

**Training of SC and ST students under skill development schemes**

2887. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is keeping records of students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes being trained under various skill development schemes currently operated under the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details of the percentage/fraction of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students among the total students getting trained under those schemes; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (c) As per the norms of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Higher Secondary Education, a Management Information System is to be developed at all levels *i.e.* National, State, District and School. Under the scheme, a Pilot Project under the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) has been launched in 40 schools in Haryana. Of the 4904 students enrolled, 1481 students *i.e.* 30% of total students belong to the Scheduled Castes. Under the scheme of Community Development through Polytechnics, approximately 18.99% of the trainees are from the Scheduled Castes and 5.60% of the trainees are from the Scheduled Tribes. Under the Vocational Education Programme of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), in the year 2012-13, out of the 27,733 students admitted in various vocational courses, 3463 students belong to the Scheduled Castes and 2003 students belong to the Scheduled Tribes.

**Improvement of elementary education in Government schools**

2888. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the main reasons for low/poor quality of elementary education in Government schools in the country;

(b) whether Central Government has prepared any comprehensive and integrated policy framework to improve this poor quality; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (c) The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which uses a rigorous research methodology, conducts very detailed periodic national surveys of learning achievements of children in classes III, V and VIII. Two rounds of such National Achievement Surveys have been completed by the NCERT, which have revealed improvements in the overall learning levels, even though achievements remain low. The reasons for the low achievements may be summed up as inadequate infrastructural facilities in schools, adverse pupil teacher ratio, presence of large number of untrained teachers in the system, curriculum, syllabus and textbooks not being in sync with the principles of National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – 2005 and the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009, excessive subject load on children, the absence of child-friendly and child-centred classroom processes, and traditional methods of memory-based assessment systems.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) provides for several interventions to improve the quality of elementary education, including the strengthening of existing school infrastructure, the opening of new schools, recruiting additional teachers, periodic in-service teacher training, the provision of textbooks and uniforms, regular academic support for learning enhancement to teachers. Further, the Government has issued an Advisory to State Governments on the implementation of section 29 of the RTE Act for initiating curriculum reform, including (i) formulating age-appropriate curricula and syllabi in keeping with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF)-2005, (ii) maintaining subject balance, (iii) initiating textbook contents and production reform, (iv) ensuring continuous and comprehensive assessment for learning.

To ensure the availability of quality teachers, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has laid down the teacher qualifications under section 23 of the RTE Act. One of the essential conditions for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher is that he/she should pass the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) to be conducted by the appropriate Government.

#### **Thirteenth Finance Commission grants to States for education**

2889. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: