

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

**LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 117  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.11.2021

**Out of School Children during CORONA**

117. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:  
SHRI GIRISH BHALCHANDRA BAPAT:  
SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE:  
DR. PRITAM GOPINATHRAO MUNDE:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether due to Covid-19 Pandemic out-of-school children are likely to double in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any study, survey in this regard;
- (c) the number of children dropped out during 2020 and 2021 as compared to corresponding period of previous years;
- (d) whether out-of-school children was a major concern even after the first wave;
- (e) whether lack of internet access or not having a proper learning space is a major reason for such high dropout;
- (f) if so, the response of the Government thereon;
- (g) whether the Government has drawn up any action plan to check school dropouts and address learning gaps; and if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) to (g): Education is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and majority of the schools come under the purview of the respective State and UT Government. The Department of School Education & Literacy has, in order to prevent drop outs, lower enrolments and loss of learning, issued guidelines on 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 for identification, smooth admission process and continued education of migrant children.

Further, 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, Ministry of Education has shared guidelines dated 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 with all States which, 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.

Also, a comprehensive Covid action plan has been shared with the States and UTs on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, outlining the role of local bodies, formation of nodal group at village/town level, conducting door-to-door/helpdesk-based/app based survey to identify out of school children, their mainstreaming and resource sharing.

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 concerned State/UT validates 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.

As per the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+) 2018-19 and 2019-20, dropout rate at all levels is as under:

2018-19			2019-20		
Primary	Upper Primary	Secondary	Primary	Upper Primary	Secondary
4.5	4.7	17.9	1.5	2.6	16.1

During the pandemic, the Ministry of Education has taken various steps for providing children continued access to education, which are available to each category of students irrespective of their region or economic standard. A comprehensive initiative called PM e-Vidya has been started which aims to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes all forms of digital modes to provide wide access- DIKSHA (online), SWAYAM (online), SWAYAM PRABHA (TV), other TV Channels including use of Doordarshan and AIR Networks. Further, an Alternate Academic Calendar has been prepared for learning solutions for grade 1 to 12 for both children with and without device. Also, Pragyata guidelines were issued to States/UTs to facilitate continued education through various modes. The guidelines inter-alia include situation where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth, resources are shared through various platforms like television, radio etc that do not depend on internet.

Under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities to reduce number of Out of School Children (OoSC) including opening/strengthening of new schools upto 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 & retention drives. Further, special training for age appropriate admission of out of school children and residential as well as non-residential training for older children, seasonal hostels / residential camps, special training centres at worksites, transport/ escort facility are also supported to bring out of school children to the formal schooling system. Also, mid-day meal is provided to students at the elementary level of education. Further, under the student oriented component for the children with special needs, financial assistance is provided for identification and assessment of children with special needs, aids and appliances, braille kits and books, appropriate teaching learning material and stipend to girl students with disability etc. Also, Section 10 of the RTE Act states that it shall be the duty of every parent or guardian to admit or cause to be admitted his or her child or ward, as the case may be, for elementary education in the neighbourhood school.

Under this scheme, for the first time in 2021-22, financial assistance upto Rs. 2000 per annum has been provided for supporting Out of School Children of age group of 16-19 years, belonging to socio economically disadvantaged groups, for completing their education through NIOS/SIOS, for accessing course materials and certification. Also, under National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme, scholarship is awarded to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue the study at secondary stage.

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