

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 872
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2022**

Learning Loss Due to COVID -19

872. SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the learning loss due to prolonged closure of schools;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to compensate long term loss of the students;
- (c) whether the Government proposes full fledged opening of schools and colleges; and
- (d) if so, whether the Government has issued any directives in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has impacted school education. Schools in States and Union Territories (UT) 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 being 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. A sample survey was conducted in the month of July, 2020 for schools of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) by the Department. Subsequently, further surveys were conducted in early 2021 regarding availability of various forms of digital devices with children. NVS has reported 92.95% and KVS has more than 98% of students having full or partial access to some digital device. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) was held on November 12, 2021 across India to assess the learning outcomes of students and schools across grades 3,5,8 and 10.

(b) In order to mitigate the impact of challenges thrown by the COVID-19 pandemic for migrant children and for preventing drop outs, lower enrolments and loss of learning, the Ministry of Education issued guidelines for identification, smooth admission process and continued education of migrant children on 13.07.2020. To ensure that children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country, the Department of School Education has prepared and issued detailed guidelines on 7th January, 2021, on the steps to be taken by the States and UTs. The guidelines, among others, include identification of out of school children from age 6-18

years, enrolment drives and awareness generation, student support while schools are closed, continued education for children with Special Needs (CWSN), student support on school reopening and Teacher capacity building.

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, 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

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 are being organized. Innovation Funds of the Department are used to set up mobile school, virtual studios, virtual class rooms in schools, Continuous Learning Plan (CLP) for States/UTs has been initiated in all States/UTs, pre-loaded tablets under Samagra Shiksha in various states and UTs are effectively used in remote/rural areas where online classes are difficult. Further 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.

(c) & (d) Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) vide their order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A) dated 30th September, 2020 has stated that State/UT Governments may take a decision in respect of re-opening of schools, after 15th October, 2020, in a graded manner. Further, Department of Higher Education (DHE), Ministry of Education may take a decision on the timing of the opening of Colleges/Higher Education Institutions, in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), based on the assessment of the situation.

The Department of School Education and Literacy has issued detailed SOP/guidelines regarding health and safety precautions for reopening of schools after issue of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) guidelines for unlock-5, on 5th October, 2020. These are based on the prevailing instructions of Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Education with regard to health and safety protocols, and are to be implemented by adopting/adapting in accordance with the local situation in all states/UTs. These guidelines can be accessed at:

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/SOP_Guidelines_for_reopening_schools_0.pdf

These guidelines have been revised vide letter 17th December, 2021.

The University Grant Commission (UGC) has also framed Guidelines for Re-opening the Universities and Colleges Post lockdown due to COVID-19 Pandemic which provide in detail the measures to be taken before re-opening of campuses. The guidelines may be adopted by the institutions as per the local conditions and directives of the Governments authorities.
