

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-232
ANSWERED ON-02/02/2026**

Declining Learning in Foundational Literacy

232. Smt. Pratima Mondal:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that despite repeated policy announcements national and international assessments continue to show stagnant or declining learning outcomes in foundational literacy and numeracy, particularly in Government schools, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) the details of measurable and independently verified outcomes to demonstrate actual implementation of the NEP, beyond pilot projects and policy circulars;
- (c) whether it is a fact that public expenditure on education has remained below 6 percent of GDP, despite being a long standing national commitment reaffirmed in the National Education policy; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

- (a): National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 gives the highest priority to achieving universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) for all children by Grade II. To achieve this objective, Ministry of Education launched the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat Mission) on 5th July, 2021 to create an enabling ecosystem for early learning across States and Union Territories.

Under the Mission, a range of systemic interventions have been undertaken. These include nationwide implementation of Vidya Pravesh, a three-month school-readiness module for all Grade 1 students; large-scale teacher and school head training through NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement)-FLN focusing on activity-based and child-centric

pedagogy; provision of play-based and digital learning resources such as DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)- FLN content, Jaadui Pitara &e-Jaadui Pitara for children in the 3–8 age group, Primers developed in 121 Local Languages for foundational literacy and numeracy in mother tongue, play-based text books for Grades I and II. Further, guidelines on co-location of Anganwadi Centres with primary schools, released on 5th September 2025 ensure convergence between school education and Anganwadis, supporting smoother transition from pre-school to Grade 1.

The Government of India conducts periodic large-scale assessments to measure learning and education outcomes across the country. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) was conducted in 2017 and again in 2021 to assess the learning levels of students in Grades 3, 5, 8 and 10 across language, mathematics, environmental studies, science and social science.

PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) is conducted to evaluate the learning competencies of students in Foundational Literacy & Numeracy, Language and Mathematics at the end of each of the educational stages i.e. Foundational, Preparatory and Middle in Grades 3, 6 & 9. PARAKH is conducted once in three years.

The latest PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024 was conducted on 4th December, 2024. The State/UT wise PARAKH 2024 report has been officially released in public domain on 2nd July, 2025. This can be accessed at <https://dashboard.parakh.ncert.gov.in/en>

PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024 findings highlight a significant improvement in foundational literacy and numeracy skills outcomes, reflecting the positive impact of the NIPUN Bharat Mission as envisioned in NEP 2020. It reflects that the performance of children in Grade 3 in rural school is better than urban schools and government schools have performed better than private schools at foundational stage.

(b): After the announcement of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), a number of transformative changes have taken place both in school and higher education for its implementation. In addition to initiatives mentioned in part (a) above, a series of significant initiatives have been undertaken in line with the vision of NEP 2020 such as:-

Samagra Shiksha, an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from preschool to class 12 aims for improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes. The structure has been modified

from 10+2 to 5+3+3+4 corresponding to Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary stages. The scheme is in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal for Education (SDG-4) and has been fully aligned with the recommendation of the National Education Policy 2020.

PM POSHAN Scheme: Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme has been revamped and extended to cover students of Balvatika in addition to students of Classes I-VIII in Government and Government-Aided Schools. In a pivotal move, setting up of School Nutrition Gardens (SNG) are encouraged in all schools and to further strengthen community participation, a special initiative named 'Tithi Bhojan' has been initiated.

The National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) was released on 20th October, 2022 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) was released on 23rd August, 2023. Under NCF-SE, the curriculum has been aligned with the National Education Policy 2020, emphasizing the 5+3+3+4 design of schooling. This framework addresses the entire educational journey from the foundational to secondary stages. Textbooks for classes 3 to 8 as per NCF-SE (2023) have been released.

Norms and standards for 4-year integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) has been notified vide gazette notification dated 22.10.2021 by NCTE. From 2023-24 to 2024-25, 64 institutions granted recognition for 4-year integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) with an intake of 6,100.

Vidya Sameeksha Kendra (VSK) was launched on 06.09.2020. VSK has been established centrally at the NCERT, CBSE and all the States/UTs except Kerala.

Holistic Progress Card: The Competency Based Assessment for Holistic Development, the Holistic Progress Card for the Preparatory, Foundational, Middle and Secondary stage have been prepared and shared with all states and UTs. The HPC are available at: <https://ncert.nic.in/parakh/hpc.php?ln=en>

National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) defines the work of teachers and makes explicit elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. NCTE has developed a guiding document that outlines the competencies that teachers should possess to effectively perform their roles. NPST guiding document released on 9th March 2024 and is now available in 22 Indian Scheduled languages and Braille Version & Audio format.

National Mission for Mentoring (NMM) is about the creation of a large pool of outstanding professionals willing to provide mentoring to school teachers. The 'Bluebook on NMM' was released on 9th March 2024 and is now available in 22 Indian Scheduled languages and Braille Version & Audio format.

Under PM e-VIDYA, DIKSHA is the one nation, one digital education infrastructure. All states/UTs have been onboarded in DIKSHA. This digital infrastructure is artificial intelligence based and is highly scalable. This infrastructure is also being utilized for creating Energized Textbooks (ETBs) and presently 7,497 ETBs are published on DIKSHA. There are total of 3,74,460 e-contents available on DIKSHA and eContent available in 135 languages (128 Indian + 7 Foreign Languages).

DTH Channels of SWAYAM PRABHA have been expanded to 200 channels for School Education, meant to support and reach those who do not have access to the internet with a total of 1,04,737 Video Contents equals 31034 hours of telecast received from States/UTs/ABs in 45 languages.

National Digital Educational Architecture (NDEAR) was launched on 29th July 2021 with a vision to create a unifying national digital infrastructure to energize and catalyse the education ecosystem.

Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID - Aadhaar linked unique lifelong digital identity for school enrolled learners. More than 15.33 crore APAAR ID generated through the parent/guardian consent and subsequent Aadhaar verification, ensuring accountability and transparency in the registry.

Vidyanjali is a school volunteer management program to strengthen Government and Government aided schools through community and private sector involvement across the country. From its inception on 07.09.2021 8,41,355 Govt. and Govt aided schools have onboarded 5,59,635 volunteers and 2,591 CSR/NGOs.

PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme was launched on 7th September 2022 with an aim to develop more than 14500 selected schools as exemplar schools that offers leadership to other schools in the neighbourhood, showcasing all the initiatives of NEP 2020.

ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Adult Education, aligns with NEP 2020 and aims to provide educational opportunities to the non-literates of aged 15 years and above. A dedicated Mobile App was launched on 29.07.2023 for registering learners and volunteer teachers and also enable teaching learning process by providing access to primers available in 27 languages. More than 3.13 crore Learners and 46.95 lakh Volunteer Teachers (VTs) have been registered. Till date, 6 States/UTs, i.e. Ladakh, Goa, Mizoram, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh have been declared “Fully Literate”.

District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) have been developed as centres of excellence for strengthening teacher training.

(c&d): Education is in the Concurrent list, and majority of educational institutions are under the management of States/UTs. The expenditure incurred by the Central Government is about **25%** of total government spending on education. At Centre, in addition to the expenditure on education by the M/o Education, the spending of other Ministries/Department on education related activities like training, research, and development etc. also forms parts of the total expenditure on education. Similarly, at State/UT level, the expenditure incurred by the D/o Education as well as spending of other Departments on education related activities forms the total spending on education at the State/UT level. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) unequivocally endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central Government and all State Governments to reach 6% of GDP. As far as Ministry of Education is concerned, there has been increase in budget allocation from Rs. 93,224.31 crore (2021-22) to Rs. 1,28,650.05 (2025-26), which is around 38 % increase. As per latest “Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education 2019-20 to 2021-22” , total expenditure on education (including all Central Ministries and all States/UTs) as percentage of GDP stands at 4.12% (for the year 2021-22).
