

## Pariksha Pe Charcha

**Prime Minister's frequent interaction with young India is aimed to ease off the burden of exams and promote competency-based joyful learning**



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India is the world's most youthful nation, with two-thirds of our population under 35. The youth of India have been able to distinguish themselves across the fields of arts and science and ushered as the new India. To encapsulate the skills and strengths of the country's youth, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has always come forward to support and interact with the youth.

For the youth of India, PM Modi has led transformative economic and social sector reforms. These transformations have helped pave a monumental journey for the empowerment of the youth. I am glad that Prime Minister has always acknowledged the power of education and believed it to be a force multiplier. He has consistently advocated for the provision of quality education along with stress-free examinations for the students. I would want to reiterate that PM Modi is the only prime minister across the globe who interacts with the students regularly. Prime Minister in his path-breaking bestselling book 'Exam Warriors', mentioned "the more we talk about these issues, share our views and experiences and learn from others, the greater will be the chances of ensuring that our children have fun-filled childhood that they deserve." Thus, it is our collective duty to ensure that students' learning process is not perplexed by the examination stress. We must put an end to students' constant anxiety that 'what do I do next?' through dialogue.

In the spirit of continuous dialogue, Modi Ji had initiated



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fun-filled and thought-provoking interactions with students. Since 2015, Modi Ji has been interacting directly with the students who are appearing for their exams. He has proactively led the development of resilient 'Exam Warriors' — brave youngsters taking part in the exams' festival. Through these interactions, he has facilitated debate and discourse around the importance of stress-free examinations and the need to pursue knowledge over exams. These interactions have been of utter support to the students during the crucial phases of their lives. Pariksha Pe Charcha has become a part of the larger movement — 'Exam Warriors', enabling the creation of a stress-free atmosphere for youngsters. It has become the moment wherein all the students, parents, teachers, and society are brought together to foster an environment where

each child's unique individuality is celebrated, encouraged, and allowed to express itself fully. Pariksha Pe Charcha has become immensely popular among the students, parents and teachers. In less than a month from the date of announcing registration, the number of participants logging into the MyGov portal for joining the PPC contest has jumped nearly five times — around 14 lakh — as compared to last year.

I am delighted to share that along with Pariksha Pe Charcha, our government is also bringing reforms to smoothen the 'pariksha', i.e. examinations. Under the able leadership of our PM, we have introduced the National Education Policy 2020. The NEP recommends a plethora of reforms at school education level to ensure quality education while propagating

stress-free examination for the youth. Though the Board exams for grades 10 and 12 will be continued, the existing system will be redesigned to encourage holistic development. The examinations will involve more flexibility, best of two attempts, while enabling student choice. Students will now be able to choose the subjects in which they take Board exams. Board exams will be made 'easier'; exams will now test only the students' core competencies rather than the rote-learning. The NEP also recommends the establishment of a National Assessment Centre; the centre will be established by the end of 2021. PARAKH will be established as a standard-setting body. It will be entrusted with the task of developing and validating standards of assessment for all school stages and curricular areas of school edu-

cation, based on NEP

I would also like to highlight that along with the continuous Pariksha Pe Charcha, we have successfully conducted entrance exams for our premier engineering (IIT-JEE MAINS) and medical (NEET) courses. By conducting these examinations, we have set an example for other countries to reflect upon for the reduction of examination stress. It ensured that there should be no loss of academic year for the students. Further, to reduce the burden of exams for the students, several initiatives have been started by the Ministry of Education. CBSE has reduced the syllabi of examinations to the extent of 30 per cent during the pandemic and introduced mandatory art-integrated work for classes I to X. The NEP also promoted art-integrated learning in schools to make teaching and learning competency-based and joyful. 'MANODHA' was also launched to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families to ensure mental health and emotional well-being during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond. Even though the pandemic has thrown several challenges upon the young students of our country, our government has ensured that the current generation does not bear the hefty cost of the pandemic. The efforts are being taken to enable the students to overcome the challenges into opportunities and take India to a greater height.

*The writer is the Secretary, Education Ministry, Government of India. Views expressed are personal.*

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