

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

**MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION
AND LITERACY)**

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE
2007-2008**

SIXTY-SIXTH REPORT

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

SIXTY-SIXTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2007-2008)
(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)
SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

[ACTION TAKEN ON 43RD REPORT OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE (14TH LOK SABHA)]

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY)

Presented to Lok Sabha on.....
Laid in Rajya Sabha on.....



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

January, 2008/Pausa, 1929 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2007-08)**

Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairman*

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*Shri Suresh Bhardwaj, M.P. resigned from membership of Rajya Sabha w.e.f. 9th January, 2008.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Public Accounts Committee, as authorised by the Committee, do present this Sixty-sixth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their 43rd Report (14th Lok Sabha) on "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)".

2. This Report was considered and adopted by the Public Accounts Committee at their sitting held on 9th January, 2008. Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

3. For facility of reference and convenience, the Recommendations and Observations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

4. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in the matter by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

5. The Committee also place on record their appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered to them by the officials of Lok Sabha Secretariat attached with the Committee.

NEW DELHI;
17 January, 2008
27 Pausa, 1929 (Saka)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in their Forty-third Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)".

2. In their Forty-third Report presented to Lok Sabha on 27th April, 2007, the Committee had dealt with various issues in respect of implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme such as delay in release of grants, improper use of funds like diversion and misutilisation, school dropouts, deficient Infrastructure, paucity of teachers, inadequate Teaching Learning Equipment, National Programme of nutritional support to primary education, education for children with special needs, and involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations. The Report contained fourteen Recommendations/Observations.

3. The Action Taken Notes have been received from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) in respect of all the fourteen Recommendations/Observations and these have been categorised as under:—

- (i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:

Recommendation Sl. Nos. 1-2, 4-6, 8-10, 12-13 and 14. (Para Nos. 106-107, 109-111, 113-115, 117-118 and 119)

Total: 11
Chapter-II

- (ii) Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the reply received from the Government:

Recommendation Sl. No. 7 (Para No. 112)

Total: 1
Chapter-III

- (iii) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which reply of Government has not been accepted by the Committee and which requires reiteration:

Recommendation Sl. No. 3 (Para No. 108)

Total: 1
Chapter-IV

- (iv) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which Government has furnished interim reply:
Recommendation Sl. No. 11 (Para No. 116)

Total: 1
Chapter-V

Important Recommendations/Observations contained in the 43rd Report of PAC (14th Lok Sabha)

4. The gist of the important Recommendations/Observations made by the Committee in their 43rd Report on the subject are as follows:

- * Government was asked for immediate appointment and deployment of teachers, construction of school buildings with toilets, timely distribution of books to students and prompt release of funds for their proper utilisation. Stress was laid on streamlining and revamping the monitoring and evaluation systems.
- * Government urged to reconsider their decision to alter the funding pattern of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
- * Minimizing the dropout rate particularly among the 'hard-to-reach' children specially targeted by the Government, emphasised.
- * Proper functioning of schools, especially in the light of imparting quality education and appointment of qualified teachers urged.
- * Regarding National Programme of nutritional support to primary education scheme, popularly known as Mid-day Meal Scheme, it was desired that the grant for meeting the cost of meals should be enhanced in view of rising price index.
- * Better supervision and monitoring of the Non-Governmental Organisations was desired so that these Non-Governmental Organisations could discharge a very useful role in advocacy as well as accountability of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
- * Committee had opined that children be enabled with computer-aided learning in order to reduce dropout rate and enhance retention level in schools while upgrading the skills of the students. To strengthen the programme it was desired that Corporate initiatives be fostered by the Ministry.
- * As Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme had suffered slippages in performance, the Committee had desired that the success of the scheme be evaluated by Premier teacher training institutions and get the feedback from the intended beneficiaries themselves. Time-bound action plan be drawn for the districts that were lagging behind.

5. The Action Taken Notes furnished by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) have been reproduced in the subsequent Chapters of this Report. The Committee will now deal with the

Action Taken by the Government on some of their Recommendations/Observations that require reiteration or merit comments.

A. Implementation of the Scheme

(Recommendation Sl. No. 2, Para No. 107)

6. In their 43rd Report, the Committee had regretted to note that such an ambitious programme of providing universal elementary education in the country was running far behind the stipulated schedule. The target dates had been revised and deadlines for accomplishment of tasks correspondingly extended. Admittedly, the Ministry were not in a position to achieve the stated objectives by 2010, which was the target year for the completion of the Scheme and had hoped to accomplish the objectives by the extended target year of 2011-2012 i.e. terminal year of the XI Five Year Plan. The Committee expected the Ministry to plan out the operations and monitor the same in a manner that would ensure accomplishment of all the objectives of the Scheme by the extended target date. The Committee had felt that delay in having a codified set of instructions for the implementation of the Scheme had a cascading effect on the appraisal of plans and the release of funds thereon. In addition, the Committee had wanted the Ministry to fully gear up their machinery so that the momentum generated was not lost mid-way. Further, the Committee had desired that immediate steps like appointment and deployment of teachers as required according to the financial provisions of the Scheme, construction of school buildings with toilets, timely distribution of books to students every year and release of funds for the same ought to be taken within a year.

7. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:—

"The Ministry of Human Resource Development's Department of School Education & Literacy is implementing the SSA with resolve and focused attention, in order to meet the goals of the programme in a time bound manner. It is maintaining rapport with and monitoring regularly, the State Governments and UT Administrations, so that the momentum for implementation at the field level, under the SSA programme is maintained. As by March 2007, 81% teachers had been recruited in SSA and the national Pupil Teacher Ratio improved to 1:41. The distribution of textbooks to focus group children is improving year after year *i.e.* 66% in 2004-05, 88% in 2005-06 and 96% in 2006-07. The States have been directed to distribute free textbooks strictly to focus group students at the beginning of the academic session. The Government of India has taken various steps to improve fund flow from Government of India to States. During 2007-08 ad hoc release of funds based on the performance of 2006-07 was made to the States/Union Territories to the tune of Rs. 2550 crore which was 18.24% of Government of India's share, within the first two months of the new financial year itself."

8. The Committee have noted the Ministry's resolve and focused attention to meet the goals of the programme in a time bound manner. The Committee would like the Ministry to constantly review the progress made by employing effective monitoring

mechanism in implementation of the Scheme so as to ensure that the revised target of accomplishing the objectives of the Scheme by 2011-2012 i.e. terminal year of the XI Five Year Plan is met. Needless to emphasise the Government should strive hard to improve the quality of education and also provide requisite funds to the States so as to accomplish the objectives of the Scheme.

**B. Funding Pattern
(Recommendation Sl. No. 3, Para No. 108)**

9. With regard to funding pattern of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan the Committee had expressed their concern that the Government had decided to modify the funding pattern of SSA from the prevalent 75:25 (Centre-State sharing) ratio to 50:50, which could possibly impair the programme that was already operating behind schedule; with serious shortcomings to boot. The Committee had found that inspite of funding at 75:25 ratio, several States were lagging behind in achieving the targets stipulated in the Scheme. The Committee had apprehended that States lagging behind, who were also the more populous and financially not so sound among the States, may actually turn reluctant in their participation, thereby jeopardizing the goal of ensuring universal elementary education by 2010. It was opined that the reduction of Centre's financial involvement in the programme could neutralize the gains made by the Scheme and it could also result in the Centre having less control and persuasive power over the programme. The Committee were of the view that the Government should reconsider their decision to alter the funding norm, as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was at a critical juncture where full provisioning of school infrastructure particularly at the upper primary level needed to be addressed in the next three years. The Committee had also apprehended that if the upper primary level was not incentivised during the XI plan period of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the gains made so far in enrolment of children would be lost. Further, the attainment of the national goal of Universal Elementary Education by 2010 depended squarely on the populous but educationally backward States to achieve their outcomes. The Committee had therefore urged the Government to ensure that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan did not suffer in any way on account of shortage of funds.

10. In their Action Taken Note, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) have replied as under:—

"The notified Frame-work for implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme provided for funding pattern between the Central Government and States/Union Territories in the ratio of 85:15 during IX Plan, in the ratio of 75:25 during X Plan and in the ratio of 50:50 during XI Plan. However, *vide* notification dated 25th September, 2007 the Government of India after intensive consultations, has since revised the funding pattern with effect from 1-4-2007 in respect of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme during the XI Plan period and till the end of the programme as indicated below:

- (i) For States/Union Territories other than North Eastern States

The funding pattern between the Central Government and States/Union Territories shall be in the ratio of 65:35 for the first two years of the XI Plan

i.e. 2007-08 and 2008-09; 60:40 for the third year *i.e.* 2009-10; 55:45 for the fourth year *i.e.* 2010-11; and 50:50 thereafter *i.e.* from 2011-12 onwards.

(ii) For eight North Eastern States

For the eight North-Eastern States, the fund sharing pattern between Centre and States shall be 90:10 under the programme with the Centre's share resourced from the 10% earmarked funds for the North Eastern Region in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan's Central Budget.

There is satisfaction in the States with this modification and therefore, their enthusiasm in keeping up the momentum of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implementation is expected to remain undisturbed".

11. The Committee have taken note of the revision that has been made in the funding pattern of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme with effect from 1st April, 2007. The modification in the funding pattern i.e. ratio between the Central Government and States/Union Territories other than North Eastern States, would be 65:35 for years 2007-08 and 2008-09; 60:40 for 2009-10; 55:45 for 2010-11 and 50:50 only from 2011-12 onwards. Even though States have reported satisfaction with this modification, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry should continue with the funding pattern of 75:25 taking into consideration the financial health of the States. In Committee's view this alone would help in keeping up the momentum of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implementation undisturbed.

**C. Mid-Day Meal Scheme
(Recommendation Sl. No. 11, Para No. 116)**

12. On the National Programme of nutritional support to primary education scheme, popularly known as Mid-Day-Meal Scheme, the Committee had found that the coverage of the Mid-Day-Meals in schools was rather dismal, warranting urgent interventions by the Ministry to effectively dovetail the Mid-Day Meal Scheme with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan so that the desired complementarities between the two Schemes were fully achieved. The Committee had further desired that the Ministry may consider enhancing the grant for meeting the cost of meals in keeping with the rising price index. It was also felt that the Ministry should enquire into the shortcomings that had crept in the operation of the Scheme and take corrective measures thereon.

13. While furnishing the Action Taken Notes, the Ministry have replied as under:—
"During the meeting of Programme Approval Board (PAB) to finalize and approve Annual Work Plan and Budget for the year 2007-08, the status of implementation of Mid-Day Meal Programme during 2006-07 was comprehensively reviewed. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Punjab and Chandigarh, the observations contained in C&AG's Performance Audit Report No. 15 of 2006 were also highlighted and they were urged to take necessary corrective measures. Secretary (Secondary Education and Literacy) has also taken up this issue with Chief Secretaries/Administrators and requested to conduct necessary enquiries into the matter and initiate disciplinary action wherever necessary.

Secondly, the aspect of enhancement of Central Assistance for meeting the cost of meals in keeping with the rising price index has been incorporated in the

proposal submitted to the CCEA for extension of Mid-Day Meal Programme to Classes VI-VIII in Educationally Backward Blocks.

Thirdly, the issue relating to integration of Mid-Day Meal Programme with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was discussed in detail in the Conference of Education Secretaries of States/Union Territories in September, 2005. As many as 21 States/Union Territories in September, 2005. As many as 21 States/Union Territories having 96% of eligible children had opposed the merger of Mid-Day Meal with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Following this, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance were consulted. Planning Commission has stated: 'Since Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has to be implemented by 2010 and Mid-Day Meal Scheme is a continuing scheme, merger of these two Schemes may not be desirable at this stage'. Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, had also communicated continuance of status quo in the implementation of Mid-Day Meal scheme and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. In view of the above, it was decided to retain *status quo* in the implementation of Mid-Day Meal Scheme and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. However, it was decided that the General Council and Executive Council of the National Mission for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will, in addition to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan itself, review, from time to time, Mid-Day Meal Scheme also."

14. The Committee have taken note of the reply of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary Education and Literacy) wherein it has been stated that the States/Union Territories were asked to explain the inconsistencies and that the matter was being pursued at the highest level with the States. The Committee have been informed that certain States were urged to take necessary corrective measures and also conduct enquiries in addition to initiating disciplinary action wherever it was necessary. However, the Committee would like to be apprised about the specific details with regard to these measures that have been purported to have been taken. Further, in respect of enhancement of Central Assistance for meeting the cost of meals the Committee have been given to understand that a proposal in this regard has been submitted to CCEA for extension of Mid-Day Meal Programme to classes VI-VIII in Educationally Backward Blocks. The Committee would like to be apprised about the specific action in this regard. The Committee would also like the Government to constantly continue with periodic reviews of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Mid-Day Meal Scheme with a view to take necessary corrective measures whenever necessary.

**D. Collaboration with Corporate Sector
(Recommendation Sl. No. 13, Para No. 118)**

15. While dealing with the problem of quality deficit in elementary education, the Committee had opined that it could be tackled with the participation of Corporate especially from Information Technology sector. The Committee held the view that the Information Technology sector could help in improving the quality of elementary education on which depended the quality of higher education. In this regard, the Committee were given to understand that such a beginning had already been made by some Corporates which had resulted in benefitting students in some states. The

collaborating companies had helped the State Governments in developing software for the children to enable computer-aided learning. The Committee had hoped that such initiatives would replicate themselves in other States and would particularly help in reducing the dropout rate and enhance retention level in schools while upgrading the skills of the students. The Committee therefore had expected that the Ministry assume a pro-active role in fostering such corporate initiatives for strengthening the programme.

16. However, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) while furnishing the Action Taken Note have replied as under:—

"Noted. The Ministry continues to encourage Public-Private Partnership in computer aided learning."

17. With regard to improving the quality of elementary education on which depended the quality of higher education, the Committee was of the view that Information Technology Sector could help in enabling the students to have computer-aided learning. The Committee were given to understand that some Corporates had made such a beginning in some States and in this respect the Committee had desired the Ministry to assume a pro-active role in fostering such Corporate initiatives to strengthen the programme. However, in the Action Taken Note, the Ministry have cryptically stated that the recommendation of the Committee had been noted and the Ministry continued to encourage Public Private-Partnership in computer aided learning. The Committee would like to be apprised in detail about the specific action taken by the Government in this direction and the outcome of the same.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

106. The constitutional commitment to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years has been spelt out in various Governmental policies. The resolve to provide universal elementary education in mission mode evolved from the recommendations of the State Education Ministers' Conference held in October, 1998 which resulted in formation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The scheme was approved by Union Cabinet in 2000 and made functional from January, 2001 as a Centrally sponsored scheme under the auspices of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy). Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was started with the intention of providing useful and elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years by the year 2010. This programme also had a supplementary goal of bridging social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. SSA thus emphasized on decentralization and community ownership of schools. Funds for the programme flowed through local community based bodies for all school related expenditure. The community based approach was also adopted for planning at habitation level and monitoring of school activities. This was a national flagship programme which was launched by the Union Ministry in partnership with the State Governments with ambitious targets requiring large funding and serious commitment on the part of implementing agencies.

The performance appraisal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was conducted by Audit covering the period 2001-2002 to 2004-2005. The audit findings have *inter-alia* revealed that there were serious shortcomings in the implementation of the scheme. The interventions by the project implementation agencies were deficient leading to the substantial gaps between planned and actual achievements in key areas such as classrooms, text-book distribution, provision of teachers, their training and other infrastructure affecting the quality of education and coverage. These issues relating to the scheme have been discussed and commented upon in the succeeding paragraphs.

(Sl. No. 1 Para 106 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The period 2001-02 to 2003-04 were the initial years of SSA implementation and there was slow progress as the programme was still being rolled out in the States and the capacity for implementation was being build up. However, there has been a marked

step up in programme implementation from the years 2004-05 as can be seen from the progress in major component of SSA as indicated below:—

1. Construction of classrooms

Target 2001-05	Achievement 2001-05	% of Achievement 2001-05	Cumulative Target upto 2007-08	Cumulative Achievement (works completed and in progress) (30.6.2007)	% of Cumulative Achievement (30.6.2007)
274797	216565	78.81%	822908	678692	83%

2. Progress of annual free distribution of textbooks

Year	Targets (number of children)	Achievement (number of children)	% of Achievement
2004-05	61476685	40495448	66%
2005-06	61071032	53558462	88%
2006-07	66877585	63991054	96%

3. Teacher recruitment

Target 2001-05	Teacher recruited till 31.3.2005	% of Achievement	Cumulative target (31.3.2007)	Cumulative Achievement (31.3.2007)	% of Achievement (31.3.2007)
596248	328785	55%	10.12 lakh	8.19 lakh	80.92%

4. Teacher Training

Year	Target	Teachers trained	% of Achievement
2004-05	34.66 lakh	20 lakh	58%
2005-06	30.53 lakh	23.47 lakh	77%
2006-07	34.06 lakh	29.52 lakh	87%

5. Other infrastructure facilities

Category of work	Target 2001-05	Achievement 2001-05	% of Achievement 2001-05	Cumulative Target upto 2007-08	Cumulative Achievement (works completed and in progress) (30.6.2007)	% of Cumulative Achievement (30.6.2007)
Toilet	133643	123659	93%	262536	217099	83%
Drinking	104564	77428	74%	189413	169805	90%

The table above reveals that there is a continuous improvement in SSA implementation.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No.13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

107. The Committee note that the primary aim of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was to enroll all children who have dropped out of schools, education guarantee schemes, alternative schools, back to school camps, by 2003; to ensure that all children completed five years of primary schooling by 2007; eight years of elementary schooling by 2010; and finally to achieve universal retention by 2010. The emphasis was to bring to the mainstream out-of-school children through diverse strategies and on providing eight years of compulsory schooling for all children in 6-14 age group while ensuring total retention of all children in this age group. Within this framework, it was expected that the education system would be made relevant so that children and parents found the Schooling system useful and absorbing, and in line with their natural and social environment. However, laudable objectives notwithstanding, it is a matter of dismay for the Committee that such an ambitious programme of providing universal elementary education in the country is running far behind the stipulated schedule. The target dates have been revised and deadlines for accomplishment of tasks correspondingly extended. Admittedly, the Ministry are not in a position to achieve the stated objective by 2010, which was the target year for the completion of the scheme. They now hope to accomplish the objectives by the extended target year of 2011-2012 *i.e.* terminal year of the 11th Five Year Plan. The Committee would like the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) to take the target dates and deadlines with greater earnestness and seriousness as the SSA programme has been conceived in mission-mode with little latitude for deviations from schedule. The Committee would thus expect the Ministry to plan out the operations and monitor the same in a manner that will ensure accomplishment of all the objectives of the scheme by the extended target date, that is by the end of the XI Plan period (2011-2012). Extension and shifting of target dates/deadlines can only be construed by the Committee as a sign of laxity on the part of the Ministry in operating programmes of such magnitude and scale.

The Committee is surprised to note that this mammoth programme, which required the right momentum from the word go, instead took off at a rather slow pace. The Manual on Annual Work Plan and Budget was made effective only from 1st April, 2004 whereas the scheme was launched in 2000-2001 itself. This delay in having a codified

set of instructions for the implementation of the scheme had a cascading effect on the appraisal of plans and the release of funds thereon. The initial loss of these years in implementation of the scheme has undoubtedly put the programme clock behind by that many years. The Committee are not convinced by the Ministry's plea that any new programme would take time to roll out and a decentralised scheme like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan would take time to be understood and concretized. The Committee believe that the enthusiasm showed in launching such an ambitious scheme needs to be backed up with similar zeal during the course of implementation. **The Ministry should, therefore, fully gear up their machinery in this regard so that the momentum generated is not lost mid-way. Immediate steps like appointment and deployment of teachers required as per the financial provisions of the scheme, construction of school buildings with toilets, timely distribution of books to students every year and release of funds for the same should be taken within a year. Action taken on these matters should be reported to the Committee.**

(Sl. No. 2 Para 107 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education & Literacy is implementing the SSA with resolve and focused attention, in order to meet the goals of the programme in a time bound manner. It is maintaining rapport with and monitoring regularly, the State Governments and UT Administrations, so that the momentum for implementation at the field level, under the SSA programme is maintained. A number of big States especially Rajasthan, MP, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, WB and AP had some initial delays in filling up posts of teachers due to court cases, elections where the model code of conduct halted the recruitment process, have now been overcome and there is substantial improvement, as by March 2007, 81% teachers had been recruited in SSA and the national PTR improved to 1:41. In so far as construction of school buildings with toilets are concerned, 125918 primary school buildings, 57543 upper primary school buildings and 235041 toilet blocks have been sanctioned upto 2006-07. The SSA further sanctioned 17828 primary school buildings, 14948 upper primary school buildings alongwith 27495 toilet blocks during 2007-08. The distribution of textbooks to focus group children is improving year after year *i.e.* 66% in 2004-05, 88% in 2005-06 and 96% in 2006-07. The States have been directed to distribute free textbooks strictly to focus group students at the beginning of the academic session. The Govt. of India has taken various steps to improve fundflow from Govt. of India to States. During 2007-08 *ad hoc* release of funds based on the performance of 2006-07 was made to the States/UTs to the tune of Rs.2550 crore which was 18.24% of Government of India's share, within the first two months of the new financial year itself.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No.13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

109. The Committee's examination of the subject has revealed that budget allocation and release of grant to State Implementing Societies were much below the amounts required as per the Annual Work Plan. The Ministry have attributed this to the Project Approval Board approving higher outlays than the budget allocation approved by Parliament, taking into account the likely low performance due to unforeseen circumstances such as floods, elections, court cases etc. in some States. The Committee are not satisfied with this plea advanced by the Ministry that the Scheme is founded on decentralization of decision making and the proposals emanating from the grassroots. In fact this basic principle of the Scheme would be defeated if the work plans prepared and submitted by the implementing agencies are not properly funded, thereby adversely affecting the implementation of the Scheme. Furthermore, the Committee have also noticed that although all the States/Union Territories put together were able to spend around 86% of the funds released, in some States, the percentage of utilization of funds was rather poor. Even though, the Committee have been assured that the unutilized funds did not lapse at the end of the year and they were allowed to be carried forward to the next year's plan, the Committee recommend that the Ministry should ensure that the States and the implementing agencies have adequate capacity to absorb the funds and deliver results. The Ministry should play pro-active role in building and developing capacities and skills of the implementing agencies.

(Sl. No. 4 Para 109 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

SSA is working closely with States, to enhance their capacities in programme implementation. National, regional and State specific capacity building training programmes were held with the States over 2006-07, across a variety of SSA components in order to equip States with better absorption and implementation capacities. The MHRD has set up a dedicated Technical Support Group at the national level to assist States/UTs in all spheres of SSA, for better performance. To tone up the financial management side, the Ministry has introduced a Manual on Financial Management and Procurement which has been adopted by all States/UTs. The implementation of the provisions of the Manual is regularly reviewed in the quarterly meetings of Financial Controllers of States/UTs. The issues discussed in such meetings are status on appointment of account staff at State/district/block level, measures taken by the States for capacity building of account staff appointed submission of Audit Report, Utilization Certificate, Annual Reports, bank reconciliation, internal audit, quarterly expenditure position, audit compliance and good financial management practices. The Ministry also arranges workshops/seminars at the national/regional/State level to provide training to the accounts staff. It also provides resource support to the States to build their capacity. The Ministry has issued instructions to all States/UTs to provide mandatory training of 5 days in a year on accounting.

The Ministry has also introduced statutory audit by Chartered Accountant empanelled by Comptroller and Auditor General of India, concurrent financial review by the Institute of Public Auditors of India (IPAI), monitoring by 40 reputed Social Science Institutions. A Joint Review Mission led by Government of India with Members from funding agencies reviews the progress of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan twice a year.

Government of India has also started release of funds to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan States/UTs in the month of April on *ad hoc* basis in the first quarter of financial year itself to avoid release at the end of the financial year which is generally contributing towards unspent balance at the end of the financial year.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of Social Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE 15 dated 05-11-2007]

**Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education and Literacy**

Recommendation

110. Examination by the Committee of implementation of the scheme has revealed twin failures relating to the release and utilization of grants. First, there was a delay in release of the grants and then the funds released were diverted outside the scope of the norms leading to irregular utilization of funds. The first instalment of the grant which was to be released by the Ministry to the State Implementation Societies in April was being released in September and the second instalment which was to be released in September was being released in March. The Ministry are stated to have taken some remedial measures in this regard such as monitoring the timely preparation of district/state plans by States/Union Territories, streamlining the appraisal process, convening Project Approval Boards' meetings within first two months of the new financial year and timely release of first instalment of funds. The Committee hope that the measures now being initiated by the Ministry to ensure smooth flow of funds will be implemented effectively. The Committee further expect that the electronic transfer of funds being undertaken now would be scrupulously enforced so as to eliminate delays in transfer of funds to be implementing agencies. The Committee desire that any case of default in this matter be reported to the Committee together with an explanation for the same.

As regard the diversion/improper use of funds, the Ministry have admitted instances of diversion of some funds and their subsequent recouping. They have also tried to explain the occurrence of these financial irregularities on the ground that manpower and capacity building were not adequate in the initial stages of the scheme. The Committee would like to caution the Ministry that as long as such diversions were only a small part of the overall expenditure, it may not have a significant impact on the efficacy of the operations. However, the Ministry ought to keep in mind that with social sector programmes such as SSA, involving huge expenditure, it was necessary

that the monitoring and evaluation systems be streamlined and revamped in order to plug leakages and pre-empt improper use of funds. The Committee need hardly emphasise that the objectives of the scheme can be fully achieved at the ground level when the funds are not only adequately deployed but the available funds are also fully utilized within the scope of the scheme.

(Sl. No. 5 Para 110 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The monitoring and evaluation system have been streamlined and revamped in order to ensure better financial management. Concurrent financial reviews of SSA accounts through an independent agency, the Institute of Public Auditors of India (IPAI) have been carried out in 21 States already. The concurrent financial review of the remaining 14 States/UTs is in progress and expected to be completed by 2007-08. 40 reputed Social Science Institutions have been engaged with a revised Terms of Reference in 2006-07, to cover monitoring of all aspects of implementation of SSA including Mid-day meal scheme and provide feedback from the field situation to the Ministry. The reports provided by these Institutions are analysed critically by Government of India and States and follow up actions are taken up faithfully. The internal audit in the States/UTs have been strengthened and internal audit is in place in 26 States/UTs. The accounts are mandatorily audited annually by Chartered Accountants firms engaged on the basis of a well defined Terms of Reference, defined by Government of India. The audit compliance of the Chartered Accountants firms is closely monitored at the national level and further follow up action is taken. The Chartered Accountants conducting the audit, have also been directed to cover all Village Education Committees spending more than Rs. 1 lakh in a year, mandating coverage of all such VEC's within a cycle of 3 years. The Village Education Committees receiving funds less than Rs. 1 lakh per year will be covered by annual audit as per mechanisms provided for Panchayati Raj Institutions under whom they are constituted. States have been asked to adopt electronic transfer of the funds mode, through an amendment incorporated in the Manual on Financial Management & Procurement of the SSA.

In order to improve the quality of audit States/UTs have been directed to engage Chartered Accountants firms empanelled by Comptroller and Auditor General of India. In addition, the Ministry has also directed the States/UTs to get the SSA accounts audited by the State Accountant General (Audit) on a regular basis. The Ministry is conducting a review meeting of State Finance Controllers on a quarterly basis and so far 14 such review meetings are held. During these meetings rigorous review is conducted on all the above parameters apart from utilization of funds alongwith with progress of various other financial aspects such as staff positions, capacity building, position on utilization certificates, adjustment of advances, bank reconciliation, internal audit, annual audit and compliance thereof. These initiatives are definitely showing a marked improvement in the implementation of SSA, as well as its' financial management system.

The Ministry has taken a serious view of the diversion of funds and also the financial irregularities and the States/UTs have been directed *vide* our letter No. 13/1/2006-EE 16 dated 15th November 2006 to avoid such lapses in future.

There has been a marked step up in the Central Government's budget allocation from the years 2004-05 to 2006-07 at RE/BE state, as the States' became fully conversant with the programme and the implementation machinery was geared up. It must also be noted that the Government of India levied an Education Cess from 2004-05, which boosted the Central Government resources in providing funds to SSA. The Education Cess received during the year 2004-05 was to the extent of Rs.4176/92 crores and in 2005-06 it was Rs. 4477.14 crores.

The position of annual SSA outlays, releases & expenditure since 2004-05 shows a marked improvement in the SSA programme, as shown below:—

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Outlay approved (GOI share)	Opening Balance. (GOI share)	GOI funds released	Total GOI funds available	%
2004-05	8337.66	1326	5044	6370	76
2005-06	10074.61	2004	7511	9515	94
2006-07	15680.68	3524	10887	14411	92

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of Social Education and
Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE 15 dated 05-11-2007]

Recommendation

111. One of the primary objectives of SSA was to enroll all children in the age group of 6-14 years in schools, Education Guarantee Centres (EGC), alternative schools and Back to School Camps (BSC) by 2003. It has been observed that out of 4.4 crore children who were out of school at the inception of the scheme in 2001, 1.36 crore still remained out of school in 2005, inspite of the target year of bringing back out-of-school children having been revised from 2003 to 2005. According to the Ministry, reports from States/Union Territories reveal that the number of out-of-schools children has come down to 70 lakh in 2006. While enumerating the reasons for non-enrolment, the Ministry have stated that these were the most 'hard to reach' children such as those living in remote areas, children of migrant families, children helping presents in farms etc. In order to bring these out of school children into the education system, the Ministry are stated to be focusing now on districts with highest number of out of school children and districts with majority of disadvantaged social groups. During the course of examination of the subject, the Ministry have informed that they are presently coordinating a household survey across all States and Union Territories to get updated disaggregated data on 'out-of-school' children in the country. The Committee desire to

be apprised of the outcome of the survey and the corrective steps taken by the Ministry to minimize the drop-out rate in the country, particularly among the "hard-to-reach" children specially targeted by the Government.

The Committee are distressed to note that SSA has not been able to make a significant dent on some of the chronic problems afflicting primary and elementary education like high incidence of school drop-outs. While there has been considerable improvement in enrolment and the student drop-out rate has also marginally come down, the drop-out rate is still more than fifty per cent. According to media reports, checks done by education inspectors in a particular State alarmingly revealed that almost 12 lakh children 'present' in education department records were "missing from the classrooms". Schools in several districts were found guilty of pumping up enrolment figures in order to retain government funding. There have also been cases reported in the Press, wherein children were enrolled during 'enrolment drives' raising the enrolment rates, but the question still remained as to how many of these children continued to attend school till they completed eight years of schooling. The Committee believe that the Ministry are aware of these flaws and would pay immediate attention to this festering problem of necessary remedial measures. Needless to emphasise, the Ministry should put in place effective systems for constant monitoring and regular feedback on the ground realities.

(Sl. No. 6 Para 111 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The States were advised to conduct the household survey as per the suggested guidelines given by the Ministry. 14 States have sent their reports to Government of India based on the new survey, while others have updated their household data. State wise details are at Annexure-1. Information as of March 2007 shows 75 lakh children are out of school.

After the launch of the SSA, significant reduction in dropout rates at the primary stage has taken place as under:—

Dropout rates have decreased from 39% (SES 2001-02) to 29% at Primary level in 2004-05—a decline of 10 percentage points, whereas girls' dropout has reduced sharply at 15 percentage point since SSA was launched.

To further focus on the reduction of dropout, the Govt. of India while sanctioning the annual work plan of States/UTs for 2007-08, has taken commitments from States/UTs to reduce dropout rate by at least 5 percentage points. Continuous efforts to increase retention and bring out of school children into school system are being made in SSA. In 2007-08, coverage of 56,000 EGS has been approved apart from AIE interventions for 40.2 lakh children. 2,180 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya residential upper primary schools have been opened to cater to older girls at upper primary level. Access at upper primary level is being further increased to improve the coverage of older children by sanctioning 24,113 new upper primary schools in 2007-08.

More emphasis is being laid on regular monitoring of attendance of both students and teachers, which will help in further reduction of the dropout rates. Government of

India commissioned a national sample study on student/teacher attendance rates in 2006-07, whose outcomes have been shared with the States. All States have committed to conduct similar State specific steps, to track teacher attendance, in particular.

ANNEXURE-I

OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sl. No.	Name of State	OOSC as per (SRI-IMRB 2005)	% of OOSC to 6-14 Children	OOSC March 2007	% OOSC to 6-14 children
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	A&D Island	165	0.32	133	0.2
2.	Andhra Pradesh	542664	4.29	264013	2.1
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	23036	7.68	30565	9.6
4.	Assam	536220	8.91	338834	7.5
5.	Bihar	3176624	17	2119584	10.9
6.	Chandigarh UT	3085	2.2	5505	3.8
7.	Chhattisgarh	254736	6.05	123632	2.7
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	1614	3.6
9.	Daman & Diu	6134	28.75	201	0.9
10.	Delhi	84424	2.98	30001	1.0
11.	Goa	1155	0.72	7699	5.3
12.	Gujarat	380445	3.96	134643	1.8
13.	Haryana	174040	4.51	238847	5.1
14.	Himachal Pradesh	4942	0.54	5624	0.6
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	4777	0.29	108560	5.9
16.	Jharkhand	620945	10.88	209662	3.1
17.	Karnataka	119517	1.42	174533	2.3
18.	Kerala	23242	0.55	20790	0.4
19.	Lakshdweep	1104	8.32	168	1.3
20.	Madhya Pradesh	1085096	8.63	296979	1.9
21.	Maharashtra	529295	3.17	136892	0.9
22.	Manipur	67515	14.74	54351	10.5
23.	Meghalaya	22131	3.74	37234	5.1
24.	Mizoram	1558	0.73	4913	2.1
25.	Nagaland	32406	8.38	35335	6.9
26.	Orissa	332615	5.37	537841	8.0
27.	Pondicherry	583	0.36	326	0.2
28.	Punjab	108755	2.87	227645	5.3
29.	Rajasthan	795089	6.9	163894	1.5
30.	Sikkim	3804	2.94	3204	2.9
31.	Tamil Nadu	193418	2.14	103261	1.0
32.	Tripura	5121	1.24	15376	2.6

1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	Uttar Pradesh	2995208	8.15	785524	2.1
34.	Uttarakhand	116680	7.47	22230	1.2
35.	West Bengal	1213205	8.67	1357601	8.1
Grand Total		13459734	6.94	7597214	3.8

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education
and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE.15 Dated 05.11.2007]**Recommendation**

113. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme envisaged civil works like new school buildings, school buildings for building-less schools, additional classrooms, room for headmaster, toilets, drinking water facilities and so on. The programme funds on civil works were not to exceed the ceiling of 33 per cent of the entire project cost approved by Project Approval Board on the basis of the perspective plan. However, the Committee note with much concern that almost all the States were plagued by severe lack of infrastructure and several schools were running even without proper buildings, toilets and drinking water facilities. The Ministry have conceded that an analysis of District Information System for Education data of 2004-05 has showed a deficit of 10 lakh classrooms, 4 lakh toilets and 78,000 drinking water facilities in elementary schools. In order to bridge this gap, the Ministry have sanctioned 5 lakh classrooms, 59,000 drinking water facilities and 57,327 toilets in 2006-07. The Committee have also been apprised in this regard that for making up the deficit in toilets and drinking water facilities in rural areas, the schemes which were being implemented by Ministry of Rural Development were being converged with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Committee hope that both the Ministries would work in close co-ordination and ensure that the targets with respect to basic facilities such as drinking water and toilets are achieved without any further delay. The Committee also urge the Ministry to convert temporary structures and schools without buildings into permanent structures and provide them with basic amenities without which the environment for learning will not be conducive at all. The Committee would like to emphasise that without the elementary facilities, the schools running under the scheme may eventually close down or the children may also stay out of these schools, rendering this worthy programme ineffective.

(Sl. No. 8 Para 113 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has issued directions to State and local SSA authorities to maintain close coordination with representatives of Drinking Water Mission at the State and District level to cover all the schools with toilets and drinking water facilities within the project period. The SSA is providing toilets and drinking water facilities to new schools and schools of urban areas whereas Department of Drinking Water Supply is providing these facilities to existing schools in rural areas. The analysis of DISE data 2005-06 reveals a gap, 6,97,268 classrooms of 63,844 toilets and 15,897 drinking water facilities. During 2007-08 the Ministry has further sanctioned 2,10,730 additional classrooms 19,146 drinking water facilities and 27,495 toilet blocks. Considering the ceiling prescribed for civil works on annual basis, the gap will be covered incrementally by the year 2010. Regular coordination between the Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Drinking Water, Ministry of Rural Development, are taking place in SSA.

Government of India has also taken steps to relax the civil works ceiling upto 50% in a year, for districts with large infrastructure gaps, to enable them to complete their requirements at an accelerated pace.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 E.E.15 Dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

114. As per SSA norms, one teacher was to be provided for every 40 students in primary and upper primary school and at least two teachers in a primary school and one teacher for every class in the upper primary school. It has however been revealed that 6647 schools (in seven States) had no teacher and 75,884 primary schools (in 15 States/Union Territories) had only one teacher. Although the Ministry have stated to be monitoring teacher recruitments, pupil teacher ratios, single teacher schools and so on, the Committee are unable to comprehend as to how the Ministry could consider school which had no teachers as "functioning schools", because the aim of the scheme was not only to provide schools on paper, but also to provide "working" schools which would be imparting education of reasonable quality to children. The Committee therefore recommend that the shortages in the number of teachers be made up immediately.

(Sl. No. 91 Para 114 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The Ministry has sanctioned 10.12 lakh teacher posts under SSA upto March 2007 to meet the gap of teachers. Against this, the States/UTs reported recruitment of 819138 teacher's upto March 2007. Recruitment and deployment of teachers is done by the State Governments. The Ministry has further sanctioned 121965 teachers to the States/UTs during 2007-08. The main reason for delay in recruitment specially in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal was court cases. Now most of these States have settled these court cases and started process of recruitment of teachers. There is tremendous improvement in teacher recruitment in last 2 years especially in the States of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Tripura. **The schools with no teachers are largely new schools sanctioned under SSA because there is a time lag between notification of new schools and recruitment of new teachers.**

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 E.E.15 Dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

115. Examination of the subject by the Committee has also revealed that there are other ills afflicting the education imparted under SSA. The Committee finding this regard that teachers are not motivated, absenteeism is high, teaching methods are out-dated and no different from that before the commencement of the scheme and overall interest in providing a good learning environment was missing, all of which eventually resulted in high rate of student drop-out. The Committee note that problem of quality deficit in elementary education is more serious in the rural areas where there are a large number of single-teacher schools with no proper buildings and teaching materials. The Committee, therefore, are of the view that in addition to increase in numbers by way of increase in enrolment, emphasis should also be laid on the quality of education that is being imparted. With this in view, it become necessary that teachers who are appointed possess at least the prescribed minimum qualifications and suitable steps are taken to train the under-qualified staff so that the quality of education is considerably improved.

In this connection, the Committee would like to advert to the findings of Annual State of Education Report (ASER) which was undertaken by Pratham, an NGO working in the field of elementary education, which *inter-alia* revealed that in Std. VI-VIII in Government-run schools, 22 per cent of the students could not read simple passages and 40 per cent could not do simple division. Learning and educational achievement

therefore remained at the same aggregate level, which has also been borne out by the fact that the mean scores of students in key subjects such as Maths, Language and Science, specially at the upper primary level, has registered a decline, despite the claims of the Ministry, regarding improvement in pupil-teacher ratio and programmes for professional training of untrained teachers. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to look into the reasons for the decline in learning and achievement levels of students and make necessary mid-course corrections for improving the learning capability of all children in the age group of 6-14 years across the country.

(Sl. No. 10 Para 115 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action taken

SSA supports State Governments in funding teacher salaries as per norms 2 teachers for every new primary school, 3 teachers for every new upper primary school and additional teachers to improve teacher-pupil ratios to 1:40. The terms and conditions of recruitment of school teachers are set by the respective State Governments concerned. Present estimates show that 8% of the total elementary school teachers in the country are local teachers. States have undertaken steps to sponsor untrained teachers for NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) approved professional training programmes, primarily through Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), to enable them to acquire requisite professional skills. For instance, the States of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and several NE States are sponsoring their untrained teachers for the CPE (Certificate in Primary Education), DPE (Diploma in Primary Education), CETE (Certificate in Elementary Teacher Education) and D. Ed. (Diploma in Education) programmes, formulated by IGNOU. Madhya Pradesh has acquired NCTE approval for imparting training to untrained teachers through the Bhoj Open University, Bhopal and nearly one lakh teachers of the State are being trained in this manner. Thus, States are utilizing SSA funds to enable untrained teachers acquire professional qualification, through distance learning mode.

Further opportunities for regular training are available to all elementary teachers under SSA, on an annual basis, for upto 20 days per year. Outcome oriented teachers training is being emphasized under SSA. A collaborative exercise with States, NCERT, UNICEF etc. was undertaken to identify desired teacher performance standards, and to encourage States to design/align their training programmes to enable teachers perform at these identified standards.

Efforts for improvement in education quality and students' achievement levels are now occupying center stage in SSA. Large scale mid term learning achievement surveys at grades III, V and VII/VIII are being undertaken by NCERT in 2007-08, that will also provide information on school, home and teacher related factors that contribute to variation in learning achievement levels of children. Nearly all major States have initiated assessment based student learning enhancement programmes to ensure acquisition of age and grade appropriate competencies by children, in the early grades, so that strong foundation in the early years can be built to support subsequent learning in the upper primary stage.

Large-scale remedial teaching programmes in States are supported under SSA to enable schools to provide extra support to children who require it. In 2006-07, nearly 34 lakh children were provided remedial support for enhancement in learning achievement levels.

MHRD also organized a National Workshop on the teaching of Science and Mathematics in February 2007, to facilitate understanding of the National Curriculum Framework 2005, cross State sharing of best practices in the teaching of Science and Mathematics and provide exposure to educational experts and resource organization in this area.

MHRD has also collaborated with NCERT to set up a reading cell that would launch an exemplar reading promotion programme for the early grades of the primary stage by developing a grades series of early readers to encourage reading skills in children, besides also providing insights on the pedagogy of reading, appropriate teacher training, setting up reading corners in schools, etc.

Quality improvement efforts under SSA are regularly reviewed in quarterly workshops organized by MHRD, and also in the regional review meetings, chaired by Secretary (School Education & Literacy).

Sd/

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

117. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme conceived vibrant partnership with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the area of capacity building both in community and in resource institutions. It was expected that the NGOs would make meaningful contribution in bringing back out of school children, developing effective teacher training programmes, organising community participation for capacity development working in the sphere of disabled children and so on. The involvement of the NGOs was expected to improve transparency of programme intervention and also encourage more open assessment of achievements. However, the Committee have noted that grants which were being released to the NGOs showed a declining trend indicating thereby a reduction in their participation. The Ministry have tried to explain this situation by contending that the States had gained sufficient experience and hence the process of engaging NGOs had been decentralised to the State level. The Committee, however, feel that the Ministry cannot shy away from their responsibility on this count, as certain irregularities involving the NGOs have come to light, such as non-submission of utilization certificates and release of subsequent grants by the Ministry to some NGOs, non-availability of records of release of grants and utilization thereof in some cases etc. The Committee would now liked the Ministry to streamline

their systems so that they can have better supervision and monitoring over the NGOs who can discharge a very useful role in advocacy as well as accountability of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

(Sl. No. 12 Para 117 of 43rd Report of PAC 14TH Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

Grants are sanctioned to Non-Governmental Organizations by Central level Grant in-aid Committee (GIAC) under the scheme 'Innovative and Experimental Education'. Only those proposals which are innovative in nature are referred for consideration of central level GIAC. Further, since States have gained sufficient experience, they are engaging more and more NGOs. Local conditions and type of innovation needed to cover the Hard to Reach children govern the involvement of NGOs. Therefore the decentralized system is considered more fruitful.

During 2004-05 an amount of Rs. 1,69,87,907 was released to NGOs under Innovative Education component. However, in the year 2005-06 and 2006-07 an amount of Rs. 6,25,19,188 and Rs. 6,00,00,000 respectively was released. Further, this Ministry on 19.4.2007 has requested States to take necessary action for involvement of more and more NGOs in the implementation of SSA.

As regards to Non-issuance of Utilization Certificates, all cases reported by audit except one have since been settled. **Moreover, settlement of Utilization Certificates has now been computerized and there is no chance of release of grant to any NGO, in future without settlement of earlier Utilization Certificate.**

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

118. The Committee are also of the opinion that the problem of quality deficit in elementary education could be tackled with the participation of Corporates especially from Information Technology sector. The Committee view that the Information Technology sector could help in improving the quality of elementary education on which depends the quality of higher education. In this regard, the Committee were given to understand that such a beginning had already been made by some Corporates which had resulted in benefiting students in some States. The collaborating companies had helped the State Governments in developing software for the children to enable computer-aided learning. The Committee hope such initiatives will replicate themselves in other States and will particularly help in reducing the drop-out rate and enhance

retention level in schools while upgrading the skills of the students. The Committee would expect the Ministry to assume a pro-active role in fostering such corporate initiatives for strengthening the programme.

(Sl. No. 13 Para 118 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

Noted. The Ministry continues to encourage Public Private Partnership in computer aided learning.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

Recommendation

119. From the preceding paragraphs, the Committee are constrained to conclude that the biggest weakness in the implementation of the scheme has been its monitoring and evaluation. The scheme provides for financial assistance to create a pool of resource persons at all levels for effective field based monitoring, which include achievement tests, evaluation studies, research etc. The Ministry have informed that they have mechanisms in place for financial monitoring by way of concurrent financial review by Institute of Public Auditors of India, annual audit by Chartered Accountants, quarterly review meetings of State Finance Controllers, electronic fund flows, evaluation reports of designated Social Science Institutions on physical aspects of the programme etc. All the existing monitoring systems notwithstanding, the Committee cannot overlook the glaring fact that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme has suffered slippages in performance including non-adherence to schedule, targets, and deadlines. There has been under-performance with respect to the physical aspects of the programme, leave alone the qualitative parameters. The Committee, thus are inclined to believe that what has been assumed as monitoring was essentially the transfer of administrative data from the lowest tier *i.e.* provider/primary school to the highest tiers of governance, ignoring the fact that monitoring of social sector programmes actually required regular feedback from the beneficiaries to report the level of usage of these services. Therefore, the appropriate yardstick to measure the success of this scheme would be to get institutionalized inputs/feedback from the teachers and the intended beneficiaries themselves. Independent evaluations by premier teacher training institutions should be solicited. This will enhance the reliability of data on the status of performance. Such an evaluation exercise could help pinpoint not only the amount of wastage, but also the points in the supply chain where failures and leakages are happening, the geographic locations where they are most prominent etc. and assist in taking corrective measures rapidly. The Ministry must therefore re-fashion and re-orient their appraisal and

monitoring systems accordingly. They should also suitably modify their norms/ guidelines based on such a feedback from the field so that performance, both quantitative and qualitative, can significantly improve. In this regard, special attention needs to be paid to the districts that are lagging behind by formulating a time-bound action plan. The Committee would like to be apprised about the concrete action taken in the matter.

(Sl. No. 14 Para 119 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

SSA is a programme which has inbuilt mechanism to get feedback from beneficiaries and to further improve the implementation of the programme. Right from top to bottom extensive representation is given in all institutions responsible for implementation of the programme. The National SSA Mission and State SSA Missions are reviewing the programme regularly, which have representation from all the stakeholders and their feedback is based to frame policy guidelines in implementation of the programme. Similar arrangements are made at the district level where a district SSA implementation society is constituted with representation from all stakeholders including representatives of teachers, parent of students, etc. to further improve the programme.

SSA envisages a bottom-up approach of planning, as it is participatory in nature, creates a sense of ownership among the stakeholders, but also creates awareness of the programmes goals and helps in the capacity building at various levels. The plans so developed reflect local specificity and educational needs, which contextualizes planning to the aspirations of people based on consultative meetings and interaction with the community and special target groups. The SSA plans are thus prepared at the habitation level in the first instance, by village level/school level committees consisting of representatives from all stakeholders through participatory planning process based on various interventions in the difference functional areas. The plans so developed at habitation level are consolidated at district level as per each intervention prescribed in the SSA framework. The districts then develop a District Elementary Education Plan (DEEP) with the help of the district level SSA committee, having representation from all stakeholders under the Chairmanship of District Collector or Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, taking into account the local priorities, and capacity to implement the plans.

District also prepare a perspective plan under SSA and set their own target for Universal Elementary Education (UEE) and adopt a contextualized mechanism for implementing interventions planned under DEEP. Their Annual Work Plans reflect their annual fund requirements and layout the set of interventions and components that districts wish to execute on priority. District plans are sent to the State level where in turn a State component plan is prepared for interventions that cut across districts *e.g.* programme management, monitoring research etc. The State component plan and the district plans are then sent to the National Mission of SSA in Government of India for approval of the SSA Project Approval Board, after due appraisal.

While preparing teacher training module, regular feedback from the teachers are being taken by the State SSA Missions. Similarly, the execution of the Programme at

the grass root level is being done by Village Education Committee, which is constituted with the representation from all stakeholders mostly from teachers and parents of the children. In some States, Village Education Committees are even monitoring the attendance of teachers and also making the payment of their salaries. Further, the school authorities are displaying details of funds received and utilized on school notice board to keep the community aware of the utilization of funds at the school level. Moreover, the Ministry and State SSA missions are displaying details of SSA activities on the website so that all stakeholders can see performance of the programme and provide there feed back.

The Ministry is also continuously taking feedback from all the stakeholders through review meetings, Review Mission, quarterly meetings and incorporating modifications in the guidelines where need is felt.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES RECEIVED FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

112. With a view to achieving the objectives envisioned in the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, new primary schools were be opened in those areas which did not have any school within one km. of a habitation. Education Guarantee Scheme Centers at primary level were to be opened in those unserved habitations where no school existed within a radius of one kilometre and there were at least 15 children in the age group of 6—14 years who were not going to school. The Committee find that in spite of this mandate, in 14 States/Union Territories there were 31,648 habitations without any schools and this accounted for about 9 per cent of the total number of habitations. The Ministry have sought to explain the situation by stating that during the period 2001-02 to 2004-05, 69,000 primary schools and 1.07 lakh Education Guarantee Scheme Centres were provided to cover school-less habitations and in addition to this, 65,000 primary schools and 31,000 Education Guarantee Scheme centers were provided in the years 2005-06 and 2006-07. Further, they have added that as per State reports only 20,895 habitations still needed a primary school, even though they were still covered under Education Guarantee Scheme/Alternative and Innovative Education facilities. The Committee, while acknowledging the efforts that have been made to ensure a school or an alternate education center in every habitation, are still apprehensive about the fact that there were a number of schools that were functional at the time of implementation of the scheme, but closed down subsequently. The Committee are surprised that the Ministry had no information or feedback regarding closure of such schools. They would now expect the Ministry to undertake an independent survey in this regard and also put in place a mechanism to regularly monitor the incidence of closure of schools. The Ministry should subsequently initiate steps to revive such schools or provide other alternatives in those habitations. The emphasis at this juncture should not merely be on quantum of schools but more importantly on ensuring that the schools function properly and there are also no drop-outs among students.

(Sl. No. 7 Para 112 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

Data on schools is collected annually under the District Information System for Education (DISE) by National University of Educational Planning and Administration, which is a computerized data base for elementary education level. Each school has a specific code. Zero enrolment schools are required to be checked by States/UTs, which enables verification of such schools. The States have been advised once again to verify such schools and their status and reasons for closure while collecting DISE

data. Sometimes, merger of schools is undertaken by State Governments and as in Kerala, due to declining birth rates and age cohorts for primary schools, the State Government has closed several primary schools for valid reasons. Verification through DISE data base, has been put in place to ensure that no invalid closure of schools takes place.

Sd/-

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and
Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation

108. The Committee are concerned that the Government has decided to modify the funding pattern of SSA from the existing 75:25 (Centre-State sharing) ratio to 50:50 from the current year onwards, which may possibly impair the programme that is already operating behind schedule; with serious shortcomings to boot. In this regard, the Committee note that financial assistance for the programme of the Scheme began with the ratio of 85:15 sharing between the Union and the States during the IX Plan; 75:25 during the X Plan and 50:50 ratio sharing thereafter. In spite of funding at 75:25 ratio, the Committee find that several States are lagging behind in achieving the targets stipulated in the scheme. In this regard, the Ministry have informed that if the proposed 50:50 ratio funding pattern were to be followed, financial burden on all the States and Union Territories, even on the scale of operations in 2006-07, would increase to over Rs. 7500 crores. The Committee apprehend that States lagging behind, who are also the more populous and financially not so sound among the States, may actually turn reluctant in their participation, thereby jeopardizing the goal of ensuring universal elementary education by 2010. In this connection, it is also disconcerting to note that the increased liability upon the States may result in they being unable to contribute their matching share, which will in turn prevent the centre from releasing their further instalments. Such a situation is bound to choke the funding of the scheme with serious repercussions particularly on the performance of States that are lagging behind. The Committee are thus worried that these States may not be able to cope with the implications of this proposal. The reduction of Centre's financial involvement in the programme could thus neutralize the gains made by the Scheme and it may also result in the Centre having less control and persuasive power over the programme.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) have also not favoured the proposed modification in the funding norms. In this regard, they have expressed the view that if the Centre were to continue with the existing 75:25 funding ratio, the burden would not be unaffordable and that with the funds available for the Scheme at the Centre from the Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh, budgetary support and external funding should be adequate to continue the existing 75:25 pattern during the XIth Plan period.

It is seen that the major portion of SSA funding came from the non-lapsable fund called Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh which received proceeds of the education cess. Although the Government has increased the education cess this year from 2% to 3%, the additional 1% is to be earmarked to fund secondary education. Further, the Ministry

have also informed that the budgetary support from the Government has been steadily declining from a level of Rs. 2732.99 crore in 2003-04 to Rs. 2288 crore in 2004-05 and Rs. 2412.90 in 2005-06. They have also stated that the Scheme in effect requires total commitment of more than Rs. 40,000 crore each year from 2007 to 2010 as per the projections based on the modified funding norms during the XI plan period.

In the light of the reasons and constraints cited above, the Committee are of the view that the Government should reconsider their decision to alter the funding norm, as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is at a critical juncture where full provisioning of school infrastructure particularly at the upper primary level needs to be addressed in the next three years. The Committee apprehend that if the upper primary level is not incentivised during the 11th plan period of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the gains made so far in enrollment of children will be lost. Further, the attainment of the national goal of Universal Elementary Education by 2010 depends squarely on the populous but educationally backward States to achieve their outcomes. The Committee therefore urge that the Government should not allow the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to suffer in any way on account of shortage of funds.

(Sl. No. 3 Para 108 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

The notified Frame-work for implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme provided for funding pattern between the Central Govt. and States/UTs in the ratio of 85:15 during IX Plan, in the ratio of 75:25 during Xth Plan and in the ratio of 50:50 during XIth Plan.

However, *vide* notification dated 25th September, 2007 the Government of India after intensive consultations, has since revised the funding pattern with effect from 1-4-2007 in respect of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme during the 11th Plan period and till the end of the programme as indicated below:

(i) For States/Union Territories other than NE States

"The funding pattern between the Central Government and States/UTs shall be in the ratio of 65:35 for the first two years of the XIth Plan *i.e.* 2007-08 and 2008-09; 60:40 for the third year *i.e.* 2009-2010; 55:45 for the fourth year *i.e.* 2010-11; and 50:50 thereafter *i.e.* from 2011-12 onwards.

(ii) For 8 North Eastern States

For the 8th North-Eastern States, the fund sharing pattern between Centre and States shall be 90:10 under the programme with the Centre's share resourced from the 10% earmarked funds for the NE Region in the SSA's Central Budget".

There is satisfaction in the States with this modification and therefore, their enthusiasm in keeping up the momentum of SSA implementation is expected to remain undisturbed.

Sd/-
(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

CHAPTER V

**RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT
OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED
INTERIM REPLIES**

Recommendation

116. The National Programme of nutritional support to primary education scheme, popularly known as mid-day-meal scheme, was launched to give a boost to the universalization of primary education through improvements in the nutritional status of students in primary classes of government, local body and government-aided schools. Central support was to be provided by way of supply of free foodgrains through Food Corporation of India and from September, 2004 assistance to State Governments was being provided to meet the cost of cooking meals also. Though the budget grants for this scheme were provided separately and it was not covered by SSA, the scheme was meant to be a major Central intervention complementary to SSA in order to improve student enrolment, attendance and lessen the drop-out rate, while simultaneously raising their nutritional standard. This was meant to evoke community participation and involvement of children in schools. The Committee note that the position of service of mid-day-meals in schools that has emerged from the household survey conducted by Social and Rural Research Institute at the instance of Audit indicated that 44 percent in rural areas and 65 percent in urban areas were not served mid-day-meals. The Committee consider such a coverage as rather dismal, warranting urgent interventions by the Ministry to effectively dovetail the mid-day meal scheme with SSA so that the desired complementarities between the two schemes are fully achieved. The Committee further desire that the Ministry should consider enhancing the grant for meeting the cost of meals in keeping with the rising price index. The Ministry should also enquire into the shortcomings that have crept in the operation of the scheme and take corrective measures thereon.

(Sl. No. 11 Para 116 of 43rd Report of PAC 14th Lok Sabha)

Action Taken

With a view to enhancing enrollment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th August 1995, initially in 2408 blocks in the country. By the year 1997-98 the NP-NSPE was introduced in all blocks of the country. It was further extended in 2002 to cover not only children in classes I-V of Government, Government aided and local body schools, but also children studying in EGS and AIE centres. Central Assistance under the scheme consisted of free supply of food grains @ 100 grams per child per school day, and subsidy for transportation of food grains up to a maximum of Rs. 50 per quintal. In September 2004 the scheme was revised to provide

cooked mid day meal with 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein to all children studying in classes I—V in Government and aided schools and EGS/AIE centres. In addition to free supply of foodgrains, the revised scheme provided Central Assistance for Cooking cost (a) Re. 1 per child per school day, (b) Transport subsidy was raised from the earlier maximum of Rs. 50 per quintal to Rs. 100 per quintal for special category States, and Rs. 75 per quintal for other States, (c) Management, monitoring and evaluation costs @ 2% of the cost of foodgrains, transport subsidy and cooking assistance, (d) Provision of mid day meal during summer vacation in drought affected areas. In July 2006 the scheme was further revised to provide assistance for cooking cost at the rate of (a) Rs. 1.80 per child/school day for States in the North Eastern Region, provided the NER States contribute Rs. 0.20 per child/school day, and (b) Rs. 1.50 per child/school day for other States and UTs. provided that these States and UTs contribute Rs. 0.50 per child/school day.

Audit report has pointed out that 44% rural and 65% urban children are reportedly not receiving the mid-day-meal (Para 7.4.19 Audit Report No. 15/2006). The report amplifies that 84.23% children in rural areas of Chandigarh and 80.85% in Mizoram are not receiving mid-day-meal. In addition 86.92% children in urban areas of Arunachal Pradesh and 94.97% in Chandigarh, 84.37% in Mizoram, and 88.33% in Punjab are not receiving mid-day-meal.

The Department had reported *vide* letter No. 5-53/2006/EE-5(MDM) dated 13.03.07 that '*the States/UTs were asked to explain the inconsistencies and the matter was being pursued at the highest level with these States*'. In this connection the following points may kindly be noted:

Chandigarh

Chandigarh reported *vide* letter No. 1212-DPI-UT-AI-6(8)05 dated 7.11.06 that 97.95% regular and 87.36% SSA/AIE students, and 89.24% regular and 87.36% SSA/AIE students respectively were covered in 2004-05 and 2005-06 under the MDM Scheme.

Chandigarh Administration has further informed *vide* letter dated 13.3.07 that they are providing mid-day-meal to the students of only Government and other six privately aided schools upto 90% of the recorded enrollment from classes I-V. Therefore, the observations are not in order according to ground realities of this case and no case of false reporting and misappropriation or diversion of funds has been found during the yearly audit conducted for such scheme by the AG (Audit), UT Chandigarh.

The Chandigarh Administration has further sought information *vide* memo No. DPI/UT/A1/2007 dated 25.4.07 regarding the areas/schools surveyed and methodology/tools adopted by audit to arrive at this report so as to counter check the relevant point.

Mizoram

Mizoram has reported *vide* letters No. G. 17018/10/06-SPD (SSA) dated 13.9.06 and G. 25018/1/2002-EDN dated 27.10.06 that Audit findings for the years 2002-03 and 2003-04 seem correct as the programme of cooked mid-day-meal was started with effect from 15.2.2006. Raw rice was distributed to schools as most of the schools were unable to prepare cooked meals due to lack of kitchen sheds, utensils and cooks etc.

The State has stated that the difference in figures may be due to that fact that the survey of schools and household was organized for all the schools (including private) and each and every household, whereas mid-day meal was served to the children of Govt. primary schools, Govt. aided and EGS/AIE centres.

Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh reported *vide* letter No. ED 3/MDM/04/2006-07 dated 3.11.06 and ED3/MDM/3/2006-07 dated 3.11.06 that:

As on 31.3.2005, there were 2595 total eligible primary schools out of which 2470 primary schools were covered.

District-wise status of implementation of cooked mid-day meal showed total enrollment at 1,99,525 out of which 1,92,059 students were covered.

As per data available with Directorate of Education, 90% *i.e.* 2336 schools are in rural areas and 10% *i.e.* 260 schools were under urban areas. Therefore, the report of survey that 86.92% were not receiving mid-day meal dos not appear correct and is not in conformity with Departmental reports.

However, necessary steps are geared up in all districts to cover the uncovered children to achieve 100% targets during 2006-07 year ending.

Punjab

Punjab reported that the implementation of MDM Programme was irregular and uneven in the year 2005-06. The programme has been taken up on regular basis only with effect from July, 2006.

The concerned States/UTs, where gap in coverage and difference of figures were reported, requested the Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India for information on the methodology adopted, tools used, period of survey and areas/schools surveyed by SRI-IMRB so that they could examine the issue and furnish a comprehensive response on the observations contained in the above said report of C&AG. Accordingly, *vide* letter No. 5-53/2006-EE.5 (MDM) dated 17-5-07 the Department of School Education & Literacy requested the Office of the C & AG to furnish the above information. Further, this Department also requested the Office of C & AG to designate suitable personnel in SRI-IMRB who could co-ordinate with the State Government/UT Administration in this regard. In turn the C&AG, *vide* letter No.A&G-II/SSA review/Vol.-II/2004-05/204 dated 16.5.07 informed that the required information has been called for from Social and Rural Research Institute (SRI). Despite reminder dated 16.8.07, the requisite information is still awaited. The matter is being pursued.

Moreover, during the meetings of Programme Approval Board (PAB) of finalize and approve Annual Work Plan and Budget for the year 2007-08, the status of implementation of MDM Programme during 2006-07 was comprehensively reviewed. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Punjab and Chandigarh, the observations contained in C&AG's Performance Audit Report No. 15 of 2006 were also highlighted and they were urged to take necessary corrective measures. Secretary (SE&L) has also

taken up this issue with Chief Secretaries/Administrators and requested to conduct necessary enquiries into the matter and initiate disciplinary action wherever necessary.

Secondly, the aspect of enhancement of Central Assistance for meeting the cost of meals in keeping with the rising price index has been incorporated in the proposal submitted to the CCEA for extension of MDM Programme in Classes VI-VIII in Educationally Backward Blocks.

Thirdly, the issue relating to integration of MDM Programme with SSA was discussed in detail in the Conference of Education Secretaries of States/UTs in September, 2005. As many as 21 States/UTs having 96% of eligible children had opposed the merger of MDM with SSA. Following this, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance were consulted. Planning Commission has states: "*Since SSA has to be implemented by 2010 and MDM Scheme is a continuing Scheme, merger of these two schemes may not be desirable at this state*". Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, had also communicated continuance of *status quo* in the implementation of MDM scheme and SSA. In view of the above, it was decided to retain *status quo* in the implementation of MDM Scheme and SSA. However, it was decided that the General Council and Executive Council of the National Mission for SSA will, in addition to SSA itself, review, from time to time, Mid-Day Meal Scheme also.

Sd/

(Vrinda Sarup)
Joint Secretary

[Ministry of Human Resource Development/Department of School Education and Literacy O.M. No. 13-1/2006 EE. 15 dated 05.11.2007]

NEW DELHI;
17 January, 2008
27 Pausa 1929 (Saka)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH SITTINGS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2007-2008) HELD ON 9TH JANUARY, 2008

The Committee sat from 1600 hrs to 1630 hrs. in Committee Room "D", Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairman*

MEMBER

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Kirip Chaliha
3. Shri Khagen Das
4. Shri K.S. Rao
5. Shri Mohan Singh
6. Shri Rajiv Rajan 'Lalan' Singh
7. Shri Kharabela Swain
8. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar

Rajya Sabha

9. Prof. P.J. Kurien
10. Shri Janardhana Poojary
11. Dr. K. Malaisamy
12. Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.K. Sharma — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri A. Mukhopadhyay — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri Brahm Dutt — *Director*
4. Shri M.K. Madhusudhan — *Deputy Secretary-II*

Representative of the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India

Shri A.N. Chatterji — *Director General (PA)*

2. At the outset, the Chairman, PAC welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration of the following draft Report:—

- (i) Action Taken Report of 19th Report of PAC (14th Lok Sabha) relating to "National AIDS Control Programme";

- (ii) Action Taken Report of 38th Report of PAC (14th Lok Sabha) relating to "Performance Audit of Department of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)";
- (iii) Action Taken Report on 40th Report of PAC (14th Lok Sabha) relating to "Management of Projects relating to Utilisation & Conservation of Soil and Water Undertaken by Institute of ICAR"; and
- (iv) Action Taken Report on 43rd Report of PAC (14th Lok Sabha) relating to "Performance Audit of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)".

3. After taking up the Draft Reports one by one, the Committee adopted these draft Reports with some verbal changes and authorised the Chairman to finalise and present the same to Parliament in the light of factual verification by the Audit.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX

Statement of Recommendations and Observations

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry/Department	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1.	8	Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy)	The Committee have noted the Ministry's resolve and focused attention to meet the goals of the programme in a time bound manner. The Committee would like the Ministry to constantly review the progress made by employing effective monitoring mechanism in implementation of the Scheme so as to ensure that the revised target of accomplishing the objectives of the Scheme by 2011-2012 <i>i.e.</i> terminal year of the XI Five Year Plan is met. Needless to emphasise the Government should strive hard to improve the quality of education and also provide requisite funds to the states so as to accomplish the objectives of the Scheme.
2.	11	-do-	The Committee have taken note of the revision that has been made in the funding pattern of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme with effect from 1st April, 2007. The modification in the funding pattern <i>i.e.</i> ratio between the Central Government and States/Union Territories other than North Eastern States, would be 65:35 for years 2007-08 and 2008-09; 60:40 for 2009-10; 55:45 for 2010-11 and 50:50 only from 2011-12 onwards. Even though States have reported satisfaction with this modification, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry should continue with the funding pattern of 75:25 taking into consideration the financial health of the States. In Committee's view this alone would help in keeping up the momentum of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implementation undisturbed.
3.	14	-do-	The Committee have taken note of the reply of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of secondary Education and Literacy)

1	2	3	4
			<p>wherein it has been stated that the States/Union Territories were asked to explain the inconsistencies and that the matter was being pursued at the highest level with the States. The Committee have been informed that certain States were urged to take necessary corrective measures and also conduct enquiries in addition to initiating disciplinary action wherever it was necessary. However, the Committee would like to be apprised about the specific details with regard to these measures that have been purported to have been taken. Further, in respect of enhancement of Central Assistance for meeting the cost of meals the Committee have been given to understand that a proposal in this regard has been submitted to CCEA for extension of Mid-Day Meal programme to classes VI- VIII in Educationally Backward Blocks. The Committee would like to be apprised about the specific action in this regard. The Committee would also like the Government to constantly continue with periodic reviews of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Mid-Day Meal Schemes with a view to take necessary corrective measures whenever necessary.</p>
4.	17	Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy)	<p>With regard to improving the quality of elementary education on which depended the quality of higher education, the Committee was of the view that Information Technology Sector could help in enabling the students to have computer-aided learning. The Committee were given to understand that some Corporates had made such a beginning in some States and in this respect the Committee had desired the Ministry to assume a pro-active role in fostering such Corporate initiatives to strengthen the programme. However, in the Action Taken Note, the Ministry have cryptically stated that the recommendation of the Committee had been noted and the Ministry continued to encourage Public Private Partnership in computer aided learning. The Committee would like to be apprised in detail about the specific action taken by the Government in this direction and the outcome of the same.</p>