

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6598

ANSWERED ON:16.05.2012

WEIGHT OF SCHOOL BAGS

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the burdening of tender primary and middle-school children mind, with school curriculum, which they fail to appreciate and comprehend;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon;
- (c) whether the textbooks prescribed for them are not only heavy in term of weight, but also not in tandem with their age appropriateness and maturity level;
- (d) if so, the details thereof ;
- (e) the corrective action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (f) the improvement recorded in the quality of education in the primary schools in the country during the last three years?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI E.AHAMED)

(a) to (d) National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has not recommended any textbook for early childhood education, only two books (Language & Mathematics) for Class I & II and three books for Class III to V (Language, EVS and Mathematics). The National Curriculum Framework-2005 also recommended that autonomy should be given to the schools to develop their own flexible time tables. With flexible time table, it is not necessary for the school to teach all subjects on all the days. The school may decide to teach two or three subject one day and two or three subjects on the other day. NCERT's textbooks used by the primary and middle school students are in synchronization with their age appropriateness and also not heavy.

(e) Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued circular dated 17.04.2007 and dated 05.04.2006 on 'Reducing the Bag Load on Children' to all the CBSE affiliated schools that inter-alia presents the following:

(i) To implement the textbooks prescribed by NCERT.

(ii) In case, the school are using other than NCERT books (for Elementary & Primary Classes), the number of these books should not exceed as prescribed by NCERT.

(iii) The Boards has also instructed the schools to restrict a number of textbooks prescribed for students especially at primary level.

(f) NCERT conducts periodical National Learners' Achievement Surveys for classes III, V and VIII. Till now, two rounds of such Achievement Surveys have been completed by NCERT. These surveys have revealed improvements in the overall learning level in the subject of Mathematics. A comparative table of the progress in respect of the two rounds is given below:

Subject	Class III		Class V		Class VIII	
	Round I	Round II	Round I	Round II	Round I	Round II
Mathematics	58.25%	61.89%	46.51%	48.46%	39.17%	42.71%
Language	63.12%	67.84%	58.57%	60.31%	53.86%	56.57%
EVS	NA	NA	50.30%	52.19%	NA	NA
Science	NA	NA	NA	NA	41.30%	42.73%
Social Science	NA	NA	NA	NA	46.19%	48.03%

NA: Not applicable.

The findings of the third round of Achievement Survey conducted by NCERT recently for class V indicate that there is enhancement in the level of achievement in most of the States.