



COACHING INDUSTRIES IN INDIA - GS II MAINS

Q. What are the new Rules and Regulations for Coaching Centers in India? Does it address the fundamental problem of mental stress of students? Discuss (15 marks, 250 words)

News: *What are the new Rules and Regulations for Coaching Centers in India?*

What's in the news?

- With the rising concerns over the mental health of students and the dysregulated functioning of coaching centers in India, the Central government has brought forward the "Guidelines for Registration and Regulation of Coaching Center 2024".

Need to Regulate Coaching Centres in India:

1. Increase in student suicide cases:

- There has been an exponential rise in cases of student suicides from the competitive exam coaching institutes.
- For ex- 28 cases of student suicides were reported in 2023 alone from Kota- the coaching capital for engg. and medical exams.

2. Exorbitant fees and lack of exit options:

- The coaching charge exorbitant fees and do not provide exit options with return of balance fees to students due to lack of regulatory guidelines.

3. False and Misleading Claims:

- The coaching centres have been indulging in false and misleading claims related to selection ratio from their institutes.
- For example, Recently, fines were imposed on UPSC coaching centres for making false claims.

4. Engineer or Doctor producing factories:

- The coaching centres function like a factory to produce candidates well equipped with practice and conceptual clarity to solve the JEE and NEET questions, but they lack heavily in extracurricular activities and life skills. For e.g., Kota is termed as KOTA FACTORY.

5. Absence of regulatory oversight:

- There were no penal provisions and there was complete lack of regulatory oversight.
- For e.g., Inapplicability of Consumer Protection Act for the coaching industry.

New Guidelines for Coaching Centres:

1. Enrolment Guidelines:

- Students younger than 16 years should not be enrolled in coaching centres.



2. Refrain from Misleading Promises:

- Coaching centres should not make misleading promises or guarantee ranks to parents and students.

3. Ensure Mental well-being of students:

- The coaching centres must provide weekly off for students.
- The curriculum must be suitably spaced-out and the duration of classes must not be longer than five hours a day.

4. Customised leaves and co-curricular activities:

- Coaching centres will have to provide Customised leaves to students for “emotional boosting” and “connection with family”.
- Also, co-curricular activities, life skills, counselling from a psychologist, emotional bonding and mental well-being will have to be prioritised in coaching centres

5. Qualification of Tutors:

- Tutors with qualifications less than graduation degree should not be allowed to teach in coaching institutes.

6. Maintenance of Website:

- Coaching centres will be required to maintain a website with updated details of the qualification of tutors, courses or curriculum, duration of course, hostel facilities and the fees being charged.

7. Exit Option from the Course:

- In case when a student wishes to exit the course, coaching centres must refund fees fully paid by a student on a pro-rata basis within 10 days.
- An easy exit policy and details of a fee refund policy will also have to be furnished on the website.

8. Filing complaints:

- The guidelines provide provisions for filing complaints before “a competent authority” against the coaching centres by the student, parent or even tutor.
- The complaints will have to be disposed of within thirty days.

9. Penal Provisions:

- Fine of up to 1 lakh or cancellation of registration, if coaching centres charge exorbitant fees from students, cause undue stress leading to student suicide and other malpractices.

10. Regulation and Monitoring:

- State governments will have to undertake registration of new and existing coaching centres, within three months after the guidelines come into effect.
- The state government will be responsible for monitoring and regulating the activities of the coaching centre.

Advantages of New Guidelines:

1. Stem the rise of Student suicides:

- The proposed guideline is a step to address this stem of student suicides by providing mandatory provisions for customised leaves, mental health counselling and emotional boosting.



2. Regulation of unchecked growth of private coaching centres:

- The proposed guideline is a step forward to regulate the unchecked growth of private coaching centres which have been indulging in malpractices like misleading claims and false advertisements.

3. Transparency in functioning:

- The move will introduce an element of transparency in the opaque way of functioning of these coaching institutes.
- For example, Creation of a website mentioning all the details about the coaching institute.

4. Provide an exit route:

- The guidelines provide for an exit route for students in case they want to drop out, with provision of return of fees.
- This will help to reduce the undue stress of students to continue a course which they want to drop out of, due to fear of losing money.

5. Holistic well-being of the student:

- The move will help in the holistic development of students in coaching, both academically and in co-extracurricular activities.
- This will help us in better reaping of our demographic dividend.

WAY FORWARD:

1. Proper Regulation by the state government:

- Since most of the engineering and medical coaching take place at the 10+2 level, state governments have been entrusted with the regulatory function.
- State governments must diligently ensure the regulation of the coaching industry.

2. Public education:

- There must be a large-scale public education about the adverse impact of putting such pressure on children from an early age through media and civil society organisations.

3. Instilling sensitivity in Parents:

- We need to make parents sensitive towards their children in their adolescent years, instead of putting the pressure of parental dream on them.

4. Revamp education system:

- The rote learning and exam-centric education system in India must be revamped with focus on imparting conceptual clarity to the students to stem the mushrooming of private coaching in India.

5. Substance Abuse Prevention Programs:

- Substance abuse prevention programs must also be implemented in the coaching districts like KOTA and Delhi to prevent student suicides.