

SPEECH OF
HON'BLE EDUCATION MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

H.E. Hon'ble President of India, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Hon'ble Union Education Minister, Hon'ble Governors and other dignitaries.

I would like to extend warm greetings on behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal and the people of West Bengal.

2. Let me begin with the fact that our State Government has strong reservations on many provisions of the NEP, 2020 e.g. proposed multiple language system, common test concept at national level for admission in UG level courses, multi layered UG level programme, discontinuation of M. Phil courses etc.

3. I would like to say that proposals like consolidation of Higher Education systems, centralisation of education by creating National Level Councils, despite Education being in the concurrent list of the Constitution of India, will only defeat the various goals set in the NEP, 2020 and marginalise the role of the States.

4. Such centralised policy in a vast and diversified country like ours, if implemented without flexibility with the State Government, may not yield good results and may be regressive. It tries to dilute the federal structure of the Country, which is guaranteed in our Constitution, by trying to prescribe almost everything centrally.

5. It is not clearly mentioned whether 6% of GDP funding will be adequate to meet the Goals set in NEP, 2020 and how the fund

sharing will take place. The NEP 2020 prescribed for some sweeping infrastructural and academic changes without outlining respective financial implications to Centre & States.

6. We wonder why a rich language like Bengali has been excluded from the list of classical languages prescribed to be learnt by the students of middle schools. This needs to be rectified, lest the entire clause should be removed from the NEP 2020.

7. Before finalising NEP 2020, due weightage has not been given to our comments on the draft NEP. It may be appreciated that in the current pandemic situation, COVID related issues should take utmost priority. We, therefore, request the Centre to provide us appropriate time to present our complete views. In the meantime, we are forwarding our primary observations on NEP 2020 to the Ministry of Education.

In the end, I would once again like to thank the Hon'ble President of India, Hon'ble Prime Minister and other distinguished guests, for giving me this opportunity to speak on NEP, 2020 on behalf of the State of West Bengal.