

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 342
ANSWERED ON 22.07.2026

Implementation of the three-language formula under NEP, 2020

342 Shri S Niranjan Reddy:

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

- (a) whether Government has assessed the preparedness of States and schools, including the availability of qualified language teachers and infrastructure, for implementation of the three-language policy under NEP, 2020;
- (b) whether such assessment was undertaken before issuing implementation guidelines, and if so, the details and findings thereof;
- (c) whether Government has received representations from States regarding constraints in implementing the policy; and
- (d) the measures being taken to provide flexibility and support to ensure effective implementation without disrupting students' education?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 at para 4.13, *inter-alia*, provides that the three-language formula will continue to be implemented while keeping in mind the Constitutional provisions, aspirations of the people, regions as well as the Union, and the need to promote multilingualism for promoting national unity. However, there will be a greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and no language will be imposed on any State. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students themselves, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India. In particular, students who wish to change one or more of the three languages they are studying may do so in Grade 6 or 7, as long as they are able to demonstrate basic proficiency in three languages (including one language of India at the literature level) by the end of secondary school.

As a follow-up of NEP 2020, the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE), 2023 has been developed which provides a roadmap for implementation of NEP 2020 on Languages Education in India. The NCF aims to make a student an independent speaker, reader and writer in at least three languages denoted as R1, R2 and R3. R1 is the first language in which students learn literacy, ideally their mother tongue or, if not feasible, the state language, which would be a familiar language, with proficiency expected by age 8, R2 is the second language distinct from R1, with proficiency to be achieved by age 11 and R3 is the third language different from R1 and R2, with proficiency targeted by age 14. NCF-SE 2023, *inter-alia*, provides the following:

- i. Two languages at the foundational and preparatory stage – out of which one is native to India.
- ii. Three languages at the middle and secondary stage (Grades 9 & 10) – out of which two are native to India.
- iii. Two languages at the secondary stage (Grades 11 & 12) – out of which one is native to India.

NEP, 2020 at para 4.12, *inter-alia*, provides that as research clearly shows that children pick up languages extremely quickly between the ages of 2 and 8 and that multilingualism has great cognitive benefits to young students, children will be exposed to different languages early on (but with a particular emphasis on the mother tongue), starting from the Foundational Stage onwards.

NEP 2020 further states that all languages will be taught in an enjoyable and interactive style, with plenty of interactive conversation, with early reading and subsequently writing in the mother tongue in the early years, and with skills developed for reading and writing in other languages in Grade 3 and beyond.

NEP, 2020 also provides that there will be a major effort from both the Central and State governments to invest in large numbers of language teachers in all regional languages around the country, and, in particular, for all languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. States, especially States from different regions of India, may enter into bilateral agreements to hire teachers in large numbers from each other, to satisfy the three-language formula in their respective States, and also to encourage the study of Indian languages across the country. Extensive use of technology will be made for teaching and learning of different languages and to popularize language learning.

Government of India regularly consults experts, linguists and state and national level policy makers, curriculum developers and implementers, practicing teachers and students, parents, teachers, teacher educators, parents, NGOs and (also students) working in the field for policy formulations and curriculum development. Prior to the formulation of the National Education Policy 2020 and National

Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023 large number of stakeholders were consulted in person and also through digital means. All the regions / states were consulted and the opinions and practices of the various school systems were also taken into consideration for making of the policy.

Further, since Education is a subject under the Concurrent List of the Constitution, the respective State and Union Territory (UT) Governments may decide on the modalities of implementing the Three Language Policy, in accordance with the spirit and recommendations of the NEP, 2020. The Policy emphasizes the promotion of multilingualism and encourages States/UTs to adopt the Three Language Formula in a flexible manner, keeping in view local needs, linguistic diversity, and implementation feasibility.
