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PM e-VIDYA

- Union Finance Ministry has announced several initiatives to boost Education Sector.
- A comprehensive initiative called PM e-VIDYA will be launched which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education.
- This will enable multi-mode access to education, and includes:

1. **DIKSHA** (one nation-one digital platform) - nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content in school education for all the states/UTs.
2. **TV (one class-one channel)** where one dedicated channel per grade for each of the classes 1 to 12 will provide access to quality educational material.
3. **SWAYAM online courses** in MOOCS format for school and higher education.
4. **IITPAL** for IITJEE/NEET preparation.
5. Air through Community radio and CBSE **Shiksha Vani podcast**.
6. Study material for the differently abled developed on **Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY)** and in sign language on NIOS website/ YouTube.
7. **Manodarpan initiative** - It is being launched to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional wellbeing through a website, a toll-free helpline, national directory of counselors, interactive chat platform, etc. This initiative will benefit all school going children in the country, along with their parents, teachers and the community of stakeholders in school education.
8. **Expanding e-learning in higher education** – by liberalizing open, distance and online education regulatory framework. Top 100 universities will start online courses. Also, online component in conventional Universities and ODL programmes will also be raised from present 20% to 40%. This will provide enhanced learning opportunities to nearly 7 crore students across different colleges and Universities.
9. **National Curriculum and Pedagogical Framework** - To promote critical thinking, creative and communication skills, along with experiential and joyful learning for the students focusing on learning

outcomes.

National Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission

- Union Finance Ministry announced it will launch National Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission.
- The mission will ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy in Grade 3 by 202.
- For this, teacher capacity building, a robust curricular framework, engaging learning material, both online and offline, learning outcomes and their measurement indices, assessment techniques, tracking of learning progress, etc. will be designed to take it forward in a systematic fashion.
- This mission will cover the learning needs of nearly 4 crore children in the age group of 3 to 11 years.

Star Rating of Garbage Free Cities

- Recently, the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MOHUA) has announced the results of the Star Rating of Garbage Free Cities for the assessment year 2019-2020.
- The Star Rating Protocol was launched by the Ministry in 2018 to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status, and to motivate cities to achieve higher degrees of sustainable cleanliness.
- It is one of the various initiatives which intends to make Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) as a successful project.
- It is based on 12 parameters which follow a SMART framework – Single metric, Measurable, Achievable, Rigorous verification mechanism and Targeted towards outcomes.
- It is a comprehensive framework that assesses cities across 24 different components of Solid Waste Management (SWM) and is graded based on overall marks received.
- The Star Rating is supported by self-assessment and self-verification for achieving a certain star rating. It also ensures the involvement of citizen groups for a transparent system of self-declaration.
- Further, the self-declaration is further verified through an independent third party agency appointed by MoHUA.
- Under the new report a total of six cities have been certified as 5-Star, 65 cities as 3-Star and 70 cities as 1-Star.
- The 5-Star cities include Ambikapur (Chattisgarh), Surat and Rajkot (Gujarat), Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra).

- The performance of cities under the Star Rating Protocol is crucial as it carries significant weightage for their final assessment in Swachh Survekshan.
- The rating protocol is an outcome-based tool that helps MoHUA and other stakeholders to evaluate cities on the basis of this single rating.

Vaccine Action Programme

- In the context of the current pandemic, partners under the Vaccine Action Programme (VAP) are planning to collaborate on the development and testing of vaccine candidates and diagnostics for Covid-19.
- The Indo-U.S. Vaccine Action Program, is a 33-year collaboration between the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the Indian Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) along with other partners.
- The focus is on safe, cost-effective vaccines against a range of infectious diseases.

mRNA-1273 vaccine

- mRNA-1273 vaccine is the working name of US firm Moderna's vaccine, which is currently in Phase 1 clinical trials under the aegis of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).
- The mRNA in the name means messenger RNA, which carries the genetic formula for the coding of a specific protein.
- In this vaccine, the particular mRNA used codes for the most distinguishing feature of the SARS-CoV2 — the spike protein — which is also the appendage that the virus uses to enter the cell and replicate.
- The vaccine, when injected into a person, codes for the spike protein.
- Thus even without the introduction of an attenuated (recognizable but not harmful) virus into the body, the body learns what the virus looks like and arms itself with the antibodies that are required to act against it.

International Museum Day

- The International Museum Day is celebrated every year on 18 May to raise awareness about the fact that "museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples."
- International Museum Day was instituted in 1977 by the International Council of Museums (ICOM).
- The International Museum Day 2020 was celebrated with the theme

"Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion".

- Recently the Ministry of Culture hosted a webinar on "Revitalizing Museums and Cultural Spaces" to celebrate the International Museum Day.
- The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) created by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) provided technical assistance for conducting the Webinar.

Administration of Museums in India

- In India multiple ministries hold charges of various Museums, not all Museums are administered by the Ministry of Culture.
- Some are run without government support by a handful of people under a Board of Trustees.

- Measures taken with respect to Museums

1. The Budget 2020 proposed the setting up of an Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation with the status of a deemed university under the Ministry of Culture.
2. The National Portal and Digital Repository for Indian Museums (under the Ministry of Culture) have been launched for digitization of the collections of the Museums.

International Council of Museum

- ICOM is the main and only organization of museums and museum professionals with global scope, committed to promotion and protection of natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.
- It was created in 1946 and is headquartered in Paris, France.
- It serves as a network of museum professionals (35,000 members in 137 countries) acting in a wide range of museum- and heritage-related disciplines.

Source: PIB, Indian Express, the Hindu

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