

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 884

TO BE ANSWERED ON 07TH FEBRUARY, 2022

Education in Rural Areas

884. SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that a study conducted on school students between grades 1 and 8 from underprivileged backgrounds has highlighted that only 6 per cent of the children were attending online classes in rural areas, as many as 57 per cent of the children had not studied at all for the entirety of the pandemic;
- (b) whether 20 per cent of students in urban areas and 44 per cent in rural areas said they had not received compensation in place of the mid-day meal at all and steps taken by the Government to ensure students receive food at home instead; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that all students from all sections of the society including Minority, Dalit and Adivasi students are able to access online education equally?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) & (c) During the pandemic, the Ministry of Education has taken various steps for providing children continued access to education, which are available to each category of students irrespective of their region or economic standard. A comprehensive initiative called PM eVidya has been started which aims to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes all forms of digital modes to provide wide access-DIKSHA (online), SWAYAM (online), SWAYAM PRABHA (TV), other TV Channels including use of Doordarshan and AIR Networks. Further, an Alternate Academic Calendar has been prepared for learning

solutions for grade 1 to 12 for both children with and without device. Also, Pragyata guidelines were issued to States/UTs to facilitate continued education through various modes. The guidelines inter-alia include situation where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth, resources are shared through various platforms like television, radio etc that do not depend on internet.

(b) As far as Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) (earlier known as Mid-Day Meal) Scheme is concerned it may be stated that due to the COVID pandemic, since schools were closed, all enrolled children are eligible for Food Security Allowance comprising of food grains and cooking cost. Some States/UTs have provided food grains along with payment of cooking cost into the beneficiary's bank accounts/through cash while other States/UTs provided food grains and dry ration like pulses etc equivalent to cooking cost during 2020-21 and the same is being continued. About 11.80 crore children are benefited under the scheme studying in 11.20 lakh school during this period.
