

Special focus areas in higher education

3705. SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has identified any area/sector in higher education which is likely to be given special focus/attention after the recent survey on higher education is published;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'): (a) to (c) Following measures have been taken by Government to give special focus/attention to Higher Education:—

- (i) Issuing of new University Grants Commission (UGC) regulation for Open and Distance Learning that allows entry of reputed institutions to offer education on the distance mode.
- (ii) Using of ICT technology- Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) portal to reach out of people and allow them to secure good quality education.
- (iii) Opening of more centrally funded institutions.
- (iv) Encouraging opening of institutions by State Governments through the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) which aims to achieve equity, access and excellence in higher education. The scheme supports components such as upgrading autonomous colleges to universities, clustering colleges to establish a university, setting up of new professional colleges in unserved and underserved areas as well as providing infrastructure grants to universities and colleges to scale up capacity.
- (v) More scholarship programmes to supplement the cost of education.

School infrastructure under SSA

3706. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL:

SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under SSA States/UTs are supported to augment school infrastructure to meet RTE norms, including those in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) to what extent the norms have been met, so far in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'): (a) to (c) The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 stipulates norms and standards for a recognized school imparting elementary education. The RTE norms provide for an all-weather building in elementary schools including those in rural area. The school building should *inter alia*, consist of at least one classroom for every teacher and an office-cum-store-cum-Head teacher's room, barrier free access, separate toilets for boys and girls, safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children and playground. Sections 8 and 9 of the RTE Act, 2009 lays down the duties of appropriate Government and local authority to *inter alia* provide infrastructure including school building, teaching staff and learning equipment.

Earlier, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) effective till 2017-18 was the designated Centrally Sponsored Scheme to meet the objectives of the RTE Act in elementary schools, *inter alia* for creation and augmentation of school infrastructure. The Department of School Education and Literacy has launched an Integrated Scheme for School Education - Samagra Shiksha w.e.f. 2018-19, which subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). The new integrated scheme envisages school education as a continuum from pre-school to senior secondary level and aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. Under Samagra Shiksha, States and UTs are supported for strengthening of existing government schools, and for creation and augmentation of infrastructure facilities based on proposals received from respective State/UT. The scheme also envisages an annual recurring composite school grant varying upto ₹ 1,00,000/- per annum depending upon the number of students, for all government schools. Each school is required to spend at least 10% of the composite school grant on activities related to Swachhata Action Plan. The scheme also provides for annual maintenance and repair of existing school building, toilets and other facilities to upkeep the infrastructure in good condition.

Under erstwhile SSA till 2017-18 and Samagra Shiksha effective from 2018-19, construction of 3.13 lakh school buildings, 18.89 lakh additional classrooms, provision of 2.41 lakh drinking water facility, construction of 3.99 lakh Boys' toilets, 5.22 lakh separate girls' toilets and 1.41 lakh Children with Special Needs (CWSN) toilets and

internal electrification of 2.08 lakh schools have been sanctioned to States and UTs for elementary schools, out of which States and UTs have reported construction of 2.97 lakh school buildings, 18.17 lakh additional classrooms, provision of 2.34 lakh drinking water facility, construction of 3.83 lakh Boys' toilets, 5.14 lakh separate girls' toilets, 1.25 lakh CwSN toilets and internal electrification of 1.95 lakh schools, till 31.03.2019.

Unified District Information System for Education (U-DISE) collects data on various indicators on school education. As per U-DISE, 2017-18(prov.), 95.54% of Government elementary schools have girls' toilet, 98.74% of Government elementary schools have boys' toilet, 97.18% of Government elementary schools have provision of drinking water facility, 72.26% of Government elementary schools have ramps, 59.86% of Government elementary schools have boundary wall, 56.72% of Government elementary schools have playground facility and 79.30% of Government elementary schools have library. Also, 63.14% schools are having electricity connection.

Book Fairs organised by NBT

3707. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the National Book Trust (NBT) of India organises Book Fairs in different parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the details of such Book Fairs organised during the last three years;
- (c) whether NBT would organise a Book Fair in Jharkhand also in the near future;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'): (a) National Book Trust (NBT), India mandated by the Government of India to organize Book Fairs across the country throughout the year to promote reading habits among the masses:

- (b) A list of National and Regional level Book Fairs organised by the NBT during last Five years is enclosed at Statement (*See* below). The NBT also organises annual New Delhi World Book Fair and the next Fair's date is 4 to 12 January 2020.