

(c) the main recommendations of the expert-group appointed to assess the feasibility of making elementary education as Fundamental Right;

(d) whether the Government have accepted all the recommendations;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the further reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The News-item refers to excerpts from the report of the Group of Experts constituted by the Department of Education in June, 1997 to examine the financial requirements of States/UTs for achieving the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education, to suggest measures for mobilizing additional resources and to determine suitable sharing arrangements between the Centre and States. The major findings and recommendations of the Group include:

- (i) Requirement of an additional estimated amount of Rs. 1,36,822 crore over a period of ten years to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education.
- (ii) Enhancement of Government allocations for Education to 60% of GDP, assuming an annual growth rate of 5% in real terms over this period.
- (iii) Provision of additional resources for achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education through augmentation of tax revenues, increase in non-tax revenues and restructuring of Government expenditure in favour of education.

(d) to (f) Government's response would follow a detailed examination of the report.

Review of Social Welfare Schemes

*296. SHRI M. BAGA REDDY:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to revamp some of its existing social welfare schemes and modify the eligibility criterion for availing funds for welfare-oriented schemes;

(b) if so, the number of schemes modified and allocation made therefor; and

(c) the extent to which these schemes are likely to be benefited by such revamping?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) A review of various schemes under implementation in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been undertaken with a view to make them user-friendly, flexible, enhance their coverage and usefulness revise financial norms in keeping with the changes in the price-index and to achieve better targeting of the beneficiaries. The review has been completed in respect of 25 schemes for the welfare and development of Scheduled castes, Scheduled Tribes, Disabled, Minorities and Social Defence programmes. The allocation for each scheme is decided every year at the time of finalisation of Annual Plan proposals and the budget.

[Translation]

Identification on Backward Districts

*297. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:
DR. M.P. JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. E.A.S. Sarma to evolve criteria for identification of most backward and poorest districts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of districts identified so far; and

(d) the criteria adopted for identifying the districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) and (b) yes, Sir. a Committee was constituted in 1997 under Dr. E.A.S. Sarma, Secretary (Expenditure), the then Principal Advisor, Planning Commission, to identify the most backward and poorest districts in the Country in 1997. Other Members of the Committee were:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Dr. (Mrs.) Rohini Nayyar
Adviser, Planning Commission | Member |
| 2. Dr. Pronab Sen
Adviser, Planning Commission | Member |
| 3. Prof. K.L. Krishna
Delhi School of Economics
Delhi University | Member |
| 4. Shri Satish Chandra
Joint Secretary (Rural Housing)
Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment | Convenor |

The terms of reference of the Committee were as under:

- (i) To recommend criteria for deciding 100 most backward and poorest districts in the country;
- (ii) To identify such districts in various states, as per the suggested criteria;
- (iii) To suggest an appropriate definition of the term 'infrastructure development' and to identify the specific sectors to be included therein;
- (iv) Any other related issues.

(c) and (d) 100 most backward and poorest districts have been identified by the Committee. The criteria for identification of these most backward and poorest districts in the country is based on the following poverty and backwardness indicators:

- (a) Poverty ratio;
- (b) Number of primary schools per 10,000 population;
- (c) Percentage of female literates to number of females;

(d) Infant Mortality rate;

- (e) Number of Primary health sub-centres per 10,000 population;
- (f) Number of community health workers per 10,000 population;
- (g) Percentage of villages having potable water supply to total number of villages;
- (h) Percentage of villages with pucca roads;
- (i) Number of railway stations per Sq. km.;
- (j) Percentage of villages electrified;
- (k) Percentage of villages with post offices;
- (l) Bank branches per lakh population;
- (m) Cropping intensity (percentage);
- (n) Value of output per hectare;
- (o) Percentage of workers engaged in non agricultural activities to total workers.

The Capital Districts and districts having urban population above 50% of the total were excluded.

[English]

HUDCO Assistance

*298. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH:
SHRI RANJIB BISWAL:

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Central assistance provided by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) to States for housing and other urban areas development activities during each of the last three years till date, State-wise;

(b) the details of the activities undertaken by various States for utilising the funds during the said period, Project-wise; and

(c) the details of allocation proposed to be made by HUDCO during 1999-2000, State-wise?