

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

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5253  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.04.2022**

**Impact of Pandemic on Education**

5253. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has made any effort to assess the impact of pandemic related disruptions on the schools and higher education in the country;
- (b) if so, the major findings of such impact/assessment studies in terms of loss of academic duration and effects on skill and knowledge levels of students at different stages of their education; and
- (c) the measures the Government proposes to take to ensure that the adverse effects of these disruptions are mitigated in the future?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (c): The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has impacted school education. 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, Colleges and University are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments.

During COVID-19 Pandemic, Ministry of Education held continuous consultations with the States and UTs at various levels to assess the various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has conducted a survey in the month of July, 2020 with the help of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to understand the scenario of Online Learning of school students in COVID-19 pandemic situation. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) was conducted on 12.11.2021 in 717 districts of the country to assess learning levels of sampled children of grades 3, 5, 8 and 10.

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, proposed 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) RTE Entitlements including uniforms, textbooks etc.; (ix) Support for ECCE; (x) Vocational Education; (xi) Sports and Physical Education; (xii) Strengthening of Teacher Education and Training; (xiii) Monitoring; (xiv) Programme Management; and (xv) National Component. Samagra Shiksha also has a clear focus on bridging and eliminating gender differences in enrolment, retention and quality 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 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of

Samagra Shiksha which is an integrated scheme of school education covering from Pre-School to Senior Secondary level. 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.

The Department of School Education and Literacy 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. 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 portal requires the concerned State/UT to validate 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. 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 RTE Act, 2009.

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, where work is in progress:

- 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

In view of the COVID-19 challenges and in order to provide continuous professional development opportunities to the teachers at the elementary level, this Department launched the NISHTHA online training programme using DIKSHA platform in October 2020. NISHTHA online for elementary level covered 18 modules in 11 languages, including use of ICT in teaching-learning. Around 24 lakh teachers completed NISHTHA online training at elementary level by June, 2021. Further, NISHTHA online training has also been initiated for secondary teachers and teachers teaching at foundational level.

Various digital initiatives are being undertaken by Ministry of Education viz. SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, National Digital Library (NDL), Virtual Lab, e-Yantra, FOSSEE (Free Open-Source Software for Education)etc to ensure quality education to the students. Quality Online courses are provided through SWAYAM which is an indigenously developed MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course) platform.

University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued a letter to Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) on 21.03.2020 that faculty members/researcher should utilize pandemic period for various academic activities such as online teaching, online evaluation, develop instructional material, prepare question bank etc. A letter issued on 11.04.2020 appealing HEIs to share details of the Bharatpadhe online campaign and to provide valuable inputs on twitter or email. Further, UGC issued a letter dated 17.09.2020 requesting the HEIs to popularize and encourage students and faculty to take advantage of online programmes, courses and learning materials.

To avoid hardship to the students/research scholars during lockdown due to two waves of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, the monthly payments were paid even for those students/scholars whose monthly confirmation of data could not be updated by their institutions on the designated scholarship portal. UGC issued Public Notice regarding extension of date for submission of thesis for terminal M.Phil/Ph.D. students vide letters dated 03.12.2020, 16.03.2021, 02.09.2021 and 01.12.2022. These letters are available on [www.ugc.ac.in](http://www.ugc.ac.in).