

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3557

ANSWERED ON:23.12.2008

LITERACY IN INDIA

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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per UNESCO report India is home to one-third of the total number of illiterates of the world;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Report and details of literacy rate in the country including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, gender-wise;

(c) whether according to current projections, India is not going to meet the targets set under the Millennium Development goals for literacy; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto particularly in regard to female illiteracy?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI)

(a) & (b) As per Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2009, the literacy rate in India in the age group of 15 and above is 65%. Out of an estimated 776 million illiterates in the world in 15+ age group, 270.1 million are in India. India is ranked at 102 position on the basis of a composite Education Development Index (EDI) comprising primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER), adult literacy rate, gender-specific EFA index and survival rate upto grade 5.

According to the decennial Census 2001, the literacy rate in the country including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, gender-wise, is as under:

Category Persons Male Female

All persons 64.84 75.26 53.67

Scheduled Castes 54.69 66.64 41.90

Scheduled Tribes 47.10 59.17 34.76

The percentage increase in literacy in 2001 over the Census 1991 is as under

Category Persons Male Female

All persons 12.63 11.13 14.38

Scheduled Castes 17.28 16.73 18.14

(c) & (d) The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for education is to ensure that by 2015, all children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. One of the indicators for achieving the MDG is literacy rate of persons in the 15 to 25 age group. According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, the youth (15 to 24 year) literacy rate is 81% of which 86% is for male and 76% is for female. The actual number of persons made literate will be available only after the 2011 Census. Continuous efforts are being made through programme of the National Literacy Mission to increase literacy rate particularly female literacy, in the country.