

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-349
ANSWERED ON –22/07/2026

Strengthening of school and higher education

349. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has undertaken major initiatives to improve the quality, accessibility and inclusiveness of school and higher education across the country;
- (b) the details of key programmes implemented under the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the measures taken to strengthen digital learning, skill development and teacher capacity building; and
- (d) the impact of these initiatives on enrolment, learning outcomes and access to quality education across the States/UTs, including Karnataka?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) :After announcement of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), a number of transformative changes have taken place both in school and higher education for its implementation.

Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L) has aligned various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, such as Samagra Shiksha, PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme, and Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS), to facilitate achievement of the goals of NEP 2020 across all levels of school education.

The other major initiatives implemented under National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 include National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage and School Education, NIPUN BHARAT initiatives (Vidya Pravesh, Jadui Pitara, Teacher Learning materials(TLM) for foundation stage), Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA), Vidya Samiksha Kendra(VSK), PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan to understand the baseline

performance, National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) etc.

Samagra Shiksha focuses on improvement of quality of education by providing support to all States and UTs for different interventions, like in-service training of teachers and school heads, composite school grant to every school for providing a conducive learning environment, support for children with special needs(CwSN), grants for library, sports and physical activities, support for Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan, Tinkering Labs, ICT and digital initiatives, school leadership development programme, remedial teaching for academically weaker students, introduction of new pedagogical and curricular structure, NIPUN Bharat Initiative, child friendly and inclusive classrooms including ECCE facilities, Strengthening of School Management Committees(SMCs) and community led initiatives and Experiential and Competency based Learning aligned with NCFs, opening, strengthening/upgradation of residential schools/hostels, free uniforms to eligible children and free text books at elementary level, transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives provision of transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives.

Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) schools are being set up as NEP 2020 exemplar schools to become the template for other schools. Further, under Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Yojna, one hot cooked meal is provided to the students at elementary level (including Balvatika) in Government and Government-aided schools.

The Department of Higher Education launched the third phase of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in June 2023 in the form of Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) to cater to the needs of educationally unserved/ underserved areas.

In Higher Education, various initiatives / reforms have been carried out such as National Credit Framework (NCrF) and National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) Multiple Entry and Exit in Academic Programme; Transforming HEIs into multi-disciplinary Institutions; pursuing two Academic Programme simultaneously; Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR ID) of individual student; introduction of PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme to provide financial support to meritorious students inter-alia enabling collateral free, guarantor free loan through a simple, transparent and student-friendly and entirely digital application process; revised regulation of ODL / Online Education; re-envisioned Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Program; permitting up to 40% credits in regular courses using SWAYAM platform; launch of new SWAYAM Plus portal; integration of technology in administration of HEIs from admission to grant of degree through SAMARTH; guidelines on Professor of Practice to enable HEIs to work with industry experts; guidelines for supernumerary seats for admitting students from abroad in Indian HEIs; Academic collaboration between Indian and Foreign HEIs to offer Twinning, Joint Degree and Dual Degree Programmes; Regulation for permitting Foreign HEIs to setup campuses in India; enhanced reputation of the Indian HEIs in international ranking; embedding of Indian Knowledge system in the education etc.

(c): Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) is the one nation, one digital education infrastructure. All states/UTs have been onboarded in DIKSHA. This digital infrastructure is artificial intelligence based and is highly scalable. This infrastructure is also being utilized for creating Energized Textbooks (ETBs) and presently 7754 ETBs are published and a total of 3.67 lakh e-contents are available on DIKSHA.

Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) hosts content curated by premier institutions and is available free of cost with the approach of “Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime” Learning. There have been more than 20,000 deliveries of courses on the platform, with cumulative enrolments exceeding 6 crores since its inception.

Under the PM eVIDYA initiative, the existing 12 DTH Channels of SWAYAM PRABHA for School Education have been expanded to 200 PM eVIDYA DTH TV channels to provide curriculum-based educational content, particularly for learners who do not have access to internet connectivity. A total of 1,12,822 video contents, equivalent to 32,763 hours of telecast has been produced by States/UTs and Autonomous Bodies in 45 languages, thereby facilitating equitable and inclusive access to quality education.

Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK) is an integrated and shared ‘seeing’ for data-based decision making. So far, VSK has been established in 35 States and UTs and centrally at the NCERT, CBSE and NIOS.

ICT and Digital Initiatives component of Samagra Shiksha covers Government Schools having classes VI to XII. Under this component financial assistance is provided for establishing ICT Labs and Smart Classrooms in schools. The non- recurring/ recurring grant under ‘ICT and Digital Initiatives’ is available to the States and UTs as per norms of the scheme. At present, 1,30,453 ICT Labs and 1,17,705 Smart Classrooms are functional.

Under Skill Education component of Samagra Shiksha Scheme, financial assistance is provided to the States and UTs for giving skill exposure to students of Grades VI to VIII and introduction of National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) aligned skill courses from Grades IX to XII. The scheme is implemented across all States and UTs, based on the proposals received from the respective State/UT Governments and approved under the Project Approval Board (PAB). Till 2025-26, 31,477 schools have been approved under the scheme and 39,49,875 students have been enrolled in different skill courses.

The Department has implemented NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement) as an integrated teacher training programme on DIKSHA, covering modules on digital pedagogy, use of ICT tools and technology-enabled learning. NEP 2020 provides for 50 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers with focus on pedagogy, digital literacy and subject specific expertise. NCTE has developed a guiding document- National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) -which defines the work of teachers and makes explicit elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. Also, National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) was launched for creation of a large pool of outstanding professionals willing to provide mentoring to school teachers.

(d): The PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024 was undertaken in December, 2024 to understand the baseline performance among the students at the end of the Foundational, Preparatory, and Middle stages (Grades 3, 6, and 9 respectively). The survey shows improvement in learning achievements of the students at the foundational stage. National, State and District level report cards for PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024 are accessible at <https://dashboard.parakh.ncert.gov.in/en>.

UDISE + provides information on the changes in the Educational Indicators. As per UDISE+ 2025-26 data, the enrolment in the schools has gone up to 24.72 crores. The Net Enrolment Ratio, including the state of Karnataka, has improved in FY 2025-26 as compared to 2024-25, across Foundational, Middle and Secondary stages of schooling. The Gender Parity Index, including the state of Karnataka, is 1.0 or more across all stages of school showing active participation of girls. The UDISE+ 2025-26 is available at weblink <https://udiseplus.gov.in/#/en/page/publications>. Further, improving the quality of education is a continuous process and efforts are taken for imparting qualitative and holistic education across all the levels.
