

(c) in order to destress the academic ambience at school level, whether Government would consider engaging voluntary counselling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) There is no proposal for scrapping of school examinations altogether. However, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) intends to introduce continuous and comprehensive evaluation more effectively in the school system.

(b) The continuous and comprehensive evaluation is intended to assess the holistic development of the child covering the cognitive, affective and the psycho motor domains of the learners in the process of learning.

(c) As per information received from the CBSE, necessary steps are being taken to implement pre examination counselling and post examination counseling to students to relieve them of the possible stress during examinations. CBSE has also advised the schools to appoint counsellors to deal with the various academic and emotional problems that the students may encounter during the learning process in the schools.

Drop-out rate

4092. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drop-out rate between 1991-92 and 2001-02 had increased only in the five States *i.e.*, Assam, Goa, Sikkim, Meghalaya and Nagaland;

(b) whether it is also a fact that drop-out rate has been increasing between 2001-02 and 2002-03 in nine States *i.e.* Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, M.P., Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa and Punjab;

(c) if so, the steps his Ministry would take to reduce the drop-out rate; and

(d) what concrete plan his Ministry has to achieve zero per cent of drop-out rate by 2007?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, in so far as Drop-out Rate for Class I-V is concerned, except that:—

- (i) Drop-out Rate declined in the case of Assam during the period 1991-92 to 2001-2002, and
- (ii) Separate figures for Drop-out Rates are not available for the newly formed States of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

(c) and (d) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid-Day Meal and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya schemes are being implemented to reduce drop-outs. State Governments have been requested to implement various schemes in an intensive and coordinated manner, monitor the status of drop-out in a disaggregated manner, and take all necessary steps so as to bring down drop-outs at the primary stage to near zero in a time bound manner.

Disparities in education

†4093. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are several disparities in imparting education; and

(b) if so, the details of the efforts being made by Government for removing such disparities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) The extant National Policy on Education (NPE) 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 includes a common educational structure, a national curriculum framework and minimum levels of learning for each stage of education.

The NPE lays special emphasis on the removal of disparities and the equalisation of educational opportunities by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far. Concerns regarding quality and equity in education are continuously addressed and several measures taken which include separate schools and hostels for girls, exemption of tuition and other fees, incentives such as free textbooks, stationery, uniforms, scholarships, free studentships for poor and meritorious students and reservations in admission. The educational development of the girl

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.