EDUDOC SERVICE SERIES

EDUDOC SERVICES : NEWSCLIPS

NEWS CLIPPINGS FROM DAILY NEWSPAPERS

February 2026

विद्यया ऽमृतमश्नुते

एन सी ई आर टी
NCERT

LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTATION DIVISION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
National Council of Educational Research & Training
Sri Aurobindo Marg, NewDelhi-110016
Phone: 011-26592317 E-mail:library-nie@ncert.nic.in

Preface

The Library and Documentation Division (LDD) of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), serves as a crucial hub for information, research, and academic resources, supporting the diverse needs of educators, researchers, and policy-makers in education. Established to foster an environment conducive to educational excellence and innovation, LDD plays a pivotal role in the dissemination of knowledge and the promotion of advanced learning in the field of academic research. LDD is recognized for its hybrid collection of old and new print collections of books, journals, reports, and other reference collections.

With the mandate of Dr. Dinesh Prasad Saklani, the Hon'ble Director, NCERT, the Library and Documentation Division executes several specialized services for its patrons known as e*dudoc services*. In this edition of "EDUDOC SERVICES: NEWSCLIPS", the LDD has delved into and presented a compilation of newspaper clippings published in reputed newspapers related to education during the month of **February 2026**.

In the fast-paced world of today, newspapers play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and keeping society informed about the latest developments. This publication of newspaper clippings is an attempt to encapsulate news published about National Education Policy; National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and School Education.

(Dr.Akash)
Head, LDD
NCERT,NewDelhi

CONTENTS

S. No.	Headings & Title	Newspaper Name	Page No. in Newspaper	Date	Pg.
1.	How to start building a career in the age of AI	The Hindu	14	01-02-2026	1
2.	Union Education Minister Lauds Historic Budget 2026-27, Calling It A Yuva Shakti Driven Budget-A Budget For Human Capital For Viksit Bharat	PIB	E-News Article	01-02-2026	2
3.	India's Bane of Poor Quality Academic Textbooks	The New Indian Express	E-News Article	01-02-2026	7
4.	Government-Backed Bhartiya Shiksha Board Gains Schools Across Country: What It Is And Its Key Features	ETV Bharat	E-News Article	01-02-2026	11
5.	Education Budget 2026 Live Updates: From AI classrooms to workforce skills, here is what to expect as FM Sitharaman tables the Budget	The Times of India	E-News Article	01-02-2026	14
6.	Budget 2026 sharpens focus on Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalayas as school education gets fresh funding push	The Times of India	E-News Article	01-02-2026	18
7.	Budget 2026 redraws education roadmap with girls' hostels, AI and skills focus	The Economic Times	E-News Article	01-02-2026	23
8.	स्कूल-कॉलेजों में कंटेंट क्रिएटर लैब बनेंगीं	हिन्दुस्तान	6	02-02-2026	26
9.	राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के अनुरूप ज्ञान और कौशल में हो रहा निवेश	अमर उजाला	13	02-02-2026	27
10.	पांच 'विश्वविद्यालय शहर' बनाएगी सरकार	जनसत्ता	10	02-02-2026	28
11.	5 varsity townships, girls hostel in each district soon: FM	The Indian Express	15	02-02-2026	29
12.	Outlay hiked for SC, tribals, disability welfare schemes	The Indian Express	15	02-02-2026	29
13.	Stronger learner engagement, regular curriculum updates can boost SWAYAM course completion rate	The Times of India	23	02-02-2026	30
14.	15K content creator labs for schools; national design institute on anvil	The Tribune	7	02-02-2026	31
15.	Booster shot for education and skilling	The Hindu	7	02-02-2026	32
16.	UP Board initiative: Edu dept officials to inspect schools to ensure use of authorised NCERT-based books	Hindustan Times	E-News Article	02-02-2026	33
17.	NEP 2020 And Indian Culture/Knowledge Systems: Quicker Implementation Needed	Free Press Journal	E-News Article	02-02-2026	37

18.	Budget 2026 to boost education and employment creation, says Dharmendra Pradhan	ET Education	E-News Article	02-02-2026	40
19.	Reframing Examinations as a Journey of Learning	The Pioneer	14	03-02-2026	44
20.	Strategic repositioning of higher education	The Pioneer	8	03-02-2026	45
21.	NEP 2020: Nurturing responsible citizens for a sustainable future	Good morning Kashmir	E-News Article	03-02-2026	46
22.	NCERT books to have 7-digit verification code	The Times of India	E-News Article	03-02-2026	50
23.	Budget 2026–27:Why schools are becomin India's first line of economic defence	ET Education	E-News Article	03-02-2026	52
24.	Budget 2026: Education funding up 8.27 per cent; Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan calls it youth focused	Organiser	E-News Article	03-02-2026	60
25.	Rajasthan School Education Department set to prepare 3-year roadmap for career guidance	ET Education	E-News Article	04-02-2026	64
26.	पढ़ना जरूरी है	अमर उजाला	8	05-02-2026	68
27.	18,727 government schools closed in India in 5 years, private schools rise	India Today	E-News Article	05-02-2026	69
28.	जीवन का अंतिम लक्ष्य नहीं हैं परीक्षाएं	दैनिक जागरण	10	06-02-2026	77
29.	Indian teacher wins $1 million Global Teacher Prize in Dubai	The Pioneer	12	06-02-2026	78
30.	Pariksha Pe Charcha: A Heart-to-Heart Interaction Guiding Students Through Examination Challenges	PIB	E-News Article	06-02-2026	79
31.	Indian Knowledge Systems, lived realities to be focus of NCERT textbooks: Draft syllabus	Hindustan Times	E-News Article	06-02-2026	87
32.	Exams are like festivals and should be celebrated, focus not only on marks but on improving life: PM to students	ETEducation	E-News Article	06-02-2026	91
33.	सुविधा का पाठ	जनसत्ता	4	07-02-2026	97
34.	अंकों के पीछे नहीं भागें... खुद को जीवन की कसौटी पर कसें	अमर उजाला	1	07-02-2026	98
35.	Creating a conducive learning environment	The Pioneer	8	07-02-2026	99
36.	Module finalised for NCERT's Open Educational Resource	The New Indian Express	E-News Article	07-02-2026	100
37.	Academic year nearly over, MCD school students yet to receive financial aid to buy uniform, bag	The Indian Express	7	08-02-2026	101
38.	One Crore Mandatory Biometric Updates (MBUs) for schoolchildren completed by UIDAI	PIB	E-News Article	08-02-2026	103

39.	A shift in direction for education and jobs	Financial Express	7	09-02-2026	105
40.	We need to keep children safe from social-media harms	The Indian Express	10	09-02-2026	106
41.	'First exam mandatory, attempt second only if improvement required'	The Indian Express	8	09-02-2025	107
42.	Teachers key messengers of NEP-2020: Prof Narayan Lal Gupta	Daily Excelsior	E-News Article	09-02-2026	108
43.	Padhai with AI: Himachal Pradesh's Digital Learning Initiative and the Emerging Future of Education	Education Today	E-News Article	09-02-2026	109
44.	Over 7 lakh Kendriya Vidyalaya students assessed via education ministry's TARA app, 1.46 lakh on career tool	News by Careers 360	E-News Article	09-02-2026	116
45.	NCERT to Release Revised 9th Class Social Science Textbooks	Sakshi Education	E-News Article	09-02-2026	120
46.	NCERT to release new class IX Social Science textbooks with IKS focus	Education Times	E-News Article	09-02-2026	122
47.	PM advises students to use Al for guidance, not as learning substitute	The Pioneer	5	10-02-2026	124
48.	Education Minister, Abhinav Bindra Meet To Discuss Sports Learning At School Level	News18	E-News Article	10-02-2026	125
49.	CBSE to implement on-screen marking for class 12 board exams from 2026-27: Schools asked to ensure technical readiness	The Times of India	E-News Article	10-02-2026	128
50.	एकलव्य शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम अगले पांच वर्ष तक रहेगा जारी	दैनिक जागरण	III	11-02-2026	131
51.	12वी की आंसरशीट्स की डिजिटल चेकिंग	नवभारत टाइम्स	5	11-02-2026	131
52.	CM launches Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana to support girls' education	The Pioneer	3	11-02-2026	132
53.	Delhi govt to upgrade Ladli scheme, will cost Rs 160 crore; CM says aim is to clear backlog	The Indian Express	4	11-02-2026	133
54.	CM Rekha inaugurates new school block in west Delhi	The Pioneer	2	11-02-2026	134
55.	Textbook distribution to begin on Feb 13; new record	The New Indian Express	E-News Article	11-02-2026	135
56.	Only 52 Govt Schools Onboarded Under Vidyanjali Initiative In WB, Says Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary	DD News	E-News Article	11-02-2026	138
57.	NCERT revisions: Post PM-SHRI, will Kerala revolt once again by teaching chapters rubbished by Centre	OnManorama	E-News Article	11-02-2026	139
58.	NCERT Launches Free Online Physics Course For Class 12 On SWAYAM	Education Today	E-News Article	11-02-2026	142
59.	How early AI education in schools can help India build a future ready generation	The Times of India	E-News Article	11-02-2026	147

60.	NCERT : वंदे मातरम समेत कई विषयों पर आएंगे स्पेशल मॉड्यूल	नवभारत टाइम्स	2	12-02-2026	150
61.	सरकारी स्कूल में लगेंगे 21 हजार स्मार्ट बोर्ड	अमर उजाला	7	12-02-2026	150
62.	CBSE to implement 'on screen marking' for class 12 board exams	Millennium Post	7	12-02-2026	151
63.	Facing trouble with faith, reason, and resolve	The Pioneer	8	12-02-2026	152
64.	Education Ministry to organise Bharat Bodhan at Al Conclave: Pradhan	The Pioneer	5	12-02-2026	153
65.	Education Minister Highlights Rapid AI Adoption In Indian Education	DD News	E-News Article	12-02-2026	154
66.	भारत बोधनः स्कूल, हायर एजुकेशन और स्किलिंग के लिए AI इनोवेशन	नवभारत टाइम्स	12	13-02-2026	155
67.	एआई के क्षेत्र में भारत दनिया का नेतृत्व करेगा'	हिन्दुस्तान	11	13-02-2026	155
68.	तीसरी कक्षा से ही बच्चों को एआई की पढ़ाई कराई जाएगी	हिन्दुस्तान	1	13-02-2026	156
69.	CBSE to roll out digital marking for Class 12 board examination from 2026	The Statesman	2	13-02-2026	157
70.	Government has adopted multi-pronged approach to address the educational, social and economic empowerment of girls	PIB	E-News Article	13-02-2026	158
71.	NEP's promise meets fiscal reality: Education ministry underspends despite record funding	The Federal Voice of States	E-News Article	13-02-2026	162
72.	No verification of marks after Class-12 results from 2026 as CBSE resorts to digit evaluation	ET Education Times	E-News Article	13-02-2026	165
73.	Indian Library Congress to be held at Anna Centenary Library, Chennai on Feb 16-17	Hindustan Times	9	14-02-2026	168
74.	CBSE to scrap post-result verification of Class 12 marks from 2026 to boost transparency	The New Indian Express	E-News Article	14-02-2026	169
75.	चार वर्षीय एकीकृत शिक्षक शिक्षा कार्यक्रम में 177 फीसद सीटें बढ़ीं	जनसत्ता	5	15-02-2026	171
76.	Write section-wise answers in science, social science exams: CBSE to students	Millennium Post	6	15-02-2026	172
77.	In NEP, AI catalyst, technology bridge for education: Pradhan	The Indian Express	1	15-02-2026	172
78.	Chennai to host two-day Indian Library Congress	The Pioneer	6	16-02-2026	173
79.	10वीं के सभी छात्रों को पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में उपस्थित होना अनिवार्य	दैनिक जागरण	2	16-02-2026	174
80.	Class 10 students must sit for first of the two board exams, says CBSE	The Pioneer	1	17-02-2026	175
81.	Bodhan AI: Centre's new bid to integrate Al tools in schools	The Indian Express	14	17-02-2026	176

82.	APAAR ID must for Class 9, 11 registration: CBSE	Hindustan Times	E-News Article	17-02-2026	177
83.	41% VNSGU students reject NEP's 4th year: Why 'Honours' dream is clashing with reality in Gujarat	The Indian Express	E-News Article	17-02-2026	182
84.	सरकारी स्कूलों में एआइ कक्षाएं, विदेशी भाषा भी सीखेंगे विद्यार्थी	दैनिक जागरण	1	18-02-2026	184
85.	Students emerge relieved after writing 'easy' first paper of CBSE board exams	The Pioneer	2	18-02-2026	185
86.	UP govt schools follow same NCERT syllabus as pvt ones: Min tells assembly	Hindustan Times	E-News Article	18-02-2026	186
87.	NCERT launches e-Magic Box app with AI bots to make early learning fun for kids aged 3–8; here's everything you need to know	The Times of India	E-News Article	18-02-2026	190
88.	NCERT and CIET partner Robotex India for Robotics and AI education drive	Data Quest	E-News Article	18-02-2026	192
89.	पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा छोड़कर दूसरी में अब नहीं बैठ सकेंगे विद्यार्थी : सीबीएसई	दैनिक जागरण	4	19-02-2026	195
90.	मैथिली में भी पढ़िए केमेस्ट्री, मूलभूत शब्दावली प्रकाशित	दैनिक जागरण	13	19-02-2026	196
91.	Al in classrooms but no calculators in exam halls	The Indian Express	13	19-02-2026	197
92.	We need a more integrated education imagination. Budget recognises that	The Indian Express	12	19-02-2026	198
93.	NCERT Launches E-Magic Box App	BW Education	E-News Article	19-02-2026	199
94.	ज्ञान भारतम : प्राचीन भारतीय परंपरा का डिजिटल दर्शन	जनसत्ता	4	20-02-2026	201
95.	Class 3 students to be sampled with NCERT papers	DT Next	E-News Article	20-02-2026	202
96.	Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Says NEP 2020 Enables Global Academic Collaboration	AIR	E-News Article	20-02-2026	204
97.	'एनसीईआरटी से पढ़ने वालों के लिए आसान, बाकी के लिए घमावदार रहा फिजिक्स का पेपर	अमर उजाला	7	21-02-2026	205
98.	Language is the soul of a people	The Statesman	7	21-02-2026	206
99.	No chalk or blackboard: At CM Shri school, a 'smart' panel is where learning happens	The Times of India	2	21-02-2026	207
100.	NCERT Launches AI-Powered e-Jaadui Pitara for Children Aged 3–8	Times Now Education	E-News Article	21-02-2026	208
101.	CBSE directs schools to implement 'mental health and wellness' & 'social emotional learning' measures	The Indian Express	E-News Article	22-02-2026	210
102.	Al and the transformation of India's education system	The Pioneer	11	23-02-2026	214
103.	The Burden of Bags: Why Heavy School Loads Persist Despite Reform Promises	Business Money	E-News Article	23-02-2026	215

104.	NCERT, Auroville discuss integrating education into national framework	The New Indian Express	E-News Article	23-02-2026	222
105.	Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Launches Teacher App 2.0- Powered By AI In Collaboration With Bharti Airtel & CK12 Foundation	AIR	E-News Article	23-02-2026	225
106.	CBSE's 3-language rule to be implemented in Class 6 from 2026-27?	India Today	E-News Article	26-03-2026	226
107.	BSE to introduce third language option in Class 6 from 2026-27 session under NEP 2020	The Times Of India	E-News Article	28-03-2026	230

The Hindu, 1 February 2026, Page No- 14

How to start building a career in the age of AI

DECODED

John Xavier

Internships and apprenticeships have long been effective for graduates and young adults to test their learning, develop new skills and secure employment. For organisations, they provided a way to identify potential hires.

However, recent advances in artificial intelligence and agentic systems are quickly making this 'on-the-job' learning and hiring channel vulnerable - much to the dismay of students and young adults.

Many organisations are rethinking entry-level roles and budgets, increasing AI spending while reducing these positions. This shift raises questions about career prospects for those looking to build a future in the coming decades.

Let's start with the basics. A career is a long-term professional journey marked by skill development, mobility and rewards. This journey has become increasingly chaotic for successive generations, but the biggest change began with Gen X.

Gen X witnessed a major shift in employment that challenged the traditional linear progression theory, where people typically start and end their careers at a single company. They entered a job market that valued individual competency over loyalty.

Looking back, we can see how the Internet, personal computers and globalisation transformed the stable job market of the Silent Generation. These changes flattened organisational hierarchies and created a new, laterally mobile talent pool. However, a deeper analysis reveals a hidden pattern: a world in flux that needed a new breed of talent.



Ideally, seek roles that allow you to develop skills by enhancing your learning outcomes through AI tools. AP

The world was shifting away from Abraham Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs' theory towards David McClelland's 'Human Motivation' theory. While both ideas centred on individual needs and growth, McClelland's theory removed the rigidity of Maslow's. He realised that individuals don't necessarily need to follow strict hierarchies to achieve fulfillment. Instead, people can meet their needs in non-hierarchical and non-linear ways.

Competency became the most crucial factor for growth and career advancement, surpassing loyalty and years of experience. Learning new skills led to promotions or switching to companies offering higher pay for those skills. This fluidity in the job market allowed people to move laterally and explore new industries and roles.

While formal skills and advanced degrees still commanded premiums, large language models – codified knowledge from textbooks – have nearly absorbed all existing digital formal knowledge. This disruption is affecting talent flow at the entry level and changing hiring practices.

In this future workforce, entry-level positions will begin with young professionals building augmentative working mechanisms using agentic AI systems.

Today's job market demands that career builders view existing AI tools as learning facilitators rather than task finishers. This distinction is vital because any AI-performed task diminishes the human element, which is something you'd rather avoid. Ideally, seek roles that allow you to develop skills by enhancing your learning outcomes through AI tools.

Also, this approach will gradually build a solid foundation, enabling you to add value to your profile and direction for your next move. It will also cultivate the right mindset to seek and build human-centric roles.

It's inevitable that AI agents will displace some jobs but new ones will eventually emerge. However, this development is beyond your control at the moment. Instead, you'll be shaping it through augmented employment. For organisations, this is the perfect time to rethink talent pipelines as they experiment with AI agents across various tasks and functions. A checklist on the best and worst cases from their AI deployments will help them identify areas where human factors remain crucial even as AI systems advance.

Ministry of Education

UNION EDUCATION MINISTER LAUDS HISTORIC BUDGET 2026-27, CALLING IT A YUVA SHAKTI DRIVEN BUDGET-A BUDGET FOR HUMAN CAPITAL FOR VIKSIT BHARAT

TOTAL BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS REACHED ₹139289.48 CRORE, MARKING A 8.27% INCREASE OVER BE 2025-26

FIVE UNIVERSITY TOWNSHIPS TO BE SET UP, TO HOST MULTIPLE UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS, SKILL CENTRES AND RESIDENTIAL COMPLEXES

ONE GIRLS' HOSTEL IN EVERY DISTRICT TO BE ESTABLISHED

HIGH POWERED 'EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE' STANDING COMMITTEE TO BE SET UP TO RECOMMEND MEASURES THAT FOCUS ON THE SERVICES SECTOR

Posted On: 01 FEB 2026 5:52PM by PIB Delhi

Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan lauded the Budget 2026–27, calling it a Yuva Shakti–driven budget that gives a boost to education and employment creation and presents a blueprint for the next phase of development.

The Minister informed that the total budget allocation for the Ministry of Education has reached ₹1,39,289.48 crore, marking an 8.27% increase over BE 2025–26.

> #ViksitBharatBudget includes all. It gives boost to education and employment-creation and presents a blueprint for the next phase of development. https://t.co/9GZ38hSnVU
>
> — Dharmendra Pradhan (@dpradhanbjp) February 1, 2026

Shri Pradhan stated that the Union Budget 2026–27 is a solid blueprint for fully harnessing Bharat's growth potential, fostering inclusive development across all sections, and achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat. He expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman for delivering a futuristic, yuva-shakti-driven, pro-people, employment-oriented, and growth-stimulating Union Budget 2026–27 that includes everyone, emphasises people's well-being, and brings cheer to all, particularly the poor and middle-class households.

He further said that, inspired by the three Kartavyas of 'accelerating and sustaining economic growth, fulfilling aspirations and building capacities of all, and ensuring every family and community has access to resources, opportunities, and amenities', the Viksit Bharat Budget will spur all-round growth across sectors and promote self-reliance in strategic and frontier areas. This will facilitate ease of living, further invigorate the education, innovation, and skilling landscape, strengthen MSMEs, boost tourism, augment healthcare, and transform Tier-II and Tier-III cities into new growth centres. This will add momentum to the 'Reform Express' for achieving the next phase of India's growth while also ensuring that economic growth translates into tangible gains for over 140 crore citizens.

The Minister said that the three Kartavyas outlined by the Finance Minister, inter alia, focus on strengthening the capacity of the yuva for realising the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The Minister highlighted that India has achieved one of the highest rates of female participation in STEM education globally. To further enhance and encourage the enrolment of girls in STEM institutions and courses, one girls' hostel in every district will be established through Viability Gap Funding and capital support, he added.

He also informed that the Budget proposes the setting up of five University Townships in the vicinity of major industrial and logistics corridors. These planned academic zones will host multiple universities, colleges, research institutions, skill centres, and residential complexes, he added.

He informed that a high-powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee has been proposed to recommend measures focusing on the services sector, which is the core driver of Viksit Bharat. The Committee will examine the impact of emerging technologies, including AI, on job and skill requirements. It proposes specific measures for embedding AI in the education curriculum from the school level onwards and upgrading State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) institutes for teacher training, among others.

Shri Pradhan lauded the setting up of India's Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) Content Creator Labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges. This project aims to provide a platform to two million professionals by 2030 for the growing AVGC sector.

Highlights of Budget Allocation 2026-27

Higher Education

- The overall Budget Allocation in FY 2026-27 is Rs. 55727.22 Cr out of which Scheme allocation is Rs. 10142.40 crore and non-Scheme allocation is Rs. 45584.82 crore.
- There has been an overall increase of Rs. 5649.27 Cr (11.28%) in the Budget Allocation of Department of Higher Education in the FY 2026-27 with respect to FY 2025-26.

ALLOCATIONS TO MAJOR AUTONOMOUS BODIES (Higher Education)

- Allocation in Central Universities has been kept at Rs. 17440.00 Cr, which is Rs 748.69 Cr (4.49%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- UGC has been allocated Rs. 3709.00 Cr in 2026-27, which is Rs. 373.03 Cr (11.18%) more than BE 2025-26.
- IITs have been allocated Rs. 12123.00 Cr in 2026-27, which is Rs. 774.00 cr (6.82%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- For NITs, Rs. 6260.00 Cr has been allocated in FY 2026-27, increasing the allocation by Rs. 572.53 Cr (10.07%) in r/o BE 2025-26.
- Deemed Universities have been allocated Rs. 650.00 Cr in 2026-27, which is Rs. 46 Cr (7.62%) more than BE 2025-26.
- Support to Indian Institute of Management (IIM) have been allocated Rs. 292.00 Cr in 2026-27, which is Rs. 40.11 cr (15.92%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.

ALLOCATIONS TO MAJOR SCHEMES (Higher Education)

- For the scheme PM-One Nation One Subscription (PM-ONOS), an allocation of Rs. 2200.00 Cr has been kept in FY 2026-27.
- For the scheme PM Research Chair (PMRC), which is a new scheme in 2026-27, an allocation of Rs. 200.00 Cr has been kept in FY 2026-27.
- For scheme ‘Centre of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Education’, which is a new scheme in 2026-27, an allocation of Rs. 100.00 Cr has been kept in FY 2026-27.
- An allocation of Rs. 900.00 Cr has been kept for World Class Institutions, which is Rs. 424.88 cr (89.43%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- In the scheme ‘Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education-EAP (MERITE)’, an allocation of Rs. 300 Cr has been made in FY 2026-27, which is Rs. 80.00 cr (36.36%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- For scheme ‘Establishment of 3 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI), an allocation of Rs. 250 Cr has been made in FY 2026-27, which is Rs. 50.00 cr (25.00%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- For PM-USHA, the budget has been kept at Rs.1850 Cr for FY 2026-27, which is Rs. 35.00 cr (1.93%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- For the scheme ‘Pradhan Mantri Uchhatar Shiksha Protsahan Yojna’(PM-USP), the budget allocation has been kept at Rs.1560 Cr in FY 2026-27.

- In the scheme 'National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)', an allocation of Rs.1250.00 Cr has been made in FY 2026-27, which is Rs. 72.00 cr (6.11%) more than allocation in BE 2025-26.
- In the scheme 'PM-Research Fellowship (PMRF)', an allocation of Rs. 600 Cr has been made in FY 2026-27.
- In the scheme 'National Mission in Education through ICT', an allocation of Rs. 650 Cr has been made in FY 2026-27.

School Education & Literacy

- The Budget Allocation for the FY 2026-27 of ₹ 83562 Cr is the highest ever for the Department of School Education & Literacy.
- There has been an overall increase of ₹ 4990 Cr (6.35%) in the Budget Allocation of Department of School Education and Literacy in the FY 2026-27 from BE 2025-26. As compared to RE of FY 2025-26, there has been an increase of ₹ 12995 Cr (18.42 **%**).
- The highest ever Budget Allocation may be seen in the Autonomous Body of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) at ₹ 10129.41 Cr & ₹ 6025 Cr respectively. Allocation in KVS has increased by ₹ 625.57 Cr and NVS by ₹719.77 Cr as compared to Budget allocation of FY 2025-26.
- Budget Allocation of FY 2026-27 in Flagship Schemes have increased i.e Samagra Shiksha (by ₹ 850.02 Cr), PM-POSHAN (by ₹ 250.00 Cr) with respect to Budget Allocation (BE) of FY 2025-26. As compared to RE 2025-26, allocation in Samagra Shiksha has increased by ₹ 4100.00 Cr (10.79%), allocation in PM-POSHAN has increased by ₹ 2150.00 Cr (20.28 %) and allocation in PM-SHRI has increased by ₹ 3000 Cr (66.67%).
- A new flagship initiative under Central Sector Schemes of the Department of School Education and Literacy named Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) has been started at the RE 2025-26 stage and allocation made in this Scheme for the FY 2026-27 is ₹ 3200 Cr.
- Out of the overall Budget Allocation in FY 2026-27 of ₹ 83562.26 Cr, the Scheme allocation is ₹ 66641.02 Cr and Non-Scheme Allocation is ₹ 16921.24 Cr.
- Increase in Scheme Allocation in BE 2026-27 is ₹ 3552.02 Cr (5.63 %) as compared to BE 2025-26. As compared to RE 25-26, increase in Scheme Allocation is ₹ 12032 Cr (22.03%) and non-Scheme allocation has increased by ₹ 963.12 Cr (6.04%) in BE 2026-27.

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# of Poor Quality Academic Textb

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Dinesh Singh

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From the time when I was a senior school student till the present I have felt an acute lacuna in the context of good quality textbooks authored by Indian scholars and academics. During the decade of the 1970s, the NCERT had done an admirable job in producing some very well written school textbooks in several disciplines. In particular, the series on the life sciences under the general editorship of the late Panchanan Maheshwari truly stood out. He was one of our most distinguished of scientists and he had taken the pains to assemble a team of highly regarded life scientists to produce the textbooks on botany and zoology. More importantly, Professor Maheshwari had himself authored several chapters in those books and it was evident to even a schoolboy like me that the books carried a great deal of value. Unfortunately, almost no one in my high school experience attached much value to those books and this included almost all my teachers. Instead, we were compelled to obtain very bulky volumes authored by nondescript individuals and we were told that these books were the ones that would help us do well in school leaving examinations as well as for entering colleges offering medical and related disciplines of study. In hindsight, compelling students to rely on those shoddy textbooks and such practices have caused much harm to the cause of education in India. Lest we gain the impression that this was affecting only high school education we need to think again. Similarly, let us not think that this is not relevant in today's times; the problem continues to persist.

Elaborating on what I have said above, I shall cite specific disciplines to bolster my point and to then hopefully suggest how the situation could be remedied. If we were to examine the discipline of mathematics or of economics as taught in most Indian institutions at the level of the first degree, we shall discover two things, and both shall depend on the quality of the institution that we choose to put under the lens. If we look at the books—in the aforementioned disciplines—prescribed at a comparatively good university, we are most likely to find a preponderance of good quality textbooks authored mostly by academics from western nations and particularly from the US. At the same time, we shall find that at these so called 'better universities' there will be an acute absence of books authored by Indians. On the other hand, if we turn our spotlight on the not-so-well regarded institutions, we shall find a greater presence of books that bear the names of Indian authors and are in use in these universities and colleges. The unfortunate part of this story is that most of these books—that have been authored indigenously—are of a very abysmal quality. The situation becomes extremely worrying—even alarming—when we look at textbooks in the regional languages.

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Why do I say so categorically that the situation is alarming? After all, what is wrong in using high quality books authored by scholars from foreign lands. In principle, I have no quarrel in using a good textbook so long as it bears value. However, I recall from my time as a vice chancellor, that many of the books on economics dealt with problems and themes that were drawn entirely from a western context or situation, especially when dealing with

microeconomics, but also in general. In fact, I have found that on quantitative issues these books would naturally mention items and currencies that a bright student from a not-so-privileged background in India would not easily relate with his daily experiences. However, my bigger worry has been that for a country that claims as a part of its hoary heritage such great examples of scholarly writing as Kautilya's Arthashastra to Aryabhata's Aryabhatiya, why do we pale in comparison with what we offer to our youth today? The remedy is simple; the University Grants Commission should leverage the National Education Policy to inculcate good scholarship and communication skills in our students who shall then in time be adept at communicating their scholarship.

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Government-Backed Bhartiya Shiksha Board Gains Schools Across Country: What It Is And Its Key Features

Over 169 schools have joined the board, promoting indigenous knowledge systems, a lighter curriculum, and activity-based learning in line with the National Education Policy standards.



The board offers Class I–XII affiliation and a curriculum that blends Indian culture and 21st-century learning. (ETV Bharat)

By ETV Bharat English Team
Published : February 1, 2026 at 5:25 PM IST

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New Delhi: Since the rollout of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020, India has been buzzing with efforts to transform its education system. There's fresh energy behind a vision to make learning more deeply connected to Indian roots and age-old traditions.

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Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). Established in 2023, the Bhartiya Shiksha Board aims to run the school education system in line with Indian traditions. Schools across the country are now affiliating with this board.

In Delhi, two private schools, SR Capital Senior Secondary School and Nav Gyan Deep Senior Secondary School, have already joined the board. Many other schools have also applied for the affiliation.

Extending beyond Delhi, 169 schools nationwide have so far joined the Bhartiya Shiksha Board, while over 250 schools have applied. The board is expected to play a major role in India's education system in the coming years.

What Is The Bhartiya Shiksha Board?

Turning to its background, the Bhartiya Shiksha Board was established on August 4, 2022, and is a government-recognised education board. It is positioned as an alternative to colonial-era and foreign education models. The Centre has entrusted its operation to Swami Ramdev's Patanjali Yogpeeth. The Executive Chairman is Dr NP Singh, a former IAS officer.

For schools considering affiliation, the BSB accepts applications from Class I to Class XII, which authorities consider equivalent to CBSE. Students who pass Class XII under this board have access to all major academic and professional opportunities, as the Association of Indian Universities, University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and state governments recognise its Class X and XII certificates.

How Is It Different From CBSE?

Highlighting the differences from CBSE, Dr NP Singh explains that the CBSE follows the Macaulay system of education, while the BSB revives indigenous education methods and integrates them with modern learning and India's knowledge traditions. The syllabus includes the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Jain and Buddhist philosophy, stories of Indian heroes, constitutional values, the Gurukul tradition, and modern science and technology.

What Are The Key Features Of The Board?

Regarding the curriculum, the former IAS officer notes that the syllabus aligns with the National Curriculum Framework and meets the standards set by the NEP. The emphasis is on

methods.

To nurture students' mental well-being, the curriculum load is thoughtfully lighter. The syllabus also inspires students to thrive in the 21st century by fostering critical thinking, creativity, and life skills, while integrating Indian knowledge systems, values, culture, and modern science.

Providing updated figures, Lakshya Chhabria, principal of a Delhi school affiliated with the board, said over 160 schools up to Class XII and over 600 schools up to Class VIII have joined so far, with more than 250 applications pending.

Addressing Parents' Concerns

To address parents' concerns, Chhabria said some worry whether the board will use only Hindi as the medium of instruction, or whether switching from CBSE would create problems. The board is addressing these concerns. It will function as a home board, meaning exam centres will not be moved elsewhere. Students will take Class 10 and 12 exams in their own schools.

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Education Budget 2026 Live Updates: From AI classrooms to workforce skills, here is what to expect as FM Sitharaman tables the Budget

TIMESOFINDIA.COM | Feb 1, 2026, 10.47 AM IST



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is about to present the Union Budget 2026–27, anticipation is running high across India's schools, colleges, and training centres. This will be her ninth Budget and the Modi government's second full fiscal roadmap of its third term. Today's announcements are especially significant for a sector that sits at the crossroads of demography, technology, and jobs.

Over the last five years, education spending has inched upward with notable consistency. Combined allocations for school education and higher education have risen from ₹84,219 crore in FY21 to ₹1,28,650 crore in FY26.

From building campuses to building outcomes

Last year's allocation of about ₹1.28 lakh crore to the Ministry of Education, up 6.22 per cent from the previous year, reinforced the government's commitment to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Schools received their highest-ever funding, with increased support for Samagra Shiksha, PM-POSHAN, and PM-SHRI Schools. BharatNet began extending broadband to government secondary schools, while digital textbooks in Indian languages under the Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme aimed to make learning more inclusive.

Higher education continued its expansion. Five IITs set up after 2014 received infrastructure upgrades, 6,500 new seats were added, and IIT Patna was earmarked for major development. The PM Research Fellowship expanded support for 10,000 scholars at IITs and IISc. A ₹500-crore Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for Education signalled a first step towards AI-enabled teaching.
Medical education was also being revitalized with an increase of 10,000 seats this year as part of a more long term goal of 75,000 seats in five years.

The scaffolds are being erected. The question to be asked is whether Budget 2026 will turn radically towards the quality of learning, teacher preparedness, and employability.

The NEP 2020 is progressive, although the difficult task will be the future.

According to the Economic Survey 202526, education was outlined as the core part of the growth process in India, with an increase in enrolment and increased career opportunities. The current Gross Enrolment Ratios are 90.9 on the primary level and 90.3 on upper primary level.

Today India has 23 IITs, 21 IIMs, and 20 AIIMS, with international IIT campuses in Zanzibar and Abu Dhabi. The Academic Bank of Credit has 2,660 institutions, whose IDs have been issued to over 4.6 crore individuals, giving them the option of entering and leaving freely. Approximately 153 universities have implemented bi-annual admissions, which has facilitated the objective of NEP, which aims at achieving 50 percent higher education GER by 2035.

But NEP 2020 was not all about numbers. It has real potential in multidisciplinary learning, quality teachers, and education that is industry oriented. Those hopes require low interest in the training of the faculty and reforming the curriculum and assessment systems, aspects that hardly find their place in the headlines but ultimately come back to haunt.

With the development of AI, jobs become anxious

What is more important, a greater discomfort is spreading among students: What will artificial intelligence do to their careers?

Entry-level jobs in IT, services, and media are already being automated. At the same time, new opportunities are emerging in data, design, ethics, and human–AI collaboration. The challenge for India is not resisting technology but preparing young people to work alongside it.

Last year's AI Centre of Excellence was an important signal. Education leaders now hope that Budget 2026 can go a step further, including supporting scale of teacher training, installing AI literacy in schools and inspiring universities to develop programmes with industry.
In the absence of this change, India would have the risk of graduating students with degrees who are not directing in the rapidly evolving job market.

Skills, teachers and employability gap

The shift in the government towards skill-based education, which has been seen through five National Centres of Excellence in Skilling, has demonstrated the increasing concern over the workforce preparation. However, there is still a gap between theoretical education and the requirements of the workplace, particularly beyond the best-of-the-best schools.

The stakeholders expect Budget 2026 to provide greater backing to apprenticeships, micro-credentials, and regional skill hubs. Another priority is teacher capacity-building. Education reform cannot move faster than the educators who deliver it.

There is also rising demand for better-targeted funding for digital infrastructure and higher education financing, as India positions itself as a global talent supplier.

A defining moment for India’s education future

As Parliament prepares for the Budget speech, expectations across the education ecosystem are remarkably aligned. Schools want better learning outcomes. Universities want research support and relevance. Students want employable skills. Teachers want training and respect.

Education funding has grown steadily. Now comes the more difficult phase: translating expenditure into impact. Budget 2026–27 arrives at a moment when India’s demographic advantage is still intact, but not guaranteed. If today’s announcements successfully link NEP 2020 with AI readiness, teacher development, and real-world skills, this Budget could shape the country’s workforce for decades.

In a few hours, the figures will be revealed. What matters more is whether they carry a clear vision for the millions of young Indians waiting to step into an uncertain future.

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Budget 2026 sharpens focus on Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalayas as school education gets fresh funding push

TOI Education | Feb 1, 2026, 04.53 PM IST



Budget 2026 sharpens focus on Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalayas as school education gets fresh funding push. India's Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (NV) two central schools systems have again been given new priorities in the Union Budget 2026-27 with increased funds being given to improve access to these schools, infrastructure, and day-to-day running in other parts of the country.

Together, these institutions serve very different student populations; KVs largely cater to children of transferable central government employees, while NVs focus on academically talented students from rural areas, but the latest budget signals a common goal: Stabilising quality schooling through sustained public investment.

Kendriya Vidyalayas see steady rise in funding

Kendriya Vidyalaya experience gradual increase in finance. The government has allocated ₹10,129.41 crore to

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) in 2026-27 compared to 9,503.84 crore in the 2025-26 budget estimates. This is a distinct positive direction of increase in funding, after actual spending of ₹8,727 crore in 2024-25.

This budget includes the operation of Kendriya Vidyalayasall over the country, salaries, academics, and operational expenses.

The allocation covers the running of Kendriya Vidyalayas nationwide, including salaries, academic expenses, and operational costs. KVS is a fully government-funded autonomous body established in 1965 to manage these schools, primarily to meet the educational needs of children whose parents are frequently transferred in central services.

While the budget document does not spell out school-wise expansions, the increase indicates continued support for maintaining and scaling the KV network, which remains a backbone of urban and semi-urban public schooling.

Navodaya Vidyalayas receive higher support for rural education

Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) which runs Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya have also been given a boost to their funds. NVS has been allocated 6,025 crore in 2026-27 compared to 5,750 crore in 2025-26 Budget Estimates. Comparatively, the 2024-25 spending was 5,370.79 crore.

Started in 1986 with Navodaya Vidyalayas as a central scheme to offer quality residential education to rural talents, with one school in each district envisaged. NVS is an independent organisation that falls under the Ministry of Education.

The increased allocation is an indication of the continued investment by the government in these fully residential schools, which tend to serve as life rafts to students in the remote and underserved areas.

The higher allocation reflects the government's ongoing commitment to these fully residential schools, which often act as academic lifelines for students from remote and underserved regions.

KVs and NVs within a larger school education budget

The increased funding for KVs and NVs forms part of a broader rise in expenditure by the Department of School Education and Literacy. For 2026-27, the department's net budget (after recoveries) has been pegged at ₹83,562.26 crore, up from ₹70,567.14 crore in 2025-26 (Revised Estimates)

Within this framework, autonomous bodies, including KVS and NVS, together account for ₹16,866.71 crore in 2026-27, compared with ₹15,907 crore in the previous year's Budget Estimates, underlining the central role these institutions continue to play in India's public education system

What this means for schools on the ground

While the budget papers focus on financial provisioning rather than programme-level outcomes, the

incremental rise for both KVs and NVs suggests priority is being given to sustaining existing schools, meeting staff costs, and supporting essential academic and residential facilities.

For Kendriya Vidyalayas, this helps maintain continuity for students who move cities due to parental transfers. For Navodaya Vidyalayas, it strengthens a model that identifies talent early and provides free, residential schooling to rural learners.

At a time when school systems are grappling with enrolment pressures and rising operational costs, the 2026-27 allocations point to a steady, if cautious, approach—reinforcing established institutions rather than launching sweeping new schemes.

In budget terms, KVs and NVs remain pillars of India's centrally funded school education, and this year's numbers make clear that the government intends to keep them that way.

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS): Budget allocation trend (₹ crore)

Financial year	Allocation
2024–25 (Actual)	8,727.00
2025–26 (Budget Estimates)	9,503.84
2026–27 (Budget Estimates)	10,129.41

KVS funding has risen steadily over the past two years, crossing the ₹10,000 crore mark in Budget 2026–27

Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS): Budget allocation trend (₹ crore)

Financial year	Allocation
2024–25 (Actual)	5,370.79
2025–26 (Budget Estimates)	5,750.00
2026–27 (Budget Estimates)	6,025.00

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Budget 2026 redraws education roadmap with girls' hostels, AI and skills focus

ET Online Last Updated: Feb 01, 2026, 03:59:00 PM IST

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Synopsis
Education Budget 2026: The Union Budget 2026-27 prioritizes education and skills for India's future growth. A new committee will connect education with jobs and business. Artificial intelligence will be integrated into learning. Medical education and healthcare jobs will receive a boost. Girls' hostels will be built in every district. Overseas education costs will see reduced taxes.

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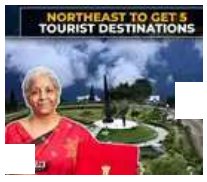
Budget 2026: Girls' hostel in every district, university townships, FM proposes slew of measures

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday placed education and skills at the centre of India's long-term growth strategy, announcing a series of measures aimed at tightening the link between education, employment and enterprise in the Union Budget 2026–27.

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In her Budget speech, Sitharaman said, "I propose to set up a High-Powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee to recommend measures that focus on the Services Sector as a core driver of Viksit Bharat. This will make us a global leader in services, with a 10% global share by 2047. The Committee will prioritise areas to optimise the potential for growth, employment and exports. They will also assess the impact of emerging technologies, including AI, on jobs and skill requirements and propose measures thereof."

Budget 2026 Highlights: Here's the fine print

Girls' hostels in every district



Addressing gender-specific challenges in higher education, especially in STEM institutions where long study hours and laboratory work remain a constraint, the finance minister announced that one girls' hostel will be established in every district, supported through viability gap funding or capital support.

AI, skilling and workforce reforms

Signalling a sharper pivot towards technology-led education reforms, the government said the committee would recommend embedding AI in curricula from the school level onwards, upgrading State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) for teacher training, and proposing





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frameworks for upskilling and reskilling engineers and technology professionals in AI and emerging technologies.

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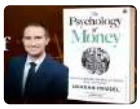
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Other focus areas include AI-enabled matching of workers with jobs and training opportunities, steps to make the informal workforce visible and verifiable, and measures to attract skilled diaspora and foreign talent to India.

Boost for medical education and health jobs

To strengthen healthcare-linked education and employment, Sitharaman announced a scheme to support states in setting up five Regional Medical Hubs, in partnership with the private sector, to promote India as a global medical tourism destination.

These hubs will function as integrated healthcare complexes, combining medical education, research and clinical facilities, along with AYUSH centres, medical value tourism facilitation centres, diagnostics, post-care and rehabilitation infrastructure. The initiative is expected to create diverse employment opportunities for doctors and allied health professionals.

Relief on overseas education costs

In a move that could ease the cost burden for students and families, Sitharaman proposed to reduce the Tax Collected at Source (TCS) under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) from 5% to 2% for remittances made towards education and medical purposes.

The Union Ministry of Education's allocation for 2026–27 builds on the government's stated focus on school education, higher education and skills, even as overall public spending on education has historically remained below the 6% of GDP target outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

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स्कूल-कॉलेजों में कंटेंट क्रिएटर लैब बनेंगीं

शिक्षा

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। केंद्रीय बजट 2026-27 में शिक्षा क्षेत्र को लेकर अहम घोषणाएं की गई हैं। स्कूल-कॉलेजों में कंटेंट क्रिएटर लैब बनेंगी। वहीं, देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों में पांच यूनिवर्सिटी टाउनशिप बनाई जाएंगी।

खास बात यह है कि ये सभी यूनिवर्सिटी टाउनशिप प्रमुख औद्योगिक और लॉजिस्टिक कॉरिडोर के आसपास विकसित की जाएंगी। ऐसे में इसका सीधा लाभ यहां पढ़ने वाले छात्रों को मिलेगा। यह पहल इसलिए की जा रही है ताकि इंडस्ट्री और रोजगार सीधे उच्च शिक्षा के साथ जुड़ सकें।

इसके साथ ही सेवा क्षेत्र के विकास पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने वाले उपायों की सिफारिश करने के लिए एक उच्च-स्तरीय 'शिक्षा से रोजगार और उद्यम' स्थायी समिति गठित करने की घोषणा से शिक्षा को कौशल से जोड़ने और उद्योगों की जरूरतों के मुताबिक शैक्षिक ढांचे पर फोकस बढ़ेगा। हर जिले में गर्ल्स हास्टल बनाने का ऐलान लड़कियों की इनरोलमेंट दर बढ़ाने के मकसद से किया गया है। बजट में हुए ऐलान के मुताबिक, देशभर के 15,000 स्कूलों और 500 कॉलेजों में कंटेंट क्रिएटर लैब्स तैयार की जाएंगी।

इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ क्रिएटिव टेक्नोलॉजीज बनेगा : इसके साथ ही सरकार कंटेंट क्रिएटर्स के लिए नए सेटअप भी लगाएगी। बजट में अनुमान लगाया गया है कि 2030 तक देश में एवीजीसी सेक्टर के लिए 20 लाख से अधिक प्रोफेशनल्स की जरूरत होगी। सरकार मुंबई में इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ क्रिएटिव टेक्नोलॉजीज की स्थापना भी करेगी। कंटेंट के उभरते बाजार को देखते हुए सरकार का यह घोषणा काफी महत्वपूर्ण है।

शिक्षा बजट में इस बार 8.27 प्रतिशत वृद्धि : शिक्षा के कुल बजट में इस बार 8.27 फीसदी बढ़ोतरी की गई है। वर्ष 2026 -27 में 139289 करोड़ रुपये का आवंटन किया गया है। पिछले वर्ष यह आवंटन 128650 करोड़ रुपये का था। अटल टिंकरिंग लैब के लिए आवंटन बढ़ाकर 3200 करोड़ रुपये कर दिया गया है। इसके अलावा आईआईटी, आईआईएम जैसे संस्थानों को दी जाने वाली मदद में भी बढ़ोतरी की गई है।

सेवा क्षेत्र पर स्थायी समिति की घोषणा की गई : एक उच्च-स्तरीय स्थायी समिति सेवा क्षेत्र पर ध्यान केंद्रित करेगी, रोजगार सृजन, प्रौद्योगिकी निर्यात और एआई एकीकरण को बढ़ावा देगी ताकि कौशल को भविष्य की कार्यबल आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप बनाया जा सके।



03
नए नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ फार्मास्युटिकल एजुकेशन एंड रिसर्च खुलेंगे

05
नए निजी विश्वविद्यालय खोलने में मदद देगी केंद्र सरकार

पूर्वी भारत में नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ डिजाइन खोला जाएगा

केंद्र सरकार ने बजट में पूर्वी भारत में नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ डिजाइन खोलने का भी एलान किया गया है। इसका सीधा मकसद है कि इस क्षेत्र में डिजाइन की पढ़ाई, क्रिएटिव सोच और इनोवेशन को मजबूती मिले। वहीं, आईआईटी मुंबई व्यावहारिक नवाचार और उद्यमिता को बढ़ावा देने के लिए क्रिएटर लैब्स की स्थापना करेगा, जिससे छात्रों को बड़ा लाभ मिलेगा।

राज्यों के साथ मिलकर टाउनशिप बनेंगी

केंद्र सरकार ने साफ किया है कि 'यूनिवर्सिटी टाउनशिप' बनाने में केंद्र सरकार विभिन्न राज्य सरकारों के साथ मिलकर काम करेगी। यानी यूनिवर्सिटी बनाने, ढांचा खड़ा करने और सुविधाएं विकसित करने में राज्यों को केंद्र की मदद मिलेगी। इस पूरी योजना का मकसद यह है कि हर क्षेत्र की जरूरत के हिसाब से आधुनिक और मजबूत शिक्षा संस्थान तैयार किए जाएं।

यह होगा खास

- इन विश्वविद्यालयों में स्किल सेंटर बनाए जाएंगे, जहां पढ़ाई के साथ-साथ व्यावहारिक प्रशिक्षण होगा
- यूनिवर्सिटी में हाईटेक लेबोरेटरी, आधुनिक कॉलेज, रिसर्च सेंटर और इनोवेशन हब भी होंगे
- छात्रों को अत्याधुनिक तकनीक और सुविधाएं मिलेंगी, शोध को बढ़ावा

विशेषज्ञ की राय



एके रथ
पूर्व शिक्षा सचिव

शिक्षा को आजीविका से जोड़ने के लिए अच्छी पहल

नई शिक्षा नीति के लिहाज से आम बजट में कई प्रमुख घोषणाएं की गई हैं। सबसे अहम बात यह है कि शिक्षा को रोजगार से जोड़ने की पहल बजट में की गई है। शिक्षा को कौशल से जोड़कर उद्योगों की जरूरत के मुताबिक वर्कफोर्स तैयार करने का महत्वाकांक्षी लक्ष्य बजट में स्पष्ट नजर आ रहा है।

पांच विश्वविद्यालय, हर जिले में गर्ल्स हॉस्टल खोले जाने से लड़कियों की नामांकन दर बढ़ाने में मदद मिलेगी। खासतौर पर साइंस, टेक्नोलॉजी, इंजीनियरिंग और मैथ के लिए यह पहल काफी महत्वपूर्ण साबित होगी। सरकार को औसत स्कूलिंग बढ़ानी है तो लड़कियों को विशेष तौर पर प्रोत्साहित करना होगा। शिक्षा बजट में लगातार बढ़ोतरी अच्छा संकेत है। नए विवि खोलने और अटल टिंकरिंग लैब बनाने के अलावा आईआईटी और आईआईएम जैसे संस्थानों को प्रोत्साहन देने की जरूरत बजट आवंटन में दिख रही है। स्कूली शिक्षा को रीढ़ मानकर इस क्षेत्र में ज्यादा निवेश की जरूरत है।

अमर उजाला, 2 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 13

राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के अनुरूप ज्ञान और कौशल में हो रहा निवेश



विशेषज्ञ की राय

प्रोफेसर एम जगदीश कुमार, यूजीसी के पूर्व अध्यक्ष

बजट में एक बात स्पष्ट है कि भारत राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 (एनईपी) के अनुरूप लोगों, ज्ञान और कौशल में निवेश कर रहा है, ताकि सभी के लिए समान अवसर, निष्पक्षता, गुणवत्ता और उत्कृटता के लक्ष्य को हासिल किया जा सके। शिक्षा मंत्रालय के बजट को 2025-26 के 1,28,650 करोड़ रुपये से बढ़ाकर 2026-27 में 1,39,289 करोड़ रुपये कर दिया गया है, जो एक अच्छा संकेत है।

इस वर्ष के बजट में निरंतरता पर जोर दिया गया है, जिसमें भारतीय भाषा पुस्तक पहल, आईआईटी की क्षमता का विस्तार और शिक्षा के लिए एआई उत्कृष्टता केंद्र शामिल हैं। बजट के ये उपाय मिलकर हमारे देश को अधिक आत्मनिर्भर बनाने और 2047 तक विकसित भारत के लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने में सहायक होंगे। स्कूली शिक्षा के प्रमुख कार्यक्रमों को लगातार मजबूत समर्थन मिल रहा है। शिक्षकों, स्कूलों और छात्रों के स्वास्थ्य को बेहतर बनाने के लिए समग्र शिक्षा को 42,100 करोड़ रुपये मिलेंगे। स्कूलों और छात्रों के स्वास्थ्य को बेहतर बनाने के लिए पीएम पोषण को 12,750 करोड़ रुपये मिलेंगे। 7,500 करोड़ रुपये की लागत से निर्मित पीएम -श्री स्कूल, आदर्श स्कूलों के निर्माण और आसपास के स्कूलों की सहायता पर केंद्रित हैं।

उच्च शिक्षा विभाग के पास उच्च शिक्षा के लिए कुल बजट 55,727.22 करोड़ रुपये का अनुमान है। यह धनराशि केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों, केंद्र सरकार की ओर से वित्तपोषित संस्थानों, छात्रवृत्तियों और प्रयोगशालाओं को दी जाती है, जो हमारे संस्थानों को विश्व स्तर पर अधिक प्रतिस्पर्धी बनने में मदद करती हैं।

वन नेशन वन सब्सक्रिप्शन में शोधार्थियों को लाभ

पीएम वन नेशन वन सब्सक्रिप्शन कार्यक्रम के लिए 2,200 करोड़ रुपये का बजट रखा गया है। इससे अधिक से अधिक आम शोधार्थी की शीर्ष पत्रिकाओं तक पहुंच आसान होगी। इंडिया एआई मिशन में 1,000 करोड़ रुपये मिलेंगे। इससे प्रतिभाओं को निखारकर उनके ज्ञान को देश सेवा में प्रयोग किया जा सकेगा। बजट राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों को भी सहायता प्रदान करता है। राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों की गुणवत्ता में सुधार और उन्हें अनुसंधान के लिए अधिक तैयार करने हेतु पीएम-यूएसएचए के लिए 1,850 करोड़ रुपये आवंटित किए गए हैं।

जनसत्ता, 2 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या -10

पांच 'विश्वविद्यालय शहर' बनाएगी सरकार

शिक्षा बजट में 8.27 फीसद का इजाफा, हर जिले में खुलेगा एक बालिका छात्रावास, इलाज के लिए पैसा भेजना हुआ सस्ता

सुशील राघव

सरकार प्रमुख औद्योगिक 'लाजिस्टिक' केंद्रों के आसपास पांच विश्वविद्यालय शहर (यूनिवर्सिटी टाउनशिप) स्थापित करेगी। केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण ने रविवार को देश के प्रत्येक जिले में एक बालिका छात्रावास स्थापित करने की भी घोषणा की। देश में 700 से अधिक जिले हैं। बजट में मुंबई स्थित भारतीय रचनात्मक प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान को 15,000 माध्यमिक विद्यालयों में 'कंटेंट लैब' स्थापित करने की भी बात कही गई है। शिक्षा मंत्रालय के लिए कुल बजट आबंटन 1,39,289 रुपए करोड़ हो गया है, जो 2025-26 की तुलना में 8.27 फीसद अधिक है। वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण ने कहा कि देश में पांच विश्वविद्यालय टाउनशिप खोले जाएंगे।

इन टाउनशिप में आवास, शोध सुविधाएं, नवउद्यम क्षेत्र, स्वास्थ्य और सांस्कृतिक ढांचा शामिल होगा, जिससे विद्यार्थियों, शिक्षकों और शोधकर्ताओं को एक बेहतर और जीवंत शैक्षणिक माहौल मिल सकेगा। भारत का एनीमेशन, विजुअल इफेक्ट, गेमिंग और कामिक्स (एवीजीसी) क्षेत्र एक बढ़ता हुआ उद्योग है। अनुमान है कि 2030 तक इस क्षेत्र में 20 लाख पेशेवरों की जरूरत होगी। वित्त मंत्री ने भारतीय रचनात्मक प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, मुंबई को समर्थन देने का प्रस्ताव दिया, ताकि संस्थान 15,000 उच्च माध्यमिक विद्यालयों तथा 500 कालेजों में एवीजीसी कंटेंट निर्माण लैब की स्थापना कर सके।

इसके साथ ही उच्च शिक्षा के विज्ञान, प्रौद्योगिकी, अभियांत्रिकी एवं गणित (एसटीईएम) संस्थानों में अध्ययन और प्रयोगशाला कार्य की लंबी अवधि छात्राओं के लिए चुनौती पैदा करती है। वीजीएफ/पूंजीगत समर्थन के जरिए प्रत्येक जिले में लड़कियों के लिए एक छात्रावास की स्थापना की जाएगी। केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्रालय के अंतर्गत स्कूल शिक्षा और साक्षरता विभाग को 2026-27 के लिए 83,562 करोड़ रुपए दिए गए हैं। यह राशि 2025-26 में निर्धारित 78,572 करोड़ रुपए से अधिक है यानी स्कूल शिक्षा के लिए बजट में लगभग 6.35 फीसद की बढ़ोतरी हुई है। हालांकि, 2025-26 के लिए संशोधित अनुमान घटाकर 70,567 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है।

केंद्र सरकार के कुल नियोजित खर्च में स्कूल शिक्षा की हिस्सेदारी लगभग 1.56 फीसद है, जो चालू वर्ष के 1.55 फीसद से थोड़ी अधिक है। इस बजट में सबसे अधिक फायदा अटल टिंकरिंग लैब योजना को हुआ है। इसे पहली बार विभाग के बजट में एक अलग मद के रूप में शामिल किया गया है। सरकार ने अगले वित्त वर्ष में इस योजना पर 3,200 करोड़ रुपए खर्च करने का प्रस्ताव रखा है, जबकि चालू वर्ष में इसके लिए 500 करोड़ रुपए रखे गए थे। सरकार ने दिसंबर में ही घोषणा की थी कि अगले पांच वर्षों में देशभर के सरकारी स्कूलों में 50,000 नई अटल टिंकरिंग लैब स्थापित की जाएंगी।सरकार की प्रमुख पीएम श्री स्कूल योजना के कुल परिव्यय 7,500 करोड़ रुपए में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है। हालांकि, चालू वर्ष में इस योजना का वास्तविक खर्च घटाकर 4,000 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है। वहीं, उच्च शिक्षा के लिए 55,727.22 करोड़ रुपए आबंटित किए गए हैं, जो पिछले वर्ष से 11 फीसद अधिक है। कुछ योजनाओं में कटौती के बाद बढ़ोतरी हुई है। आइआइटी, यूजीसी और केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों के बजट में इजाफा हुआ है।

सरकारी उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों को मदद देने वाली प्रधानमंत्री उच्चतर शिक्षा योजना (पीएम-यूएसएचए) के लिए बजट अनुमान बढ़ाकर 1,850 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है। प्रधानमंत्री अनुसंधान फैलोशिप (पीएमआरएफ) योजना के बजट को भी संशोधित कर 290 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है, जबकि इसका मूल परिव्यय 600 करोड़ रुपए था। यानी इसमें भी आधे से ज्यादा की कटौती हुई। हालांकि, 2026-27 के लिए इसका बजट फिर से 600 करोड़ रुपए ही रखा गया है। विकसित भारत शिक्षा अधिष्ठान (वीबीएसए) लाने की तैयारी के बीच उच्च शिक्षा से जुड़े नियामक संस्थानों विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (यूजीसी), अखिल भारतीय तकनीकी शिक्षा परिषद (एआइसीटीई) और राष्ट्रीय शिक्षक शिक्षा परिषद (एनसीटीई) के बजट में अगले वित्त वर्ष के लिए बढ़ोतरी की गई है। यूजीसी के लिए संशोधित बजट 3,470 करोड़ रुपए था, जिसे बढ़ाकर 3,709 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है। एआइसीटीई का बजट भी बढ़ाकर 230 करोड़ रुपए कर दिया गया है। भारतीय सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान और भारतीय विज्ञान संस्थान के बजट में कटौती देखी गई है।

उदारीकृत प्रेषण योजना (एलआरएस) के तहत शिक्षा और चिकित्सा उद्देश्यों के लिए विदेश से भेजे जाने वाले धन के साथ-साथ विदेशी यात्रा पैकेज की बिक्री पर 'स्रोत पर कर संग्रह' की दर को घटाकर दो फीसद करने का प्रस्ताव रखा। प्रस्ताव के अनुसार, शिक्षा या चिकित्सा उपचार के लिए 10 लाख रुपए से अधिक की राशि भेजने पर अब मौजूदा पांच फीसद के बजाय दो फीसद टीसीएस लगेगा।



इन शहर में आवास, शोध सुविधाएं, नवउद्यम क्षेत्र, स्वास्थ्य और सांस्कृतिक ढांचा शामिल होगा, जिससे विद्यार्थियों, शिक्षकों और शोधकर्ताओं को एक बेहतर और जीवंत शैक्षणिक माहौल मिल सकेगा। भारत का एनीमेशन, विजुअल इफेक्ट, गेमिंग और कामिक्स (एवीजीसी) क्षेत्र एक बढ़ता हुआ उद्योग है। अनुमान है कि 2030 तक इस क्षेत्र में 20 लाख पेशेवरों की जरूरत होगी। वित्त मंत्री ने भारतीय रचनात्मक प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, मुंबई को समर्थन देने का प्रस्ताव दिया।

15,000 स्कूलों और 500 कालेजों में भारत की एनिमेशन, विजुअल इफेक्ट्स, गेमिंग और कामिक्स (एवीजीसी) कंटेंट क्रिएटर लैब स्थापित करना बहुत दूरदर्शी है। इस प्रोजेक्ट का मकसद 2030 तक बढ़ते एवीजीसी क्षेत्र के लिए 20 लाख पेशवरों को एक मंच देना है।

– धर्मेंद्र प्रधान, केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री



The Indian Express, 2 February 2026, Pg- 15

ALLOCATION FOR EDUCATION UP BY 8%

5 varsity townships, girls hostel in each district soon: FM

Abhinaya Harigovind

FIVE UNIVERSITY townships in the vicinity of industrial and logistics corridors, and a girls' hostel in every district were among the key announcements for the education sector in the Union Budget.

"Our government will support states, through challenge route, in creating five university townships in the vicinity of major industrial and logistic corridors. These planned academic zones will host multiple universities, colleges, research institutions, skill centres and residential complexes," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced.

The Education Ministry has seen an 8% increase in allocation from around Rs 1.28 lakh crore last year to Rs 1.39 lakh crore this year, with a larger increase of Rs 5,649 crore in higher education (total allocation of Rs 55,727 crore), compared to an increase of Rs 4,990 crore in school education (total allocation of Rs 83,562 crore).

"It is very important to recognise... today, in the private sector there are many universities. States are thinking that there should be more higher education centres. Considering this, we are bringing in more options in higher education, where all types of courses are offered in those hubs. Our students don't need to go out...in case they don't get a visa, or if they need to borrow...," she said at the post-Budget press conference.

"States can, in challenge mode, say they are willing to give land...universities with different types of courses can come and set up, and this will also mean partnering with universities abroad...to give students who are going abroad the same quality of education here," said Sitharaman.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday said this announcement can help provide an ecosystem for research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge.

In higher education, a fresh provision of Rs 200 crore has been made for the 'Prime Minister Research Chair Scheme'.

In school education, the increase in total allocation includes a rise in provisions for Atal Tinkering Labs, NCERT and the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan.

The allocation for PM-SHRI schools remains the same as last year, at Rs 7,500 crore.

• Expenditure on health and education (Rs cr)

YEAR	HEALTH		EDUCATION	
	Health and Family Welfare	Health Research	School Education	Higher Education
2015-16	33,121	993	41,800	25,439
2016-17	37,671	1,324	42,989	29,026
2017-18	51,382	1,732	46,600	33,614
2018-19	52,954	1,728	48,441	31,904
2019-20	62,397	1,861	52,520	36,916
2020-21	77,569	3,125	51,842	32,378
2021-22	81,780	2,691	46,822	33,531
2022-23	73,308	2,423	58,640	38,557
2023-24	80,292	2,857	67,972	55,393
2024-25 (RE)	86,582	3,392	67,571	46,482
2025-26 (BE)	95,958	3,901	78,572	50,078

RE (Revised Estimate), BE (Budget Estimate) Source: Budget documents

Outlay hiked for SC, tribals, disability welfare schemes

Nikhil Ghanekar

THE CENTRE has hiked budgetary allocations for key ongoing schemes for tribal welfare, development of Scheduled Castes and for welfare of persons with disabilities. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also announced two new schemes for persons with disabilities — Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana for skilling and Divyang Sahara Yojana to improve access to high-quality assistive devices. The budget earmarked Rs 200 crore and Rs 100 crore, respectively, for these schemes.

The 2026-27 Union Budget increased the allocation for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) by 42.47 per cent, and for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) by 20 per cent, compared to the outlay under revised estimates. The total outlay for MoTA for 2026-27 is Rs 15,421.97 crore while for the MoSJE it is Rs 13,687.59 crore. The Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disability (DoEPwD) saw a 23.9 per cent hike to Rs 1,669.72 crore with more funds earmarked for Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances scheme.

Among the tribal welfare schemes that saw a hike included increased allocation for the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) scheme, and the flagship Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA), which is aimed at saturation of schemes by 17 line ministries to plug structural infrastructure gaps.

The allocation for EMRS has been hiked to Rs 7,151 crore from Rs 4,900 crore at the revised estimate stage, and continues the government's push for construction of approved schools and new ones proposed. As against a revised estimate of Rs 500 crore, the Centre has allocated Rs 2,013.46 crore for the flagship Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan.

Under the EMRS scheme, 720 schools have been sanctioned.

The Times of India,

2 February 2026,

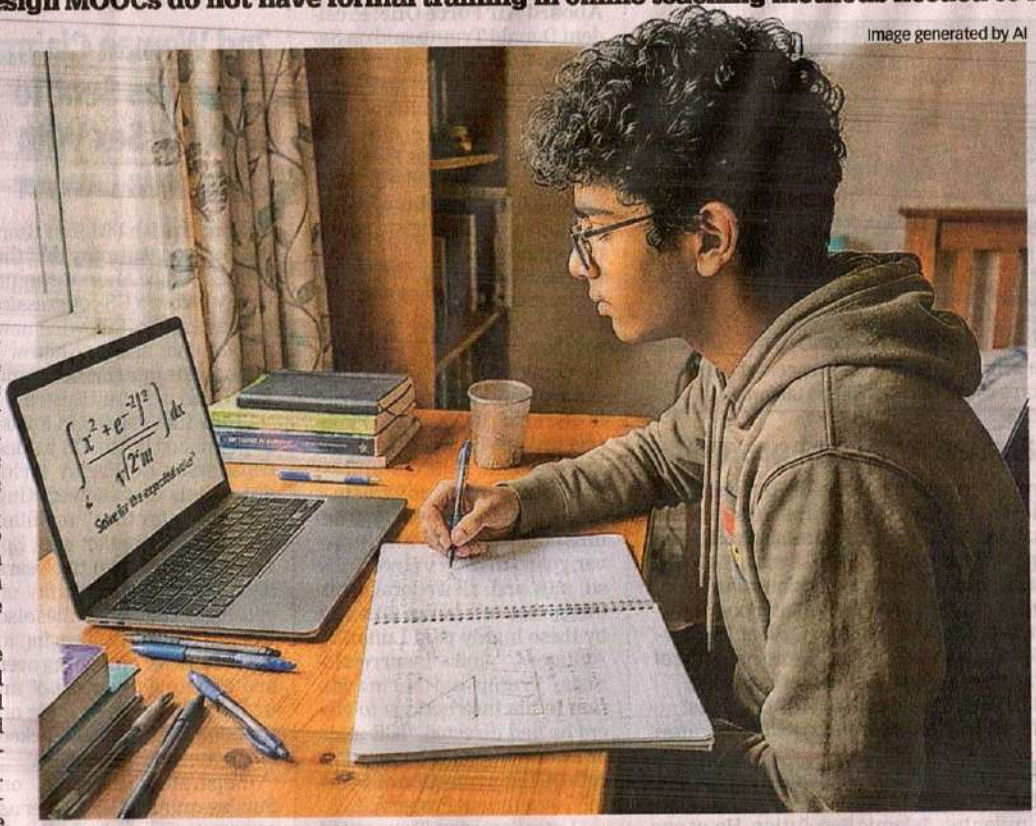
Page No- 23

Stronger learner engagement, regular curriculum updates can boost SWAYAM course completion rate

Many educators who design MOOCs do not have formal training in online teaching methods needed to make interesting content

Priyadarshini.Gupta
@timesofindia.com

Image generated by AI



Despite being launched to make education accessible to all, the government's SWAYAM platform continues to face challenges. Aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) was introduced by the government to provide free online courses to students. The platform aims to remove barriers related to cost and location. Over the past years, SWAYAM has attracted large enrolments across disciplines, but completion rates have remained consistently low. A parliamentary panel in 2025 highlighted that since the launch of the platform in 2017, less than 4% of enrolled learners have completed SWAYAM courses.

Academic experts claim the gap between enrolment and completion is due to uninspired teaching, lack of motivation and flexibility, outdated course materials, and far-off exam centres. There are also a number of learners who do not enrol in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) with the intention of completing the full course or acquiring a certificate, but only to supplement their classroom learning.

Improving completion rates will require stronger academic monitoring, more frequent curriculum updates, and boosting learner independence from the school level itself. Prof AK Bakhshi, former vice-chancellor and former Sir Shankar Lal Chair Professor of Chemistry, University of Delhi, says that low completion rates are not unique to SWAYAM. "This is a global trend seen across MOOC platforms such as Coursera, edX, and Udacity. A typical four-credit MOOC may consist of 30-35 modules which are equivalent to a full semester course. Many students do not join MOOCs with the goal of completing an entire course; instead, they often seek clarity on specific topics or difficult modules within a larger syllabus," he says.

There are also a number of learners who do not enrol with the intention of acquiring a certificate, but only to supplement their classroom learning

Fail to Sustain Interest

However, for learners who do aim to complete the course, the design and quality of MOOCs play a major role in whether they stay engaged. While some courses begin well, they often fail to sustain interest of the learners over time. Prof Bakhshi says, "Unlike regular classroom learning, online courses depend entirely on self-learning, with limited interaction between students and teachers. Simply being a subject expert is not enough to deliver an effective MOOC. Good online courses require strong instructional design, engaging digital content, and proper pacing to keep learners interested throughout the course. Many educators who design MOOCs do not receive formal training in online teaching methods. Also, without regular interaction, live discussions, feedback, or motivation, students gradually lose interest and drop out. Assessments also tend to be automated and repetitive, which makes learning monotonous over time."

Fixed Format

With rapid changes in technology and industry needs, several MOOCs fail to keep up. Structural limitations of traditional MOOCs also lead to dropouts. Most courses follow a fixed, one-size-fits-all format, offering little flexibility for students with different learning speeds, backgrounds, or abilities. Prof Bakhshi says, "Globally, there is a growing shift towards 'smart MOOCs' which use technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and data analytics to personalise learning. Such platforms can track a learner's progress, identify weak areas, and adjust content accordingly. This approach can make online learning feel more like having a personal tutor. However, India is still in the early stages of adopting such technologies due to the high costs involved in building AI-based infrastructure."

Beyond course design, access-related issues also affect completion rates. John J Kennedy, former dean, School of Arts and Humanities, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, says, "The digital divide remains a challenge for learners in rural and semi-urban areas. While mobile internet usage is widespread, reliable connectivity required for video-based courses is still uneven."

Prof Kennedy also adds that online learning benefits students who are highly self-motivated. "Many learners enrol out of curiosity or initial excitement since the courses are free. But without strong self-discipline, students struggle to stay motivated till the end. A lack of physical monitoring and regular teacher interaction further reduces completion rates. Students in the traditional classroom setup are used to being guided and often find it difficult to manage when it comes to independent learning," he adds.

Cultural and institutional factors also play a role. Prof Kennedy says, "Schools and colleges in India tend to focus heavily on examination results, leaving little room for developing independent learning habits. As a result, students are often unprepared for self-online education. Though SWAYAM courses are updated from time to time, coordination across institutions makes regular revision a slow process."

The Tribune, 2 February 2026, Page No-7

15K content creator labs for schools; national design institute on anvil

AKSHEEV THAKUR
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 1

The Union Budget 2026-27 has delivered a push to the education sector, with an allocation of Rs 1,39,289.48 crore for the Ministry of Education, an increase of 8.27 per cent over Budget Estimates 2025-26.

EDUCATION

Among the key announcements are the setting up of content creator labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges, along with the establishment of a National Institute of Design in eastern India.

Central universities will receive Rs 17,440 crore, a 4.49 per cent increase over last year. The UGC has been allocated Rs 3,709 crore, up by Rs 373.03 crore. IITs have received Rs 12,123 crore, NITs Rs 6,260 crore, deemed universities Rs 650 crore, and IIMs Rs 292 crore in 2026-27. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also proposed the creation of a high-powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee to recommend measures focused on strengthening India's services sector. "This will make us a global leader in services, with a 10 per cent global share by 2047. The Committee will prioritise areas to optimise growth, employment and exports. It will also assess the impact of emerging technologies on jobs," she said.



The Budget gives a push to the animation and gaming sector, which is projected to require nearly two million professionals by 2030. ISTOCK

The Budget also proposes Centre support to states, through a challenge route, to create five university townships near major industrial and logistics corridors.

A major thrust has been given to the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) sector, which is projected to require nearly two million professionals by 2030. The Budget proposes support for the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies, Mumbai, to establish AVGC content creator labs. It also announced the creation of a National Institute of Hospitality by upgrading the existing National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology.

Dhruv Marwadi, Trustee, Marwadi University, said, "The formation of an 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee is a welcome move as it strengthens the link between education, skills and industry needs."

Ashoka University VC Somak Raychaudhury said the push for new universities, design institutes and stronger STEM ecosystems "signals a clear intent to democratise access and build a future-ready talent pipeline".

The Hindu, 2 February 2026, Page No-7

Booster shot for education and skilling

Allocation for Education Ministry sees 14.21% increase to about ₹1.39 lakh crore; Budget for Samgra Shiksha scheme, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan raised; Finance Minister announces five university townships and a panel to look at 'pathways from education to employment'

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The Centre has made a significant push in the education and skilling sector in the Union Budget presented on Sunday.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced, among other things, the establishment of five university townships near major industrial and logistics corridors, provisions to set up a girls' hostel in each district to encourage the participation of more girls in STEM education, and a high-powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee to focus on the "services sector as a core driver of Viksit Bharat".



The allocation for Atal Tinkering Labs sees a jump of ₹2,700 crore from ₹500 crore last year to ₹3,200 crore this year. S. SIVA SARAVANAN

Budget documents show the allocation for the Union Education Ministry in 2026-27 has risen to about ₹1.39 lakh crore, an increase of 14.21% compared with the revised estimates for the current fiscal, with a majority of this increase being reflected in the allocation for the Department of School Education and Literacy, where the allocation for Atal Tinkering Labs saw a jump of ₹2,700 crore from ₹500 crore last year to ₹3,200 crore this year.

Increases were also seen in the allocations for the Samgra Shiksha scheme, which saw a rise of ₹4,100 crore in its allocation compared with the revised estimates for 2025-26, and in the allocation for the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, which has been given about ₹600 crore more when compared with the current fiscal's revised estimates. The PM Poshan scheme also saw an increase of about ₹2,150 crore from the 2025-26 Revised Estimates.

The budget for the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship saw a significant jump in allocation, with a Budget estimate of ₹9,885.8 crore, a 62% increase compared with the previous year's Budget Estimate. However, the Budget Estimate (2025-26) of ₹6,100.1 crore had been revised to ₹2,703.54 crore by the current fiscal. Much of the allocation for the Skills Ministry has been towards the PM Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded Industrial Training Institutes scheme, launched in 2025, which got an allocation of ₹6,081.8 crore.

The Minister also announced provisions to set up 'Content Creator Labs' across 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges to promote pathways in the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) sector. She also mentioned plans to set up another National Institute of Design for the promotion of design education in eastern India, and the reduction of Tax Collected at Source (TCS) from 5% to 2% for pursuing education abroad.

The government also announced a high-powered Standing Committee to look at the pathways from education to employment and entrepreneurship. It will identify services sub-sectors with potential for growth, assess impact of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, on jobs and skills requirements, and propose measures to include AI in the curricula from school onwards and upgrading State Councils for Educational Research and Training Institutes for teacher training.

UP Board initiative: Edu dept officials to inspect schools to ensure use of authorised NCERT-based books

According to officials, the initiative aims to enforce the use of 70 NCERT-based textbooks, along with 12 textbooks for Hindi, Sanskrit and Urdu that the UP Board has published

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By HT Correspondent , PRAYAGRAJ

Officials of the state secondary education department will conduct inspections in over 29,000 government-run, government-aided and unaided schools across the state that are affiliated with the Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad (UP Board). The purpose of



UP Board headquarters in Prayagraj (File)

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According to officials, the initiative aims to enforce the use of 70 NCERT-based textbooks, along with 12 textbooks for Hindi, Sanskrit and Urdu that the UP Board has published after obtaining due permission from the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

UP Board secretary Bhagwati Singh has issued directives to all joint and deputy directors of education, as well as district inspectors of schools (DIOSs), to conduct special campaigns from April 1 to April 10 and again from July 1 to July 15 as part of this mission. “The objective is to ensure the availability of authorised textbooks at affordable rates in all schools so that students and parents are not subjected to an unnecessary financial burden,” Singh said.

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books from unauthorised printers or booksellers in addition to the NCERT or UP Board textbooks.

Continuous monitoring and surprise inspections will be carried out, officials said, and strict action will be taken against any schools or unauthorised vendors found violating the instructions. In cases of non-compliance, punitive action will be initiated under the Intermediate Education Act, 1921.

The UP Board has also clarified that the copyright of these textbooks rests with the Board, and piracy or duplication will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If printers or shopkeepers are found selling counterfeit textbooks or charging higher prices, joint legal action will be taken in coordination with the police, administration, commercial tax and income tax departments. Violations of NCERT copyright conditions will attract action under the Copyright Act. Where textbooks are unavailable or in short supply, district officials have been instructed to coordinate with authorised printers or distributors to ensure adequate availability. Book sale camps may also be organised for a specified period in government and aided inter colleges, officials added.

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NEP 2020 And Indian Culture/Knowledge Systems: Quicker Implementation Needed

The National Education Policy emphasises Indian culture and languages to create an India-centric education system. Drawing inspiration from ancient learning centres like Takshashila and Nalanda, and thinkers such as Charaka and Panini, the policy highlights India's rich contributions to science, medicine, linguistics and governance.

Dr AK Sen Gupta | **Updated:** Monday, February 02, 2026, 09:01 PM IST



National Education Policy 2020 |

Backdrop:

The NEP has laid immense focus on Indian culture and language aspects. The vision of the Policy itself was to enable an "India Centric Educational System". In the introductory part itself, the committee has observed that India in ancient times had contributed significantly to creation of knowledge in diverse areas through great institutions like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Sharad Peetha, among others. India also had thought leaders like Charaka, Chanakya, Patanjali,

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Panini, among many others in different areas like science, medicine, politics, astronomy, etc. The ancient Indian civilization led to several modern concepts like zero, pie, theory of evolution, political management, medicine, surgery, architecture & construction, etc. The committee, therefore, felt that all these aspects of "Indian Knowledge System (IKS)" should be brought to the fore by christening it in the form of "liberal education". This would help students understand and appreciate rich heritage of India and its tremendous contribution to the growth of the world at large.

Recommendations:

In the above context, the committee made certain specific recommendations as under:

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Start from School Level: The thrust on "Indian language" should start from school level itself. The medium of instruction up to 8th grade should be mother tongue / home language / local language. The committee also recommends that good textbooks in all subjects should be prepared in all Indian languages.

Project on Language of India: The committee has made an interesting recommendation that every school student between the grade of 6 to 8 would take up a project on the topic of "Languages of India" wherein they would study evolution and linkage between different Indian languages. This would help them to appreciate the richness of Indian languages.

Importance of Sanskrit: It is suggested that Sanskrit will be available as an "optional subject" across grades in schools and at higher education institutions so that the willing students can learn this classical and most ancient language. Besides Sanskrit, the students can also take up any two of the classical Indian languages through self-learning. All these are aimed towards helping the students to delve into the world of Indian languages.

Integration of Indian Knowledge System (IKS): The committee has recommended that this approach towards integrating rich Indian traditions and past into education process should continue at the higher education level as well through "liberal education approach". All students of HEIs should, therefore, be encouraged to take ancillary subjects of India's values and traditions like classical dance, Indian musical system, ancient Indian mathematics, etc. so that they appreciate the India's true strength in terms of "Indian Knowledge System (IKS)". The committee recommended the introduction of IKS as a subject in all HEIs.

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Current Stage of Implementation and Moving Ahead:

In nutshell, the committee has desired to move towards a fusion of western and Indian education so that students while graduating from the system not only become competent in global issues but also appreciate rich Indian culture, heritage, and diversity in terms of various languages. Aim is to create good "global citizens" with Indian values and ethos. While the objective seems to be noble, implementation on the ground will pose a humongous challenge. We need willing students; we also require competent as well as willing teachers who can contribute to this area. Both appear a bit difficult at this stage. While many Indian students are busy migrating to the west in search of higher education, there is dearth of teachers at all levels who are competent in Indian languages particularly for teaching subjects like science, mathematics, etc. Therefore, the challenge before the government is substantive.

As of today, things are moving quite slowly and more on a voluntary basis. At school level the implementation is quite less while in HEI domain some institutions like IITs, IIMs, IISc, TIFR, JNU, UOM, Delhi University, among others, there is some progress, thanks to passion and interest of individual faculty members. The IKS cell of MOE is quite active and offers lots of research grants but here again there is no concerted approach. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, one of the oldest trusts carrying forward Indian legacy has recently set up an IKS cell at Navi Mumbai Kendra but here also the activities are limited to talks on various IKS knowledge issues. What is needed is to bring out clearly the relevance of IKS in today's context and how to apply them with western thoughts / principles to make a difference to solve Indian problems. There will be substantial time to reach the goal. Similarly, the focus on Sanskrit is increasing but nothing tangible is visible on the ground. For example, we need many more Veda Schools on Gurukul pattern like the one we have at SIES campus at Navi Mumbai. The country is on right track, but it will take substantive time to integrate the ancient wisdom and knowledge pool into our modern educational system. We hope the implementation is faster and policy makers & administrators do something quickly on ground.

By Dr A K Sen Gupta, Founder and Convener, Higher Education Forum (HEF). He may be contacted at aksengupta51@gmail.com or 98211 28103.

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Budget 2026 to boost education and employment creation, says Dharmendra Pradhan

"ViksitBharatBudget includes all. It gives a boost to education and employment creation presents a blueprint for the next phase of development," Pradhan shared in a video mess

IANS
Published On Feb 2, 2026 at 08:00 PM IST

New Delhi, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday hailed the Union Budget 2026-27 as Viksit Bharat Budget and said that it will boost education and employment creation.

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"This budget places emphasis on the mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, through which poor and middle-class families will benefit especially," Pradhan said, in a post on social media platform X

includes all. It gives a boost to education and employment creation and presents a blueprint for the next phase of development," Pradhan shared in a video message.

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The minister noted that the budget presents a blueprint for the next phase of development.

"In this year's budget, the allocation for education has been increased by 8.27 per cent from the previous budget," Pradhan said. He added that the increase reflects the government's commitment to education.

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Pradhan said, in a post on social media platform X.

The Education Minister called the provisions made in the Budget "bigger and bolder investments to strengthen education and future-ready skills across the length and breadth of India".

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FM Sitharaman, in her Budget speech, said that the government will set up a high-powered 'education to employment and enterprise' standing committee to recommend measures that focus on the services sector as a core driver of Viksit Bharat.

The measures include five university townships in the vicinity of major industrial and logistic corridors, a girls' hostel in every district to support STEM education.

"In higher education STEM institutions, prolonged hours of study and

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The Budget also proposed establishing a National Institute of Design in eastern India.

Further, content creator labs will come up in 15,000 schools and 500 colleges, and the Digital Knowledge Grid will be developed to bring India's cultural, heritage, and spiritual knowledge onto one platform.

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Published On Feb 2, 2026 at 08:00 PM IST

The Pioneer, 3 February 2026, Page No - 14

Reframing Examinations as a Journey of Learning



PRACHI PANDEY

This year, Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) in its ninth edition, has seen registrations reach an unprecedented level of 4.5 crorewith additional participation of 2.2 crore in PPC related activities. Behind these numbers, is a story of a deep connection forged between the students, parents and teachers across the country with the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Narendra Modi ji. In PPC 2023, the Prime Minister said that "Pariksha Pe Charcha is my test too.

Crores of students... are taking my test... It is a great fortune for me to know what the young mind of my country thinks." The initiative, itself, has transformed from a town-hall interactioninto a nationwide movement with innovative modes of engagement.Each edition has strengthened dialogue around examinations, mental well-being and life skills by responding to the changing realities and aspirations of learners.

February and March are synonymous withexaminations, but with their advent, often the stress begins to overshadow the true purpose of education. For decades, examinations have taken on a larger-than-life persona, even going so far as to define a child's self-worth. The end of the academic year is over-ridden by dread and anxiety rather than being a celebration of achievement and fulfilment.

For a Viksit Bharat, it is necessary that our children's imagination soars with knowledge and experiential learning. Pariksha Pe Charcha has sought to reshape how examinations are viewed by students, teachers and parents by emphasising that examinations are opportunities for learning and self-reflection.Open dialogue around the various themes has been instrumental in strengthening the relationships between students and teachers as well as students and parents.

The Pioneer
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Anchored in sensitivity and common-sense, the initiative provides space to express concerns and seek guidance on examinations and on life beyond marks. PPC is not just about words or advice that we wish to hear, an easy way to address issues. Rather, the Prime Minister has responded to real-life concerns with genuine solutions. A good example is that of the relationship between parents and children which is as complex as it is simple.

Time and again, he has urged families not to impose their own unfulfilled dreams on children, but instead to allow them to fly with their own aspirations. In 2024, Narendra Modi ji reminded parents that "Your words make your child's world-encourage, don't pressurise."Teachers are the mainstay of a student's academic lifebut their role extends beyond curriculum delivery to one of personality development, advice and emotional stewardship. While every human being is unique, our classrooms are often characterised by uniform expectations and excessive comparison, at the cost of ignoring learner diversity.

Teachers who recognise this individuality are better placed to lower anxiety and foster intrinsic motivation among students. Teacher-parent relationshipis another critical issue. There was a time when these relationships were familialyet sometimes there is a perception of alienation or even of becoming adversarial. Isolated efforts are not the most effective when it comes to child welfareand, thus, collective and shared responsibility is the path towards holistic growth of the child. It is crucial that parents and teachers appreciate their vital roleas partners in a child's academic and emotional development rather than as pressure-builders.

PPC is a Jan Andolan rooted in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 philosophy. NEP 2020, on its part, recommends that assessments be indicators of learning and progress and stresses on reducing the high-stakes nature of examinations. Today, pedagogy is about joyful learning and classroom transactions encourageconceptual understanding and critical thinking. The policy views student well-being and mental health as integral to meaningful learning. Naturally, these principles would result in an assessment strategy that is a holistic evaluation of a student's competencies.

Translating this vision into practice, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)has notified the introduction of two Board Examinations for Class X from 2026. Students will now be permitted to appear in Board examinations on up to two occasions in a single academic year, one main examination and one for improvement, if desired. This measure is aimed to reduce the 'high-stakes' character of Board examinations, offergreater flexibility and choice to learners, and position assessment as an opportunity for improvement rather than pressure and elimination.

Another reform, in pursuance of NEP 2020 objectives is to re-design assessment frameworks. CBSE is giving importance to questions that evaluate the application of knowledge rather than recall alone. Similarly, NAS Parakh, is a national assessment initiative to comprehensively evaluate the progress of learners across stages.

Physical, emotional and mental well-being contribute in equal measure to a joyful and meaningful life.

Important issues of digital de-tox, cheating, competition, healthy routines, mindful practices, peer pressure, etc, have been addressed by the Narendra Modi ji to reinforce the idea that a composed mind is a student's greatest strength, not only in the examination hall, but in life. After all, skills developed to tackle examinations also prepare students to tackle other problems. Handing pressure, learning from setbacks, resilience, discipline, tenacity and self-regulation will all help students in facing challenges beyond the school.

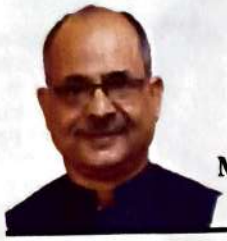
Pariksha Pe Charcha invites us to see examinations as an "Utsav" and as meaningful moments in a larger journey of growth. PPC seeks to build an enabling and empathetic ecosystem around studentsto ensure that their well-being is at the centre of the examination discourse. The Prime Minister captured the essence of PPC by stating in 2023 that, "Pariksha Pe Charcha aims to transform stress into success, enabling Exam Warriors to ace exams with a smile".

Prachi Pandey is Joint Secretary in Department of School Education and Literacy

The Pioneer, 3 February 2026, Page No - 8

Strategic repositioning of higher education

By embedding higher education into an integrated education-employment-enterprise continuum, the Budget recognises human capital as India's most valuable productive asset – especially at a time of geopolitical churn, disruptive technologies, and the global race for skilled talent



MANOJ KUMAR TIWARI



The major highlight of this year's Union Budget, as far as higher education is concerned, is the major shift in the approach towards higher education. There is a structural shift in the perceived role of higher education, that is, from a welfare-oriented social sector to a core pillar of India's economic growth. Instead of treating higher education separately, it has been embedded within an integrated education, employment, and enterprise continuum, thereby directly linking universities with industrial growth and exports, intertwined with emerging technologies. This change in approach recognises human capital as the country's most critical productive asset, particularly in times of global uncertainty with geopolitical conflicts, the advent of disruptive technologies, reshoring as well as regionalisation of value chains, and intensifying competition for skilled talent.

University Townships: Anchoring Knowledge in Economic Geography

One of the most revolutionary interventions in this Budget is the proposal to develop, through states, five University Townships along major industrial and logistics corridors through a challenge-mode framework. These townships will be developed as an ecosystem consisting of multiple universities, colleges, research institutions, skill centres, residential facilities, along with different industries. This proposal will help in institutionalising the spatial integration of education, research, and industry, eliminating the long-standing disconnect between academic institutions and industries. Finally, it may result in developing Regional Innovation Systems, where proximity between universities, research institutions, and industries boosts innovation and ideas which can be transformed into commercially viable products.

Education-to-Employment and Enterprise Standing Committee

Another pragmatic, timely budget proposal is to form a High-Powered Education-to-Employment and Enterprise Standing Committee. It is a significant shift from fragmented skill development initiatives to system-level planning to integrate education, skills, and entrepreneurship. The proposal envisages transforming higher education institutions from a degree-granting role to dynamic suppliers of a future-ready, agile labour force and entrepreneurs to meet the evolving demand of industry. It takes into consideration the advent of emerging technologies like AI to bring the required changes in the education sector, starting from school to higher education.

THE BUDGET INTRODUCES NEW INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURES THAT CAN RESHAPE INDIA'S HIGHER EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM OVER THE NEXT TWO DECADES, CONSIDERING HIGHER EDUCATION AS THE MAJOR SOURCE OF LONG-HORIZON NATIONAL CAPITAL FORMATION

The writer is Director, Indian Institute of Management Mumbai

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STEM, Research Infrastructure, and Frontier Knowledge

The Budget also proposes strengthening the research and frontier-science ecosystem, highlighting the role of higher education institutions as engines of innovation. The establishment or upgradation of four major national telescope and astronomy facilities to enhance India's global standing in astrophysics and space sciences, as well as continued support to national research missions like AI, Quantum, Anusandhan NRF, etc., with higher education institutions as primary implementing nodes, are the major initiatives to elevate the research ecosystem in the country. This highlights the importance of sustaining innovation-led growth, which will create more value than imitation-based industrial development.

Gender-Responsive Higher Education Infrastructure

To eliminate the structural barriers faced by women in STEM education, the Budget proposes establishing one girls' hostel in every district. This may address non-academic constraints such as safety, accommodation, and mobility faced by female students in STEM and result in greater participation. The highlight of this proposal is enhancing productivity through innovation with greater female participation rather than a mere social obligation.

Expansion of Professional and Applied Higher Education

The Budget tries to expand higher education beyond traditional universities into professional, applied, and services-linked domains. The major initiatives under this head include adding 100,000 professionals in allied health institutions by enhancing the capacities of AYUSH universities and research centres; increasing the number of veterinary and para-veterinary colleges through private participation; establishing a new National Institute of Design through challenge mode; and introducing creative technologies (AVGC) labs in colleges and schools to bring a more professional skill-oriented approach.

Overall, the Budget introduces new institutional architectures that can reshape India's higher education ecosystem over the next two decades, considering higher education as the major source of long-horizon national capital formation. If effectively implemented-especially through cooperative federalism and credible governance mechanisms – these reforms can position Indian universities as anchors of innovation-led, inclusive, and competitive growth.

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NEP 2020: Nurturing responsible citizens for a sustainable future

Environmental destruction threatens human survival, biodiversity, ecological balance, and sustainable development.

BY **GUEST AUTHOR** 83 VIEWS

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 3, 2026 10:20 PM



by **Tawheed Ahmad**

In 2020, the Government of India introduced a concise yet visionary document known as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, further strengthened by the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023. NEP 2020 is not merely a policy reform; it is a transformative framework that has the potential to redefine the entire education system of the country if implemented in its true spirit. It offers educators a clear roadmap to achieve the aims of education through learning outcomes, competency-based education, curricular goals, and holistic developmental domains. The policy goes far beyond academic achievement. It seeks to nurture responsible, ethical, creative, and socially conscious citizens who are capable of addressing real-world challenges. Among these challenges, environmental degradation stands out as one of the most urgent and existential threats confronting humanity today.

Environmental Crisis is a Global Concern and an Educational Responsibility, In the modern world, humanity is grappling with multiple crises, wars, rapid technological advancement, digitalisation, social unrest, and widening inequalities. However, the degradation of the environment remains one of the most critical and pressing challenges of our time. Earth, the only known living planet in the universe, can sustain life only if its natural systems remain intact. Environmental destruction threatens human survival, biodiversity, ecological balance, and sustainable development. Climate change, pollution, deforestation, depletion of water resources, and loss of biodiversity are no longer distant concerns; they are lived realities. Addressing these challenges requires strong policies, innovative strategies, and a collective societal response. Recognising this urgent need, great minds across the nation came together to frame a visionary education policy-NEP 2020, which acknowledges that education is the most powerful tool for environmental protection and sustainability.

A key objective of NEP 2020 is to create awareness, equip learners with essential skills, and nurture environmental responsibility among the younger generation, enabling them to protect and preserve nature.

India has witnessed several education policies in the past, including NEP 1968, NEP 1986, and its revised version in 1992. While these policies recognised the importance of environmental education, they did not address it with the urgency, depth, and integration seen in NEP 2020. NEP 2020 marks a significant shift by placing environmental education at the heart of the curriculum. It assigns a central role to education in environmental conservation, climate action, and sustainable development. The policy strongly emphasises, Integration of environmental awareness, water conservation, and resource management across all subjects, Introduction of environmental education as a contemporary and relevant area of learning at different stages of schooling, Incorporation of traditional Indian knowledge systems and India's environmental values, Inculcation of respect, responsibility, and ethical behaviour towards nature and mandatory integration of environmental education in all B.Ed. and teacher education programmes.

These provisions clearly demonstrate that NEP 2020 views education not merely as a means of knowledge transmission, but as a moral and social responsibility to safeguard the environment. The policy empowers educators to nurture environmentally responsible citizens from the foundational stage to higher education.

Environmental Ethics: The Foundation of Sustainable Behaviour, the most crucial dimension of environmental education is the development of environmental ethics among children. When ethical values related to nature are instilled at an early age, learners develop a lifelong commitment to protecting the environment. Knowledge without values cannot bring sustainable change. Therefore, educators must move beyond textbook-based teaching and focus on awareness, attitudes, values, ethical reasoning, and real-life problem-solving. Environmental education should inspire learners not only to understand environmental problems but also to take ownership of solutions.

NEP 2020 and NCF 2023 strongly advocate the development of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. When these competencies are integrated with environmental education, learners become capable of analysing environmental issues and actively contributing to their resolution. This cannot be achieved through rote learning confined within classroom walls. NEP 2020 identifies experiential learning as the most effective approach for developing competencies. Learning through observation, fieldwork, projects, community engagement, and real-life experiences enables students to connect theory with practice.

A remarkable example of experiential learning in environmental education is Ms. Nyla Ali, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Science at Boys Higher Secondary School, Zainakote, Srinagar. The school is located on

the banks of the renowned Hokersar Wetland, a vital ecological site of immense environmental significance.

Rather than limiting teaching to classroom instruction aimed solely at examination results, she adopted a nature-based, experiential approach. She initiated several environmental projects focused on protecting the Hokersar Wetland from pollution and ecological degradation.
Through Green School initiatives, participation in national movements such as Youth for Earth, and innovative conservation activities, her students achieved remarkable success and earned several national-level awards. By engaging learners directly with real environmental challenges, she effectively developed critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.

The school implemented practical projects such as rainwater harvesting, reuse of treated sewage water, drip irrigation systems, and resource conservation practices. Ms. Nyla Ali strongly believes in infusion studies and often states that “nature itself is the best teacher.” Her role as a mentor and facilitator has inspired countless young minds to become environmentally responsible citizens.

Her work stands as a living example of how competency-based education and experiential learning, as envisioned in NEP 2020, can truly fulfil the goals of environmental education. It shows us that environmental responsibility is a collective educational duty, Environmental responsibility should not be confined only to teachers of environmental science. Every teacher, irrespective of subject, must integrate environmental ethics into teaching if society is to effectively combat climate change and environmental degradation.

Today, humans are increasingly becoming a threat to nature. Green pathways are littered with plastic and polythene, water bodies are choking with non-biodegradable waste, forests that once echoed with the fragrance of flowers are now polluted with single-use plastic, and even glaciers are no longer untouched. Places that were once pristine and inaccessible are now easily reachable. Unfortunately, instead of appreciating nature, humans often leave behind plastic waste and pollution. Plants that once enhanced natural beauty are now seen carrying polythene bags—symbolising human negligence and apathy.

The need of the hour is to develop strong environmental ethics among children so that they grow up as ambassadors of environmental protection. We cannot rely solely on international summits, conferences, or global agreements to save the planet. The real and lasting change must begin in our classrooms—through experiential learning, value-based education, ethical responsibility, and community engagement. By implementing NEP 2020 and NCF 2023 in letter and spirit, educators can empower young learners to understand, respect, and protect nature. Education, when aligned with environmental ethics and experiential learning, has the power to ensure a sustainable, harmonious, and environmentally secure future for our planet.

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NCERT books to have 7-digit verification code

Feb 3, 2026, 09.39 PM IST

Prayagraj: The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Board announced that affordable NCERT textbooks will be made available to students for the academic session 2026–27 to prevent fraud and overpricing in the sale of educational material.

Each authorised book will carry a 7-digit serial number printed in ultraviolet fluorescent red ink on its cover page for verification of authenticity.

UP Board secretary Bhagwati Singh issued a detailed directive to all the district school inspectors, deputy directors of education, and joint directors of education, outlining strict measures to ensure that only approved textbooks are prescribed and sold in schools. For students of Classes 9 and 10, and Classes 11 and 12, a total of 70 NCERT textbooks covering 36 subjects have been introduced into circulation. These books, published by NCERT, New Delhi, will be available at subsidised rates.

In addition, 12 selected textbooks in Hindi, Sanskrit, and Urdu for Classes 9 to 12 have been introduced at affordable prices for students enrolled in govt, govt-aided, and self-financed institutions across the state.

Expressing concern over reports that certain educational institutions and book sellers were compelling students to purchase expensive textbooks and guidebooks instead of the officially prescribed material, Singh emphasised the need for effective monitoring and strict enforcement.

To ensure the availability of authorised textbooks, special campaigns will be conducted in all schools between April 1 and April 10, and again from July 1 to July 15. Institutions and book sellers failing to comply with the Board's instructions will face stringent action.

The Board reiterated that the copyright of official textbooks rests with the Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Board and warned that piracy or duplication in any form will not be tolerated. Regular surprise inspections of schools were mandated to detect and prevent the sale of counterfeit or overpriced books.

Furthermore, the Board directed education officials to coordinate with the police administration, commercial tax department, and income tax authorities to take joint action against those involved in the illegal sale or distribution of textbooks.

Schools were instructed to contact authorised printers and distributors and organise textbook sales camps in govt and aided inter colleges across all districts, ensuring that students receive genuine study material at prescribed rates.

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School Education 6 Min Read

Budget 2026–27: Why schools are becomi India's first line of economic defence

Budget 2026-27 signals a strategic shift, treating schools as infrastructure for economic a innovation ambitions. The focus moves from enrollment to learning, integrating AI, creat and foundational skills to prepare students for a future shaped by technology and global competition.

S Sheeba Chauhan • ETEducation
Published On Feb 3, 2026 at 07:15 AM IST

For years, India's education budgets have been assessed by the number of schools built, meals served, or enrolments recorded. Budget 2026–27 signals a quieter but more consequential shift: schools are no longer being treated merely as welfare institutions, but as strategic infrastructure for India's economic and innovation ambitions.



With school enrolment levels already crossing 90 per cent across primary and upper-primary stages, the government’s focus is now turning towards what children actually learn, how early they are exposed to technology and creativity, and whether schooling can prepare them for a future shaped by artificial intelligence, automation, and global competition.

Advt

The Budget’s emphasis on AI-enabled learning, content creator labs, girls’ hostels, digital connectivity, and foundational skilling suggests a growing recognition that workforce readiness does not begin in universities—it begins in classrooms.

Creativity, IP, and the rise of the school-age innovation economy

One of the Budget's clearest signals is its recognition of creativity as economic capital, not an extracurricular luxury. The proposed rollout of content creator and AVGC labs across 15,000 secondary schools and 500 institutions positions schools as the first point of contact for India's future creative economy.

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Atul Temurnikar, Chairman and Co-founder, Global Schools Group, notes that the Budget's focus on creativity and content is especially significant in an AI-driven world. By integrating design, storytelling, and creative thinking into school education, he argues, students can develop original thinking, use technology responsibly, and participate in new-age careers, helping India emerge as a culturally confident, globally competitive talent hub.

This shift reflects a broader policy realisation: as AI automates routine tasks, original thought, intellectual property creation, and human creativity will become differentiators, and schools must nurture these capabilities early.

Advt

STEM, AI, and learning beyond textbooks

Budget 2026–27 strengthens the role of schools in preparing students for emerging technologies. The emphasis on AI integration, digital infrastructure, and experiential STEM learning moves schooling away from rote instruction towards applied problem-solving.

Sunitha Nambiar, CEO, Manav Rachna International Schools, highlights that the Budget places schools "where they truly belong—at the foundation of India's future." She points to improved digital infrastructure, content labs, and exposure to emerging technologies as steps that help children develop digital confidence, creativity, and real-world problem-solving skills early in life.

However, she also underscores that this is not merely about launching new schemes. The Budget implicitly challenges schools to modernise classrooms, adopt technology meaningfully, and integrate experiential learning so that academics and skills grow together.

From a practitioner's lens, implementation depth—not announcement volume—will define impact.

Access, equity, and the gender question

While technology dominates headlines, the Budget's most transformative school-level intervention may be its focus on girls' access and retention. The proposal to establish one girls' hostel in every district directly targets safety, accommodation, and continuity—key barriers that prevent girls, especially from rural and underserved regions, from progressing through secondary education.

Aditi Misra, Director, Dharav High School, Gurugram, welcomes the focus on girls' hostels, calling it a crucial step in improving safety, access, and retention. She stresses that parallel investments in school infrastructure, laboratories, smart classrooms, and teacher training are essential if policy intent is to translate into meaningful learning outcomes.

Echoing this, Niru Agarwal, Managing Trustee, Greenwood High International School, Bengaluru, views the hostel initiative as a structural enabler for women's participation in STEM. She also highlights the Budget's broader emphasis on employability alignment, AI integration, sports, and wellbeing, reinforcing the idea that schooling must support balanced cognitive, physical, and emotional development.

"The Union Budget's focus on digital learning infrastructure, AI initiatives, and creative labs is very encouraging for schools like ours. It reflects a long-term vision to equip students with future-ready skills while strengthening access and inclusivity, especially for girls. At Chaman Bhartiya School, we see this as an opportunity to further

enhance our learning environment, integrating technology, innovation, and experiential learning to prepare our students not just for exams, but for life and careers in a rapidly evolving world", quoted Geeta Jayanth, Head of School, Chaman Bhartiya School.

Beyond metros: Regional equity and school-led democratisation

Another subtle but important school-level signal lies in the Budget's push for City Economic Regions (CERs) and university townships beyond metropolitan centres. While often discussed in higher education terms, these investments have significant downstream implications for school education.

Niyati Handa, Co-founder and Director, Eklavya School, Bengaluru, notes that the proposed ₹5,000 crore capital investment per CER has the potential to democratise access to quality education beyond metros. By strengthening regional ecosystems, schools in non-urban areas stand to benefit from better infrastructure, talent circulation, and exposure to industry-linked learning pathways.

This regional lens is critical as India seeks to reduce the concentration of opportunity and talent migration into a handful of cities.

Global exposure, medical pathways, and future-readiness

As Indian school enrolment stabilises above 90 per cent, aspirations are increasingly shifting from access to global competitiveness and career mobility. This is particularly visible in the rising demand for STEM and medical pathways, with the government announcing the addition of 10,000 medical seats in 2026–27, part of a broader plan to create 75,000

new medical seats over five years. At the school level, early exposure to AI-enabled learning, digital labs, and innovation ecosystems is becoming critical in preparing students for these high-stakes, globally benchmarked career tracks.

Against this backdrop, Shweta Sastri, Managing Director, Canadian International School, Bengaluru, views Budget 2026–27 as a comprehensive roadmap that addresses access, quality, and future readiness simultaneously. She highlights how the integration of AI into curricula, the rollout of e-content labs, and the strengthening of innovation-driven learning environments can significantly enhance classroom outcomes. She also notes that expanded medical education and STEM pathways will widen opportunities for students aspiring to global careers in healthcare, science, and technology.

Sastri further points to the reduction in TCS on overseas education as a practical and timely relief for families. By easing the financial friction associated with international education, the move acknowledges the growing global aspirations of Indian school students, while allowing schools to better align academic preparation with international higher education and career pathways.

From enrolment to outcomes: The implementation test

With enrolment rates already high, the challenge before school education is no longer scale but quality, teacher preparedness, and classroom execution.

Praneet Mungali, Trustee, Sanskriti Group of Schools, Pune, notes that while flagship programmes like Samagra Shiksha, PM-POSHAN, PM-

SHRI Schools, and BharatNet connectivity continue to strengthen access and equity, the emphasis must now shift decisively towards learning outcomes and teacher readiness. He underlines that technology-led reforms will succeed only if educators are equipped to translate them into everyday pedagogy.

Reinforces this view, Rima Singh, Head, DPS International stated that Budget 2026 lays the foundation for aligning education with future workforce needs through stronger industry linkages, practical learning, AI-enabled education, and inclusion-focused initiatives.

The bigger message

Budget 2026–27 makes one thing clear: India's education reform clock has moved upstream. Universities and skilling institutions matter, but the future workforce is already sitting in today's classrooms.

If schools can successfully integrate creativity, technology, equity, and foundational skills—supported by robust teacher capacity and regional infrastructure—India's demographic advantage may yet become a durable economic strength. If not, the risk remains that early promise will be lost long before students ever reach college.

The Budget has set the direction. The real test now lies in execution, classroom by classroom, teacher by teacher, district by district.

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Budget 2026: Education funding up 8.27 per cent; Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan calls it youth focussed

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the budget, describing it as the 'Viksit Bharat Budget' that emphasises education, employment creation, and inclusive growth. With an 8.27 per cent increase in education funds and several new initiatives, the Budget sets the direction for India's next stage of growth

WEBDESK — Feb 3, 2026, 01:14 pm IST in **Bharat**, **Economy**, **Education**, **Employment**

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Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the Union Budget 2026-27 as the “Viksit Bharat Budget”, emphasising its strong focus on education, employment creation, and inclusive growth. In a video message shared after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Budget, Dharmendra Pradhan said that the Viksit Bharat Budget is inclusive and aims to strengthen education and job opportunities while shaping the roadmap for the nation’s next stage of

growth. Emphasising the government's ongoing focus on education, he noted that the sector's funding has risen by 8.27% from last year, showing a commitment to creating a knowledge-based society and preparing young Indians with future-ready skills.

Pradhan said the Budget is future-oriented, focused on youth, friendly to people, and aimed at creating jobs. He highlighted that it reflects the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, ensuring benefits for poor and middle-class families. He added that the Budget brings larger and stronger investments to improve India's education and skill systems, covering both school and higher education, to prepare the workforce for the demands of a rapidly changing global economy.

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He further said that these initiatives will expand access to quality education and generate new employment opportunities, aligning with the government's vision of achieving a developed India (Viksit Bharat) by 2047. During her Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also announced plans to set up a high-level 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' committee, which will suggest ways to boost the services sector as a major force for India's growth and progress. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between education and employment by aligning academic programs with the evolving needs of industries and emerging job markets.

The Finance Minister announced several important initiatives for the education sector, including the development of five university townships near major industrial and logistics hubs, the establishment of a girls' hostel in every district to encourage female participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, and the setting up of a new National Institute of Design (NID) in eastern India to promote design learning and innovation.

Sitharaman said that long study hours and lab work in STEM institutions often create difficulties for female students. To address this, the government will provide support to set up a girls' hostel in every district. The Budget also introduced a plan to start Content Creator Labs in 15,000 schools and 500 colleges to encourage digital creativity and help students build new-age skills. Additionally, a Digital Knowledge Grid will be developed to showcase India's cultural, heritage, and spiritual knowledge on a unified digital platform, promoting Indian knowledge systems and traditional wisdom globally. Calling it a "blueprint for the next phase of development," Pradhan said that the Budget's measures reflect Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making India a knowledge-driven, innovation-led economy.

Pradhan said that the 2026–27 Budget demonstrates the government's commitment to using education as a tool for empowerment and employment, helping build a more skilled and inclusive India.

Topics: Nirmala Sitharaman Dharmendra Pradhan Education STEM Union Budget 2026 National Institute of Design

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Government Policies 2 Min Read

Rajasthan School Education Department set to prepare 3-year roadmap for career guidance

The initiative aims to empower school students to make informed and confident career choices by strengthening the state's guidance system in a structured and sustainable manner.

IANS

Updated On Feb 4, 2026 at 11:12 PM IST



Dalchand Gupta, Deputy Director, Vocational Education, said, "Children today have no shortage of options. What they need is the right guidance, suited to the present context, to help them decide which option is best for them"

Jaipur, Keeping pace with changing times and emerging career demands, the Rajasthan School Education Department is set to transform career guidance from a one-time formal activity into a continuous, life-shaping process for students.

Advt



The initiative aims to empower school students to make informed and confident career choices by strengthening the state's guidance system in a structured and sustainable manner.

Dalchand Gupta, Deputy Director, Vocational Education, said, "Children today have no shortage of options. What they need is the right guidance, suited to the present context, to help them decide which option is best for them."

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Aligned with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the department is focusing on the idea of "living a career, not just choosing one".

As part of this approach, a clear three-year roadmap is being developed to institutionalise comprehensive career guidance across the state.

The roadmap is being prepared jointly by the Rajasthan School Education Council (Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan), Jaipur, and the Rajasthan State Council of Educational Research and Training (RSCERT), Udaipur, with technical support from UNICEF Rajasthan and the Antarang Foundation.



Under this initiative, students will be encouraged to map their own career paths based on their interests, aptitude, and abilities.

The role of career counsellors at the school level will be strengthened and made more impactful. Career guidance will be delivered through hybrid learning modules, digital platforms, and practical exposure, extending well beyond the confines of classrooms.

The department is also working to create a strong ecosystem by fostering coordination among teachers, parents, students, and the industry.

The objective is not only to make students employable, but also to equip them with decision-making skills essential at every stage of life.

A state-level workshop focusing on comprehensive career guidance was organised to frame this strategy, with special emphasis on student-friendly communication and confidence-building.

Presiding over the workshop, Additional State Project Director (Second) Ashok Kumar Meena stressed that students should choose their own careers so they can progress in line with their interests and strengths.

अमर उजाला, 5 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 8

पढ़ना जरूरी है

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का स्कूलों में अखबार पढ़ना अनिवार्य करने का निर्णय एक बेहतरीन पहल है। भारत में शिक्षा राज्य का विषय है। इसलिए हर राज्य को इस पर फैसला लेना चाहिए। सोशल मीडिया के बेसब्र और घटती एकाग्रता के दौर में पढ़ने को प्रोत्साहन मिलना ही चाहिए।

हाल ही में उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने स्कूलों में अखबार पढ़ना अनिवार्य कर दिया है। बच्चों के लिए इससे बेहतर पहल और कोई नहीं हो सकती। खबरों के मुताबिक, छात्रों का स्क्रीन टाइम कम करने और पढ़ने की आदत को बढ़ावा देने के लिए यह कदम उठाया गया है। इसमें आगे बताया गया है कि नियमित अखबार पढ़ने से छात्रों की शब्दावली और भाषा शैली बेहतर होती है, जबकि अलग-अलग तरह के लेख और संपादकीय उनका लेखन कौशल विकसित करने में मदद करते हैं। अलग-अलग नजरिये और विश्लेषण पढ़ने से छात्रों में आलोचनात्मक सोच और सही-गलत के बीच फर्क करने की क्षमता विकसित होती है, जिससे वे झूठी खबरों के जमाने में ज्यादा समझदार बनते हैं। हालांकि वे अपने पसंदीदा विषय पर टिके रह सकते हैं, लेकिन अखबार पढ़ने से उन्हें विज्ञान, संस्कृति और खेल जैसे विषयों के बारे में भी पता चलता है, जिनके बारे में वे शायद वैसे नहीं जानते।



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इससे उनके ज्ञान का दायरा बढ़ता है। डिजिटल स्क्रीन की तुलना में, मुद्रित अखबार पढ़ने से एकाग्रता बढ़ती है।

हम सभी के लिए सबसे बड़ी चुनौती यह है कि सोशल मीडिया के आने से हमारी एकाग्रता की अवधि घट गई है। छोटे संदेश, व्हाट्सएप और 90 सेकंड के वीडियो ने हमें बेसब्र बना दिया है। हम कंटेंट को जल्दी-जल्दी देखते हैं, पर उसे समझते नहीं हैं। यह बिना चबाए खाना निगलने जैसा है। अगर आप ध्यान दें, तो जो लोग मोबाइल स्क्रीन पर कंटेंट देखते हैं, उन्हें सिरदर्द, पेट दर्द और अवसाद या अजीब-सी अनुभूति होती है। फास्ट फूड इसलिए आया, क्योंकि लोग चलते-फिरते खाना चाहते थे। यह स्वादिष्ट था, लेकिन सेहत के लिए अच्छा नहीं था। फास्ट कंटेंट भी कुछ ऐसा ही है-आप बात करते समय, चलते समय और कुछ मामलों में गाड़ी चलाते समय भी स्मार्टफोन देखते हैं। लेकिन कुछ भी आपके दिमाग में नहीं रहता। पढ़ने की आदत डालने के लिए शुरुआत में, आपको ऐसी आसान व छोटी किताबें पढ़नी चाहिए, जो आपको पसंद हों।



इससे आपका मन भी नहीं हटेगा। जैसे-जैसे आप आगे बढ़ेंगे और आपको पढ़ने में मजा आने लगेगा, तो आप थोड़े और मुश्किल विषयों पर भी किताबें पढ़ सकते हैं। कॉमिक्स और छोटी कहानियों से शुरुआत करना कोई बुरा विचार नहीं है, क्योंकि वे बहुत दिलचस्प होती हैं और उन्हें कम समय में पूरा किया जा सकता है। किताब पढ़ना उसी कहानी पर बनी फिल्म देखने से ज्यादा दिलचस्प होता है। इसका एक मुख्य कारण यह है कि किताब आपको अपनी कल्पना के अनुसार सोचने की आजादी देती है, जबकि फिल्म डायरेक्टर की सोच होती है। उदाहरण के लिए, एक अंधेरी, डरावनी गली में चलना फिल्म में एक ही तरह से दिखाया जा सकता है, लेकिन आप उसे दर्जनों अलग-अलग तरीकों से सोच सकते हैं।

एक बहुत ही सफल और लोकप्रिय टीवी प्रस्तोता पालकी शर्मा कहती हैं कि उन्हें पढ़ने का बहुत शौक है और किताबों ने ही उन्हें वह बनाया है, जो वह आज हैं!' वह स्कूल के दिनों से किताबें पढ़ रही हैं और देखिए, आज कहां पहुंच गई हैं। इसलिए वीडियो में मत डूबिए। वे मजेदार हो सकते हैं, लेकिन धीरे-धीरे आपके दिमाग को खत्म कर रहे हैं। वीडियो आमतौर पर साइबरस्पेस में तैरते-बिखरे हुए टुकड़ों की तरह होते हैं। ये आपके दिमाग को भ्रमित करते हैं और बिना किसी पैटर्न या अनुशासन के एक विचार से दूसरे विचार पर भटकाते रहते हैं। *साइकोलॉजी टुडे* मैगजीन का कहना है कि वीडियो को इन्सान का दिमाग पाठ की तुलना में साठ हजार गुना तेजी से प्रोसेस करता है। यह आपके दिमाग को बाईपास करके सीधे आपकी भावनाओं तक पहुंचता है, जिससे आलसी सोच को बढ़ावा मिलता है। जैसे आपकी शारीरिक क्षमता की एक सीमा होती है, वैसे ही आपकी मानसिक क्षमता की भी सीमा होती है। उदाहरण के लिए, आप कभी भी 100 मीटर पांच सेकंड में नहीं दौड़ सकते। एक स्वाभाविक सीमा होती है। पुरुषों की 100 मीटर रेस का वर्ल्ड रिकॉर्ड जमैका के उसेन बोल्ट के नाम है, जिन्होंने 2009 में बर्लिन में वर्ल्ड चैंपियनशिप में 9.58 सेकंड का समय लिया था। दूसरी ओर, पढ़ना इंटरैक्टिव और ज्यादा दिलचस्प होता है। आपको मन में तस्वीरें बनानी होती हैं और पेज पर बनी आकृतियों को अपने दिमाग में विचारों में बदलना होता है। यह माध्यम आपको एक मजबूत, ज्यादा अनुशासित विचारक बनाता है, चाहे आप कुछ भी पढ़ें।

महान और सफल लोग बहुत पढ़ते हैं। महात्मा गांधी, डॉ. अब्दुल कलाम और नेहरू ने बहुत सारी किताबें पढ़ीं, और वे लियो टॉल्स्टॉय, चार्ल्स डिकेंस और कई अन्य लेखकों से प्रभावित थे। पूर्व अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति बराक ओबामा कहते हैं कि किताबों ने उनके राष्ट्रपति पद के दौरान और पूरे जीवन में बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। ब्रिटेन के प्रधानमंत्री विंस्टन चर्चिल ने सैकड़ों किताबें पढ़ी थीं। अब्राहम लिंकन, जिन्हें ज्यादा औपचारिक शिक्षा नहीं मिल पाई थी, उन्होंने किताबें पढ़कर इसकी कमी पूरी की और खुद से पढ़ाई की।

कॉर्पोरेट जगत में कई सीइओ और सीनियर एग्जीक्यूटिव बहुत ज्यादा पढ़ते हैं। जब आप पढ़ते हैं, तो आपका बोलने का तरीका बेहतर होता है। सफल लोग चुनिंदा किताबें पढ़ते हैं और मनोरंजन साहित्य के बजाय उन्हें शैक्षणिक व ज्ञानप्रद पुस्तकें पसंद आती हैं। वे दूसरे सफल लोगों और उनकी कहानियों के बारे में पढ़ने में रुचि लेते हैं। एलन मस्क ने खुद किताबें पढ़कर रॉकेट बनाना सीखा। बॉलीवुड में बहुत-सी हस्तियां हैं, जिन्हें किताबें पढ़ने का शौक है। अलग-अलग लेखकों को पढ़ना चाहिए, क्योंकि हर लेखक के लिखने की अपनी शैली होती है और अलग-अलग लेखकों को पढ़ने से अलग-अलग शैली सीखने को मिलते हैं। अगर आप नहीं पढ़ेंगे, तो आप लिख नहीं पाएंगे।

यह सिर्फ नौकरी पाने के लिए ही नहीं, बल्कि कैरिअर में आगे बढ़ने के लिए भी जरूरी है। आपको अलग-अलग विधाओं की किताबें -रोमांचक उपन्यास, थ्रिलर, रहस्यमयी किताबें, महान लोगों की आत्मकथाएं/जीवनी, इतिहास और क्लासिक्स पढ़नी चाहिए। अमेरिकी लेखक जॉर्ज आरआर मार्टिन कहते हैं, 'एक पाठक मरने से पहले हजार जिंदगी जीता है...जो आदमी कभी नहीं पढ़ता, वह सिर्फ एक ही जिंदगी जीता है।' भारत में शिक्षा राज्य का विषय है। हर राज्य को इस पर फैसला लेना चाहिए। अगर आप 'विश्वगुरु' बनना चाहते हैं, तो पहले सीखें, और इसका एकमात्र तरीका पढ़ना है। सभी स्कूलों में स्थानीय भाषा में अखबार पढ़ना अनिवार्य किया जाना चाहिए। यह बात मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय की तरफ से भी आनी चाहिए।

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18,727 government schools closed in India in 5 years, private schools rise

India's school education system is shifting, with over 18,700 government schools closing in five years while private schools continue to grow. This trend raises concerns about affordability, rural access, and education equity, signalling major changes in the country's public education structure.

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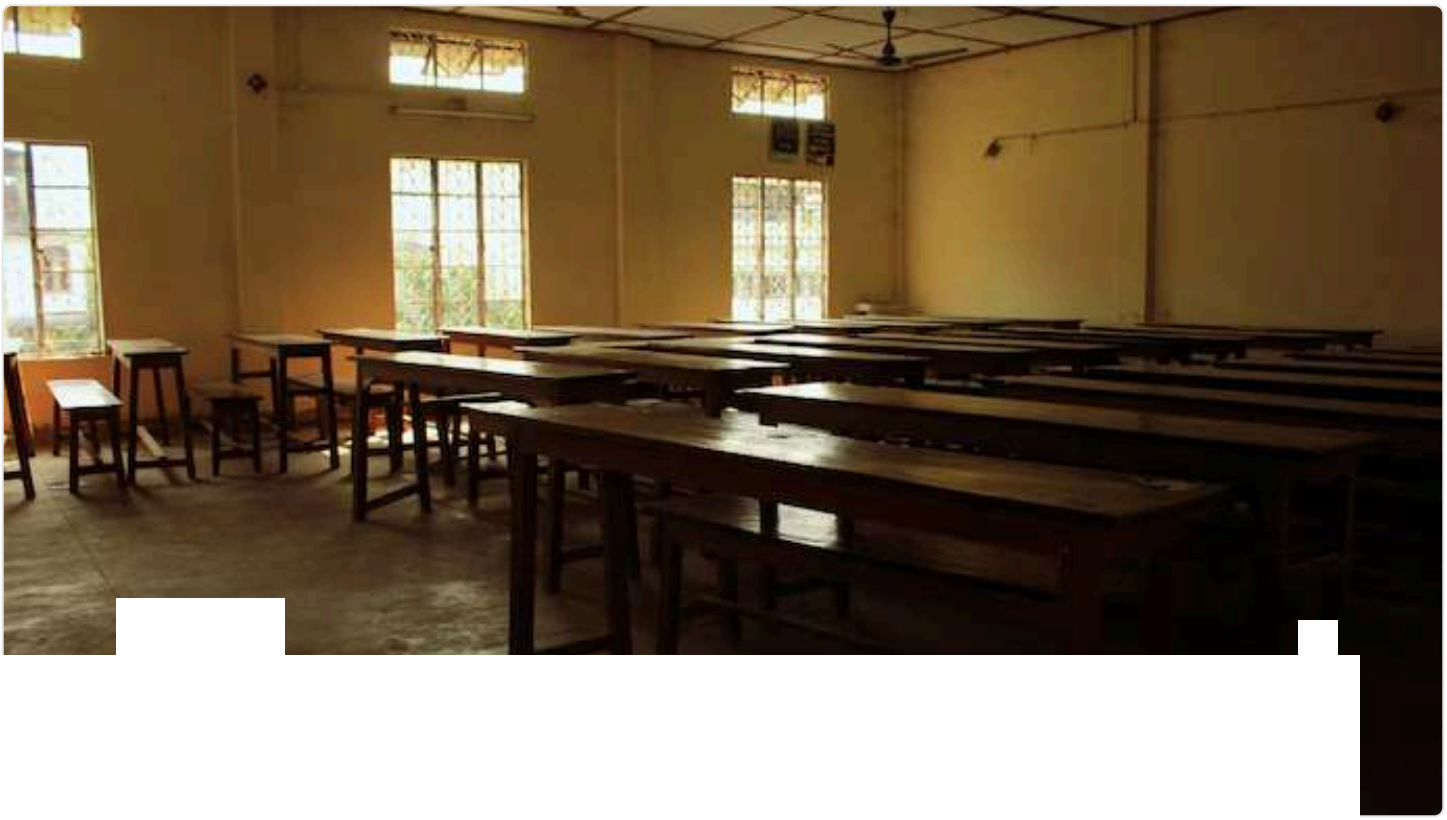
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Which Indian states experienced major shifts ir

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India lost 18,727 government schools in 5 years, while private schools rose in just one year

India Today Education Desk
New Delhi, UPDATED: Feb 5, 2026 15:48 IST

India's school education system is witnessing a notable transformation, with government data presented in the Rajya Sabha indicating a steady decline in public schools alongside a rise in private unaided institutions.

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CPI(M) MP John Brittas has raised concerns over the decline in government schools in India, stating that more than 18,000 such institutions have shut down over the past five years.

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Highlighting government data presented in the Rajya Sabha, Brittas described the trend as alarming for the country's public education system, sharing his concerns in a post on X.

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The data indicate a slow but consistent contraction of government schooling infrastructure, which has traditionally served as the backbone of affordable education, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged regions.

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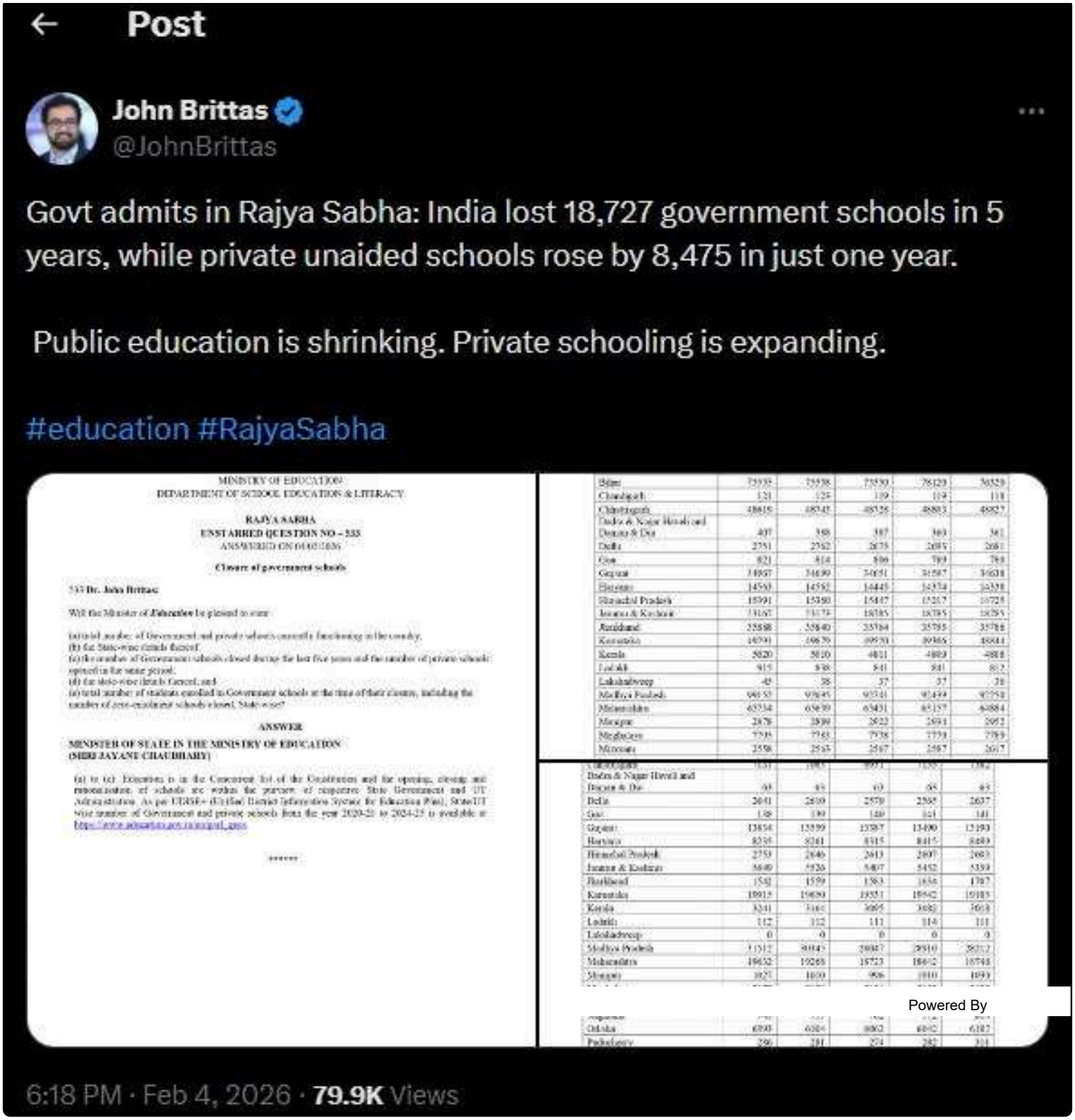


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WHY ARE GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS DECLINING IN INDIA

According to official government data, the total number of government schools in India

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The reduction reflects a gradual contraction of the public school network across the country, raising concerns about access to affordable education, particularly for students in rural and economically weaker sections who largely depend on government-run institutions.

This drop indicates a consistent reduction in publicly run schools across multiple states and union territories.

While reasons such as rationalisation, merging of low-enrolment schools, and demographic shifts are often cited, the scale of decline suggests bigger structural changes in the public education system.

ARE PRIVATE SCHOOLS EXPANDING?

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The expansion of private unaided schools has been particularly noticeable in the most recent year. Official data shows that the number of private unaided schools increased from 3,31,108 in 2023-24 to 3,39,583 in 2024-25, reflecting the addition of 8,475 new private schools within a single year.

This sharp rise indicates a growing presence of private players in India's education

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WHAT IS THE OVERALL FIVE-YEAR TREND?

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS TREND:

2020-21: 10,32,049

2021-22: 10,22,386

2022-23: 10,16,010

2023-24: 10,17,660

2024-25: 10,13,322

This reflects a clear downward trend in the number of institutions, even though there are minor fluctuations in certain years.

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PRIVATE UNAIDED SCHOOLS TREND:

2020-21: 3,40,753

2021-22: 3,35,844

2022-23: 3,23,430

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This indicates a recovery phase followed by a sharp and significant growth in recent years.

WHICH STATES SHOW MAJOR SHIFTS?

State-wise trends show significant variations in the changing education landscape across India. Uttar Pradesh continues to have the highest number of both government and private schools, with private institutions witnessing a sharp rise to 1,04,508 in 2024–25.

Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have recorded notable reductions in government school numbers over the years, indicating a contraction in public education infrastructure. Meanwhile, Karnataka and Maharashtra have maintained a steady presence of private schools, though with moderate fluctuations.

In contrast, West Bengal has experienced visible declines in both government and private institutions in recent years. These variations across states suggest that policy decisions, demographic patterns, and socio-economic factors play a major role in shaping educational infrastructure trends.

WHY DOES THIS SHIFT MATTER?

The closure of government schools can disproportionately impact rural and remote communities where public institutions often serve as the primary or only accessible source of education.
It also places an additional burden on economically weaker families who rely on government schools for free or subsidised education.

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For many students from marginalised backgrounds, these schools provide essential support such as mid-day meals, free textbooks, and basic infrastructure, making their closure a serious concern for educational access and social equity.

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Meanwhile, the expansion of private schooling often reflects growing parental demand for perceived quality but also raises concerns about affordability and widening educational inequality.

The data signal a gradual but noticeable transformation in India's school education framework.

The loss of nearly 18,727 government schools, alongside the rapid addition of 8,475 private schools in just one year, suggests a shift in educational provisioning patterns. While private institutions may help meet rising demand, a shrinking public school network could weaken access to affordable education for millions.

The emerging trend raises critical policy questions: Can India maintain educational equity while public institutions decline? Or will the growing reliance on private schooling reshape the country's education system permanently? The answers will shape the future of learning opportunities for generations to come.

- Ends

Published By: Apoorva Anand

Published On: Feb 5, 2026

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दैनिक जागरण, 6 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 10

जीवन का अंतिम लक्ष्य नहीं हैं परीक्षाएं



संजय कुमार

परीक्षा पे चर्चा पहल का यही संदेश है कि परीक्षाएं बोझ नहीं, बल्कि सीखने, बढ़ने एवं खुद को समझने का अवसर हैं

भारत में छात्रों के परीक्षा तनाव को कम करने और सीखने की प्रक्रिया को आनंदमय बनाने के लिए शुरू हुई 'परीक्षा पे चर्चा' पहल आज एक बड़ी जन-भागीदारी बन चुकी है। 2018 में प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी और छात्रों के बीच हुई एक बातचीत से आरंभ हुई यह पहल अब करोड़ों छात्रों, अभिभावकों और शिक्षकों का मार्ग प्रशस्त कर रही है। 2025 में इस कार्यक्रम ने गिनीज वर्ल्ड रिकार्ड बनाया, जब एक ही महीने में 3.53 करोड़ से अधिक लोगों ने इसमें भागीदारी के लिए पंजीकरण किया। इसकी कुल पहुंच 21 करोड़ से अधिक दर्शकों तक रही, जिसमें विदेश स्थित भारतीय स्कूल भी शामिल थे। यह कार्यक्रम छात्रों को यह संदेश देता है कि परीक्षाएं जीवन का अंतिम लक्ष्य नहीं हैं, बल्कि सीखने की यात्रा का सिर्फ एक प्रमुख चरण हैं। प्रधानमंत्री बार-बार इस पर जोर देते हैं कि परीक्षा केवल किसी विशेष क्षण में आपकी तैयारी को मापती हैं, जबकि सीखना लगातार और आनंददायक होता है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-2020 में 'आजीवन सीखने' की अवधारणा पर गहराई से जोर दिया गया है। इस कार्यक्रम का एक प्रमुख उद्देश्य यह है कि अंकों का प्रतिशत बच्चे के संपूर्ण व्यक्तित्व को परिभाषित नहीं कर सकता। बच्चों को पाठ्यपुस्तकों से आगे बढ़कर अलग-अलग कौशल सीखने, नई गतिविधियों को आजमाने और चुनौतियों को डर के बजाय अवसर के रूप में देखने के लिए प्रेरित किया जाना है।

इस पहल में मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को विशेष महत्व दिया गया है। विशेषज्ञ छात्रों को तनाव कम करने के आसान तरीकों से परिचित करा रहे हैं, जिनमें 5-4-3-2-1 ग्राउंडिंग तकनीक, पर्याप्त नींद, पानी, व्यायाम और ध्यान जैसी स्वस्थ दिनचर्या शामिल हैं। 5-4-3-2-1 इंद्रिय-आधारित ध्यान अभ्यास है, जिसे पांचों इंद्रियों का उपयोग करके विचारों की दौड़ को शांत करने और अंततः उन्हें एक इंद्रिय तक सीमित करने के लिए डिजाइन किया गया है। ऐसा करने से आपका ध्यान चिंता पैदा करने वाले विचारों से हटकर वर्तमान क्षण पर केंद्रित होता है। इस तकनीक को 18वीं शताब्दी में बेट्टी एलिस



परीक्षाओं को लेकर दृष्टिकोण बदलना आवश्यक● फाइल

एरिक्सन ने विकसित किया था। खेल जगत की कई हस्तियों ने अपने अनुभव साझा करते हुए बताया था कि खेल पढ़ाई में बाधा नहीं, बल्कि तनाव कम करने और ध्यान केंद्रित रखने में मदद करते हैं।

डिजिटल मीडिया के बढ़ते प्रचलन से आशंका व्यक्त की जा रही है कि उससे संज्ञान का ह्रास हो रहा है तथा मानसिक स्वास्थ्य कुप्रभावित हो रहा है। विश्व में 5.66 अरब डिजिटल मीडिया प्रोफाइल हैं। लोग प्रतिदिन डिजिटल मीडिया प्लेटफार्म पर सामग्री देखने में 15 अरब घंटे व्यतीत करते हैं, जो मानव जीवन के 17 लाख वर्षों से अधिक के बराबर है। अत्यधिक उपयोग से 'डिजिटल डिमेंशिया' में बढ़ोतरी हो रही है, जिसके कारण मस्तिष्क के उन क्षेत्रों में ग्रे मैटर की कमी हो जाती है, जो भावनात्मक विनियमन और आवेग नियंत्रण के लिए जिम्मेदार होते हैं। हम डिजिटल मीडिया को नकारने की स्थिति में नहीं हैं, इसलिए हमें इसके उपयोग के लिए स्वस्थ सीमाएं निर्धारित करनी चाहिए। तकनीकी विशेषज्ञों ने छात्रों को सलाह दी है कि वे मोबाइल और डिजिटल साधनों को नियंत्रित तरीके से इस्तेमाल करें, ताकि तकनीक मददगार बने, बोझ नहीं। परीक्षा पे चर्चा कार्यक्रम अभिभावकों को भी महत्वपूर्ण संदेश देता है कि वे बच्चों का ध्यान केवल अंकों पर न लगाएं, बल्कि सीखने की प्रक्रिया पर केंद्रित रखें। बच्चों की तुलना दूसरों से न करें और अपने घर में ऐसा माहौल बनाएं जहां बच्चे खुलकर अपने डर, चुनौतियों और उम्मीदें साझा कर सकें। अभिभावकों का सहयोगी व्यवहार बच्चों की परीक्षा तैयारी में सबसे ज्यादा मदद करता है।

भारतीय शिक्षा दर्शन में ज्ञान की प्राप्ति को एक एकाकी प्रक्रिया नहीं, बल्कि एक साझा पथ माना गया है। परीक्षा पे चर्चा कार्यक्रम शिक्षकों से अपील करता है कि वे रटने की संस्कृति से आगे बढ़कर आलोचनात्मक सोच और रचनात्मकता को बढ़ावा दें। यह कार्यक्रम राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के दृष्टिकोण के अनुरूप है, जिसमें छात्र-केंद्रित, तनाव-मुक्त और अनुभवात्मक शिक्षा पर जोर दिया गया है। मूल्यांकन प्रणाली में बदलाव की जरूरत है ताकि परीक्षाएं केवल याद्दाश्त नहीं, बल्कि समझ, अनुप्रयोग और विकास को माप सकें। डिजिटल प्लेटफार्म का उपयोग भी शिक्षा को अधिक सुलभ बनाने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण माना गया है। स्कूलों और जिला स्तर के शिक्षा अधिकारियों को इस पहल के सिद्धांतों को वास्तविकता में बदलने की भी जिम्मेदारी दी गई है। इसके लिए स्कूलों में वेलनेस कमेटियां बनाना, तनाव प्रबंधन और अध्ययन कौशल पर कार्यशालाएं आयोजित करना, अभिभावक-शिक्षक संवाद बढ़ाना और छात्रों की उपलब्धियों को केवल अंकों के बजाय विविध क्षेत्रों में पहचानना जरूरी बताया गया है। इसे सुनिश्चित करने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा अभिलेखित एक्जाम वारियर्स जैसे संसाधनों को हर छात्र तक पहुंचाना भी महत्वपूर्ण है।

अंततः परीक्षा पे चर्चा मात्र एक कार्यक्रम नहीं, बल्कि भारतीय शिक्षा व्यवस्था में सकारात्मक बदलाव की दिशा में महत्वपूर्ण कदम है। इसका संदेश स्पष्ट है-परीक्षाएं बोझ नहीं, बल्कि सीखने, बढ़ने और खुद को समझने का अवसर हैं।

(लेखक स्कूल शिक्षा एवं साक्षरता विभाग के सचिव हैं।)
response@jagran.com

The Pioneer, 6 February 2026, Page No-12

Indian teacher wins $1 million Global Teacher Prize in Dubai

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Dubai



Indian teacher Rouble Nagi receiving the Global Teacher Prize trophy from Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan at a ceremony in Dubai AP

An Indian teacher and activist known for creating hundreds of learning centres and painting educational murals across the walls of slums won the $1 million Global Teacher Prize on Thursday.

Rouble Nagi accepted the award at the World Governments Summit in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, an annual event that draws leaders from across the globe.

Her Rouble Nagi Art Foundation has established more than 800 learning centres across India.

They aim to have children who never attended school begin to have structured learning. They also teach children already in school.

Nagi also paints murals that teach literacy, science, math and history, among other topics.

The prize is awarded by the Varkey Foundation, whose founder, Sunny Varkey, established the for-profit GEMS Education company that runs dozens of schools in Egypt, Qatar and the UAE.

Nagi plans to use the $1 million to build an institute that offers free vocational training. Nagi is the 10th teacher to win the award, which the foundation began handing out in 2015.

Past winners of the Global Teacher Prize have included a Kenyan teacher from a remote village who gave away most of his earnings to the poor, a Palestinian primary school teacher who teaches her students about non-violence and a Canadian educator who taught a remote Arctic village of Inuit students. Last year's winner was Saudi educator Mansour al-Mansour, who was known for his work with the poor in the kingdom. GEMS Education, or Global Education Management Systems, is one of the world's largest private school operators and is believed to be worth billions. Its success has followed that of Dubai, where only private schools offer classes for the children of the foreigners who power its economy.

BACKGROUNDERS
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Pariksha Pe Charcha: A Heart-to-Heart Interaction Guiding Students Through Examination Challenges

06, February 2026

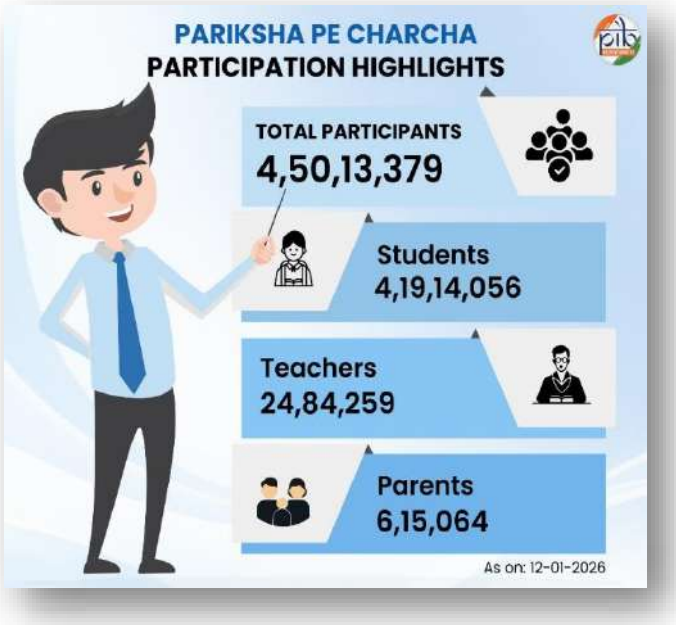
Key Takeaways

- Launched in 2018, Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) is an annual nationwide **interactive initiative where the Prime Minister engages with students, teachers and parents** on examinations, life skills and well-being.
- PPC promotes stress-free examinations, emotional resilience, and holistic development, aligning with **National Education Policy 2020's experiential and conceptual learning framework**.
- PPC encourages students to view exams positively, promoting confidence, disciplined preparation, and resilience through the **'Be a Warrior, Not a Worrier' mindset**.
- **2025 Benchmark:** PPC 2025 recorded **over 5 crore participants** and achieved a **Guinness World Record with 3.53 crore registrations**, marking its largest global engagement milestone.
- **Pan-India Expansion 2026:** PPC 2026 introduced **multi-city interactions across five regions**, with interactive sessions held at **Devmogra, Coimbatore, Raipur, Guwahati** and **7 Lok Kalyan Marg, Delhi**, strengthening inclusivity and regional representation.

Introduction: The Dawn of the "Exam Warrior"

Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC), launched in **2018** by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is a nationwide initiative aimed at reducing examination stress and promoting holistic learning among students. Conducted by the **Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education**, PPC provides a unique platform where the Prime Minister interacts directly with students, teachers and parents, encouraging a confident and positive approach towards examinations. The programme has evolved into a mass movement, with the **2025 edition witnessing participation of over 5 crore students, teachers and parents**, reflecting its extensive nationwide reach. PPC promotes time management, emotional well-being, balanced lifestyles and conceptual learning, aligning with the Government's vision of student-centric education under the **National Education Policy**.

The **9th edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC 2026)** has further expanded participation, crossing **over 4.5 crore registrations** from students, parents and teachers across the country, underscoring its continued relevance in addressing examination-related stress and promoting student well-being. As part of the run-up to PPC 2026, nationwide student engagement activities were organised from **12 January 2026 (National Youth Day) to 23 January 2026 (Parakram Diwas)**. The activities commenced with the **Swadeshi Sankalp Daud**, promoting self-reliance among students, and culminated with **quiz and writing competitions at selected Kendriya Vidyalayas**, further strengthening student participation and awareness.



The initiative reflects the core principles of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which promotes stress-free, experiential and conceptual learning in place of rote memorisation. Through interactive interactions, the Prime Minister highlights critical aspects such as effective time management, managing digital distractions, maintaining mindfulness and building emotional resilience, while providing practical and relatable guidance to students, parents and educators.

Interesting Highlights of Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026

Special Interactions at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg (LKM)

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 featured several memorable and engaging moments during the interaction from **7 Lok Kalyan Marg, New Delhi**. The 2026 edition recorded **over 4.5 crore registrations**, with an additional **2.26 crore participants engaging in associated activities**, taking the overall participation to **over 6.76 crore individuals**.

The Prime Minister surprised students during breakfast, significantly enhancing their enthusiasm and energy. He also **presented Assamese gamosas** to the students as a gesture reflecting India's cultural diversity. Students actively shared their fears related to examinations and discussed strategies to overcome them. Many participants also shared insights from the *Exam Warriors* book, highlighting how its messages help them manage stress and improve focus. The students presented the Prime Minister with several thoughtful gifts, including handmade bouquets, a veena crafted from recycled materials, Assamese gamosas, organic tea leaves from Sikkim and traditional sweets, reflecting creativity and cultural richness.

Nationwide Expansion of PPC

The **2026 edition marks a historic expansion of PPC into a truly pan-India programme**. For the first time, interactions are conducted across multiple locations covering different regions of the country, including **Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), Raipur (Chhattisgarh), Devmogra (Gujarat), Guwahati (Assam)** and New Delhi.



One of the most distinctive interactions took place in Assam, where the session was conducted aboard a cruise on the **Brahmaputra River**, symbolising regional representation and innovative outreach.

Scale and Participation: From Initiative to Jan Andolan

PPC began modestly in 2018 as a town-hall style event at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi, where over 2,500 students participated in person, and an estimated 8.5 crore viewers tuned in via Doordarshan, TV, and radio. The inaugural edition focused on holistic development and resilience, setting the tone for what would become an annual tradition.

By **2019,** the event expanded, lasting over 90 minutes and incorporating humor to engage participants. The **2020** edition introduced an online competition with 2.63 lakh entries from India and 25 countries abroad, emphasizing challenges as opportunities for growth.

The program adapted remarkably during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **2021**, it shifted entirely online on April 7, highlighting adaptability and resilience in uncertain times. Returning to in-person format in **2022** at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi, it drew around 9.69 lakh student viewers, 47,200 employees, and 1.86 lakh parents live on TV and YouTube.

The **2023 edition**, held on January 27, saw close to 7.18 lakh students, 42,337 employees, and 88,544 parents watching live, reinforcing its role in stress management.

By 2024, PPC moved to Bharat Mandapam in a town-hall format with around 3,000 participants, including 100 students from Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for the first time, and garnered 2.26 crore registrations on the MyGov portal.

The **2025 edition** marked a new benchmark with over 5 crore participants, **earning a Guinness World Record for 3.53 crore registrations.** It featured seven episodes with renowned personalities and 36 students from diverse schools across all states and union territories.



Now in its **9th edition in 2026**, PPC has surpassed 4.5 crore registrations, with some reports indicating engagement reaching over 6.76 crore participants.

This exponential growth, from thousands to crores, illustrates PPC's transformation into a Jan Andolan, or people's movement, driven by PM Modi's vision to unite society in nurturing young talent.

The Format: Engaging and Inclusive Interactions



PPC's format is designed to be accessible and interactive, starting with an online MCQ-based competition on the MyGov portal for selection. Winners get the chance to interact directly with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, sharing questions on exams, life skills, and personal growth. The main event typically unfolds in a town-hall setting, but innovations have added depth. In 2025, it began at Sunder Nursery in Delhi, an open-air venue emphasizing connection with nature, and included distributing til-gud sweets[1] for warmth during winters.

[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qANqhZz7u1c

The initiative seeks to transform examination stress into confidence by promoting creativity, self-belief and a positive learning approach. It encourages participants to share ideas and express creativity, contributing to a nationwide movement that makes education more engaging and empowering.

Run-up activities for 2026, from January 12 to 23, included student-led events like the Swadeshi Sankalp Daud (a run promoting self-reliance) on Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, and quizzes on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti. These tie into national themes, making PPC more than an event, it's a cultural celebration. A **fresh angle in 2026 is its multi-location format of interactions**, with special episodes in cities like Devmogra, Coimbatore, Raipur, Guwahati, and Delhi's 7 Lok Kalyan Marg. This decentralized approach brings the dialogue closer to regional students, highlighting diverse experiences and fostering inclusivity.

Exploring New Dimensions: Expanding the Scope of Learning through Pariksha Pe Charcha

Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) has steadily evolved beyond a dialogue on examinations into a platform that connects education with life skills, social awareness and personality development. Its expanding themes reflect a broader approach to student growth, encouraging young learners to develop responsible, balanced and future-ready perspectives.

Integrating Environmental Awareness PPC increasingly emphasises **environmental responsibility**, encouraging students to link learning with sustainability and lifestyle choices. The **"Ek Ped Maa ke Naam" campaign**, highlighted during interactions, motivates students to plant trees in honour of their mothers, fostering an emotional bond with nature and promoting conservation. The initiative aligns with the Government's **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)**, encouraging sustainable habits and responsible use of natural resources, while nurturing environmental stewardship among students.

Promoting Holistic Wellness PPC consistently highlights the importance of **physical and mental well-being** alongside academic preparation. Students are encouraged to adopt **healthy dietary habits, balanced lifestyles and mindfulness practices** to manage stress effectively. Wellness techniques such as **breathing exercises and mindful eating** are promoted to improve focus, reduce anxiety and enhance overall health, reinforcing the link between academic success, physical fitness and emotional stability.

Encouraging Responsible Use of Technology PPC recognises the growing influence of digital platforms and addresses challenges of **excessive screen time and digital distractions**. Students are encouraged to practise **periodic digital detox or digital fasting** to improve concentration, strengthen interpersonal communication and enhance family bonding. The initiative promotes technology as a **constructive learning tool**, encouraging purposeful use of digital resources instead of distraction.

Alignment with National Education Policy 2020 PPC strongly complements the vision of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which promotes joyful, inclusive and experiential learning. The programme

supports national education initiatives such as **Samagra Shiksha** and **PM-SHRI Schools**, which aim to enhance the quality and accessibility of education across the country. By encouraging conceptual understanding, creativity and equal opportunities, PPC reflects NEP's focus on equitable and student-centric education.

Promoting Inclusivity and Regional Representation PPC promotes inclusive participation by bringing together students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, regions and school systems, reflecting India's educational diversity. The **2026 edition adopted a pan-India format**, with interactive sessions held at **Devmogra, Coimbatore, Raipur, Guwahati** and **7 Lok Kalyan Marg, Delhi**, enabling students to share region-specific educational challenges. The edition recorded **over 4.5 crore registrations**, with total engagement exceeding **6.76 crore participants**, including students, parents and teachers, highlighting PPC's growing nationwide trust and relevance.

Making Learning Relatable through Real-life Analogies PPC uses relatable examples from sports, daily life and inspirational stories to simplify complex ideas. Analogies such as maintaining focus like a cricketer or narratives highlighting cooperation among Divyang students help communicate the importance of perseverance, teamwork and healthy competition. These examples encourage students to view challenges as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles.

Nurturing Leadership and Personal Development Beyond academic guidance, PPC emphasises leadership and character-building. The initiative promotes values such as self-discipline, trust-building and organic talent development. By encouraging students to lead by example and support peers, PPC helps nurture responsible and confident individuals prepared to contribute positively to society.

Through these expanding dimensions, Pariksha Pe Charcha has transformed into a dynamic platform that addresses not only examination preparedness but also broader life skills, social responsibility and personal growth, shaping well-rounded and future-ready.

Cultivating a Positive Mindset

Psychosocial Well-being: PPC has strengthened student mental well-being by complementing the Government's **Manodarpan initiative**, a national psychosocial support and mental health helpline under the Ministry of Education. By encouraging open conversations on examination anxiety and academic pressure, PPC has helped reduce stigma around seeking help and empowered students to openly discuss expectation-related stress.

Time Management and Micro-Planning: PPC interactions have promoted practical time-management techniques. **The Prime Minister's reference to "mothers as time-management role models"** has encouraged students to adopt structured study planning, prioritise difficult subjects and reduce last-minute examination stress.

The 'Exam Warrior' Philosophy: Inspired by the book *Exam Warriors*, PPC promotes a positive learning mindset built on confidence, discipline and resilience. Campaign themes such as **"Be a Warrior, Not a Worrier"** have reinforced the message of approaching examinations with optimism and self-belief, gaining wide engagement across Government digital platforms.

Conclusion: A Lasting Legacy for India's Youth

Pariksha Pe Charcha is no longer just a pre-exam ritual; it is a movement that celebrates the unique individuality of every child. By bridging the gap between the Prime Minister's office and the classroom, it has created a sense of belonging and confidence among the youth. As India moves toward *Viksit Bharat 2047*, PPC ensures that the future of the nation, its students, is resilient, stress-free, and ready to face the world.

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Indian Knowledge Systems, lived realities to be focus of NCERT textbooks: Draft syllabus

New NCERT Class 9 social science textbooks will highlight India's indigenous contributions and historical insights, emphasizing inquiry-driven learning.

Updated on: Feb 06, 2026 8:09 AM IST

By Sanjay Maurya

New Delhi: The new NCERT social science textbooks for Class 9, set to be released in March will focus on indigenous intellectual and cultural contributions across fields such as mathematics, philosophy, science and technology, medicine,

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and how these influenced the course of Indian history.



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and analyse social, cultural, and political life in India over time as well as the underlying historical Indian ethos and philosophy of unity in diversity," while recognising past and present challenges and efforts to address them. Students will be enabled to "discuss forms of inequality, injustice, and discrimination" arising from internal and external forces, including colonisation, and to examine movements towards equity, inclusion, justice and harmony.

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The new books will emphasise inquiry-driven learning rooted in "Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)," "culturally rooted" perspectives and "lived realities," with a focus on core concepts "rather than memorisation," according to the draft syllabus.

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The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has released the draft syllabus for languages, science, mathematics and social science to support teachers' academic planning for the 2026-27 academic session. Draft of NCERT Class 9 syllabus states that the new curriculum across all 10 subjects will be competency-based and experiential, aligned with the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment guiding document National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Navneet Sharma, a faculty in department of education at Central University of Himachal Pradesh (CUHP), Dharamshala said that Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in syllabus should be replaced by indigenous knowledge systems . "Indigenous knowledge includes tribal, Dalit, minority and women's perspectives, and their narratives should be reflected in textbooks to make them truly pan-Indian. There is no problem in teaching new government policies but students should be encouraged to critically analyse policies, question them and understand how policy documents are made, rather than only praise or accept them uncritically." he said.

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School Education 4 Min Read

Exams are like festivals and should be celebrated, focus not only on marks but on improving life: PM to students

In his interaction with the students during the ninth edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 202 with PM', he asserted that comfort zones don't shape life - your way of living does.

PTI

Published On Feb 6, 2026 at 11:43 PM IST

New Delhi, Listen to ev ut change your lifestyle pattern only when you want to, education should not feel like a burden, focus not only on marks but also on improving life -- these are some of the mantras



Modi remarked that this continues throughout life, noting that even as prime minister people advise him differently

Modi also noted that exams are like festivals and should be celebrated.

In his interaction with the students during the ninth edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 with PM', he asserted that comfort zones don't shape life - your way of living does.

Advt

"Education should not feel like a burden. It needs our total involvement. Education in bits and pieces does not ensure success. Instead of focusing on marks, everyone sho e they have made it in life. No matter what your parents, or teachers, or peers say, have faith in and follow your pattern, keeping in mind all the suggestions that come your way...," he said.

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He cautioned against the obsession with marks, asking whether anyone remembers the name of a student who scored highest marks last year in boards.

When the students replied no, Modi underscored that even if such achievements are praised briefly, they are soon forgotten, showing how little importance marks hold.

A student from Gujarat asked that while parents worry for them and teachers support them, the issue arises when teachers suggest one study pattern, parents insist on another and students follow a different trend, leaving them confused about which pattern is correct.

Modi remarked that this continues throughout life, noting that even as prime minister people advise him differently.

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"Just as siblings at home have different eating patterns - some starting with vegetables, some with dal, some mixing everything together - everyone has their own way. Enjoyment comes from following one's own pattern...some prefer studying at night, others early in the morning, and each has their own rhythm," he said.

"Students must trust their own pattern, listen carefully to suggestions and add improvements only through personal experience, not merely because someone says so. When I began Pariksha Pe Charcha there was one pattern, but over time I improved it, even conducting sessions in different states, changing the format while retaining the core," he said.

Modi urged students not to waste time dwelling on the past but to think of living what lies ahead.

"I don't look back at what has passed. I always look at what is to come... There are times when te[illegible] what is important and can help you score good marks, but a good teacher focuses on all-around development and teaches everything. Life is not just about exams. Education is just a medium of our development.

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Responding to a question about pursuing a future in gaming despite societal pressure to focus only on studies, the prime minister said gaming is not just a hobby, it is a skill. It involves speed as well, so it is good for development.

"Gaming is a skill requiring speed and alertness, which contributes to self-development. Focus on building expertise in high-quality games and build studies," he said.

Modi cautioned against gambling in gaming, noting that laws have been enacted to prevent such practices, and stressed that gaming should be pursued as a constructive skill

He also said a teacher's effort should be to ensure that the student's speed is such that his own speed is one step ahead of theirs.

Modi asked the students to balance studies, rest, skills and hobbies, which is the key to growth.

"Even there are two skil[illegible]rofessional skills. I say both go hand in hand. So, skill starts with knowledge," he said.

"Our goal should always be within reach, but not easily achievable..there

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The 9th edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha was also screened at the Bal Yogi Auditorium in Parliament premises.

Launched in 2018, Pariksha Pe Charcha began as student interaction in townhall format before expanding into one of India's largest education engagement exercises.

Registrations rose from about 38.8 lakh in 2023 to 2.26 crore in 2024, before touching 3.53 crore in 2025 - a milestone that earned the programme a Guinness World Record. The ninth edition broke the previous record with over 4.5 crore registrations.

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जनसत्ता, 7 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 6

सुविधा का पाठ

राजेंद्र जोशी

सार्वजनिक शिक्षा प्रणाली एक जीवंत लोकतांत्रिक समाज का मजबूत आधार है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 (एनईपी) ने इसे परिवर्तित, सुधारे गए और अधिक सक्षम बनाने के लिए अनेक प्रावधान किए हैं। चाहे सरकार द्वारा संचालित स्कूल हों या निजी संस्थान, शिक्षा सब तक समान रूप से पहुंचनी चाहिए। शिक्षा शास्त्रियों का मानना है कि सरकारी और निजी, दोनों क्षेत्रों में योजनाबद्ध तरीके से काम करने की संस्कृति एक जैसी होनी चाहिए। अगर शिक्षा प्रणाली और प्रबंधन में एकरूपता आ जाए, तो वर्ग-भेद मिट जाएंगे। शिक्षा के मंदिरों का स्वरूप भी लगभग एक समान होना चाहिए। निजी विद्यालयों पर नियमों की भरमार हो और सरकारी स्कूलों में उनकी अनदेखी हो, यह स्वीकार्य नहीं। अगर निजी स्कूल संसाधनों या नियमों के अभाव में कमजोर पड़ते हैं, तो उनकी मान्यता रद्द हो सकती है। उसी प्रकार, सरकारी विद्यालयों में नियमों की अवहेलना पर उनकी मान्यता रद्द करने का प्रावधान अनिवार्य होना चाहिए।

एनईपी-2020 शिक्षा प्रणाली में गुणात्मक और योजनाबद्ध तरीके का भरोसा दिलाती है। पांच वर्ष बीतने के बावजूद इसके उज्ज्वल परिणाम अभी देखना शेष है, लेकिन यह स्कूलों, संस्थानों, शिक्षकों, अधिकारियों, समुदायों और हितधारकों को सशक्त बनाने तथा संसाधनों से परिपूर्ण रखने वाली संस्कृति विकसित करने का वादा करती है। साथ ही, जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करने के लिए पारदर्शी सार्वजनिक स्व-प्रकटीकरण पर जोर दिया गया है। शिक्षा संस्थानों में उपयोगी संसाधनों का समुचित उपयोग सभी को लाभान्वित करता है। स्कूल प्रबंधन में खेलकूद के साधन, कक्षाओं की उपलब्धता और स्थानीय नागरिकों का जुड़ाव शिक्षा व्यवस्था को ऊर्जावान बनाता है। मगर बच्चों के लिए आवश्यक संसाधनों के अभाव में बीच में पढ़ाई छोड़ने की समस्या बनी रहती है। विशेष रूप से छात्राओं के लिए स्कूल समय के दौरान निजी जरूरतों की व्यवस्था पर गंभीरता से काम करने की आवश्यकता है।

भारत जैसे विकासशील देश के अधिकांश स्कूलों में- चाहे वे केंद्र या राज्य सरकार के हों या निजी- छात्राओं के लिए पर्याप्त शौचालयों का अभाव है। मासिक धर्म के दौरान स्वच्छता की मूलभूत सुविधाओं का न होना छात्राओं को शिक्षा से दूर कर देता है। अगर शौचालयों के साथ-साथ सैनिटरी पैड और माहवारी स्वच्छता के मौलिक अधिकार पर ध्यान न दिया जाए, तो छात्राओं की स्कूल से दूरी बढ़ती जाएगी। आमतौर पर देखा जाता है कि सरकारी स्कूलों में स्वयंसेवी संस्थाओं द्वारा सैनिटरी पैड मशीनें लगाई जाती हैं, लेकिन कुछ समय बाद खराब होने पर ये सरकार की प्राथमिकता सूची से बाहर हो जाती हैं। अनेक मामलों में शौचालय ताले में बंद रहते हैं, जिससे छात्राओं को खुले में शौच के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ता है। यह न केवल स्वास्थ्य के लिए हानिकारक है, बल्कि सामाजिक कुप्रथा को भी बढ़ावा देता है।

विचित्र है कि भारत में ऐसे जरूरी मुद्दों पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट या अन्य न्यायालयों को सक्रिय होना पड़ता है। गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षण प्रबंधन शिक्षा-शास्त्रियों और उच्च वेतनभोगी नौकरशाहों की सोच का हिस्सा क्यों नहीं बन पाता? सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कई फैसलों में स्कूलों में छात्र-छात्राओं के लिए अलग-अलग शौचालयों का निर्माण अनिवार्य किया है, ताकि छात्राएं अपने मौलिक अधिकारों का उपयोग कर सकें। यह सुविधा मध्य, माध्यमिक और उच्च शिक्षा स्तर पर समान रूप से लागू होनी चाहिए। फिर भी, जमीनी स्तर पर कार्यान्वयन कमजोर है। सरकार को प्रत्येक स्कूल में छात्राओं को जैविक रूप से अपघटनीय सैनिटरी पैड उपलब्ध कराने चाहिए। स्कूल प्रबंधन सरकारी हो या गैर-सरकारी, अगर शौचालय या स्वच्छता संबंधी सुविधाएं प्रदान करने में असफल रहता है, तो उनकी जवाबदेही तय करते हुए मान्यता रद्द की जानी चाहिए। नई शिक्षा नीति केवल पढ़ने-लिखने तक सीमित नहीं रहनी चाहिए। प्रबंधन के दृष्टिकोण से इसके मसविदे पर पुनर्विचार आवश्यक है। छात्राओं के लिए माहवारी स्वच्छता को नीति का प्रभावी हिस्सा बनाना होगा।

दुनिया मेरे आगे

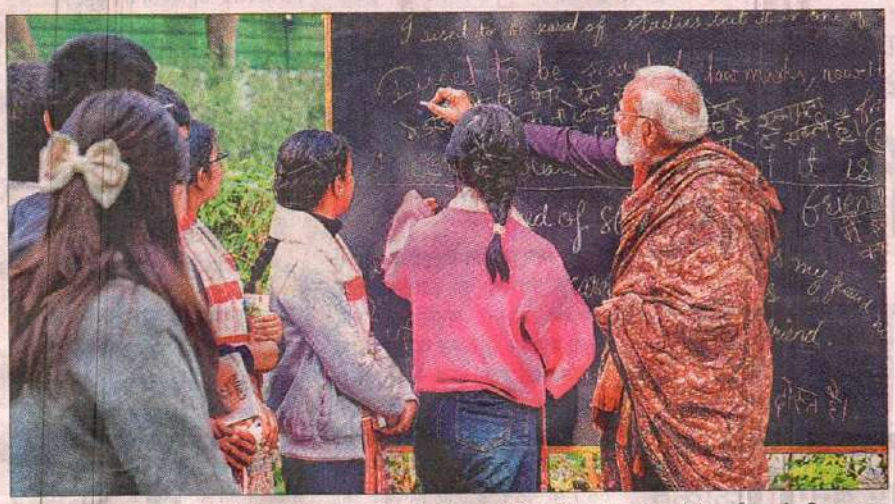
भारत जैसे विकासशील देश में अधिकांश स्कूलों में- चाहे वे केंद्र या राज्य सरकार के हों या निजी- छात्राओं के लिए पर्याप्त शौचालयों का अभाव है। मासिक धर्म के दौरान स्वच्छता की मूलभूत सुविधाओं का न होना छात्राओं को शिक्षा से दूर कर देता है।

नई शिक्षा नीति- 2020 ने स्कूलों को संसाधन-संपन्न बनाने और जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करने का वादा किया है, लेकिन छात्राओं की इन बुनियादी जरूरतों पर ठोस प्रावधानों का अभाव है। अगर इस संवेदनशील विषय पर ध्यान न दिया गया, तो बीच में पढ़ाई छोड़ने की समस्या तो बढ़ेगी ही, साथ ही लिंग भेदभाव गहरा जाएगा। छात्राएं शिक्षा से वंचित रहेंगी, जो राष्ट्र निर्माण के लिए घातक होगा। सरकार, शिक्षा विभाग और स्थानीय प्रशासन को जरूरी कदम उठाने चाहिए। प्रत्येक स्कूल में छात्राओं के लिए अलग, स्वच्छ और कार्यशील शौचालय अनिवार्य किए जाने की जरूरत है। अनेक अध्ययनों में यह तथ्य उजागर हो चुका है कि स्वच्छ शौचालय और पेयजल के अभाव के कारण बहुत सारी लड़कियां अपनी स्कूली पढ़ाई बीच में ही छोड़ देती हैं। इसके अलावा, माहवारी से जुड़ी परेशानियों को लेकर भी समाज में लोग सहज नहीं होते और इसका खमियाजा महिलाओं और लड़कियों को उठाना पड़ता है। ऐसी स्थिति में जैविक रूप से अपघटनीय सैनिटरी पैड स्कूल प्रबंधन द्वारा मुफ्त उपलब्ध कराया जाना चाहिए। मशीनों के रखरखाव के लिए नियमित निगरानी और कोष सुनिश्चित करने की जरूरत है। मान्यता रद्द करने जैसे सख्त प्रावधान लागू किए जाने चाहिए। जागरूकता अभियान चलाकर मासिक धर्म को संकीर्ण सोच से मुक्त किए जाने की जरूरत है। यदि एनईपी को इन मुद्दों से समृद्ध किया जाए, तो यह वास्तव में समावेशी और सशक्तीकरण लाने वाली बनेगी। आधी आबादी को शिक्षा का पूर्ण अधिकार दिलाने के लिए अब ठोस कार्रवाई जरूरी है।

अमर उजाला, 7 फरवरी 2024, पृष्ठ संख्या -

अंकों के पीछे नहीं भागें...खुद को जीवन की कसौटी पर कसें

परीक्षा पे चर्चा : प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने विद्यार्थियों को दी तनाव से बचने की सलाह, अभिभावकों और शिक्षकों को भी दिए गुरुमंत्र



पीएम की क्लास : प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने परीक्षा पे चर्चा के दौरान विद्यार्थियों को जीवन में आगे बढ़ने के कई गुरु मंत्र दिए। एजेंसी

नई दिल्ली। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने बोर्ड परीक्षाओं से पहले परीक्षा पे चर्चा के दौरान छात्रों को जीवन में सफल होने के गुर बताए। उन्होंने कहा, अंकों के पीछे भागने से बेहतर है कि हम खुद को जीवन की कसौटी पर कसें। इस पर ध्यान दें कि मेरा जीवन कहां पहुंचा और उसके लिए मुझे क्या करते रहना है और कैसे खुद को कसते रहना है।

प्रधानमंत्री ने शुक्रवार को छात्र-छात्राओं के सवालों के जवाब देने के साथ अभिभावकों और शिक्षकों को भी गुरुमंत्र दिए। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा, परीक्षाएं उत्सव की तरह होती हैं। इनकी खुशी मनानी चाहिए। शिक्षा केवल परीक्षाओं के लिए नहीं, बल्कि जीवन के लिए है, स्वयं की परीक्षा लेने के लिए होती हैं।

नंबरों को लेकर जुनून के प्रति आगाह करते हुए उन्होंने पूछा कि क्या किसी को पिछले साल बोर्ड में सबसे ज्यादा नंबर लाने वाले छात्र का नाम याद है। छात्रों ने नहीं में जवाब दिया, तो पीएम ने जोर देकर कहा कि भले ही ऐसी उपलब्धियों की थोड़ी देर के लिए तारीफ होती है, लेकिन उन्हें जल्द ही भुला दिया जाता है। इससे पता चलता है, नंबरों का कितना कम महत्व है।

अभिभावक बच्चों की रुचि पर ध्यान दें : प्रधानमंत्री ने माता-पिता को सलाह दी कि वे बच्चों को उनकी क्षमता, योग्यता और रुचि के अनुसार विकसित होने दें। पढ़ाई, कौशल, आराम व रुचियों में संतुलन ही विकास की कुंजी है। अगर रुचि को व्यावहारिकता से जोड़ा और साझा किया जाए, तो नए विचारों को बढ़ावा मिलता है। ब्यूरो

>> परीक्षा पे चर्चा : पेज 13

शिक्षा में पूरी भागीदारी जरुरी...समय प्रबंधन सीखें

शिक्षा बोझ नहीं लगनी चाहिए। इसमें हमारी पूरी भागीदारी की जरूरत होती है। टुकड़ों में शिक्षा सफलता सुनिश्चित नहीं करती। मन को वश में करें, फिर मन को जोड़ें, और फिर उन विषयों को रखें जिनका आपको अध्ययन करना है। -नरेंद्र मोदी, पीएम

कभी-कभी हमें पता ही नहीं होता है कि हम समय कैसे बर्बाद कर रहे। जीवन में अगर समय का प्रबंधन और उसका सदुपयोग करना सीख लिया, तो कभी दबाव नहीं होगा। जैसे मैं हूं, इतने सारे काम होते हैं, लेकिन मुझे तनाव नहीं होता, क्योंकि मुझे बहुत पहले से समय का सही उपयोग करने की आदत बन गई।

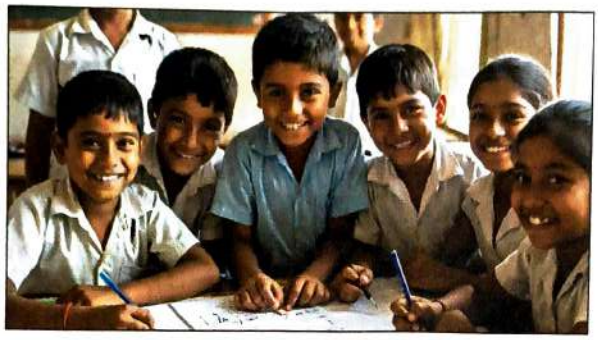
The Pioneer, 7 February 2025, Pg No. - 8

Creating a conducive learning environment

As India seeks excellence and social harmony under the National Education Policy, it is time to re-examine whether these arrangements still serve the constitutional promise of equality, dignity, and national cohesion



JS RAJPUT



The constitutional proviso of reservations for certain categories of people identified as SC/ST was initially meant for ten years only. Dr BR Ambedkar himself never wanted it to last long, as that would amount to the negation of the objectives which necessitated its implementation. It was a case of socially inherited inequalities that also led to economic and cultural deprivation. In other words, the inequalities created by the caste system and the related inhuman practice of untouchability were considered the main culprits. Both of these were rejected by the Constitution. Those outside this classification accepted the provisions of reservations, as the logic behind them was clear and convincing to one and all.

The Constitution was framed by men and women of unimpeachable integrity and total commitment to the nation. Most of them were part of the great freedom struggle and had earned the respect of the people through sheer sacrifice and suffering during alien rule. As the generations changed, adherence to human values was impacted globally. Advances in science and technology had created gadgets and implements that could reach every home and hearth that had the requisite resources. In India, the urge to accumulate more brought about a great attitudinal transformation among those who were in power and authority.

In a democratic setup, it was the politicians who were the privileged ones. They realised the 'benefits' that could accrue to an elected representative of the people, or better still, to being in a position of power. Expectedly, the approach and attraction to being in politics changed drastically. Exceptions apart, the prime consideration for being in public life, as articulated by Gandhiji - to serve the 'last man in the line' — was quietly replaced by 'politics for privilege and pelf', and for preparing inheritors from within the family. The Constitution was amended frequently; how power had changed the scenario was witnessed during the imposition of the Emergency, the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, and much more that followed.

Young persons in colleges and universities in the sixth decade of the 20th century were convinced that the caste system would disappear, as they thought the political persons around them were true to their words and were all committed to the upgradation of deprived people. After about three to four decades, the political generation had changed; so had the approach to democratic principles, and the people — the electors. Now politics, and the politician, were busy exploring the new avenues that had suddenly appeared before them, and were indeed alluring and attractive. Being in the seat of power pays, and there are ways and means to ensure zero accountability. The integrity, sincerity, and honesty that were needed to make reservations for the SC/ST a success were shifted to the back burner. This is one project that has never been evaluated sincerely and scientifically. Now, these are not the only categories for which constitutional provision was made. There are many more. Gandhi was just forgotten, interestingly and most obviously by those who continue to claim to be the only inheritors of his legacy and values. The 'last man in the line' was lost in the glare and glamour that were blinding the political power scenario.

THE FACT REMAINS THAT CASTE CONSIDERATIONS AND SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR MINORITIES ARE NOW CREATING UNACCEPTABLE SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, WHICH IS NOT CONDUCIVE TO GENERATING SOCIAL COHESION AND RELIGIOUS AMITY. WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE UGC REGULATIONS ON EQUITY WERE NOTIFIED ON JANUARY 13, 2026, AND BECAME EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY 15, 2026 ONWARDS?

The author is an educationist, a Padma Shri awardee, and works in religious amity and social cohesion

dailypioneer

@jagmohansrajput

The Pioneer

After four decades of the Constitution being in place, things were analysed at various levels. Dr Karan Singh wrote in 1993: "Our understanding was that castes would gradually erode, and that the whole point was to build a society where caste would no longer remain significant. But what do we find today? We find that attempts are being made to institutionalise caste, and not only four castes, but 3,000 castes. Is this what the Constitution envisaged? How does this tally with the whole question of equal democratic rights?" It would be interesting to recall how the environment that promised total liquidation of the caste system was transformed into one that assures its continuation, and consequently a horrifying fragmentation of Indian society.

To arrive at a clearer picture of the current socio-cultural scenario on a broader canvas, one must recall the provisions specifically made for minorities in the Constitution in Article 30 of the Constitution of India, which, in fact, did not synchronise with the text and spirit of Article 15. The apparent contradictions are noted by every alert and active citizen who is not restricted by ideological or political leanings. As a practising academic, my impression stands gradually confirmed that the provisions of Article 30, with all the noble intents behind them, have, in actual practice, done more damage to minorities than supporting them in their educational advancement. The provisions have been grossly misused. I have personally observed how teacher-training (minority) institutions refused to follow any norms and obviously prepared teachers who were not trained adequately. There are numerous examples in other areas and sectors also. Article 30: Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions — (1) All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. (2) The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institutions on the ground that they are under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

The problem is that no learned discussion or sincere deliberation is allowed on such issues that are projected as sensitive zones. The fact remains that caste considerations and specific provisions for minorities are now creating unacceptable socio-cultural environments at various levels of educational institutions, which is not conducive to generating social cohesion and religious amity. What happened after the UGC Regulations on Equity were notified on January 13, 2026, and became effective from January 15, 2026 onwards?

Having served in institutions of varied levels for over five decades, one could safely state that concerns of harassment or ill-treatment among students could best be handled by the head of the institution and the faculty. National guidelines are needed, but the autonomy of institutions must remain sacred. Creating a socially conducive campus environment is best supported by instilling a sense of responsibility among the stakeholders.

The Pioneer SINCE 1865

This is also high time to evolve ways and means on how to relate culturally evolved environments in schools and other institutions. National-level deliberations must be organised, sponsored, and supported. Let the intelligentsia of the nation re-read the constitutional provisions that could help move towards culturally enthralling, socially cohesive, and religiously amicable campuses. Eminent people have been thinking along these lines, but it needs to be organised seriously. I quote, as an example, the words of the late Vasant Sathe, a freedom fighter, Supreme Court lawyer, Union Minister, and a highly respected public figure. He wrote in 1993 about Article 30 of the Constitution: "This article should be deleted because to recognise some sections as minorities based on religion is contrary to the provisions of equality specified in Article 15 and threatens to create perpetual discrimination for such sections on the basis of a factor like religion, which is irreversible."

The NEP 2020 expects to move towards excellence in education. The prime requisite is a learning environment bubbling with mutual respect and positive energy. Mere changes in a couple of words in notifications, without a well-considered socio-cultural analysis supported by dynamic constitutional provisions, may not really work any more.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

A

Nation

Module finalised for NCERT's Open Educational Resource

Behera underscored the need for compliance to the vision of onal Digital Education Architecture.



11:25 pm · 1 min read

NEW

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NEW DELHI: The online module has been finalised for a course on Open Educational Resource (OER) by the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), NCERT, New Delhi, in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (COL CEMCA).

A statement from NCERT said a two-day workshop was organised on February 5 and 6 to develop and finalise the module structure and content framework for the proposed online course.

“Resource persons from various organisations participated in the workshop and contributed through extensive deliberations and brainstorming sessions, resulting in the finalisation of the module outline,” the statement said.

"Prof Amarendra P. Behera, Joint Director, CIET-NCERT, Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, and Professor Indu Kumar, Head of the Department of Information and Communication Technology & Training Division were among those who took part in the workshop," the release said.

Indu Kumar emphasised the importance of transitioning from “read to reel” pedagogical approach for the course.

D Shadrach highlighted the need for the development of OER specifically for school education, noting that most existing OER are developed for the tertiary level, and emphasised that the proposed course would address the requirements of school education.

Prof. Amarendra P. Behera underscored the need for compliance to the vision of NEP 2020 and National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR-2021) through integrated, inclusive, interoperable, free and open source platforms within the OER ecosystem.

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NEW

Academic year nearly over, MCD school students yet to receive financial aid to buy uniform, bag

Drishti Jain
New Delhi, February 7

"I AM told by the school to check my account again and again... but not even a single rupee has been credited so far," said Rajesh Pandit (38), who works as a mason, as he sums up the excruciating wait to buy uniform, stationary and school bag for his son, a Class 5 student at a MCD-run school, even as the academic year is about to end.

Each student studying at a MCD-run school is entitled to receive Rs 1,670 annually under a government scheme that enables direct bank transfer (DBT) for uniform (Rs 1,250), stationary (Rs 300) and bag (Rs 120).

Many parents like Pandit are stuck in a similar situation.

Nearly 2.32 lakh students — studying in about 1,500 MCD schools — are yet to receive the money. The number of affected students was confirmed last December by Ashwani Kumar, then MCD commissioner, in his Budget speech.

Senior officials said the funds are released annually by the government. "This time, the grant-in aid is estimated to be Rs 235 crore. Of this, the share of DBT is pegged at Rs 109 crore. But till now, we have only received Rs 58 crore for DBT transactions," an official said, adding that Rs 19 crore has been released by the MCD from its own pocket so far.



Each student studying at a MCD-run school is entitled to receive Rs 1,670 annually

When reached for a comment, no response was received from Education Minister Ashish Sood's office.

This is the first time, officials said, that such a delay has been seen. "We received the first instalment in September, post which the sanction order for second instalment was dated October 31. We had written twice to the government in November, requesting the release of the second instalment," said an official. *The Indian Express* has learnt that the two letters were sent on November 6 and 14, 2025.

The MCD, meanwhile, last September had said that Rs 109 crore has been transferred to bank accounts of students.

MCD Education Committee chairman Yogesh Verma said there is no financial crunch and that funds are yet to reach only those students who did not have functional bank accounts or were not compliant with KYC (know your customer) norms.

However, sources said 30,000-35,000 students are facing delay in disbursement.

Another parent whose son studies in the MCD school in Anand Vihar said their account is functional but the aid has not been credited yet. "I bought two school uniforms for Rs 1,300 on my own. Till when will I wait," said Ravirajan Pandey (32) who works as a security guard.

Principals and teachers expressed helplessness at the situation. "Earlier, a pool of money used to get transferred to the school, and from here, we used to send it to the students' account. This time, the Education department asked us to upload details of all students on the portal for DBT. The window given was very small... Despite following the process, we are still waiting for the money," said a teacher. Thirty-three students in her school are yet to receive the amount.

Naveen Sangwan, Joint General Secretary of Akhil Delhi Prathmik Sikshak Sangh, a teachers' body, said the issue is not just limited to DBT. "The annual budget allocated to the principal of a school, which goes up to Rs 2 lakh, to carry out minor repairs in schools, has also not been received."

The Sunday Express, 8 February 2026, Page No. - 7

Don't compel schools to form fee regulation panels till Feb 20, HC tells govt

Sohini Ghosh
New Delhi, February 9

THE HIGH Court on Monday directed the Delhi government not to compel schools till February 20 to form school-level fee regulation committees (SLFRCs) under the new fee fixation law. The court stated that no prejudice would be caused if the formation of the committees was deferred.

As per the new law, private schools were given the deadline of February 10 to finalise the SLFRCs. ASG S V Raju, appearing for the Delhi government, informed a division bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela that nearly 80-90% of schools have already formed the committees, while also submitting before the court that any further extension of time for constitution of SLFRCs will disrupt and delay the entire timeline for fixation of fee for academic year 2026-2027.

After the Delhi School Education (Transparency in Fixation and Regulation of Fees) Act came into force on December 10 last year, the Delhi government on February 1 had issued a notification clarifying that the new law shall be implemented from the next academic year. By way of the gazette notification, the government had stipulated that the SLFRCs have to be constituted within 10 days of the notification, even though its decisions will not affect fees for 2025-26.

The court on Monday issued notice to the Delhi government on pleas by several associations of schools challenging the February 1 notification and reasoned that "no prejudice will be caused to either side, nor will it cause prejudice to the timeline for fixation of fee for academic year 2026-27" if more time is granted for formation of the committees.

The matter will be next heard on February 20.

The Indian Express, 10 February 2026, Page No. - 3

Ministry of Electronics & IT

One Crore Mandatory Biometric Updates (MBUs) for schoolchildren completed by UIDAI

UIDAI Regional Offices and education departments of states, worked in mission mode to hold MBU camps in 83,000 schools in just 5 months

MBU for children in the 7-15 age group had been made free from 1st October 2025, for one year period

Posted On: 08 FEB 2026 2:43PM by PIB Delhi

In a significant achievement under its ongoing mission-mode drive, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has crossed the milestone of completing over one crore Mandatory Biometric Updates (MBUs) for school-children studying in 83000 schools across the country.

UIDAI had initiated this special MBU drive for school-children in September 2025 after a successful technological integration with the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) application, that enabled visibility of MBUs status of children at schools. This breakthrough helped the UIDAI and schools to jointly identify children who were due for an MBU, and hold camps at schools to complete the MBU.

Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar, CEO, UIDAI, had written to Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories apprising them of this initiative by UIDAI and requested their support in conducting focussed MBU camps at schools. UIDAI Regional Offices spread across eight locations in the country have worked tirelessly for five months to coordinate this massive exercise with all the stakeholders, i.e. the Education Departments of States & Union Territories, District-level administration, UIDAI registrars and the school authorities. The mission mode campaign continues to be operational till such time all schools in the country are covered. This initiative has already benefitted 1 crore children in 83,000 schools and many more are set to gain from it.

A child under the age of five enrols for Aadhaar by providing the photograph, name, date of birth, gender, address and birth certificate. The fingerprints and iris biometrics of a child are not captured for Aadhaar enrolment below the age of five because these are not mature at that age. Therefore, providing fingerprints and iris information in Aadhaar by following the process of MBU, upon crossing the ages of

5 and 15 years, is an essential requirement for children. Lack of MBU in Aadhaar may lead to difficulties while carrying out authentication for receiving benefits under various Government schemes, registering in competitive and university examinations like NEET, JEE, CUET etc.

In order to incentivise children to complete MBU and to make the service accessible to all, UIDAI had waived off the charges payable for MBU by children in the 7-15 age group, from 1st October 2025 for a period of one year. Further, MBU by children between 5-7 years and 15-17 continues to remain free of charge.

In addition to camps held at schools, children can also complete their MBU at any of the Aadhaar enrolment centres and Aadhaar Seva Kendras running across the country. About 1.3 crore MBU transactions have also been completed in the same period, by children visiting these centres.

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MSZ

(Release ID: 2225104) Visitor Counter : 812
Read this release in: Gujarati , Urdu , हिन्दी , Marathi , Punjabi , Tamil , Malayalam

Financial Express, 9 February 2026, Page no. - 07

A shift in direction for education and jobs

BUDGET FY27 ALIGNS EDUCATION WITH INDUSTRY





NARAYANAN RAMASWAMY

THE INTENT OF this year's Union Budget was clear — there is no stopping us from becoming an economic powerhouse, and human capital is at the core of achieving this.

The Budget had human capital development focused on labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture, textiles, leather, toys, rural economy, MSME, etc, and emerging ones such as healthcare, pharma, entertainment, hospitality, etc. Also prominent was the plan to bring AI and its impact on these sectors.

New institutions and initiatives are the highlights — these are aligned to industries that create 'employment pathways'. Similarly, skilling programmes were linked to not just sectors, but beyond that to job roles that will bring employment.

Healthcare and pharma sectors received a strong boost with the launch of the Biopharma SHAKTI Mission, backed by an outlay of ₹10,000 crore. It aims to move India beyond traditional strength in generics and into higher-value segments of biologics, biosimilars.

The Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT) is another example. By building capabilities in animation, visual effects, gaming, comics, and extended reality (AVGC-XR), IICT addresses skills that are becoming central to the entertainment industry across platforms. This initiative highlights how digital technologies can generate employment and accelerate sectoral growth in India's vast entertainment market.

The policy acknowledges the value of integrating industry and education. The proposed university townships, located close to major industrial and logistics corridors, are designed to deepen industry-academia collaboration by fostering integrated knowledge-industrial-economic zones — here, students gain exposure by learning alongside active industries, ensuring education remains closely aligned with real-world production and innovation.

The Budget introduces targeted interventions to increase women's participation in the workforce. A key step is setting up girl hostels in every district, aimed at supporting girls pursuing STEM education. Women-led entrepreneurship and small businesses also received a boost through the SME Growth Fund, the Corporate Mitra programme, and SHE Marts.

The Budget FY27 signals a decisive shift in allocation for education — not as an end in itself, but as a means to boost employment and enterprise. By embedding AI into education and skilling, promoting startups, and bridging education with industry needs, the Budget can turn our demographic strength into a globally-competitive workforce, powering services-led growth, and moving us closer to Viksit Bharat.

The author is partner & national leader, Education & Skill Development, KPMG in India

THE INDIAN EXPRESS,
9 February 2026
Page no.- 10

We need to keep children safe from social-media harms



VIKRAM PATEL

THE NEWS of three minor sisters ending their lives by jumping from the ninth floor of their residential building in Ghaziabad, apparently as a result of conflict with their parents over their dependence on online games and serials, is a tragic reminder of the risks posed by video games and social media on the mental health of children.

A few months ago, Australia became the first country to ban social media for children younger than 16. Several other countries are preparing legislation similar to Australia's, and India needs to join this growing community of nations immediately.

There is now abundant evidence that shows how algorithms engineered by top social-media companies prioritise addictive engagement over children's safety, amplifying anxiety, dissatisfaction with one's body or social life, and suicidal ideation. This addictive potential puts children in direct conflict with their parents because it takes over all aspects of their lives, not least their need to play, study, and sleep.

Why, one may ask, do social media's toxic effects only apply to children and adolescents? Quite simply, because the brain undergoes dramatic changes in its structure and function, which makes this period of life particularly vulnerable. The fact that our brains are sensitive to our social environments coincides with the fact that adolescence is the phase when one is developmentally primed to compare oneself with and to model one's peers. These features make the young person uniquely susceptible to the addictive potential of substances that trigger the brain's reward pathways.

We have known this for decades. This is why we impose age limits on alcohol and tobacco. What we now know is that these same reward pathways, which can lead to addiction, can also be triggered by social-media algorithms. And the companies not only know this but deliberately mine this knowledge regardless of the damage they can cause.

Tech companies have argued that denying children access to social media violates their rights to information, that the evidence on harm is weak, and, in any case, parents should take the responsibility to manage their children. This is exactly the playbook that the tobacco industry argued for decades, blaming smokers and rubbishing the large body of science through a formidable array of tactics, including bribing legislators.

Like tobacco and the food and beverage industry, social-media companies know which features of their products can hook children, and they amplify them. Even more repulsive are the allegations from an ongoing US court filing, which has evidence that the leadership of Meta knowingly exposed girls to sexual violence and human traffickers.

While the companies also claim that children are already banned from their platforms, the age limit is as low as 13, and, incredibly, they don't even enforce any age verification. Unsurprisingly, it is estimated that nearly 40 per cent of 8-12-year-olds in the US already use platforms like Instagram and Snapchat. What Australia has done is to place the responsibility for verifying the age of its subscribers on the company and empowering parents to sue the companies if their children are found to have created accounts. Many high-income countries, including the US, Australia, the UK, Japan, and South Korea, have witnessed a dramatic worsening of youth mental health in the past decade, a period during which smartphones and social media took over children's lives. At the same time, the experience of loneliness in young people has surged. These are not coincidental findings, for loneliness is the direct result of spending less time with real friends compared to online ones.

While many countries are watching the fallout of Australia's action closely, India must take steps to implement such a ban immediately. First, even though smartphone penetration is rising rapidly, the ASER 2024 reports that only a third of rural adolescents under the age of 16 own a personal smartphone. So, action now will not only protect future generations but also the majority of our children today. Second, there are already signs that mental-health problems are worsening in young people, as evidenced by recent surveys. Finally, our policymakers and development gurus keep trumpeting on about the country's youth dividend. Surely, they must not squander this simply to enrich tech companies.

Tech companies have argued that denying children access to social media violates their rights to information, that the evidence on harm is weak, and, parents should take the responsibility to manage their children

The writer is Paul Farmer Professor of Global Health at Harvard Medical School

The Indian Express,
9 February, 2026,
Page no - 8

'First exam mandatory, attempt second only if improvement required'

Express News Service
New Delhi, February 8

AS THE Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) prepares to introduce the two-exam system for Class 10 students in 2026, the move aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has raised questions among students, parents, and schools about structure, eligibility, flexibility, and evaluation. CBSE Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bharadwaj answers frequently raised questions around the issue:

How will the two Class 10 Board exam sessions be structured?

CBSE will conduct two Board examinations for Class 10 in 2026 — the first from February 17 to March 9, and the second from May 15 to June 1, both to be conducted on the same syllabus.

It is mandatory for students to appear in the first examination. The second exam is intended as an opportunity to improve performance in the first attempt. CBSE advises students to prepare seriously for the first and not assume that the second attempt will be a fallback.

Is the second exam mandatory, or optional? Which marks will be considered final?

The second Board examination is optional. Students may choose to appear only if they wish to improve their scores. For the final result, the better score in the two exams will be considered for computation of the final result. Parents are advised not to put undue pressure on their wards to appear for the second examination if improvement is not required.



CBSE Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bharadwaj

CBSE CLASS 10
2-exam FAQs

How many subjects can be attempted twice under the two-board exam system? Is it limited to specific subjects?

Under the scheme, a student can appear for improvement in a maximum of three subjects in the second examination.

If a student fails in some subjects in the first exam, what happens?

Students who fail in two subjects in the first examination will be placed in the compartment category and allowed to appear in the second one.

However, students who fail or do not appear in three or more subjects will not be eligible for the second examination. They will be able to appear in the main Board examinations in 2027.

Will the syllabus be reduced or remain the same for the second attempt?

The syllabus for the second examination will remain the same as that of the first examination.

What flexibility is available for sports and CWSN students?

Students participating in sports and those belonging to the Children With Special Needs (CWSN) category will be extended facilities in both the first and second examinations in accordance with the existing CBSE policies.

Teachers key messengers of NEP-2020: Prof Narayan Lal Gupta

By **Daily Excelsior** - February 9, 2026



aker sharing his views on NEP 2020 at University of Jammu on Sunday. Geographic Reference

lsior Correspondent

/U, Feb 8: A programme on the theme "NEP 2020 Se Viksit Bharat 2047" was organised by the Akhil atiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM) at the Brigadier Rajinder Singh Auditorium, ersity of Jammu today.

Academicians, professors, teachers and other education stakeholders participated in large numbers.

Gulshan Raina, State General Secretary ABRSM, welcomed the invited dignitaries.

Addressing the gathering, Prof Narayan Lal Gupta, National President ABRSM and chief spokesperson said teachers are the main messengers of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

He said NEP-2020 provides a strong foundation for building an inclusive, innovative and globally competitive education system in line with the vision of a developed India by 2047.

He stressed that adaptability to change is a key feature of the policy and highlighted the importance of the Indian knowledge system.

Prof Gupta also underlined the focus of NEP-2020 on holistic education, multidisciplinary learning, critical thinking, skill development and integration of traditional knowledge with modern pedagogy.

Chief Guest V S Sahay, Director IIM Jammu, spoke on major aspects of NEP-2020, including curricular flexibility, research and innovation, use of technology, teacher empowerment and strengthening of higher education institutions.

He emphasised the need for effective implementation of the policy at the ground level to achieve its desired outcomes.

Other speakers shared their views on how NEP-2020 can transform learning experiences and create new opportunities for creativity, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. Interactive sessions were also held, focusing on implementation strategies and the collective role of institutions, educators and students.

Rattan Sharma, State President ABRSM J&K, presented a vote of thanks. Dev Raj Thakur, National Joint Secretary ABRSM, and Darshan Bharti, National Media Prakosht Pramukh, were also present.

Travel Guides & Travelogues



Education Today Keekli . Feb 09, 2026 . 100 Views

Padhai with AI: Himachal Pradesh's Digital Learning Initiative and the Emerging Future of Education

News

The accelerating integration of artificial intelligence into education is no longer a speculative vision but an unfolding reality. Governments, institutions, and educators across the world are increasingly recognising that digital technologies, when deployed thoughtfully, can enhance accessibility, personalise learning, and address persistent educational disparities. Against this backdrop, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's launch of the 'Padhai with AI' initiative in Bilaspur district marks a noteworthy step towards embedding technological innovation within public education systems in India.

While modest in geographical scope at present, the initiative symbolises a broader policy direction, one that seeks to harness artificial

intelligence not merely as a technological novelty but as a practical tool for academic advancement, equitable access, and systemic educational improvement.

Understanding the Initiative

The ‘Padhai with AI’ platform has been introduced primarily as an AI-enabled digital learning resource designed to support students preparing for competitive examinations in Bilaspur district. The initiative aims to provide technology-driven educational support, offering structured academic content alongside continuous guidance to learners.

Such initiatives are particularly relevant in regions where access to high-quality coaching or specialised academic resources may be uneven. Artificial intelligence, through adaptive learning systems and data-driven feedback mechanisms, has the potential to bridge these gaps by delivering tailored educational assistance regardless of geographical constraints.

The Chief Minister emphasised during the launch that education extends beyond syllabus completion, functioning instead as a transformative force capable of shaping societal progress and expanding intellectual horizons. This articulation reflects a contemporary understanding of education as both an individual and collective developmental instrument.

Artificial Intelligence in Education: A Global Context

Globally, AI is reshaping educational paradigms in multiple ways:

- Personalised learning pathways tailored to individual student performance
- Automated assessment and feedback systems
- Intelligent tutoring platforms capable of adaptive instruction
- Data analytics for institutional decision-making

Such technologies promise efficiency, scalability, and inclusivity. Yet they also raise critical questions regarding digital equity, teacher roles, ethical safeguards, and pedagogical balance.

The Himachal Pradesh initiative sits within this evolving global discourse, illustrating how regional governments are beginning to explore AI’s educational potential within local contexts.

Addressing Educational Inequality Through Technology

Educational inequality remains a persistent challenge across India. Rural and semi-urban districts often face disparities in infrastructure, teacher availability, and access to advanced learning materials. Digital platforms can mitigate some of these challenges by:

- Delivering consistent academic content across locations
- Enabling remote mentorship and counselling
- Providing continuous performance tracking
- Facilitating exam preparation without reliance on costly coaching centres

The ‘Padhai with AI’ initiative explicitly seeks to ensure equal educational opportunities through a fully digital learning environment and ongoing academic counselling support. Such provisions may prove particularly valuable for students navigating competitive examinations, where access to preparatory resources significantly influences outcomes.

The Role of Public-Private Collaboration

The initiative has reportedly received support from NTPC, indicating collaboration between governmental authorities and institutional partners in advancing educational technology infrastructure.

Public-private partnerships have become increasingly prominent in educational innovation. Governments often provide policy direction and institutional legitimacy, while private or semi-public entities contribute technological expertise, infrastructure investment, or specialised knowledge.

However, successful collaboration requires transparency, accountability, and clear alignment with educational objectives rather than purely commercial interests.

Pedagogical Implications: Complement, Not Replacement

While AI offers substantial educational benefits, it is essential to recognise that technology complements rather than replaces human educators. Effective teaching encompasses emotional intelligence, mentorship, cultural sensitivity, and ethical guidance, i.e - qualities that remain uniquely human.

AI-driven platforms should therefore be positioned as supportive tools that:

- Enhance teacher effectiveness
- Reduce administrative burdens
- Provide supplementary academic resources
- Facilitate differentiated instruction

Maintaining this balance ensures that technological innovation strengthens rather than undermines pedagogical relationships.

Continuous Academic Counselling: An Understated Strength

One notable element of the initiative is its emphasis on continuous academic counselling. Educational success is influenced not only by cognitive ability but also by motivation, confidence, mental well-being, and informed career guidance.

Digital counselling platforms can provide:

- Regular performance insights
- Goal-setting assistance
- Stress management resources
- Career pathway information

Such holistic support aligns with contemporary educational philosophy, which increasingly recognises the interplay between academic achievement and emotional well-being.

Challenges That Must Be Addressed

Despite its promise, AI-enabled education initiatives inevitably encounter practical challenges:

Digital Infrastructure Gaps

Reliable internet connectivity, device access, and technical support remain uneven across many regions. Without addressing these factors, digital platforms risk exacerbating existing inequalities.

Teacher Training Requirements

Educators must be adequately trained to integrate AI tools effectively into teaching practices. Professional development becomes essential for meaningful adoption.

Data Privacy and Ethical Considerations

AI systems rely heavily on data. Ensuring robust privacy protections and ethical usage standards is critical to maintaining public trust.

Pedagogical Alignment

Technology should serve educational goals, not dictate them. Careful curriculum integration and evaluation are necessary to ensure educational coherence.

Addressing these challenges proactively will determine the initiative’s long-term effectiveness.

Education, Sustainability, and Broader Policy Vision

Interestingly, the launch coincided with discussions around sustainable energy initiatives in the state, including exploration of geothermal energy potential. While distinct policy domains, both reflect a governance approach that prioritises innovation, sustainability, and future-oriented development.

Education, particularly technology-enabled education, plays a critical role in preparing future generations for environmentally and economically sustainable societies.

The Symbolic Significance of Regional Innovation

Often, educational innovation is associated with metropolitan centres or elite institutions. Initiatives emerging from regional districts challenge this perception, demonstrating that meaningful reform can originate from diverse geographic contexts.

Bilaspur's adoption of AI-supported learning underscores the growing democratisation of educational innovation. It suggests that technological advancement need not be confined to urban hubs but can extend to communities historically underserved by educational infrastructure.

The Future Trajectory of AI-Driven Education in India

India's education sector is poised for significant technological transformation. Government initiatives promoting digital literacy, online learning platforms, and technology-integrated curricula indicate sustained policy momentum.

AI-enabled initiatives such as 'Padhai with AI' may evolve to include:

- Multilingual adaptive learning tools
- Skill-based vocational training modules
- Integration with national digital education frameworks
- Expanded geographic coverage

If implemented strategically, such developments could substantially enhance educational accessibility and quality nationwide.

Conclusion: Innovation with Purpose

The launch of the 'Padhai with AI' initiative in Himachal Pradesh represents a meaningful intersection of technology, education policy, and social aspiration. While still in its early stages, it reflects an emerging consensus that educational systems must adapt to technological realities while remaining anchored in humanistic values.

Artificial intelligence offers unprecedented opportunities to personalise learning, expand access, and improve academic outcomes. Yet its success depends on thoughtful implementation, ethical governance, and sustained commitment to inclusivity.

Ultimately, education remains a profoundly human endeavour. Technology may enhance its reach and efficiency, but its transformative power continues to reside in curiosity, creativity, empathy, and the enduring quest for knowledge. Initiatives such as 'Padhai with AI' remind us that when innovation is guided by educational purpose, it can help shape a more equitable and intellectually vibrant future.

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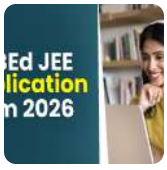
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Over 7 lakh Kendriya Vidyalaya students assessed via education ministry's TARA app, 1.46 lakh on career tool

Shradha Chettri | February 9, 2026 | 05:59 PM IST …

TARA app assessed reading fluency in Hindi, English of students from Classes 3 to 8 across 1,289 KVs; Punjab leads with over 44,000 enrolments on career guidance tool



Over 7 lakh KVS students assessed via AI-powered TARA app: Govt (Representational Image: Facebook KV,

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Anu Parthiban | Feb 12, 2026 | 1 min read

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Over 7 lakh students across 1,289 Kendriya Vidyalayas have been assessed for foundational reading skills using the education ministry's artificial intelligence (AI)-powered Teachers' Assistant for Reading Assessment (TARA) app, while a newly launched career guidance tool – My Career Advisor – has registered a total of 1,46,061 students since July last year, the government informed parliament on Monday.

Kendriya Vidyalayas were among the first where the TARA app was implemented. A total of 7,04,210 KV students from Classes 3 to 8 have been assessed through the app, the education ministry said..

TARA is an AI driven tool to develop and deploy reliable and scalable digital solutions for the assessment of Oral Reading Fluency (ORF), a critical component of foundational literacy.

TARA App: NCERT, IIT Bombay pact

In a question raised by BJP MP from Odisha, Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo, minister of state for education Jayant Chaudhary said, "TARA app uses audio signal analyses to measure attributes linked to word decoding accuracy, pace and expression in oral reading. Kendriya Vidaylaya Sangathan (KVS) has implemented the TARA App during the Financial Year 2025-26,"

It assesses students in Hindi and English. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay for TARA.

Also read

School Education Budget 2026: Atal Tinkering Labs gain big; small hikes for Samagra Shiksha, mid-day meals

"In the financial year 2025-26, KVS has made a provision of Rs 2,44,7048 plus 18% GST for conducting and analysing the Oral Reading Assessment (ORF) through TARA app," added Chaudhary.

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My Career Advisor App: 1.46 lakh registered

My Career Advisor app was developed in collaboration with Pandit Sunder Lal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), Bhopal, NCERT and Wadhwani Foundation. The app was launched on July 29, 2025, to help students make informed career decisions.

Out of a total 1.46 lakh registered, passion tagging has also been completed for 97,644 students, the education ministry said. Passion tagging is a feature that aligns students interests with the over 1,500 jobs roles available on the app.

Among the states and UTs, it is Punjab and Chandigarh which have the maximum number of children enrolled.

My Career Advisor App: State, students enrolled, passion tagged

State	Enrolled	Passion tagged
Punjab	44,750	29,881
Chandigarh	16345	10,738
Madhya Pradesh	9166	6295
Rajasthan	8477	5761
Himachal Pradesh	8168	4258

In the northeastern states and the UTs of Ladakh and Lakshwadeep the adoption of this technology has been negligible.

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Chaudhary informed that to popularise and ensure adoption of the app, a national-level workshop was organised by PSSCIVE and even state-level training sessions were carried out in nine states/UTs – Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Nagaland, Telangana, Gujarat, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.

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NCERT to Release Revised 9th Class Social Science Textbooks

Sakshi Education

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is set to introduce updated Class 9 Social Science textbooks in March 2026. The new books aim to strengthen students' understanding of India's cultural, intellectual, and knowledge traditions.

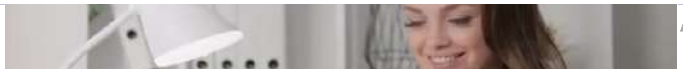


NCERT to Release Revised 9th Class Social Science Textbooks

According to the draft syllabus, the updated curriculum shifts away from memorising dates and events. It will focus more on understanding ideas and concepts, in line with NEP 2020 and NCF 2023. The syllabus includes India's contributions to science, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, agriculture, literature, and arts. Topics such as Ayurveda, yoga, traditional practices, language origins, and classical music will also be included.

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Along with civilisational history, the curriculum explains the development of the modern Indian nation and highlights early forms of democratic practices and the concept of unity in diversity. The syllabus covers India's civilisational history along with the making of the modern Indian nation. It highlights early democratic traditions and the idea of unity in diversity.

The curriculum also addresses issues like inequality and discrimination and encourages discussion on equality, justice, and social harmony. Education experts have welcomed the changes, calling them a clear shift from the earlier content-heavy syllabus.

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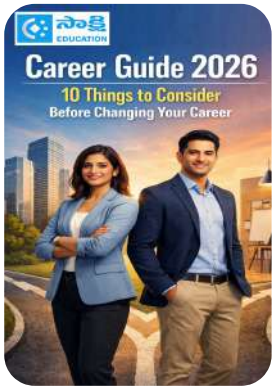
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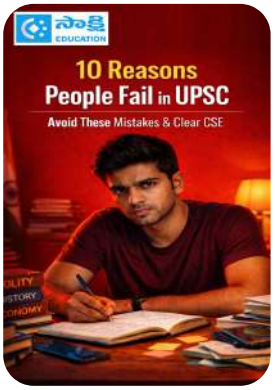
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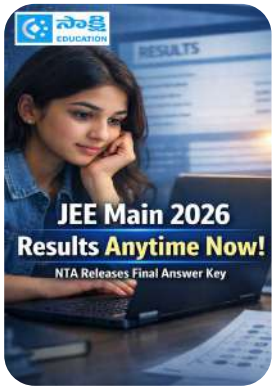
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NCERT to release new class IX Social Science textbooks with IKS focus

The textbooks will highlight indigenous knowledge, culture & history, boosting inquiry-based learning

TNN | Posted February 09, 2026 04:00 PM



The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is expected to release new class IX social science textbooks in March. The books will have a strong focus on Indian Knowledge Systems, with an emphasis on indigenous intellectual and cultural contributions, reads a draft syllabus released by the Council.

The new textbooks will highlight inquiry-driven learning rooted in “Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)”, with perspectives that are “culturally rooted” and connected to “lived realities”, the draft syllabus states. The focus will be on core concepts “rather than memorisation”, aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023.

New Syllabus Contents

In the revised syllabus, students will get to study Indian contributions in areas such as mathematics, philosophy, science and technology, medicine, architecture, agriculture, literature, and art.

The curriculum will include Indian philosophy, Ayurveda, yoga, horticulture, the traditional use of herbs and spices, etymology, and the “22 shrutis” of Indian classical music, examining how these moulded the course of Indian history.

Students will also study the evolution of the modern Indian nation along with the “rich civilisational history of the Indian subcontinent” including early democratic traditions in different parts of ancient India. They are expected to “understand and analyse social, cultural, and political life in India over time as well as the underlying historical Indian ethos and philosophy of unity in diversity,” while recognising past and present challenges and efforts to address them. They will be taught to “discuss forms of inequality, injustice, and discrimination” arising from internal and external forces, including colonisation, and to examine movements towards equity, inclusion, justice and harmony.

The NCERT has released the draft syllabus for languages, science, mathematics, and social science to facilitate teachers’ academic planning for the 2026-27 academic session. Draft of NCERT class IX syllabus states that the new curriculum across all 10 subjects will be competency-based and experiential.

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PM advises students to use AI for guidance, not as learning substitute

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Underlining the harmful effects of mobiles, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday advised students not to let technology enslave them, saying artificial intelligence should be used for guidance and value addition, not as a substitute for learning.

In the second episode of the ninth edition of the prime minister's annual 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' event, he noted that mobile phones have become masters of some children, who cannot even eat without them or without a television screen.

"Every era has faced concerns with new technologies, whether computers or mobile phones. But the fear is unnecessary. Technology must not become the master of human life. You have to make a firm resolve that you will not let technology enslave you," Modi said in an interaction with students from Coimbatore, Raipur, Guwahati and Gujarat.

The prime minister urged students not to be afraid of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), but to use them to hone their skills.

"We should try not to make AI or mobile the master; some kids do not eat food unless they watch something on a smartphone. We can use AI efficiently. AI should be used for guidance and value addition, not as a substitute for learning.

"The nature of jobs will always evolve, just as transport shifted from bullock carts to aeroplanes, but life continues," Modi said and highlighted that understanding technology, expanding one's own capabilities, and integrating its strengths into work ensures progress without fear.

The prime minister also urged students to practise previous years' question papers and get a good night's sleep to perform better at examinations. "You will never feel tense after preparing well for exams. A good night's sleep will keep you cheerful for the rest of the day," Modi said.

He also advised parents not to compare their wards with others.

When asked what qualities he expects from the future generation of leaders, the prime minister remarked that the first quality is to be fearless. Leadership begins when one decides to act without waiting for others, Modi said and cited the example of picking up litter, thereby inspiring others to do the same.

"Leadership is not about elections or speeches but about the ability to explain and convince others," he said, adding that true leaders first understand people before guiding them.

"To become a leader, develop a mindset to take initiative. A key leadership quality is the ability to communicate your thoughts clearly and effectively to at least 10 people," the prime minister said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacting with students during 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 with PM' PTI

On career choices, he said that constantly changing aspirations confuses families, but it is natural to feel inspired by successful people.

He stressed that one should not only look at their achievements but also at the effort and discipline behind the success. "True success makes its own noise, and when one becomes number one, the whole school, village, and community will recognise it."

Addressing another student's concern about balancing studies and passion, Modi noted that both are useful and can complement each other.

He illustrated with an example of combining art with science experiments, saying creativity can help in learning and reduce fatigue, recommending dedicating daily or weekly time to personal interests while ensuring education remains a priority.

Responding to a student's query on startups, he remarked that the first focus should be on what one wants to do, whether innovation in technology or practical solutions like drones or electricity systems. The prime minister advised forming small teams with friends skilled in technology or finance.

"There is no age requirement for starting a venture, and even small startups can be impactful. If there is genuine interest, it is a very good thing. You should visit existing startups, prepare a project report and present it honestly as a school project, which would encourage guidance and support. Gradually, valuable knowledge will be gained on how to proceed," he said.

The prime minister said he felt good to see that students of Classes 10 and 12 can also carry the dream of Viksit Bharat 2047.

"This is a matter of great happiness for me. We should adopt the habits of developed countries - we should turn off engines at red lights, we should not waste food, and we should reduce wastage. Discipline is very important in our lives," he said.

The prime minister recalled the role of his teachers in his days as a student and their insistence on physical exercise to remain healthy. "If you ask any great person, they will say that their mother and teachers helped shape their life," Modi said.

The first episode of the ninth edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha was aired last week, where the prime minister advised students to listen to everyone's advice but change their lifestyle only when they want to.

The Pioneer, 10 February 2026, Page No.- 05

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Education Minister, Abhinav Bindra Meet To Discuss Sports Learning At School Level

Curated By : Education.Careers Desk News18.com

Last Updated: February 10, 2026, 19:54 IST

Pradhan and Bindra examined ways to leverage the later's expertise to design sports-based curricula, integrate sports learning, and encourage lifelong fitness habits.

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Abhinav Bindra (L); Dharmendra Pradhan (R). (Image: X/ @dpradhanbjp)

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan recently met with Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra to discuss advancing school-level sports excellence. In a post on X, Pradhan expressed his delight in meeting Bindra, noting their productive talks on fostering school sports excellence. They also examined ways to leverage Bindra's expertise to design sports-based curricula, integrate sports learning, promote mental wellness, and encourage lifelong fitness habits.

Dharmendra Pradhan
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A pleasure to meet Olympic gold medallist and national icon Shri @Abhinav_Bindra.

Fruitful conversations on nurturing sporting excellence at the school level. Also, discussed ways we can utilise his expertise for designing sports-based curriculum, imparting sports-integrated Show more

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In December, to further India's goal of becoming a top 10 sporting nation by 2036, the Department of Sports identified the need to enhance sports administration capabilities. As a result, it established a Task Force on Capacity Building of Sports Administrators, chaired by Bindra, to create a framework for strengthening sports administration.

The Task Force recently submitted its report to the Department of Sports, which is available on the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MoYA&S) website. The report emphasises the need for professional, accountable, and progressive sports administrators to realise this transformative vision, including hosting the Olympic Games, reported ANI.

One of the Task Force's recommendations is to establish the National Council for Sports Education & Capacity Building (NCSECB) as an autonomous statutory body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to regulate, accredit, and certify sports administration training. It also proposed introducing a five-level Capability Maturity Model (CMM) to help SAI, NSFs, and State Departments

assess institutional maturity in various areas, facilitating evidence-based monitoring and targeted interventions.

It suggests including sports governance training modules in the induction and advanced training of IAS and State Civil Service officers, linking training to practical application and career progression. It also recommends rotational postings, apprenticeship models, innovation labs, and partnerships with federations, government, and the private sector to ensure administrators can apply their skills and advance professionally.

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The Department of Sports is currently evaluating the Task Force's recommendations to further professionalise India's sporting ecosystem. It revised assistance norms under the Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) in May 2025, allowing NSFs to allocate up to 10% of their funding for administrative manpower. Additionally, expenses for administrative operations, legal services, and hiring specialised professionals or interns are permitted up to 2.5% of the annual budget.

NSFs are now required to have appropriate administrative structures and ensure proper advertisement for staff appointments. These reforms aim to create a globally respected, athlete-focused governance framework, positioning India for long-term sporting success, including the 2036 Olympics. The Government has also laid the foundation for this vision through the enactment of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.

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CBSE to implement on-screen marking for class 12 board exams from 2026-27: Schools asked to ensure technical readiness

TOI Education | Feb 10, 2026, 12.40 PM IST



The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has announced that it will introduce On-Screen Marking (OSM) for the evaluation of Class 12 answer books beginning with the 2026 board examinations. The decision is aimed at improving accuracy, efficiency and transparency in the assessment process.
CBSE conducts Class 10 and Class 12 board examinations annually in India and across 26 countries, covering nearly 46 lakh students. While Class 12 answer sheets will move to digital evaluation from 2026, Class 10 answer books will continue to be assessed in physical mode for now.

The notification regarding the new system is dated February 9, 2026. Candidates and school officials can check the CBSE notice by clicking here.

Digital evaluation to replace manual checking for Class 12

Under the new system, Class 12 answer books will be scanned and evaluated digitally by examiners. Teachers will mark scripts on a computer instead of handling physical copies.

The Board stated that the move will eliminate totalling errors and reduce manual intervention.It also observed that verification of marks after the results will not be required under this mechanism, which will also reduce the manpower needs.
The CBSE further stated that digital evaluating would help expedite the process of checking, as well as encourage maximum involvement by teachers, including those from the affiliated schools abroad.

Key benefits outlined by CBSE

The Board has highlighted several advantages of the On-Screen Marking system:

- Elimination of totalling errors
- Automated coordination
- Faster evaluation
- Savings in transportation time and cost
- Teachers can remain in their schools while evaluating
- Reduced manpower requirement for verification
- Opportunity for all affiliated schools to participate
- Involvement of teachers from affiliated schools globally
- Environmentally sustainable evaluation process

CBSE said the new system will make the evaluation process more streamlined and transparent.

Schools asked to ensure technical readiness

CBSE has directed schools to prepare the required infrastructure for smooth implementation. Schools must ensure:

- A computer lab with Public Static IP as per Affiliation Bye-Laws
- PC or laptop with Windows 8 or above
- Minimum 4 GB RAM and 1 GB free space on the C drive
- Updated internet browser such as Chrome, Edge, Internet Explorer or Firefox
- Adobe Reader installed
- Reliable internet connectivity with minimum 2 Mbps speed
- Uninterrupted power supply

The Board has requested schools to complete these preparations in advance.

Training and support measures

To facilitate the transition, CBSE will allow all teachers with OASIS IDs to log in and familiarise themselves with the platform. The Board will also conduct multiple dry runs and organise training programmes to explain the system.

In addition, a call centre will be set up to resolve issues, and instructional videos will be released for better understanding.

CBSE said detailed instructions for each activity will be issued separately to ensure timely action by all

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जासं, नई दिल्ली: केंद्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड (सीबीएसई) ने देशभर के स्कूलों में विज्ञान और गणित की पढ़ाई को रोचक और व्यावहारिक बनाने की दिशा में एक अहम कदम उठाया है। सीबीएसई ने गांधीनगर स्थित भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आइआइटी) के साथ 3030 एकलव्य शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम को अगले पांच वर्ष (2031) तक जारी रखने के लिए समझौता ज्ञापन (एमओयू) पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं। इस पहल का उद्देश्य शिक्षकों को आधुनिक शिक्षण तरीकों से जोड़कर कक्षा में बच्चों की सीखने की प्रक्रिया को बेहतर बनाना है। यह एमओयू सीबीएसई चेयरमैन राहुल सिंह के आइआइटी गांधीनगर दौरे के बाद हुआ है।

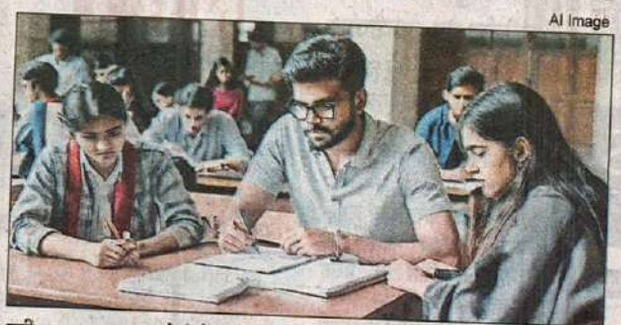
आइआइटी गांधीनगर के सेंटर फार क्रिएटिव लर्निंग (सीसीएल) द्वारा चल रहा यह कार्यक्रम आनलाइन माध्यम से शिक्षकों को प्रशिक्षित करता है। इसमें विज्ञान, प्रौद्योगिकी, इंजीनियरिंग और गणित (एसटीईएम) से जुड़े विषयों को प्रयोगों, गतिविधियों और वास्तविक जीवन के उदाहरण से समझाने पर जोर दिया जाता है। कार्यक्रम को 30 घंटे के सतत पेशेवर विकास (सीपीडी) माडल के रूप में डिजाइन किया है, जिसमें लाइव डेमो, असाइनमेंट, पाठ्यक्रम से जुड़ी गतिविधियां व मूल्यांकन शामिल हैं।

दैनिक जागरण, 11 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - III

12वीं की आंसरशीट्स की डिजिटल चेकिंग

CBSE शुरू करेगा ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग सिस्टम

Katyayani.Upreti
@timesofindia.com


AI Image

■ नई दिल्ली : सेंट्रल बोर्ड ऑफ सेकंडरी एजुकेशन (CBSE) के क्लास 12 की आंसरशीट्स 2026 से ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग सिस्टम (OSM) से चेक की जाएंगी। हालांकि, क्लास 10 की कॉपियां पहले की तरह फिजिकल मोड पर ही चेक होंगी।

बोर्ड के अनुसार, ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग से आंसरशीट्स की जांच में होने वाली जोड़ने की गलतियां खत्म होंगी और जांच की प्रक्रिया तेज और पारदर्शी बनेगी। इससे टीचर्स को आंसरकॉपी जांचने के लिए दूर-दराज के सेंटर्स पर नहीं जाना पड़ेगा। वे अपने ही स्कूल में रहकर यह काम कर सकेंगे। सीबीएसई का कहना है कि इस नई व्यवस्था से आंसरशीट्स को ट्रांसपोर्ट करने में लगने वाला समय और खर्च भी बचेगा। साथ ही, रिजल्ट आने के बाद अंकों के वेरिफिकेशन की जरूरत भी कम हो जाएगी। यह व्यवस्था पर्यावरण के लिहाज से भी बेहतर मानी जा रही है। क्योंकि इसमें कागज का कम इस्तेमाल होगा।

हालांकि, क्लास 10 की कॉपियां पहले की तरह फिजिकल मोड पर ही चेक होंगी

इसके लिए एजेंसी हायर की जाएगी या नहीं, इस सवाल पर बोर्ड ने कमेंट नहीं किया है। सीबीएसई के एग्जामिनेशन कंट्रोलर संयम भारद्वाज का कहना है कि ऑफ-स्क्रीन मार्किंग के लिए हमें पहले की तरह ही सेंटर्स बनाने होंगे, जहां कंप्यूटर्स, इंटरनेट से जुड़ी हर व्यवस्था हो। इवैल्यूशन से पहले टीचर्स को ट्रेनिंग दी जाएगी। कॉपी चेक करने की प्रक्रिया एग्जाम शुरू होने के लगभग 10 दिन बाद होगी। क्या इस कदम के बाद रिजल्ट जल्द आएगा, इसके जवाब में उन्होंने कहा कि यह अभी नहीं कहा जा सकता।

17 फरवरी 2026 से दोनों क्लास के एग्जाम शुरू होंगे। 10वीं के एग्जाम 10 मार्च तक और 12वीं के 9 अप्रैल तक चलेंगे। बोर्ड ने अपने सभी स्कूलों से कहा है कि वे ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग के लिए जरूरी तकनीकी तैयारी करें। स्कूलों में कंप्यूटर, इंटरनेट कनेक्शन और बिजली की तय व्यवस्था करने को कहा है। टीचर्स को नए सिस्टम से परिचित कराने के लिए ट्रेनिंग, प्रैक्टिस सेशन और विडियो भी जारी किए जाएंगे।

बोर्ड ने कहा है कि क्लास 11 और 12 के टीचर्स को ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग के लिए तैनात किया जाएगा। इसके लिए स्कूलों को इन टीचर्स का ब्यौरा ऑनलाइन (OASIS पोर्टल) पर 13 फरवरी तक अपडेट करने को कहा गया है। स्कूलों को चेतावनी भी दी है कि अगर बोर्ड के निर्देशों का पालन नहीं किया गया तो इसे मूल्यांकन प्रक्रिया को प्रभावित करने का प्रयास माना जाएगा और ऐसे मामलों में संबंधित स्कूलों का परिणाम घोषित नहीं किया जाएगा। एग्जामिनेशन/एफिलिएशन बाइलॉज के तहत कार्रवाई भी की जा सकती है।

1 करोड़+ आंसरकॉपी कैसे स्कैन होंगी?

सीबीएसई एग्जाम में इस साल 46 लाख स्टूडेंट्स शामिल होंगे। ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग सिस्टम की ओर कदम, सीबीएसई के लिए बड़ा टास्क होगा। क्योंकि क्लास 12 के देश-विदेश में 17 लाख से ज्यादा स्टूडेंट्स है। इनकी आंसरशीट्स 1 करोड़ से ऊपर होगी। इन कॉपियों को पहले स्कैन किया जाएगा, जो बड़ा काम है। इसके बाद इन्हें ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग के लिए अपलोड किया जाएगा। बोर्ड को टीचर्स की ट्रेनिंग भी करानी होगी। इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर की भी व्यवस्था करनी होगी। बोर्ड की परीक्षाओं में होने वाला खर्च इससे कम नहीं होने वाला है, बढ़ जरूर सकता है।

NBT Lens खबरों के अंदर की बात

नवभारत टाइम्स, 11 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 5

The Pioneer,
11 February 2026,
Page no. -03

CM launches Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana to support girls' education

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Delhi Government on Tuesday launched the Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana, an expanded and restructured version of the Ladli Scheme. The scheme aims to ensure financial security and uninterrupted education for girls from economically weaker families from birth to higher education.

Announcing the scheme, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the initiative seeks to ensure that no girl child in Delhi is forced to discontinue her education due to financial constraints. She said the scheme will also help create a long-term savings corpus that grows as a girl achieves key educational milestones and matures into adulthood.

Under the new scheme, the Government will provide financial assistance of up to ₹56,000 per beneficiary. The amount will be deposited in phased instalments linked to age and education milestones, starting from birth and continuing through graduation or diploma-level studies. The deposited amount will be invested through a structured financial instrument and, with interest, is expected to mature to more than ₹1 lakh. The final amount will be credited directly to the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account.

"This is an investment in the future of our girls and the future of the country," the Chief Minister said. She added that the Government is determined to ensure that no girl drops out of school or college for want of funds. As girls progress through education, the Government will continue to support them financially.

The Chief Minister said the Ladli Scheme, launched in 2008, had not been adequately implemented over the years. After assuming office, the present Government found that a large number of maturity accounts remained unclaimed. She said more than 1.86 lakh such accounts were lying pending, meaning the money meant for beneficiaries had not reached them on time.



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta during a media interaction at the Delhi Secretariat in New Delhi PANKAJ KUMAR

To address this, the Government identified 30,000 beneficiaries in 2025 and disbursed ₹90 crore that had remained unclaimed. The Chief Minister said another 41,000 beneficiaries have now been identified and ₹100 crore will be released shortly. In total, ₹190 crore belonging to beneficiaries is being ensured and delivered, she said.

Eligibility conditions have been slightly modified under the revamped scheme. It applies to girls born in Delhi whose families have lived in the city for at least three years and whose annual family income does not exceed ₹1.20 lakh. Benefits are limited to two surviving girl children per family. Girls can be registered within one year of birth or at later stages, such as admission to Class I, VI, IX, or XI, or upon admission to a recognised graduation or diploma course.

A key expansion under the scheme is the inclusion of girls pursuing graduation or professional diploma courses in government-recognised institutions anywhere in India. This includes universities and colleges affiliated with the UGC or other statutory bodies. Conditions have also been relaxed for girls living in child care institutions under Government protection to ensure wider inclusion.

Financial assistance will be deposited at different stages of a girl's educational journey, beginning at birth and continuing through school and higher education. The Government will deposit the assistance amount in instalments at critical stages: ₹11,000 at the birth of the girl child, ₹5,000 on admission to Class I, ₹5,000 on admission to Class VI, ₹5,000 on admission to Class IX, ₹5,000 on passing Class X, ₹5,000 on admission to Class XII. Another ₹20,000 will be credited to the accounts of beneficiaries in phases on completion of diploma or graduation. The deposited amount will earn interest over time, creating a substantial maturity value.

The maturity amount can be claimed once the beneficiary has passed Class XII and attained the age of 18, or after completing graduation or a diploma and attaining the age of 21. If educational milestones are not met within the prescribed age, or if the amount remains unclaimed, the funds will be credited back to the Government. The Chief Minister said the entire process, from application to payment, will be fully digital and transparent.

PHASED INSTALMENT STRUCTURE

Stage of Education/Life	Assistance Amount
At Birth	₹11,000
Admission to Class I	₹5,000
Admission to Class VI	₹5,000
Admission to Class IX	₹5,000
Passing Class X	₹5,000
Admission to Class XII	₹5,000
Completion of Graduation/Diploma	₹20,000 (in phases)
Total Base Investment	₹56,000

NEW SCHEME FROM APRIL, FINANCIAL AID INCREASES BY Rs 20,000

Delhi govt to upgrade Ladli scheme, will cost Rs 160 crore; CM says aim is to clear backlog

Process online, eliminating need for beneficiaries to visit govt offices

Express News Service
New Delhi, February 10

TO ENSURE financial security and academic growth of girls from economically weaker sections, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday said her government will launch 'Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojna' in April, upgrading and restructuring the Ladli Scheme of 2008.

Under the new scheme, the government will provide financial assistance of up to Rs 56,000 per beneficiary, deposited in phased installments linked to education and age-related milestones, beginning from birth and continuing through graduation or diploma-level studies, Gupta told mediapersons. Under the 2008 scheme, each beneficiary received Rs 36,000 annually.

She maintained that the main objective is to clear the backlog. "When we came to power, we learnt that more than 1.86 lakh maturity accounts (of the Ladli scheme) were lying unclaimed, which means that the money meant for our daughters did not reach them on time," the CM said.

She added that the government identified around 30,000 such beneficiaries last year and Rs 90 crore has already been disbursed to them. "Now, we have identified another 41,000 beneficiaries and an amount of Rs 100 crore will be released shortly to them... In all, Rs 190 crore, which rightfully belongs to these girls, is being delivered to them," she added.

Gupta said the initiative aims to ensure that no girl child in Delhi is forced to discontinue her education due to financial constraints, while also creating a long-term savings corpus that matures as she completes key educational milestones. The amount will be released directly into the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account on maturity.

The financial cost of implementing the upgraded scheme will be around Rs 160 crore and the financial support will be given to two girls per family, she added.

"This is one of the schemes of our government that is very close to my heart. It shows our commitment towards ensuring that every girl, every daughter of Delhi gets an opportunity to reach her full potential...," Gupta said.

Officials said the eligibility conditions under the Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana have been slightly modified from the Ladli Scheme. Under the Ladli scheme, Rs 11,000 and Rs 10,000 were deposited when the girl child was born in hospitals and homes, respectively. A deposit of Rs 5,000 was added each time the child took admission in classes 1, 6 and 9 as well as when she cleared classes 10 and 12.

"Many conditions in respect of girls residing in child care institutions under government protection have been relaxed, ensuring inclusion of vulnerable beneficiaries," said Gupta.

Further, she said that the entire process —from application to payment —will be fully online, eliminating the need for beneficiaries to visit government offices. "This scheme sends a clear message that the Delhi government sees its daughters not as a burden, but as a strength of society and the nation," she said.

•THE NEW DELHI LAKHPATI BITYA YOJNA

AID: ₹56,000

ELIGIBILITY: Domicile or resident of Delhi for last three years

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME: ₹1.2 lakh

DEPOSITS:

- ₹11,000 within one year of birth
- ₹5,000 each on admission to classes I, 6, 8, 10 and 12; ₹25,000 in all
- Rs 20,000 in phases after diploma or graduation



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday. EXPRESS

CAP: 2 girls per family

TRANSFER OF AID: To be credited phase wise via Aadhar-linked DBT

MATURITY AMOUNT: After Class 12 and 18 years of age, or completed graduation/diploma and 21 years of age

UNCLAIMED AMOUNTS: To be credited back to the government.

BUDGET: Rs 100 crore allocated, additional Rs 60 cr likely in next Budget

Aid under existing Delhi Ladli Scheme: ₹36,000

The Indian Express, 11 February 2026.
Page No.- 4

THE PIONEER,
11 February 2026,
Page no. -2

CM Rekha inaugurates new school block in west Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi



Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday inaugurated a new school building block at a Sarvodaya Vidyalaya in Mansarovar Garden and said her Government is committed to improving infrastructure and learning facilities in schools.

The chief minister also inaugurated the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Laboratory in Mansarovar and a District Institute of Education and Training at Dilshad Garden. Cabinet Minister Ashish Sood, MLA|Harish Khurana, and several other dignitaries were present at the programme. Speaking on the occasion, she said the BJP dispensation aims to make schools under the Delhi Government a preferred choice for parents, on par with or better than private institutions in terms of quality, facilities and infrastructure.

She said real success in the education sector would be achieved when parents themselves choose Government schools for their children. The Chief Minister said that the Government aims to make Delhi the state with the highest number of smart classrooms, computer labs, language labs, modern sports facilities, and robust educational infrastructure in the country. Alongside academics, focused attention is also being given to sports and nutrition.

The chief minister also acknowledged the role of public-private partnerships, including support from the Ladli Foundation and the American India Foundation (AIF), in strengthening digital education.

A total of 101 computer labs have been set up in Government schools through such collaborations, with more than 2,000 computers provided so far, she added.

At Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, Mansarovar Garden, the Chief Minister inaugurated a newly constructed ground-plus-three-storey school building comprising 29 classrooms, developed in accordance with modern standards and academic requirements. Similarly, a new ground-plus-three-storey building was inaugurated at the DIET campus, Dilshad Garden.

The facility includes 19 classrooms and is equipped with modern amenities to support teacher training and educational innovation.

Education Minister Ashish Sood said meaningful change in education is reflected in classrooms and laboratories rather than publicity campaigns. The Government was prioritising spending on school infrastructure, including classrooms and ICT facilities, to bridge the digital divide among students, he said. Sood said access to computers and technology-enabled learning was crucial as most competitive examinations are now computer-based.

The Education Minister informed that more than 7,000 new computers have been provided to Delhi Government schools in less than a year. Tenders for 7,000 smart blackboards have been completed. In the next four years, smart boards will be installed in 21,000 classrooms from Classes 9 to 12, with a five-year maintenance guarantee.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

A

Kerala

Textbook distribution to begin on Feb 13; new record

Minister Sivankutty said orders have been received from schools
oks in the first volume and 1.9 crore in the second.



Edu interacts with students during distribution of school textbooks
ss

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THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Setting a new benchmark, the state government will begin distributing textbooks for Classes I to X in state syllabus schools on February 13, more than three months ahead of the start of the next academic year. Last year, textbook distribution had begun by mid-March.

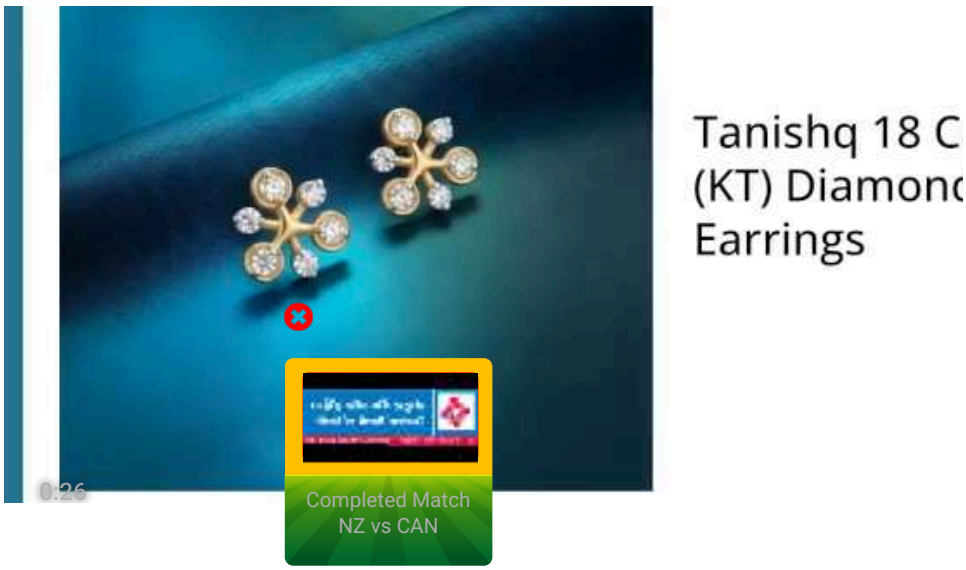
General Education Minister V Sivankutty told reporters here on Tuesday that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will carry out the state-level inauguration of textbook distribution at 12 noon on February 13. “Textbook distribution has remained timely over the past four years. However, this year’s advance schedule sets a new record for the state and is also a rarity at the national level,” the minister said.

Sivankutty said orders have been received from schools for 3.5 crore textbooks in the first volume and 1.9 crore in the second. Of the first volume textbooks, printing has been completed for 79 lakh textbooks of which 55 lakh have reached the distribution hubs.

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The minister also informed that a comprehensive revision of higher secondary textbooks will be carried out in the state after a gap of 15 years. With the state curriculum committee giving approval for revision of 41 titles, Class XI students will get revised textbooks in the upcoming academic year.

NEW

year, the state had brought out supplementary textbooks in four subjects after NCERT struck off certain portions, allegedly owing to political considerations.

The minister informed that the government has constituted a high-level committee to study digital device addiction among schoolchildren. The committee, chaired by general education secretary K Vasuki, will submit a report within three months. Sivankutty said over eight lakh students have been enrolled as beneficiaries of the free khadi uniform scheme for 2026-27 academic year. The distribution of the uniform material will also be launched by the chief minister along with the textbook distribution on February 13.

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Education Minister V Sivankutty | Textbook distribution



Only 52 Govt Schools Onboarded Under Vidyanjali Initiative In WB, Says Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary



Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary stated that in West Bengal, only 52 government schools out of more than 82,000 schools have been onboarded under the Vidyanjali initiative of the Ministry of Education.

Replying during Question Hour, the Minister noted that the number of volunteers participating in the scheme from the state is significantly lower compared to other states. The Minister said the volunteer count under the scheme is very low compared to the other states because the students are hesitant due to the attitude of the state government. The Minister informed that over 2,000 students from West Bengal are currently registered as volunteers under the scheme. He further remarked that due to the narrow political approach, students in the state have been deprived of the full benefit from the initiative.

Vidyanjali is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Education with the objective of strengthening schools through community and private sector participation across the country. The programme seeks to connect schools with a wide range of volunteers, including members of the Indian diaspora, young professionals, retired teachers, retired government officials, NGOs, private and public sector companies, corporate institutions, and other stakeholders, to contribute to the overall development of schools.

ONmanorama

NCERT revisions: Post PM-SHRI, will Kerala revolt once again by teaching chapters rubbished by Centre

Onmanorama Staff

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2 MINUTE READ



Minister V Sivankutty. Photo: Manorama Archives

textbooks this academic year, too, as part of what he called its "agenda to distort history".

In 2023, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) had published additional text books that included all the chapters and portions that were left out by the NCERT texts and retained them as part of Kerala's curriculum. "Whenever the NCERT had extensively excised chapters, Kerala had set an example by boldly printing additional text books," the minister said in a Facebook post on Wednesday.

The minister's clarification has come close on the heels of reports that revised NCERT text books will be allowed to be taught in Kerala's schools after Kerala had become a signatory to the PM-SHRI project in 2025.

Though the LDF government claims that the PM-SHRI agreement had been put on hold, the status of the project in Kerala is still uncertain. The Centre has still not responded to Kerala's decision to opt out of the scheme.

However, the general education minister had strong words against the Centre's curriculum revision. "The Centre's meddling in the education system in the name of education is aimed at distorting history and destroying scientific temper," Sivankutty said. He said that Kerala did not hesitate to officially oppose such anti-academic measures at the NCERT meeting held in Delhi.

"If the new NCERT textbooks are against Kerala's interests, Kerala would respond as strongly as we had in earlier years," Sivankutty said. The revised NCERT textbooks are expected to arrive by the end of February.

As many as 44 titles that are taught in Kerala government schools are NCERT texts, and this include science and social science texts like physics, chemistry biology, history, political science, economics, sociology and psychology. The SCERT, on the other hand, prints 39 titles.

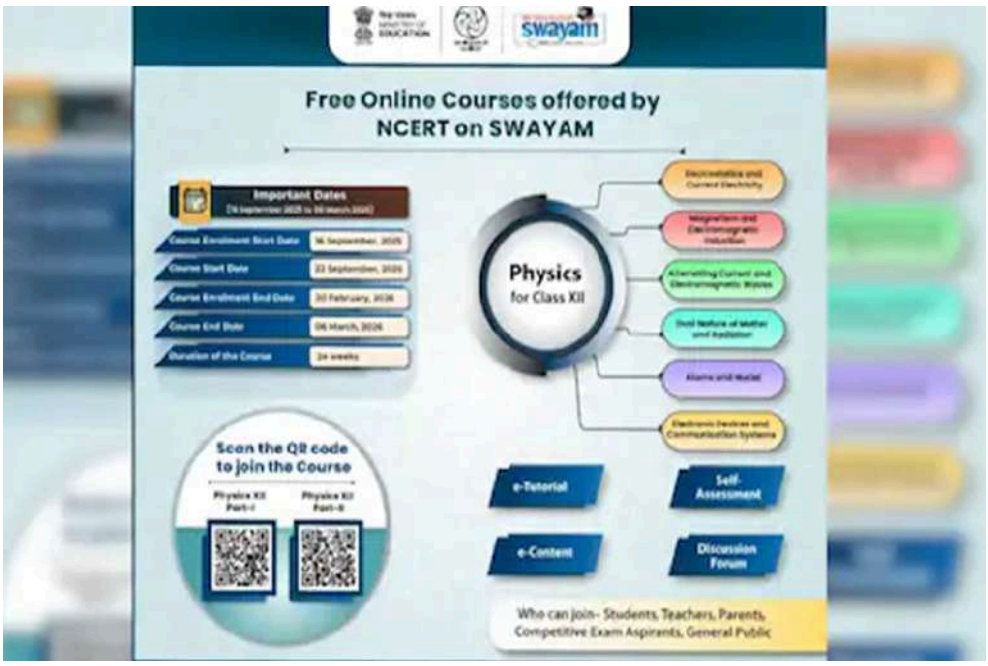
In 2023, as part of what has been called "syllabus rationalisation", the NCERT had removed certain chapters on the Mughal Empire from class 12 history

dominance.

From Class 11 humanities texts, certain chapters like 'Central Islamic Lands', 'Confrontation of Cultures', and 'The Industrial Revolution' were excised. From Class 10 politics textbooks, chapters like 'Democracy and diversity', 'Popular struggles and movement', and 'Challenges to democracy' were removed.

References to the Hindu right's dislike for Mahatma Gandhi and the ban on RSS after Gandhi's assassination were also edited out from Class 12 history texts. All these were re-introduced by the LDF government through additional textbooks printed by the SCERT.

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NCERT Launches Free Online Physics Course For Class 12 On SWAYAM

News

In a noteworthy step towards strengthening accessible, high-quality education across India, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, has introduced a free online Physics course for Class 12 students on the SWAYAM platform. Designed to cover the entire senior secondary Physics syllabus over a structured 24-week period, this initiative reflects a growing commitment to digital learning, academic equity, and enhanced preparation for both board examinations and competitive assessments.

As education systems worldwide continue to integrate digital resources into mainstream pedagogy, initiatives such as this represent more than supplementary academic support. They signify a broader shift towards democratised learning, where quality educational content is accessible regardless of geographic, socio-economic, or institutional constraints.

Expanding Access to Quality Education

Physics, often regarded as one of the more demanding subjects in the science curriculum, requires conceptual clarity, analytical reasoning, and consistent practice. Students in many parts of the country, particularly in remote or under-resourced areas, may face challenges accessing specialised teaching or supplementary academic resources. By offering a comprehensive online course free of cost, NCERT is addressing these disparities while reinforcing the principle of educational inclusivity.

The SWAYAM platform, India's national Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) initiative has increasingly become a central hub for accessible digital education. Hosting courses across disciplines and educational levels, it enables learners to access curated academic content from reputable institutions. The addition of a full-length Class 12 Physics course further strengthens its role as a national academic resource.

Course Structure and Academic Scope

The newly launched course covers all major components of the Class XII Physics syllabus in alignment with NCERT textbooks and national curriculum standards. Core topics include Electrostatics and Current Electricity, Magnetism and Electromagnetic Induction, Alternating Current and Electromagnetic Waves, the Dual Nature of Matter and Radiation, Atoms and Nuclei, as well as Electronic Devices and Communication Systems.

This structured progression ensures that learners receive a comprehensive conceptual foundation while also gaining exposure to advanced topics essential for higher education in science and engineering fields. The alignment with official curriculum standards makes the course particularly valuable for students preparing for board examinations, national-level entrance tests, and other competitive assessments.

By maintaining curricular consistency, the programme ensures that learners can integrate online study seamlessly with their school coursework, thereby reinforcing classroom learning rather than replacing it.

Interactive Digital Learning Environment

A defining feature of the course is its emphasis on interactivity. Rather than relying solely on recorded lectures, the programme incorporates e-tutorials, digital study materials, self-assessment tools, and discussion forums. This multifaceted approach fosters active engagement, enabling students to test their understanding, clarify doubts, and interact with peers or instructors in a collaborative environment.

Self-assessment modules play a particularly important role in science education. Physics requires not only theoretical comprehension but also problem-solving proficiency. Regular quizzes, practice exercises, and diagnostic assessments allow learners to identify conceptual gaps and strengthen their analytical skills systematically.

Discussion forums further enhance the learning experience by creating a community of learners. Peer interaction can stimulate critical thinking, encourage knowledge sharing, and provide motivational support, especially for students studying independently.

Supporting Examination Preparedness

For many Class 12 students, Physics is not merely an academic subject but a gateway to future academic and professional opportunities. Strong performance in Physics often influences admission prospects in engineering, medical, and scientific programmes. Consequently, comprehensive exam preparation is essential.

The NCERT online course is structured to support both board examination readiness and preparation for competitive examinations. By closely adhering to the prescribed syllabus while providing deeper conceptual insights, the course bridges the gap between foundational learning and advanced application.

Moreover, the flexibility of online learning allows students to revisit complex topics, practise repeatedly, and pace their studies according to individual needs, advantages that traditional classroom settings may not always provide.

Lifelong Learning Beyond the Classroom

While the primary audience for the course is Class 12 students, NCERT has intentionally kept it open to a broader learner base. Teachers, parents, competitive examination aspirants, and members of the general public with an interest in Physics are also eligible to enrol.

This inclusive approach reflects the evolving philosophy of lifelong learning. Education today is no longer confined to specific age groups or formal institutional settings. Professionals seeking to refresh their knowledge, educators aiming to enhance teaching strategies, or enthusiasts pursuing intellectual curiosity can all benefit from such accessible academic resources.

For teachers in particular, exposure to structured digital courses can support professional development. They can gain insights into updated pedagogical approaches, digital teaching tools, and innovative content delivery methods.

Digital Education and National Policy Priorities

The launch of this course aligns with broader national educational priorities emphasising digital integration, accessibility, and quality enhancement. Educational policies increasingly advocate blended learning models that combine traditional classroom instruction with digital resources.

Digital platforms offer scalability that physical infrastructure alone cannot achieve. A single high-quality online course can reach thousands of learners simultaneously, ensuring uniform access to reliable academic content. This scalability is particularly valuable in a country with diverse educational contexts and varying resource availability.

Furthermore, digital initiatives support resilience in education systems. Experiences from recent global disruptions have underscored the importance of flexible learning mechanisms capable of sustaining educational continuity under challenging circumstances.

Challenges and Considerations

Despite the evident advantages, digital learning initiatives must address several challenges to maximise impact. Access to reliable internet connectivity, availability of suitable digital devices, and digital literacy levels remain uneven across regions. Addressing these infrastructural and socio-economic factors is essential to ensure that online education truly promotes equity.

Another consideration is learner motivation. Online courses demand a degree of self-discipline and time management that some students may find challenging. Structured guidance from teachers, parental support, and institutional encouragement can help sustain engagement.

Quality assurance also remains crucial. Continuous feedback, periodic updates, and rigorous academic oversight ensure that course content remains accurate, relevant, and pedagogically effective.

Implications for Future Science Education

The introduction of comprehensive digital courses in subjects such as Physics reflects a broader transformation in science education. Increasingly, digital simulations, virtual laboratories, and interactive content complement traditional teaching methods. These tools can visualise complex phenomena, facilitate experimentation, and enhance conceptual understanding.

As technological capabilities expand, future iterations of such courses may incorporate augmented reality, artificial intelligence-driven personalisation, and advanced data analytics to further enrich learning experiences.

A Step Towards Educational Inclusivity

Ultimately, NCERT's free online Physics course represents an important stride towards educational inclusivity, academic excellence, and digital empowerment. By providing structured, curriculum-aligned content accessible to learners across the country, the initiative strengthens the foundation of science education while supporting national aspirations for technological advancement.

For students navigating the challenges of Class 12 academics, the course offers a valuable supplementary resource. For educators and lifelong learners, it presents opportunities for professional enrichment and intellectual exploration. And for the education system at large, it exemplifies how digital innovation can expand access, enhance quality, and support equitable learning outcomes.

As enrolment remains open until 20 February 2026, the initiative invites learners to engage with Physics not merely as an academic requirement but as a field of inquiry that fosters curiosity, analytical thinking, and scientific literacy. In doing so, it reinforces the broader educational mission of cultivating informed, capable, and intellectually confident citizens prepared for an increasingly knowledge-driven world.

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How early AI education in schools can help India build a future ready generation

Guest Contributor | Feb 11, 2026, 08.11 AM IST

India is home to over 600 million people under the age of 25 making it the world's largest youth population. That sheer number, combined with our status as the fastest-growing major economy, puts the country right at the heart of the global AI revolution. We already produce some of the best tech talent in the world, but foundational AI understanding is still missing in most schools, especially beyond the big cities.

Bringing AI into classrooms early isn't just a good idea but also essential if we want to turn this huge youth energy into something lasting. Starting young builds curiosity, sharpens critical thinking, and plants a strong sense of ethics, so children grow up ready not only to use intelligent tools but to create with them responsibly.

Why India needs early AI literacy now

National initiatives like Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat are pushing AI into every corner of life. Studies suggest it could add as much as $500 billion to our GDP by 2030, while creating millions of new jobs and changing many more. From precision farming that supports millions of agricultural workers to diagnostic tools addressing the critical doctor-patient ratio, AI is already transforming healthcare, agriculture, finance, and manufacturing.

Yet real obstacles such as years of rote learning habits, the deep urban-rural digital gap, and a projected shortage of 1.4 million AI professionals by 2026 continue to persist. Early exposure can ease worries about technology, spark ideas that matter locally, and help our children become builders of AI rather than just users. Many forward-looking classrooms, equipped with interactive and visual tools, are already showing that this change can reach every part of the country.

The core skills early AI education builds

Early AI education goes beyond coding. It's about making technology feel approachable through simple, fun activities such as questioning what an AI suggests to sharpen thinking. Children learn to recognize the patterns to build data sense, or using AI to make art and unlock imagination. Along the way, they naturally pick up logical reasoning, teamwork, and ease working alongside smart systems.
Ethics matter just as much, and plans are in place to start teaching bias, privacy, and responsible use from Grade 3, as upcoming Ministry of Education guidelines suggest. In a country as diverse as ours, this kind of awareness creates thoughtful digital citizens. Interactive displays and visual platforms turn tricky concepts into something children can touch and explore, letting them draw, experiment, and work together instantly. The result? Learning that feels joyful and memorable.

Making AI education truly inclusive

India’s rich linguistic diversity, rural-urban divide, and varied learning abilities create distinct challenges in education. The good news is that AI itself helps clear them. Multilingual resources now cover more than 22 languages through platforms like the Skill India Digital Hub, opening doors for every child. Adaptive tools match each student’s pace, and pilots have shown engagement rising by up to 68%. Visual and interactive technologies go further, carrying quality education even to rural vocational centres.

When these are part of connected classroom setups, they deliver truly personalised lessons, voice recognition, and support in regional languages so that no one is left out. Teachers get instant insights into each child’s needs, turning our diversity from a barrier into real strength.

Empowering teachers for the AI era

As AI steps into classrooms, teachers move from giving lectures to guiding curiosity and ethical conversations. Helpful tools take over routine planning, create content that fits local contexts, and give quick feedback, so

educators can focus on real mentoring.

Initiatives like NISHTHA and the new AI Centre of Excellence, supported by ₹500 crore in the 2025-26 Budget, are preparing millions of teachers nationwide. In our 1.5 million schools, digital classrooms with interactive panels, wireless sharing, and cloud software are making widespread change possible, even where resources are tight. The SOAR programme, with its focused modules for grades 6–12, shows how national initiatives can bring structured AI literacy to huge numbers of students.
The broader impact on India's future

Children who grow up comfortable with machine intelligence, data-driven choices, and human-AI teamwork will thrive in jobs we can barely imagine today. They'll push forward on the issues that matter most such as smarter cities, climate solutions, better healthcare access, and sustainable farming, while standing strong on the world stage. Finland and Singapore have already seen the rewards of starting AI literacy early; with our unmatched scale, India can move ahead even quicker.

The time to act is now

Early AI education is the foundation for a bolder, more confident, and fairer India. By carefully bringing intelligent, visual, and connected classroom solutions into schools from Grade 3 onwards, policymakers, teachers, and technology partners can together release the full power of our youth.

In today's classrooms, where visual collaboration tools and interactive ecosystems make learning lively and inclusive, children begin to see AI not as something far away and mysterious, but as a partner they can steer. When that shift happens, young Indians won't just face the future but also build it.

By: Muneer Ahmad Khant, Managing Director at ViewSonic India

NCERT : वंदे मातरम समेत कई विषयों पर आएंगे स्पेशल मॉड्यूल

Bhupender.Sharma
@timesofindia.com

AI Image



■ नई दिल्ली: NCERT अब तक 19 विषयों पर स्पेशल मॉड्यूल जारी कर चुका है और आम बोलचाल की भाषा में छात्रों को अंतरिक्ष शक्ति, चंद्रयान समेत कई बड़ी उपलब्धियों के बारे में बताया गया है। एनसीईआरटी अब कई और विषयों पर मॉड्यूल तैयार कर रहा है। वंदे मातरम, परमाणु ऊर्जा, त्योहारों का वैज्ञानिक महत्व, भारतीय शिक्षा को उपनिवेशवाद से मुक्त करने, तंबाकू और नशे के खिलाफ मुहिम, डोपिंग के खिलाफ जागरूकता जैसे तमाम विषय शामिल है।

खास बात यह है कि इन विषयों को आम बोलचाल की सरल भाषा में समझाया गया है, ताकि छात्र आसानी से इन्हें समझ सकें। इन मॉड्यूल के जरिए छात्रों को भारत की बड़ी उपलब्धियों और समसामयिक विषयों की जानकारी दी जा रही है। NCERT के एक सीनियर अधिकारी का कहना है कि राष्ट्रीय गीत वंदे मातरम् के 150 वर्ष पूरे होने के मौके पर वर्ष भर चलने वाले समारोहों की शुरुआत हो चुकी है और वंदे मातरम् पर विशेष मॉड्यूल तैयार किया जा रहा है। विशेष मॉड्यूल शिक्षा को पाठ्यपुस्तकों की सीमा से बाहर निकालकर राष्ट्र, समाज और जीवन से जोड़ने का सशक्त माध्यम बनकर उभर रहे है। जैसे भारतीय त्योहारों के वैज्ञानिक पहलुओं के बारे में भी बताया जाएगा। भारतीय त्योहार केवल धार्मिक अनुष्ठान नहीं बल्कि ऋतु परिवर्तन, स्वास्थ्य और प्रकृति के बीच संतुलन बनाने का वैज्ञानिक ढांचा है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 के लागू होने के बाद देश की शिक्षा व्यवस्था में बड़े बदलाव हुए है।

अन्य प्रमुख विषय

NCERT ने अब तक 19 विशेष मॉड्यूल जारी किए है। इंडिया–ए राइजिंग स्पेस पावर में भारत के अंतरिक्ष कार्यक्रम की पूरी यात्रा सरल भाषा में समझाई गई है, जबकि चंद्रयान उत्सव भी प्रमुख है। अन्य मॉड्यूल संविधान दिवस, G-20, ऑपरेशन सिंदूर, विभाजन विभीषिका, सहकारिता, स्वच्छता, कोविड-19, डिजिटल व आर्थिक शक्ति, विकसित भारत, नारी शक्ति वंदन, नए कानून–2023 और बिरसा मुंडा पर आधारित है।

नवभारत टाइम्स, 12 फरवरी, 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 2

सरकारी स्कूल में लगेंगे 21 हजार स्मार्ट बोर्ड

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। दिल्ली के सरकारी स्कूल अगले चार वर्षों में पहले से ज्यादा स्मार्ट और हाईटेक हो जाएंगे। दिल्ली सरकार अगले चार वर्षों में 21 हजार क्लासरूम में स्मार्ट बोर्ड लगाएगी। इन बोर्ड की पांच वर्षों के रख-रखाव की गारंटी होगी। मार्च के अंत से पहले 175 आईसीटी लैब में सात हजार कंप्यूटर भी आ जाएंगे।

दिल्ली के शिक्षा मंत्री आशीष सूद ने मानसरोवर गार्डन स्थित सर्वोदय स्कूल में नव निर्मित भवन, 101 आधुनिक आईसीटी लैब और दिलशाद गार्डन स्थित मंडलीय शिक्षा एवं प्रशिक्षण संस्थान का उद्घाटन किया।

उन्होंने कहा कि नीट, सीयूईटी, क्लैट जैसे हर बड़े एग्जाम के लिए कंप्यूटर साक्षरता अनिवार्य है। लेकिन वास्तविकता यह है कि कई बच्चों के घरों में कंप्यूटर उपलब्ध नहीं है। शिक्षा मंत्री ने बताया कि दिल्ली में 7,000 से अधिक नए कंप्यूटर एक वर्ष से भी कम समय में दिल्ली के सरकारी स्कूलों को दिए जा चुके हैं। सरकार दिल्ली के प्रत्येक स्कूल की हर क्लासरूम में स्मार्ट बोर्ड पहुंचाने के लक्ष्य की ओर तेजी से आगे बढ़ रही है। 7,000 स्मार्ट ब्लैक बोर्ड का टेंडर हो चुका है।

मार्च के अंत से पहले 175 आईसीटी लैब में सात हजार कंप्यूटर आ जाएंगे

कक्षा 9वीं से 12वीं तक के 21,000 क्लासरूम्स में अगले 4 वर्षों में स्मार्ट बोर्ड लगाए जाएंगे। उन्होंने बताया कि 175 आईसीटी लैब्स में 7,000 कंप्यूटरों का टेंडर किया जा चुका है, जो 31 मार्च से पहले आ जाएंगे। दिल्ली में 1,000 से अधिक सरकारी स्कूल हैं और अगले 3 वर्षों में हर सरकारी स्कूल में आईसीटी लैब होगी।

उन्होंने कहा की आज दिल्ली सरकार द्वारा लाडली फाउंडेशन के सहयोग से स्थापित आईसीटी लैब्स में हर टेबल पर अलग कंप्यूटर और अलग यूपीएस उपलब्ध कराए गए हैं।

लाडली फाउंडेशन की ओर से अब तक 100 आईसीटी लैब्स में 2,000 कंप्यूटर डोनेट किए जा चुके हैं और 75 और लैब्स में 1,500 कंप्यूटर देने का वादा किया गया है। दिल्ली सरकार द्वारा दिल्ली के सरकारी स्कूलों में इस वर्ष 100 से अधिक डिजिटल लाइब्रेरी भी स्थापित की जा रही हैं।

हिंदू कॉलेज में बनेगा एआई लैब

नई दिल्ली। दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय के हिंदू कॉलेज ने परिसर में एआई लैब स्थापित करने की तैयारी की है। यह एआई एंड इंफॉर्मेशन सिस्टम लैब छात्रों को भविष्य की चुनौतियों के लिए तैयार करने में मदद करेगा। यह छात्रों व शिक्षकों के लिए व्यावहारिक प्रशिक्षण और प्रयोग का मंच होगा। फैकल्टी के लिए यह अनुसंधान और इंटरडिसिप्लिनरी सहयोग के नए रास्ते खोलेगा, जो पारंपरिक अकादमिक सीमाओं से परे होंगे। हिंदू कॉलेज में मंगलवार को इम्पॉवरिंग माइंड्स, ट्रांसफॉर्मिंग फ्यूचर थीम पर एक कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया। जल्द ही दिल्ली में एक एआई सम्मिट होना है। इसके लिए यूजीसी की ओर से शिक्षण संस्थानों को एआई जागरूकता संबंधी निर्देश दिए हैं। जिसमें संस्थानों को छात्रों को एआई में सशक्त बनाना है। ऐसे में कॉलेज की ओर से इस कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया। कॉलेज ने बताया कि उसकी योजना जल्द ही एक एआई लैब स्थापित करने की है। प्रिंसिपल प्रो. अंजू श्रीवास्तव ने कहा कि एआई न केवल तकनीकी शिक्षा का हिस्सा है,बल्कि यह छात्रों को रचनात्मक और आलोचनात्मक सोच विकसित करने में मदद करता है। यह उन्हें केवल तकनीक के उपयोगकर्ता नहीं बल्कि समाधान निर्माता बनने के लिए प्रेरित करता है। ब्यूरो

अमर उजाला, 11 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या 7

FROM 2026

CBSE to implement 'on screen marking' for class 12 board exams

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will implement on-screen marking (OSM) for evaluation of Class 12 answer books from this year, according to officials.

However, evaluation of class 10 answer books will continue in physical mode as before, they said.

"In its continuous effort to enhance efficiency and transparency, the board has decided to introduce On-Screen Marking (OSM) for the evaluation of class 12 answer books beginning with the 2026 examinations. Evaluation of Class 10 answer books will continue in physical mode as before in 2026," said CBSE Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj.

The official explained the move will improve coordination and reduce manual intervention, besides eliminating totalling errors.

"The option for digital marking is not only environmentally sustainable but will ensure faster evaluation with wider teacher participation. Teachers can remain in their schools and continue regular duties. "Post-result verification of marks will no longer be required, and there will be a reduced manpower requirement for verification.

There will be an opportunity for all schools to contribute to the evaluation, ensuring involvement of teachers from all affiliated schools globally," he said.

Schools have been asked to ensure that computer labs with certain system specifications, a reliable internet connection, and an uninterrupted power supply are available for evaluation.

"Schools have been asked to update data on teachers teaching these classes on an online portal. Non-compliance with the board's directions will be treated as an attempt to vitiate the evaluation process, and the school's results will not be declared," Bhardwaj said.

Closer Look

- However, evaluation of class 10 answer books will continue in physical mode as before, officials said
- The official explained the move will improve coordination and reduce manual intervention, besides eliminating totalling errors
- Schools have been asked to ensure computer labs with certain system specifications, reliable internet connection and uninterrupted power supply are available for evaluation

Millennium post,
12 February 2026,
Page No. - 7

The Pioneer, 12 February 2026, Page no. - 08

Facing trouble with faith, reason, and resolve



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

2ND OPINION

It is quite normal in our lives to get into trouble. It may be a new problem or an old one surfacing. What is different, however, is the reaction of an individual. It depends on the individual's nature. One may lament what is happening to him, or get angry about it and blame someone for it, or fear the worst, or seek sympathy from someone, or go into denial: it cannot happen to me.

Very seldom does one take the blame for it or consider it as normally occurring. And it is really rare to seek guidance and help from God. Fortunately, I do. The mind goes into overdrive for almost all. Surely, seeking a solution is normal, as is thinking of avoiding or escaping the problem, but becoming obsessed about something is not wise at all.

What should one do? There are three options. One is to think hard about what the best course of action is. However, it may not be so easy. Then, one should seek help from a near or dear one; ego should not be allowed to interfere. Thirdly, one should begin praying to God for guidance and help. Let us see what others can do. They can sympathise, being kind. Some may find fault with the person and make him feel guilty or foolish. Some may try to guide and help in their limited ways.

This is what God can do for us. Let me be very honest. God ignores most of our requests if they are not very sincere, which most are not. All our prayers for help must be in a humble mood. God will guide perfectly, being omniscient. Does God not know the past, present, and future as well? In short, God knows the Big Picture, which we are never privy to.

And if we are devotees of God, having developed God consciousness, He helps us to overcome our problems by His 'ichcha shakti' (divine willpower), as promised by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, verse 18.58. God mostly uses a near or dear one to extend such help. Additionally, God makes a note of us for extending help in the future too. What should one not do when in trouble or faced with a problem? Freeze with fear, thinking of the worst, which seldom happens. If it were so common, how would anyone survive till ripe old age? Or lament one's bad luck, because all good or bad that happens to us is due only to our past 'karmas' (acts).

Seeking sympathy is also of no gain, because it does not address the problem. Giving up is another silly thing to do. Problems just do not go away, except some, like being stuck with bad company while travelling on a plane. Postponing action does not help if the problem is urgent, like a fever.

The Pioneer
SINCE 1865

And one must be prepared to tolerate until the problem is solved; intolerance makes it worse. Just as happiness and misery are forever coming and going (2.14), problems will also come. And we must be prepared to deal with them.

Conclusion

Trouble is inevitable, but how we respond defines us. By combining thoughtful action, the support of loved ones, and sincere faith in God, we transform crises into opportunities for growth. Problems test our patience and character, but with humility and perseverance, they ultimately strengthen us.

The writer is a spiritual teacher

The Pioneer,
12 February 2026,
Page no.-05

Education Ministry to organise Bharat Bodhan at AI Conclave: Pradhan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday chaired an Edtech AI Roundtable with founders of 10 new-age Indian edtech startups, at IIT Delhi. The event was also graced by Sukanta Majumdar, MoS for Education and Development of North Eastern Region, and Jayant Chaudhary, MoS for Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

The Roundtable brought together policymakers, academic leaders, and emerging technology entrepreneurs to discuss how AI can be leveraged to transform India's education system, aligning with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This is part of a series of initiatives by the Ministry of Education to harness the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

According to a Education Ministry press release, the Roundtable showcased a new generation of Indian edtech startups developing AI-first solutions across K-12 learning, test preparation, upskilling, language learning and skill education, with a focus on students in underserved areas.

The interaction was organised as a precursor to the upcoming India AI Impact Summit. The insights from the Roundtable and the Conclave will inform policy and ecosystem deliberations at the India AI Impact Summit, with a focus on responsible AI adoption, safeguards, and pathways for scaling impact across sectors, including education.



The Roundtable will be followed by a two-day event - Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave on Thursday and Friday. The Conclave will bring together senior policymakers from the Centre and States, researchers, academic institutions, and industry leaders to deliberate on AI's strategic role in transforming India's education ecosystem, with a focus on innovation, scalable adoption, and national capacity building.

Pradhan expressed his happiness to engage in in-depth discussions with home-grown start-up founders who are building indigenous 'AI stack for the world from India', particularly for transforming and redefining the educational landscape. The Minister emphasised that technology is a powerful instrument of empowerment and inclusion, capable of bridging the gap between hope and opportunity. He underscored the central role of AI in advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Pradhan encouraged these pioneers to build creative solutions tailored to Indian values, languages, contexts and needs, while also ensuring global relevance. He assured them of all the support in harnessing the transformative power of AI for addressing national educational and skilling priorities, shaping Bharat's technological and digital sovereignty and building impactful DPIs in education.

Education Minister Highlights Rapid AI Adoption In Indian Education



Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan today said the government is actively strengthening the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the education sector. Addressing the Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave 2026 in the national capital, he noted that work on AI in India's education ecosystem is advancing at a rapid pace and that the country possesses a strong and abundant talent pool. The Minister said that AI will be incorporated into India's education framework from Class 3 through advanced research levels, not only as a subject of study, but also as a research theme, a model of innovation, and a communication strategy.

नवभारत टाइम्स
13 फरवरी 2026
पृष्ठ संख्या - 12

भारत बोधन: स्कूल, हायर एजुकेशन और स्किलिंग के लिए AI इनोवेशन

Bhupender.Sharma
@timesofindia.com

■ **नई दिल्ली :** ग्लोबल AI इम्पैक्ट समिट से पहले भारत बोधन AI कॉन्क्लेव शुरू हुआ, जिसमें स्कूल एजुकेशन, हायर एजुकेशन और स्किलिंग के लिए AI इनोवेशन की बड़ी तस्वीर पेश की गई। शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने बोधन AI सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस लॉन्च किया, जिसे आईआईटी मद्रास ने तैयार किया है। शिक्षा मंत्री ने कहा कि Machine + Emotion को मिला कर हम AI architecture खड़ा करेंगे, तब हम दुनिया की बड़ी ताक़त बन सकते है। एजुकेशन सेक्टर के लिए भी डिजिटल प्लैटफॉर्म तैयार किया जाएगा। नाम Bharat EduAI Stack होगा। उच्च शिक्षा विभाग के सचिव डॉ. विनीत जोशी मौजूद रहे। IIT बॉम्बे में मैन्युफैक्चरिंग के लिए AI सेंटर बनाने के लिए IIT बॉम्बे और कोलंबिया यूनिवर्सिटी के बीच MoU भी हुआ।



केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान अन्य अफसरों के साथ कॉन्क्लेव में मौजूद रहे।

आर्टिफिशल इंटेलिजेंस पर 3 नए कोर्स

केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने गुरुवार को आर्टिफिशल इंटेलिजेंस पर तीन नए कोर्स लॉन्च किए, जो इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ़ मैनेजमेंट (IIM), लखनऊ में ऑफर किए जाएंगे। ये कोर्स हैं- आर्टिफिशल इंटेलिजेंस और बिज़नेस एनालिटिक्स में BS, टेक MBA और इंटीग्रेटेड BS + टेक MBA। शिक्षा मंत्री ने कहा कि IIM लखनऊ में आर्टिफिशल इंटेलिजेंस पर नए प्रोग्राम सोच-समझकर डिज़ाइन किए गए मॉड्यूलर कोर्स करिकुलम के ज़रिए बिज़नेस की समझ को टेक्नोलॉजिकल गहराई के साथ आसानी से मिलाते हैं।

हिंन्दुस्तान
13 फरवरी 2026
पृष्ठ संख्या - 11

'एआई के क्षेत्र में भारत दुनिया का नेतृत्व करेगा'

नई दिल्ली, वि.सं.। केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने गुरुवार को दिल्ली में भारत बोधन एआई सम्मेलन 2026 को संबोधित किया। उन्होंने कहा कि अपनी प्रतिभा के बूते भारत एआई के क्षेत्र में दुनिया का नेतृत्व करेगा।



प्रधान ने कहा कि भारत की कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (एआई) डिजाइन में समावेशी, संरचना में अंतरसंचालनीय और क्षमता में संप्रभु होगी। दो दिवसीय सम्मेलन में केंद्र और राज्यों के वरिष्ठ नीति निर्माता, शोधकर्ता, शैक्षणिक संस्थान और उद्योग जगत के नेता भारत के शिक्षा तंत्र को बदलने में एआई की रणनीतिक भूमिका पर विचार-विमर्श करने के लिए एक साथ आए हैं।

इसमें नवाचार, व्यापक उपयोग और राष्ट्रीय क्षमता निर्माण पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया जाएगा। प्रधान ने कहा कि तकनीक देश की शिक्षा प्रणाली का केंद्र बन रही है।

तीसरी कक्षा से ही बच्चों को एआई की पढ़ाई कराई जाएगी

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने गुरुवार को कहा कि सरकार शिक्षा क्षेत्र में कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (एआई) के एकीकरण को सक्रिय रूप से मजबूत कर रही है। उन्होंने देश में कक्षा तीन से ही छात्रों को एआई की शिक्षा देने की बात कही।

प्रधान दिल्ली में गुरुवार को 'भारत बोधन एआई सम्मेलन 2026' को संबोधित कर रहे थे। उन्होंने कहा कि शिक्षा तंत्र में एआई पर काम तेजी से बढ़ रहा है और देश में प्रतिभाओं का एक मजबूत और प्रचुर भंडार मौजूद है।

हिंन्दुस्तान
13 फरवरी 2026
पृष्ठ संख्या - 01

The Statesman
13 febuary 2026
Page. No. - 02

CBSE to roll out digital marking for Class 12 board examination from 2026



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 12 February

Announcing a shift in the assessment of Class 12 Board examination papers, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Tuesday notified the introduction of the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system. OSM is a digital tool that allows teachers to evaluate scanned answer sheets on a computer, while the software automatically compiles the scores.

Officials from CBSE said the system is expected to offer multiple advantages, including the elimination of totalling errors, automated coordination that reduces manual intervention, faster evaluation with wider teacher participation, no need for post-result verification of marks, cutting delays after results, and a reduced manpower requirement for verification-related work.

In a February 9 circular to principals and heads of all CBSE-affiliated schools, the Board said digital assessment will begin for Class 12 from 2026, while evaluation for Class 10 will continue in the physical mode for the time being.

The Board further noted that the OSM system would be both cost-effective and environmentally friendly, as teachers can check answer books from their respective schools while continuing their regular duties, leading to savings in transportation time and costs. Following Tuesday's directive, the Board will conduct a two-hour live webcast on Friday, February 13, four days ahead of the start of the board examinations, to familiarise principals and heads of all CBSE-affiliated schools with the changes in the modalities for conducting the national-level exam, according to an official notification issued on Wednesday.

CBSE is conducting the Secondary and Senior Secondary Board Examinations 2026 for the students of more than 31,000 schools affiliated to it in India and 26 countries abroad from February 17 to April 10.

About 46 lakh students will appear for these examinations at more than 8074 centres across the country and abroad.

Ministry of Women and Child Development

Government has adopted multi-pronged approach to address the educational, social and economic empowerment of girls

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 13 FEB 2026 3:01PM by PIB Delhi

The Government gives utmost priority to the safety, security and empowerment of girls in the country. To this end, the Government has adopted multi-pronged approach to address the educational, social and economic empowerment of girls.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme was launched on 22nd January 2015 to help address Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of girls and women over a life cycle continuum. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme has transformed from a policy initiative into a national movement by mobilizing various stakeholders, including government agencies, communities, media, civil society and the public at large. This movement aims not only to address immediate concerns related to sex ratio and gender-based discrimination but also to foster a cultural shift towards valuing the girl child and ensuring her rights and opportunities. The scheme focuses on creating mindset and behavioural changes towards the girl child by informing, influencing, motivating, engaging, and empowering all stakeholders.

In order to enhance the ease of living for the girl child and women, particularly in the rural areas of the country, under the Swacch Bharat Mission more than 11.8 crore toilets have been constructed. Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) is a small savings scheme designed to secure the future of girl children, offering a high interest rate. Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme for school education from pre-school to class XII, supporting the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 and the Right to Education Act, 2009. It emphasizes early childhood care and education, foundational literacy and numeracy, a holistic and inclusive curriculum, enhancing learning outcomes, bridging social and gender gaps, and ensuring equity and inclusion at all education levels.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme seeks to bridge gender and social category gaps in school education by providing residential schooling facilities for girls up to Class XII. Under the scheme, the girls in the age group of 10-18 years from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC), minority communities, and BPL families are covered.

The Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) has been subsumed under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 w.e.f. 01.04.2022. The targeted beneficiaries under this scheme are girls in the age group of 14 – 18 years in the Aspirational Districts and all North Eastern States.

Vigyan Jyoti Programme encourages girls to pursue education and careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields to improve gender balance. It targets meritorious girls from Class IX to Class XII and includes student-parent counselling, career counselling, additional academic support classes, tinkering activities, special lectures, visits to scientific institutions, labs, industries, and science camps and workshops.

With the objective of ensuring economic independence for girls, including single girl children, the Government has launched the Skill India Mission to provide comprehensive skill development and vocational training. Government has also set up the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana across the country. Under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY), skill and vocational training is provided to women.

Further, PMKVY 4.0 prioritizes and provides special focus to projects that emphasize women as primary beneficiaries. This inclusive approach ensures significant representation and benefit for women in skill training programs across the country.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojna – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), under which women self-help groups are changing the rural landscape for employment and self-employment. Similarly, National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) is for urban areas. Besides, there are schemes like the Stand-up India, Start-up India, Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), for providing employment/ self-employment and credit facilities. Majority of the beneficiaries under these schemes are women.

In 2017, the Maternity Benefit Act was amended to increase paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for the first two children. This Act also provides for paid maternity leave to women workers and crèche facility within prescribed distance in all establishments having fifty or more employees

Stand-Up India Scheme launched on 05.04.2016 with the objective to facilitate loans from Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) of value between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and one Women borrower per bank branch for setting up greenfield enterprise in manufacturing, services or trading sector including activities allied to agriculture. The scheme has been extended up to the year 2025.

There are schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and Prime Minister’s Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) which have been launched for helping women set up their own enterprises.

In order to bring women in the mainstream of political leadership at the grass root level, Government has reserved at least 33% of the seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for women through the 73rd amendment to the Constitution. As per available data, there are more than 12.06 lakh Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) in PRIs, which is approximately 49.75% of the total elected representatives.

The greatest leap forward for women empowerment and representation of women in the highest political offices in the country has been the notification by Government of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 (Constitution One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 on 28th September, 2023, for reservation of one-third of seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and in the State Legislative Assemblies including Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi.

Mission Shakti aims at strengthening interventions for women safety, security and empowerment.

Mission Shakti comprises of two verticals ‘Sambal’ for safety and security of women and ‘Samarthya’ for empowerment of women. The ‘Sambal’ has components of One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) and Nari Adalat (Nari Adalat). The ‘Samarthya’ has components of Shakti Sadan, Sakhi Niwas, Padhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Palna and SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (SNKALP: HEW)

The Government of India has adopted a comprehensive and integrated approach to empower girls and women and to end gender discrimination through a wide spectrum of schemes and initiatives. These measures collectively aim to ensure safety and security, improve employability, promote entrepreneurship, and create an enabling environment for women.

As per the latest report of Health Management Information System (HMIS) of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) at the national level has increased from 918 in 2014-15 to 929 in 2024-25.

Further, the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 is administered by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to regulate the use of technologies with the potential for detection and disclosure of the sex of the foetus. This Act was enacted for the prohibition of sex selection before or after conception, and for regulation of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for the purposes of detecting genetic abnormalities or metabolic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities or certain congenital malfunction or sex-linked disorders and for the prevention of their misuse for sex determination leading to female foeticide and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The PC&PNDT Act is a central legislation implemented uniformly across all States and UTs to curb gender-biased sex-selective practices and promote a positive environment for the girl child through gender-sensitive policies, awareness generation, and legislative measures.

The measures taken by the Government to ensure effective enforcement of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC&PNDT) are as below:

- Supporting the States/UTs for sensitization and capacity building on PC&PNDT Act.
- Under the National Health Mission (NHM), MoHFW provides financial support to the States/UTs to strengthen implementation of the PC&PNDT Act.
- Support is being extended for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and advocacy activities aimed at fostering behavioural change and promoting gender equality.
- The MoHFW has constituted a ‘Nodal Agency’ as per the directions of the Hon’ble Supreme Court to monitor and facilitate the removal of online advertisements violating the provisions of the Act
- Regular review and assessment through various institutional mechanisms like Common Review Mission visits, Inspection & Monitoring visits are carried out by Centre, States and Districts so as to further strengthen the ground level implementation of the PC&PNDT Act.

The detailed information related to PCPNDT is available in the Annual Report 2024-25 of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare at the link mentioned below:

https://mohfw.gov.in/?q=en/publications-12

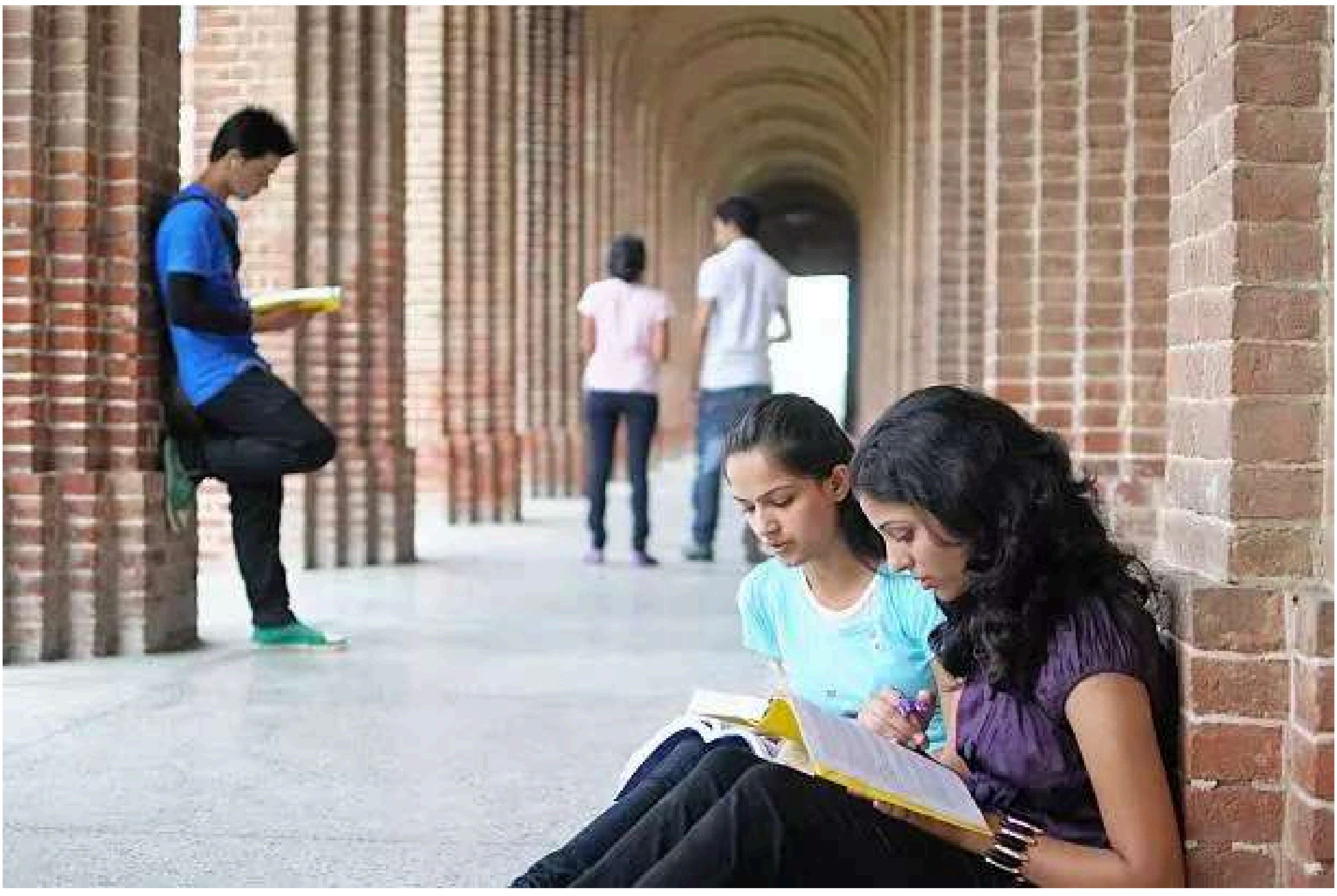
This information was given by the Minister of State for Women and Child Development Smt. Savitri Thakur in Lok Sabha in reply to a question today.

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SS

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THE FEDERAL
VOICE OF THE STATES



Delhi University was the first to roll out the four-year undergraduate programme under the NEP and is now having to navigate the financial implications of reform-led expansion. For this new course has been implemented without the government providing additional funds. File photo

Education

NEP’s promise meets fiscal reality: Education ministry underspends despite record funding

Government data reveals Rs 3,709 crore was unspent in 2024-25, while minority scholarships face cuts and universities struggle with self-financing model costs

Aranya Shankar

13 Feb 2026 11:47 AM

Click the Play button to hear this message in audio format

0:00 / 5:38

Since the rollout of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Union government has repeatedly described the current phase as a transformational moment for India’s education system.

From Parliament to public rallies, ministers have framed the policy as a structural overhaul, promising multi-disciplinary universities, expanded access, digital classrooms, global rankings, and a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 50 per cent in higher education by 2035.

Budget speeches have highlighted record allocations, new IIT infrastructure, AI Centres of Excellence, university townships, and expanded flagship schemes. The ministry of education's allocation has risen from Rs 93,224 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 1,39,289 crore in 2026-27, an increase the government has presented as evidence of sustained public investment.

But expenditure data placed before Parliament shows a less publicised trend: persistent underspending.

Persistent underspending

According to a Rajya Sabha reply dated February 11 to Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien, the ministry of education has fallen short of its own revised estimates every year from 2019-20 to 2024-25.

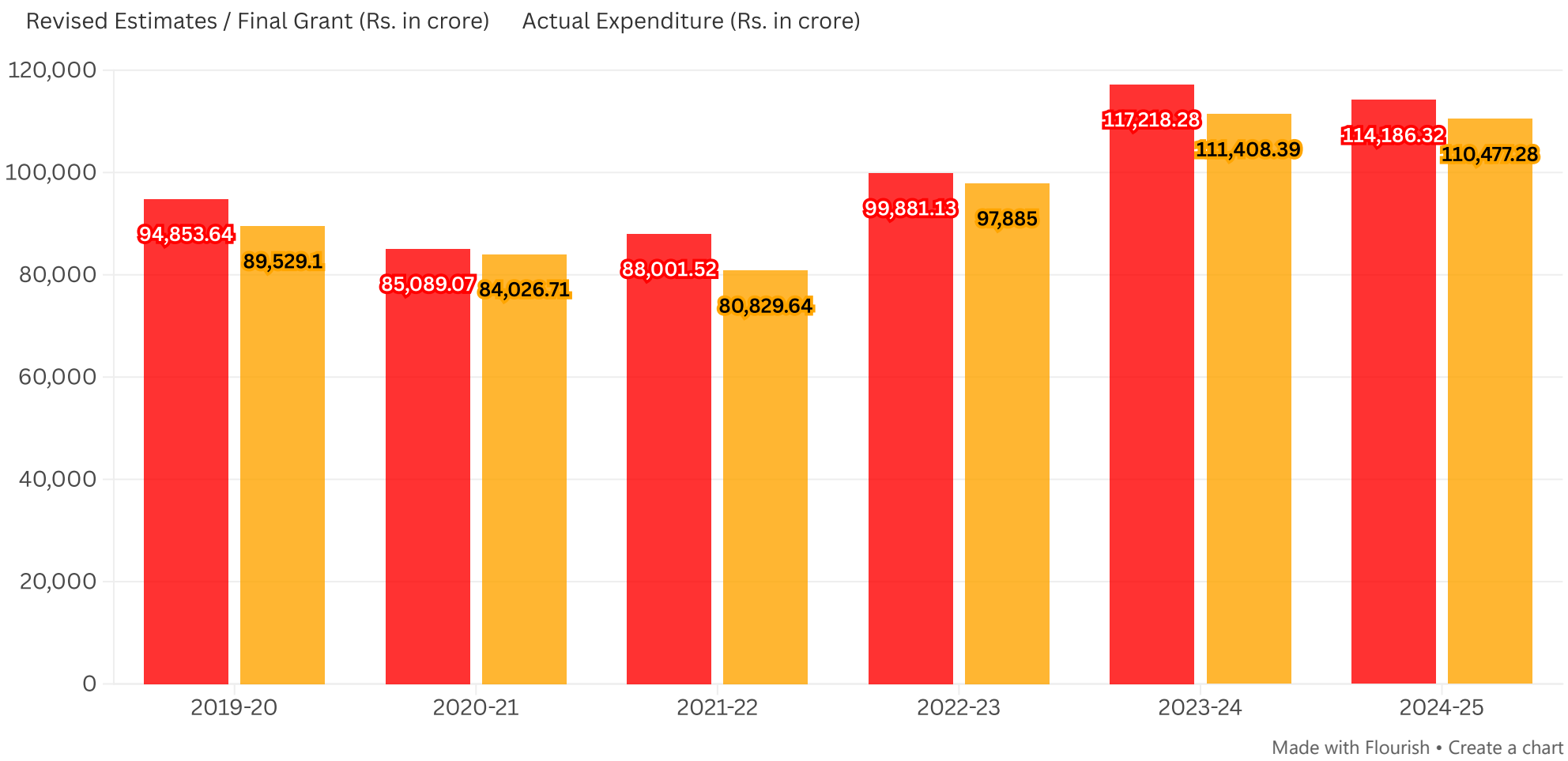
In 2019-20, Rs 5,324 crore remained unspent. In 2021-22, the gap widened to Rs 7,171 crore. In 2023-24 and 2024-25, despite allocations exceeding Rs 1 lakh crore, the ministry underspent by Rs 5,809 crore and Rs 3,709 crore, respectively.

Also read: Higher education at a crossroads: NEP, equity and UGC rules under scrutiny | Interview

Underspending in government departments is not uncommon, particularly in a federal system where implementation depends on states and utilisation certificates. However, the year-on-year quantum becomes politically and fiscally significant in the context of the NEP's expansion narrative, especially when education spending as a share of GDP has remained well below the long-promised 6 per cent benchmark, first articulated in 1968 and reiterated in 1986, 1992 and again in 2020.

The year-wise details of Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure of the Ministry of Education from financial year 2019-20 to 2024-25 is as under:

(Rs. in crore)



Over the same period, the Centre announced Rs 11,828 crore for expanding five newer IITs, Rs 990 crore for three AI Centres of Excellence, and a Rs 500 crore Centre of Excellence in Education.

Cuts in scholarships

The contrast becomes sharper when viewed alongside cuts to scholarship programmes.

Minority scholarship schemes such as pre-matric, post-matric and merit-cum-means, which saw near-total utilisation in 2020-21, were not approved beyond 2021-22. Allocations were sharply reduced, and utilisation, which once hovered close to 100 per cent, has plunged below 10 per cent in recent years.

The government cited "overlaps" with other schemes and emphasised easier access to loans as a rationale for discontinuation.

At a time, when thousands of crores within the broader education budget remain unspent annually, the rollback of direct scholarship schemes raises questions about prioritisation rather than fiscal constraint, experts say.

Also read: Protest against UGC's new equity rules 'manufactured'? Yogendra Yadav interview

The shift also aligns with a broader policy emphasis on credit-based access, including expansion of education loans, rather than grant-based support.

The effects, faculty members argue, are visible on campuses.

"There is what is on paper, and then there is what we are actually experiencing. Our experience is that fees are continuously being increased, and students are being pushed towards loans that they have to repay," said Abha Dev Habib, a teacher at Delhi University's Miranda House.

No fresh allocation

Delhi University was the first to roll out the four-year undergraduate programme under the NEP and is among the institutions navigating the financial implications of reform-led expansion.

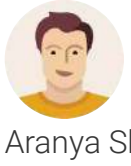
"Any new course that is being introduced now is largely in self-financing mode. Earlier, the UGC would provide grants to start new courses, but there is no fresh budget allocation coming to universities for expansion. Institutions are being asked to manage on their own," said Habib.

"The fourth year has been implemented without the government providing additional funds. The EWS expansion was also rolled out without giving universities any extra money. So, the question is, where is the funding supposed to come from?" she said.

Education remains in the Concurrent List, and implementation of central schemes depends significantly on states and institutions. The parliamentary reply does not specify reasons for the underspending.

Taken together, rising headline allocations, ambitious structural reforms, recurring expenditure gaps, and shrinking direct scholarship support reveal a tension at the heart of India's education policy moment: the promise of transformation on paper versus the reality of limited spending and shifting priorities.

NEP Ministry of Education scholarship



About the Author

Aranya Shankar

Aranya Shankar is a Special Correspondent with The Federal.

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No verification of marks after Class-12 results from 2026 as CBSE resorts to digit evaluation

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Friday conducted a workshop for s teachers and principals detailing the modalities of the on screen marking (OSM) system, which will be implemented from 2026.

PTI
Published On Feb 13, 2026 at 11:50 PM IST

New Delhi: The verification of marks for Class-12 board exams will not be required after declaration of results from this year, as the board is shifting to fully digital evaluation with on screen marking, officials of the Central Board of Secondary Education said on Friday.



The CBSE conducts Class-10 and Class-12 board examinations annually in India and across 26 countries, catering to nearly 46 lakh students.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Friday conducted a workshop for school teachers and principals detailing the modalities of the on screen marking (OSM) system, which will be implemented from 2026.

Advt

However, evaluation of Class-10 answer books will continue in physical mode as before.

"Post-result verification of marks will no longer be required and there will be a reduced manpower requirement for verification as there would be no scope for any totalling errors," Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj said.

"In the older system, students would seek verification to check for

discrepancies in the whole numbers or missing numbers. In the new scheme of digital evaluation, such discrepancies would be eliminated at the outset," he added.

The official said the reform was not overnight.

"Before taking a final call, we analysed lessons from past experiences, redesigned systems, carried out dry runs, identified glitches, took stakeholder feedback, conducted global testing and reinforced the safety and security protocols," Bhardwaj said.

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The CBSE conducts Class-10 and Class-12 board examinations annually in India and across 26 countries, catering to nearly 46 lakh students.

Bhardwaj said the move will improve coordination and reduce manual intervention, besides eliminating totalling errors.

"The option for digital marking is not only environmentally sustainable but will ensure faster evaluation with wider teacher participation. Teachers can remain in their schools and continue their regular duties," he said. PTI>

Hindustan Times, 14 February 2026,
Page no. - 9

Indian Library Congress to be held at Anna Centenary Library, Chennai on Feb 16-17

The ministers will lead delegations in reading preamble to the Constitution

OUR CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu Education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi will be the chief guest at the inaugural function. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi MP will deliver the keynote address.

The ministers will lead the delegations in reading the preamble to the Constitution.

The conference will be initiated by the opening remarks of N Ram. R Girirajan MP, Salma MP, Su Venkatesan MP, Sachitanandam MP, V Sivadasan MP, S Jayanthi IAS, B Chandramohan IAS, Kamachi (Chief Librarian Anna Centenary Library), L Hanumanthaiyya former MP, Uma Mahadevan IAS, Pushpavati Poypadath (Vice President of Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi), Irai Anbu IAS (Retd.), Prabhjot Kaur, Prof. V Chandrakumar, Shashi Kumar, Bhaskar Shakti, Justice K Chandru, Mini Krishnan, Kavita Muraleedharan, P Sai Nath, Mridula Koshy, G Selva and others will participate.



The Indian Library Congress works to strengthen libraries with the aim of making them public spaces accessible to all.

Libraries should be inclusive spaces that everyone could access.

In the present era, technological developments are changing the way people access knowledge. Libraries need to respond positively to these changes.

Libraries need to be able to use new technologies for everyone and become centres of learning, sharing and innovation.

This year's Indian Library Congress will be held on 16th and 17th February 2026 at the Anna Centenary Library in Chennai.

The Indian Library Congress is being held in partnership with the Anna Centenary Library and the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Renowned journalist and thinker N Ram is the Chairman. V Sivadasan MP is the General Convener.

The Chennai Congress will discuss the changes in the knowledge economy, share experiences from different states and develop ideas to make libraries more vibrant, democratic and people-friendly public spaces.

Around 400 delegates including librarians, public representatives, writers, academicians, activists and cultural workers from different states of India will actively participate in the Congress.

Key Points

- The Indian Library Congress works to strengthen libraries with the aim of making them public spaces accessible to all
- In the present era, technological developments are changing the way people access knowledge. Libraries need to respond positively to these changes
- The Indian Library Congress is being held in partnership with the Anna Centenary Library and Tamil Nadu govt

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

A

Nation

CBSE to scrap post-result verification of Class 12 2026 to boost transparency

ıework, Class 12 answer scripts will be evaluated digitally, for manual errors such as incorrect totalling or unmarked



ve purpose. (File Photo | Express)

Updated on: 14 Feb 2026, 7:56 am · 1 min read

NEW

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

NEW DELHI: WITH an aim to enhance transparency and efficiency in board examinations, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) announced on Friday that post-result verification of marks for Class 12 will be discontinued from 2026.

The move comes as the board transitions to a fully digital evaluation system through 'On-Screen Marking (OSM)', a step officials said will eliminate totalling errors and streamline the assessment process.

The decision was outlined during a workshop conducted by CBSE for school principals and teachers to explain the modalities of the new system. Under the OSM framework, Class 12 answer scripts will be evaluated digitally, reducing the scope for manual errors such as incorrect totalling or unmarked responses.

However, Class 10 answer books will continue to be assessed in physical mode.

Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj said students earlier sought verification mainly to address discrepancies in marks calculation or missing entries.

"In the older system, students would seek verification to check for discrepancies in the whole numbers or missing numbers. In the new scheme of digital evaluation, such discrepancies would be eliminated at the outset," he added.

The board examinations begin from February 17 this year.

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NEW

चार वर्षीय एकीकृत शिक्षक शिक्षा कार्यक्रम में 177 फीसद सीटें बढ़ीं

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 14 फरवरी।

चार वर्षीय एकीकृत शिक्षक शिक्षा कार्यक्रम (आइटीईपी) में वर्ष 2026-27 में सीटों की संख्या में जबर्दस्त वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है। पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में इस वर्ष सीटों की संख्या में 177 फीसद का इजाफा हुआ है। संस्थाओं की संख्या भी बढ़कर 223 तक पहुंच गई है।

दूसरी ओर, परीक्षा केंद्रों वाले शहरों की संख्या कम कर दी गई है। राष्ट्रीय परीक्षा एजंसी (एनटीए) ने हाल ही में इन सीटों के लि राष्ट्रीय साझा प्रवेश परीक्षा (एनसीईटी) की चना जारी की है। एनटीए के अधिकारियों के ाबिक, इस वर्ष आइटीईपी में करीब 17 हजार सीटों पर दाखिले के लिए होंगे। अभ्यर्थी 220 से अधिक संस्थानों में दाखिला ले सकते हैं। पिछले वर्ष एनटीए ने 6,100 के लगभग सीटों के लिए एनसीईटी का आयोजन किया था। उस समय केवल 64 संस्थान ही इसमें शामिल हुए थे।

दाखिला देने वाले संस्थाओं की संख्या भी 64 से बढ़कर 223 तक पहुंची।
पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले प्रवेश परीक्षा के लिए शहरों की संख्या कम करके 170 की।

पिछले वर्ष देश के 178 शहरों में प्रवेश परीक्षा के लिए केंद्र बनाए गए थे जबकि इस वर्ष इन शहरों की संख्या कम करके 170 कर दी गई है। पश्चिम बंगाल के दो शहर (हुगली व मुर्शिदाबाद), उत्तर प्रदेश के मथुरा व आजमगढ़ और तेलंगाना व तमिलनाडु के एक-एक शहर में इस वर्ष परीक्षा केंद्र नहीं बनाया गया है।

एनटीए की ओर से जारी सूचना के मुताबिक, राष्ट्रीय साझा प्रवेश परीक्षा के लिए 10 मार्च तक आवेदन किया जा सकता है। संभावना है कि यह परीक्षा 17 अप्रैल को आयोजित की जाए। एनसीईटी कंप्यूटर आधारित परीक्षा होगी जो अंग्रेजी और हिंदी सहित 13 भारतीय भाषाओं में आयोजित की जाएगी। इस परीक्षा के लिए अभ्यर्थी का बारहवीं पास होना अनिवार्य है। बारहवीं की परीक्षा दे रहे विद्यार्थी भी इस परीक्षा के लिए आनलाइन आवेदन कर सकते हैं।

जनसत्ता
15 फरवरी 2026
पृष्ठ संख्या - 05

Millennium post, 15 February 2026,
Page no. - 6

Write section-wise answers in science, social science exams: CBSE to students

Sanjay Maurya
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Class 10 students appearing for the 2026 board exams conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) must clearly write answers section-wise in science and social science papers, board officials said on Friday, adding that responses mixed across sections will not be evaluated by subject-specific teachers and will not fetch marks.

During a webinar, conducted by CBSE for principals and head of affiliated school on 'modalities for the conduct of board exams 2026' on Friday, officials explained that the board has introduced three major initiatives for CBSE board examinations 2026: two board examinations for Class 10; On Screen Marking (OSM) evaluation for Class 12; and division of Class 10 science and social science papers into three and four sections, respectively.

CBSE CONDUCTED A WEBINAR FOR PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL HEADS ON MODALITIES FOR CONDUCT OF BOARD EXAMS 2026 ON FRIDAY

Until 2025 board exams, Class 10 science papers had physics, chemistry and biology questions mixed across five mark-based sections. From 2026, each subject will appear in a separate section. Similarly, social science papers earlier combined history, geography, political science and economics questions across six mark-based sections. From 2026, each subject will be placed in a separate section, including one map-based question each in history and geography sections.

During the webinar, CBSE exam controller Sanyam Bhardwaj said "If a reply [answers of one section] will be written somewhere else [in another section]...such answers will not be evaluated and no marks will be awarded," he said.

The Sunday Express, 15 February 2026,
Page no. - 1

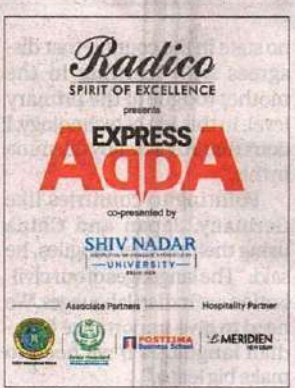
In NEP, AI catalyst, technology bridge for education: Pradhan

Express News Service
New Delhi, February 14

DESCRIBING ARTIFICIAL Intelligence as a "good catalyst" and a "bridge", Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said at the Express Adda Friday that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focuses on using technology to "fill learning gaps" and "take education to inaccessible areas".

Responding to a question on NEP and whether it can meet the challenges posed by AI, Pradhan said: "The policy came in 2020, but work began in 2014. The document was brought after six years of homework. The policy gives importance to

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The Pioneer, 16 February 2026,
Page no. - 6

Chennai to host two-day Indian Library Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Chennai

The upcoming Indian Library Congress would focus on navigating the transformations in the knowledge economy and exploring ways to make libraries more vibrant, Rajya Sabha MP V Sivadasan said. Highlighting the cultural importance of these institutions, he described libraries as spaces for intellectual exchange.

The two-day Indian Library Congress is scheduled to be held here on February 16. It is being organised in association with the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Anna Centenary Library.

The Congress would discuss transformations in the knowledge economy, share experiences from different States, and develop ideas to make libraries more vibrant, democratic and people-friendly public spaces, he said.

"Libraries are not merely collections of books; they are spaces for intellectual exchange among people. There are many spaces where people of the same caste or religion can gather together. However, spaces where people of different castes, religions and political views can come together and discuss social issues are limited," he said.

"The Indian Library Congress is a collective platform of academics, researchers and social activists that seeks to overcome this limitation," he said in a press release on Sunday. The Indian Library Congress works to strengthen libraries with the goal of making them accessible public spaces for everyone. Libraries must become inclusive spaces where anyone can enter and feel welcome. In the present era, advances in technology are transforming the ways in which people access knowledge.


Rajya Sabha MP V Sivadasan

Tamil Nadu Minister for School Education Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi would be the chief guest for the event, while Kanimozhi Karunanidhi would deliver the keynote address.

The Hindu Publishing Group Director and noted journalist N Ram is the Chairperson, while Sivadasan is the General Convener of the event, the release said.

Among those participating are MPs R Girirajan, Salma, and Su Venkatesan, among many others. Around 400 delegates, including library professionals, elected representatives, writers, and academic experts from various States were also expected to attend, the release added.

दैनिक जागरण, 17 फरवरी 2026, Page no.-2

10वीं के सभी छात्रों को पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में उपस्थित होना अनिवार्य

नई दिल्ली, प्रेट्र: केंद्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड (सीबीएसई) ने स्पष्ट किया है कि 10वीं कक्षा के सभी छात्रों के लिए पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में शामिल होना अनिवार्य है। जो छात्र पहले चरण में कम-से-कम तीन विषयों में उपस्थित नहीं होंगे, उन्हें "अनिवार्य पुनरावृत्ति" श्रेणी में रखा जाएगा और वे अगले वर्ष फरवरी में आयोजित होने वाली मुख्य परीक्षाओं में ही परीक्षा दे सकेंगे। सीबीएसई 2026 से 10वीं कक्षा के लिए दो बोर्ड परीक्षाएं शुरू करने जा रहा है। 10वीं और 12वीं की बोर्ड परीक्षाएं मंगलवार से शुरू हो रही हैं, जिसमें भारत और विदेश के 46 लाख से अधिक छात्र शामिल होंगे।

सीबीएसई का यह स्पष्टीकरण कुछ अनुरोध प्राप्त होने के बाद आया है, जिसमें कहा गया था कि कुछ कारणों से 10वीं कक्षा के जो छात्र पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में शामिल नहीं हो पाएंगे, उन्हें दूसरी बोर्ड परीक्षा में बैठने की अनुमति दी जानी चाहिए। सीबीएसई के परीक्षा नियंत्रक संयम भारद्वाज ने कहा कि सभी छात्रों के लिए पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में उपस्थित होना अनिवार्य है। सभी उत्तीर्ण और पात्र विद्यार्थियों को विज्ञान, गणित, सामाजिक विज्ञान और भाषाओं में से किसी भी तीन विषयों में अपने प्रदर्शन को बेहतर बनाने की अनुमति दी जाएगी। यदि कोई छात्र पहली परीक्षा में तीन या अधिक विषयों में उपस्थित नहीं होता है, तो उसे दूसरी परीक्षा में बैठने की अनुमति नहीं दी जाएगी। पहली परीक्षा में कंपार्टमेंट वाले छात्रों को कंपार्टमेंट श्रेणी के तहत दूसरी परीक्षा में बैठने की अनुमति दी जाएगी।



प्रश्नपत्र लीक होने की अफवाहों पर ध्यान न दें छात्र : सीबीएसई

सीबीएसई ने 10वीं और 12वीं की बोर्ड परीक्षा में शामिल हो रहे छात्रों से कहा है कि वे किसी भी सूरत में प्रश्नपत्र लीक होने की अफवाहों से गुमराह न हों। सीबीएसई के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा-कुछ असामाजिक तत्व परीक्षा के दौरान विभिन्न इंटरनेट मीडिया प्लेटफार्म पर फर्जी खबरें फैलाकर छात्रों और अभिभावकों को गुमराह करने का प्रयास करते हैं। इसमें अक्सर प्रश्नपत्र लीक होने का झूठा दावा शामिल है। इसलिए अभिभावकों, छात्रों और सभी संबंधित हितधारकों से आग्रह है कि वे सतर्क रहें और अफवाहों से गुमराह न हों। सीबीएसई ने छात्रों को स्थानीय परिस्थितियों, यातायात, मौसम और दूरी को ध्यान में रखते हुए सुबह 10 बजे तक परीक्षा केंद्रों पर पहुंचने का निर्देश दिया है।

CBSE बोर्ड परीक्षा आज से, 10वीं का पहला सेशन ज़रूरी

स्टूडेंट्स एडमिट कार्ड और समय का रखें ध्यान

AI Image

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

सीबीएसई की 10वीं और 12वीं बोर्ड परीक्षाएं 17 फरवरी से शुरू हो गई है। 10वीं के एग्जाम 10 मार्च तक और 12वीं के 9 अप्रैल तक चलेंगे। भारत समेत 26 देशों के कुल 43,67,870 छात्र परीक्षा दे रहे हैं। पहले दिन 10वीं में मैथ्स स्टैंडर्ड और बेसिक, जबकि 12वीं में बायोटेक्नोलॉजी, आंत्रप्रेन्योरशिप और शॉर्टहैंड की परीक्षा होगी। सभी परीक्षाएं सुबह 10:30 बजे से शुरू होंगी और छात्रों को 10 बजे तक सेंटर पहुंचने के निर्देश दिए गए हैं।

26 देशों के कुल 43,67,870 छात्र परीक्षा देंगे

दिल्ली में भारत मंडपम में AI इंटरनैशनल समिट और VVIP मूवमेंट को देखते हुए ट्रैफिक पुलिस ने 10 स्कूलों में नोडल अधिकारी तैनात किए हैं और छात्रों को मेट्रो से आने की सलाह दी है। इस साल 12वीं की कॉपियां ऑन-स्क्रीन मार्किंग सिस्टम से जांची जाएंगी, जबकि साइंस और सोशल साइंस के पेपर सेक्शन में विभाजित होंगे। बोर्ड ने छात्रों को एडमिट कार्ड साथ रखने और समय से पहले सेंटर पहुंचने को कहा है।



पहली परीक्षा चूकने पर अगले साल मौका

फरवरी की परीक्षा जरूरी: CBSE ने साफ किया है कि सभी छात्रों के लिए पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में बैठना अनिवार्य होगा।

जून में सुधार का मौका: पास छात्र तीन विषयों में अंक सुधार के लिए दूसरी परीक्षा दे सकेंगे।

तीन पेपर मिस किए तो रोक: तीन या अधिक विषय के पेपर नहीं देने पर जून परीक्षा में मौका नहीं मिलेगा, अगले साल ही बैठ सकेंगे।

एग्जाम स्ट्रेस से बचने के टिप्स

- शांत जगह पर पढ़ें और उसी समय पढ़ाई करें, जब आपका ध्यान सबसे ज्यादा लगता हो।
- पढ़ाई और रिविजन के लिए टाइमटेबल बनाएं, हर चैप्टर के बाद छोटा ब्रेक लें।
- पर्याप्त नींद लें, पौष्टिक भोजन करें, जंक फूड से बचें और रोज थोड़ी एक्सरसाइज करें।
- मूवी, म्यूजिक या टहलने से तनाव कम करें, खुद पर दबाव न डालें और पॉजिटिव रहें।

नवभारत टाइम्स, 17 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 1

The Pioneer, 17th February 2026, Page. no. - (1)

Class 10 students must sit for first of the two board exams, says CBSE

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi



Representative image iSTOCK

With the onset of secondary and senior secondary school examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the board on Monday noted that it is mandatory for class 10 students to appear in the ensuing first board exam, and those who do not attempt at least three subjects in the first edition will be placed in the Essential Repeat category. The clarification comes after CBSE is scheduled to start with two board exams for class 10 from 2026.

The clarification by the board comes after it received a few requests stating that class 10 students who are not able to appear in the first board exam should be allowed to appear in the second board exam.

"It is mandatory for all the students to appear in the first board examination. All passed and eligible students will be allowed to improve their performance in any of the three subjects out of science, mathematics, social science and languages," said Sanyam Bhardwaj, CBSE Examination Controller.

"Additional Subject will not be permitted after passing class 10, students will not be allowed in standalone subjects. Because of any reason if a student is not able to appear in 3 or more subjects in main examination, he or she cannot be permitted to appear in second board exams as per policy. Any request received by CBSE about this not be responded to," Bhardwaj said.

Board exams for class 10 and class 12 will begin on Tuesday, with over 46 lakh students set to appear from India and abroad.

Class 10 students will appear for the Mathematics exam on Tuesday while Class 12 examination is scheduled for four subjects — Biotechnology, Entrepreneurship, Shorthand (Hindi) and Shorthand (English).

Simultaneously, the CBSE has urged students and all concerned stakeholders not to get misled by rumours of question paper leaks. Over 46 lakh students from India and abroad are set to appear in the exams conducted by the CBSE, according to officials.

The Indian Express,

17th February 2026

Page. no - (14)

EDUCATION

Bodhan AI: Centre's new bid to integrate AI tools in schools

Abhinaya Harigovind
New Delhi, February 16

EDUCATION MINISTER Dharmendra Pradhan last week said the Central government will integrate AI tools in teaching from the next academic session at all levels, from pre-primary to higher education.

The effort is propelled by the launch of the not-for-profit company, Bodhan AI, at the Centre of Excellence in AI for Education at IIT Madras. The centre was a part of the Budget announcement last year, with an allocation of Rs 500 crore.

What will Bodhan AI do?

The company will develop the Bharat EduAI Stack as Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for education. DPI is a digital system that can provide access to services on a large scale, similar to UPI for payments.

The company will work to build AI capabilities for Indian languages and develop assets like automatic speech recognition. Applications will then be built and incorporated into schools through collaborations with state governments.

"These models have to be deployed on a sovereign infrastructure where you can just plug in these models into your existing EdTech solutions," IIT Madras Professor Mitesh Khapra said recently. For example, the systems powering an existing EdTech solution for assessing reading fluency in English could be used to incorporate a speech diagnostics model in Hindi, he said.

He added, "We, as well as others (tech players), can build applications... The last mile delivery is where we would rely on government partners... many tech players [are] today building these solutions. But they are all plugging in models that are not Indian. They are relying on the ChatGPTs or the Geminis of the world."

APPLICATION IN SCHOOLS

- For the student, AI in teaching can translate into voice-based exercises on a phone or laptop, with feedback sent to the teacher.
- The AI tool can then recommend exercises or personalised worksheets that the teacher can use.

What tools could be deployed?

Professor V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, said that the focus will be on personalised learning, assistance for teachers and parents to make interventions, and for the administration to determine how schools are faring and take policy decisions.

"As a child, I need to understand... in my mother tongue... where I am going wrong, so that I can correct myself. We want AI to be able to do this," Kamakoti said.

For the student, this can mean voice-based exercises on a phone, tablet, or laptop, with feedback or reports provided to the teacher. The AI tool can then recommend exercises or personalised worksheets that the teacher can use.

Such services exist in digital learning, but AI is being seen as useful for creating a more foundational setup. Prof Kamakoti said it will "build the basic blocks". "If one of these EdTech companies wants to deploy a tool, we will have the basic infrastructure for them, and they can build on it," he said.

Funds will also come in through the startups and governments using the system. "The state governments will pay some maintenance costs. The start-ups will also give some equity in return for the services," Prof Kamakoti said.

However, several concerns need to be addressed. "We should be very careful about the data. Anything that the student puts in or writes is their personal data. We need to see that there is absolutely no data storage in a public forum," he said. As for the issue of high screen time among children, he pointed to voice-based tools as an alternative.

While Khapra said that "we will be grounded in the government policy framework of the National Education Policy of 2020", Karthik Mahadevan Mohanakrishnan, the COO of Bodhan AI, added that the research and tools will be based on NCERT and SCERT frameworks.

APAAR ID must for Class 9, 11 registration: CBSE

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has decided to make 12-digit automated permanent academic account registry (APAAR) ID mandatory for registration in classes 9 and 11 from the upcoming 2026-27 academic session

Published on: Feb 17, 2026 4:23 PM IST

By Sanjay Maurya

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The key proposals approved by the governing body also include redesigning of class 10 marksheet to include scores of two board exams. (HT Photo)

New Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has decided to make 12-digit automated permanent academic account registry (APAAR) ID mandatory for registration in classes 9 and 11 from the upcoming 2026-27 academic session. The decision was taken during the board's 142nd governing body meeting held in December 2025, minutes of which were made public on Monday.

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The key proposals approved by the governing body also include redesigning of class 10 marksheet to include scores of two board exams, constitution of global curriculum sub-committee, and expanding multilingual provisions in line with National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

CBSE had first introduced APAAR-ID integration in the registration of class 9 and 11 students in the 2025-26 session. However, in September 2025, the board relaxed the requirement after schools flagged documentation gaps, parental consent concerns and technical integration issues. At present, about 50% of class 9 and 11 students' data is linked with APAAR ID across the country, CBSE said.

"The board will initiate communication and hand-holding schools in states where there was a problem in creation of APAAR ID," the minutes said. The move is aimed at streamlining student data management, academic credit tracking and digital verification of records in line with education reforms under NEP 2020.

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CBSE's governing body, the highest decision-making authority of the board, has also approved the proposal of the examination committee to redesign marksheet format for class 10 in line with two-board examinations in a year.

performances," the minutes said, citing the examination committee's proposal, which was ratified by the governing body.

After detailed deliberation, it was decided that the column of Internal Assessment (IA) "may be shifted to the final result column from the main exam column."

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In alignment with multilingual policy priorities, CBSE has also decided to offer four Indian languages — Konkani, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali — as elective subjects in class 9 from 2026-27. The board has also approved the proposal to introduce Computational Thinking (CT) and Understanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) for classes 3 to 8 from the upcoming session.

To establish a dedicated mechanism to address matters relating to CBSE's global operations, the board has approved the constitution of the 'Sub-Committee for CBSE Global Curriculum', which "shall deliberate on matters related to CBSE's global outreach, academic alignment with international standards, assessment reforms, capacity building, and issues specific to CBSE-affiliated schools abroad."

The CBSE Global Curriculum is a new, specialised educational framework, set to be launched in April 2026.

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‘Class 10 first board mandatory’

Meanwhile, CBSE, which is starting with two board exams for class 10 from 2026, has made it is mandatory for students to appear in the first board exam, and those who do not attempt at least three subjects in the first edition will be placed in the “essential repeat” category, requiring them to repeat the academic year and making them ineligible for the second exam scheduled in May 2026.

In a February 14 notification, CBSE examination controller Sanyam Bhardwaj clarified that while the first exam is compulsory, students who pass will be allowed to improve their performance in up to three subjects — Science, Mathematics, Social Science and languages — in the second, optional exam. Students failing in up to two subjects in the first phase will be placed in the compartment category and permitted to take the second exam.

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The class 10 and 12 board examinations of both CBSE and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) will begin on Tuesday. While over 4.37 million students — 2.51 million class 10 students and 1.86 million class 12 students — will appear for CBSE board examinations, over 360,000 students — around 260,000 class 10 students and 100,000 class 12 students — will sit for the CISCE board examinations.

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The Indian EXPRESS
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

41% VNSGU students reject NEP's 4th year: Why 'Honours' dream is clashing with reality in Gujarat

Despite the academic benefits of the new 4-year Honours programme, the need for immediate employment and government job eligibility is driving students away from extended research.

Written by: Kamal Saiyed 3 min read Surat Feb 17, 2026 02:12 PM IST



The survey covered third-year students in the Science, Commerce and Arts faculties (Image generated using AI).

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A survey conducted by the Veer Narmad South Gujarat University (VNSGU) for undergraduate students in the four year honours programme revealed that over 41 per cent of the nearly 20,000 students who are in the third year said they did not want to continue the fourth year of the "Honours and Research" course introduced in 2023-24 by the university under the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

In alignment with the NEP, the university intends to begin interest registration for the upcoming academic session, which is why the survey was conducted.

The Vice Chancellor of VNSGU, Dr K N Chavda, sent a circular to the colleges of South Gujarat affiliated to the varsity, asking them to pass on the details of the circular to the students so that their intention would be known.

The VNSGU covers seven districts of Gujarat, including Surat, Bharuch, Navsari, Tapi, Valsad, and Dang, as well as the Union Territory of Daman and Diu, and has 263 affiliated colleges.

The survey started late in November last year and continued till the end of January. Vice Chancellor Chavda said, "Till date, we have received response of 19,675 students, in which 8,128 (41.31 per cent) students opted for "Exit" after successful completion of 3rd year, 5,878 (29.87 per cent) had shown interest for "Honours", while 706 (3.58 per cent) students had shown interest in "Honours with Research" and 4,963 (25.22 per cent) students had shown interest in Post-Graduation".

The circular seen by the Indian Express says, "Interest Registration for 4th Year Honours, 4th Year Honours with Research, or Master's Degree Pathways. Students currently in their 3rd year in different colleges are requested to review the three avenues and register their preferences in the academia ERP system. This pathway involves continuing your undergraduate studies for a fourth year. It focuses on advanced theory and in-depth knowledge of your major subject, making you eligible for a 1-Year Master's degree later."

Design of Honours programme

The fourth year of the Honours with Research programme is designed for students who wish to undertake a rigorous research project under faculty supervision. This is highly recommended for students planning to pursue a PhD in the future, as mentioned in the circular.

Those students who wished to exit after three years and join a two-year master's degree were free to, after successfully completing the third year with the standard bachelor's degree and then enrol in a traditional two-year master's degree programme. The survey covered third-year students in the Science, Commerce and Arts faculties.

Sources at VNSGU said students preferred jobs first after completing the third year to help their families financially. "Besides, there are many such students who want to appear for competitive exams conducted by the State government and get a government job, where the minimum qualification is a graduation degree", sources said.

Professors at VNSGU said that students will gain more benefits by saving 2 years of a master's degree by directly entering research activities.

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दैनिक जागरण, 18 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - (1)

सरकारी स्कूलों में एआइ कक्षाएं, विदेशी भाषा भी सीखेंगे विद्यार्थी

दिल्ली के लिए 75 सीएम श्री स्कूलों की परियोजना शुरू

- शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान और मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने सीएम श्री स्कूल का किया उद्घाटन
- शिक्षा मंत्री ने कहा- सरकारी स्कूलों में निजी स्कूलों जैसी उन्नत शिक्षा उपलब्ध

जागरण संवाददाता, दक्षिणी दिल्ली: केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान और दिल्ली की मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने मंगलवार को सरोजिनी नगर में बने सीएम श्री स्कूल का उद्घाटन किया। इसी के साथ दिल्ली में 75 सीएम श्री स्कूल परियोजनाओं की शुरुआत भी की गई। इस अवसर पर धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने सरकार को बधाई देते हुए कहा कि एक साल के अंदर शिक्षा से जुड़े अपने वादों को पूरा करने की दिशा में यह कार्य सराहनीय है। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकारी स्कूलों में विद्यार्थियों को निजी स्कूलों जैसी आधुनिक और उन्नत शिक्षा उपलब्ध कराई जा रही है।

इस अवसर पर मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने कहा कि सीएम श्री स्कूल बच्चों के भविष्य को वैश्विक स्तर पर प्रतिस्पर्धी बनाने का संकल्प है। इन स्कूलों को 'सेंटर आफ एक्सीलेंस' के रूप में विकसित किया जाएगा। यहां विद्यार्थी स्मार्ट एआइ कक्षाओं में पढ़ेंगे, जहां इंटरेक्टिव पैनल, डिजिटल पढ़ाई सामग्री और आधुनिक लर्निंग टूल्स उपलब्ध होंगे। प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं की तैयारी के लिए खास पोर्टल बनाया है, जहां जेईई, नीट, सीयूईटी, जैसी परीक्षाओं की तैयारी कराई जाएगी। वहीं मल्टी-सेक्टोरियल स्किल लैब्स में रोबोटिक्स, एआइ, डिजाइन और मेकाट्रानिक्स जैसे आधुनिक विषय पढ़ाए जाएंगे।



सरोजिनी नगर स्थित सीएम श्री स्कूल के उद्घाटन के बाद माडल बाल वाटिका में पढ़ाई के साथ खेल रहे बच्चों को देखते केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान, मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता व दिल्ली के शिक्षा मंत्री आशीष सूद • विपिन शर्मा

कोडिंग से लेकर विदेशी भाषाओं का भी ज्ञान: मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा कि आइसीटी लैब में विद्यार्थी कोडिंग और कंप्यूटर सीखेंगे। साथ ही 'साइंस आफ लिविंग' स्पेस के जरिये बच्चों के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य, नैतिक शिक्षा और व्यक्तित्व विकास पर खास ध्यान दिया जाएगा। स्कूलों में बहुभाषी शिक्षा और विदेशी भाषाएं सिखाने के लिए खास लैंग्वेज लैब भी बनेंगी। मौके पर दिल्ली के शिक्षा मंत्री आशीष सूद ने कहा कि मुख्यमंत्री के नेतृत्व में 7000 कंप्यूटरों से सुसज्जित 175 नई आइसीटी लैब्स शुरू की जा रही हैं। साथ ही 100 से ज्यादा डिजिटल लाइब्रेरी और 175 से अधिक लैंग्वेज लैब्स बनेंगी। 31 मार्च से पहले सभी 7000 स्मार्ट कक्षाएं तैयार हो जाएंगी।

The Pioneer, 18th February 2026, Page no. - (2)

Students emerge relieved after writing 'easy' first paper of CBSE board exams

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi



Students discuss the question paper after appearing for the CBSE Class 10 board examination PANKAJ KUMAR

Nervousness before entering the exam hall turned into relief and confidence for several students who stepped out after appearing for the Class 10 and 12 examinations on Tuesday, saying the paper was easy to moderate.

They said the paper was largely based on the syllabus of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The Class 10 and 12 board examinations conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) began on Tuesday across the country and will conclude on March 10 and April 10, respectively.

Air Force Bal Bharati School's Omisha Dhondiyal, who appeared for the Class 10 Standard Mathematics paper, said her nervousness faded once she went through the question paper. "There was a lot of anxiety before the exam, but during the reading time, I felt confident. The paper was much easier compared to last year, and I managed to finish it before time," she said, adding that she had ample time for revision.

A Class 12 student from the same school, who had the biotech paper, said that the questions were mostly theoretical. "The paper was easy compared to the previous year. The questions were asked largely from the book and most of them were theory-based which was easier to answer," he added.

Nishtha, a Class 10 student from Delhi Public School, described the paper as straightforward. "Most of the questions were directly from the NCERT, and the case-study questions were easy. Like everyone else, I was nervous in the beginning, but the paper turned out to be manageable," she said.

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UP govt schools follow same NCERT syllabus as pvt ones: Min tells assembly

The minister pointed to infrastructure upgrades, citing CM Composite Schools as an example. Each such school is built for ₹25 crore, with two planned per district. On English, Singh said the National Education Policy (NEP) treats English as a subject, not a medium of instruction, and all schools teach it as such.

Published on: Feb 18, 2026 5:14 AM IST

By HT Correspondent , LUCKNOW



Sandeep Singh, basic education minister, UP (Sourced)

Sandeep Singh, basic education minister, told the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly on Tuesday that government schools under the basic education department follow the same National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) syllabus as private schools, pushing back against opposition questions on English-medium education on the lines of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) boards in the state.

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“The same syllabus taught in private schools under NCERT is being taught in basic education department schools,” Singh said during Question Hour.

The minister pointed to infrastructure upgrades, citing CM Composite Schools as an example. Each such school is built for ₹25 crore, with two planned per district. On English, Singh said the National Education Policy (NEP) treats English as a subject, not a medium of instruction, and all schools teach it as such.

Secondary education minister Gulab Devi, responding to a question on science education, said all but three of the state's 974 government colleges have science teacher positions and that science education is being provided. Her reply came after Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA Ragini Singh claimed many government colleges lacked science teachers. SP legislator Sonkar invoked Lord Rama, saying the government speaks of Ramrajya but fails to provide teachers to students.

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In a separate exchange, Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) MLA Pallavi Patel from Sirathu raised the issue of medical leave for university professors, asking why they were denied benefits available to government college teachers.

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Warning at 8am, 150 stings, death by afternoon: How a bee attack killed umpire Manik Gupta in Unnao

Umpire Manik Gupta had just finished officiating an under-13 match between YMCA and Paramount when the bees erupted from a hive and descended on the ground.

Updated on: Feb 19, 2026 10:22 PM IST

By Haidar Naqvi , KANPUR



Around 10 to 15 others, including players and ground staff, were also stung in the attack. (Representative image/HT)

A day after veteran cricket umpire Manik Gupta died following a bee swarm attack at the Rahul Sapru ground in Shuklaganj, Unnao, more details have emerged on Thursday about how the tragedy unfolded. A swarm had attacked at 8 am, stung a few people and retreated, yet the cricket matches went ahead as planned. By afternoon, 65-year-old Gupta, a three-

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

NCERT launches e-Magic Box app with AI bots to make early learning fun for kids aged 3–8; here's everything you need to know

TOI Education | Feb 18, 2026, 06.10 PM IST



If you are a parent of a toddler or a primary school teacher, you have probably asked yourself at least once — "Am I doing enough to support this child's learning?" Well, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, seems to have heard you loud and clear. The council has launched a brand-new digital tool called the e-Magic Box app, and honestly, it sounds like something every parent and teacher needs on their phone right now.

The app is targeted at kids aged 3 to 8 years, which is that crucial phase of childhood when curiosity is at its peak and the right kind of stimulation can work wonders. And what makes e-Magic Box so special is not just the content it has to offer, but the three intelligent bots waiting inside to answer your queries at any time of the day.

Introducing the Three Bots Inside e-Magic Box

The app is chock-full of three intelligent bots powered by Artificial Intelligence, each with a special purpose to serve. Katha Sakhi is your trusted friend when it comes to stories and creative content that keeps young minds occupied. Next, there is Parent Tara, which is specifically designed to help parents navigate through the numerous questions and doubts that come with having a young one at home. Finally, there is Teacher Tara, who is there to help teachers make their interactions with kids in the classroom more meaningful and effective.

Simply type in your question, and you get an instant answer.

Not Just an App – A Full-Fledged Campaign

Simultaneously, with the launch of the app, NCERT has also started an interesting campaign called the 'Kingdom of Learning and Learning' campaign, encouraging parents and teachers to actively participate in these bots and discover the treasure trove of content available.

Multiple Ways to Access e-Magic Box

The most appreciable aspect of this campaign is that NCERT has not restricted it to just an app. Here's how you can access it on different platforms:

Mobile App: Download the user-friendly app to instantly access a vast array of learning content, available for both parents and teachers.

WhatsApp and Telegram: The AI bots are directly accessible on WhatsApp and Telegram, making it extremely convenient for those who do not wish to download an additional app.

IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System): This is perhaps the most inclusive aspect of this campaign. All you need to do is dial the toll-free number 1800-212-0173 or 15108 to access the "Story of the Day," "Song of the Day," and "Question of the Day," all available in your language. This ensures that even if your family does not own a smartphone, you can still avail yourself of this campaign.

Why This Matters

India has millions of children in the age group of 3-8 years, who are at a foundational stage of learning. A tool such as e-Magic Box, which has the credibility of NCERT and is available on multiple platforms, has the potential to actually bridge the gap between home and school learning. If you haven't checked it out yet, this might just be the right time to give it a try!

T and CIET partner Robotex India for ics and AI education drive

T partner Robotex India to train teachers in robotics and AI, boosting STEM learning nationwide sessions aligned with NEP 2020 policy.

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erating the use of technology in classrooms with a new Robotics and Artificial Education programme led by Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) in collaboration with Robotex India. CIET has significance in development and

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tance of Robotics, AI in schools and NEP 2020 technology

ed learning supports STEM and STEAM learning by blending science, mathematics, tional thinking with engineering design and problem-solving. Robotics is also being a way of eliminating the gap between theory and practice. Robotics-based learning rough the integration of science, mathematics, and computational concepts with lesign to provide students with the opportunity to design, build, test, and refine assists in integrated STEM and STEAM education and promotes critical thinking, teamwork. Artificial intelligence goes a step further in presenting learners with lecision-making and smart systems.

me aligns with NEP 2020 technology education and the National Curriculum 023, promoting experiential and competency-based learning through robotics and gence. The training programme complies with the spirit of NEP 2020 and Framework urriculum of School Education 2023, which focus on experiential, competency- quiry-based learning. Rather than having technology as an independent topic, AI are environments where notions of physics, mathematics, and computer science mented in the real world.

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format and delivery

ill be streamed live via NCERT's YouTube channel and PM eVidya, and later hosted d course on DIKSHA for long-term access. The broadcasts will take place in the and be sent in real-time on the NCERT channel on the official YouTube channel of L and the PM via DTH TV channel. The teachers will be educated on how to embrace ed experiential learning in the schools via expert talks and demonstrations. Notably,

learning, while guiding students in coding, testing, and prototype development. The
s to enable the teachers with the capability to develop competency based practical
makes use of robotics, AI, IoT and machine learning. It emphasises the
of the application of design thinking, and computational thinking in order to ensure
s can support the students in finding issues, creating solutions, and creating
e other important goal is to empower teachers to mentor students on how to code,
e technology projects that facilitate team work, creativity and solving real world

ticipate in the NCERT robotics training

ailable to teachers, teacher educators, and students among other educational
The initiative will establish a platform of robotics and AI implementation in schools
practitioners and influencers in the education ecosystem. India is accelerating the
logy in classrooms with a new Robotics and Artificial Intelligence in Education
ed by Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) under NCERT, in
with Robotex India.

the school system in India, this programme marks a transition in passive digital
to active technological creation, i.e. the focus of the next generation of classrooms
otics and AI.The programme started from 16th February and will finish on 24 Feb,
run daily between 10:00 AM-11:00 AM and will assist the educators to incorporate the
hnologies in classroom instruction. The programme marks India's shift from passive
g to active creation using robotics and artificial intelligence in education.

rticles

दैनिक जागरण, 19 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ-4

पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा छोड़कर दूसरी में अब नहीं बैठ सकेंगे विद्यार्थी : सीबीएसई

जागरण संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली : केंद्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड (सीबीएसई) 10वीं की बोर्ड परीक्षाओं में वर्ष 2026 से लागू हो रही दो बोर्ड परीक्षा व्यवस्था को लेकर चल रही अटकलों पर सीबीएसई ने सख्त रुख अपनाया है। बोर्ड ने साफ कर दिया है कि पहली परीक्षा में शामिल होना अनिवार्य है और इसे छोड़कर सीधे दूसरी परीक्षा देने का विकल्प नहीं मिलेगा। दरअसल, बोर्ड को कई अनुरोध मिले थे कि यदि कोई छात्र किसी कारण से पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा में शामिल नहीं हो पाता, तो उसे दूसरी परीक्षा में बैठने दिया जाए। लेकिन बोर्ड ने स्पष्ट कर दिया कि नियमों में ऐसी कोई छूट नहीं है।

सीबीएसई की नई व्यवस्था के तहत पहली बोर्ड परीक्षा सभी विद्यार्थियों के लिए अनिवार्य होगी। जो विद्यार्थी पास हो जाएंगे, उन्हें अपने



अंकों में सुधार के लिए विज्ञान, गणित, सामाजिक विज्ञान और भाषा विषयों में से अधिकतम तीन विषयों में दूसरी परीक्षा देने का अवसर मिलेगा। यानी दूसरी परीक्षा बैकअप प्लान" नहीं, बल्कि परफार्मेंस बूस्टर (प्रदर्शन सुधार) के रूप में होगी।

बोर्ड ने कहा यदि कोई विद्यार्थी पहली परीक्षा में तीन या उससे अधिक विषयों में अनुपस्थित रहता है, तो उसे एसेंशियल रिपीट (आवश्यक दोहराव) श्रेणी में डाल दिया जाएगा। ऐसे विद्यार्थियों को उसी वर्ष दूसरी परीक्षा में बैठने की अनुमति नहीं होगी। उन्हें अगले वर्ष फरवरी में मुख्य परीक्षा का इंतजार करना पड़ेगा। जिन विद्यार्थियों का परिणाम पहली परीक्षा में कंपार्टमेंट आता है, उन्हें दूसरी परीक्षा में कंपार्टमेंट श्रेणी के तहत मौका दिया जाएगा। इसके अलावा अतिरिक्त विषय लेने या स्टैंड-अलोन विषय में परीक्षा देने की अनुमति नहीं होगी।

दूसरी परीक्षा में बैठने की पात्रता चार श्रेणियों में तय की गई है। इसमें तीन मुख्य विषयों तक सुधार, प्रथम या तृतीय अवसर कंपार्टमेंट, कंपार्टमेंट सुधार और प्रतिस्थापन विषय से पास हुए छात्रों के लिए सुधार का अवसर शामिल है। बोर्ड ने कहा है कि यदि कोई छात्र मुख्य परीक्षा में तीन या उससे अधिक विषयों में उपस्थित नहीं होता है तो उसे दूसरी बोर्ड परीक्षा में अनुमति नहीं दी जाएगी और इस संबंध में प्राप्त होने वाले अनुरोधों पर विचार नहीं किया जाएगा।

दैनिक जागरण, 19 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ - 13

मैथिली में भी पढ़िए केमेस्ट्री, मूलभूत शब्दावली प्रकाशित

प्रिंस कुमार • जागरण

- इसमें 3500 शब्द, स्कूलों में रसायनशास्त्र को मैथिली में भी पढ़ना-पढ़ाना होगा संभव
- सरकार के वैज्ञानिक व तकनीकी शब्दावली आयोग और एलएनएमयू के सहयोग से हुआ कार्य

दरभंगा: स्थानीय भाषाओं में जिस विज्ञान की पढ़ाई को असंभव माना जा रहा था, उसे संभव कर दिखाया गया है। भारत सरकार के वैज्ञानिक तथा तकनीकी शब्दावली आयोग ने मिथिलांचल की भाषा मैथिली में केमेस्ट्री यानी रसायन शास्त्र की मूलभूत शब्दावली प्रकाशित कर दी है। अब नई शिक्षा नीति के तहत स्कूलों में रसायनशास्त्र को मैथिली में भी पढ़ना और पढ़ाना संभव हो सकेगा। 12वीं तक के पाठ्यक्रम के लिए यह शब्दावली काफी उपयोगी साबित होगी। अंग्रेजी-हिंदी-मैथिली की इस मूलभूत शब्दावली में लगभग साढ़े तीन हजार शब्द हैं।

भारतीय भाषा समिति के पूर्व मुख्य समन्वयक डा. अवधेश कुमार मिश्र का कहना है कि भारत सरकार



मूलभूत शब्दावली की प्रति • सौ.

वैज्ञानिक तथा तकनीकी शब्दावली आयोग के शिक्षा मंत्रालय की योजना है कि सभी विषयों की पाठ्यपुस्तकों का मैथिली में भी अनुवाद किया जाए।

ऐसी होगी शब्दावली

अंग्रेजी : मैथिली

रोपी स्ट्रक्चर : रस्सी, डोरीक संरचना

राउंड बाटम फ्लास्क : गोल पेनीक फ्लास्क

रिफ्लिंग : लहरिक उठब

रोस्टिंग : भूज

रोल : गुड़कब

रिन्सिंग : खंघारब

साथ ही, स्कूल स्तर पर भी विज्ञान विषयों में तकनीकी शब्दों की कमी दूर होगी। इसका काम छह वर्ष पहले वैज्ञानिक तथा तकनीकी शब्दावली आयोग और ललित नारायण मिथिला विश्वविद्यालय (एलएनएमयू) के सहयोग से शुरू हुआ था। इसमें एलएनएमयू के रसायनशास्त्र विभाग के तत्कालीन अध्यक्ष डा. प्रेम मोहन मिश्र और केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्रालय की भारतीय भाषा समिति के पूर्व मुख्य समन्वयक भाषा विज्ञानी डा. अवधेश कुमार मिश्र का विशेष योगदान रहा।

दो अन्य विषयों की मैथिली शब्दावली की भी तैयारी: रसायनशास्त्र के बाद राजनीति शास्त्र और पत्रकारिता शब्दावली भी मैथिली में आने वाली है। इन दोनों विषयों की शब्दावली के लिए भी एलएनएमयू के पीजी विभाग में कार्यशाला हो चुकी है। ऐसी शब्दावली मैथिली के अलावा अन्य प्रादेशिक और क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में भी तैयार की जा रही है।

The Indian Express, 19 February 2026, Page no. -13

AI in classrooms but no calculators in exam halls



POOJAN SAHIL

IMAGINE A Grade 11 Physics class where a student understands the concept and can explain what the answer should mean. Then the numbers arrive. The calculation is long and unforgiving, and the student slows down, not because the physics is unclear, but because arithmetic is about to consume the entire problem. They look up, hoping for a calculator. It is not allowed. That small moment sits oddly alongside the larger moment India is in. While we talk about AI in schools, why do our mainstream exam cultures remain uncomfortable with the calculator?

In most board exam settings, calculators are not permitted, and this becomes a classroom habit. Teaching follows assessment, and what cannot be used in the final test slowly disappears from daily learning, too. I still remember asking my teacher why I could not use a calculator for a long calculation. The answer was familiar: "You will not always have a calculator with you." Today, that argument feels weaker, not because phones belong in exam halls (they do not), but because the world outside school assumes tool use as normal.

There are reasons for the hesitation. A national system must be fair across contexts, including low-resource schools. There are concerns about integrity, standardisation, and the fear that students will lose fluency. Foundational numeracy does matter. However, the question is about emphasis in higher grades, where calculation is a means, not the goal. In senior Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Economics, and Accounts, many students spend disproportionate time on computation. We start rewarding manual endurance more than understanding.

In higher studies and most workplaces, calculations are handled by tools, from calculators and spreadsheets to software and code. Human value lies in framing problems, choosing methods, interpreting output, and sense-checking whether a result is even reasonable. As AI agents take on more execution work, this human role becomes even clearer. A blanket calculator ban also reshapes assessment. Questions drift towards tidy numbers. Real life is not tidy. Measurements are awkward and errors accumulate. If we fear computation, we quietly train students away from realism.

A blanket calculator ban also reshapes assessment. Questions drift towards tidy numbers. Real life is not tidy

Access concerns are real, but calculators can be affordable, standardisable, and easier to regulate than phones. Approved models, centre-provided devices, or phased introduction are workable options. Calculator literacy is not button-pressing; it is judgement: Estimating first, rounding sensibly, reading scientific notation, tracking units, and spotting when a small input error has produced a wildly wrong result. These are the same habits we want with AI: Certification and the discipline of asking, "Does this make sense?"

We can keep a non-calculator component that assesses fluency and estimation where it belongs. In higher grades, allow calculators for tasks meant to assess modelling, interpretation, and application. Policy shifts may take time, but schools do not have to wait. Teachers can build calculator literacy in learning time, while still preparing for current exam patterns, by using calculators for exploration, insisting on estimation and explanation, and using real data tasks that prioritise interpretation.

Richard Feynman said, "I would rather have questions that cannot be answered than answers that cannot be questioned." Used well, a calculator helps shift learning back to what matters most.

Sahil is an education consultant specialising in curriculum design, teacher training, and edtech initiatives

The Indian Express, 19 February 2026,
Page no. - 12

We need a more integrated education imagination. Budget recognises that



SOMAK RAYCHAUDHURY

BUDGETS ARE often read as lists: New institutions announced, capacities expanded, and allocations increased. Yet, the true measure of an education budget lies not in what it builds, but in what it enables in principle, on intellectual and social grounds. The Union Budget 2026–27, with its emphasis on design education, STEM access, university-industry linkage, and focus on scientific infrastructure, shows a clear intent: India's future competitiveness will depend less on scale alone and more on the quality and coherence of its educational ecosystem.

At a time when AI is reshaping how knowledge is produced, transmitted, and applied, education systems across the world are grappling with a common question — how do we prepare young talent not just for jobs that exist today, but for ones that will be imagined in the future, especially at a time of geopolitical shifts and an evolving policy landscape?

The solution does not lie in privileging one discipline over another, educating in silos, or in narrowly aligning education with immediate market needs. Instead, it lies in cultivating intellectual breadth, ethical grounding, and the capacity to learn across domains, qualities that have long defined strong education systems. In ancient Nalanda, for example, the university had no divisions between subjects. Everybody had to learn some basic subjects such as Astronomy, Law, Literature, Theology, and Mathematics.

Several strands of this year's Budget, taken together, gesture towards such a vision. The continued emphasis on future-ready skills, interdisciplinary learning, and innovation-led education acknowledges that technical proficiency alone is insufficient in an AI-rich world. As machines become better at recognising and interpreting patterns, human value increasingly resides in areas such as critical thinking, creativity, contextual judgement, and the ability to integrate insights across disciplines.

The Budget also recognises that the relationship between education and employment can no longer be viewed as linear or static. The announcement of a high-powered standing committee is a timely step to examine the links between education, employment, and enterprise, particularly in the context of the services sector and emerging technologies. If approached thoughtfully, such a forum can support higher education institutions still grappling with aligning curriculum, pedagogy, and infrastructure with evolving market realities.

Equally significant is the enduring focus on access and inclusion. In recent years, there has been growing and consistent participation of women in national scientific and technological projects — in building the Chenab Bridge or in ISRO's Mars Orbiter mission, for instance. Nonetheless, women in tier 2-3 regions continue to face structural barriers in STEM. Investments aimed at improving participation, particularly of young women in STEM-intensive institutions, address a structural weakness in India's talent pipeline. Diversity in classrooms is a driver of better science, better design, and better decision-making. When students from varied backgrounds encounter one another, they challenge assumptions, widen perspectives, and enrich the learning environment in ways no curriculum reform can achieve on its own.

The Budget also recognises that the relationship between education and employment can no longer be viewed as linear or static

The Budget's attention to design education and creative capabilities, especially in the eastern region, is also noteworthy. The Indian design industry is expanding rapidly, and yet there is a shortage of designers. Today, design thinking sits at the intersection of technology, arts, humanities, and social environment. Such thinking requires empathy as much as engineering, imagination as much as analysis. By recognising design as central to national capacity-building, policy is showing a clear commitment to democratising access and strengthening talent pipelines in next-generation fields.

Most importantly, the Budget's focus on building scientific infrastructure, particularly in astronomy, plays a transformative role. Investments in upgrading the Himalayan Chandra Telescope and advancing plans for the National Large Optical Telescope in Ladakh mark a long-awaited moment for India's astronomical community. These facilities anchor a thriving national ecosystem of researchers, and of high-tech small-scale industry. They also enable Indian scientists to lead frontier science from Indian soil and offer students direct access to world-class observational platforms. Support for modern planetariums signals a commitment to linking the highest level of research to public awareness and communicating the excitement to younger generations.

Just as the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission captured the imagination of students across India — making astrophysics a visible and viable career path — and as the country prepares for its first human spaceflight mission under Gaganyaan, the installation of these telescopes can play a similarly catalytic role.

What ties these diverse initiatives together is the possibility of a more integrated educational imagination. Universities must break down the walls between traditional subject categories and function as spaces where engineers learn to think ethically, scientists engage with History and Philosophy, designers grapple with social realities, and students learn to communicate across differences. This is particularly critical in the age of AI, where decisions shaped by algorithms will have deep societal consequences.

The progressive outlook provided by the National Education Policy, 2020 gave a clear direction for higher education institutions to pivot towards a more future-looking, interdisciplinary mode of education system. As the world is changing fast, higher education institutions will need to fine-tune further to align with the shifts, something the Budget has captured very well.

With a young population and growing global influence, India can redefine what educational excellence looks like in an AI world, while charting a credible path towards the Viksit Bharat mission. The Budget gestures towards this possibility by recognising that education, science, design, and inclusion are deeply interconnected. The task ahead is to ensure that these strands are woven into a coherent whole — one that prepares students not just to participate in the future, but to shape it thoughtfully and responsibly.

The writer is vice-chancellor and professor of Physics, Ashoka University, Delhi-NCR. Opinions are personal

NCERT Launches E-Magic Box App

BW Online Bureau Feb 19, 2026

Digital Education # Foundational Literacy # NCERT

AI-based app aims to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy in early grades

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एन सी ई आर टी
NCERT

NCERT

National Council Of Educational Research And Training

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has launched the E-Magic Box, an artificial intelligence-enabled learning application designed to support foundational literacy and numeracy among early learners.

The application has been introduced as part of ongoing efforts to operationalise the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which places strong emphasis on strengthening foundational learning outcomes in the

early years of schooling. The tool is intended for young students and aims to supplement classroom instruction through interactive and adaptive learning modules.





According to officials, the E-Magic Box uses AI-based features to personalise content based on a child's learning pace and progress. The application includes exercises in basic reading, writing and arithmetic, with interactive elements designed to maintain engagement.

The launch aligns with the broader Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) mission under the NEP framework, which seeks to ensure that all children attain basic reading and numeracy skills at the primary level. Digital tools are increasingly being integrated into classrooms to address learning gaps and provide additional academic support.

Education stakeholders note that technology-enabled platforms can assist teachers by offering data-driven insights into student performance. However, they also underline the importance of ensuring equitable access to digital devices and internet connectivity, particularly in rural and underserved regions.

NCERT is expected to provide guidance to schools and state education departments regarding the implementation and integration of the application into existing teaching practices. Training and orientation modules for educators may also be rolled out to facilitate effective use of the platform.

The introduction of the E-Magic Box reflects the growing role of digital and AI-based solutions in India's school education landscape, particularly in advancing foundational learning goals under the NEP framework.

Share

जनसत्ता, 20 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - 4

ज्ञान भारतम : प्राचीन भारतीय परंपरा का डिजिटल दर्शन

अनामिका सिंह
नई दिल्ली, 19 फरवरी।

इंडिया एआइ समिट 2026 में तकनीकी नवाचारों का महाकुंभ देखने को मिला। भारत मंडपम के हाल 14 में स्थापित 'भारत पवेलियन' ने 'ज्ञान भारतम' के माध्यम से भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा को आधुनिक तकनीक से जोड़कर आगंतुकों को चकित कर दिया। यह एआइ आधारित मंच वैदिक काल से लेकर आधुनिक साहित्य तक के प्रमुख ग्रंथों को विभिन्न भाषाओं में सुलभ रूप में प्रस्तुत करता है।

'ज्ञान भारतम' में आगंतुक ऋग्वेद, यजुर्वेद, सामवेद, अथर्ववेद जैसी प्राचीन वेद पांडुलिपियों के मूल रहस्य जान सकते हैं। इसके अलावा सुश्रुत



संहिता, चरक संहिता, अष्टांग हृदय संहिता, श्रीमद् भगवद गीता और रामायण सहित लगभग एक लाख पांडुलिपियों को डिजिटल रूप में संरक्षित कर प्रदर्शित किया गया है। आगंतुक अपनी मातृभाषा या किसी अन्य वैश्विक भाषा में इन्हें देख, सुन और पढ़ सकते हैं। विशेष आकर्षण का केंद्र 168 पृष्ठों की श्रीमद् भगवद गीता की प्रतिकृति है, जो आक्सफोर्ड विश्वविद्यालय के बोडलियन पुस्तकालय से लाई गई है। संस्कृत में नेवारी लिपि में 1492 में लिखी गई यह लिपि एक समृद्ध पांडुलिपि परंपरा को दर्शाती है। इसके अलावा मोक्षयोग (भीमपर्व) को प्रदर्शित किया गया है। ये श्रीमद् भगवद् गीता की अनूठी वृत्ताकार पांडुलिपि है, जिसे 17वीं शताब्दी में 18 अध्याय व 700 श्लोकों में लिखा गया था और वर्तमान में हिंदी साहित्य सम्मेलन, प्रयागराज में संरक्षित है।

पवेलियन में एआइ शीशा भी लगाया गया है, जिसमें देखकर आगंतुक जान सकते हैं कि वैदिक काल के किस ज्ञानी से उनकी शक्ल मेल खाती है। वहीं हाल नंबर पांच में गूगल का एआइ क्रिकेट युवाओं के लिए आकर्षण का विषय बना। इसमें खिलाड़ी क्रिकेट खेलते हुए वीडियो रिकार्ड कर अंपायरिंग समेत लाइव अनुभव ले सकते हैं।

इसी मंडप में खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्रालय ने 'अन्न चक्र' नामक एआइ आधारित आपूर्ति श्रृंखला प्रणाली का प्रदर्शन किया, जिससे 250 करोड़ रुपए की बचत हुई। साथ ही स्मार्ट पीडीएस, डिपो दर्पण, स्वचालित अनाज विश्लेषक और बहुभाषी शिकायत निवारण प्रणाली 'आशा' भी प्रदर्शित की गई। आगंतुक भविष्य की झलक 'अन्नपूर्णा ग्रेन एटीएम' के माध्यम से देख सकते हैं, जो बायोमेट्रिक प्रमाणीकरण के जरिए खाद्यान्न वितरण करता है। इस प्रकार समिट ने आधुनिक तकनीक और भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा का अद्भुत संगम प्रस्तुत किया, जो युवाओं और शोधकर्ताओं के लिए सीखने और अनुभव करने का अनूठा अवसर बन गया।

Tamil Nadu

Class 3 students to be sampled with NCERT papers

As per official information by DEE and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), the sample question papers have been sent to conduct field testing.



Representative image

DTNEXT Bureau

Updated on: 20 Feb 2026, 7:23 am

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CHENNAI: The Directorate of Elementary Education (DEE) is set to conduct a stu
foundational learning of Class 3 students as per the samples provided by the Nationa

As per official information by DEE and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), the sample question papers have been sent to conduct field testing.

"The sample question papers will be sent to all primary schools to provide the necessary training to class 3 students through teachers. This will be a refreshing practice for students and will give scope for new learning and outcomes," said a department official.

However, teachers of primary government schools have confirmed that they have not received any sample questions as yet. But they have been briefed about the training with samples sent by the NCERT.

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"[illegible] Ennum Ezhuthum (numeracy and literacy) is already in place for students in classes 1 to 3, the new sample question paper will surely help understand the foundational learnings of students," said a primary school teacher in Chengalpattu.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Says NEP 2020 Enables Global Academic Collaboration



Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that National Education Policy 2020 enables global academic collaboration. He said this while addressing the closing session of India-Spain Conference on Higher Education, held on the sidelines of the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi on Friday. Mr Pradhan highlighted that the Spain-India Dual Year 2026 marks 70 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries. He said that education, research and youth exchanges are central to their shared vision.

The Minister also underlined that Artificial Intelligence must strengthen human judgment, creativity and ethical responsibility, and not replace them. He also extended an invitation to leading Spanish universities to establish campuses in India.

अमर उजाला, 21 फरवरी 2026, पृष्ठ संख्या - (7)

एनसीईआरटी से पढ़ने वालों के लिए आसान, बाकी के लिए घुमावदार रहा फिजिक्स का पेपर

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। केंद्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड की बारहवीं कक्षा की जारी परीक्षाओं में शुक्रवार को फिजिक्स की परीक्षा हुई। एनसीईआरटी किताबों से पढ़ाई करने वालों के लिए पेपर आसान रहा जबकि दूसरी किताबों से पढ़ने वाले विद्यार्थियों ने प्रश्न को काफी घुमावदार बताया। छात्रों के अनुसार प्रश्न पत्र न ज्यादा कठिन ना ज्यादा आसान था। पेपर को छात्रों ने स्कोरिंग व संतुलित बताया। जबकि कुछ ने कहा कि सवाल सीधे नहीं बल्कि घुमा कर पूछे गए थे।

बारहवीं की फिजिक्स की परीक्षा देकर सेंटर से निकली आशी सिंह ने कहा कि पेपर संतुलित व स्कोरिंग था। इसमें न्यूमेरिकल वाले प्रश्न भी पूछे गए थे, जो कि एनसीईआरटी किताब से थे और सोच कर हल करने वाले थे। केस आधारित सवाल मध्यम स्तर के थे। बहु विकल्पीय सवाल कॉन्सेपट आधारित थे। आशी ने कहा कि पेपर ना ज्यादा मुश्किल थे वह मध्यम स्तर का संतुलित पेपर और अच्छे अंक लाने वाला था।



परीक्षा केंद्र से बाहर निकलतीं छात्राएं। अमर उजाला

THE STATESMAN, 21st February 2026, Page no. 7

Language is the soul of a people

SANTHOSH MATHEW

On February 21, the world pauses to remember a truth written in blood and ink - that language is not merely a tool of communication, but the soul of a people. International Mother Language Day is not an abstract cultural celebration. It is rooted in sacrifice, in the streets of what was then East Pakistan, where young students laid down their lives defending the right to speak Bengali. Their resistance shaped not only the destiny of Bangladesh, but also the global conscience on linguistic justice.

The origins of this day trace back to 1952. In 1948 Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had declared that "Urdu and Urdu alone" would be the state language of Pakistan. It was a decision that ignored demographic reality: the majority of Pakistan's population spoke Bengali. The imposition of Urdu was seen as cultural domination by West Pakistan over East Pakistan. On 21 February 1952, students of the University of Dhaka defied Section 144 and marched in protest. Police opened fire. Several students were killed. Their martyrdom became the seed of the Bengali Language Movement, which later nourished the liberation struggle of 1971, when the Mukti Bahini - Bangladesh's liberation fighters - took up arms for political and cultural freedom. Language was at the heart of that struggle. The fight was not merely about vocabulary; it was about dignity, identity, and the right to exist as a distinct people. In recognition of this sacrifice, UNESCO declared February 21 as International Mother Language Day in 1999.Today, the Shaheed Minar in Dhaka stands not just as a monument to fallen students but as a global symbol of linguistic rights. The Bengali Language Movement teaches a timeless lesson: unity cannot be built on linguistic uniformity. Diversity is not a weakness but a strength. This principle resonates deeply in India, a country often described as a linguistic civilization rather than a monolithic nation-state. India officially recognizes 22 languages in its Eighth Schedule, yet it is home to hundreds of languages and thousands of dialects. Scholars generally classify Indian languages into four major families: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman, and Austroasiatic. Indo-Aryan languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, and Punjabi dominate northern and central India. Dravidian languages - Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam - flourish in the south. Tibeto-Burman languages are spoken across the northeastern hills, while Austroasiatic tongues survive among tribal communities in central and eastern India. This mosaic is not accidental; it is the cumulative result of millennia of migration, interaction, and coexistence.

India's post-independence leaders understood that linguistic aspirations could not be ignored. The linguistic reorganization of states in 1956 was a landmark in democratic accommodation. States like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Gujarat emerged on linguistic lines, not as acts of division, but as acknowledgments of cultural identity within the framework of national unity. The formula was simple yet profound: respect diversity to preserve unity. But linguistic harmony has never been automatic.

Colonial India witnessed its own battles over language. In 1878, the British passed the Vernacular Press Act to curb Indian-language newspapers that criticized colonial rule. English publications were spared, but vernacular presses were targeted. The Act revealed the colonial anxiety that native languages could mobilize political resistance. And they did. Newspapers in Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, and Tamil became platforms for nationalist awakening. Language became liberation's ally.

Even today, the vernacular press remains the lifeblood of Indian democracy. While English media often dominates elite discourse, regional newspapers and television channels shape public opinion in rural and semi-urban India. Yet print journalism in all languages faces existential challenges. Digital disruption, declining readership, and shrinking advertisement revenues threaten newspapers across the spectrum. For classical languages like Sanskrit, the struggle is even starker. India is perhaps the only country where a classical language like Sanskrit still has newspapers and journals, but their circulation is limited, and survival depends largely on institutional support. At the same time, India has demonstrated innovative ways to celebrate linguistic plurality. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's radio programme Mann Ki Baat is translated into numerous Indian languages and dialects, ensuring that the message reaches citizens in their mother tongues. From All India Radio's regional services to community radio stations in remote villages, the effort to communicate in native languages reinforces democratic inclusion. Language is access; language is empowerment. Globally, however, the story is not always hopeful. UNESCO estimates that nearly 40 per cent of the world's 7,000 languages are endangered. India, despite its linguistic wealth, is not immune. Many tribal languages in the Andaman Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, and central India have already disappeared, taking with them unique worldviews, oral traditions, and ecological knowledge. When a language dies, an entire intellectual universe vanishes. Vocabulary encodes culture; grammar reflects patterns of thought; proverbs carry ancestral wisdom. Extinction is not merely linguistic - it is civilizational. This is why mother language education is vital. Children learn concepts best in the language they speak at home. Studies consistently show that primary education in the mother tongue improves comprehension, retention, and cognitive development. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes teaching in the mother tongue at least until Grade 5, reflecting global pedagogical consensus. This approach is not parochial; it is practical and humane.

Consider Tamil, often described as one of the world's oldest continuously used classical languages. Tamil boasts a literary tradition spanning over two millennia, from Sangam poetry to modern novels. Its antiquity is not merely a matter of pride for Tamils; it is a testament to India's civilizational depth. Likewise, Sanskrit, though no longer widely spoken as a mother tongue, continues to influence philosophy, ritual, and vocabulary across the subcontinent. Both languages illustrate different models of linguistic endurance - one thriving as a living vernacular, the other preserved as a liturgical and scholarly medium. Across the border in Bangladesh, the memory of the language martyrs remains vibrant. The Mukti Bahini fighters of 1971 did not forget that their liberation struggle began with the assertion of Bengali identity. International Mother Language Day, therefore, is also a tribute to them. It reminds us that cultural rights are inseparable from political freedom.

In a world increasingly dominated by global languages such as English, Mandarin, and Spanish, smaller languages often feel pressured to retreat. Yet multilingualism need not be a zero-sum game. One can be proficient in English for global mobility while remaining rooted in one's mother tongue for cultural continuity. The challenge is not choosing one over the other, but ensuring that globalization does not become homogenization.

The message from Dhaka's martyrs echoes across the subcontinent: language is identity, memory, resistance, and hope. The bullets fired in 1952 could not silence Bengali. Instead, they amplified it, eventually birthing a nation. International Mother Language Day is thus more than a commemorative date. It is a reminder that linguistic justice sustains democratic justice. It urges governments to protect endangered languages, educators to prioritize mother tongue instruction, media houses to nurture vernacular journalism, and citizens to cherish the language spoken at their hearth.

(The writer is Professor, Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry Central University.)

The Times of India, 21 February 2026,
Page no. - 2

No chalk or blackboard: At CM Shri school, a 'smart' panel is where learning happens

Meghna.Dhulia
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Inside a classroom at a CM Shri school in Delhi, learning is no longer with chalk and blackboard.

As students settle into their seats, a lesson unfolds through colourful infographics projected on a smart panel, real-time feedback appears alongside explanations, and personalised prompts guide each learner differently. At the centre of this transformation is Microsoft Copilot, which educators now call a "thinking partner".

On Friday, teachers at a CM Shri School, Pandara Road demonstrated how artificial intelligence is quietly reshaping everyday classroom practices. The initiative is part of Microsoft's newly launched 'Elevate for Educators' programme in India, under which the company aims to train 2 million teachers and reach 200,000 schools by 2030.

The AI-powered system is set to be implemented across all 75 CM Shri schools in the capital. India is the first country in Asia to roll out the programme, reflecting the scale of opportunity in what is often described as the world's largest classroom, home to over 200 million students and nearly 10 million educators.

So far, 356 teachers across CM Shri Schools have been trained. The programme emphasises enquiry-based learning, personalised instruction, and responsible AI use, aligning with the National Education Policy 2020, which introduces AI and computational thinking at grade 3.

Delhi education minister Ashish Sood said the goal is to ensure that govt school classrooms become "smart". "Earlier, students in govt schools were called underprivileged. We want to change that reality," he said, adding that Delhi aims to become a hub for technology-enabled education that can be replicated across India.

Speaking on this announcement, Brad Smith, vice-chair and president at Microsoft, said: "As AI becomes part of everyday learning, we want to ensure it strengthens education, preserves human judgement, and earns the trust of educators and learners. By taking AI at this scale across India, we want it to open new opportunities and deliver meaningful outcomes for teachers and students". Puneet Chandok, president of Microsoft India and South Asia, said: "As intelligence becomes widely available, the real differentiator will be how confidently and responsibly people can use it."

For many educators, the biggest change lies in preparation and clarity. Sadaf Fatima, a teacher at the CM Shri School in Rohini's Sector 11, described how lesson planning evolved. While preparing a Class XI biology lesson, she used Microsoft Copilot to create posters, infographics and structured presentations that clearly defined learning goals. Complex topics that once required lengthy explanations are now broken into smaller, understandable tasks.

The technology is also opening doors to inclusion. Madhubala, a teacher from CM Shri School in Dwarka's Sector 22, shared how AI helped her support an autistic student. Using Copilot, she created customised motivational stickers and feedback tools designed to make the child feel more comfortable. Language learning, too, is seeing a shift. Preeti Sharma, another educator from Rohini, said the tool helps simplify abstract concepts in English lessons and encourages higher-order thinking skills such as inference and prediction.

Students are not just consuming technology; they are creating with it. Shubhi Yadav, a student, described building a project called "Parakh AI". "By placing a fruit like an orange or mango in front of a camera, the system identifies it and provides detailed information," she said. For another group of students, including Suhana and Aditi, AI became their backstage mentor. With no prior experience in theatre, they used Copilot to script a play, learning about costume design, lighting, mood, and tone along the way.

BRINGING AI TO CLASSROOMS

Photo: Rajesh Mehta

India to be the first country in Asia to join a programme under which Microsoft will train two million teachers

All 75 CM Shri schools in Delhi to adopt the programme



Brad Smith, vice-chair and president, Microsoft, at a CM Shri School on Pandara Road on Friday

'ELEVATE FOR EDUCATORS' IS A STRUCTURED FRAMEWORK FOCUSED ON THREE PILLARS

CREDENTIALS
- To introduce new educator credentials aligned to national frameworks and the AI Literacy framework
- Designed for educators across schools, polytechnics, vocational institutions and higher education, in partnership with institutions of national importance

COMMUNITY
- Initiative to bring together a community of two million educators
- Enable peer learning, collaboration and professional recognition across disciplines, institutions and regions, supported by a progressive achievement model

CAPACITY
- To help build AI ambassadors, educator academies, AI productivity labs and centres of excellence across 25,000 institutions, supporting hands on training and institutional readiness before AI tools are introduced into classrooms
- Initiative aligns with national digital education platforms, including Diksha and Skill India Digital Hub

EDUCATION

NCERT Launches AI-Powered e-Jaadui Pitara for Children Aged 3–8

Edited by: Deeksha Teri | Updated Feb 21, 2026, 12:22 IST

Free multi-platform digital learning toolkit offers stories, activity books, interactive bots and IVRS support to promote holistic early childhood development at home and in classrooms.



Free digital magic box offers stories, activity tools and smart AI companions for children aged 3–8 across app, website, WhatsApp, Telegram and IVRS platforms.

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The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has launched an Artificial Intelligence powered e-Magic Box (*e Jaadui Pitara*)for children aged between three to eight. In addition to basing it for children, this digital magic box can also be used by teachers and parents to help guide early learning at

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home and in classrooms. In addition to an online website, this online application is available in form of a mobile app, an IVRS system, and is also available at WhatsApp and Telegram.

The application provides educational content along with interactive assistance through intelligent digital companions. This website has several tools to guide easy learning for young children. These tools include books (activity and story magazines), cards, charts, dominoes, flash cards, guidelines for teachers and trainers, posters, puppets, puzzles, toys and games.

Powered via AI

What is the AI literacy initiative in Kerala? −

The 'Sarvam AI Mayam' initiative in Kerala aims to train 6 lakh parents in AI literacy, enhancing their understanding of AI's opportunities and risks. It includes practical training for parents on using AI tools in daily life, such as identifying plants and translating languages. This program is being implemented through Little KITEs IT clubs and emphasizes the importance of responsible AI usage.

How will AI be integrated into school curricula in India? +

What role do AI Labs play in education? +

This e-Jaadui Pitara is available at:

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JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

CBSE directs schools to implement ‘mental health and wellness’ & ‘social emotional learning’ measures

The Board has further advised schools to review their examination patterns periodically to “cultivate a broader sense of identity among students beyond test scores and ranks.”

By: Education Desk 3 min read New Delhi Updated: Feb 22, 2026 09:28 AM IST



Central Board of Secondary Education HQ (Image via CBSE)

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The Central Board of Secondary Education has directed all affiliated schools to implement a series of mandatory measures to promote “Mental Health and Wellness” and “Social Emotional Learning (SEL)” among students. The circular, which the Board issued in line with the Supreme Court’s July 25, 2025 judgment, lays down detailed compliance requirements for schools.

ARTICLE CONTINUES BELOW VIDEO



Watch Video

Referring to the apex court's directions, the CBSE stated that the emotional resilience and psychological well-being of students require "collective attention and proactive support" in today's demanding academic environment.

ALSO READ | CBSE Class 10 English Analysis: How was this year's paper?

As per the circular, "all teaching and non-teaching staff shall undergo mandatory training at least twice a year, conducted by certified mental health professionals." The training must cover psychological first aid, identification of warning signs, response to self-harm, and referral mechanisms. It further emphasised that "all teaching, non-teaching and administrative staff are adequately trained to engage with students in a sensitive, inclusive and non-discriminatory manner."

Schools have also been asked to maintain proper documentation. They must “maintain anonymous records and prepare an annual report, indicating the number of wellness interventions, student referrals, training sessions, and mental health related activities.”

In addition, institutions are required to organise regular sensitisation programmes for parents and guardians. The circular states that schools must “sensitise parents and guardians to avoid placing undue academic pressure, to recognise signs of psychological distress, and to respond, empathetically and supportively.” Mental health literacy, emotional regulation, life skills education and awareness of institutional support services are to be integrated into orientation programmes and curricular activities.

The Board has further advised schools to review their examination patterns periodically to “cultivate a broader sense of identity among students beyond test scores and ranks.” It has called for greater focus on extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts and personality development initiatives.

On career guidance, CBSE has made structured counselling mandatory. “Schools shall provide regular structured career counselling services for students and their parents or guardians,” the notice reads. These sessions must be conducted by qualified counsellors and aim to reduce “unrealistic academic pressure, promote awareness of diverse academic and professional pathways, and assist students in making informed and interest-based career decisions.”

The Board has also urged schools to nominate teachers and staff for capacity-building programmes offered through CBSE training platforms to build a school ecosystem that prioritises mental health and empowers every student to flourish.

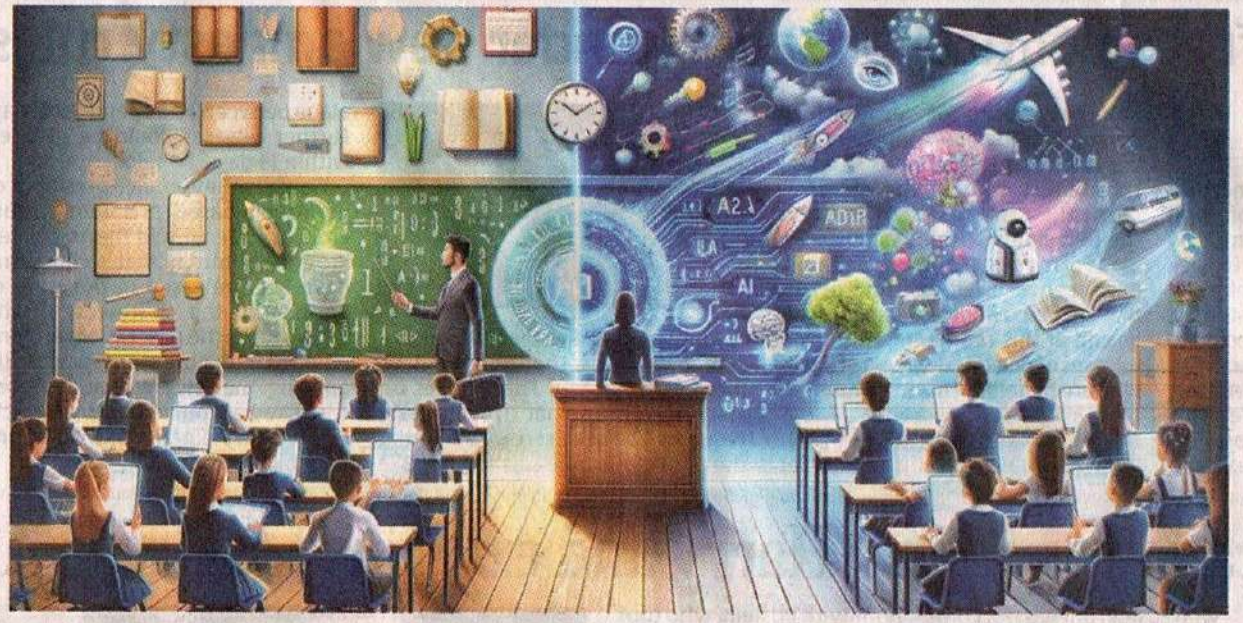
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The Pioneer, 23 February 2026, Page no. - (11)

AI and the transformation of India's education system



RICHARD HAY



India has recently concluded a major international convention on Artificial Intelligence, underscoring the nation's growing ambition to emerge as a global hub of advanced technology and innovation.

This landmark event should prompt a deeper national introspection: how can AI be systematically harnessed to upgrade the quality, reach, and relevance of education across the country? Education, after all, is the foundation upon which economic growth, social equity, and national progress firmly rest.

Artificial Intelligence offers far more than a technological upgrade; it provides an opportunity for a structural transformation of the educational ecosystem. Traditional education systems, constrained by uniform syllabi and standardised teaching methods, often fail to address individual learning differences. AI, by contrast, enables a shift towards personalised, adaptive, and learner-centric education, which is indispensable in a diverse country like India.

Personalised and adaptive learning

One of the most significant contributions of AI lies in its ability to tailor learning experiences to individual students. AI-powered platforms can analyse a student's learning speed, comprehension levels, strengths, and weaknesses, and adjust content accordingly. This ensures that no student is left behind due to rigid instructional methods, while simultaneously allowing gifted students to advance beyond prescribed limits. Such adaptability can drastically reduce dropout rates and improve learning outcomes nationwide.

Enhancing teaching effectiveness

AI should be viewed as an enabler for teachers, not a replacement. By automating routine and time-consuming tasks-such as grading, attendance tracking, and basic assessments-AI allows teachers to focus on higher-value roles: mentoring, critical thinking development, ethical guidance, and creativity.



Moreover, data-driven insights generated by AI can help teachers identify learning gaps early and design targeted interventions.

Bridging regional and social inequalities

India's education system is marked by stark disparities between urban and rural institutions, and between privileged and marginalised communities. AI-driven digital education platforms can help bridge these gaps by delivering high-quality content in multiple Indian languages, providing remote access to expert instruction, and ensuring uniform academic standards. When integrated with public education initiatives, AI can become a powerful tool for educational equity and national integration.

Curriculum reform and skill orientation

Beyond pedagogy, AI must be embedded into the curriculum itself. Students should not only learn with AI but also learn about AI. Digital literacy, data reasoning, ethical use of technology, and interdisciplinary problem-solving must become integral components of education from the secondary level onwards. Such exposure will prepare students for future employment landscapes shaped by automation and intelligent systems.

Phased implementation across educational levels

A pertinent question arises: can AI-based reforms be introduced simultaneously across all levels of education? The answer lies in phased and context-sensitive implementation.

- At the primary level, AI can support foundational literacy, numeracy, and inclusive learning.
- At the secondary level, AI can assist subject mastery, personalised assessments, and career guidance.
- At the higher education level, AI must drive advanced research, innovation, and global competitiveness.

Leadership role of premier institutions

India's premier institutions, particularly the Indian Institutes of Technology, have a vital national role to play. Their academic and research expertise can guide curriculum redesign, teacher training, and the development of indigenous AI solutions suited to Indian conditions. By mentoring universities and colleges across the country, these institutions can help elevate higher education to international standards while safeguarding national priorities.

Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence, if adopted with foresight and responsibility, can bring about a sea change in India's educational system. The challenge before policymakers, educators, and institutions is to ensure that this transformation is inclusive, ethical, and sustainable. With a clear national vision, robust institutional support, and sustained investment in human capacity, AI can empower Indian students to become not merely participants but leaders in the global knowledge economy.

The time to embed these transformative changes into our educational curriculum is not in the distant future-it is now.

Writer is a former Member of Parliament and Retd. Professor

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The Burden of Bags: Why Heavy School Loads Persist Despite Reform Promises

Experts trace the problem to structural issues in the education system, including textbook-centric learning and weak implementation of reforms first flagged decades ago.



Ainnie Arif

Updated on: 23 February 2026 7:33 am

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Summary of this article

- Students continue to carry excessively heavy school bags, with some reporting multiple unused textbooks despite NEP 2020’s recommendation of bagless days and weight limits.
- Parents question the effectiveness of policies such as the 10 per cent body weight rule, arguing that a single standard cannot apply to all children.
- Parents and educationists highlight the lack of technology-enabled and experiential learning.

Aditya*, a Class 8 student, carries several textbooks for the same subject to school, seven for Hindi alone, adding that some of them are not used at all during the term. He sits through nine classes in school everyday, with books and notebooks for all.

Ad removed. Details

His mother, Apoorva*, says the school in Noida, affiliated with the CBSE board, has added extra books to the curriculum under the guise of promoting critical thinking and analysis, calling it little more than a way to extract additional money from parents.

“The bag is nowhere close to 10 per cent of my body weight,” Aditya resolutely said. He laughed it off when asked whether he has any bagless days.

In a parliamentary reply, the government of India said that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommends that all students will participate in a 10-day bagless period during Grades 6-8 where they intern with local experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists etc.

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free," it stated.



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BY **PTI**

Furthermore, the government also formed a class-wise range for the ratio for school bags as 10 per cent of the body weight as suggested in School Bag Policy. Apoorva questioned the relevance of such a standard, asking how the body weight benchmark for one student could possibly apply to all. She remarked that a single measure cannot suit everyone."One glove cannot fit all," she said.

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However, the reality of how many books the students are carrying seems to be different as the policy might just be on paper.

"This entire issue exists because of education being in the concurrent list," said Dr. Ramanand, Director of Center of Policy Research and Governance.

The majority of the students in India are enrolled in schools and curriculum that are managed by states, he said, adding that "the training for those schools is also done by the SCERT. So, in a way, the entire structure of the school is transferred to the state."

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He said the Centre can at best oversee its implementation, while it is the state government that determines the school curriculum and its norms, and this is where the issue of heavy school bags arises.

The discussion on school bags and associated learning is not new. It was discussed in the 1993 Yash Pal Committee Report on ‘Learning without Burden’.

The committee was constituted to advise on enhancing the quality of learning while easing the burden on school students. Identifying joyless learning, fear of examinations, an excessive reliance on textbooks, and an overloaded syllabus as key curriculum concerns, it proposed a range of reforms.

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Finding the issues in the education system, the report stated that it can be identified briefly by saying that "a lot is taught, but little is learnt or understood". While the problem manifests itself in a variety of ways, the most common and striking manifestation is the size of the school bag.

“A survey conducted in Delhi revealed that the weight of school bag, on an average, in primary classes in public schools is more than 4 kg while it is around 1 kg in MCD schools,” it said.

maintaining a 1:30 pupil–teacher ratio and introducing subject-specific curriculum improvements.

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"We are obsessed with the notion that there is only one way to learn, which is through books," Ramanand said. "We are not open about other ways of learning, which is why children's creativity is stifled."

Zaira*, a mother of another student in class 8th who goes to a school in Delhi, said that not much has changed in terms of book-based learning since her school ended decades ago.

She said her son worries about being reprimanded and insists on carrying all his books and additional notebooks to school to avoid being caught without the required material.

Uttarakhand Schools To Have 'Bag-Free' Day Each Month

BY

Zaira said there is no concept of bagless days and questioned why there has been so little progress in technology-enabled learning, adding that in a "digital India", students should not be subjected to such heavy reliance on books.

Echoing Zaira's concerns of technology being integrated in learning, Ramanand pointed to a deeper problem in the education system and the structural understanding of it.

"A bag is not just a bag, it is a mental blockage. The child should feel what they're going to learn today," he said, adding that if the class needs to learn traffic rules, one can simply arrange a visit to the traffic police on a small local road. "Why do you want to teach them

He said the problem in the education system also arises with the bureaucratic mindset. “Sometimes, even our educationists start thinking like bureaucrats, which needs to change for transformation in the education system to occur.”

While maintaining that the initiatives outlined in the NEP are significant, he said their effective implementation is equally crucial. A school bag, he observed, gradually becomes part of a child’s identity and is carried into adult life, associated with confidence, a sense of completeness in formal settings, and being perceived as responsible.

He concluded that this mindset needs to be reshaped at an early stage.

**Names have been changed to maintain anonymity.*



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Tamil Nadu

NCERT, Auroville discuss integrating education into national framework

The meeting was led by Sushil Kumar Tiwari of NCERT's Department of Teacher Education and SAIIER Executive Auraven.

Express News Service

VILLUPURAM: Officials of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and representatives of Auroville have initiated discussions on collaborating to integrate Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of Integral Education into the national education framework.

The meeting was led by Sushil Kumar Tiwari of NCERT's Department of Teacher Education and SAIIER Executive Auraven.

According to a statement from the Auroville Foundation, Auraven outlined the educational framework of the Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research (SAIIER), which oversees Auroville's schools and has implemented the 'Free Progress' system for nearly five decades.

The SAIIER team said Integral Education addresses five aspects of human development — physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual — and added that the model aligns with the objectives of the National Education Policy 2020.

A key focus of the discussion was the 'Triple Challenge' framework for students in Classes 9 to 12. The programme proposes replacing board examinations with personal challenges in physical fitness, socio-emotional learning and mental research.



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Tiwari said NCERT had promoted innovative practices through various projects since the 1960s, including the Holistic Progress Card initiative. “The culture of innovation remains a hurdle in many States,” he said. Both sides agreed that board examination pressure continues to be a constraint.

The Auroville Foundation has decided to engage with the University Grants Commission to explore alternative pathways for university admissions.

The discussions concluded with a meeting attended by Jayanti S Ravi, Secretary of the Auroville Foundation and Additional Chief Secretary of Gujarat, along with Puducherry government school teachers selected for an NCERT programme.

Jayanti said there was an opportunity to synchronise the efforts of SAIIER and NCERT. She added that the proposed partnership would utilise NCERT’s national reach to document Auroville’s educational experiments and extend these practices to surrounding villages to create a model zone.

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Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Launches Teacher App 2.0- Powered By AI In Collaboration With Bharti Airtel & CK12 Foundation



Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan today launched the Teacher App 2.0 – Powered by AI in collaboration with Bharti Airtel and CK12 Foundation in New Delhi. Addressing the programme, Mr Pradhan said that the app is an AI-driven tech companion for schoolteachers to empower and support them. He added that the app provides the teachers with tools, content and dashboards to make teaching more engaging and productive. The Minister said that the government is working at a rapid pace to embed AI in education, and the Launch of this app adds momentum to the AI revolution taking place in the country. Mr Pradhan also said that AI can be a force multiplier in education. He said that it can enhance learning outcomes, lead to increased engagement and drive personalisation in education.

The Minister also appealed to the collaborators to use sovereign Language Learning Models and make training tools available in the majority of Indian languages.

CBSE's 3-language rule to be implemented in Class 6 from 2026-27?

As per leading media reports, CBSE is set to introduce the NEP 2020 three-language formula from the 2026-27 session, beginning in Class 6. English will be treated as a foreign language, and students may eventually have to appear for a third language paper in Class 10.

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How is English classified in CBSE's 3-language formula? →

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DeeperDive BETA



As per leading media reports, CBSE is set to introduce the NEP 2020 three-language formula from the 2026-27 session, beginning in Class 6. (Photo: PTI)

India Today Education Desk
New Delhi, UPDATED: Feb 26, 2026 17:33 IST

The Central Board of Secondary Education is set to roll out the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommendations on the three-language formula from the 2026-27 academic session, as per leading media reports.

Under the proposed structure, students in Class 6 will study three languages. At least two of these must be Indian languages. English will be treated as a “foreign” language under this framework.

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For schools already teaching English in Class 6, it will count as that one foreign language, and two Indian languages will need to be taught alongside it.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND OPTIONS

Reports suggest that if a school offers another foreign language, such as French or German, as the third language, it must still ensure that two Indian languages are part of the combination.

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The move is in line with the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023, which recommends that the third language be introduced in the middle stage, covering Classes 6 to 8.

The framework states that learning an unfamiliar third language requires more time and practice. It emphasises that adequate classroom hours should be allocated to


Hindi imposition crosses all limits, Tamil identity under assault: MK Stalin

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THIRD LANGUAGE TILL CLASS 10?

The reported changes may not stop at Class 8. The NCFSE recommends that all three languages continue in Classes 9 and 10 as well.

As per leading media reports, this could mean that by 2031, students appearing for the Class 10 Board examinations may have to write a paper for the third language too. At present, students typically appear for two language papers in the Board exams.

TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIAL

To align with the new recommendations, fresh textbooks and learning material will need to be developed. Reports indicate that CBSE is preparing study material for nine languages for the 2026-27 session. These are expected to include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Gujarati and Bangla, among others.

The NCFSE underlines that language education plays a crucial role in helping students stay connected to their culture and heritage. It highlights India's rich linguistic diversity and says exposure to multiple languages can promote multilingualism and strengthen a shared national identity.

If implemented as reported, this will mark one of the most significant shifts in language education at the middle and secondary school levels in recent years.


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CBSE to introduce third language option in Class 6 from 2026-27 session under NEP 2020

NEWS | TOI Education | Feb 28, 2026, 10:58 IST





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The Central Board of Secondary Education will introduce a third language option for students in Class 6 in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020, which calls for multilingual learning from the early years of schooling. The change will apply to schools affiliated with the board across the country.

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Under the revised structure, students in Class 6 will study three languages. At least two must be Indian languages. Where English is offered, it will be treated as a foreign language. In such cases, students will be required to select two Indian languages alongside English.

Structure of the three-language framework

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If a student opts for another foreign language such as French, Spanish or German, the requirement will remain unchanged. Two Indian languages must be included in the three-language combination.

Three-language approach is an integral part of NEP 2020, which is applicable to both government and private schools. Although it has provided a general framework, it has given scope for states and regions to choose which language to teach, as per their needs and demands. There is a scope for students to exercise their choice, as long as they opt for at least two languages that are originally from India.

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The policy also recommends that the mother tongue, home language or regional language be used as the medium of instruction at least until Class 5, and preferably till Class 8 and beyond.

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Continuation till secondary level

According to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023, students should continue learning all three languages until Class 10 to ensure continuity. Reports indicate that if this is strictly followed, students who write their Class 10 Board examinations in 2031 would have to

write a paper in their third language. At present, students usually sit two language papers in the Board examinations.

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The three-language formula was first introduced in the National Education Policy 1968 and reaffirmed in the National Education Policy 1986 and NEP 2020. The Centre has clarified that the framework serves as a guiding principle and is not legally binding. It has also stated that no language will be imposed on any state or individual.

Textbooks and implementation plans

To adjust to this new framework, new textbooks and other learning materials are expected to be developed. According to reports, new study materials for nine languages are being developed for the 2026-27 session. These languages include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Gujarati, and Bangla, among others.

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