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The historic RTE Act provisions for 8 years of free and compulsory education for all children between 6 and 14 years. Still 6 Million children in India are deprived from Basic Education which is their right - Haq Banta Hai.



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Even After 67 years of Independence, six million children are out of school, and a majority (75%) of those out-of-school children belong to Dalit (32.4%), Tribal (16.6%) and Muslim (25.7%) communities alone. It is a gross injustice that the national average for the full compliance with all the norms of Right to Education (RTE) in India is only eight percent.

Moreover-

- 59% (20 out of 34 States & UTs) fall below the national average of 8% compliance.
- 38% (13 out of 34 States & UTs) of the States have less than 3% of schools fully comply with RTE Act.
- 41% of the States have less than 4% full compliance – less than half of National average which is 8%.
- 18% of the States (6 out of 34 states & UTs) do not have even 1% of schools fully comply with RTE Act.

The Government had set a final deadline of 31st March 2015 for full compliance of the Act. However, only 8% of the schools in India comply with all RTE Act norms. 31st March deadline is going to be surely missed. This has a huge impact on retaining those children who are already in school. That is the reason why half of the children who are enrolled in schools in India drop out before completing class 10th.

One of the main reasons for this gap is inadequate budgetary allocation to education. The Kothari commission in 1966 had recommended that public spending on education is to be increased to at least 6% of GDP by 1986. Today, nearly after 50 years of accepting this recommendation, public spending on education is hovering around 3.4% of GDP. It has stagnated at around 3% for the last 15 years, at a time the country was witnessing unprecedented economic growth. We cannot educate all the children in India with just half the money it takes to educate all the children.

Deepak Xavier, who heads the Haq Banta Hai Campaign at Oxfam India said –

“Inequality in India is rising at an alarming rate putting the future of our country at stake. Education is the greatest equalizer against inequality. By ensuring full implementation of RTE Act, we can achieve two things - (1) quality education for all children and (2) reduction in inequality.”

Mr. Xavier further elaborated

“We can't be bystanders anymore. We have waited for so long. That's why Oxfam India and its partners are calling on civil society groups and citizens of our country to join the 'Haq Banta Hai' campaign. Haq Banta Hai is a targeted campaign that is asking the

Education Minister to issue a clear and accountable road-map to achieve full implementation of the RTE Act within next 3 years. Is this asking for too much? Definitely, not. We have initiated an online petition asking the Education Minister to come out with the road map immediately. We are targeting to get at least 5 lac signatures within a month's time from across the country."

India is one of the fastest growing economies and a middle income country. We sure can afford to give every child the education that is it's right. What we are asking for is only the minimum that the country should do to its children. After all, India is going to be the world's youngest country by 2020.

Link to the RTE Scorecard Map for India by Oxfam: <http://www.oxfamindia.org/rte>

Online petition by Oxfam and partners: <https://act.oxfam.org/india/haq-banta-hai>

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