

POLITY
PRE-CONTEXT
MADRASAS
THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "SC verdict safeguards right of madrasa students to pursue education, say Muslim bodies".

Context:

- **Allahabad High Court's ruling in March 2024**, which declared the Uttar Pradesh Madarsa Education Act, 2004 unconstitutional opined due to violative of secular principles.
- **Supreme Court, intervened and upheld** the validity of the Act with certain modifications.
 - The **Court clarified that madrasas cannot confer higher education degrees** like "Fazil" and "Kamil" as it violates the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act.
- **NCPCR recommended the closure of govt. aided madrasas** & stop government funding (which are not compliant with the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009).
- **Supreme Court of India has stayed the recommendations and** opined NCPCR recommendations are in conflict with:
 - **Art. 30:** which guarantees minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
 - **Art.21:** Free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14 years (which includes madrasa education too).

Madrasa System of Education:

- Word Madrasa, Arabic in origin meaning '**place of study**'.
- **Traditional Islamic schools** that provide religious and increasingly **secular education** to millions of students.
- Madrasa system **prevailed since the days of the Delhi Sultanate** and was patronised by slave, Khilji and Tughlaq dynasties.
- **Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1309-1388)**, instrumentalised this practice to educate women and slaves in the arts, science and handicrafts — **travelogues of Ibn Battuta, a Moroccan traveller.**
- Certifications awarded by Madrasas at various levels of Muslim educations:
 - **Munshi/Moulvi:** equivalent to 10th standard.
 - **Alim:** equivalent to 12th standard.
 - **Fazli and Kamil:** postgraduate level degree and doctorate level degree but they are not allowed to confer these both degrees. **They fall under UGC jurisdiction.**

About National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR):

- Established under **Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act 2005.**
- **Commission monitors the effective implementation of**
 - POCSO Act 2012.
 - Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015.
 - Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009.
- **Chairperson and members** are appointed by the **Central Govt.**
- **Powers:**
 - **Quasi-judicial powers:** can summon individuals, require production of documents and conduct inquiries.
 - **Power to recommend and advice** the government on child welfare and protection measures.

Note:

- Education falls under **Concurrent List.**
- **Entry 66 of 'Union List':** conferred the Union the authority to make laws to determine and regulate the standards of higher education.

GS II

SYLLABUS: ISSUES RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION.

HIGHER EDUCATION CHALLENGES

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Rising STEM research demands revitalised education".

Challenges with Higher Education:

- **Quality of Education:**
 - Only about 30% of HEIs are accredited — **NAAC's Annual Report 2019-20.**
 - **Outdated Curriculum:** many institutions are not aligned with industry needs or global standards.
 - **Faculty shortages:** about 30% of faculty positions are vacant in universities and colleges — **AISHE 2020 report.**
- **Access and Equity:**
 - **Low Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)** in India (27%), which is lower than the global average of 38% — **AISHE 2019-20 report.**
 - **Regional Disparities:** Tamil Nadu has a GER of over 50%, while states like Bihar are below 14%.
 - **Socio-Economic Barriers:** GER for SC at 22% and ST at 18% — **AISHE 2019-20 report.**
 - **Institutions rely heavily on student fees**, which limit access for economically weaker sections.
- **Funding Constraints:**
 - **Insufficient Public Expenditure on Education:** 2024 budget allocated around 4% of GDP, with only 0.6% allocated to higher education. Where Kothari Commission (1966) recommended 6% of GDP.
- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:**
 - **Inadequate facilities:** only about 60% of colleges have basic computer facilities — **AISHE 2020 report.**
 - **Digital Divide:** exposed by COVID-19, particularly in rural areas due to poor internet connectivity.
- **Research and Innovation Deficit:**
 - **Low Research quality:** India ranks 9th in the number of publications but lags in quality metrics.
 - **Limited Industry-Academia Collaboration** affects research relevance and innovation.
 - **Significantly lower expenditure on R&D by India** (0.6% of GDP) compared to China (2%), USA (3%).
- **Multiplicity of Regulatory Bodies:**
 - Higher education sector is regulated by multiple bodies like the UGC, AICTE.
- **Skill Gap and Employability:**
 - **Unemployment Among Graduates:** unemployment rate of 20% among urban youth with higher education degrees — **PLFS 2018-19 report.**
 - Over 80% of engineering graduates are unemployable due to lack of relevant skills — **Aspiring Minds 2019.**
- **Low Global Rankings:**
 - Only three Indian institutions are in the top 200 — **QS World University Rankings 2021.**



POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

BASIC STRUCTURE

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "Law validity can't be challenged for Basic Structure's violation".

About Basic Structure:

- Doctrine of basic structure holds **certain basic features (democracy, federalism and secularism, etc)** that cannot be altered or destroyed by amendments of Parliament.
- It was propounded in **Keshavananda Baharati Case 1973**.
- Doctrines of basic structure put a **limitation on the amending powers of the Parliament**.

Recent developments:

- Basic Structure doctrine was made up of "**undefined concepts**" such as democracy, federalism, and secularism.
- "Allowing courts to strike down legislation for violation of such concepts **will introduce an element of uncertainty** in our constitutional adjudication" — **CJI D.Y. Chandrachud**.
 - If a law is in violation of the principle of secularism, **it must be proved that the law violates provisions of the Constitution** pertaining to secularism.

6 Nov 2024

EXAMPLES FROM TODAY'S NEWS PAPER

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 14.

Sectarianism

News: "Buddhism can teach how to counter sectarianism: President of India".

- Sectarianism is **characterized by excessive attachment to a particular sect, religion** or faction, which often leads to discrimination, intolerance, and conflict among different religious, ethnic, or ideological groups.

Characteristics of sectarianism:

- **Exclusivity:** superiority of one's own group over others.
- **Discrimination:** Unequal treatment based on sectarian affiliations.
- **Intolerance:** Lack of acceptance for differing beliefs and practices.
- **Conflict:** Potential for both verbal and physical confrontation.

Buddhism: A Path to Counter Sectarianism.

- **Principle of Ahimsa (Non-Violence):** Encourages peaceful dialogue and reconciliation over aggression.
- **Doctrine of Anatta (No-Self):** Reinforces the idea that all beings are interconnected.
- **Cultivation of Metta (Loving-Kindness):** Fosters genuine empathy and compassion towards all individuals.

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Thank you!