

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3009
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.12.2018**

Affordable Education

†3009. **SHRIMATI RANJANBEN BHATT:
SHRIMATI VASANTHI M.:**

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the education policy today is based on accessibility, accountability, affordability and equity and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also true that even after all these steps by the Governments the education for some sectors of the society is still unaffordable;
- (c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken up by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to impart free education till class 12th and if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

(Dr. SATYA PAL SINGH)

(a) to (c): The extant National Policy on Education (NPE) provides for a National System of Education which implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. It includes a common educational structure, a national curriculum framework and minimum levels of learning for each stage of education. The Government is committed to improve the quality of education and it is a continuous ongoing process. The Government is committed to provide equitable access to quality education to all sections of the society. Ministry of Human Resource Development took a leap forward in transforming education sector with the motto of “Sabko Shiksha, Achchi Shiksha” (Quality education to all) founded on the goals of accessibility, accountability, affordability and equity. The Ministry of Human Resource Development is implementing several schemes aimed at enhancing literacy and basic education of the youth, expanding access to all levels of education, including higher and technical education.

The 42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976 brought about a fundamental change by transferring education from the State List to the Concurrent List giving equal responsibility to both the Central and State Governments to promote education. Recognizing the centrality of states both in policy formulation and effective implementation of education reforms, the Ministry of HRD has been regularly convening meetings of the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), which is a composite body and is also the highest advisory body on education.

Several initiatives are currently being undertaken such as in elementary education, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme aims for improvements in school infrastructure, curricular and assessment reforms, identification of learning indicators, improved teaching and learning resulting in better learning outcomes. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha (RSMA), ICT in Schools, Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education (CSSTE), Shaala Siddhi, Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan are being implemented to improve the quality of secondary education. Recently, the Department of School Education and Literacy has formulated the Samagra Shiksha – an Integral Scheme for School Education as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and it is being implemented throughout the country with effect from the year 2018-19. This programme subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha (RSMA) and Teacher Education (TE). It is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class XII and aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of school education. It envisages the ‘school’ as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to senior secondary levels.

In higher education also, various schemes, namely, Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC), 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 (PMMMNMTT), Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), National Digital Library, campus connect programme, Uchchar Avishkar Abhiyan, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan are being implemented to improve the quality of higher education. A number of initiatives are also undertaken by UGC and AICTE for quality improvement in higher and technical education.

(d) to (e): No Madam. However, the Government is in the process of formulating a New Education Policy (NEP) to meet the changing dynamics of the population’s requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry. The five pillars of NEP would be Accessibility, Equity, Affordability, Quality and Accountability. For this purpose, the Government has constituted a Committee for preparation of the draft National Education Policy under the Chairmanship of eminent scientist Padma Vibhushan Dr. K. Kasturirangan, which is expected to submit its report soon.
