INDIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR COOPERATION WITH UNESCO
RESPONSE TO COVID 19

In wake of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO (INCCU) has been working online to carry forward the mandates of the respective Sub Commissions.

PROMOTING DIGITAL EDUCATION WITH EQUITY

The Ministry of Human Resources Development and its associated institutions are promoting digital education through **ONLINE EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS** and through the mediums of **TV and RADIO**

When the Government of India declared a nation-wide lockdown on 23rd March 2020 to contain the spread of COVID 19, immediate action was taken to **intensify digital learning with equity** so that students across the country could continue their learning even during the lockdown. The Ministry has, over the last few years, developed **a rich variety of online resources** that are available on **a variety of platforms**. While students and teachers can access these through their laptops, desktops and mobile phones, these resources are being **reached to learners in remote areas through Television and Radio**.

ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES

The following are some of the online resources developed by the Government

1. **DIKSHA** – This is an online platform for school education . It offers teachers, parents and students engaging learning material relevant to the prescribed school curriculum. It has over 80,000 e-content items in multiple Indian languages, catering to Grades 1-12. During the lockdown period these contents have been accessed nearly 215 million times.
   This app can be downloaded from iOS and Google Play Store:
   Website: https://diksha.gov.in or https://seshagun.gov.in/shagun

2. **e-PATHSHALA** - A web portal and mobile app designed and deployed by the National Council for Educational Research and Training. It has 1886 audios, 2000 videos, 696 e- e-books (e-Pubs) and 504 Flip Books for classes 1st to 12th in different languages.
   Website: http://epathshala.nic.in or http://epathshala.gov.in

3. **NATIONAL REPOSITORY OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (NROER):** A portal equipped with best quality informational content on diverse topics in multiple languages a total of 14527 files including 401 collections, 2779 documents, 1345 interactive, 1664 audios, 2586 images and 6153 videos on different languages.
   Website: http://nroer.gov.in/welcome

4. **SWAYAM**: This is the national online education platform hosting 1900 courses covering both school (class IX to XII) And Higher Education (both UG and PG)   in all subjects including engineering, humanities and social sciences, law and management courses. A unique feature of SWAYAM is that, it is integrated with the conventional education . The courses are interactive and prepared by the best teachers in the country, and are available free of cost to any learner in the country. Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses (max 20%). There has been a three time increase in access to the platform during the lock down period.
   Website: https://www.swayam.gov.in

5. **SWAYAM PRABHA** -. Has 32 DTH TV channels transmitting educational contents on 24/7 basis. These channels are available for viewing all across the country using DD free Dish set top box and antenna.Now even the private DTH operators are telecasting these courses through their channels. The channels cover both school education (class IX to XII) And Higher Education in a wide range of subjects like engineering, vocational courses, teacher training, performing arts, social sciences and humanities subjects,   law, medicine, agriculture and many more.
   Website: https://www.swayamprabha.gov.in

6. **NISHTHA** –An integrated Teacher Training Portal and Moblie App
   Website : nishtha.ncert.gov.in

7. **NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY**: This is a digital repository of a vast amount of academic content in different formats and provides interface support for leading Indian languages for all academic levels including researchers and life-long learners, all disciplines, all popular form of access devices and differently-abled learners.
   Website : https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/

In addition to the above there are many other resources deployed by University Grants Commission (UGC), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) which are being intensified.

The lockdown period has seen a **huge upsurge in digital learning**. The access to the above digital resources has grown nearly five times. In addition to these, many institutions are holding online classes through various modes.

ENSURING EQUITY IN DIGITAL LEARNING

TV Channels/Radio are being used to to reach out to the most difficult areas. The **32 DTH TV** channels are available on **Swayam Prabha**. These channels are available for viewing all across the country using DD Free Dish Set Box and Antenna. The same are being promoted with special emphasis on students in remote areas. 12 channels will be exclusively marked for School education (Class 1 to 12). Swayam Prabha Channels pertaining to school education will be given for 2 hours per day to each State/UT. States will develop class wise/ subject wise content mapped to their syllabus in local languages. **Private DTH service providers** have also provided one channel each for education during COVID period.

Extensive use is being made of **radio channels** to broadcast educational programmes .Radio will be used specially for those children in remote areas who are not online (specially for classes 1 to 5). Activity based learning will be very effective for radio channels. **289 Community Radio Stations** are to be used .Due to digitalization, huge portions of **Analog spectrum of Radio and TV** that are not in use, may be utilized for connecting people online in remote areas.

Post lockdown, **Operation Digital Board** will be an immediate priority in all Govt. and Govt. aided secondary and senior secondary schools. (around 1.53 lakh schools). Two Digital Boards will be provided to each r school. DD free dish antenna will also be included in the package.Pre-loaded pen drives with contents from Class 1 to 12 for areas lacking connectivity. Students will be able to access e-content through on line as well as offline mode. It will also be helpful in watching educational TV channels including Swayam Prabha. Provision of monitoring and evaluation of the usage of ODB will be made.

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGES

In order to promote online learning it is proposed to make Regulatory changes like enhancing the permissible SWAYAM Online component in conventional universities and ODL programmes from the present 20% to 40% ; liberalize open, distance and online education regulatory framework so as to empower/enable 25% of the universities to offer ODL and Online education, from next academic session if complying with quality provisions ; integrating ODL and Online Regulations focusing on effective promotion, monitoring and regulation.

ONLINE PROMOTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

'ViraasatSetu' App launched to raise awareness about tangible and intangible heritage of India in the digital space. Webinars were held around Indian heritage sites and cities. The Government has ensured that grants payable to artists under various schemes are paid on time.

PROMOTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AS RESPONSE TO COVID 19

Over 200 Corona related research projects are on at leading Science and Technology institutions in the country. These range from Personal Protective Care Equipment to Testing Kits, Data Analytics Models and Treatment alternatives.

Engineering students from IIT Bombay, NIT Srinagar and Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST), in Jammu and Kashmir, has come up with a low-cost ventilator using locally available materials. IIT Delhi has developed low cost Probe-free Covid 19 detection assay.

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