

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 5484.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19/09/2025

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 39/2025

5484. Ms N K Sharif (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

(a) What progress has been made regarding the guidelines for disaster management in schools, (b) on what date will the specified guidelines be published and (c) how will implementation of guidelines be monitored?

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Response

(a) The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is in the process of developing the *Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management in Schools*, which will provide a standardised framework to strengthen school-level preparedness, response, and recovery in the event of disasters. The Guidelines will align with the *National Disaster Management Framework* and outline clear roles for schools, districts and Provincial Education Departments (PEDs).

This work follows the recent review of disaster management policies initiated in response to the increasing frequency and severity of weather-related incidents affecting school infrastructure across several provinces. The review aims to improve coordination, strengthen early warning systems and ensure that schools are better equipped to respond to emergencies.

(b) It is anticipated that the Guidelines will be finalised and approved during the middle of the 2026 school year, following completion of the required institutional consultation processes with relevant stakeholders, including PEDs, the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), and other sector partners.

It must be noted, however, that provinces are already required in terms of existing disaster management law and related frameworks to work collaboratively with all relevant spheres of government (including municipalities) to improve and ensure their readiness to respond to disasters. The Guidelines under development will provide further guidance to PEDs, districts and schools in this regard.

(c) The DBE is currently working closely with the National and Provincial Disaster Management Centres to strengthen support for schools in responding to disaster risks. To enhance coordination, the DBE will establish an *Education Sector Disaster Risk Reduction Team* comprising representatives from all PEDs. This team will be responsible for planning, monitoring and advising on the implementation of the Guidelines, ensuring that all schools adopt proactive measures for disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery in line with the guidance provided by the NDMC.