

## **Plan on Higher Education**

### **Why in news?**

\n\n

Union government is enabling regulatory architecture to emerge public and private institutions as world-class institutions.

\n\n

### **What actions were taken by government in this regard?**

\n\n

\n

- In early 2017, the UGC approved the guidelines for creating 20 world-class institutions that were renamed “institutes of eminence” (IoE).
- The outcome of the process that took more than two years was that out of over 900 universities, only six have the potential to become world-class universities.
- In all, 114 institutions applied on the basis of a promise laid down in policies announced by the government.
- The terms of references under which the Empowered Committee was tasked to identify universities were not made public.
- The process of selecting the empowering universities was arbitrary.

\n\n

### **What are the challenges involved?**

\n\n

\n

- Only three Indian universities featured in the top 250 in the QS World University Rankings 2018, while just 11 made it to top 700.
- No Indian university features in the top 250 in the Times Higher

Education World Rankings 2018 while only two have made it to the top 500.

\n

- This is because the key characteristics that are vital to any world-class university were missing from the exercise of selecting institutions.

\n

- This includes, for instance, internationalisation of faculty, research, students, courses and outlook

\n

- There seems to be a paralysis in India's higher education system in not just policy, but also in procedure, planning and perspective.

\n

\n\n

### **What measures needs to be taken?**

\n\n

\n

- Universities take decades to evolve, attention should have been on empowering existing brown-field universities, rather than recognising non-existing universities as contenders.

\n

- Institution building is about a deeper recognition of what it takes to build a culture of excellence, thus Lived experiences of individuals matter more in universities than in any other organisation.

\n

- Even if there was a vision to recognise green-field institutions, there should have been a separate criteria and process to evaluate them.

\n

- The task for the Committee should have been to simply select from the existing pool of universities and empower them to compete internationally.

\n

- The Committee should have taken cognisance of the robust methodology that is used to rank institutions. Of course, research is of paramount importance.

\n

- Thus the selection process should have had a holistic approach to disciplines.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Indian Express**

\n

