

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 3802
ANSWERED ON- 24/03/2025

EDUCATION FOR ALL

3802. SMT. RACHNA BANERJEE:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure universal access to quality education, particularly in rural and underserved areas of the country;
- (b) whether the Government has any mechanism to ensure that education is accessible to children with disabilities and the manner by which schools are being made more inclusive;
- (c) the manner by which the Government is addressing the challenges of illiteracy in certain areas, especially in tribal and marginalized communities; and
- (d) the measures being taken by the Government to bridge the gap in educational access between urban and rural areas, particularly in terms of infrastructure and teacher availability?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (c): The Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing an integrated centrally sponsored scheme for School education- Samagra Shiksha. The scheme treats school education holistically, without segmentation from pre-primary to class XII in alignment with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and 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 Samagra Shiksha, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for implementation of various provisions of Samagra Shiksha Scheme including free uniform to eligible children at elementary level, free textbooks at elementary level, reimbursement under RTE Act, various qualitative components development of primers/textbooks for tribal language, teaching learning materials, transport/escort facility up to secondary level, 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 centers, age-appropriate residential and non-residential training, support to Out of School Children (16 to 19 years) for completion of education through NIOS/SIOS, Holistic Progress Card, bilingual teaching material and books.

Further, financial assistance is also provided to the States and UTs for opening/strengthening of new schools upto senior secondary level, construction of school buildings & additional classrooms, development/strengthening of school infrastructure in northern border areas under Vibrant Village Programme, setting up, up-gradation and running of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, setting up of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalayas, construction of hostels for PVTGs under PM-JANMAN, construction of hostels under Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan for unsaturated ST population, strengthening of teacher education and strengthening of DIETs/BRCs/CRCs, provision of ICT and digital interventions.

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. It also has provisions for creation of differently-abled friendly infrastructure such as ramps, ramps with handrails and differently-abled friendly toilets for barrier free access in schools. Further, to improve the identification of CwSN, the Government has introduced the Prashast App for early screening and identification of CwSN in regular schools. Teacher capacity building programs are being undertaken under NISHTHA in hybrid mode to train general teachers to address the learning needs of CwSN.

The New India Literacy Programme (NILP) popularly known as ULLAS - targets non-literates aged 15 years and above who have missed formal schooling and provide educational opportunities to them to make them literate. It is being implemented from FY 2022-23 to 2026-27. A dedicated ULLAS App has been created for registering learners and volunteer teachers. Till now, over 2.20 crore learners and more than 40 lakh volunteer teachers have registered on the app. The App also contains TLM in the form of ULLAS primers in all languages.

(d) The Scheme supports creation and strengthening of infrastructure like, School buildings, Additional Classrooms, Toilets, Drinking Water, Ramp and Handrails, electrifications, Boundary wall, Science labs, Library Rooms, Computer Rooms, and Major Repairs works as per state requirements.

To bridge the gap between rural and urban areas in educational access, digital initiatives like ICT Labs, Smart Classrooms, PM e-Vidya including DIKSHA and SWAYAM PRABHA DTH-TV Channels are also being supported under the scheme.

The annual plans are prepared by the States and UTs as per their requirements/ priority including creation/ strengthening of infrastructure, support to teachers' salary etc. and same is reflected in their respective Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) Proposals. These plans are then appraised and approved by the Project Approval Board (PAB) in the Department of School Education & Literacy in consultation with the States and UTs as per the programmatic and financial norms of the scheme and physical and financial progress of the State for the interventions approved earlier.
