

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 244
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.03.2022

Online Classes for Differently Abled Students

244. SHRIMATI APARAJITA SARANGI:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the struggles faced by differently abled students in accessing online classes;
- (b) if so, the action taken thereon to increase their accessibility to quality education;
- (c) whether the drop-out ratio among differently abled students has increased since 2020, owing to COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (d) if so, the action taken by the Government with regard to alter the mode of education to make it more inclusive?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY (A) TO (D) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 244 FOR 21.03.2022ASKED BY SHRIMATI APARAJITA SARANGI, HON'BLE MP REGARDING 'ONLINE CLASSES FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED STUDENTS'.

(a) & (b) Education being in the Concurrent List of the Constitution, the state governments/ UTs have been advised by Ministry of Education through policy interventions, guidelines, creation of e-content on electronic devices viz. laptop/desktop, mobile, television, etc. developed and disseminated by NCERT and SCERTs through PM eVIDYA, DTH-TV channels (One Class, One Channel), All India Radio, Community radio channels, DIKSHA portal etc., to increase the accessibility to quality education. NEP (2020) also recommends extensive use of digital technology to provide accessible content to Children with Special Needs (CwSN).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.

(c) to (d) Samagra Shiksha – An Integrated Scheme on School Education envisages the 'school' as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to Senior Secondary levels. The vision of the Scheme is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from pre-school to senior secondary stage. The Scheme envisages to achieve Universal Access, Equity and Quality, promoting Vocationalisation of Education and strengthening of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs). Samagra Shiksha also aims to look at education of CWSN in a continuum from pre-school to class XII. The scheme covers all children with special needs with one or more disabilities as mentioned in the schedule of disabilities of the Right of the Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 studying in Government, Government-aided and local body schools.

Under Inclusive Education (IE) component of Samagra Shiksha, financial assistance is provided for all the enrolled CwSN and the ones receiving home based education services for sub-activities, which includes 1) environment building programme, 2) development of Learning materials, 3) provision of TLMs, 4) assistive devices, aids and equipment, 5) therapeutic services, 6) orientation of education administrators, Principals, teachers , parents/care-givers, peer groups, 7) distribution of aids and appliances, 8) therapeutic services, 9) escort allowances, 10) transport allowances to ensure the access of CwSN to schools, 11) support of helpers/ayaaas

in the schools and resource rooms to cater the specific needs, 12) sports and exposure events to promote the social inclusion of CwSN etc. which helps in retention of CwSN

Financial assistance is also provided to States and UTs for undertaking 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. for universalization of school education/ reducing dropout of children including CWSN.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the education system not only in India but also in countries across the world due to closure of schools. This also lead to a situation where the Centre, States and educational institutions had to adopt online technologies and Blended Mode of Education at a very rapid pace to ensure continued education of the students.

The e-contents are supplementing the regular classroom transactions by assisting teachers with UDL based resources to be used in the teaching-learning process. Notably, these resources are also created to aid the children in adapting to regular schools and encouraging inclusive classrooms. Also, it will help us move towards achieving complete inclusive learning with the standards as recommended in the guidelines for the better educational and professional development of all children with disabilities.
