

# CAG Report Summary

## The Implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has released an audit report on the Implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 on July 21, 2017.
- The RTE Act, 2009 guarantees the right to free and compulsory elementary education for children between the ages of six and 14 years in a neighbourhood school. The CAG audit examined the extent to which central and state governments have complied with the provisions of the Act and utilised the allocated funds. The audit was conducted in 28 states and 7 Union Territories (UTs) for the period between April 2010 and March 2016. The key observations and recommendations of the audit Report are as follows:
  - **Financial management:** Retention of huge balances by the state governments was observed which indicates poor internal financial control. It was observed that in 35 states/UTs, the unutilised amounts ranged between Rs 12,259 crore to Rs 17,282 crore over the six year period. Other observations include: (i) huge outstanding advances, (ii) diversion/irregular release of funds, (iii) misappropriation of funds, (iv) irregular utilisation of fund grants, and (v) delays in release of funds at various levels. The CAG recommended reviewing the timelines of the RTE budgeting exercise to be in line with the budget formulation exercise at the centre and the state levels.
  - **Compliance with the RTE Act, 2009:** Certain areas of deviance from the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009 were observed. These include: (i) non-maintenance of a record of the number of children eligible for elementary education, (ii) children above the age of 14 years being retained in elementary classes in violation of the Act, (iii) schools being run without recognition, and (iv) inadequate pupil teacher ratio due to poor mobilisation of teachers and deployment of existing teachers for non-educational purposes. The CAG recommended that state governments must correctly identify the eligible children and enrol them. Further, the state governments must re-evaluate the requirement of teachers and other infrastructural requirements to bring them in line with the Act.
  - **Monitoring and evaluation:** The CAG observed that the progress of schools was not monitored using comprehensive and continuous assessment. The CAG makes some observations regarding the key bodies and measures responsible for monitoring the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009 across all the schools. These include:
    - (i) **School Management Committees (SMCs):** SMCs act as a bridge between the local community and the school, by including elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardians of children admitted in such schools and the teachers. They also provide oversight in schools to ensure that the basic requirements of the schools are being met. The CAG observed delays in formation of SMCs ranging from one month to three years preventing the continuous assessments and inspections conducted by them. The CAG also noted that during 2015-16, nine states did not have any School Development Plans (SDPs) prepared. SDP is a strategic plan prepared by the SMCs for improvement in school functioning;
    - (ii) **Internal audit:** The internal audit of the of the RTE under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) scheme by the Chief Controller of Accounts was not conducted at the central level. Internal audit is conducted through the internal audit wings of the concerned ministries/departments; and
    - (iii) **The National Advisory Council (NAC):** The NAC was formed in 2010 to advise central government on implementation of the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009. It was observed that this body has remained largely ineffective as it has not been reconstituted after November, 2014, thereby being non-existent after 2014.
    - The CAG recommended: (i) reconstituting the NAC; (ii) the SMCs should be constituted in a timely manner and must meet regularly; (iii) SDPs to be prepared by all the SMCs; and (iv) Chief Controller of Accounts must ensure that the internal audit of the SSA at the central level is conducted regularly.

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