

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 688
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6TH FEBRUARY, 2017**

Out of Schools

688. ADV. M. UDHAYAKUMAR:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that freshly released census 2011 data has revealed that a large number of children do not go to school at all in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also true that many Indian children are forced to earn a livelihood even as they attend schools and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is true that the increasing cost of education is one of the reasons for the piling number of students who do not go to school; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to ensure that free education is provided to such students?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)**

(a): Census 2011 has reported that 8.4 crore children do not go to school in the age group of 5 – 17 years. However, under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 the mandated age group for free and compulsory elementary education in a neighbourhood school is 6-14 years. According to Census 2011, the number of children who do not attend schools (including never attended and attended before) in the age group of 6-13 years are 3.81 crore. Census 2011 has shown a marked decline in the number of out of school children in this age group from 5.8 crore in 2001 to 3.8 crore in 2011, a 35% decline over a period of ten years. The States and UTs in their Annual Work Plan & Budget, 2016-17 under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have reported a total of 14.2 lakh children as out of school at the elementary level of schooling as on 31.03.2016.

(b): As per the Census 2011, there are 78 lakh working children in the age group of 5–17 years. However, the number of working children in the age group of 5-14 years has reduced from 126.6 lakh in 2001 to 43.5 lakh in 2011, a 65% decline over a period of ten years.

As per an independent survey commissioned in 2014 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, 60.64 lakh children were estimated to be out of school in the age group of 6-13 years. The number of out of school children has declined from 134.59 lakh in 2005 to 60.64 lakh in 2014 in the same age group.

(c) & (d): The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) provides assistance to State Governments and UTs to ensure free and compulsory quality elementary education for all children. Universal enrolment is the first goal of SSA, and hence all efforts are being made to bring all children in schools. SSA has provided 2.04 lakh primary and 1.59 lakh upper primary schools for ensuring universal provisioning of schooling facilities. Preference for opening of school is given to tribal areas, and areas with high concentration of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and minority population. In addition, 3609 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, which are residential schools for girls at upper primary level, have also been sanctioned to the States for improving access to marginalised girls particularly out of school, either drop out or never enrolled. As per Unified District Information System for Education 2015-16 (provisional), the number of total children enrolled at elementary level has increased from 15.1 crores in 1998-99 to 19.67 crore at present.

Under SSA, provisions have also been made for residential schools/hostels and transportation/escort facility for children living in sparsely populated areas, children living in areas where schools cannot be opened due to unavailability of land and children in need of care and protection. Special training is also provided to all such children who are school dropouts and long absentees and they are enrolled in “back to school” camps.

Additionally, other strategies adopted under SSA such as strengthening school infrastructure, improving pupil-teacher ratios, providing incentives like free textbooks, uniforms for eligible category of children and mid-day meal in schools have proved to be useful in increasing the enrolment of children in elementary schools.

To further work on this issue and in pursuance of a resolution adopted in the 63rd Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held on 19th August, 2015 under the Chairpersonship of Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, a Sub-Committee of CABE under Chairpersonship of Minister of State for Human Resource Development has been constituted to 'Devise Pathway for Re-Engaging Out of School Children' vide Order dated 06.11.2015.

It may also be noted that since enactment of the RTE Act, 2009, a renewed focus by all States and UTs was given to ensure that every child of the age of 6-14 years is enrolled in schools. Therefore, it is expected that the decline in out of school children would have been faster after 2011.
