MONTHLY SUMMARY FOR THE CABINET FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH, 2020:

1. A. Preparation for online Education in the light of spread of COVID-19:

In order to facilitate education while the country is under lockdown, following digital initiatives have been taken up in the field of higher education.

- E-content for higher education in 86 PG and 204 UG level courses have been made available by UGC.
- Course material for 21 branches of engineering available on NPTEL under the aegis of SWAYAM.
- Virtual lab facility in technical subjects available at vlab.co.in within SWAYAM.
- Five SWAYAM PRABHA channels are being used by NIOS/NCERT for school education. In order to enhance the reach of these channels during the lockdown period, MHRD has tied up with private DTH operators like Tata Sky and Airtel to air three of these channels.
- The various e-learning platforms of HRD Ministry saw a cumulative hit of 1.4 Crore since 23.03.2020. This is a more than 5-fold increase from usual.

B. Important Events


ii. The Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2020 has been passed by the Parliament. The bill converts three deemed to be universities in Sanskrit- (i) Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, (ii) Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi, and (iii) Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati into Central Sanskrit Universities.

iii. Vide OM No. 2-48/2029- PN. II dated 24.03.2020 draft Cabinet Note on National Education Policy 2020 has been circulated to the concerned Ministries / Departments to furnish their comments.

iv. Hon’ble Minister for Human Resource Development chaired a meeting on “Research in Indian Traditional Knowledge Systems” on 18.3.2020 wherein MOS (HRD), Secretary (HE), Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Chairman AICTE, Representatives of Central Universities and eminent scientists / Researchers / experts attended the meeting in person. Approximately 25 Scientists / Researchers / Experts attended the conference from various parts of the country through Video Conferencing.
C. Improving Access

**HEFA:** As on 31st March, 2020, cumulatively, projects worth Rs. 40,192.2 crore have been approved under HEFA; for which a loan amount of Rs. 29,233.84 crore have been sanctioned and Rs. 7,630.10 crore have actually been disbursed. The number of educational institutions that have availed funding through HEFA stands at 84. In the month of March, 2020 alone, an amount of Rs 486.6 crores have been disbursed by HEFA across institutions of MHRD and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

D. Quality improvement:

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai and Delhi are amongst the top 50 engineering colleges across the globe, according to subject-wise QS World Ranking 2020. While IIT Bombay has been ranked 44, IIT Delhi has bagged the 47th rank.