

6. National Literacy Mission

Prelims Level: Policies

Mains Level: GS-II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector or Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Why in News?

- Adult Education is a Concurrent Subject with both Central and State Governments being required to contribute to its promotion and strengthening.
- At the national level, National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA), an autonomous wing of MHRD is the nodal agency for overall planning and management and funding of Adult Education Programmes and institutions. Its inter – ministerial General Council and Executive Committee are the two policy and executive bodies.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes:

- Presently, the provision of adult education is through the Saakshar Bharat Programme (SBP) which is a centrally sponsored scheme.
- The National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA), is the Nodal Agency at the National level. The Joint Secretary (Adult Education) is the ex – officio Director General of NLMA.
- It was set up in 1988 with the approval of the Cabinet as an independent and autonomous wing of the Ministry of HRD (the then Department of Education). The Cabinet vested NLMA with full executive and financial powers in the sphere of work.
- **National Literacy Mission Authority is mandated with**
 - ✓ Policy and planning;
 - ✓ Developmental and promotional activities;
 - ✓ Operational functions including assistance to voluntary agencies and other NGOs,
 - ✓ Technology demonstration
 - ✓ Leadership training
 - ✓ Resource development including media and materials
 - ✓ Research and development
 - ✓ Monitoring and evaluation etc.

The Council of NLMA:

- Is the apex body of NLMA, headed by Minister of Human Resource Development and consists of, among others, Ministers of Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Minority

Affairs, Information and Broadcasting, Health and Family Welfare, Youth Affairs and Sports, Social Justice and Empowerment, Women and Child Development, senior level political leaders of the main political parties, three Members of Parliament, Education Ministers of six States etc.

Executive Committee:

- The Executive Committee is responsible to carry out all the functions of the Authority in accordance with the policy and guidelines laid down by the Council.
- It strives for proper implementation of policies and incorporation of latest developments in the field of Adult Education.

Major campaigns under the National Literacy Mission:

- **TOTAL LITERACY CAMPAIGNS (TLC):** This model is the dominant strategy for the eradication of adult illiteracy in India. TLC campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome-oriented.
- The campaigns are implemented through district-level literacy committees which are registered under the Societies Registration Act as independent and autonomous bodies to provide a unified umbrella under which a number of individuals and organisations work together.
- **POST LITERACY PROGRAMME (PLP):** Post-literacy programmes attempt to give interested learners an opportunity to harness and develop their learning potentials after completion of a course in basic literacy.
- Post literacy programmes are open to neo-literates in the age group of 9-35 who have completed the basic literacy course under the total literacy campaigns, dropouts from primary schools and pass outs from Non formal Education (NFE) programmes.
- **CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMME (CEP):** After the impingement of literacy and adult education programmes another challenge that came before the National Literacy Mission was to create a Continuing Education System and maintain a channelled continuous and life-long learning process.
- Thus, the scheme of Continuing Education was taken up. The Continuing Education Scheme is multi-faceted and is postulated on the principles of treating basic literacy, post literacy and later continuing education. Above all the scheme aims at addressing the socio-economic situations of the community to provide infrastructure for larger development initiatives.