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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 833
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2022

Education for Differently Abled Children

833. DR. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has started Assisted Technology Innovation to provide socially relevant solutions to aid the learning of children who suffer from various disabilities;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether there is a need for promotion of research in assistive devices and its inclusion in curriculum;
(d) if so, the details thereof;
(e) whether the scheme is creating digital gap in the country; and
(f) the measures taken to remove digital gap in the country particularly for rural areas?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) to (f) National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 endorses the use of assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools in school education for implementing the equitable and inclusive education with support of technology. Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM), organized a virtual event on Assistive Technology Innovations showcasing start-ups and their innovations that enhance or aid the learning of children with special needs (CwSN) on January 17, 2022.

This Ministry is constantly advising States/UTs through guidelines for development of e-content for producing digital resources. The guidelines issued so far, are as follows:

(i) PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education:

   https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/pragyata-guidelines_0.pdf

(ii) Guidelines for the development of e-content for Children with Special Needs (CWSN).

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/CWSN_E-Content_guidelines.pdf

Apart from all these, to remove digital gap in the country particularly for rural areas 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.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has signed MoU with Indian Sign Language Research and Training Center (ISLRTC) for development of Sign language videos. Till 25 February, 2021 about 300 videos have been recorded on NCERT curriculum from classes 1 to 5. These are shared on DIKSHA and telecast on PM eVIDYA DTH TV channels. NCERT has recorded 317 textbook chapters of different grades as audio books and uploaded on DIKSHA.

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) is imparting daily 8 hours live programmes on PMeVidya channels, for classes 10 and 12 for providing continued learning support for learners at Secondary and Senior Secondary level including Vocational Courses and Indian Sign Language-based content w.e.f. 01.09.2020. NIOS is using One DTH channel specifically for hearing impaired students in sign language. For visually and hearing-impaired students, study material has been developed in Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language which are available on NIOS website/ YouTube. Course material in 20 subjects at secondary level and 5 subjects at senior secondary level are already uploaded on DIKSHA Portal by NIOS. 141 sign language videos for CWSN are uploaded on DIKSHA portal by NIOS.

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