

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 2
ANSWERED ON-20/07/2026

National Digital University Initiative

*2. Shri Baijayant Panda:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Digital University initiative has improved access to higher education for students from remote, rural and aspirational districts, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the number of learners enrolled through digital platforms under the initiative since its inception; and
- (c) the measures taken by the Government to ensure academic quality, credit transferability and industry relevance of the courses offered under the said initiative?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)**

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) IN RESPECT OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 2 ANSWERED ON 20.07.2026 REGARDING “NATIONAL DIGITAL UNIVERSITY INITIATIVE” ASKED BY SHRI BAIJAYANT PANDA, HON’BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

(a) to (c): The Government of India has framed the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with a vision to strengthen learner-centric and technology-enabled education. In alignment with this vision, the Government has envisaged the establishment of a Digital University platform to provide flexible and multidisciplinary learning.

National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), has launched “NIELIT Digital University (NDU) Platform” in October 2025. NDU is a digital learning platform to deliver online and blended skill-based courses in emerging technology sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing and other frontier domains. The courses on this digital platform are aligned to National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) with credits to be transferred in the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) after successful completion. As on date, the NDU Platform host more than 100 courses, with over 2.70 Lakhs registration.

Further, the Ministry of Education has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen the digital learning in higher education ecosystem. The University Grants Commission (UGC) Open & Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes Regulations, 2020 provide a framework for offering quality higher education through Open & Distance Learning and Online modes. In the Academic Year 2025-26, over 800 Online programmes were approved in more than 120 Universities/HEIs, with an enrolment of 4,26,196 learners.

Further, premier institutions, including IITs, are offering online programmes in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Machine Learning and Cyber Security. The online Bachelor of Science in Data Science programme by IIT Madras has seen more than 55000 enrolments since 2021.

Additionally, with a view to democratise quality education through digital technology, the Ministry of Education has initiated the SWAYAM online platform to provide free access to courses from premier institutions. There have been more than 20,000 deliveries of courses on the platform, with cumulative enrolments exceeding 6 crores since its inception. Further, under the UGC (Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through SWAYAM) Regulations, 2021, Higher Educational Institutions may offer up to 40% credits in a semester through SWAYAM. As of July 2026, 450 universities have adopted the SWAYAM framework for credit transfer.

Further, to enhance industry-academia collaboration and improve employability of learners, the Ministry of Education has launched SWAYAM Plus platform. As of July 2026, the platform offers more than 500 industry-aligned courses across 15 sectors in collaboration with 89 industry partners.
