

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 886
ANSWERED ON 12/12/2022**

Learning Gap Due to COVID

886. DR. SANJEEV KUMAR SINGARI:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is true that India's learning poverty i.e. inability to read and understand short sentences by the age the of 10 has increased from 54 percent to 70 percent after lockdown as per the World Bank data;
- (b) if so, the reasons thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has investigated the full effects of closure of schools due to lockdown;
- (d) is there any scheme within the New Education Policy to bridge the learning gap created due to 2 years of no school; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (c) The Ministry of Education, Department of School Education and Literacy has conducted National Achievement Survey (NAS) on 12.11.2021 in 717 districts of the country to assess learning levels of sampled children of grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. The aim and objective of NAS is to evaluate children's progress and learning competencies as an indicator of the health of the education system, so as to take appropriate steps for remedial actions at different levels. National, State/UT and District Reports for NAS 2021 have been released on 25.05.2022 and are available at <http://nas.gov.in>. The World Bank has published a report titled "The State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 Update", which can be accessed at:- <https://www.unicef.org/media/122921/file/StateofLearningPoverty2022.pdf>.

The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has impacted school education. Schools in States and Union Territories were closed as a precautionary measure to protect the students from Novel COVID-19 (Corona) virus. This has interrupted the learning of students from pre- school to grade 12. Education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. During COVID-19 Pandemic, Ministry of Education held continuous consultations with the States and UTs at various levels to assess the various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has conducted a survey in the month of July, 2020 with the help of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to understand the scenario of Online Learning of school students in COVID-19 pandemic situation.

(d) & (e) The Department of School Education and Literacy vide letter dated 4th May, 2021 has shared a comprehensive Covid Action plan with States/UTs and other stakeholders for mitigating the

loss of learning. This Department has also developed an online module for compiling the data of Out of School Children (OOSC) identified by each State/UT and their mapping with Special Training Centres (STC) on the PRABANDH Portal (<http://samagrashiksha.in>). The portal requires the concerned State/UT to validate the child wise information of the identified OOSC and STC uploaded by the concerned Block Resource Centre of the State for monitoring the progress of mainstreaming of OOSC. Also, Bridge Course Modules have been developed for bridging the learning gaps of Out of School Children studying in Special Training Centers (STC) under the provision of RTE Act, 2009.

Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing a centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha which is an integrated scheme of school education covering from Pre-School to Senior Secondary level. Samagra Shiksha has been aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in order to ensure inclusive and equitable, quality and holistic school education. The major interventions, across all levels of school education, proposed under the scheme are: (i) Universal Access including Infrastructure Development and Retention; (ii) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (iii) Gender and Equity; (iv) Inclusive Education; (v) Quality and Innovation; (vi) Financial support for Teacher Salary; (vii) Digital initiatives; (viii) RTE Entitlements including uniforms, textbooks etc.; (ix) Support for ECCE; (x) Vocational Education; (xi) Sports and Physical Education; (xii) Strengthening of Teacher Education and Training; (xiii) Monitoring; (xiv) Programme Management; and (xv) National Component. Samagra Shiksha also has a clear focus on bridging and eliminating gender differences in enrolment, retention and quality of learning.

A National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy called “National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat)” has been launched by the Ministry of Education (MoE) on 5th July 2021 under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha. The National Mission lays down priorities and actionable agendas for States/UTs to achieve the goal of proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy for every child by grade 3.

A comprehensive initiative called PM eVIDYA has been initiated which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes, where work is in progress:

- DIKSHA the nation’s digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs: and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades (one nation, one digital platform)
- One earmarked Swayam Prabha TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel)
- Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- Shiksha Vani
- Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website/ YouTube

To address the gaps and/or loss of learning among students, during and after the lockdown, National Council of Education Research & Training (NCERT) had prepared ‘Alternative Academic Calendar’, which is a week-wise learning plan for grades 1 to 12. It consists of interesting activities and challenges related to topics/themes in the syllabus. It maps the topics/themes with the learning outcomes & facilitates teachers/parents to assess the progress in students’ learning in a variety of ways

In view of the COVID-19 challenges and in order to provide continuous professional development opportunities to the teachers, this Department launched the NISHTHA online training programme using DIKSHA platform in October 2020. NISHTHA online training has also been initiated for Elementary level teachers, Secondary level teachers, teachers teaching at foundational level and for NIPUN Bharat.
