

Narendra Kumar Shah, IAS

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Date: 25/04/2022.

Dear Madam/Sir,

As we all know that the Covid pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns have caused a major break in school education for the last 2 years. Though efforts were taken to ensure learning during the pandemic by taking online classes, it required access to devices, network and commitment on part of teachers, parents and students to secure learning. However, in Chirang due to the presence of remote hard to reach areas with low network accessibility, absence of smart phones with poor households, illiteracy among the parents, difficult living in the interior tribal pockets, all these contributed to a huge learning gap among the children. These children in government schools are mostly first generation learners and hence a deeper responsibility is bestowed upon us as education department. The impact of this break is more prominent at the primary school level because age 6-12 are the basic learning age. Learning loss at this critical stage can impair a child's ability to learn skill later.

Consider, for example, a class V student in April 2021 would have attended only few months of class IV and hardly for any duration of class III. So practically a class II student will be attending class V. But this student will also have forgotten some of his/her earlier learning in these 2 years. Similar will be status of students of other classes.

In this context, it is imperative to bridge the learning gap of these children. Being the first generation learner's, if such gaps remain unaddressed, it can seriously impact their growth and development. Thus spiralling, not only these families but the societies in these areas into impoverishment. Without foundational level of learning, such gap will also make the work of the teachers of middle and secondary classes more difficult.

This can lead to higher drop out rates at secondary level, causing an increase in unskilled labour impacting their future livelihood opportunities.

In order to bridge this gap, the District Administration Chirang with the support of 'The Ant' organization is planning to start a short duration project titled 'Project Catch Up'. The core idea is to teach students for 1 extra hour just after mid-day meal for coming few months. The aim is to provide basic minimum level of competency of language (Assamese, Bodo, English) and Maths. The training module and other materials for the same is being prepared in consultation with education department.

In this background, I, Deputy Commissioner, Chirang hereby appeal to all respected primary school teachers of Chirang district to spare one hour per day for next few months and to wholeheartedly contribute to the Project Catch-Up to achieve the successful outcome.

Your cooperation in this regard is highly solicited.

with regards

Yours sincerely,



Shri Narendra Kumar Shah, IAS

To,

All Primary School Teachers
Chirang, Assam