GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 648
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST DECEMBER, 2021

ONLINE LEARNING

648.   SHRI ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether the Government is aware that during the COVID-19 lockdown rural students in the areas located on the foot of hillocks in the state of Telangana faced severe problems in online learning mainly due to the non-availability of sufficient internet and mobile bandwidth in rural areas

(b)   if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c)   whether the Government is taking any steps to designate internet services bandwidth as an essential service to ensure that both BSNL and private telecom service providers provide sufficient bandwidth and stable internet in rural areas in the country including in the state of Telangana and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)

(a) & (b)   A comprehensive initiative called PM eVIDYA has been initiated as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan on 17th May, 2020, which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes:

- DIKSHA (one nation, one digital platform) is the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades are available on it.
- 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.

All these schemes/programmes are available to all the students across the nation.

To reach out to those students who lack access to technology various innovative activities are being done at national, state or district level such as Gali-Gali Sim-Sim, Tili-Mili programme, Motor Eskool, Roving Teacher, Project SMILE (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement), e-Kaksha, formation of Whatsapp and other social media groups, Work Book Distribution at home, Teacher calling to maintain connects with students.

Also, Internet access under BHARATNET scheme has been made available to Government institutions and to improve the internet connectivity in rural areas the CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd (CSC-SPV) of MEITY has been assigned the task of providing Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connectivity to the Government Institutions, including schools.

(c)   No, Sir. No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

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