

FROM THE STATES—TRIPURA

Saharsh Curriculum

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Saharsh is the title of the socio-emotional learning curriculum framework, developed by SCERT Tripura in collaboration with Labhya Foundation. It was launched in August 2022 as a pilot project in 40 selected schools from various districts of Tripura.

The project is perceived as a first-of-its-kind State-wide education programme.

For this project, teachers in 204 schools were trained by January 2023 and by March 2023, 200 more schools were involved. Moreover, 30 Assistant Headmasters from different districts of Tripura were selected to work as Saharsh Implementation Ambassadors.

The genesis of the project has been well-articulated in the preliminary pages of the *Saharsh Curriculum*.

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Thousands of children currently enrolled in the government education system are finding it hard to cope with the harsh realities of life. Without learning coping strategies for social situations, children in the classroom may exhibit behaviour, such as attention deficit disorder, lack of curiosity, inhibitions, powerlessness, loneliness, shame, etc. These not only affect academic performance but also their mental states, emotions, their interpersonal relationships, as well as performance.

At this critical juncture, more than 50 per cent of India's population today are under the age of 25. This means an estimated 500 million people will enter the workforce in the next 15 years. The government education system must be prepared to adequately equip young men and women with the skills necessary to succeed in this rapidly changing world. It is therefore imperative to take immediate steps to develop children's social and interpersonal skills to face the harsh realities and become effective learners. The Saharsh Curriculum has been developed, keeping in mind various aspects of social and emotional learning aimed at building and maintaining healthy relationships among children to develop mental health and motivate them to be lifelong learners. Saharsh Curriculum is the first important step towards this goal. It is hoped

that through this effort, the education system can be made more conducive to the all-round development of the students.

The document underlines the pivotal role of teachers in ensuring its success. In order to ensure the mental well-being of the students of Tripura, Saharsh Curriculum is being implemented on a regular basis. Students will engage in open discussions through mindfulness, stories, reflective conversations and activities designed to help students experience, and practice essential social and emotional skills.

A team of qualified teachers and educators from Tripura were selected to co-develop the curriculum.

While developing Saharsh Curriculum, it has been ensured that the needs of the students of Tripura are historically reflected in their socio-cultural background and diversity. In order to make this curriculum relevant, the students' local environment is highlighted. The entire curriculum has been developed in Bengali, so that the needs and context of the children of Tripura can be easily understood by the teachers.

Stories, activities and expressions included in this curriculum are from the day-to-day life of students, thus making it contemporary and relevant. In Saharsh classroom, the teachers can act as a facilitator and guide them to discuss and reflect their

thoughts. Teachers can help identify how students are feeling, without making answers all about being right or wrong.

As educators, it is important to foster an environment of free interaction, where students can express their thoughts without fear. It is imperative that a learning environment is created, where students are not judged based on their responses or ideas. We should encourage them to think outside the box and feel comfortable sharing their opinion without worrying about consequences. It is obvious that the students will share ideas and opinions that may not be acceptable

to you, but it is important to keep an open mind and allow them to express openly. By creating a fearless and non-judgmental environment, students will learn more effectively in the long run and build relationships with each other.

It is not an extra burden that the teachers are expected to carry out, rather its successful implementation over time will help the teachers to solve real problems, like discipline, management, good academic result, attendance in schools, recruitment of parents in education, etc.

The document aims to transform the present and future generation of Tripura into effective learners.