

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 370
ANSWERED ON 3.12.2025

Paywalls as barriers to education

370 Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Ministry is aware that a large share of academic journals, research publications, and learning resources remain behind costly paywalls, limiting equitable access;
- (b) whether Ministry has assessed the impact of pay-walled academic content on higher-education outcomes, particularly in State Universities, rural institutions, and publicly funded colleges, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Ministry plan to negotiate national-level open-access agreements or subsidised institutional subscriptions with major academic publishers, and proposed timeline for such measures; and
- (d) whether Ministry intends to expand or strengthen national digital repositories to ensure universal access to publicly funded research, and steps taken or proposed in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (d): The Government of India has launched the One Nation One Subscription (ONOS), a new central sector scheme in November 2024 to provide access of scholarly research journal from 30 most reputed international publishers to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Central and State Governments and Research & Development organisations of the Central Government. This has enabled access to all articles published in more than 13,000 journals published by these publishers, including those which are behind paywalls. The access has been provided to all Government HEIs, including the State Universities, government colleges and government HEIs in rural areas. Students and faculty of all government HEIs can access these contents without any additional payment from the state government or the HEIs, as the central government has made the payments centrally.

The ONOS scheme has been implemented with effect from 1st January 2025 for a period of three calendar years. Up to October 2025, more than 9.5 crore articles have been downloaded by the HEIs covered under the ONOS.
