

2. The Ministry of Human Resource Development runs two Scholarship schemes namely Centrally Sponsored National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme and Central Sector Scholarship Scheme for College and University Students. Centrally Sponsored National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme has been launched in May, 2008, with the objective to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue the study at secondary stage. Reservation as per State Government norms is applicable under the Scheme. An amount of ₹ 323.56 crore has been spent on sanction of scholarship from 2008-09 to 2013-14. Central Sector Scholarship Scheme for College and University Students has been launched in 2008-09 with the aim to provide financial assistance to meritorious students *i.e.* those who are above the 80th percentile of successful candidates in relevant stream for a particular board of examination. The reservation is as per the Reservation policy of the Government subject to internal earmarking. Since, inception of the scheme *i.e.* from the academic year 2008-09 till date an amount of ₹ 771.28 crore has been spent in this scheme.

Data regarding disbursement of these two scholarships to the OBC students, however, is not maintained centrally.

#### **Uniform education policy**

46. SHRI PARVEZ HASHMI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is planning for uniform education policy for classes from nursery to XII in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, that reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the parents are demanding that age for admission in nursery class should be four years;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. (DR.) RAM SHANKAR KATHERIA): (a) to (e) The National Policy on Education 1986, as amended in 1992, has been the guiding document for the policies of the Central Government in the education sector. The Government has been following National Policy on Education 1986, as modified in 1992, which provides for

National System of Education implying that up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. The National System of Education envisages a common educational structure. The 10+2+3 structure has now been accepted in most parts of the country.

A number of suggestions are being received to include pre-school education under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE), 2009 and relating to the age of admission in nursery class. These suggestions have been kept for consideration as and when the education policy is revised.

#### **Enrolment of children in schools**

47. SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years in the country are enrolled in schools;
- (b) how many of them are able to avail of free educational facilities extended by Government;
- (c) whether there are sufficient Government schools in all the States to cater to them;
- (d) whether a large number of Government schools are being closed in States like Rajasthan and Telangana for want of children; and
- (e) whether such a step actually denies the opportunity to a number of students, particularly those belonging to backward classes to attend schools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) to (c) The Census 2011 estimated 20.78 crore children in the 6-13 age group. In 2013-14 enrolment in elementary schools was 19.89 crore children in 14.49 lakh elementary schools, including 13.79 lakh Government and Government aided schools providing free education.

(d) and (e) No State Government has reported that schools have been shut down due to non-availability of children, however some State Governments, like Rajasthan have reported an exercise of consolidation of schools.

#### **Data bank of students going abroad**

48. SHRI PARVEZ HASHMI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is willing to prepare data bank of students going abroad for study;