

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1937
ANSWERED ON- 20/12/2023

School education in rural India and urban India

1937 # DR. SONAL MANSINGH:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a wide gap between the school education in rural India and urban India in terms of equality and quality of educational opportunities;

(b) whether several suggestions have been made in the National Education Policy 2020 to bridge this gap, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the policy related steps taken by Government vis-a-vis those suggestions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (c): The National Education Policy 2020 has envisaged that the gap between the current status of learning outcomes and desired outcomes in all regions can be addressed through undertaking major reforms that bring the highest quality, equity, and integrity into the system, from early childhood care to higher education. Accordingly, this Policy bridges the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in school education and has continued to be one of the major goals of all education sector development programmes. Some of the major recommendations and steps taken to bridge this gap are as under:

1. All efforts will be made early on to ensure that any gaps that exist between the language spoken by the child and the medium of teaching are bridged. Teachers will be encouraged to use a bilingual approach, including bilingual teaching-learning materials, with those students whose home language may be different from the medium of instruction.
2. Vocational education will be integrated into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. Focus areas for vocational education will be chosen based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities.

3. Central and State governments will take steps to ensure that books are made accessible and affordable to all across the country including socio-economically disadvantaged areas as well as those living in rural and remote areas.
4. Olympiads and competitions in various subjects will be conducted across the country, with clear coordination and progression from school to local to state to national levels, to ensure that all students may participate at all levels for which they qualify. Efforts will be made to make these available in rural areas and in regional languages to ensure widespread participation.
5. VIDYA PRAVESH has been launched on 29th July, 2021. The module is around 12 weeks of developmentally appropriate instruction for the children entering of Grade I to strengthen a child's pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, cognitive and social skills. This program ensures that children coming from all backgrounds including rural become school ready.
6. Under PM e-VIDYA, DIKSHA is the one nation, one digital education infrastructure. All states/UTs have been onboarded in DIKSHA. This will provide education to both rural and urban India.
7. The existing 12 DTH Channels of SWAYAM PRABHA for School Education are meant to support and reach those who do not have access to the internet have been extended to 200 channels with more than 13,000 contents produced for telecast in 31 languages.

The Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing an integrated centrally sponsored scheme for School education- Samagra Shiksha. The scheme treats school education holistically, without segmentation from pre-primary to class XII and now aligned with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and aims to ensure that all children have access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment which should take care of their diverse background, multilingual needs, different academic abilities and make them active participants in the learning process.

Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented in partnership with States and UTs. The objectives of the scheme include improving the nutritional status of children studying in Bal Vatika (just before class-I) and classes I-VIII in Government and Government-aided schools; encouraging poor children to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities; and providing nutritional support to children of elementary stage in drought/disaster affected areas during summer vacation and disaster times.
