

Over 1 lakh schools in India have just 1 teacher

DEHRADUN: A report on single-teacher schools across the country, tabled in Parliament on Monday, has thrown up some alarming statistics on the education scenario in India. A solitary teacher is running the show in as many as 1,05,630 government elementary and secondary schools in the country, with MP emerging as the worst state where 17,874 of the institutions have just one teacher each.

UP has the second-highest number of elementary and secondary schools-17,602-where single teachers are performing the role of educators for multiple classes. UP is followed by Rajasthan (13,575), Andhra Pradesh (9,540) and Jharkhand (7,391), according to the annual report (2014-15) of the HRD ministry that was tabled by junior minister Upendra Kushwaha.

No state can boast of having no single-teacher schools. UTs have performed better, with Daman & Diu, Pondicherry, Chandigarh and Lakshwadeep recording no single-teacher schools in two categories. Delhi has 13 such schools.

Bihar, which was in the news after the infamous "topper scam" surfaced in June, has 3,708 single-teacher schools.

The MHRD report comes close on the heels of a TOI report last month which had revealed that 41 primary and middle schools in Gurgaon are one-person wonders with teachers doubling up as administrators, clerks, caretakers, wardens, midday meal servers, nurses and sundry crisis managers.

The report was based on a recent UDISE (unified district information for school education) survey, an annual exercise conducted by the state education department in association with While successive central governments have stressed the right to education, the ground reality is far from the specified objectives, with states flouting norms of the RTE Act. According to RTE guidelines, there has to be one teacher for every 30 to 35 students in government and private schools.

According to the MHRD report, the states and UTs, apart from Delhi, that have registered the lowest number of elementary and secondary schools with a single teacher are Andaman and Nicobar Islands (16), Tripura (45), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (49) and Mizoram (73).

Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand has the highest number of schools with single teachers at 1,771. Himachal Pradesh has 1,119 such schools while Jammu and Kashmir has 1,430. Punjab has 1,360 single-teacher schools; Haryana has recorded the number at 888 and Gujarat at 778.

The data for student-teacher ratio in these single-teacher schools was not available.