

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1351
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 22.09.2020

DIGITAL DIVIDE IN TRIBAL AREAS OF ODISHA

1351. DR. AMAR PATNAIK:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by Government to address the digital divide in tribal areas of Odisha;
- (b) whether any scheme is in place to address the aforementioned issue;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) If not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the details of the measures taken by Government to make online education viable and feasible for tribal children in Odisha?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)

(a) to (d): To address the digital divide in the country including the tribal areas of Odisha, the Government of India has initiated the following Schemes/Programmes:

In the years 2014 to 2016, two Schemes titled “National Digital Literacy Mission” (NDLM) and “Digital Saksharta Abhiyan” (DISHA) were implemented by the Government with a target to train 52.50 lakh candidates in digital literacy across the country including rural India. Under these two schemes, a total of 53.67 lakh beneficiaries were trained. including 7,17,412 beneficiaries from ST category.

Further, the Government approved a scheme titled “Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)” in 2017 to usher in digital literacy in rural India by covering 6 crore rural households (one person per household). The scheme is specifically targeting the rural population especially the marginalized sections of society including Scheduled Tribes. Under the PMGDISHA Scheme the target for the State of Odisha is 25,17,000. As on 17.09.2020, a total of 21,80,396 candidates have been enrolled and around 17,02,645 candidates have completed the training, out of which 12,61,120 have been certified by duly authorized 3rd party Assessment Agencies. Out of the above achievements in Odisha, around 3,41,991 tribal candidates have been

enrolled and 2,53,037 candidates have completed the training out of which 1,79,148 candidates have been certified.

The IT for Masses Programme of Ministry of Electronics & IT is aimed at narrowing the Digital Divide by initiate/promote activities in ICT for focus groups (Women, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Senior Citizen, Differently Abled, Economic Weaker Section (EWS) and Minorities) and underprivileged areas (North Eastern Region, Backward Districts and Blocks &

Districts having more than 40% SC/ST population). Under IT for Masses programme, the following projects have been initiated to address the digital divide in tribal areas of Odisha:

- “Skill Development of youths in Aspirational Districts in the area of IECT leading to enhancement in Employability” aimed at improving the digital literacy amongst the SC/ST youth in 60 Aspirational Districts including the Dhenkanal and Gajapati Districts of Odisha.
- “Facilitating Skill Development and Enhancing Employability in IT-ITes Sector for SC/ST Candidates” aimed at providing financial assistance by facilitating skill development in IT/ITES Sector for enhancing employability of unemployed youth through a residential training programme by involving state-of-art training providers across the country. The Boudh and Cuttack Districts are covered in Odisha.

(e) : The following measures have been taken by the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education to make online education viable and feasible for children:

i. 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:

- 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 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

Initiatives like DIKSHA, Swayam Prabha, Swayam MOOCs, ePathshala, NIOS content are being used extensively by students.

ii. INDIA REPORT- Digital Education June 2020

The State/ UT Governments have also managed the critical task of providing digital education at the door step of the students. The report can be accessed here:

https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/India_Report_Digital_Education_0.pdf

iii. PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education

Keeping in view the availability of digital infrastructure, guideline briefs on various modes of digital education including online mode that depends more on availability of internet, partially online mode that utilizes the blended approach of digital technology and other offline activities, partial and offline mode that utilizes television and radio as a major medium of instruction of education.

The guidelines can be accessed at:

https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/pragyata-guidelines_0.pdf
