, and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. The Resolution stressed the role of education in promoting national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and in strengthening national integration.”

Similarly, the National Policy on Education 1986 envisaged a “national system of education which implies that up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparative quality”. We clearly see that none of these objectives have been met. We do not even see a semblance of attempt by the people in power to meet these objectives. The lesson to be learnt is

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that we should not take such statements at their face value, and should check the actual actions taken by the MHRD under its current leadership to verify its earnestness in actually implementing the declared aims and objectives.

Now let us see how much realization about the real state of the education system is reflected in the proposed NEP-2016. We will see that most of the real problems discussed above do not find mention in the document. So we confine ourselves to the ones that are mentioned, and will check how the government proposes to address the problems.

### **The content of NEP-2016**

Like the earlier NEPs, the NEP-2016 declares a lofty objective: “The National Education Policy, 2016 envisions a credible education system capable of ensuring inclusive quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all and producing students/graduates equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are required to lead a productive life, participate in the country’s development process, respond to the requirements of the fastchanging, everglobalising, knowledge-based societies, and developing responsible citizens who respect the Indian tradition of acceptance of diversity of India’s heritage, culture and history and promote social cohesion and religious amity” (page 14).

Such pronouncements are not much different from those in NEP-68 and NEP-86, and, are slickly phrased in such a way that there is no measurable yardstick of commitment or success in any of these directions, and so one cannot accuse the government of failure in meeting the objectives.

Then the document goes on to invoke Mahatma Gandhi’s teaching: “The real difficulty is that people have no idea of

what education truly is. We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of the character of the educated” (page 5).

Wonderful! Upon seeing this quotation in the NEP-2016 document one would tend to believe that finally the education policy makers have realized that earning is not the sole objective of education and appropriate emphasis would be placed on “improvement of the character of the educated.”

**Job-oriented education:** But as we read on, we realize that is not the Government’s agenda at all. In fact, one of the main objections of the educationists to the NEP-86 was its undue stress on job-oriented education. Most prominent educationists feel that the primary purpose of education should be man-making and character-building, that education should enable the educated to think clearly, rationally, and with proper scientific and historical perspective. They feel that the slogan of job-oriented education without first fulfilling the above objective goes exactly in the opposite direction.

We find that the primary agenda of the NEP-2016 is again to promote job-oriented education, but cloaked under a different expression. “The need for the development of human skills, including life skills, that meet the demands of the emerging knowledge economy and society highlights the need to promote the acquisition by learners of knowledge and skills on a life-long basis to enhance their capacity to adapt to changing skill requirements” (page 4).

And then it goes on to say “India is one of the youngest nations in the world with more than 54 percent of its total population below 25 years of age. It is estimated

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that there will be 104.62 million fresh entrants to the workforce by 2022 who will need to be skilled. However, institutional arrangements to support technical and vocational education programmes remain quite inadequate. Formally linking the development of skills in vocational fields, and bringing an academic equivalence to vocational accomplishments with avenues for horizontal and vertical mobility of students has been attempted only recently. To enhance employability, a blend of education and skills is essential for individual growth and economic development” (page 8).

“There is a growing realisation that there exist serious disconnects between the existing school and higher education curricula and the curricular thrusts that are needed for promoting the acquisition by students of relevant skills required for decent work and a better life in a rapidly changing world” (page 9).

At another place it says “Expanding opportunities for skill development and ensuring acquisition by young people and adults of the skills and competencies for life and work, including technical and vocational skills that are required for employability, work and entrepreneurship and for adapting to an ever-changing world of work” (page 9).

Thus, according to the education policy-makers, the acquisition of “skill” is the focus. Our organization feels that the development of personality, thinking capacity and quality of mind should be the primary focus of education, and skill may be imparted only after meeting these primary objectives. According to Albert Einstein, “The school should always have as its aim that the young person leaves it as a harmonious personality, not as a specialist. Otherwise, he — with his specialized knowledge — more closely resembles a well-trained dog than a harmoniously developed person.”

**Expansion of the school system:** The document does recognize some of the limitations of our school education mentioned earlier. “The biggest challenge facing school education relates to the unsatisfactory level of student learning. The findings of the National Achievement Surveys (NAS) covering Grades III, V, VIII and X suggest that learning levels of a significant proportion of students do not measure up to the expected learning levels”. “The perceived failure of the schools in the government system to provide education of good quality has triggered entry of a large number of private schools, many of which lack required infrastructure, learning environment, and competent teachers” (page 8).

Thus, the document recognizes the need for expanding the reach of the education system. But as a means it proposes to rely on non-formal channels. “Significant changes have taken place in the education sector. The educational activities and learning process are no longer confined to the classroom and, therefore, the domain of education is no longer limited to formal schooling or higher education. The educational process is not only mediated by classroom-based curriculum transaction but also by media, both electronic and print, information and communication technologies, books and journals etc. Learners today have access to more current knowledge through non-institutionalized means” (page 4). This implies that the government does not really intend to increase, augment, and improve the school education system, and that is why it eulogizes “out of classroom” learning. The entire focus of NEP-2016 is to produce a large number of half-educated people to satisfy the needs of the job market rather than to improve the quality of education and to make it accessible to larger number of students.

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**Commercialization of education:** The document recognizes the problem of commercialization of education: “Commercialization is rampant both in school and higher education sub-sectors as reflected in the charges levied for admissions in private educational institutions. The proliferation of sub-standard educational institutions has contributed to the diminished credibility of the education system” (page 12).

But does it recommend substituting it by well-funded government school and college system? No. They are only mentioning the problem in passing, and the document does not propose stoppage of commercialization of education. As we will see later, the government actually proposes to strengthen private investment in the education sector.

**No detention policy:** The document recognizes the problem created by no-detention policy. It says: “The present provisions of no-detention policy will be amended, as it has seriously affected the academic performance of students.” But then, it seeks to continue the policy in the primary stage: “The no detention policy will be limited up to class V and the system of detention will be restored at the upper primary stage” (clause 4.3-3). If the policy has seriously affected the academic performance of students, will it not continue to have detrimental effects on primary education—the foundation of the whole education system? We demand that proper examination system should be brought back from the primary level.

**Examination reform:** Similarly, the document acknowledges the problems of the examination system in the higher levels also. “The overall assessment practices at the school and college/university level remain unsatisfactory. In most cases the assessment of learning achievement continues to focus on rote learning and

testing the students’ ability to reproduce content knowledge. The whole assessment system needs to be revamped to ensure comprehensive assessment of the students, including learning outcomes relating to both scholastic and co-scholastic domains” (clause 4.5).

That is good thinking. But in what direction do they seek to bring in changes? That is not spelt out clearly, retaining the scope of retrograde steps that might jeopardize the education system further.

The only concrete recommendation we find is this: “High failure rate in class-X examination is attributed to a large extent to poor performance in three subjects: Mathematics, Science and English. In order to reduce the failure rates, class X examination in Mathematics, Science and English will be at two levels: Part-A at a higher level and Part-B at a lower level. Students who intend to join courses/ programmes for which science, mathematics or English is not a prerequisite or wish to shift to vocational stream after class-X will be able to opt for Part-B level examination” (clause 4.5-8). This recommendation is highly debatable and has no relation to the problems of the present examination system pointed out in the same document.

**English:** One welcome aspect of NEP-2016 is that it proposes to introduce English as second language from the primary level: “Knowledge of English plays an important role in the national and international mobility of students and provides an access to global knowledge. Hence, it is important to make children proficient in reading and writing English. Therefore, if the medium of instruction upto primary level is the mother tongue or local or regional language, the second language will be English and the choice of the third language (at the upper primary and secondary levels) will be with the individual states and local authorities,

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in keeping with the Constitutional provisions” (clause 4.11-2).

While the increased emphasis on English is welcome, they clearly state that they are proposing a three-language formula (clause 4.11)—which many eminent educationists have opposed.

**Sanskrit:** In ‘Language and Culture in Education’ (clause 4.11-5) it mentions that, “Keeping in view special importance of Sanskrit to the growth and development of Indian languages and its unique contribution to the cultural unity of the country, facilities for teaching Sanskrit at the school and university stages will be offered on a more liberal scale.” In this context it is worthwhile to recall that, in May 2016, the MHRD has issued an advisory to the IITs and other institutes of national importance instructing them to initiate “Sanskrit Cells” for introducing courses in Sanskrit. The MHRD Committee headed by Shri N Gopaldaswamy, a former Chief Election Commissioner, recommends this step “in order to facilitate study of Science and Technology in Sanskrit literature and inter disciplinary study of various modern subjects and its corresponding subjects in Sanskrit literature.” The MHRD document ([http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/Report-CVRM.pdf](http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/Report-CVRM.pdf)) titled ‘Vision and Road Map for the Development of Sanskrit Ten Year Perspective Plan’ further claims, “There are hundreds of works like Siddhanta Shiromani, Vriksha Ayurveda, Upavana Vinoda, Mayamatam, etc., to name a few, which are of great relevance in the context of research and innovation.”

Actually the government is trying to impose Sanskrit at various levels of the education system as a part of their indoctrination agenda, where the Vedic age will be painted in a picture of imaginary glory—Pushpak vimanas flying to other planets, surgeons planting elephant heads on human torsos,

missiles flying with nuclear warheads (what else is Brahmastra?), and doctors routinely giving birth to test-tube babies—all these supposedly occurring ten thousand years back!

The objective of the education system is to equip students with the latest and the most refined knowledge about the working of nature, obtained through the rigorous scientific method of observation, experimentation, theory-building, and objective testing of theories. Teaching a mixture of old and new texts in the name of a so-called ‘inter-disciplinary’ study might lead to a truncated, confused and erroneous understanding.

**Curricular reforms:** Regarding curriculum renewal and examination reforms, the document just gives a quotation from Swami Vivekananda, “Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.. . . If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages of the world and encyclopedia are the greatest Rishis” (clause 4.5).

Surprisingly, the rest of the document is completely silent about what steps will be taken to change the information-centric curricula into ones whose objectives are life-building, man-making, character-making. There is no emphasis on inculcation of scientific bent of mind and logical thinking.

**The anti-science attitude:** It is noticeable that the NEP-2016 document consciously avoids spelling out the anti-science approach the current NDA government has

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been pursuing in all fields of education. The history textbooks are being modified by mixing mythology with history and by projecting a distorted image of India's past. Subjects like Vedic mathematics are being introduced in the school curricula. Many other steps are being surreptitiously taken to propagate unscientific bents of mind and various shades of superstitions. But these find no mention in the policy statement.

Only in two places we find hints of what are to come. "The Education System which was evolved first in ancient India is known as the Vedic system. The ultimate aim of education in ancient India was not knowledge, as preparation for life in this world or for life beyond, but for complete realization of the self." This is the way they are trying to define the objective of modern education! And then they propose that "Ways of building synergies and linkages, providing mentoring and advice between Ashram shalas and nearby secondary schools/ higher secondary schools/ Kendriya Vidyalayas/ Navodaya Vidyalayas will be worked out." (clause 4.6-4). That is it, then. The schools and colleges will be guided by what they call the "Ashram shalas", in reality the religious fanatics!

It is historically a fact that the Vedic education included a varna (caste) system, in which lower castes were denied scope of education. By citing this as an 'ideal' education system, does the government plan to do something similar today?

**Governance of education:** The policy document states that (clause 4.14-4) "The State will endeavour to implement the recommendations of earlier policies of 1968 and 1986/92 for the creation of an Indian Education Service (IES), which is reiterated herein too. The IES will be an all India service with HRD as the cadre controlling authority." The move seems to be aimed at formalising the shifting of control of

educational institutions from the hands of educationists to the hands of bureaucrats. We demand that education should be governed by the collective wisdom of the academic community through a democratic process.

## Financing of education

One remarkable (and welcome) aspect of the policy statement is that it envisages a universal elementary and secondary education and seeks to ensure 100% enrolment of eligible students in higher education. "Achieving universal elementary and secondary education and ensuring that all secondary education graduates have access to higher secondary education and all higher secondary education graduates have equitable access to higher education and that all enrolled students are supported to successfully complete their education with all of them achieving expected learning outcomes" (Goals and objectives, point 2).

Yet, as we have seen earlier, the NEP-2016 declares as its target to increase gross enrolment ratio to 25.2 per cent in 2017-18 and further to 30 per cent in 2020-21!!

The policy statement even says that "Education, in Indian context, should be considered a public good and there is a need for greater public investment in the sector. There are evidences to show that countries which have heavily privatized education systems could not economically and socially progress and hence there is a value loss rather than gain. On the other hand, countries which consider education a public good reap greater social benefits on a sustained basis" (clause 4.21)

It goes without saying that fulfilling this objective will require many-fold increase in the educational facilities at all levels, and it costs money. Therefore the success crucially depends on the flow of adequate funds. The document even acknowledges



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that the prime reason for the failure of education policies so far was inadequate financial commitment of the respective governments. “Insufficient financing of education continues to constrain efforts to expand access to education and foster quality education. Several studies have reported the challenges in education governance exemplified by the delayed fund flows to schools/ colleges/ universities. The earlier education policies had endorsed a norm of 6 percent of GDP as the minimum expenditure on education. However, this target has never been met” (page 12, Budgetary Constraints).

The policy statement then declares “The earlier National Policies of 1968 and 1986/92 had recommended 6% of GDP as the norm for the national outlay on education. However, the actual expenditure on education has remained consistently below this level and in recent years it has hovered around 3.5%. ... The government will take steps for reaching the long pending goal of raising the investment in education sector to at least 6% of GDP as a priority” (clause 4.21). This is a very welcome wish, indeed. However, we would like to point out that it has been demanded by educationists for a long time that 10% of the union and state budgets should be allotted to education and research.

We need to note that the earlier education policies had no dearth of such wishful pronouncements which were never planned to be met. Will the current policy meet the same fate?

There are already a few indicators. Ever since the current NDA government came to power, the financial outlay in education and scientific research has been drastically reduced. The science funding agencies like the DST have experienced slashing of their budget. The IITs, IISERs, and NITs have also experienced reduction of their

funds. In fact, the former Minister of Human Resource Development, Smt Smriti Irani asked the IITs to raise the running expenditure entirely from students’ fees, and as a result the fees of the IITs have gone up from Rs. 90,000 per semester to Rs. 2 lakhs per semester in one go. The IISERs and the NITs have also been ordered to increase the students’ fees. If this is the status of the ‘favoured’ institutions, it is anybody’s guess how much financial support the mainstream less-endowed institutions and universities receive from the government. Do these moves reflect any intention of increasing the governmental support for education?

In fact, the NEP-2016 document amply betrays the government’s real intentions. “Over the next decade, at least 100 new centres/ departments of excellence, in the field of higher education, both in the public and the private sector, will be established to promote excellence in research and encourage innovations.”

But who will fund these ventures? “Private trusts, philanthropists and foundations will be given freedom to establish such Centres of Excellence” (clause 4.20). Ha! The cat is out of the bag.

Their policy is in fact spelt out quite clearly: “In order to supplement the Government efforts, investment in education by private providers through philanthropy and corporate sector responsibility will be encouraged. The Government will take steps for incentivizing private sector investment in education, such as, tax benefits and inclusion of education within the definition of infrastructure. In general, public funding will continue for core activities, whereas other functions can be through private funding. Private funding and FDI for R&D and other quality enhancement activities in education institutions will be pursued as an important strategy for mobilising financial

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resources” (clause 4.21-2).

“HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) funded by governments need to find ways of increasing their revenues through other sources, such as, alumni funding, endowment funding, tuition fee enhancement along with fee waiver for disadvantaged sections, and private investment” (clause 4.21-4).

The infusion of foreign direct investment (FDI) is now welcome: “Selected foreign universities, from the top 200 in the world, will be encouraged to establish their presence in India through collaboration with Indian universities. If required, steps will be taken to put in place an enabling legislation. Rules/ Regulations will be framed so that it is possible for a foreign university to offer its own degree to the Indian students studying in India, such that these degrees will be valid also in the country of origin” (clause 4.18-1).

Thus it is clear that the government is not really committing any increased public fund inflow into the education and research sector. It is washing its hand of the financial responsibility of education in stages, and inviting private capital (even FDI) to be invested in the educational sector. The crocodile tears about commercialization of education mentioned earlier should be seen in this light.

### **The process followed in formulating the policy**

While the government claims that it has held “hundreds and thousands” of consultations with people at different levels, the fact is the most people directly concerned with education have no idea about the existence of such a consultative process. It has never been publicized in any form,

and unless one accesses the webpage of the MHRD, there is no way to know about it. How many people would visit the MHRD website for no reason, and would chance upon the related documents?

It is clear that the government does not intend to follow a democratic process in formulating NEP-2016. Just a five-member committee headed by a retired bureaucrat Mr T S R Subramaniam was constituted to formulate the policy. This committee submitted its 230-page report and recommendations to the HRD Ministry on 27th May, 2016. No debates/discussions have been held involving teachers, scientists, and educationists. It is also to be noted that the MHRD released only a 43-page abridged version of the report, and has not subjected the whole policy statement to public scrutiny. Why this secrecy? Why should the education loving people not know the content of the whole policy?

The document, now available only in English, should also be made available in all the state languages so that all people can be made aware of the NEP 2016 and what it portends for the future of education, and can meaningfully take part in as wide a debate as possible so as to evolve a education policy that will truly address the education needs of the masses.

The Breakthrough Science Society urges all education loving people to protest against the attempt to formulate such a crucial policy statement without adequate consultative process. We also urge all people to use not only whatever means of registering public opinion that have been offered—by sending emails to nep.edu@gov.in—but also to start their own campaigns using whatever platforms, including online petitions, to publicise the issue. □