

Number of children out of school

557. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether around 60.6 lakh children between the ages of 6 to 13 are still out of the school after the RTE came into effect, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the majority of these children are in rural areas and the families in rural area fail to send their children to school largely due to non-affordability;

(c) whether the UNESCO report clubs India with some of the worst performing nations like Kenya, Nigeria, Indonesia, Sudan and Tanzania; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the necessary steps taken on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) As per an independent survey commissioned by Ministry of Human Resource Development in 2014, 60.64 lakh children are out of school in the age group of 6 to 13. The survey indicates consistent decline in the number of out of school children from 134.59 lakh in 2005 to 60.64 lakh in 2014 in the same age group.

(b) As per the survey, there are 46,95,518 out of school children from rural areas which constitute 77.43% of the total number of such children. As per the survey findings, reasons for not attending the school includes, *inter-alia*, poverty/economic reasons, child not interested in studies, girls needed to help in domestic work or to take care of siblings, boys required to supplement household income and education not considered necessary by the head of the household.

(c) and (d) UNESCO Report of 2015 points out that India has made remarkable strides towards ensuring education for all, while access is now close to universal. Improvement in early childhood education, universal primary education, huge reduction in out of school children and gender equality are big achievements for India. The Report states that India is predicted to be the only country in South and West Asia to have an equal ratio of girls and boys in both primary and secondary education, where more than 220 million children are in schools. Countries like Indonesia (1.3 million), Kenya (1.1 million), Nigeria (8.7 million) and Sudan (2.7 million) have large number of out of school children as given in parenthesis.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 provisions for free and compulsory education to children between the age group of 6-14 years. The Central Government's programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides assistance to State

Governments/UTs to ensure quality elementary education for all children. Universal enrolment is the first goal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and hence all efforts are being made to bring all children in schools. SSA has provided 2.04 lakh primary and 1.59 lakh upper primary schools for ensuring universal provisioning of schooling facilities. Preference for opening of school is given to tribal areas, and areas with high concentration of SC, ST and minority population. In addition, 3609 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, which are residential schools for girls at upper primary level, have also been sanctioned to the States for improving access to marginalised girls particularly out of school, either drop out or never enrolled.

Under the SSA, provisions have also been made for residential schools/ hostels and transportation/ escort facility for children living in sparsely populated areas, children living in areas where schools cannot be opened due to unavailability of land and children in need of care and protection. Special training is also provided to all such children who are school dropouts and long absentees and they are enrolled in back to school camps which may be residential and non residential.

Development fee charged by KVS

†558. SHRIMATI KANAK LATA SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 came into the force in April, 2010 in which there is a provision of not collecting any type of fee or charge or expenditure from children *in lieu* of education, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that ₹ 500 is being charged every month from the students in the Kendriya Vidyalayas throughout the country in the name of development fund; and

(c) if so, whether the objectives of RTE Act, 2009 are being fulfilled or money is being collected by adopting other means, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which came into force from 1st April, 2010, provides for free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of six to fourteen years in a neighbourhood school. As per Section 3 of the RTE Act, 2009, no child shall be

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.