

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY  
RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3710  
ANSWERED ON 25/03/2026**

**Opening of Balwadi in schools**

3710 # **Dr. Bhim Singh:**

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

- (a) the current status of the programme to open Balwadis in schools;
- (b) the current status of the Vidya Pravesh programme; and
- (c) the current status of the programme to make teachers adaptable to phonetic teaching?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

**(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)**

(a): In the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, for the first time, 3 years of pre-schools (Balvatika/Balwadi) is recognized as a continuum of education in the 5+3+3+4 structure where the foundational stage is 3 years of pre-school and grade 1 & grade 2. Para 1.4 of the NEP 2020 states that in order to ensure universal access to high quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) across the country “*ECCE shall be delivered through a significantly expanded and strengthened system of early-childhood education institutions consisting of (a) standalone Anganwadis; (b) Anganwadis co-located with primary schools; (c) pre-primary schools/sections covering at least age 5 to 6 years co-located with existing primary schools; and (d) stand-alone pre-schools.*”

As per UDISE+ 2024–25, preschool access has expanded rapidly across the country. Out of 9,11,035 Government and Government-aided schools with Grade 1, a total of 4,81,004 schools has some form of preschool education facility, either Balvatika/Balwadi or co-located Anganwadi Centre or both.

(b): Under the Vidya Pravesh programme, from the year 2022-23, over 4.2 crore students in around 8.9 lakh schools have benefitted.

(c): The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) released in 2022 emphasizes on phonological awareness as component of early language and literacy. NCF-FS has recommended four block approach for literacy instruction comprising of oral language development, word recognition including phonological awareness activities, reading and writing. This approach ensures a progressive and integrated development of language and literacy skills at the foundational stage. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been conducting capacity building programmes for key resource persons including teachers of the foundational stage, where the four block approach of language teaching-learning is adopted.