Performance Grading Index - School Education

Why in news?

The Education Ministry recently released the latest edition of the Performance Grading Index (PGI).

What is the Index for?

- The Education Ministry released the first PGI in 2019 for the reference year 2017-18, to measure the performance of states in school education.
- The objective is to help the states prioritise areas for intervention in school education.
- States are only graded and not ranked.
- This is to avoid discouraging the practice of one improving only at the cost of others and casting a stigma of underperformance on some.

How does it work?

- The PGI assesses states' performance in school education based on data drawn from several sources including -
    i. the Unified District Information System for Education Plus
    ii. National Achievement Survey
    iii. Mid-Day Meal
- States are scored on a total of 1,000 points across 70 parameters.
- The parameters are grouped under five broad categories:
    1. access (eg. enrolment ratio, transition rate and retention rate)
    2. governance and management
    3. infrastructure
    4. equity (difference in performance between scheduled caste students and general category students)
    5. learning outcomes (average score in mathematics, science, languages and social science)

- The PGI grading system has 10 levels.
- Level 1 indicates top-notch performance and a score between 951 and 1,000 points.
- Level II, also known as Grade 1++, indicates a score between 901 and 950.
- Level III, or Grade 1+, indicates a score between 851 and 900.
- The lowest level is Grade VII, and it means a score between 0 and 550 points.

What are the highlights of the recent Index?

- In PGI 2019-20 too, no state/UT could achieve the highest grade/Level I, same as in 2017-18 and 2018-19 editions.
- Chandigarh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar and Kerala have scored more than 90%.
- They have obtained Grade 1++ (or Level II), which makes them the best performing states.
- This is the first time that any state has reached Level II.
- Only the UT of Ladakh has been placed in the lowest grade, that is Grade VII.
- But this is because it was the first time it was assessed after it was carved out of J&K in 2019.
- **Progress** - A total of 33 States and UTs have improved their total PGI score in 2019-20 as compared to 2018-19.
- However, there are still 31 states/UTs placed in Level III (Grade 1) or lower.
- The biggest improvement in PGI this year has been shown by Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Punjab, and Arunachal Pradesh.
- All three have improved their score by 20%.

What are the key areas demanding attention?

- In 'Governance Processes' domain, 24 States/UTs have scored less than 288 (80% of the maximum possible score).
- It carries parameters such as teacher availability, teachers training, regular inspection, and availability of finances.
- States and UTs need to improve in this, and the PGI too accords the highest importance to this Domain.
- This is because compliance in this domain will improve other areas including monitoring teachers' attendance, and transparent recruitment.
- The second area that requires attention is the Domain for Infrastructure and facilities.
- Here, 20 States/UTs have scored less than 120 (80% of maximum possible score in this domain).
- Two States, Bihar (81) and Meghalaya (87) recorded lowest scores in this domain.
- This is a cause for concern, as a proper school building with adequate facilities is essential to improve the overall quality of school education.

Source: The Indian Express



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