

PRADHAN MANTRI SCHOOLS FOR RISING INDIA (PM-SHRI)

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Context:

After Punjab, the AAP government in Delhi has also relented under financial pressure and agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre to implement the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI) scheme in the Capital.

Background:

The Education Ministry had stopped funds under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the flagship school education programme, to three Opposition-ruled states — Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal — due to their reluctance to participate in the PM-SHRI scheme.

About PM- SHRI Scheme:

1. The PM SHRI is a centrally sponsored scheme initiated by the Government of India.
2. Its objective is to establish over 14,500 PM SHRI Schools, overseen by the Central Government, State/UT Governments, local bodies, as well as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS).
3. These schools aim to create an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for every student, ensuring their well-being and providing a secure and enriching learning environment.
4. The goal is to offer a diverse range of learning experiences and ensure access to good physical infrastructure and appropriate resources for all students.
5. These schools will not only focus on enhancing cognitive development but also creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with key 21st-century skills.
6. The pedagogy adopted in these schools will be more experiential, holistic, integrated, play/toy-based (particularly in the foundational years), inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and enjoyable.
7. The focus will be on the learning outcomes of every child in every grade. Assessment at all levels will be based on conceptual understanding and application of knowledge to real-life situations and will be competency-based.
8. PM SHRI Schools will help showcase the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 and emerge as exemplar Schools over a period of time.

Current issue:

1. States must confirm their participation in PM SHRI by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Education Ministry.
2. Five states — Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal — are yet to sign the MoU. While Tamil Nadu and Kerala have indicated their willingness, Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal had earlier refused, prompting the Centre to stop their SSA funds.

3. The AAP-ruled Punjab and Delhi had held out over the implementation of PM-SHRI saying they have their own schemes along similar lines, called Schools of Specialised Excellence in Delhi and Schools of Eminence in Punjab. Both had not received crores worth of SSA funds.
4. Punjab was the first to end the logjam on July 26 when Punjab Education Secretary wrote to Union Education Secretary, expressing willingness to implement the scheme in the state.
5. On September 2, Delhi also relented. Its Secretary (Education) has written saying that Delhi is interested in signing the MoU for establishing PM-SHRI schools in Delhi.
6. With this, West Bengal is now the only state holding out on the implementation of the scheme. The state opposes prefixing 'PM-SHRI' to the names of its schools, especially since it bears 40% of the cost.



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