

(d) At present, there are 41 Central Universities under the purview of this Ministry and the Vice-Chancellor's posts are vacant only in three Central Universities. This Ministry has no role in appointment of Vice-Chancellors in State Universities.

**Recommendation of UNICEF for pre-school education**

†1234. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to United Nation Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report which says that more than six lakh children aged between 6 to 13 do not go to school;

(b) whether UNICEF has recommended inclusion of pre-school education in the new education policy and provision for unrestricted progression upto class tenth instead of class eighth;

(c) whether only about half of the children belonging to Scheduled Castes and poor families attend pre-schooling in Anganwadi; and

(d) if so, steps being taken to send all the children in the schools and Anganwadis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) As per the United Nation Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report titled 'South Asia Regional Study covering Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, 2014' 1.19 crore children in the age group of 6 to 13 years are out of school. However, to track out of school children in the age group of 6 to 13 years, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) commissioned three independent surveys according to which 134.59 lakh children were estimated to be out of school in 2005, and the figure came down to 81.50 lakh in 2009 and 60.64 lakh in 2014.

(b) As per data on consultations on proposed new education policy, available with MHRD, there is no record of any recommendation from UNICEF regarding inclusion of pre-school education in the new education policy or regarding provision for unrestricted progression upto class tenth instead of class eighth.

(c) and (d) Anganwadi Centres under the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Programme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development are intended to provide Early Childhood Education. ICDS Scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and has been universalized to cover 14 lakh habitations through 13.50 lakh Anganwadi Centres and about 3.50 crore children in the 3 to 6 years age

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

group. The number of children belonging to Scheduled Caste and poor families attending pre-school at Anganwadi Centres is not separately maintained by Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for free and compulsory education to every child of the age group of 6 to 14 years in a neighbourhood school till completion of the elementary education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is the designated Centrally Sponsored Scheme to meet the objective of the RTE Act, 2009, provides assistance to State Governments and UTs to ensure quality and inclusive elementary education for all children. Universal enrolment is the first goal of SSA, and hence continuous steps/measures have been taken to bring all children in schools. SSA has sanctioned 2.04 lakh primary and 1.59 lakh upper primary schools to States and UTs for ensuring universal provisioning of schooling facilities. Preference for opening of school is given to tribal areas, and areas with high concentration of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minority population. 3609 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, which are residential schools for girls at upper primary level, have also been sanctioned to the States for improving access to marginalised girls particularly out of school, either drop out or never enrolled. The number of children enrolled at elementary level has increased to 19.8 crore in 2014-15 from 15.1 crore in 1998-99.

Additionally, other strategies adopted under SSA such as improving pupil-teacher ratios, providing incentives like free textbooks, uniforms for eligible category of children and mid-day meal in schools have proved to be useful in increasing the enrolment of children in elementary schools.

#### **Funds for Tribal Sub Plan of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme**

1235. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the fund earmarked under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme for Odisha for the financial years 2013, 2014 and 2015;

(b) whether the fund has been fully utilized for the purpose it was allocated; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) The funds earmarked under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme for Odisha for the financial years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 are as under: