

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1127
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.07.2022

Low levels of education in weaker sections

1127 # **Dr. Kirodi Lal Meena:**

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the weaker sections are the most disadvantaged sections of the society with extremely low levels of education;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the response of Government thereto;
- (c) the details of the initiatives taken by Government for the upliftment of weaker sections of the society along with the success achieved in this regard during last three years; and
- (d) whether Government is adopting any special measures to prevent the exclusion of SC/ST/other weaker sections from distance education/online classes, if so, the State-wise details thereof?

A N S W E R

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)**

(a) to (c): The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, mandates the appropriate Government to provide free and compulsory elementary education to every child of the age 6 to 14 years in a neighbourhood school. Education is a subject in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of the schools are under the control of the respective State Governments. Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education is implementing Samagra Shiksha to support States and UTs in implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education is one of the major objectives of Samagra Shiksha. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) shows equitable participation of children belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) in education, which is as under:

GER	All Children	SC Children	ST Children
Primary	103.28	113.66	106.72
Upper Primary	92.17	99.95	95.77
Secondary	79.77	84.79	78.60

(Source :- UDISE+ 2020-2021)

Samagra Shiksha attempts to reach out to girls, and children belonging to SC, ST, Minority communities, etc. SC, ST and minority Special Focus Districts (SFDs) have been identified on the basis of adverse performance on various indicators of enrolment, retention, and gender parity, as well as concentration of SC, ST and minority communities. To ensure equitable education to the most deprived sections of the society, Samagra Shiksha has various provisions like free textbooks, uniform, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas for girls, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Awasiya Vidyalayas/Hostels for areas which are sparsely populated with low density of population (mostly tribal areas). These efforts have resulted in decrease in dropout rate of SC and ST students across all levels of education. The details for last three years are as under:

Drop Out Rate	SC Children			ST Children		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Primary	5.2	1.82	0.9	5.5	3.84	2.5
Upper Primary	6.0	3.76	3.34	6.7	6.06	5.0
Secondary	20.20	18.6	15.3	24.8	24.2	20.9

(Source :- UDISE+ 2020-2021)

(d): A comprehensive initiative called PMeVidya has been started which aims to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes all forms of digital modes to provide wide access - DIKSHA (online), SWAYAM (online), SWAYAM PRABHA (TV), other TV Channels including use of Doordarshan and AIR Networks. Further, PRAGYATA guidelines were issued to States/UTs to facilitate continued education through various modes. The guidelines inter-alia include situations where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth, these resources are shared through various platforms like television, radio etc that do not depend on internet. An Alternate Academic Calendar has been prepared for learning solutions for grade 1 to 12 for both children with and without device. Besides these, community radio, worksheets & textbooks supplied to residence of learners, home visits by teachers, community classes, toll free numbers, SMS based requests for audio content, localised radio content for edutainment etc. have been used. The steps taken by all the states and UTs are shown in the India Report Digital Education, June 2020, which is available at the following link: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/India_Report_Digital_Education_0.pdf.

Further, under the Samagra Shiksha, there is a provision of financial assistance for the out of school children in the age group of 16-19 years, inter-alia belonging to SC & ST, to continue education through Open/Distance Learning mode. Recurring grant upto Rs. 2000/- per child per grade per annum is provided to such children for completing their secondary/senior secondary education through the Open School System (NIOS/SIOS).
