

- (a) the status of educational facilities being provided in rural areas of the country;
- (b) the details thereof; State-wise;
- (c) whether Government is aware that the quality of education in rural areas has been declining continuously;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether Government is considering any corrective measures in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 (as modified in 1992) provides for a National System of Education, which implies that up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. It also accords priority for improvement of the standard of education at all levels for children living in rural and urban areas.

The NPE recognizes that the rural areas, with poor infrastructure services, will not get the benefit of trained and educated youth, unless rural-urban disparities are reduced and determined measures are taken to promote diversification of employment opportunities. Pursuant to this, a large number of schemes/programmes are under various stages of implementation, which predominantly address the educational needs of rural areas including technical education. The schemes/programmes include Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid-day Meal scheme (MDM), Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme, Mahila Samakhya and the scheme of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in Schools. Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in rural areas specifically in order to provide quality education to rural children. There are other institutions such as Gandhigram Rural Institute and the National Council of Rural Institutes which address issues of reducing disparities in education.

As per an independent study commissioned by Government of India the number of out of school children has decreased from 1.35 crore in 2005 to 81 lakh in 2009.

The Saakshar Bharat scheme also focuses on women's literacy, especially in rural areas. 80% overall literacy is targeted by the end of the 11th Plan period. The States/UT Governments have been informed that under Saakshar Bharat 70 million non-literates are to be made literate, of which 60 million will be women.

Promotion of higher education

†1764. SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (a) whether Government is contemplating any action plan to promote higher education;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is a fact that only 2.5 per cent students in the country are able to get higher education; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Eleventh Five Year Plan provides for several schemes for the promotion and strengthening of higher education. Schemes of increasing access include establishment of new Central Universities in hitherto uncovered States, new Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, National Institutes of Technology and Schools of Planning and Architecture, incentivizing States for establishment of new institutions by establishment of model degree colleges in districts where the GER is below the national level, and expansion of existing institutions. Similarly schemes for improving quality and standards of higher education have also been included in the Plan.

(c) and (d) The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of persons enrolled in higher education as a percentage of the population in the age cohort group of 18-24 years is estimated to be 12.4%. The reasons for the low GER are manifold and include the lack of adequate number and spread of institutions for access and the correspondingly low percentage of children emerging after completing secondary education.

Requirement of teachers for Right to Education Act

†1765. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that large scale inadequacy in the number of teachers in the country can prove Right to Education Act to be meaningless;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reason therefor; and
- (d) the provision made for student teacher ratio under Right to Education Act and the present ratio thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) As per estimates prepared by the National University of

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