

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2617
ANSWERED ON 09/03/2026**

Admission of Deprived Students in Government Schools

†2617. Shri Gajendra Singh Patel:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any provision in the Right to Education Act regarding the distance of the school from the residence of the student for free admission;
- (b) if so, whether the deprived students are being given admission in the Government schools located within the said distance;
- (c) whether it is a fact that instead of giving admission in the Government school located within the prescribed distance, admission is being given in private school outside the prescribed distance resulting in financial burden on the Government, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government has any plan to provide admission to the deprived students in Government schools located within the prescribed distance in future, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Section 6 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 mentions the duty of appropriate Government and local authority to establish school. It states that the appropriate Government and the local authority shall establish, within such area or limits of neighbourhood, as may be prescribed, a school, where it is not so established, within a period of three years from the commencement of this Act.

The rationale of this provision is to provide all children access to elementary education. The RTE Act therefore mandates the appropriate governments and local authorities to provide for children's access to elementary schools within the defined area or limits of neighbourhood. The RTE Act does not define the limits or area of

neighbourhood as a centralised norm, but requires the appropriate Government to notify such limits or area in the RTE Rules. This is on account of the very diverse geographical, climatic terrain and the varied development requirements of the different States, and the conscious decision that States would be better placed to define the 'neighbourhood', keeping the best interests of different children in mind.

However, the Central Government has attempted to exemplify this in the Model RTE Rules circulated to States, which provide for distance norms of one kilometre for children in classes I-V, and three kilometres for children in classes VI-VIII, as also provision for relaxation of norms in places with difficult terrain where there may be risk of landslides, floods, lack of roads and in general, danger for young children in the approach from their homes to the school. These have also been incorporated in the Central RTE Rules applicable to all UTs without Legislature.

In providing for the right of every child to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school, the RTE Act does not restrict the choice of the child to seek admission in a school which may not be in the immediate vicinity, or the neighbourhood of the child's residence. In other words, there is no compulsion on the child to seek admission only in the school in his or her neighbourhood.

The Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing an Integrated Centrally Sponsored Scheme for School Education- Samagra Shiksha. Under the scheme, in order to facilitate the deprived children to attend government schools, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities, 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, construction of hostels for PVTGs under PM-JANMAN, construction of hostels under Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan for unsaturated ST population, free uniforms, free text books, transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives. Further, 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, including Balvatika, which encourages the children to attend schools regularly.
