

1. Enumerate the measures initiated by the government of India to reap the demographic dividend. (150 words)

Answer:

India with a large and young population has a great demographic advantage. The average age of the 125 billion-strong Indian population will be 29 years in 2020, even younger than the 37 years of China and the US. The proportion of working-age population is likely to increase from approximately 58 per cent in 2001 to more than 64 per cent by 2021, adding about 63.5 million new entrants between 2011 and 2016 with a large number of young persons in the 20-35 years age group. This is a great opportunity for India.

Taking advantage of such an opportunity is contingent upon progress on the human development front as well as availability of productive employment, which crucially depends on industrial growth led by the manufacturing sector. This will also need diversification of the agricultural sector and enhancing productivity of the sector. Further, the rural sector will have to create employment in the non-farm sector. India has to provide quality education and develop the skills of its large young population to fully reap the benefits of the demographic dividend. Currently, many programmes are being implemented both in elementary and secondary education and higher and technical education.

Higher and technical education

A new mission mode scheme called Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), which will focus on access, equity, quality, and innovation through creation, expansion, and consolidation of institutions, research, and innovation and will have norm-based funding, has been launched for strengthening and reforming higher education. During the Twelfth Plan, RUSA will create 80 new universities by converting autonomous colleges/colleges in a cluster to state universities, besides creating other related infrastructure.

Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP) Phase II, a four-year programme, is currently being implemented with the assistance of the World Bank, covering about 200 institutions based on competitive funding. A total of 187 institutions have been selected under TEQIP.

Apart from the above mentioned specific programmes for higher and technical education, government is continuing various programmes to promote primary and secondary education. Some of such important programs are: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA); Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme; Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA); Model School Scheme (MSS); and Saakshar Bharat/Adult Education, among others. All these programs are targeted at universalization of school education India and targeted to specific needs of different groups.

Apart from these a number of skill development programs have also been started to address the needs of technicians in the manufacturing and construction sector. The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) has been aligned to the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) to standardize skill learning outcomes and provide mobility. As of now 500 existing polytechnics have been

provided financial assistance. In 2012-13, 2.07 lakh persons have been trained through polytechnics and 3.5 lakh persons have been trained in four regional boards of apprenticeship during the last five years.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. How did India fare on the Millennium Development Goals related to health? In this regard, identify the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and evaluate India's capacity to meet them. (150 words)
2. What are the different rights recognized under the Forest Rights Act, 2006? Highlight the gaps in the implementation of community forest rights and community forest resource rights granted under the Forest Rights Act. Also, suggest measures to address the current scenario. (150 words)