

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

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2030
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2022**

Education During Pandemic

2030. SHRI T.R. BAALU:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government concurs with the view that the education system now needs not only an infusion of resources for multiple years but also a strengthened focus on the needs of the poor and disadvantaged children;
- (b) if so, the initiatives taken/being taken by the Government keeping in view the fact that the vast majority of the 260 million children enrolled in pre- schools and schools, especially in Government schools, did not have meaningful structured learning opportunities during the last 20 months of school closures; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)**

(a) to (c) The Government of India launched Samagra Shiksha-an Integrated Scheme for school education, w.e.f. 2018-19, as an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class XII and aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of school education. Samagra Shiksha has been aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in order to ensure inclusive and equitable, quality and holistic school education. The major interventions, across all levels of school education, under the scheme are: (i) Universal Access including Infrastructure Development and Retention; (ii) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (iii) Gender and Equity; (iv) Inclusive Education; (v) Quality and Innovation; (vi) Financial support for Teacher Salary; (vii) Digital initiatives; (viii) Right To Education (RTE) Entitlements including uniforms, textbooks etc.; (ix) Support for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE); (x) Vocational Education; (xi) Sports and Physical Education; and (xii) Strengthening of Teacher Education and Training. Samagra Shiksha also has a clear focus on bridging and eliminating gender differences in enrolment, retention and quality of learning. Samagra Shiksha also focuses on improvement in quality of education by providing funds for digital/online Education.

The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has impacted school education across the world. Schools in States and Union Territories were closed as a precautionary measure to protect the students from Novel COVID-19 (Corona) virus. This has interrupted the learning of students from pre- school to grade 12. Education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. During pandemic, Ministry

of Education had several consultations with the States and UTs to assess the various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a view of addressing the issues related to gaps and/or loss of learning among students, during and after the lockdown, National Council of Education Research & Training (NCERT) has prepared 'Alternative Academic Calendar' which is a Week-wise learning plan for grades 1 to 12. It consists of interesting activities and challenges related to topics/themes in the syllabus. It maps the topics/themes with the learning outcomes & facilitates teachers/parents to assess the progress in students' learning in a variety of ways. Also links for e-resources have been provided for those learners who have access to the internet. NCERT has also developed bridge course modules for out-of-school children including various activities which are helpful for bridging the learning gaps and the States/UTs have also been requested to prepare and implement School Readiness Module/Bridge Course in classrooms for initial one or two months for each grade. In addition the Department vide letter dated 4th May, 2021 has shared a comprehensive Covid Action Plan with States/UTs and other stakeholders for mitigating the loss of learning.

A National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy called "National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat)" has been launched by the Ministry of Education (MoE) on 5th July 2021 under the aegis of Samagra Shiksha. The National Mission lays down priorities and actionable agendas for States/UTs to achieve the goal of proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy for every child by grade 3. Vidya Pravesh module has been launched for class 1 students. This is a play based 3 months school preparation program for children entering in Class I.

In addition, 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 the following components:

- 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)
- 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

SWAYAM is a programme initiated by Government of India and designed to achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality. The objective of this effort is to take the best teaching learning resources to all, including the most disadvantaged and to bridge the digital divide for students.

Where the digital facility (mobile device/ DTH television) is not available, Ministry of Education has taken many initiatives like Community Radio Stations and a podcast called Shiksha Vani of CBSE, Textbooks, worksheet supplied to residence of learners, Handbook on 21st Century Skills and community/mohalla classes. Innovation Funds under Samagra Shiksha have been used to set up mobile school, virtual studios, virtual class rooms in schools, Continuous Learning Plan (CLP), pre-loaded tablets etc. in various states and UTs in remote/rural areas where online classes are difficult. Further, in order to provide continuous professional development opportunities to the teachers at the elementary and secondary level, this Department launched the NISHTHA online training programme using DIKSHA platform in October 2020.
