

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4776
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21/08/2025

SPECIAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT THROUGH EMRSs

4776. DR. HEMANT VISHNU SAVARA:

Will the Minister of Tribal Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) the specific initiatives being implemented to promote digital literacy and other future-ready skills among students in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs);
- (b) whether any dedicated digital coaching or special academic support is being provided to EMRSs students for competitive examinations such as IIT-JEE and NEET and if so, the details of such programmes and the number of student beneficiaries;
- (c) the status of integration of vocational training in EMRSs through establishment of Skill Labs and introduction of CBSE-linked skill courses;
- (d) the details of the framework for providing structured career counselling to EMRSs students and the mechanism in place to track the impact of counselling on higher-education and career outcomes; and
- (e) the details of skill-development programmes implemented in EMRSs in Maharashtra, particularly in Palghar district and the number of student beneficiaries?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

(a) National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), an autonomous organization under Ministry of Tribal Affairs, has been established to manage and implement the scheme of Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) in co-ordination with State EMRS Societies. To promote digital literacy and other future-ready skills among EMRS students, following specific initiatives have been implemented in EMRS:

1. Establishment of Centers of excellence: NESTS has established three Centres of Excellence — one in Bhopal, one in Maharashtra, and one in Andhra Pradesh — for IIT-JEE and NEET preparation of EMRS students.
2. Digital Tutoring: Digital tutoring for NEET and IIT preparation in EMRSs, where the science stream is provided by the Ex-Navodayan Foundation and PACE IIT & Medical.
3. iHUB Divya Sampark Initiative: A joint effort by the Department of Science and Technology and IIT Roorkee to establish experience centers/labs in EMRSs to benefit tribal students.
4. Dedicated DTH TV Channel in collaboration with CIET has been introduced in EMRSs to deliver curriculum and competitive content to tribal students studying in classes 9th to 12th.
5. Smart Class Infrastructure: In collaboration with ERNET, MeitY, smart classrooms have been enabled in EMRSs to enhance the learning experience.

6. Skill development labs in schools to promote vocational skills and prepare students for future employment opportunities.
7. Amazon Future Engineers Program- a significant capacity-building drive, undertaken in EMRSs to strengthen computer science education to 178 teachers from 187 EMRSs.
8. Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) Project, which specifically focuses on Establishing vocational skills labs and Training of Trainers (ToT) in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) under Pradhan Mantri Koushal Vikas Yojna (PMKV) 4.0.
9. Cyber Security - NESTS has initiated a program that aims at capacity building of the teachers in EMRS in the domain of AR – VR and cybersecurity, and empower them to further cascade these new age skills among EMRS students and make them future ready.

(b) NESTS has entered into an MoU with two NGOs to provide offline coaching to EMRS students for IIT-JEE/NEET preparation through Centres of Excellence — one in Bhopal, one in Maharashtra, and one in Andhra Pradesh. The students have already been selected and have started their coaching. Arrangements are also in place for online teaching to prepare the students for competitive examinations such as IIT-JEE and NEET.

(c) CBSE Skill Labs- CBSE skill labs has been established in 14 selected EMRSs, targeting to 50 more EMRSs.

Establishment of Atal Tinkering Lab- 26 labs has been established. Each lab is equipped with STEM kits, AI modules, electronics, and 3D printers for hands-on learning.

CBSE-linked skill courses- Instructions have been issued to State Societies and schools for selecting two skill subjects for the secondary level and two for the senior secondary level from the CBSE approved list.

(d) A career guidance system has been proposed through the implementation of the psychometric test-based initiative named “**Tribal Aptitude Life Skill and Self Esteem Hub (TALASH)**” by NESTS for EMRS students, designed to provide digital career counselling and aptitude assessment, inspired by NCERT’s “Tamanna” initiative, and developed in consultation with UNICEF. It enables students to undertake a digital psychometric test via a dedicated web portal, which then generates career cards and personalized career pathways based on their aptitude in seven core areas. The portal also includes Life Skills and Self-Esteem modules, along with E-Learning resources for teachers to support and guide students effectively. Additionally, a structured three-phase training programme has been rolled out to build the capacity of EMRS teachers to implement and sustain this initiative, thereby ensuring a supportive environment that promotes the continuity of tribal students into higher education.

(e) Following initiatives has been taken for skill development in EMRSs:

1. **Tribal Aptitude Life Skill and Self Esteem Hub (TALASH)-** TALASH focuses on psychometric assessment and career mapping, enabling students to gain personalized insights into their strengths and career paths The program is implemented through a structured training approach conducted in three phases: national, state, and school levels.
2. **Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) Project-** The program specifically focuses on Establishing vocational skills labs and Training of Trainers (ToT) in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) under PMKVY 4.0. Vocational skill labs have been installed in 199 out of 200 EMRSs.
