

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

LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 311  
ANSWERED ON – 11/08/2025

**CLOSING OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BACKWARD AREAS**

†\*311. Shri Virendra Singh:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the decision to close the primary schools does not violate the Right to Education of children from remote, poor, tribal and backward areas in the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the literacy rate and school attendance of girls has declined after the closure of schools in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any assessment has been made regarding deprivation of education due to closure of schools, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to ensure that a proper study of the geographical, social, ethnic and economic condition of the area is conducted before closing any school in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**A N S W E R**  
**MINISTER OF EDUCATION**  
**(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)**

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 311 ANSWERED ON 11<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2025 ASKED BY  
SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT REGARDING  
CLOSING OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BACKWARD AREAS**

(a) to (e): Education is in the Concurrent list of the Constitution and the opening, merger/closing of schools are within the purview of respective State Government and UT Administration, which are the appropriate Government under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, is a Central legislation which guarantees free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years and lays down minimum norms for neighbourhood schools. However, under the framework of the RTE Act, it is the responsibility of the respective State Governments to frame detailed rules, issue administrative orders, and implement the provisions of the Act through their own education departments and local bodies.

To ensure universal access to elementary schools, Section 6 of the RTE Act mandates the establishment of schools by the appropriate government within defined area or neighbourhood limits.

Further, Para 7.4 of the National Education Policy 2020 underscores that although consolidation of schools is an option that is often discussed, it must be carried out very judiciously, and only when it is ensured that there is no impact on access. Therefore, to achieve better learning outcomes and appropriate Pupil-Teacher Ratios (PTR) across upper primary and secondary levels, some states have adopted appropriate strategies to establish the larger schools as per aspirations of the public.

The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL) 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. One of the educational performance indicators captured on the UDISE portal is Gender Parity Index (GPI). The GPI, measured as ratio of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of girls

to GER of boys, stood at above 1 at all levels indicating proportionally higher participation of girls as compared to boys.

The GPI for the year 2018-19 and 2023-24 is as follows:

Year	Primary	Upper Primary	Elementary	Secondary	Higher Secondary
<b>2018-19</b>	1.01	1.02	1.01	1.00	1.03
<b>2023-24</b>	1.03	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.07

As per the data available on UDISE+, advancements have been made in improving universal access across all levels of school education. This is evidenced by Gross Access Ratio (GAR) for 2018-19 and 2024-25:

Year	Primary	Upper Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary
<b>2018-19</b>	97.15	96.49	88.24	65.05
<b>2024-25</b>	97.83	96.57	95.35	94.97

**GAR:** Gross access ratio (GAR) is total villages/habitations having school within specified norm in a year out of total villages/habitations in that year.

To check the health of the educational system and to provide information about the learning achievement of students, National Achievement Surveys (NAS) are conducted at regular intervals.

The latest round of NAS, i.e., PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (PRS) 2024 (formerly National Achievement Survey) was undertaken in December, 2024 to understand the baseline performance under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in development of competencies among the students at the end of the Foundational, Preparatory, and Middle stages (Grades 3, 6, and 9 respectively). The PRS indicates improvement in average scores of the Grade 3 students in Language and Mathematics as compared to NAS 2021. Further, it also reflects that the performance of children in Grade 3 in rural school is better than urban schools and the Government schools performed better than Private schools at Grade 3 level.

The State/UT wise PARAKH 2024 report has been officially released in public domain on 2nd July, 2025. This can be accessed at <https://dashboard.parakh.ncert.gov.in/en>.

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