



Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan

For Prelims: Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan, [National Education Policy \(NEP\)](#), Central Sponsored Scheme, [Left-Wing Extremism \(LWE\)](#).

For Mains: Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan, Significance and Concerns.

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Why in News?

14 States and Union Territories are yet to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Education, mandating the implementation of the [National Education Policy \(NEP\)](#) to avail funds for the next three years, under the **Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA)**.

What is the Need for MoU and Concerns Raised by States?

- **Need:**
 - The MoU includes **provisions for planning, implementation, and monitoring**, aligning State proposals with NEP for better integration.
 - The scheme offers **flexibility for States/UTs to tailor activities** according to their needs, streamlining components for more effective resource allocation.
 - Moreover, **States can identify focus districts** based on indicators like enrollment ratios, gender parity, and population proportions of marginalized communities.
- **Concerns:**
 - Some State governments have expressed **dissatisfaction with the MoU**, as it **doesn't address the need for additional funding** to implement NEP reforms.
 - States are responsible for 40% of the PM-USHA expenses, but the MoU **doesn't provide clarity on funding mechanisms** for NEP-related changes.

What is the PM-USHA Scheme?

- **About:**
 - In the light of the National Education Policy , [RUSA \(Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan\)](#) Scheme has been launched as “**Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (PM- USHA)**” in June 2023.
 - RUSA, as a [Centrally Sponsored Scheme](#) launched in October 2013, aiming at **providing strategic funding to higher education institutions** throughout the country.
 - **It focuses on:**
 - Equity Access and inclusion in higher education
 - Developing Quality Teaching & Learning processes,
 - Accreditation of Non Accredited Institutions and improving accreditation.
 - ICT - based Digital Infrastructure.
 - Enhancing Employability through Multidisciplinary.

▪ Objective:

- To improve the overall quality of existing state higher educational institutions by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and **standards and adoption of accreditation** as a quality assurance framework.
- Ensure governance, academic, and examination reforms in the State higher educational institutions and establish backward and forward linkages with school education on one hand and employment market, on the other hand, to facilitate self-reliance and thus creating an Atma-Nirbhar Bharat
- Create an enabling atmosphere in the higher educational institutions to devote themselves to research and innovations.

▪ Key Features:

- **MERU Transformation:** It supports 35 accredited state universities with Rs 100 crore each to facilitate multi-disciplinary education and research.
- **Model Degree Colleges:** The scheme provides provisions for establishing new model degree colleges.
- **Enhancing Universities:** Grants are allocated to strengthen universities.
- **Focus on Remote and Aspirational Areas:** PM-USHA targets remote, **Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)** affected regions, aspirational districts, and areas with low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER).
- **Support for Gender Inclusion and Equity:** The scheme aids state governments in promoting gender inclusion and equity, as well as upgrading skills for better employability through Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Conclusion

- The current standoff between several States/UTs and the Ministry of Education over the MoU's terms reflects concerns about funding **NEP reforms under the PM-USHA scheme.**
- While discussions continue to resolve differences, the MoU's successful implementation will play a crucial role in shaping the integration of NEP goals and higher education quality enhancement across various Indian states.

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