

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 351
ANSWERED ON 22/07/2026**

Exam-mode research and graduate feedback

351 Dr. Santrupt Misra:

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

- (a) whether any controlled study, using comparable student cohorts, has been undertaken to establish whether performance in competitive examinations differs by the mode of examination, that is, online versus pen-and-paper;
- (b) the details thereof, if any;
- (c) whether structured counselling and guidance are available in schools to help students cope with the pressure caused by competitive examination;
- (d) the coverage of such support across Government schools?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) NTA has conducted over 270+ examinations, involving over 6.6 crore candidates. In 2026 so far, NTA has conducted 12 examinations with over 65 lakh candidate registrations. Major examinations such as JEE(Main), CUET(UG), CUET(PG), UGC-NET, CSIR-NET etc. are conducted in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode and NEET(UG) examination is conducted in Pen and Paper Test (PPT) mode. NTA conducts each examination in the mode, periodicity, procedure and syllabus as mandated by the respective test-indenting agencies, such as NEET under the National Medical Commission (NMC), CSIR-NET under the Ministry of Science and Technology, and UGC-NET under the University Grants Commission (UGC).

(c) & (d) The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, inter alia, envisages examination reforms aimed at shifting the focus from rote memorisation to competency-based assessment, while also promoting mental-health awareness, reducing academic stress, and enhancing learning and participation for improved learning outcomes. Under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, the Central Government provides financial support to States/UTs for career guidance, Mental health and socio-emotional well-being, self-defence and for strengthening school infrastructure. States and UTs are encouraged to train teachers as first-level counsellors. According to Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2024–25 data, around 4.48 lakh schools have trained teachers serving in this role. The autonomous organisations under the Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L), Ministry of Education such as, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has mandated every affiliated secondary and senior

secondary school to appoint a Counsellor and Wellness Teacher, as of February 2026, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) has engaged 830 contractual counsellors.

Further, the Manodarpan initiative was launched by this Ministry under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package to provide psychosocial support to students, families and teachers across the country through a toll-free national tele-helpline(844-844-0632) wherein trained counsellors provide guidance to callers. Over the years, Manodarpan's services have been expanded in a graded manner to make it comprehensive through offerings such as Sahyog and Paricharcha; live interactive series telecast on PM e-Vidya channels which address themes relevant to student's mental health and well-being including examination and academic stress.

As of March 2026, more than 3 lakh calls have been received from different regions of the country through the Manodarpan helpline indicating broad-based utilisation of the service by the target population. Further, a total of 1560 Sahyog sessions and 272 Paricharcha sessions have been conducted till 17.06.2026 since its inception
