

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No.91
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.12.2018

Higher Education System

***91. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:
SHRI KAMAL NATH:**

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

- (a) whether several renowned educationists have urged the Government to re-imagine and reconstruct the country's higher education system;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Universities in the country are facing various challenges ranging from inadequate funds, teachers' shortage to falling enrolment levels; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to make the universities capable to tap the potential of our burgeoning young population?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *91 FOR 17.12.2018 ASKED BY SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA AND SHRI KAMAL NATH, HON'BLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.

(a) & (b): Over the last few decades the scale and complexities of India's Higher Education sector has increased manifold and is now considered to be one of the largest higher education systems in the world with over nine hundred Universities and forty thousand colleges.

The need to address the growing concerns on the performance of regulating bodies in Higher Education has been discussed and debated by various Commissions and Committees on Higher Education, including the Hari Gautam Committee (2015) and TSR Subramanian Committee (2016).

All these Committees have recommended re-structuring of the regulatory and professional bodies. In addition, the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development in its 265th report (2015-16) recommended for strengthening of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for effective regulation of higher education. The Union Government also announced its intent for reforms in the University Grants Commission in its Budget 2017-18. This was followed by the recommendations of the NITI Aayog for undertaking core reforms in the University Grants Commission, in August, 2017.

(c): There has been a continuous increase in the funds disbursed by the UGC to the Universities and Colleges. The details of funds disbursed to Universities during the last three years are as follows:

S.No.	Year	Funds disbursed (in lakh)
1.	2015-16	₹ 888628.43
2.	2016-17	₹ 905882.26
3.	2017-18	₹ 1084058.52

Further, as per report of the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education in the age group 18-23 years has gone up to 25.8% with total enrolment estimated to be 36.6 million during 2017-18, as compared to 23% with total enrolment estimated to 32.3 million, during 2013-14.

(d): From the statistics, it is evident that all the challenges being faced by the Universities are being addressed by the Government. The Government has taken several steps to aid the Universities, which inter-alia, includes the following:

- i. As announced during the Budget Speech of 2016-17, the Government has created Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA), to provide assistance to top quality higher educational institutions for improving physical infrastructure, research laboratories and equipment etc. so that the country can offer a superior learning environment to students, rise in global rankings and emerge as an educational hub.

An amount of Rs. 1.57 lakh crores has been spent from 2013 to 2018 for higher education. In addition, an amount of Rs. 8091.84 crores has been sanctioned under HEFA.

- ii. There are 5606 posts vacant out of a total of 17092 sanctioned teaching posts in Central Universities. Vacancies at various levels occur due to retirements, resignations, deaths, deputations, expansion and opening of new Universities etc. Thus, occurring and filling up of vacant teaching posts in Universities, is a continuous and ongoing process. Universities are autonomous institutions established under the Central Act, Provincial Act or State Act and the onus of filling up of vacant teaching posts lies with them. The Ministry and UGC continuously monitor vacancy related issues with Central Universities.
- iii. In order to tap the potential of our burgeoning youth population, the Government is committed to improve the quality of education and it is a continuous ongoing process. Several initiatives are undertaken to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), Global Initiative for Academics Network (GIAN), Impacting Research, Innovation & Technology (IMPRINT), Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP), Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMNMTT), Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), National Digital Library, campus connect programme, Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT), and Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP) are being implemented to improve the quality of higher education.
- iv. Further for promotion of innovation, cognitive thinking and improving the quality of Ph.D programmes, the Government has devised schemes in all the fields of education viz. IMPRINT (Impacting Research Innovation and Technology) for technical research, IMPRESS (Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences) for social sciences research, SPARC (Scheme for Promotion of Academic Research and Collaboration) for joint research with Foreign Universities and STARS (Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Fundamental Sciences) for research in fundamental sciences.
- v. The UGC has also started three schemes, namely Community College, B.Voc Degree Programme, and Deen Dayal Upadhyay KAUSHAL Kendras in Universities and Colleges for imparting skill development based vocational courses offering Certificate/Diploma/Advance Diploma/B.Voc/M.Voc and Research level programme with multiple exit and entry options enabling vertical mobility of the students.
- vi. Considering that autonomy is pivotal to promoting excellence in higher education, the University Grants Commission (Categorization of Universities (only) for grant of Graded Autonomy) Regulations, 2018 and the University Grants Commission (Conferment of Autonomous Status Upon Colleges and Measures for Maintenance of Standards in Autonomous Colleges) Regulations, 2018 have been notified. These Regulations will provide the much needed impetus to improve quality and promote autonomy in higher educational institutions.
- vii. The parameters of Assessment and Accreditation have been revised by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), which focus more on public disclosures than peer inspections. Further, owing to the constraints in the existing capacity for accreditation, the University Grants Commission (Recognition and Monitoring of Assessment and Accreditation Agencies) Regulation, 2018 has been notified to encourage multiple government/semi-government agencies for accreditation of higher educational institutions.
