

**Ftth/ fibre network system by BSNL and MTNL**

1299. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is seriously considering to revive loss making BSNL and MTNL;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government is considering to start Fibre To The Home (FTTH)/ Fibre network through MTNL/BSNL in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government approved the revival plan for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) on 23.10.2019. The revival plan inter-alia includes measures like reduction in employee cost through Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services to BSNL/MTNL through capital infusion by the Government, debt restructuring by raising of sovereign guarantee bonds, monetization of assets of BSNL and MTNL to raise resources for retiring debt, C APEX and other operational requirements and in-principle approval for merger of BSNL and MTNL.

(c) and (d) BSNL and MTNL have informed that they are already providing Fibre to the Home (FTTH) services in their respective Licensed Service Areas (LSAs).

**Gender and Divyang issues in NEP**

1300. SHRI SUJEET KUMAR: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is confusion over NEP 2020 statement on gender and other related issues;
- (b) whether there is no mention in NEP, 2020 of Divyang community or socially backward classes, if so, the measures by which higher education will cater to the needs of these segments; and
- (c) whether the NEP 2020 envisions more privatization of higher education, if so, the details of the funding of affiliated colleges that will be asked to be autonomous?

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

(a) No Sir.

(b) No Sir. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) clearly mentions Divyang and Socially & Economically Disadvantaged Groups at Chapters 6 and 14. NEP stresses on increasing access for Divyang students and envisages that there is an urgent need for additional special educators for certain areas of school education, such as for subject teaching for children with disabilities/Divyang children at the Middle and Secondary school level, including teaching for specific learning disabilities. The Policy also recognizes the importance of creating enabling mechanisms for providing Children With Special Needs (CWSN) or Divyang, the same opportunities of obtaining quality education as any other child. A rich variety of educational software, for all the above purposes, is to be developed and made available for Divyang students in all major Indian languages. The Policy envisions ensuring equitable access to quality education to all students, with a special emphasis on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) by earmarking suitable Government funds for the education of SEDGs, setting clear targets for higher GER for SEDGs, enhancing gender balance in admissions to HEIs, providing more financial assistance and scholarships to SEDGs in both public and private HEIs, conducting outreach programmes on higher education opportunities and scholarships among SEDGs etc.

(c) No Sir. NEP 2020 clearly mentions that commercialization will be curbed.

**Closure of schools and students affected due to COVID-19 pandemic**

1301. SHRI K.C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) details of assessment made to find out the number of children impacted due to closure of schools in view of COVID-19 pandemic;

(b) whether it is a fact that some States are also closing Government schools in the name of rationalization;

(c) if so, the details of Government schools that have been closed down in the country during the last two years and the current year, year-wise and State-wise; and

(d) in what manner the Ministry will ensure that online classes can reach every student of the country?