

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1302

ANSWERED ON 11/02/2026

Bridging learning gaps through digital education initiatives

1302 Shri Rajinder Gupta:

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

- (a) whether Government has undertaken measures to bridge learning gaps arising from the COVID-19 pandemic using digital education platforms;
- (b) if so, the key initiatives launched and the access and usage statistics among rural and urban students;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the challenges faced in ensuring adequate access to digital devices and connectivity in rural schools; and
- (e) the measures planned to build teachers' capacity in digital pedagogy and effective online instruction?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (e): The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) announced on 29.07.2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. The Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG-4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems.

In order to mitigate the impact of challenges thrown by the COVID-19 pandemic on loss of learning, the Ministry of Education issued guidelines for identification, smooth admission process and continued education of migrant children on 13.07.2020. To ensure that children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country, the Department of School Education & Literacy had issued detailed guidelines on 7th January 2021, on the steps to be taken by the States and UTs for identification of out of school children from age 6-18 years, enrolment drives and awareness generation, student support while schools are closed, continued education for children with Special Needs (CwSN), student support on school reopening and teacher capacity building. The Department, also, vide letter dated 4th May 2021, had shared a comprehensive Covid Action plan with States/UTs and other stakeholders for mitigating the loss of learning.

In addition, a comprehensive Learning Recovery Plan (LRP) during 2022-23 was shared with States/UTs to provide a multipronged & holistic approach to ensure that children receive suitable support. Under this, States/UTs were supported for various interventions including Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP), Teacher Resource Package (TRP), ICT facility to Block Resource Centers (BRCs), Strengthening of Clusters Resource Centers (CRCs), etc.

Education is part of the Concurrent List of the Constitution and most of the Government schools are under the administration of the State Government and its bodies. The Ministry of Education implements ICT and Digital initiatives under Samagra Shiksha and digital learning in Government schools across the country, including rural areas. The initiatives aim to enhance the quality of education by integrating technology into teaching and learning processes. Under the initiatives, funds are provided for setting up ICT Labs and Smart Classrooms according to the requirements of the State submitted in the Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B). The ICT scheme offers two options:

1. Option I: Schools without prior ICT facilities can choose ICT labs or smart classrooms. Schools with over 700 students may get an additional ICT lab. States/UTs can procure hardware, software, tablets, laptops, and training resources, supporting digital boards, virtual classrooms, and DTH channels.
2. Option II: Schools with existing ICT facilities can access smart classrooms or tablets under the scheme norms.

Based on the UDISE+ data and funds approved in Project Approval Board's (PAB) meetings to States/UTs for the year 2025-26, gaps were identified in saturating ICT Labs and Smart Classrooms in Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools. To address this gap, a supplementary PAB was conducted on 10th June, 2025 wherein 22,618 ICT Labs and 29,920 Smart Classrooms for States/UTs were approved for the saturation of these facilities. Further, to saturate all functional Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) 3,564 ICT Labs and 3,655 Smart Classrooms were approved in the year 2024-25. Till date 1,79,153 ICT Labs and 1,76,738 Smart Classrooms have been sanctioned to State/UT Governments.

During and post covid, 14,82,565 tablet devices were sanctioned to ensure that teachers in government or aided schools remained connected to their students.

Additionally, the Government of India, in the Budget 2025, has announced provision of broadband connectivity to all Government Secondary schools in rural areas, under the 'BharatNet' project to enhance digital infrastructure in remote areas by BSNL in a phased manner.

A comprehensive initiative called PM eVidya was initiated as part of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan' on 17th May, 2020, which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education across the country under the aegis of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. States/Union

Territories (UTs) collaborate with NCERT to utilise, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives as per their requirements in mother tongue/local/regional languages. PM eVidya includes 200 DTH TV Channels allotted to States/UTs/Autonomous Bodies (ABs)/Other Ministries in Government of India and 400 Radio channels, including PM eVidya mobile app, to enable them to provide supplementary education as per their requirement in various Indian languages for classes 1-12.

Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) is the Nation's One Nation, One Digital platform for providing quality e-content for school education in States/UTs along with QR coded Energised Textbooks (ETBs) for all grades. Additional details can be obtained from <https://diksha.gov.in/data/>. DIKSHA Offline supports areas with limited or no internet connectivity. The stakeholders have access to more than 450+ Virtual Labs and 100 Virtual skill labs (50 each in Hindi and English) on DIKSHA.

Strengthening of teacher training/education programmes is supported under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha in alignment with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

Financial provision is provided under this scheme as per State-specific proposals inter-alia for in-service training of teachers, school heads, subject teachers, resource persons, master trainers, education administrators, teacher educators, key resource persons and induction training of newly recruited teachers including those in rural and remote areas at elementary and secondary levels through SCERTs and DIETs, as the nodal agencies.

Under Samagra Shiksha, teacher capacity building for digital education is being supported through the **DIKSHA** platform, which provides e-content and digital learning resources. The Department has also implemented **NISHTHA** (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement) as an integrated teacher training programme on DIKSHA, which includes modules related to the use of ICT and technology in teaching and learning. Further, **NCERT, SCERTs, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs** undertake development of resource material, digital content, training programmes and workshops to strengthen teachers' preparedness for digital education.

NCTE has notified ITEP, a 4-year integrated dual-major bachelor degree in Education as well as a specialized subject in arts, science, physical education etc. for pre-service teachers. Being digitally literate and skilled to leverage technology for improving teaching-learning and assessment processes is one of the capacities sought to be developed by all student-teachers under ITEP.
