

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4951
ANSWERED ON - 23/03/2026

Closure of School in Tribal Areas

4951. Dr. Bachhav Shobha Dinesh:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Government and Government-aided schools functioning in Scheduled Tribe-dominated areas of Maharashtra since 2014-15, including the number of schools opened and closed during the same period, year-wise;
- (b) the number of closures attributed to low or zero enrolment and the criteria adopted for such rationalisation in tribal habitations;
- (c) whether free transport facilities, residential hostels or bridge schooling arrangements have been provided to students affected by school closures, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of additional financial or academic incentives provided to Scheduled Tribe students to enhance enrolment and retention; and
- (e) whether any impact assessment has been conducted on school access and dropout rates in tribal areas following such closures, if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R

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

(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 Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing Samagra Shiksha, an integrated scheme for school education in 2018-19 covering the entire gamut from pre-school to class XII. The scheme has also been aligned with the recommendations of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 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.

Para 7.4 of the National Education Policy 2020 underscores that although consolidation of schools is an option, must be carried out very judiciously, and only when it is ensured that there is no

impact on access. 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.

Under Samagra Shiksha, all States and UTs submit their proposals for all interventions contained in the scheme through their Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B) as per their priorities and requirements. The proposals are appraised and approved by the Project Approval Board (PAB) in the Ministry in consultation with the respective State/UT government and funds are allocated accordingly, as per norms.

As per information received from the state, Scheduled Tribe–dominated districts of Maharashtra include Amravati, Bhandara, Chandrapur, Dhule, Gadchiroli, Gondia, Jalgaon, Nagpur, Nandurbar, Nashik, Palghar, Raigad, Thane, and Yavatmal.

As informed by the State, year-wise details of the number of Government and Government-aided schools functioning in Scheduled Tribe-dominated areas of Maharashtra since 2014-15 is as under:

Year	Functioning Schools	
	Government	Government-aided
2014-15	26437	9590
2015-16	26654	9750
2016-17	26477	9668
2017-18	26259	9700
2018-19	25947	9685
2019-20	25883	9683
2020-21	25806	9687
2021-22	25761	9676
2022-23	25680	9623
2023-24	25591	9620
2024-25	25008	9624
2025-26	25363	9603

One of the focus areas of the Samagra Shiksha scheme is to reduce the dropout rate and the number of Out of School Children (OoSC). The scheme includes the provision of opening and strengthening of new schools up to senior secondary level; construction of school buildings and 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, financial assistance is provided to the State/UT Government for opening and running of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalayas in remote, sparsely populated and difficult to reach areas, hilly terrains, areas affected by LWE, large uninhabited areas with natural barriers. Financial assistance is also provided under PM-JANMAN component of Samagra Shiksha to the States and UTs for the unserved identified Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups and under Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA) component of Samagra Shiksha, for the unserved ST population.