

An Innovative Approach Of Literacy Programme From The Govt. Of India

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Abstract

Literacy is the backbone of development in a progressing country like India as it enhances the quality of life, awareness, and skills of people. It helps people to overcome the struggles of poverty by empowering them to prosper independently. Therefore, the Central Govt. has been providing excellent support and financial assistance to literacy activities in Kerala. The Government of India has launched a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the states namely, the 'New India Literacy Programme' (NILP) for implementation during five years from 2022-23 to 2026-27 with a financial support of Rs.1037.90 crore in order to eradicate illiteracy from India. The New India Literacy Programme is a joint venture of the Central Government and State Governments. The scheme intends to cover a target of 5.00 crore illiterates in the age group of 15 years and above.

Key words: Instructor, Literacy, Mikavulsavam, Prerak, Promoter etc.

Introduction

Literacy is the backbone of development in a progressing country like India as it enhances the quality of life, awareness, and skills of people. It helps people to overcome the struggles of poverty by empowering them to prosper independently. Therefore, The Government of India has launched a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the states namely, the 'New India Literacy Programme' (NILP) for implementation during five years from 2022-23 to 2026-27 with a financial support of Rs.1037.90 crore in order to eradicate illiteracy from India. The New India Literacy Programme is a joint venture of the Central Government and State Governments. The scheme intends to cover a target of 5.00 crore illiterates in the age group of 15 years and above¹.

New India Literacy Programme

The Central Govt. has been providing excellent support and financial assistance to literacy activities in Kerala also. After 'Patna Likhna Abhiyan' project sanctioned to Kerala by the National Literacy Mission with the financial assistance of the Central Government, and the completion of the said project, a new project sanctioned by the Central Government to Kerala is the 'New India Literacy Programme'. The scheme is implemented in all 14 districts of Kerala. The aim of the 'New India Literacy Programme' is to provide an opportunity for education to all those who have had to stay out of formal education for various reasons, such as tribal groups, transgender-queer groups, coastal areas, minorities, cashew factory workers, Kudumbasree activists and other sectors of the society².

New India Literacy programme in Kerala

Kerala Government has undertaken this project in 14 districts of Kerala under the supervision of the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority (KSLMA) and in collaboration with

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the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The scheme is based on technology and implemented by means of online mode. The teaching material, learning material and resources are made available on DIKSHA platform of the NCERT and can be accessed through the mobile-apps³. The Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority is functioning under the guidance of the National Literacy Mission. As a modern society, Kerala wants to attain cent percent literacy that includes literacy about the civil rights and civic responsibilities of the people of Kerala through the implementation of the NILP. The brief details and main activities of the New India Literacy Programme in Kerala are given below:

Brief Details of the Scheme (NILP)

- ❖ Target – To select 85000 illiterates above 15 years of age in 14 districts and make them literate in the first year.
- ❖ Duration – from 2022-23 to 2026-27
- ❖ Activities formed by organizing committees under the leadership of local self-governing bodies.
- ❖ A voluntary teacher with 10th standard education to conduct a class of 8-10 students as per the National Literacy Mission guidelines.
- ❖ There is no provision for remuneration in the scheme.
- ❖ Literacy classes are based on text books revised by the Literacy Mission.
- ❖ Duration of classes – 120 hours
- ❖ Classes in online/offline mode for the convenience of learners⁴.

Other factors

1. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
 2. Development of life skills
 3. Job oriented skill development
 4. Basic education
 5. Continuing education
- ❖ Fund utilization as a part of the New India Literacy programme is through the PFMS (Public Finance Management System) Portal.
 - ❖ All district officers and local self-government institutions which implement the scheme should open an account.
 - ❖ Savings Accounts in the name of Zero Balance Subsidiary Accounts should be opened in the Canara Bank itself.
 - ❖ The Account should be in the name of the Secretary of the Local Self-Government Institution.
 - ❖ Account balance can be checked by checking the PFMS portal.

The NILP Activities

- ❖ A meeting of the District Panchayat Presidents and Secretaries should be organized under the chairmanship of the Hon-Education Minister.
- ❖ A meeting of the Presidents of Local Self-Government Institutions, Secretaries, and Collectors should be organized under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister and the details of the project should be discussed.
- ❖ The General Council chaired by the Chief Minister and the Executive Committee chaired by the Minister of Public Education should explain the importance of the project.

Organizing committee – Discussion guidelines

1. Project Explanation
2. Locating learners
3. Appointment of voluntary teachers
4. Voluntary teacher training

5. Organization of classes
6. Short video for promotion (3minutes)
7. Brochure (four pages in plain language)
8. Power point presentation.
9. Opening of savings account in the Canara Bank.
10. Linking with the PFMS

Population to be given special emphasis in the NILP

1. Scheduled Castes (15%)
2. Scheduled Tribes (5%)
3. Minority groups (31%)
4. Other social classes (49%)
5. Total women in the above mentioned categories (79%)
6. Total males (21%)⁵

It is very important activity to find the illiterates in the above mentioned categories by conducting a survey in each ward.

Preparation for locating learners

❖ Prepare a list of illiterate settlements

Prepare a list of illiterate settlements by including public servants and religion – community workers from the likely areas in the ward level organizing committee.

❖ Meeting of survey team members

Ward level organizing committee should support this by deputing a team in the wards so that the survey team members assigned from their respective areas to find the learners have an understanding of what the survey is for and who should be surveyed. Their meeting should be held prior to the survey.

❖ Survey

After the above mentioned preparations the survey should be organized. The survey team members should divide into three teams and visit predetermined houses and record the names of the illiterates in the survey form.

❖ Survey codification

1. Keep the survey forms tagged as a set, treating the illiterates for literacy class of 8 to 10 persons each.
2. Entrust the information relating to the number of classes expected, total number of learners (Female/Male/Transgender/SC/ST/ Minority/Disabled/ Others) to the ward member when coded. Hand over the survey forums to voluntary teachers when they are appointed.
3. Codification activities at the panchayath level should be carried out by the Preraks (facilitators)⁶ after receiving the details of codification from the ward member. The district level consolidation and state level consolidation and release of survey report should be done.

Ward level resource persons

SC, ST, Women and Minority categories must be included while appointing resource persons.

Duties of Ward level Resource Persons are given below.

1. Assist ward member to perform activities necessary for constituting ward level organizing committee.
2. Lead survey activities at ward level
3. Assist in ward level survey compilations.
4. Help to find volunteer teachers.
5. Ensure co-ordination of literacy classes and necessary support arrangements to voluntary teachers.

Training of volunteer teachers

As soon as volunteer teachers are appointed at the ward level, one day training is to be organized for them at the panchayath level. The training topics include details of the scheme, approach to the older learners and introduction to the text book.

Literacy classes

Literacy classes are conducted using the study guide prepared by the literacy mission based on the literacy text book. Life skills training are also to be provided.

Other classes and training

Digital – Financial – Legal Literacy Classes, Disaster Management, Child Care, Nutrition – Health – Hygiene – Environmental Literacy Classes, Business Skills, Family Welfare, Exercise, Yoga, Anti-Drug Classes, First-Aid, Road Traffic, Accident Management, Subjects like Enrollment in Voters List, and Aadhaar Card are also studied.

Literacy examination – (Mikavulsavam)

A literacy examination of 3 hours duration is conducted for evaluating the learners. Learners have the opportunity to write the examination at their convenience. The examination is conducted in the respective learning centre itself.

Duties of Preraks, SC/ST promoters

The Preraks are responsible for organizing this project in their local self-government institutions. SC promoters are responsible for organizing and supervising literacy activities in Scheduled Cast colonies. ST promoters are responsible for organizing and supporting literacy activities in Scheduled Tribe areas.

Responsibilities of Equivalency Teachers

10th standard and higher secondary equivalency course teachers are to render service as district resource group members in this scheme.

Meetings/ Trainings

1. One day training for district staff regarding the scheme.
2. Meeting and training of secretaries at district level.
3. One day training for Preraks in all districts where the scheme is implemented.
4. Training of teachers.
5. Training of ward resource persons.
6. Training of survey team members at ward level.
7. One day training of voluntary teachers.
8. Meeting and Training of SC promoters.
9. Meeting and Training of ST promoters.

Monitoring

State Literacy Mission representatives headed by the Director have to conduct monitoring through District, Block and Ward level literacy committees.

Documentation

Documentation of activities from local to state level is done.

Publicity

The project is to be promoted through mass media including electronics and television channels, You Tube / Facebook/ Whats App/Instagram, Telegram, Share Chat, Twitter and other media including FM radio, under the leadership of Asst. Director of the State Literacy Mission and Asst. Editors at the state level, and under the leadership of Asst. Coordinator and office staff at the district and local levels⁷.

Scenario in Kerala

Kerala is the most literate state in India. Its average literacy rate is 96.2 according to the Survey of National Statistical Office (NSO) based on 2011 Census. The target of the NILP in Kerala was to select 85000 illiterates above 15 years of age in all 14 districts and make them literate in the first year. The Kerala State Literacy Mission identified 80602 literacy learners to write the examination on 10th December 2023. Out of which 67291 learners wrote the examination on 10th December 2023. 79.2% of the targeted population wrote the examination. It shows the public support and pertinence of the New India Literacy Programme even in a state like Kerala. The details regarding the targeted learners of the NILP in Kerala, Number of Learners of the New India Literacy Programme and number of learners who attended the literacy examination are given below:

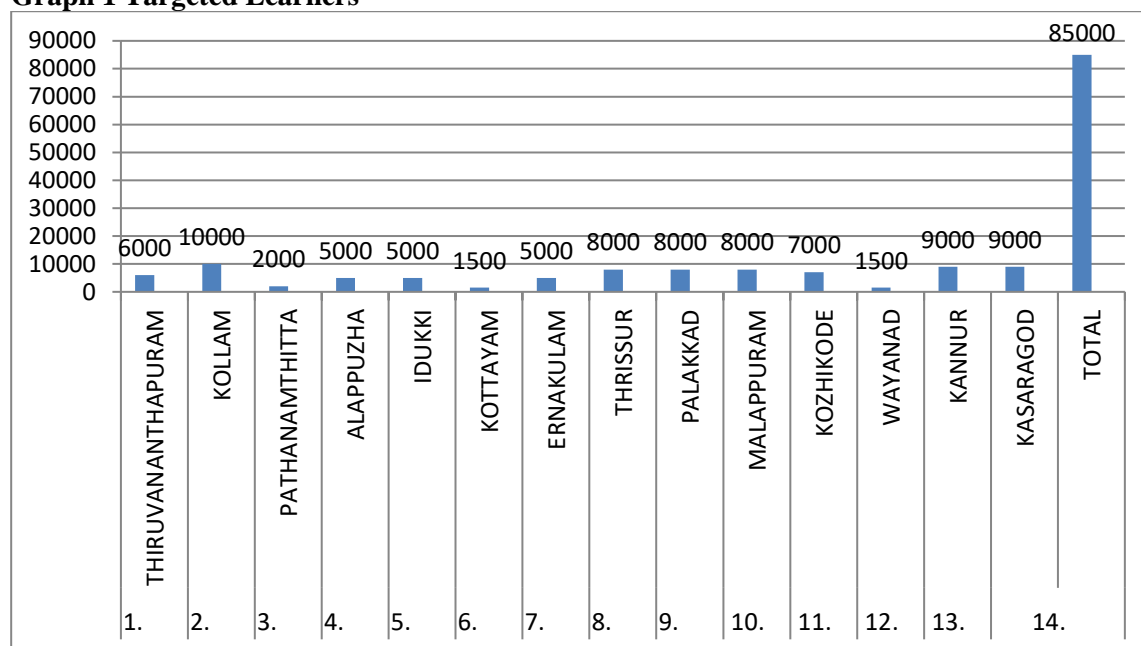
Table 1 New India Literacy programme (NILP)

Number of people to be literate in each district for the scheme

Sl. No	District	Total	Female	Male	SC	ST	Minority	General/Others
1.	Thiruvananthapuram	6,000	4,800	1,200	1,580	220	1,800	2,400
2.	Kollam	10,000	7,800	2,200	2,800	550	3,000	3,650
3.	Pathanamthitta	2,000	1,600	400	350	120	1,000	530
4.	Alappuzha	5,000	3,750	1,250	900	30	1,000	3,070
5.	Kottayam	1,500	1,200	300	170	10	800	520
6.	Idukki	5,000	3,750	1,250	900	800	1,000	2,300
7.	Ernakulam	5,000	3,750	1,250	600	30	1200	3,170
8.	Thrissur	8,000	6,400	1,600	750	110	2,100	5,040
9.	Palakkad	8,000	6,400	1,600	1,200	1,100	1,600	4,100
10.	Malappuram	8,000	6,400	1,600	900	150	5,500	1,450
11.	Kozhikode	7,000	5,600	1,400	850	100	1,500	4,550
12.	Wayanad	1,500	1,200	300	150	900	150	300
13.	Kannur	9,000	7,200	1,800	700	250	2500	5,550
14.	Kasaragod	9,000	7,200	1,800	900	210	3,000	4,890
	TOTAL	85,000	67,050	17,950	12,750	4,580	26,150	41,520

Table 2 Number of Learners of the NILP Exam on 10th December 2023

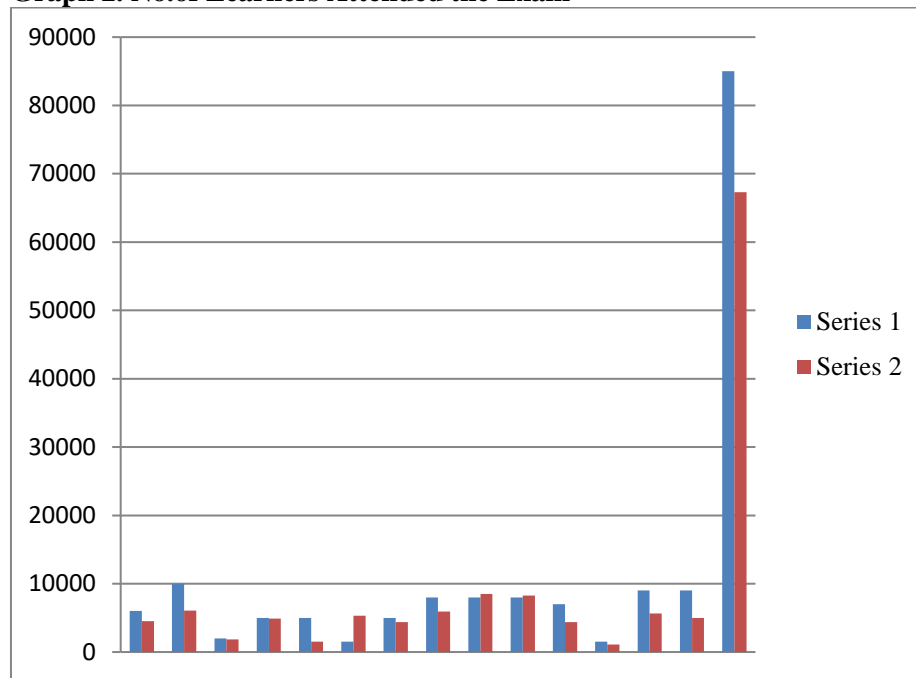
	District	Target	Number of persons attending exam			
			Male	Female	TG	Total
1	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM	6000	1102	4899	2	6003
2	KOLLAM	10000	1563	4640	3	6206
3	PATHANAMTHITTA	2000	432	1568		2000
4	ALAPPUZHA	5000	794	4206		5000
5	IDUKKI	5000	2436	4272	6	6714
6	KOTTAYAM	1500	403	1103		1506
7	ERNAKULAM	5000	507	4495		5002
8	THRISSUR	8000	2501	4499		7000
9	PALAKKAD	8000	3712	8289		12001
1	MALAPPURAM	8000	1800	6426		8226
1	KOZHIKODE	7000	1542	3467		5009
1	WAYANAD	1500	342	8989		1331
1	KANNUR	9000	1679	5924		7603
1	KASARAGOD	9000	1297	5698	6	7001
	TOTAL	85000				80602

Graph 1 Targeted Learners**Table 3 Total No. of Learners Attended the Exam**

		Target	Total No. of Learner Attended Exam
1.	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM	6000	4508
2.	KOLLAM	10000	6054
3.	PATHANAMTHITTA	2000	1842
4.	ALAPPUZHA	5000	4896
5.	IDUKKI	5000	1500
6.	KOTTAYAM	1500	5333
7.	ERNAKULAM	5000	4391
8.	THRISSUR	8000	5931

9.	PALAKKAD	8000	8505
10.	MALAPPURAM	8000	8247
11.	KOZHIKODE	7000	4357
12.	WAYANAD	1500	1074
13.	KANNUR	9000	5650
14.	KASARAGOD	9000	5003
	TOTAL	85000	67291

Graph 2. No.of Learners Attended the Exam



Series 1 Targeted Learners
Series 2 Learners Attended the Exam

Conclusion

The 'New India Literacy Programme' (NILP) has been launched for implementation during five years from 2022-23 to 2026-27 with a financial support of Rs.1037.90 crore in order to eradicate illiteracy from India and to uplift the standard of living of the people. The Scheme has five components. They are Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical Life Skills, Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education. The scheme is based on technology and implemented by means of online mode. The teaching material, learning material and resources are made available on DIKSHA platform of the NCERT and can be accessed through the mobile-apps. Moreover, other modes of communication like TV, Radio, Samajik Chetna Kendra etc. are also used for dissemination of Basic Literacy and Numeracy. All the illiterates who are above 15 years of age are beneficiaries of the scheme. As literacy is the foundation for education, the New India Literacy Programme can improve self-esteem, overall quality of life of the citizens, health conditions, and help to reduce poverty of the people of India at a large scale. Kerala Government has undertaken this project in 14 districts of Kerala under the supervision of the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority (KSLMA) and in collaboration with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Kerala can achieve 100% literacy by implementing this scheme that will help Kerala to attain the literacy rate of developed countries. The New India Literacy programme of Kerala is an exemplary model for the entire India.

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