

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1159
ANSWERED ON 29.07.2026

National Education Policy (NEP), 2020

1159. Shri Ravi Chandra Vaddiraju:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the progress made under the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 in terms of skill-based learning;
- (b) whether Government has introduced new schemes for digital classrooms in rural schools; and
- (c) the steps taken to bridge the urban-rural education divide?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): In line with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, skill-based and experiential learning has been promoted across school and higher education. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha, Skill Education has been integrated as a regular component for students of Classes VI to XII. For Classes VI to VIII, exposure to Skill Education is provided through Pre-vocational Education, including 10 Bagless Days, a separate off-textbook experiential learning programme and Kaushal Bodh, the NCERT activity-based textbook series. For Classes IX to XII, skill courses aligned with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) are offered, with skill modules as an additional subject at the Secondary level and skill courses as an elective subject at the Senior Secondary level.

In higher education, skill-based education is supported through Community Colleges, B.Voc. Degree Programmes and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centres for Knowledge Acquisition and Upgradation of Skilled Human Abilities and Livelihood. Further, UGC and AICTE have issued Guidelines for Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programme (AEDP), 2025 for higher education programmes under their respective domains. AEDP with National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS), provide opportunities to combine academic learning with structured

apprenticeship and on-the-job training and industry exposure. Skill-based learning is also supported through programmes in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cyber Security, Quantum Technology, Space Technology, Sustainable Energy, Internet of Things, Robotics and Semiconductors. These initiatives promote experiential, skill-based and industry-linked learning and support the development of employability and entrepreneurial abilities.

The Ministry of Education implements ICT and Digital initiatives such as PM eVidya and DIKSHA under Samagra Shiksha to enhance digital learning in Government schools across the country including the rural, remote and tribal areas. The initiatives aim to enhance the quality of education by integrating technology into teaching and learning processes. Under the scheme, funds are provided for setting up ICT Labs and Smart Classrooms according to the requirement of the State submitted in the Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B).

A comprehensive initiative called PM eVidya was 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 across the country. States/UTs collaborate with NCERT to utilise, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives as per their requirements. The key components of PM eVidya are also aligned towards enhancing digital literacy and include 200 DTH TV channels and 400 Radio channels to enable all States/UTs to provide supplementary education 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. As a participant in DIKSHA, States/UTs/Autonomous Bodies (ABs) have generated and contributed over 3.67 lakh content in mother tongue/local/regional languages enabling multilingualism. Overall, 579.41 crore learning sessions for 2.29 crore users have been completed on DIKSHA by students, teachers and other stakeholders. The stakeholders also have access to more than 836 Virtual Labs on DIKSHA that help them with simulation of real-world laboratory environment. The platform supports both online and offline access, enabling learners to download content and continue learning without internet connectivity. These digital initiatives provide free curriculum aligned e-content to students, parents and teachers for supplementary academic resources.

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 by BSNL to enhance digital infrastructure in remote areas in a phased manner.

To bridge the urban-rural education divide, Samagra Shiksha focuses on equal opportunities for schooling, equitable learning outcomes, bridging social and gender gaps and ensuring equity and inclusion in school education. The availability of digital learning platforms, Smart Classrooms and other technology-enabled learning resources provides access to educational content across different regions.

In higher education, digital learning platforms such as SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, e-PG Pathshala and the UGC e-resource portal provide access to educational content and courses. The integration of the UGC e-resource portal with the Digital Seva Portal enables access to digital learning resources through Common Service Centres, including in rural areas. The UGC e-resource portal also provides selected digital content in regional languages. Further, the regulatory framework for Open and Distance Learning and Online Education provides for access to higher education through these modes while the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme includes faculty capacity-building through technology-enabled and ICT-based pedagogy. The Union Budget 2026–27 announced provision of Viability Gap Funding (VGF)/capital support for girls' hostels in Higher Education Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) institutions, covering every district. There was also announcement in Budget 2025-2026 of Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Yojana (BBPY) to provide digital-form Indian language books for school and higher education. These measures support access to education and digital learning opportunities across different regions.
