

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), funds are provided to all States/Union Territories including Maharashtra for providing infrastructure facilities to government secondary schools. The infrastructure includes class-rooms, library, science laboratory and toilets. There is no provision for playgrounds at present.

(b) The budget provision for RMSA for the current financial year 2016-17 is ₹3,700 crore. However, the funds are not allocated in the Budget State-wise.

(c) There is no separate allocation of funds for maintenance of toilets of government schools. However, under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) a school Maintenance Grant of ₹5,000/- per school (having upto 3 rooms) and ₹10,000/- per school (having more than 3 rooms), subject to the overall amount of ₹7500/- per school for a district, is allocated for repair and maintenance of school infrastructure including toilets. Under RMSA an annual school grant of ₹50,000/- per school is allocated for various activities at the school level including repair and maintenance of school infrastructure, which includes toilets. Further, the Government of India has advised all States and UTs to urge the Gram Panchayats to put in place proper arrangements for regular cleaning of school toilets and for disposal of solid and liquid waste generated in the schools.

(d) The Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (District component) has been delinked from the budgetary support of the Central Government w.e.f. 2015-16.

**Decline in quality of primary and high school
education in rural areas**

2043. SHRI PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quality of primary and high school education continues to decline in rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to improve the quality of education in the country, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducts periodic national surveys of learning achievement of children in classes III, V, VIII and X. Four rounds of National Achievement Survey (NAS) have been conducted so far for class V and three rounds for classes III and VIII. These reveal improvement in learning achievement levels of pupils, in identified subjects from first round to fourth round. Since only first round of NAS has been conducted at Class X level, it is not possible to comment on the comparative learning achievement or decline of students of Standard X.

The results of the 3 cycles of NAS conducted at classes III, IV and VIII over the period of time indicate that there is no significant difference in performance of students of rural and urban areas.

The standard of education in States and UTs depends upon several factors including socio-economic, socio-geographic and educational background of the students, availability of basic infrastructure/amenities in schools, availability of trained and competent teachers in the schools and so on.

(c) Since the inception of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a flagship programme of the Central Government for universalising elementary education in 2001 till 31.3.2016, opening of 3.64 lakh new elementary schools, construction of 3.11 lakh school buildings, and 18.61 lakh additional classrooms and 19.48 lakh teacher posts have been sanctioned to States and UTs. Further, under SSA, the State Governments and UT Administrations are supported on several interventions to improve teaching standards, including regular in-service teachers' training, induction training for newly recruited teachers, training of all untrained teachers to acquire professional qualifications, recruitment of additional teachers for improving pupil-teacher ratios, academic support for teachers through block and cluster resource centres, continuous and comprehensive evaluation system to equip the teacher to measure pupil performance and provide remedial action wherever required, and teacher and school grants for development of appropriate teaching-learning materials, etc. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 specifies statutory duties and responsibilities of teachers and lays down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in elementary schools.

Additionally, to improve the quality of elementary education in the country, the Central Government has taken several initiatives. Some of these are - (i) Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat' (PBBB) which is a sub-programme under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), encourage children to improve on early grade reading, writing and comprehension, and early Mathematics in classes I and II. Rashtriya Aavishkar Abhiyan (RAA) programme has been launched in July 2015, *inter alia*, as a sub-component of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), to motivate and engage children of the age group from 6-18 years in Science, Mathematics and Technology through observation, experimentation, inference drawing, model building, etc. both through inside and outside classroom activities.

At secondary level, the centrally sponsored scheme of RMSA envisages enhancing the quality of education by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of every habitation, improving quality of education imparted at secondary level, removal of gender, socio-economic and disability barriers. The Scheme provides for classrooms, science laboratory, library, computer room etc. in new/upgraded and existing secondary schools. Since the inception of RMSA in 2009-10 till 31.3.2016, 11,599 new secondary schools, 52,715 additional classrooms, 25,948 science laboratories, 21,864 computer rooms and 27,428 libraries have been sanctioned to States and UTs. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to the States/UTs for various above activities including teachers training viz. induction training, in-service teachers training, master trainers training, training of key resource persons, professional development training as well as management and Leadership training of headmasters & state resource groups (SRGs).

Percentage of GDP for education sector

†2044. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether draft of the new National Education Policy has been prepared, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it has been proposed under the new policy to spend at least 6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in the education sector, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it has been proposed under the new policy to encourage establishment of Indian educational institutes in foreign countries, if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.