GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY

RAJYASABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1163
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2021

Impact of pandemic on EWS students

1163 Shri Shamsher Singh Dullo:
Smt. Phulo Devi Netam:
Shri Rajmani Patel:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has assessed the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns on students from the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) due to added costs of transitioning to online learning;
(b) if so, details of additional costs borne by households of students to enable access to online education, State-wise;
(c) whether the Ministry has undertaken steps to provide subsidies and/or material assistance in the provision of textbooks, smartphone, laptops, online tuitions and other modes to enable access to online learning at affordable rates, from March 2020 till date; and
(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) & (b) During COVID-19 Pandemic, Ministry of Education has held continuous consultations with the states and UTs at various levels to assess the various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic including financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns on students. The Ministry has conducted a survey in the month of July, 2020 with the help of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan(KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti(NVS) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to understand the scenario of Online Learning of school students in COVID-19 pandemic situation. The details of the survey and findings are given in Chapter – 3 of the Learning Enhancement guidelines, which may be accessed at the following links:

1. https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/Learning_Enhancement_0.pdf
2. https://seshagun.gov.in/sites/default/files/update/Learning_Enhancement.pdf
3. https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/announcement/Learning_%20Enhancement_Guidelines.pdf

Navodaya Vidyalay Samiti (NVS) conducted survey on the availability of devices with students and mapped all the students to provide alternate learning plan in respect of students without devices. Mapping of Students for availability of devices was done in all Kendriya Vidyalayas also to plan for Synchronous and Asynchronous modes of academic transaction. Schools have worked out the accessibility issues of each student and all out efforts are being made to reach out to every student.

Education being in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. The States/UTs are making efforts and also taking several innovative steps towards putting together multi-modal formats of digital education (through devices such as, TV, Radio, computers, mobiles, etc.). To ensure equity among the Students having digital devices and without having digital devices, Continuous Learning Plan (CLP) for the unique requirements of each and every learner or groups of learners in the school have been initiated in all States/UTs. Where the internet facility is not available, Ministry of Education has taken many initiatives like One Class One Channel of SWAYAM PRABHA to impart education through TV and One DTH channel is being operated specifically for hearing impaired students in sign language. Community Radio Stations and a podcast called Shiksha Vani of CBSE, Textbooks, worksheet supplied to residence of learners, Handbook on 21st Century Skills and community/mohalla classes are being organized.

(c) & (d) To mitigate the effect of covid-19, Department of School Education and Literacy had allocated a total of Rs. 8104.18 crore under Samagra Shiksha in 2020-21 to promote online learning through digital initiatives, online teacher training to ensure continuous professional development of teachers, training of members of School Management Committees (SMC)/ School Management and Development Committees (SMDC) to make them aware of Covid-19 situation and to create awareness amongst the students and parents, media and community mobilization, Safety and Security at school level as per Covid-19 Guidelines, orientation of teachers on safety and security and composite school grant which inter-alia includes safe school operations, sanitization and ensuring basic wash facilities, safe drinking water, availability of essentials like alcohol rub/sanitizer disinfectant, cleaning material, thermal screening facilities, etc. and textbooks are also being provided under Samagra Shiksha in various States and UTs to schools where online classes are difficult. Further, an ad-hoc grants of Rs 7662 crore has been released in 2021-22 under Samagra Shiksha to ensure continuity of these initiatives.

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