

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 603
ANSWERED ON 04.02.2026

LOW EDUCATION LEVELS IN INDIA'S WORKFORCE

603. SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP be pleased to state:

- (a) whether around 73 per cent of India's workforce has only basic education, with nearly 47 per cent having not progressed beyond primary or middle schooling, as highlighted in the 5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries;
- (b) if so, whether this education gap has contributed to lower labour productivity and skill mismatches, particularly in manufacturing and services sectors; and
- (c) the specific, time-bound measures being undertaken to raise workforce education and skill levels ahead of India's projected workforce peak around 2030?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (c): As per the latest annual estimates of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023-24, 72.9 percent persons of age 15 and above have successfully completed the education up to the secondary level. Also, 41.0 percent persons of age 15 and above have successfully completed the secondary and above level of education. As per the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2024-25 data, the national Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for secondary education is 68.5 percent. As per All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22 estimates, national Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for higher education is 28.4 percent.

Education and skill training are at the core of the effort to increase a country's productivity and to improve opportunities for better wage- and self-employment.

Realizing the essence of education and skilling for raising the employment opportunities (wage or self), Government of India has *inter-alia* taken the following measures for raise the education and skill attainment of the workforce:

- (i) Since 2018-19, Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing 'Samagra Shiksha' Scheme with aim to ensure that all children have access to qualitative and holistic education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment. PM-eVidya unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education across the country. Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) is the Nation's One Nation, One Digital platform for providing quality e-content for school education in States/UTs along with QR coded Energised Textbooks (ETBs) for all grade.

- (ii) As per National Education Policy 2020, the Government has planned to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education from 26.3% to 50% by 2035. The number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have increased from 51,649 in 2018-19 to 58,643 in 2022-23 (Provisional). Number of students has increased from 3.74 Crore in 2018-19 to 4.46 Crore in 2022-23 (Provisional). Number of HEIs offering online education has gone up from 7 in 2020 to 123 in 2025. Further, steps to improve the GER in India include expanding infrastructure by building new institutions and upgrading the existing ones, increasing financial supports through scholarship and funding and leveraging technologies by promoting online platforms like Swayam (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) and NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning).
- (iii) Under the Government of India's Skill India Mission (SIM) , the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) delivers skill, re-skill and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres under various schemes, viz. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Sikhshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), to all the sections of the society across the country. The SIM aims at enabling youth of India to get future ready and equipped with industry relevant skills. The details of the candidates trained under various schemes of MSDE are as under:

Scheme Name	Overall
PMKVY (since 2015-16 to 31.12.2025)	1,64,34,210
JSS (since 2018-19 to 31.12.2025)	34,14,181
NAPS (since 2018-19 to 31.12.2025)	47,19,923
CTS (ITIs) (2018-19 to 2024-25)	1,07,42,151

- (iv) MSDE has launched SIDH as a unified platform that integrates skilling, education, and entrepreneurship ecosystems to provide an array of services targeting a wide range of stakeholders. The details of the trained candidates, including women, are available on SIDH portal for connecting with potential jobs and apprenticeship opportunities. Bharatskills portal supports skill development by providing access to a range of educational materials, including e-books, question banks, and e-learning videos, available in 12 regional languages.
- (v) National Education Policy 2020 lays emphasis on integration of vocational education programs with mainstream education in all educational institutions in a phased manner. The National Credit Framework (NCrF) has been developed as a comprehensive credit accumulation & transfer framework encompassing elementary, school, higher, and vocational education & training. Accordingly, the skill training programs are offered as the standalone or embedded programs with the mainstream education. With an aim to augment the employability and competencies of the graduates, the Apprentices Embedded Degree/Diploma programs are also offered by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
