

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

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No. 5

## LOK SABHA

*Monday, July, 15, 1991/Asadha 24,  
1913 (Saka)*

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the  
Clock.*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

#### ILLITERACY PERCENTAGE

\*22. **SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI** :  
Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE  
DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) what is the percentage of illiterates in the country as per the 1991 census;
- (b) the break-up of illiterates, State-wise and Union Territory-wise; and
- (c) the specific steps taken or proposed to be taken to improve the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the table of the Sabha.

#### Statement

(a) According to the provisional figures of the 1991 census released by the Registrar General of India, the illiteracy rate in the country is 47.89%.

(b) A statement showing the number of illiterates and illiteracy rate in each State and Union Territory, according to the provisional figures of 1991 census, is enclosed at Annexure--I.

(c) Universalisation of elementary education and universal retention in schools of children upto 14 years of age, a programme of non-formal education in the ten educationally backward States and the National Literacy Mission which aims at imparting functional literacy to 80 million adult illiterates in the 15—35 age-group by 1995 form an integral part of a larger programme for eradication of illiteracy in the country.

#### ANNEXURE—I

#### STATEMENT SHOWING STATE-WISE NUMBER OF ILLITERATE PERSONS AND PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERATES

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Persons (All age-groups)	Percentage of illi- teracy (Aged 7 yrs. and above)
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	41464398	54.89
2.	Arunachal Pradesh . . . . .	576245	58.78
3.	Assam . . . . .	12663033	46.58
4.	Bihar . . . . .	59484464	61.46
5.	Goa . . . . .	386620	23.04
6.	Gujarat . . . . .	1990865	39.09
7.	Haryana . . . . .	8886007	44.67
8.	Himachal Pradesh . . . . .	2386470	36.46

1	2	3	4
9.	Jammu & Kashmir . . . . .		Census not held.
10.	Karnataka . . . . .	23743281	44.02
11.	Kerala . . . . .	6353252	9.41
12.	Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	42643906	56.55
13.	Maharashtra . . . . .	35905805	36.95
14.	Manipur . . . . .	931491	39.04
15.	Meghalaya . . . . .	1071207	51.74
16.	Mizoram . . . . .	223971	18.77
17.	Nagaland . . . . .	594525	38.70
18.	Orissa . . . . .	18600165	51.45
19.	Punjab . . . . .	10237830	42.86
20.	Rajasthan . . . . .	30262368	61.19
21.	Sikkim . . . . .	216833	43.47
22.	Tamil Nadu . . . . .	25254902	36.28
23.	Tripura . . . . .	1376260	39.61
24.	Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	91889322	58.29
25.	West Bengal . . . . .	35263392	42.28
26.	A. & N. Islands . . . . .	106740	26.26
27.	Chandigarh . . . . .	211716	21.27
28.	D. & N. Haveli . . . . .	93469	60.55
29.	Daman & Diu . . . . .	39942	26.42
30.	Delhi . . . . .	3420947	23.91
31.	Lakshadweep . . . . .	18119	20.77
32.	Pondicherry . . . . .	279670	25.09
	INDIA	482217615	[47.89

**SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Minister has stated that the illiteracy rate in the country is 47.89 per cent according to the provisional figures of the 1991 census. Our total population, I think, is over 84 crores. Here they have mentioned that the number of illiterate persons is 482217615. I think, the percentage of illiteracy, which is given here, is erroneous and it is not correct. I would like to have a clarification on this.

The hon. Minister in his reply has mentioned about universalisation of elementary education and universal retention in schools of children upto 14 years. This problem has not arisen just now and it has been there since our Constitution was adopted and implemented in the country. May I know from the hon. Minister the specific steps taken and also the amount involved

in implementing the so-called universal retention in schools of children upto 14 years of age? I would like to have a specific reply on this.

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH :** So far as the first question of the figures is concerned, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member that the percentage has been calculated after excluding the population upto six years of age. So far as the second question is concerned, I think, the hon. Member and the House are aware of various reasons that go into the number of drop-outs and other problems that arise because of which the students do not remain on the rolls upto the age group of 14 years. I think, all the steps that are being taken in that regard will cumulatively have the effect because, as is evident, the percentage of illiterates has certainly gone down

though not to a great extent, in the 1991 census. I am sure, with all the steps that have been mentioned and with more vigorous implementation we shall be able to achieve the target.

**SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI :** The hon. Minister mentioned about the children excluding 6 years of age. But here they have not included the illiterates that are living in Jammu & Kashmir because census has not been held there. If we add this figure, then certainly the percentage of illiteracy will increase. The Minister referred to the problem of drop-out. This is not something which has happened suddenly. This has been the problem since long. When 65 per cent drop-out is there, in most of the junior schools specially elementary schools there are only one or two teachers for five classes. We know that education is a State Subject and the Centre has no control over it. However, I ask the hon. Minister whether he will impress upon the State Governments to see that at least one teacher is appointed for each class so that drop-outs are minimised and adequate care is taken to see that people are educated properly.

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH :** The hon. Member himself is aware of the real limitations in this matter. There is no hesitation on my part to impress upon the State Governments the need to fulfil this requirement.

**DR. KARTIKESWAR PATRA :** Does the Government propose to take a special drive on literacy in 9 States and Union territories where the percentage of literacy is below 50 per cent. As per the census report it is evident that the percentage of literacy among female is very poor in comparison to that of male. In 14 States the percentage of female literacy is above 50 and in 17 States, the percentage of literacy is below 50.

**MR. SPEAKER :** You do not have to give the information. You have to ask the question.

**DR. KARTIKESWAR PATRA :** What are the reasons that after 45 years of independence we could not achieve the target of literacy in the country? Is any special drive proposed to be taken up by the Government to achieve literacy target in a specific period?

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH :** Special drives have been initiated in the States where the percentage of literacy is low. In the course of the session when the budgetary demands come up I will give further details as to what is being sought to be done and I will seek the cooperation of the House also.

[Translation]

**SHRI SATYANARAYAN JATTVA :** Honourable Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has just said in his reply that universalisation of elementary education and retention in schools of children upto 14 years of age, a programme of non-formal education in the ten educationally backward States etc. form an integral part of a programme for eradication of illiteracy in the country. May I know the names of these ten states and the achievements made so far under non-formal education programme and National Literacy Mission in these states.

[English]

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH :** Sir, for a detailed answer to this, I will need some notice. But I can say that the Marked Literacy Campaign has caught on and there are very very few States where this thing is not getting the support that it should.

[Translation]

**SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR :** Mr. Speaker, Kerala has done an exemplary job in eradication of illiteracy. Does the Government propose to take some advantage of this experience by applying the same methods in the entire country? Has he given any assistance to the voluntary organisations engaged in this field; if so, the outcome thereof?

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as the contribution of voluntary organisations is concerned, there can't be any doubt about the fact that these organisations have made and can make significant contribution in illiteracy eradication programme. The department will surely do whatever is possible in this direction. Efforts have been made to overcome the difficulties being faced in this regard.

**PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT :** Sir, the statement laid on the Table of the House just now by the hon. Minister shows the

illiteracy percentage in Kerala as 9%, whereas some days back it appeared in the press that Kerala is the first State in the country which has achieved 100 per cent literacy. Why such a discrepancy in the reply? It is beyond my comprehension. Will the Minister be pleased to correct his reply?

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH** : Sir, I will get it corrected according to the latest position, but these figures are based on the census.

[English]

**SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK** : Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the Integrated Child Development Scheme has a very close link with the attendance of the school-going children at the primary level and it will have a close link with the attendance of the school going children. May I know whether this Integrated Child Development Scheme which is implemented at a very limited level in the country, will be implemented in each and every Block of the country, specially in those Blocks where the attendance at the primary level is going down?

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH** : Sir, it goes without saying that the success of the literacy campaign does not depend on only one line of action taken by any single department or any single programme. The total literacy campaign has to have components from all those areas which go, directly or indirectly, into helping the children to attend school and maintaining their situation. The scheme mentioned by the hon. Member definitely has a bearing. But I can not say just now how it will be related to each and every area in the campaign for this programme.

### EDUCATION POLICY

\*23. **SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY** : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to make any changes in the present Education Policy in the light of the report of National Policy on Education Review Committee; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH)** : (a) and (b) : The National Policy on Education 1986 was formulated on the basis of a national consensus and it contains the framework for development of all aspects of education. The Policy, inter alia, envisages that the implementation of its various parameters will be reviewed every five years. As part of the review, the recommendations made by the NPE Review Committee will be taken into account.

**SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY** : Sir, at the outset, I want to say that it is said that it was a national consensus. It was never a national consensus because three States have not implemented this scheme. I want to know whether the Government is aware of those. Even by the teachers community it was considered that the 1986 Education Policy was an elitist education policy. The Education Policy was really declared before a national consensus was achieved.

So, in view of the fact that education being a very basic question, will the Government take all the objections that were then raised against this policy into consideration to come to a real national consensus?

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH** : Sir, the policy being as far reaching and wide ranging the Educational Policy, it is not possible to say that every one agrees with it. But this much is correct that all the forums that are concerned with the formulation of the policy discuss the policy, comments of the State Governments are taken and then the policy decision is taken. That is how you arrive at a policy decision.

**SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA** : The West Bengal State Government had objected to it.

**SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY** : Tamil Nadu and Assam also.

**SHRI ARJUN SINGH** : May be on some aspects they don't agree. (Interruptions). Parliament approved of it. So after Parliament has approved, I think it should be taken as approved by consensus. That is what I can say. So, I am not putting one State against the other.