

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-343
ANSWERED ON 22/07/2026

Aligning education with labour market requirements

343 Shri S.R. Sivalingam:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) Government's assessment of trends concerning weak learning outcomes, school dropouts and curriculum gaps that continue to affect employability among students entering the labour market and their implications for workforce readiness;
- (b) the details of initiatives undertaken by Government to integrate vocational education, digital skills, industry exposure and employability-focused learning into school and higher education systems across the country; and
- (c) the policy measures proposed to be taken by Government to ensure that formal education better aligns with labour market requirements and future employment opportunities?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): The Government recognizes that improving learning outcomes, reducing school dropouts and addressing curriculum gaps are important for enhancing employability and workforce readiness. The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 envisages a holistic transformation of the education system through foundational literacy and numeracy, competency-based learning, experiential education, multidisciplinary learning and greater integration of Skill Education to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and competencies required for higher education, employment and lifelong learning.

To improve learning outcomes and reduce school dropouts, the Government is implementing various programmes, including Samagra Shiksha, NIPUN Bharat, PM POSHAN, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) and targeted interventions for socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

The Government of India conducts periodic large-scale assessments to measure learning and education outcomes across the country from time to time. More recently, the PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (previously National Achievement Survey) 2024 was conducted on 4th December, 2024, by the National Assessment Centre, PARAKH, NCERT under the aegis of the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education to measure the baseline

performance under the NEP 2020 in development of competencies among students at the end of the Foundational, Preparatory and Middle Stages of education. The Survey provides district-level evidence on learning outcomes and contextual factors to support evidence-based interventions for improving the quality of school education.

The findings of PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024 highlight a significant improvement when compared to National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021 scores in foundational literacy and numeracy skills, thereby, reflecting the positive impact of the NIPUN Bharat Mission launched under NEP 2020.

As per UDISE+ (2025-26), it has been observed that dropout rate of school children at preparatory and secondary stage has decreased significantly over the years i.e., from 8.7% (in 2022-23) to 1.8% (in 2025-26) at preparatory level and from 13.8% to 7.0% at secondary level.

At the school level, Skill Education has been integrated as a regular component of education under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha. NSQF-aligned skill courses are offered to students of Classes IX–XII to enhance employability skills including communication, self-management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), entrepreneurship and green skills. In line with NEP 2020, students of Classes VI–VIII are provided pre-vocational exposure through Bagless Days, internships with local vocational experts and experiential learning. The Government has also promoted digital learning through platforms such as DIKSHA, SWAYAM, SWAYAM PRABHA and Virtual Skill Laboratories, while PM SHRI Schools emphasize experiential learning, digital infrastructure and skill development.

In higher education, NEP 2020 promotes integration of vocational education, skill development and practical learning with stronger industry linkages. The University Grants Commission (UGC) facilitates skill-based education through Community Colleges, Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc.) programmes and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centres. UGC has notified the Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes (CCFUGP), 2022 and is developing Learning Outcomes-based Curriculum Frameworks (LOCFs) to promote competency-based, skill-oriented and outcome-based education. UGC has also enabled skill-based courses and micro-credentials aligned with the NCfR, with UGC-validated modules available through SWAYAM Plus. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has introduced outcome-based curricula and programmes in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cybersecurity, VLSI, semiconductors, Robotics, Quantum Technology and 3D Printing, while promoting industry-academia linkages through mandatory internships and other industry engagement initiatives.

In furtherance of NEP 2020, UGC and AICTE have issued guidelines for Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programmes (AEDP), under which apprenticeship forms an integral part of degree and diploma programmes. Under the National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS), approximately 17.22 lakh apprentices have been engaged during the last five years, including over 76,000 apprentices in Artificial Intelligence, while 457 MoUs have been signed with Higher Educational Institutions for implementation of AEDP. Flexible learning pathways have been enabled through the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), the National Credit

Framework (NCrF) and the Multiple Entry and Multiple Exit framework. Higher Education Institutions, including IITs and IIMs, have also introduced flexible and industry-oriented programmes in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cybersecurity, FinTech and agri-technology.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has also made concerted efforts for strengthening the skilling ecosystem through its schemes and initiatives. Flagship schemes being implemented by MSDE include Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), and the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS). Further, DGT anchors long term training through Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) and Craft Instructor Training Scheme (CITS) implemented through a network of over 13,856 ITIs.

The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), functioning as national regulator for setting standards and formulating comprehensive regulations for the vocational education, training, and skilling ecosystem, promotes competency-based, outcome-oriented, and industry-aligned education. The NSQF, anchored by NCVET provides for On-the-Job Training (OJT) and mandates the inclusion of Employability Skills in all qualifications, covering essential competencies such as digital literacy, to better prepare learners for the evolving labour market. NCVET also facilitate the recognition of School Boards and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as Awarding Bodies, thereby enabling them to offer industry-relevant, competency-based qualifications.

These initiatives aim to strengthen the alignment of formal education with labour market requirements and future employment opportunities by promoting skill development, digital competencies, industry exposure, lifelong learning and workforce readiness.
