

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2054

ANSWERED ON:28.11.2016

Right to Education

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

- (a) whether the freshly released Census 2011 data has revealed that a huge number of children still do not go to school in the Country and another considerable number of children are forced to earn a livelihood while they attend school and if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;
- (b) whether the said number of children is covered under the Right to Education Act and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has assessed the major reasons that keep such children away from school and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of the steps taken by the Government to ensure that the children of the said category attend school?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) & (b): Census 2011 has reported that 8.4 crore children do not go to school in the age group of 5 – 17 years. Under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 the mandated age group for free and compulsory elementary education in a neighbourhood school is 6-14 years. The age group of 5-17 years quoted in the Census data, thus, includes one year of pre-schooling age (5 years) and 3 years of above elementary age which is of secondary and senior secondary level of schooling.

According to Census 2011, the number of children who do not attend schools (including never attended and attended before) in the age group of 6-13 years are 3.8 crore. Census 2011 has shown a marked decline in the number of out of school children in this age group from 5.8 crore in 2001 to 3.8 crore in 2011, a 35% decline over a period of ten years.

The RTE Act, 2009, which became operative with effect from 1st April, 2010, mandates that all children in the age group of 6-14 years shall be in schools for completing elementary education. Section 4 of the RTE Act, 2009 provides for special training for age appropriate admission of out of school children. Those children who have missed out certain academic years either because they were never enrolled in school or dropped out of school, have a right to Special Training in residential and non residential mode, subsequently to be mainstreamed in formal schools in age appropriate class.

(c): As per an independent survey commissioned by Ministry of Human Resource Development in 2014, 60.64 lakh children were estimated to out of school in the age group of 6 to 13 years. As per the survey findings, reasons for not attending the school include, interalia, 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.

(d): The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) provides assistance to State Governments and UTs to ensure quality elementary education for all children.

Universal enrolment is the first goal of 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 Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe 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. The number of total children enrolled at elementary level has increased from 15.1 crores in 1998-99 to 19.7 crore at present.

Under 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. Additionally, other strategies adopted under SSA such as strengthening school infrastructure,

improving pupil-teacher ratios, providing incentives like free textbooks, uniforms for eligible category of children and mid-day meal in schools have proved to be useful in increasing the enrolment of children in elementary schools.

To further work on this issue and in pursuance of a resolution adopted in the 63rd Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held on 19th August, 2015 under the Chairpersonship of Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, a Sub-Committee of CABE under Chairpersonship of Minister of State for Human Resource Development has been constituted to 'Devise Pathway for Re-Engaging Out of School Children' vide Order dated 06.11.2015.
