

1. The State of the Education Report for India: Artificial Intelligence in Education

Topic: Reports and Indices



In News: UNESCO has inaugurated 2022 State of the Education Report for India: Artificial Intelligence in Education recently.

More on the Topic:

- The report is the fourth edition and is an annually flagship report.
- The AI Market in India is **likely to reach US Dollar 7.8 billion by 2025** at the rate of 20.2 percent compound annual growth.
- To match India's curriculum to make the students ready for the AI economy, India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 lays a big emphasis on the need to impart the **necessary technical knowledge and the integration of AI in Education** to also promote quality and skill-based education.

Recommendations by UNESCO:

- Consider the **ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Education** as an utmost priority
- Rapidly provide an **overall regulatory framework for Artificial Intelligence in Education**
- Create **effective public-private partnerships**
- Ensure that all students and teachers have **access to the latest technology**
- **Expand AI literacy efforts**
- Attempt to **correct algorithmic biases and the resulting discrimination**
- Improve **public trust in Artificial Intelligence**
- Request the private sector to better involve students and educationists in developing AI products
- Place **ownership of data with the students**
- Embrace the **versatility of Artificial Intelligence in Education systems**

About Artificial Intelligence:

- Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to **the simulation of human intelligence in machines** that are programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions.

- The term may also be applied to any machine that exhibits traits associated with a human mind such as learning and problem-solving.
- Voice assistants, image recognition for face unlock in cellphones, and ML-based financial fraud detection are examples of AI software currently being used in everyday life.

Source: Indian Express

2. Early Childhood Education

Topic: Government Policies

Early Childhood Education

Learn • Play • Grow



In News: A report released by the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) indicated that India spent only 0.1 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on early childhood education in 2020-21.

More on the Topic:

- India has the largest number of children between the age of 3 to 6 years – more than 9.9 crore – but is far behind rich countries which spend more than 0.7 percent of GDP on ECE.
- The report said that India, **on average, spends only Rs 8,297 per child on ECE services in 2020-21.**
- It estimates that **India needs to spend a minimum of Rs 32,500 per child per year in anganwadi and Rs 46,000 per child per year in pre-primary section** to achieve universalisation of ECE by 2030.
- **This can only be achieved if India allocates 1.5 to 2.2 per cent of GDP** for universalisation of ECE.
- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states that universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education must be achieved by 2030.
- However, the report also notes that although the earlier draft of NEP suggested spending 1.4 percent of total government expenditure for the universalisation of ECE, **the final report is silent on funding.**

Significance of Early Childhood Education:

- According to UNESCO, Early childhood is defined as **the period from birth to eight years of age. It is a time of remarkable growth with the brain development at its peak.**
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is more than preparation for primary school. It aims at **the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing.**
- According to National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, **“Over 85% of a child's cumulative brain development occurs prior to the age of 6,** indicating the critical importance of appropriate care and stimulation of the brain in the early years.
- Nobel Laureate **James Heckman strongly argues that investing in early childhood education produces the greatest returns** in terms of human capital and ensures quality economic returns. It results in far greater returns than the same investment in schooling.
- Neuroscience tells that **‘a young child's brain develops through stimulation of the sensing pathways (e.g. seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) from early experiences’.**
- The greater the number of experiences, the more neural pathways are created by neurons for optimal learning and development.

Government Programs for Early Childhood Education:

- **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan** for quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students from pre-school to class 12.
- **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme** for nutritional as well as proper psychological, physical and social development of the child.
- **Students and Teachers Holistic Advancement through Quality Education (SARTHAQ)** to reform ECCE along with other targets.

Source: Hindu

3. Bio Decomposer

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: Ahead of the stubble burning season, the bio-decomposer spray, which is known to turn paddy stubble into manure, is to be sprayed across 5,000 acres of farm fields in the national capital.

More on the Topic:

- It will be sprayed for free of cost by the government in all the basmati and non-basmati paddy farms in Delhi.
- A bio-decomposer capsule, **developed by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute**, turns into a solution through a week-long process, after which it decomposes straw and stubble into manure.
- It is composed of **a group of beneficial micro-organisms**, which rapidly convert crop residues, animal waste, dung and other waste into organic manure.

Winter Air Pollution of Delhi:

- Every winter air pollution spikes in the national capital and adjoining areas due to multiple reasons, **including slow wind speed, bursting of firecrackers and pollution from stubble burning**.
- A list of emergency measures to control air pollution in Delhi-NCR, such as closing schools and stopping construction work, are undertaken each year during the winter months.
- As per the latest Graded Response Action Plan, prepared by **the Commission for Air Quality Management**, emergency measures will now be implemented based on predictions on air quality, three days in advance.

Source: Hindu

4. 'Indian Nutrition Rating (INR)'

Topic: Governance



In News: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the country's apex food regulator, has released draft notification for front-of-pack nutrition star labelling .

More on the Topic:

- Like the star-rating system for energy efficiency of electronic products, the ‘Indian Nutrition Rating (INR)’ will see the unhealthiest food items carry a 0-star rating and the healthiest carry a 5-star rating.
- It is **to discourage consumers from buying packaged food high in sugar, salt, and fat**, which will require pre-packaged food to carry a star graphic ranging for 0 to 5 next to the brand name.
- Items will be given scores based on contribution of energy and content of saturated fat, sugar, sodium, fruit and vegetables (FV), nuts, legumes, and millets (NLM), dietary fibre, and protein per 100 gm of solid or 100 ml liquid foods.
- Solid food with a score of more than 25 will be given 0.5 stars, and those with a score less than – (minus)11 will get 5 stars.

Source: Indian Express

5. Green Events Tool

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: The Gulf Organisation for Research & Development (GORD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have developed an online Green Events Tool (GET).

More on the Topic:

- Events, irrespective of their size, are a significant source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and sustainability impacts.
- The GET aims to facilitate eco-friendly events and designed to evaluate events’ sustainability performance.
- The platform **helps event organizers systematically evaluate the GHG emission profile and sustainability impacts of the proposed event** at planning stage, to design mitigation activities, **and to transparently report** the actual sustainability impact and GHG emissions resulting from their events.
- Events supported by the GET go through a comprehensive assessment framework covering aspects related to venue construction, venue operation, flight, ground

transportation, communication, audio-visual systems, production and exhibition, accommodation and catering.

Source: Hindu

6. Asia-Pacific Institute of Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

Topic: International Affairs



In News: India's presidency of prestigious AIBD extended for one year.

More on the Topic:

- The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), was formed in 1977.
- It is a unique regional inter-governmental organization of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP).
- **AIBD works in the field of electronic media development.**
- AIBD currently has **26 countries as complete members represented by 43 organizations and 52 affiliate members.**
- The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) is hosted by the Government of Malaysia and the secretariat is located in Kuala Lumpur.

Source: Hindu

7. Dharamshala Declaration

Topic: Economy



In News: The three-day National Conference of State Tourism Minister ended with the adoption of the “Dharamshala Declaration” which affirms commitment toward developing “sustainable and responsible tourism” and positions India as a “global leader in the tourism sector by 2047”..

More on the Topic:

- Tourism sector currently contributes 6.8% to the Indian GDP.
- It also creates over 39mn jobs.
- India is ranked 54th/117 countries on the latest WEF Travel and Tourism Development Index. (down from 46 in 2019).

Source: Hindu
