

(b) whether Government is aware that more than 11 lakh posts of teachers are vacant throughout the country;

(c) if so, whether it is not possible to provide compulsory education to all the children between 6 to 14 years age group due to the vacant posts of teachers; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) Yes, Sir. As per District Information System for Education (DISE) 2011-12 (Provisional) data, a total of 19.90 crore students were enrolled in classes I to VIII.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), 12.86 lakh teachers have been recruited by the States/UTs till December, 2012 and 26 States/UTs have conducted the mandatory Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) for recruitment of teachers. The Central Government has laid emphasis with State Governments and UT Administrations on expediting recruitment and redeployment of teachers to ensure pupil-teacher ratios as laid down in the Schedule of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009.

Drop-out of girl students in rural areas

108. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the drop-out rates at the primary and secondary levels are high amongst girls in rural areas as compared to urban areas;

(b) if so, the details of drop-out rates among girls in rural as well as urban areas, State-wise;

(c) whether poor infrastructure facilities, remoteness and socio-cultural reasons are responsible for these high drop-out rates among girls; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to remove infrastructure bottlenecks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) and (b) The dropout rate for the Classes I-V and Classes I-X during 2010-11 (Provisional) in the country is given below:

Classes	2010-11 (Provisional)		
	Boys	Girls	Total
I-V	28.7	25.1	27.0
I-X	50.4	47.9	49.3

The dropout rates are not maintained separately for rural and urban areas.

(c) and (d) The incidence of high dropout rate may be attributed to inadequate school infrastructure and facilities, adverse pupil teacher ratio, children engaged in household or other kinds of work, seasonal migration etc. The Government has been making consistent progress in meeting the goals of Universal Elementary Education through implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009, which became operational with effect from 1st April, 2010, provides that every child in the 6 to 14 age-group shall have a right to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education. The SSA Framework of Implementation has been revised to correspond with the provisions of the RTE Act 2009 and SSA is being implemented in accordance with the norms and standards of the RTE Act to enhance enrolment and retention of children and to bridge gender gaps in elementary education. A multi-pronged approach has been adopted for reducing dropout rates. This includes; *inter-alia* strengthening of school infrastructure and facilities, residential hostel buildings for children in habitations not covered by regular schools, provisioning for additional teachers, regular training of teachers, provision for text books and uniforms to children. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme provides for setting up of residential upper primary schools for girls. Mid Day Meal Scheme is also being implemented with a view to enhance enrolment and retention of children in school. Further, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan which has been launched for universal access to secondary education, aims at removing gender and socio-economic disparities in access to education.

Price hike in onion

†109. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that there has been a sharp increase in the prices of the onions recently;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.