



Education in Mother Tongue in Tribal Areas

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The Ministry of Human Resource Development through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) recognises the intra-regional, inter-state disparities and is supporting States/UTs to improve the infrastructure of schools in tribal areas. A crucial step in this direction is the identification of Special Focus Districts (SFDs), one of the criteria for identification is the concentration of Scheduled Tribe (ST) population. A total of 109 districts have been identified as ST concentration districts. The details of infrastructure sanctioned in elementary and secondary government schools of these districts under SSA and RMSA, since 2009-10, is given below.

S.No.	Component	Total Number approved in ST concentration districts under RMSA since 2009-10
1.	New Schools	2812
2.	Strengthening of schools	4826
3.	Girls Hostel	474
4.	ICT in school	8273

S.No.	Component	Total Number approved in ST concentration districts under SSA since 2009-10
1.	Opening of New Primary Schools (including EGS to PS)	6677
2.	Opening of new Upper Primary Schools (UPS)	5677
3.	Construction of Primary School buildings	6287
4.	Construction of Upper Primary School buildings	4619
5.	Construction of Additional Classrooms	125936

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs administers a programme under Article 275(1) of the Constitution. Under this programme, grants are provided to 27 states for setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) for quality education of ST students of Class VI to Class XII. Funds are also released for infrastructural purpose of tribal residential schools including hostels under Article 275(1) of the Constitution and Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan.

Section 29(2) (f) of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 states that “medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue”. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 emphasizes the importance of imparting primary education in the mother tongue of the child.

Since education is in the Concurrent List, States have the liberty to decide the medium of instruction in schools. Several States have taken steps to impart education to children in their mother tongue. The NCF clearly states that the Three-Language Formula is an attempt to address the challenges and opportunities of the linguistic situation in India. As per the “Three Language Formula” the first language to be studied must be the mother tongue or the regional language.

This information was given by the Minister of State (HRD), Shri Upendra Kushwaha today in a written reply to a Rajya Sabha question.

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