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ULLAS: 11 States and UTs Now 'Fully Literate', Madhya Pradesh Leads in Adult Learners

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Exam relevance: GS Paper-II (education, social sector); Prelims: facts, names and figures



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Why in news

Under the Centre's adult literacy initiative, ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, 10 states and Union Territories had been declared "fully literate" as per the PIB factsheet of 29 September 2026; a 19 November 2026 report, citing ministry officials, puts the number at 11. According to Ministry of Education data, over 90.96 lakh learners have taken the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) in the current academic year.

Which states are 'fully literate'

The 11-state fully literate list given in the report, citing officials, covers **Ladakh, Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and Lakshadweep**. Note that the official factsheet of 29 September 2026 had confirmed 10; formal confirmation of the latest list, including the eleventh entrant, is awaited from a fresh ministry release.

The 95 per cent bar: Achieving 95 per cent literacy in a state or UT is treated as equivalent to being fully literate, since 100 per cent literacy is not feasible because of factors such as the advanced age of some people and certain intellectual disabilities affecting the ability to read and write.

What the ULLAS programme is

Full name: ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society).

Implementation: The Department of School Education and Literacy has run the scheme since 2022-23.

Target group: In line with the National Education Policy 2020, non-literate persons aged 15 and above.

Method: A hybrid mode based on volunteerism, using school and higher education institution platforms and community engagement.

Five components: Foundational literacy and numeracy, critical life skills, basic education, vocational skills, and continuing education.

Related reading: From Education to Employment: The University Townships Committee

What the FLNAT is

FLNAT, the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test, is the mechanism under ULLAS to evaluate learners' reading, writing and numeracy skills. It is conducted twice a year. Successful learners are certified as "Literate" by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

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Key figures

- **This academic year (2026-27):** More than 90.96 lakh learners have taken the FLNAT so far.
- **Overall:** Over 4.15 crore learners across 34 states and UTs have taken the test, with a success rate above 90 per cent.
- **Madhya Pradesh leads in adult learners** with 20.43 lakh, followed by Rajasthan (18.18 lakh), Odisha (12 lakh), Telangana (7.54 lakh), Maharashtra (6.5 lakh) and Tamil Nadu (4.5 lakh).
- **App registrations:** More than 4.17 crore learners and 52.89 lakh volunteer teachers are registered on the ULLAS mobile app.
- **Literacy rate:** According to PIB, the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2025 records India's literacy rate at 81.1 per cent; it was 74.04 per cent in Census 2011.

Facts for the exam

For Prelims, remember the 95 per cent full-literacy bar, the list of 11 states/UTs, the roles of FLNAT and NIOS, the launch year (2022-23) and the target age group (15 and above). Note that states declare full literacy themselves, and it does not mean 100 per cent literacy.

Prelims Practice Questions

Question 1. With reference to the ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, consider the following statements:

Statement 1: The programme targets non-literate persons aged 15 years and above.

Statement 2: Learners who succeed under the programme are certified as 'Literate' by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

Statement 3: A state is declared 'fully literate' only when it attains 100 per cent literacy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

▼ **Answer and Explanation**

Correct answer: (a)

Statement 1 is correct: the scheme targets non-literates aged 15 and above.

Statement 2 is correct: NIOS certifies learners who clear the FLNAT.

Statement 3 is incorrect: 95 per cent literacy is treated as equivalent to full literacy.

Question 2. Which of the following is NOT among the 11 states/UTs declared 'fully literate'?

(a) Tripura

(b) Sikkim

(c) Kerala

(d) Uttarakhand

▼ **Answer and Explanation**

Correct answer: (c)

The list cited in the report comprises Ladakh, Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep; Kerala is not in it.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

By what other name is ULLAS known?

As the New India Literacy Programme (NILP); it is a centrally sponsored scheme whose vision is 'Jan Jan Saakshar' in the spirit of 'Kartavya Bodh' (sense of duty). (Source: PIB factsheet, 29 September 2026)

What are the scheme's coverage target and financial outlay?

A target of covering 5 crore learners during 2022-27, with a financial outlay of Rs 1,037.90 crore. (Source: PIB factsheet, 29 September 2026)

How many languages does the ULLAS app support?

The ULLAS app, available on iOS and Android, carries teaching-learning material in 27 languages. (Source: PIB factsheet, 29 September 2026)

How are learners and volunteer teachers identified?

District- or block-level surveyors conduct door-to-door surveys to identify non-literate individuals and potential volunteer teachers; these surveyors may include school teachers, civil society workers, and ASHA and Anganwadi workers. (Source: PIB factsheet, 29 September 2026)

Sources

- www.pib.gov.in
- indianexpress.com
- www.hindustantimes.com

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