

occasions, Missions/Posts abroad face some short-term vacancies. The COVID-19 situation has also led to temporary delays in the movement of personnel. It is not possible to determine the exact number of vacancies since this is a continuous process with some officers demitting charge and others assuming charge in some of our 197 Missions/Posts abroad.

Recently on account of the global pandemic of COVID-19, various countries including India enforced strict lock-downs and restrictions on movement. This has severely impacted movement of officials to allotted stations of posting in a timely manner. Vacancies arising on account of delayed movements are temporary in nature, and all efforts are being made by the Ministry to facilitate the movement of its officers through Vande Bharat Mission flights or under air-bubble agreements with partner countries.

Additionally, when new posts are created, it takes time to fill them as indent needs to be placed with UPSC, which then recruits officers through a three-step examination process. Once officers are recruited, they go through a probation period before confirmation in service.

Increased expenditure under the new National Education Policy

572. SHRI BINOY VISWAM: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) the share of the increased expenditure under the new National Education Policy (NEP) between the Centre and State Governments;

(b) the total budgetary allocation and expenditure on education during the last 3 budgets; and

(c) the steps Government is taking to reach the increased expenditure of 6 per cent GDP?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'):

(a) In order to attain the goal of education with excellence and the corresponding multitude of benefits to this Nation and its economy, the New Education Policy unequivocally endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central government and all State Governments.

(b) The details of budgetary allocation and expenditure on education during the last 3 years and current year for the Department of Higher Education and Department of School Education & Literacy are given below:—

Year	D/o School Education & Literacy			D/o Higher Education			
	Budget	RE/FG	Expenditure	Budget	RE/FG	Expenditure	Budget
2017-18	46356.25	47006.25	46586.12	33329.70	34862.46	33656.51	79685.95
2018-19	50000.00	50113.75	48069.80	35010.29	33512.11	31913.31	85010.29
2019-20	56536.63	56536.63	52590.03	38317.01	38317.01	36920.25	94853.64
2020-21	59845.00	0.00	16714.02*	39466.52	0.00	10830.79*	99311.52

*as on 14.09.2020

(c) The Centre and the States have to work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest. This is considered extremely critical for achieving the high-quality and equitable public education system that is truly needed for India's future economic, social, cultural, intellectual and technological progress and growth.

Workers rescued from abroad

573. SHRI M. SHANMUGAM:

SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights sent abroad to repatriate students and blue-collared workers among others stuck abroad, up to 31st of July, 2020;

(b) the details of workers repatriated and to which States they were repatriated; and

(c) the justification for charging flight charges from the workers when they were in distress and penniless?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) Till 31 July 2020, more than 3800 flights were used to repatriate students and blue collar workers among others stuck abroad. As on 13 September 2020, the figure is more than 6400 flights.

(b) The requested details are given in the Statement (*See blow*) as per data shared by the passengers with our Missions.

(c) The Vande Bharat Mission was a repatriation exercise by way of which the Government of India facilitated the movement of stranded Indian nationals back to their home. In extreme distress cases, Missions extended assistance by paying for the air fare from the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), as per the guidelines. In many cases, companies that employed workers either paid for their airfares or hired chartered flights for them at the company's expense.