

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO – 211

ANSWERED ON 15/12/2025

Merger of Government Schools

†*211. Shri Narayandas Ahirwar:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that many Government schools with less number of students in various States have been merged with the nearby bigger schools, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that such mergers have increased the distance and schooling cost of rural and poor children thereby affecting their education and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any study/evaluation to assess the impact of school mergers on enrolment rate and quality of teaching, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government consider the said policies as an attempt to strengthen the Government education system or as a step to promote private education and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government is implementing any scheme to ensure that the number of Government schools does not decrease and all children have access to free and quality education near their homes; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (F) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 211 ANSWERED ON 15/12/2025 ASKED BY HONB'LE MP
SHRI NARAYANDAS AHIRWAR REGARDING 'MERGER OF GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS'**

(a) to (f): Education is in the Concurrent list of the Constitution and the opening, closing and rationalisation 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.

As per UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus), State/UT wise Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by level of education for the year 2023-24 and 2024-25 are available at https://www.education.gov.in/en/parl_ques.

Strengthening of teacher training/education programmes is supported under the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha in alignment with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The interventions under Samagra Shiksha are aimed at strengthening of physical infrastructure in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs); support to State Councils of Educational Research and Trainings (SCERTs) so that they can effectively and efficiently carry out quality teacher education, research and develop state-specific curriculum framework, as a follow up to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF SE); capacity building of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) functionaries; continuous academic support to schools through BRC/CRC etc.

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
2018-19	97.15	96.49	88.24	65.05
2024-25	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.

The PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, conducted in December 2024 by the National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (NCERT), under the Ministry of Education, assessed baseline competency development in students of Grades 3, 6, and 9 as per the National Education Policy 2020. Over 21.15 lakh students and 2.70 lakh teachers from more than 74,000 schools across 781 districts participated. National, State, and District-level report cards are available at <https://dashboard.parakh.ncert.gov.in/en>. Previously, the government of India has conducted National Achievement Survey (NAS) in 2021, with an objective to evaluate students learning outcomes and competencies. The class wise, subject wise and management wise details of performance of students at National, State/UT and District level are available at <https://nas.gov.in/report-card/2021>.

Also, Central Government assist States and UTs through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha and Mid-Day Meal provided from Balvatika to class 8 under Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Yojna. Financial assistance is also provided to the States and UTs for various activities to increase enrolment in Government schools, which include opening/strengthening of new schools up to senior secondary level, strengthening school infrastructure, setting up and up gradation and running of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) upto class 12, setting up of residential schools/hostels named Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalayas, hostels under Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), transport allowance, undertaking enrolment drives, seasonal hostels/residential camps, provision of vocational education and ICT facilities in schools, providing free text books and free uniform, transport/escort facility, etc, financial assistance is also provided for aids and appliances for children with special needs.

PM SHRI Scheme has also been launched with an aim to develop more than 14,500 selected schools as exemplar schools that offer leadership to other schools in the neighbourhood, showcasing all the initiatives of NEP 2020.
