

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 189
ANSWERED ON 24.07.2024

Raising the level of education in rural areas

189 # Shri HARSH MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of effective measures and efforts made by Government to raise the level of education among the rural people in the country, especially in Himachal Pradesh;
- (b) whether any special step has been taken in the aspiring districts regarding New Education Policy (NEP), if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the amount given to Himachal Pradesh under this and whether Utility Certificate (UC) has been received and whether any provision has been made by Government in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to raise the level of education in rural areas in the last three years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(Dr. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (c): Education being in the Concurrent List, enhancing the quality of education is the responsibility of both the Central and State Governments. Various schemes/ projects/ programmes run by the Ministry have been aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no child loses opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. It has taken into account the concerns of the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which inter-alia includes geographical identities such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts and other categories. This policy aims at bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes.

The Department of School Education and Literacy is implementing an Integrated Centrally Sponsored Scheme for School Education- Samagra Shiksha from 2018-19. It aims to ensure that all children, from pre-school to class 12, have access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment which should take care of their diverse background, multilingual needs, different academic abilities and make them active participants in the learning process. During the last three years (i.e. 2021-22 to 2023-24), an amount of Rs. 1,355.55 Crore has been released to Himachal Pradesh as central share under Samagra Shiksha.

The Department of Higher Education has undertaken various transformative changes including providing much-needed flexibility, allowing creative combination of subjects, providing multiple pathways, establishing equivalence and mobility to the students through National Credit Framework (NCrF), National Higher Education Qualification Framework, Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), multiple entry/exit; offering

of courses and books / course materials in Indian Languages; use of technology to enhance access to education and for administration and governance of Universities and HEIs; permitting learners to avail upto 40% credit Courses from SWAYAM platform; industry academia collaboration for internships and to develop courses and curriculum to meet the industry and societal needs, offering of industry-aligned courses; embedding of Indian Knowledge system in the education etc.

The Department of Higher Education has launched the third phase of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) as Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) in June 2023 with an outlay of Rs. 12926.10 crore for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 to cater to needs of educationally unserved/ underserved areas. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme aimed at funding specific State government universities and colleges, including in the rural areas, so as to improve their quality by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards. Under the scheme, 7 units have been approved in Himachal Pradesh for a total amount of Rs. 154.76 Crore under various components.

Under PM-USHA, priority is given to Focus Districts. The focus districts are identified by the concerned States/ UTs based on various criteria including low Gross Enrolment Ratio, Gender Parity, population proportion and enrolment proportion for females, transgenders, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, Aspirational/ Border Area/ Left Wing Extremism prone district, etc.

Implementation of NEP 2020 is a continuous process and its implementation requires multiple initiatives and actions, which are taken by concerned bodies/ stakeholders in a synchronized and systematic manner.
