

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1636

ANSWERED ON 15/03/2023

Guidelines for Education Technology products

1636 Shri A. A. Rahim:

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has developed any guidelines for ensuring minimum standards of quality of Education Technology (EdTech) products before they are used in any classroom;
- (b) whether the process adopted for ensuring all EdTech products adhere to minimum standards of quality;
- (c) if a process exists, details of the Committee/agency tasked for this including its budget and human resources;
- (d) whether a policy on Education Technology (EdTech) is being prepared by Government;
- (e) if so, which agency/Committee has been given the responsibility for drafting the policy; and
- (f) the timeline by which Government is considering releasing the policy?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SMT ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (f): National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) has been conceived as a unifying National Digital infrastructure to energise and catalyse the education ecosystem. NDEAR blueprint was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 29th July 2021. The NDEAR Standards and Ecosystem policy was issued on 11th Nov 2022, these can be accessed at <https://www.ndear.gov.in/>

NDEAR focuses on facilitating the achievement of the goals laid down by National Education Policy 2020, through a digital infrastructure for innovations in the education ecosystem, ensuring autonomy and participation of all the relevant stakeholders, to help achieve the learning outcomes by offering solutions to learners and teachers.

The National Education Policy 2020 vide para 23.3 has envisaged an autonomous body National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) - a platform for free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration and so on, both for School and Higher Education.

Keeping in view the availability of digital infrastructure PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education have been issued on Digital/Online Education on 14th July 2020. The guidelines brief on various modes of digital education including online mode that depends more on availability of internet, partially online mode that utilizes the blended approach of digital technology and other offline activities, and offline mode that utilizes television and radio as a major medium of instruction of education. These guidelines provide a roadmap or pointers for carrying forward enhanced quality online education. The guidelines recommend screen time for different categories of students such as – Pre Primary, Classes 1 to 8 and Classes 9 to 12. The guidelines are useful for a diverse set of stakeholders including school heads, teachers, parents, teacher educators and students. It also outlines the support to be provided to students with special needs. These guidelines are also useful, to take care of the physical health and mental wellness of the students and ensure that the children do not get over-stretched or stressed, or get affected negatively owing to prolonged use of digital devices. The guidelines can be accessed at:

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

In order to safeguard against the exploitative practices of ed-tech companies, the Government has issued advisory which includes do's and don'ts for the stakeholders. It has also reiterated legal provisions for e-commerce firms (which were notified by the MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (Department of Consumer Affairs)) for information to citizens who are consumers of ed-tech services. The details may be seen at: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1784582>

Further, considering grievances against Ed-tech platforms, UGC and AICTE have issued public notices on 16th January, 2022 advising the students to check recognition/entitlement status of programme on official website before enrolling any course. The notice may be seen at https://deb.ugc.ac.in/pdf/UGC_Public_Notice_16-01-2022.pdf.
