New Approach for Post-Covid Education

Why in News

Due to a **surge in** Covid-19 infections in the **Second Wave** of infections, the education of students in the entire nation is affected.

Key Points

- **Concerns:**

    - **Availability of Online Education:**

        - Online education was envisioned as an alternative means of spreading education, but it too fails, given the Indian students' conditions.
        - The **availability and affordability of this system poses a barrier.**
        - **While e-education is a privilege for the students from an upper and middle class**, it has proved to be a **nuisance for students from the lower middle class** and people living **below the poverty line.**

    - **Long-Term Exposure to Internet:**

        - There are also implications of longer exposure to the internet for these young kids.
        - This may create **impediments to the development of the thinking process** in the younger generation.

    - **Decreasing Analytical Thinking:**

        - The other important question is about the **learning outcomes of online education.**
        - Google is the prominent and only platform to all queries, and as a result of that, **students are not thinking on their own.**

            - Scientific outlook was the key parameter stressed upon since the inception of modern education in India.

    - **Increasing Student Isolation:**

        - Due to the pandemic and lack of physical classroom teaching, a peculiar **feeling of isolation is developing in the minds of students.** That's a very serious issue. The trauma of the second wave will put a deep imprint on the student's mind.
        - **Physical interaction and activities have been entirely absent**, and that may also be contributing to **new problems.**

- **Possible Solutions:**

    - **Use of Infrastructure:**

        - The whole **infrastructure should be fully utilised**, and if necessary, many **more facilities should be invested in** (and created) to impart education.

            - As classroom teaching gives us the opportunity to impart many more things

apart from information.

- **New Content:**

  - Institutions should **contemplate new content generation for each subject** to overcome the absence of classroom teaching within the framework of the existing syllabus.
  - This content would be of a **new type, self-explanatory, and considering the lowest IQ of the class**, it has to be attractive.
  - The content **should produce the same effect on the minds of the students that the best book imparts** on the thinking faculty.

- **Personal Supervision:**

  - The teachers and non-teaching staff should **visit the locality of the students (in and around the school area) on a weekly basis** to supervise the whole work.
  - They should **take notes on the problems faced by students** in understanding the reading material and also whether things are reaching them on time.

- **New Evaluation System:**

  - The evaluation should be **based on the capacity of analysis, and the questions** should be framed in such a way that **students need to apply their minds** to answer the questions on each subject.

- **Prioritizing Vaccination:**

  - In addition, the **government should take the responsibility to** vaccinate **the whole teaching community** as fast as possible to advance this learning process.

- **Related Government Initiatives for E-Learning:**

  - **E-PG Pathshala:**

    - An initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide e-content for studies.
  - **SWAYAM:**

    - It provides for an integrated platform for online courses.
  - **NEAT:**

    - It aims to use **Artificial Intelligence** to make learning more personalized and customized as per the requirements of the learner
  - **PRAGYATA:**

    - The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) released guidelines on **digital education** titled PRAGYATA.
    - Under the PRAGYATA guidelines, only 30 minutes of screen time per day for interacting with parents is recommended for kindergarten, nursery and pre-school.
  - **National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning:**

    - The NPTEL is a project of MHRD initiated by seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), along with the Indian Institute of Science Bangalore.
    - It was started in 2003 and its aim was to have **web and video courses in engineering, sciences, and management.**

Way Forward

- **Covid-19** has shown the extent to which the Indian system of education exploits inequalities.
- Thus, there is a **need for renewed commitments to the synergy between the private and public education sector.** In this context, there is a **need to make education a common good and digital innovation can help in achieving the feat.**

Source:IE