

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1732
ANSWERED ON 13th February, 2023

Impact of Permanently Closed Down Schools in Maharashtra

1732. DR. AMOL RAMSING KOLHE:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Government schools permanently closed down in recent years in Maharashtra and also the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government has any data regarding the students who left their studies due to closure of these schools and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to get these children back to school;
- (d) whether the Government has launched any programme at school level to compensate the educational loss suffered by the children due to closure of schools and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether there are various resources/ opportunities available for children who have dropped out or never attended school to get them back into the system; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to prioritize the opening of these schools?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) to (f): Total number of Government schools in Maharashtra as per UDISE+ Data:

Year	Number of Government Schools
2021-22	65639
2020-21	65734
2019-20	65886

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.

Government of India in partnership with the States and UT Governments have taken a range of initiatives to ensure that all children are enrolled in schools and complete their elementary education. The Department of School Education and Literacy has launched an Integrated Scheme for School Education - Samagra Shiksha with effect from 2018-19 which subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teacher Education. The Samagra Shiksha scheme has now been aligned with the recommendations of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and has been continued for a period of five years with effect from 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026. The scheme aims to ensure that all children have access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment which should take care of their diverse background, multilingual needs, different academic abilities and make them active participants in the learning process.

Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities to reduce number of Out of School Children (OoSC) including opening/strengthening of new schools upto senior secondary level, construction of school buildings & additional classrooms, setting up, up-gradation and running of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, setting up of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalayas, free uniforms, free text books, transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives. Further, 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. Further, 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.

Under 'Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman' (PM POSHAN) one hot cooked meal in Government and Government aided schools is provided to students at the elementary level of education. Also, Section 10 of the RTE Act states that it shall be the duty of every parent or guardian to admit or cause to be admitted his or her child or ward, as the case may be, for elementary education in the neighbourhood school. Also, under National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme scholarship is awarded to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue the study at secondary stage.