

Saakshar Bharat Programme

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Source: *PIB & Ministry of Human Resource Development*

Saakshar Bharat Programme, the latest version of the National Literacy Mission, was implemented in the rural areas of 410 districts in 26 states and one UT of the country. Under the programme, against the overall target of making 7 crore adult non-literates to be made literates, around 7.64 crore learners successfully passed the biannual Basic Literacy Assessment Tests conducted by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) between August 2010 to March 2018 and were certified as literates.

About Saakshar Bharat Programme

The Prime Minister launched Saakshar Bharat, a **centrally sponsored scheme of the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI),** in September 2009. **It aims to further promote and strengthen Adult Education, specially of women, by extending educational options to those adults who have lost the opportunity of access to formal education** and crossed the standard age for receiving such education, now feel a need for learning of any type, including, literacy, basic education (equivalency to formal education), vocational education (skill development), physical and emotional development, practical arts, applied science, sports, and recreation

Objectives

The Mission has four broad objectives, namely:

1. Impart **functional literacy and numeracy** to non-literate and non-numerate adults
2. Enable the neo-literate adults to **continue their**

- learning beyond basic literacy** and acquire equivalency to the formal educational system
3. Impart non and neo-literates relevant **skill development programmes** to improve their earning and living conditions
 4. **Promote a learning society** by providing opportunities to neo literate adults for continuing education

Targets

- The principal target of the mission is **to impart functional literacy to 70 million adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond.**
- The auxiliary target of the mission is to cover 1.5 million adults under basic education programme and an equal number under vocational (skill development) programme.
- Within these targets, the Mission will primarily focus on, but not limited to, women.
- Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) Minorities, other disadvantaged groups and adolescents in rural areas in low literacy States will be other-focused groups.
- For each focused group and area, there will be a specific target and for each target, an explicit approach and strategy

Key features

- Saakshar Bharat Programme **goes beyond '3' R's (i.e. Reading, Writing & Arithmetic), for it also seeks to create awareness of social disparities** and a person's deprivation on the means for its amelioration and general well being.
- This **programme was formulated with the objective of achieving 80% literacy level at the national level, by focusing on adult women literacy** seeking – to reduce the gap between male and female literacy to not more than 10

percentage points

▪ **Eligibility criteria for coverage under Saakshar Bharat.**

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1. **A district, including a new district, carved out of an erstwhile district that had an adult female literacy rate of 50 per cent or below,** as per the 2001 census, were considered eligible for coverage under the Saakshar Bharat programme.
2. In addition, **all left-wing extremism-affected districts, irrespective of their literacy rate,** were also eligible for coverage under the programme.
3. The programme provides for coverage of **only rural areas in the eligible districts**