Issues of Centralised Model of Education

Why in News?

This year, September 5 was marked as Student-Teacher Solidarity Day by many students and teachers wearing black badges to protest against the present education crisis in the country.

> *September 5 is celebrated as Teachers' Day to mark the birth anniversary of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, scholar, philosopher and former president of our country. He chaired the first Education Commission (1948-49).*

How India is pushing for centralised model of education?

> *Despite the "concurrent" status of education in the Constitution, the government seems to be bulldozing the best-performing States to succumb and conform.*

- The last decade has witnessed an unprecedented trend of increasing centralisation and control by the Union government.
- **Centralised model** – It requires states to
  - Be in conformity with NEP.
  - Contribute 40% of a much larger sum for centrally sponsored schemes
  - Implement the CBSE curriculum in case of PM-Shri Schools
- *Both Kerala and Tamil Nadu* States have been under *implicit pressure to sign a MoU* to implement the scheme of selected PM-SHRI schools.

> *Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) schemes, a centrally sponsored scheme was launched in 2022 to transform selected existing schools into model institutions to achieve the objectives of National Education Policy 2020.*

- Schools from States which are being brought under this exclusive centralised model will be *taken away from the State Boards*.
- These selected schools along with disproportionately generous funding, can be *used to showcase as the "better performing" exemplars than the poor 'others'* under the state system.
- The impact of such discrimination within the State system can be damaging, to say the least.

What are the funding issues faced by state education?

- **Delays in funding** - Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been facing protracted delays with respect to centrally funded schemes.
- They have *not received pending instalments* of the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SMSA).

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan *aims to ensure equitable access to quality education for all children, including the 6-14 year old under the Right to Education Act.*

- **Disproportionate funding** - The current budget allocates a *large portion of its funds to PM-SHRI*, while substantially reducing funding to SMSA.
- According to the 'Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability', the central budget allocations to the Department of School Education budget between the years 2019-20 and 2024-25
  - **Funding to PM-SHRI** – It increased from 19% to 29%
  - **Funding share of SMSA** – It dropped from 62% to 51%
- The PM-SHRI schools selected are 8,108 in number and constitute less than 1% of the 11.6 lakh schools that get funding under the SSA.

Undemocratic Focus of Funds
• Central funding is leveraged to push through its agenda of • Commercialisation • Gross stratification of the public system • Early vocationalisation (which can be caste-based) for the proletariat • Distortion and communalisation of curricula

Why Tamil Nadu opposes NEP?

- **Disadvantageous provisions** – The state has *already achieved a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)* higher than the target of 50% proposed by NEP to be attained by 2035.
- **Deprives formal education** - It critiqued that vocational education beginning from Class 6, would alienate and *exclude vulnerable sections from formal education* and the formal economy.
- **Impact of external assessments** – It critiqued that NEP mandated external tests can have an adverse impact on children being failed and *forced to drop out*.
- It also insisted that continuous internal assessment, as per the original RTE mandate, is most appropriate for young students.

What lies ahead?

- Higher education is, undoubtedly, an obligation of the State but State aid is not to be confused with State control over academic policies and practices.

As per Dr. Zakir Hussain, chairperson of the Basic Education Committee (1938), and co-founder of Jamia Millia Islamia, the exclusive control of education by the State has been an important factor in facilitating the maintenance of totalitarian tyrannies.

Reference

[The Hindu| Impact of Centralised Model of Education in State Education]

