

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOKSABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.87
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.09.2020

Education for Vulnerable Groups

87. DR. SHASHI THAROOR:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state?

- (a) Whether the Government is aware of the immense disparities that exist between students with regard to their access to online learning, which has become a necessary mode of education and may continue into the future;
- (b) if so, the measures taken to ensure equal access to education even when done remotely, regardless of children's family's financial status, under the provisions of the Right to Education Act, 2009;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is taking any special measures to prevent the exclusion of vulnerable groups from remote learning, considering the suicide of a young student in Valanchery, Kerala, on 1 June, caused by such exclusion; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK')**

(a) to (e) Government is committed to ensure equal access to online/digital education, even when done remotely. Quality Online courses are provided through SWAYAM which is an indigenously developed MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course) platform. Since everyone does not have access to internet, under one of the flagship Initiatives, SWAYAM-Prabha, Ministry of Education is providing 34 educational TV channels covering educational contents for Schools and Higher Educational Institutions. Curriculum-based contents are telecast every day as per pre-defined schedule which can be accessed by students as per their convenience. There is a provision of one class, one channel for school education. In addition to this, 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: -

- (i) Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) ranked in top 100 NIRF or NAAC score of 3.26 can offer online programme without prior approval of UGC. Institutions

with NAAC score of 3.01 to 3.25 can offer online programme with prior approval of UGC.

- (ii) For conventional courses, the online content has been increased from up to 20% to 40% in regular degree programmes.
- (iii) 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)
- (iv) Study materials have been provided on an experimental basis for 12 channels for classes 1 to 12 and actions are expedited to run these channels in a full-fledged manner.
- (v) Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- Shiksha Vani
- (vi) Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website/ YouTube.

The above measures taken by the Government prevent the exclusion of vulnerable groups from remote learning.
