

## CAPTAINS CORNER

## Preserving our Bahraini marine legacy



CAPT. MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

Shrimp is a tasty morsel and it is considered a luxury seafood ingredient all over the world. This year in Bahrain, the annual six-month ban on fishing for shrimp was lifted just in time for fragrant shrimp biryani over the Eid break.

Just before the ban was lifted though, we had headlines about how inspectors caught fishing boats returning loaded with illegally caught shrimp and the clear violation of rules which have banned trawling nets in the process. Of the four main causes, fishermen have overfishing as most detrimental to Bahrain's marine life. Overfishing has led to the disappearance of some fish breeds as well as a 75% drop in the population of shrimp.

All of this points to a drastic lack of knowledge on the part of the fishermen as to why these rules are in place. Already overfishing has resulted in a drastic reduction in fish populations, particularly shrimp and fish breeds that are solely found in Bahrain. Sand extraction of the ocean bed is also continuously destroying fisheries, habitats, corals, and killing marine organisms. As if this were not dangerous enough, the shoreline pollution is in a very bad state – one has to only visit any seashore in Bahrain to see the appalling heaps of garbage that damage our beaches.

How can we stem the tide of marine wealth loss? It is not enough to regulate fishing with set time slots and equipment. I believe that we must launch an educational campaign to raise responsibility – and not just for fishermen. How about a campaign to teach consumers to respect the source of our marine wealth. Let's say you are going to have a seafood meal in a restaurant – if you order fish that is not in the 'overfished' category, then the restaurant can give you a discount. Such a campaign helped to bring back the popular hamour from the brink of extinction in the UAE.

Bahrain has a rich legacy of coexisting with the sea. We must do everything we can to pass on this heritage to future generations.

**Bahrain has a rich legacy of coexisting with the sea. We must do everything we can to pass on this heritage to future generations.**



(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

# New education policy 2020

Educational perestroika in the Indian system?

By Anand Nair

The Indian Cabinet approved the National Education Policy 2020 on July 29, 2020. The New Education Policy of India aims at an education system that contributes to an equitable vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all. It also aims at developing a deep sense of respect towards the fundamental rights and duties by instilling skills and adequate values. The new policy would see an overhaul of the system in place in higher education. An educationist mentioned, "The preliminary findings lead to the possibility of less stress on boards, common college entrance test as part of sweeping education reforms. The Ministry of Human Resources in India will now be known as the Ministry of Education."

The current 10+2 structure in which the policy covered schooling from Class 1 to 10 (age 6-16 years) and then Class 11-12 (age 16-18 years) gives away to the 5+3+3+4 pattern; first five years of study will be foundation stage. The curriculum will be designed by NCERT and all state boards will operate within the framework as prescribed by NCERT. The pre-primary stage which will begin at the age of 3 will have three years of study followed by 2 years of Grade 1 and 2. The focus here will be art integrated education and play-way method with less emphasis on the textbooks. Grade 3 and 4 will prepare students for the future. They will be introduced to Science, Mathematics, Social Science, Environmental Sciences and Humanities based subjects. Class 6 to 8 will be considered as the Middle school. During this stage, the curriculum will be fixed as per the textbooks prescribed. Vocational training will be introduced to the children during this stage of development.

### Logical thinking

Grade 9 to 12 will be the final stage in this process. Here the emphasis will be on establishing logical thinking, reasoning, and mathematical aptitude. Class 9 to 12 will focus on the research-based aptitude of the student. Critical thinking will be primarily focused upon. Students will get to choose multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary subjects across the spectrum. There will be no separation like Science, Commerce or Humanities. Someone selecting Physics as a major can even select Psychology as a minor. A pool of subjects will be made, and students can select subjects from the given pool. Another noteworthy feature has been that all studies till Grade 5 can be made in the regional or local language. There has been a lot of emphasis on regional language as a mother tongue or regional language to be a medium of instruction till Grade 5 as per this policy. There will be at least nine bagless days in a year for the students. Computer coding and related subjects will be imparted to students from Grade 6 onwards. This will pave the way for the introduction of AI courses at the Middle school itself. An internship can



Pictures courtesy of DNA

- **Emphasis on regional language education**
- **Multiple pathways to learning; involving both formal and non-formal education modes**
- **To bring drop out children back to school**
- **Alternative and innovative education centres**
- **The focus will be on achieving desired learning outcomes at all levels**
- **Suitable for all categories business and personal presentation**
- **Common standards for public and private school education**
- **Curriculum and pedagogy to be transformed by 2022 to promote skill-based and minimize rote based learning**
- **Revision of NCF for school education and NCF for teacher education 2009 by 2021**

begin at this stage and the child can acquire practical knowledge too. Grade 9 to 12 exams will be based on Semester pattern. The core competencies of the children will be tested in the exams rather than their ability for rote learning. Exams will be based on questions that test the thinking skill of the child. The child will be free to answer the paper in the language of his choice, but this requires a lot of clarity before being implemented.

### Holistic Progress Card

The Report Card will be reflective of a child's overall progress with a 360-degree Holistic Progress Card. Progress card will include self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment. The assessment parameters are to be decided by a special think tank constituted for this purpose. Teachers will be prepared for a transformation in the assessment system by 2022-23. Schools will become nodal centres of learning and there will be enabled sharing of human and infrastructure resources. The integration of vocational education at all levels have been a major decision. This will be based on the practice-based curriculum.

All admissions to higher education (4 years) will be through a Common Aptitude Test (CAT) conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA). The marks obtained by the student in Grade 12 and from CAT will be the criterion for admissions for

graduation. Credit Bank for multiple courses opted by a graduate student during graduation will be made.

The policy targets all school and college dropouts to return to the mainstream. Graduation to be of three or four years. Multi entry and multi exit will be the feature of any graduate programme. Graduation dropouts to get a certification if the exit is after a year, Advance Diploma if the exit is after two years, Bachelor's degree after three years and Bachelor's degree with research if a student completes 4 years of graduation. There will be a lot of emphasis on research-based education.

### Paradigm shift

The policy aims at the overall holistic development of the child. It brings in practical and trade training to be a part of the education system and brings in better adoption of technology for learning. Subjects across the spectrum can be adopted as a major and a minor. Art integration in all subjects will be a challenging task. There will be a lot of research and time spent on

inventing new pedagogies to bring about a paradigm shift in the policy. The challenge is herculean and the road too long. In the days to come there will be various debates on the positives and negatives of NEP 2020 but let education lead to learning and bridge the gap between reality and fantasy.

The schools have a daunting task ahead. School systems must adapt to the proposed multidisciplinary approach and this requires a change of attitude. Teacher training programmes must be inculcated at every nodal school level to prepare and equip the teaching fraternity for the sweeping changes. Reforms are not free from glitch or criticisms. The days ahead will no doubt be challenging for education in India, but implementation is the key.

(Writer is the Vice Principal of Indian School, Bahrain)

