



Rural uptick

The latest ASER report points to an improvement in reading ability and arithmetic proficiency among rural students in the country. By **RAMESH CHAKRAPANI**

An increase in all-India rural school enrolment, improvement in reading ability in early classes in government schools, and a lack of growth in private enrolment are some of the key findings in the latest edition of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) brought out by Pratham, a non-governmental organisation.

The report said that two States showed significant increases in government school enrolment from

2014 levels. In Kerala, the proportion of children (age 11-14) enrolled in government schools rose from 40.6 per cent in 2014 to 49.9 per cent in 2016, while Gujarat saw this proportion rise from 79.2 per cent to 86 per cent. The gender gap in private school enrolment has decreased in the 11-14 age group, from 7.6 percentage points in 2014 to 6.9 points in 2016.

Three States showed substantial increases since 2014 in private

Enrolment of children aged 3-6 in 2016 (all-India) % of students

Age	In balwadi or anganwadi	In LKG/UKG	Out of school or preschool			
			Govt school	Pvt school	Other	Out of school or preschool
Age 3	53.6	8.2	38.3			
Age 4	52.3	22.5	25.3			
Age 3	22.5	17.7	30.7	17.5	0.9	10.6
Age 4	5.6	10.3	53.3	25.1	1.0	4.9



Type of school (all-India) % of students

Std I-V	2010				2012				2014				2016			
	Govt (no tuition)	61.5	55.8	52.3	51.1	15.7	15.3	15.7	16.6	17.7	22.4	24.0	24.3	5.0	6.5	8.1
Pvt (no tuition)	17.7	22.4	24.0	24.3	5.0	6.5	8.1	7.9	54.6	53.1	50.7	50.7	20.3	19.3	20.2	21.1
Pvt + tuition	19.2	21.6	22.6	22.0	5.9	6.0	6.4	6.2	20.3	19.3	20.2	21.1	19.2	21.6	22.6	22.0
Pvt + tuition	5.9	6.0	6.4	6.2	54.6	53.1	50.7	50.7	5.9	6.0	6.4	6.2	5.9	6.0	6.4	6.2

Availability of library books % of schools surveyed

	2010			2014			2016		
	All India	62.6	78.1	75.5	62.6	78.1	75.5	62.6	78.1
Top States									
A.P.	92.0	97.2	94.7	92.0	97.2	94.7	92.0	97.2	94.7
Himachal	80.3	95.7	94.6	80.3	95.7	94.6	80.3	95.7	94.6
Karnataka	92.4	91.8	91.6	92.4	91.8	91.6	92.4	91.8	91.6
Kerala	83.1	94.7	93.6	83.1	94.7	93.6	83.1	94.7	93.6
Punjab	96.0	88.7	92.0	96.0	88.7	92.0	96.0	88.7	92.0
Bottom States									
Arunachal	13.0	25.0	34.6	13.0	25.0	34.6	13.0	25.0	34.6
Nagaland	13.3	14.6	17.4	13.3	14.6	17.4	13.3	14.6	17.4
Meghalaya	22.0	23.6	28.7	22.0	23.6	28.7	22.0	23.6	28.7
Manipur	9.2	18.0	11.7	9.2	18.0	11.7	9.2	18.0	11.7
Mizoram	6.4	16.9	9.1	6.4	16.9	9.1	6.4	16.9	9.1

Rural survey & findings

- Survey reached 589 rural districts across India
- Was carried out in 17,473 villages
- Covered 350,232 households, 562,305 children (aged 3-16)
- All-India enrolment up for all age groups since 2014
- Private school enrolment unchanged for children (6-14) at 30.5%
- Govt school enrolment rises in Kerala, Gujarat among children (11-14)
- Private school enrolment up among children (6-14) in Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam

- Attendance levels above 80% in 12 key States, 50-60% in 5 States

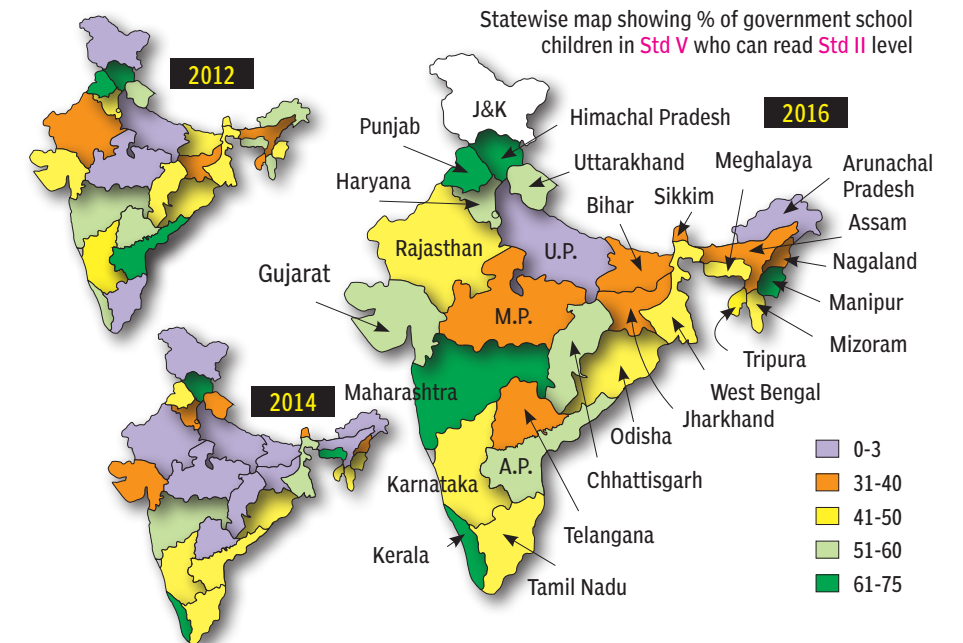
- Improvement in school facilities continues

Source: ASER 2016

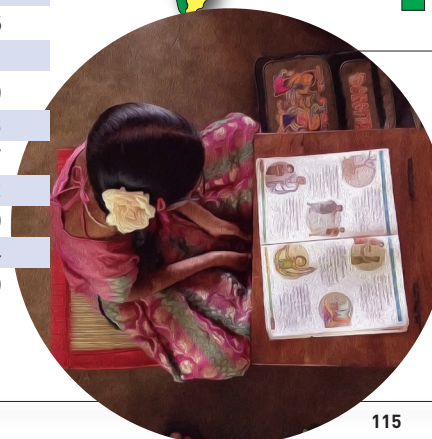
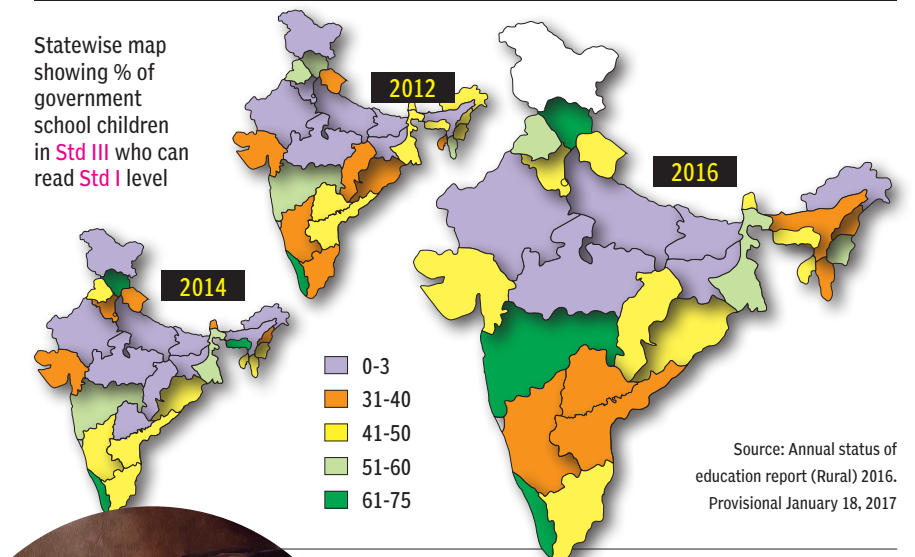
Lure of private schools % of children aged 6-14

All India	30.5
Top States	
Manipur	71.7
Meghalaya	55.2
Haryana	55.7
Kerala	54.8
U.P.	52.1
Punjab	51.6
Bottom States	
Odisha	8.9
W. Bengal	9.3
Tripura	9.7
Gujarat	10.2
Bihar	12.9
Jharkhand	17.4
Chhattisgarh	19.9

INDIA RURAL Standard V reading



INDIA RURAL Standard III reading



school enrolment among children in the 6-14 group: Uttarakhand (from 37.5 per cent to 41.6 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (from 24.4 per cent to 29.5 per cent), and Assam (from 17.3 per cent to 22 per cent). Nationally, reading ability has improved especially in the early classes in government schools. The proportion of children in Std III who are able to read at least Std I level text has gone up slightly, from 40.2 per cent in 2014 to 42.5 per cent. In almost all States there is some improvement in the arithmetic levels of children in government schools in Std III.