

Education Bill

3885. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to bring before Parliament, Education Bill to make education a Fundamental Right;

(b) whether it is a fact that the proposed Bill intend to make education compulsory for children in the age group of 6 to 14;

(c) what are the other salient features of the proposed Bill; and

(d) how Government propose to provide infrastructural facilities in schools upto primary level, both in rural and urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The Constitution (Eighty-Third Amendment) Bill, 1997 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 28th July, 1997 to make right to free and compulsory education for children from 6—14 years of age a Fundamental Right.

The Bill was referred to the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on HRD. Based on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the advice of Ministry of Law, and suggestions of Law Commission, the Ministry formulated a revised proposal and placed it before the Cabinet. The Cabinet desired that this may be placed first before the Group of Ministers., where it is under consideration.

(d) The Government has recently launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)—a National Programme for Universal Elementary Education to provide eight years of elementary education to all children in the 6—14 age group by 2010. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan aims to expand and improve the existing facilities in elementary schools by providing *inter-alia* for additional teachers, classrooms, and alternative schooling facilities especially, for girls and children of the weaker sections of the society.