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**Govt. intervention in education policy should be minimal: PM**

People's doubts must be addressed before NEP implementation, Modi says

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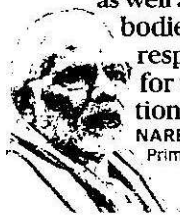
The government's intervention in the education policy should be "minimal", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, emphasising that the policy belonged to the whole country, rather than to any particular government in power.

Mr. Modi was addressing the inaugural session of the Governors' conference on the National Education Policy (NEP), which is being attended by State Education Ministers and Vice-Chancellors. The focus of the conference is on the implementation of NEP.

"The education policy and the education system are important means of fulfilling the aspirations of the country. The Central and the State governments, as well as local bodies, all have responsibility for the education system. But it is also true that the government's interference or intervention in education policy should be minimal," he said.

"Just as the foreign policy or defence policy are the policies of the country, not of the government, so is the education policy. It belongs to the whole country," he noted, urging a "collective responsibility" in implementing the policy.

**Education is the most effective means of social justice and personal advancement. There is no better investment than that in education to improve the future of society.**  
RAM NATH KOVIND  
President



NARENDRA MODI  
Prime Minister

The Prime Minister urged the States to hold consultations with stakeholders on the implementation of the policy by September 25. "When we move towards change, it's natural for doubts and questions to arise in people's minds," he said.

**'Hold discussions'**

Parents may have questions about subject stream flexibility, teachers may want to know about the curriculum design and other stakeholders may have doubts about the availability of resources needed to implement the NEP.

"It's important to discuss all the provisions and the nitty-gritty of this document. It can only be implemented

once all the doubts and questions in people's minds are addressed," Mr. Modi said.

With Governors being the Chancellors of the 400-plus universities - which have more than 40,000 affiliated colleges - they have a crucial role to play in the implementation of the NEP.

Further consultations would be held with the central universities on September 19.

Mr. Modi said the NEP 2020 provided a vision for a new India of the 21st century, in line with its aspirations to be a self-reliant power.

The Prime Minister felt it would help transform the country into a "knowledge economy" and tackle brain drain by paving the way to open local campuses of glo-

bal educational institutions. The policy would also prepare the country's youth for the jobs of the future, in a world where the nature of work was undergoing change.

The focus on critical thinking, instead of mere curricular studying, as well as the emphasis on vocational education, would equip Indian students with the skills needed for the global workforce, he pointed out.

**President's call**

Addressing the conference, President Ram Nath Kovind urged the Central and State governments to increase their percentage of investment in research and innovation.

Mr. Kovind noted that such investment was only 0.7% of the GDP in India, in comparison to 2.8% in the U.S., 4.2% in South Korea and 4.3% in Israel.

"Education is the most effective means of social justice and personal advancement. There is no better investment than that in education to improve the future of society," he said.

The goal of investing 6% of the GDP in public education had remained unreachable since it was originally made in the 1968 Education Policy, the President added.