

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Steps taken by Government to provide education to poor students

New Delhi, 11th July, 2019

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for access to elementary schools for children of the age group of 6-14 years, within the defined area or limits of neighbourhood. Section 6 of the Act provides that ‘the appropriate government and local authorities’ shall establish, within the area or limits of a neighbourhood, a school, where it is not already established, within a period of three years from the commencement of the Act. In pursuance of Section 6 of the Act, the Central RTE Rules has notified the area or limits of neighbourhood as one kilometre, within which a primary school and 3 kilometre within which an upper primary school, has to be established. The States have notified area or limits of their neighbourhood norms in their state RTE Rules, factoring in their State specific condition, for opening of schools. As reported by States/UTs in their Annual Work Plan, 2018-19, 97.15% of habitations in the country are covered by primary schools and 96.49% of habitations are covered by upper primary schools. The habitations that remain uncovered are mostly small or sparsely populated in difficult areas where opening of school is not feasible for which there is a provision of giving transport and escort facility and opening of residential schools and hostels. Further, 88.24% of habitations were covered by Secondary schools within a distance of 5km.

In addition, Section 12 (1)(c) of the Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for admission of children belonging to disadvantaged groups (DG) and economically weaker sections (EWS) in private unaided schools to the extent of at least 25 percent of the strength of class I or below.

The Department of School Education and Literacy has launched an Integrated Scheme for School Education - Samagra Shiksha with effect from 2018-19 which subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). The scheme envisages school education

as a continuum from pre-school to senior secondary level and aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities to reduce number of out of school children 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 (KGBV), setting up of residential schools/hostels, free uniforms, free text books and undertaking enrolment & retention drives. Further, special training for age appropriate admission of out of school and residential as well as non-residential training for older children, seasonal hostels / residential camps, special training centres at worksites, transport/ escort facility are also supported to bring out of school children to the formal schooling system. Also, mid-day meal is provided to students at the elementary level of education. Further, under the student oriented component for the children with special needs, financial assistance is provided for identification and assessment of children with special needs, aids and appliances, braille kits and books, appropriate teaching learning material and stipend to girl students with disability etc.

This information was given by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

NB/AKJ/AK