

[14 March, 2005]

RAJYA SABHA

(b) if so, whether this subject has been made compulsory in senior secondary (XI and XII) classes in the schools in Delhi;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of schools where the subject has been introduced; and

(e) Government's action plan to popularize the course and make it compulsory for all the schools in the NCT of Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Biotechnology has been introduced only as an optional elective subject at senior secondary level (Classes XI and XII) by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

(c) to (e) Government of NCT of Delhi has informed that career counselling is done in schools to make students aware of the career options in the field of Biotechnology but it cannot be enforced on the students. Biotechnology has been introduced as optional elective subject in 122 schools, affiliated to CBSE, all over India, including 29 in Delhi.

Mobilization of funds for elementary education

1273. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of **HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making progress in achieving the desired level of mobilization of the funds requirement of Rs. 1,37,000 crore by 2009 estimated by an Expert Group on financial requirement for making elementary education a Fundamental Right in 1999, for universalization of elementary education; and;

(b) if so, the current status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) In 1999, and Expert group on "Financial Requirements for Making Elementary Education a Fundamental Right" had estimated an additional requirement of Rs. 1,37,000 crores over the next ten years for achieving Universal Elementary Education. However, the Financial Memorandum attached to the Constitution (93rd) Amendment Bill, 2001, which sought to make

elementary education a fundamental right, has stated that "total overall financial burden due to implementation of obligations under the proposed provision would be about 9800 crores per annum to be shared between Central and State Governments. In a ten year period, this is estimated at Rs. 98000 crores."

To augment Central Government's normal budgetary resources for elementary education, an Education Cess has been levied in 2004-05 @ 2% on Income Tax, Excise Duty, Customs Duty and Service Tax "to fulfil the commitment of the Government to provide and finance universalised quality basic education." This is resulting in substantially enhanced allocations for the elementary education in the Central Plan as would be clear from the following figures:—

BE, 2004-05 - Rs. 5750 crores

RE, 2004-05 — Rs. 8982 crores

(including Rs. 1232 crores provided under State sector as Additional Central Assistance for Mid Day Meal schemes)

BE, 2005-06 — Rs. 12241.76 crores.

Charter and action plan for children

1274. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are formulating a charter and an action plan for children;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) by when the proposed charter and action plan are likely to be placed for a public debate at various forum so that an informed public opinion could be formulated with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) The National Charter for Children, 2003 has been adopted by the Government and notified in the