

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5404
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2012
ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of population which has access to higher education in the country;
- (b) the details of the problems being faced by the higher education system in the country and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to set up National Accreditation Authority and National Education Finance Corporation as well as to allow domestic and foreign players to set up educational institutes in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action initiated by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) the extent to which the measures taken by the Government is likely to improve access to higher education in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. D. PURANDESWARI)

- (a): The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education (in the age group of 18-23 years) has increased from 13.1% in 2007-08 to 15% in 2009-10, as per statistics compiled by the Statistics Division of this Ministry.
- (b): The challenges to the Indian higher education system include challenges of access, equity and quality. Some areas of the country still do not have adequate number of higher educational institutions. There is also a significant differential in the GER of disadvantaged groups like SCs, STs, women and minorities. Some of the institutions need to improve quality of teaching and learning.
- (c) & (d): A National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010, which provides for mandatory accreditation of all higher education institutions has been introduced in Parliament. The proposal for establishment of a National Educational Finance Corporation (NEFC) has not been agreed to by the Planning Commission. A Bill to regulate entry and operation of foreign educational institutions has also been introduced in Parliament.
- (e): Several programmes and schemes initiated by the Government have led to improvement in access to higher education. These include setting up of Model Degree Colleges in 374 Educationally Backward Districts, 16 Central Universities, 08 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 07 Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), 10 National Institute of Technology (NITs) etc. There are also schemes for scholarships and fellowships for socially deprived classes, special programmes for women like Girls' Hostels and Single Girl Child Scholarships, Quality Improvement initiatives of University Grants Commission and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Interest subsidy to economically backward students on educational loans and National Mission on Education through IC&T are other initiatives to improve access to higher education.