

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 126
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.07.2021**

COVID Impact on Education

126. SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:
SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:
SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:
SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE:
SHRI SANJAY SADASHIVRAO MANDLIK:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has noticed any impact of COVID-19 on education from primary to secondary and other higher level courses and its impact on the students;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, course-wise;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken to help students at each level with regard to reduction of fee, syllabus, teaching hours;
- (d) whether it is also true that the economic impact of COVID-19 could push more children into employment and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether it is a fact that many children are at risk of not returning to school next year due to the economic fallout of COVID-19 and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether the Government has any plan to prevent children drop out of school on account of the above reason and if so, the details thereof ?

**ANSWER
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)**

(a) & (b) Education being in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools, colleges and university are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has also had a severe impact on education as schools, universities and colleges closed their premises and states shut their borders in response to lockdown measures. This has interrupted the learning and led to disruption of education system in the country.

The Central Government is constantly advising States/UTs through guidelines and meeting with respect to interventions for reducing impact of pandemic on education. The guidelines issued so far as follows:

- Guidelines For Children of Migrant Labourers:
https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/Migrant%20labour%20guideline.pdf
- Guidelines For Out of School Children and Mitigation of Loss of Learning:
https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/guidelines_oosc.pdf.
- PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education:
https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/pragyata-guidelines_0.pdf
- Learning Enhancement Guidelines for Continuous Learning:
https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/announcement/Learning_%20Enhancement_Guidelines.pdf

- COVID-19 Related Health and Safety Sop/Guidelines for School Re-Opening: https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/SOP_Guidelines_for_reopening_schools.pdf
- Covid Action Plan for School Education: The Department of School Education and Literacy vide letter dated 4th May, 2021 has shared the Covid Action plan with States/UTs
- Guidelines For Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya(JNV) –Residential Schools : <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LAc4iKQTqTJkNVDGc5gIEDsrDGdAXwC8/view>,
- Guidelines for parents: Guidelines for parents to support learning of their children.
- E-content for CWSN : Guidelines for e-content for Children with Special Needs (CWSN).
- CBSE competency-based assessment framework: CBSE in collaboration with British Council has prepared a competency-based assessment framework for class X. This is based on recommendations of NEP 2020 and will help in reducing the stress of exams and aims to develop competencies in students rather than content knowledge alone.
- National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Guidelines for Teachers Education Institutions : https://ncte.gov.in/WebAdminFiles/RecentAnnouncement/0_20_08_2020_637335320672297662.pdf

Further, University Grants Commission (UGC) has also issued notices/advisories to Higher Education Institutions from time to time to contain the spread of COVID-19 and other academic related matters. UGC has framed guidelines for reopening of the campuses which inter alia deals with the safety and well being of the students. UGC has also issued a letter dated 06.07.2020 regarding Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Conduct of Examinations in Higher Education Institutions. UGC via this letter communicated to all Universities/Colleges the detailed procedure issued by the then MHRD for the conduct of Examinations with measures to be taken in view of COVID-19 situation.

c) The subject matter of reduction of fee is within the purview of States/UTs. For Rationalisation of Syllabus for Summative Examinations, CBSE has decided to compensate the loss of face to face teaching learning by rationalizing the syllabus for the Board/Annual Examinations for classes IX to XII to an extent of around 30 percent. With respect to online teaching hours, Pragyata guidelines have been issued. With respect to teaching in classroom after school re-open, guidelines on learning with social distancing. UGC has issued a letter to the Vice-Chancellors of all Universities and Principals of all colleges on 27.05.2020 requesting to consider the payment of annual semester fee, tuition fee, examination fee etc. sympathetically and if feasible, may consider officering alternative payment options to students till the situation returns to normal. Another letter was issued on 17.12.2020 regarding refund of fees and non-retention of documents by the universities. These letters are available on UGC website www.ugc.ac.in.

In view of the emerging situation related to COVID-19 pandemic in India, revised guidelines were issued. Wherein the universities were requested to complete the examinations by the end of September, 2020 in offline (pen & paper)/ online/ blended (online + offline) mode following the prescribed protocols/ guidelines related to COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines have provision that in order to avoid financial hardship being faced by the parents due to lockdown and related factors, full refund of fees be made on account of all cancellation of admissions/ migration of students, up to 30.11.2020, for this very session as a special case. Thereafter, on cancellation/ withdrawal of admissions up to 31.12.2020, the entire fee collected from a student is refunded in full after deduction of not more than Rs.1000/- as processing fee. These guidelines also

stated that all the universities may follow a 6-day week pattern for the academic session 2020-21 and 2021-2022 to compensate the loss for this batch of students. Further, the universities were requested to compensate the delay in the start of academic session in the subsequent years by curtailing the breaks/ vacations so that this batch of students would get their final results for award of degree timely.

(d) & (e) During COVID-19 Pandemic, Ministry of Education has held several consultations with the states and UTs at various levels and taken many initiatives to ensure that the school going students don't lag behind in their studies during COVID-19 pandemic. Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha, financial assistance is provided to the States and UTs for various activities including in rural areas to reduce number of dropouts, which include opening/strengthening of new schools up to senior secondary level, construction of school buildings & additional classrooms, setting up, up-gradation and running of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, setting up of residential schools/hostels, free uniforms, free text books, transport allowance and undertaking enrolment drives, residential as well as non-residential trainings, Seasonal Hostels/ residential camps etc. Financial assistance is also provided for Inclusive Education of children with special needs, Vocational Education and ICT in schools. Further, due to COVID pandemic, since schools were closed, all enrolled children at elementary level have been given Food Security Allowance comprising of food grains and dry ration of pulses etc and to cooking cost.

f) To ensure that children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country, the Department of School Education has prepared and issued detailed guidelines on 7th January, 2021 on the steps to be taken by the States and UTs. The guidelines, among others, include identification of out of school children from age 6-18 years, enrolment drives and awareness generation, student support while schools are closed, continued Education for children with Special Needs (CWSN), student support on school reopening and Teacher capacity building. The link of the guidelines is <https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload-files/mhrd/files/gaidelines-oosc.pdf>.

A comprehensive COVID action plan was prepared and shared with States and UTs on 4th May 2021. The action plan contains guidance for States and UTs for preventing drop outs, locating out of school children and mainstreaming them. This Department has also developed an online module for compiling the data of Out of School children 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 Out of School Children (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 Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Women and Child Development(MWCD), Govt. of India have taken cognizance of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation due to which many children have lost one, and in some cases, both parents to the deadly virus and are determined to work towards providing necessary support to such children in distress and are in need of care and protection. In this regard, a joint letter dated 16.06.2021 from Secretary DoSEL, MoE and Secretary, MWCD has been issued to all States and UTs.
