

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1850
ANSWERED ON 19/12/2022**

Closing of Rural Schools due to COVID

1850. SHRI ABHISHEK BANERJEE:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of rural schools that have been closed down during and post pandemic *i.e.* 2019-2022; and
- (b) the various steps taken/being taken by the Government to prioritise their reopening?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)**

(a) and (b) Education is in the Concurrent list of the Constitution and the opening and merger/closing of schools are within the purview of respective State Government and UT Administration. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides children's access to elementary schools within the defined area or limits of neighbourhood. In pursuance to Section 6 of the RTE Act, all States have notified area or limits of their neighbourhood norms. Further, Section 8 of the RTE Act, 2009 also mandates that the appropriate government shall provide free and compulsory elementary education to every child and will ensure availability of neighbourhood schools.

The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education has developed the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) system to record data on indicators of school education provided by all the States and Union Territories. As per data recorded in UDISE+, number of schools in the rural areas for the year 2019-20 to 2021-22 are as under:

School Management/Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Schools in the Rural Areas	1258347	1259028	1234788
