

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1973
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2021

Education for Children with Disabilities (CwD) during pandemic

1973 **Shri John Brittas:**

Will the Minister of **Education** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has undertaken any steps to make learning during the COVID-19 pandemic easier for Children with Disabilities (CwD);
- (b) whether Government plans to create and maintain a unified database for CwD for quicker and easier interventions; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof, including stipulated time for the project, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) to (c): Education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. The Central Government is constantly advising States/UTs through guidelines and meeting with respect to interventions for reducing impact of pandemic on education. The guidelines issued so far are as follows:

(i) PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education:

https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/pragyata-guidelines_0.pdf

(ii) Guidelines for the development of e-content for Children with Special Needs (CWSN).

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/CWSN_E-Content_guidelines.pdf

(iii). Apart from all these, a comprehensive initiative called **PM eVIDYA** has been initiated as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan on 17th May, 2020, which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes:

- DIKSHA (one nation, one digital platform) is the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades are available on it.
- One earmarked Swayam Prabha TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel).
- Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Podcast- Shiksha Vani.
- Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website/ YouTube.

(iv). National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has signed MoU with Indian Sign Language Research and Training Center (ISLRTC) for development of Sign language videos. Till 25 February, 2021 about 300 videos have been recorded on NCERT curriculum from classes 1 to 5. These are being shared on DIKSHA and telecast on PM eVIDYA DTH TV channels. NCERT has recorded 317 textbook chapters of different grades as audio books and have uploaded on DIKSHA

(v). National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has also started imparting daily 8 hours live programme of 4 hours each on PMeVidya channels, for classes 10 and 12 for providing continued learning support for learners at Secondary and Senior Secondary level including Vocational Courses and Indian Sign Language-based content w.e.f. 01.09.2020. Till now, more than 370 live sessions are already broadcast for learners still now, more than 1064 live sessions are already broadcast for learners of NIOS. NIOS is using One DTH channel specifically for hearing impaired students in sign language. For visually and hearing-impaired students, study material has been developed in Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language; both are available on NIOS website/ YouTube. 82 sign language videos for CWSN are uploaded on DIKSHA portal by NIOS. One hour programme in sign language for secondary and senior secondary level content of NIOS are being broadcast on PM eVidya channel 10 from September 1, 2020. Course material in 20 subjects at secondary level and 5 subjects at senior secondary level are already uploaded on DIKSHA Portal by NIOS. 141 sign language videos for CWSN are uploaded on DIKSHA portal by NIOS.

Further, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) is implementing Scholarship schemes [Pre-matric (Classes IX & X) & Post-matric (Classes XI to

Post Graduate Degree/Diploma)] for Children with Disabilities under the umbrella Scheme titled ‘Scholarships for Students with Disabilities’ through National Scholarship Portal. During COVID-19 pandemic, the date for submission of application by students as well as date for verification by Institutes and States were extended from 30.10.2020 to 20.01.2021, 15.11.2020 to 12.02.2021 and 30.11.2020 to 20.02.2021 respectively on the portal to enable students with disabilities to avail the scholarship.

While COVID-19 is impacting the entire population, persons with disabilities including children, are more vulnerable to the disease due to their physical, sensory and cognitive limitations. With this in view, the DEPwD formulated a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for identification of beneficiaries and distribution of aids and assistive devices under the ‘Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)’ Scheme by following social distancing and sanitization protocols. Special emphasis has been given to use of masks, gloves and PPE kits.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the distribution of aids and assistive devices continued under the Scheme and ADIP- Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme to children with disabilities.
