

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY

RAJYA SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO - 347

ANSWERED ON 25/03/2026

Low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in secondary education

347 Shri S Niranjana Reddy:

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in secondary and higher secondary education remains low, with GER recorded at 79 per cent and 58 per cent respectively in 2024-25;
- (b) whether Economic Survey 2025-26 has noted that low enrolment in secondary grades is partly due to the limited availability of secondary schools,
- (c) whether it is also a fact that only about 17 per cent of schools in rural areas are secondary schools compared to 38 per cent in urban areas; and
- (d) if so, steps taken by Government to increase the number of secondary schools and improve enrolment and retention of children?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (D) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 347 ANSWERED ON 25/03/2026 ASKED BY HON'BLE MP SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY REGARDING 'LOW GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER) IN SECONDARY EDUCATION'

(a): As per Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2024-25, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in secondary and higher secondary education is 78.7 per cent and 58.4 per cent respectively.

(b) & (c): As per UDISE+ 2024-25, number and percentage of schools by level of education are given below:

Location Type	Number and Percentage of schools		
	Total Schools	Number of Secondary schools*	Percentage of Secondary schools
Overall	1471473	306942	20.9
Rural	1210062	207316	17.1
Urban	261411	99626	38.1

*As per NEP structure

The Economic Survey 2025-26 under the head “Innovative pedagogy and community participation” has relied on UDISE+ data.

(d): Education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. The Central Government assist States and UTs through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha. Samagra Shiksha is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12. The program aims to improve access, equity, and quality of education and has been aligned with the recommendations of NEP 2020 as revamped Samagra Shiksha. One of the key goals of the NEP, 2020 is to improve access and achieve a 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) across all levels of school education. The salient interventions are:

Infrastructure development: Samagra Shiksha program provides funding for the construction of new schools, additional classrooms, and the improvement of existing school infrastructure to ensure that all children have access to a nearby school. Additionally special focus is laid on establishment of ICT labs, smart classrooms, skill labs, tinkering labs, STEM labs, integrated science lab etc.

Provisions for out-of-school children: Samagra Shiksha focuses on identifying and enrolling out-of-school children, including those from marginalised communities, and providing them with targeted interventions to facilitate their mainstreaming into the education system.

Transport and residential facilities: The program supports the provision of safe and accessible transport, as well as residential facilities, to enable children from remote and disadvantaged areas to attend school regularly.

Partnerships and community engagement: Samagra Shiksha encourages partnerships with various stakeholders, including local communities, to ensure that the program is responsive to the needs of the community and enhances community ownership of the education system.

Inclusivity and Accessibility: Inclusive education for children with special needs to education is available to all, contributing to higher GER.

Remote and Rural Areas: Special measures are taken to provide quality education in underserved areas, ensuring broader participation.

Enhanced emphasis on **convergence with Skills and other Government departments/agencies** are made for undertaking development works for providing exposure and internships to children on different vocations. Support under **Skill Education extended to Government aided schools** also in addition to Government Schools and grant/number of job roles/sections linked to enrolment and demand.

Financial assistance/grant is also provided to the States and UTs for various activities to reduce dropout and increase enrolment in Government schools, which include opening/strengthening of new schools up to Senior Secondary level, strengthening school infrastructure, setting up and up gradation and running of **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV)** upto class 12, setting up of residential schools/hostels named **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalayas**, hostels under **Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)** and **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA)**, transport allowance, undertaking enrolment drives, seasonal hostels/residential camps, provision of vocational education and ICT facilities in schools, providing free text books and free uniform, transport/escort facility, etc, financial assistance/grant is also provided for aids and appliances for children with special needs.

Under Samagra Shiksha, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities for Universalization of School Education including opening/strengthening of new schools upto senior secondary level, construction of school buildings & additional classrooms, development/strengthening of school infrastructure in northern border areas under Vibrant Village Programme, free uniforms to eligible children and free text books at elementary level, **transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives**.

Special training for age-appropriate admission of out of school children and residential as well as non-residential training for older children, seasonal hostels / residential camps, special training centres at worksites, transport/ escort facility are also supported to bring out of school children to the formal schooling system including support to complete their education through **NIOS/SIOS**. Under the student-oriented component for the children with special needs, financial assistance is provided for identification and assessment of children with special needs, aids and appliances, braille kits and books, appropriate teaching learning material and stipend to girl students with disability etc.

Further, the scheme provides for free textbooks to all children and free uniforms to all girls, SC, ST and BPL boys at elementary level including primers/textbooks for tribal languages with bridging materials. In addition, Provision for qualitative and innovative interventions such as **Holistic Progress Card (HPC)**, sports grant, library grant, composite school grant, teacher training, strengthening of TEIs, **assessment cell, Bagless days, school complexes, internships with local artisans, curriculum and pedagogical reforms etc.**

Total actual Central Release under Samagra Shiksha for the years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (as on 02.03.2026) are as under:-

Year	Actual Release (in lakhs)
2023-24	3238278.58
2024-25	3445820.90
2025-26	2315850.25

The above interventions reflected upon UDISE + in terms of number of secondary and higher secondary schools from the year 2020-21 to 2024-25 is given below:

Year	Secondary schools	Higher Secondary schools
2020-21	151946	139520
2021-22	150452	142398
2022-23	145452	150289
2023-24	143978	158886
2024-25	142749	164193

As per UDISE+, the dropout rate by level of education from the year 2020-21 to 2024-25 is given below:

Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary		
	Girls	Boys	Overall	Girls	Boys	Overall	Girls	Boys	Overall
2020-21	0.7	0.8	0.8	2.3	1.6	1.9	14.2	14.9	14.6
2021-22	1.4	1.6	1.5	3.3	2.7	3.0	12.3	13.0	12.6
2022-23	7.8	7.8	7.8	8.3	7.9	8.1	15.4	17.3	16.4
2023-24	1.7	2.1	1.9	5.3	5.2	5.2	12.6	15.5	14.1
2024-25	0.0	0.8	0.3	2.9	4.1	3.5	9.6	13.3	11.5

It is noted that the dropout rate at all levels of education has gone down from 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, which is indicative of an improved retention at various levels of education.

As per the data available on UDISE+, advancements have been made in improving universal access across all levels of school education. This is evidenced by Gross Access Ratio (GAR) from 2020-21 and 2024-25:

Year	Secondary	Higher Secondary
2020-21	95.48	72.12
2021-22	95.48	90.55
2022-23	96.09	91.65
2023-24	95	94.67
2024-25	95.35	94.98

GAR: Gross access ratio (GAR) is total villages/habitations having school within specified norm in a year out of total villages/habitations in that year.

The NEP, 2020 is premised in ensuring access and inclusivity for all and aims to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in preschool to Secondary level by 2030.
