

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2040
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION
Viswanathan Shri P.

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

(a) whether the Government is aware of the problems being faced by the rural students due to lack of access to quality higher education; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a): Yes, Sir,

(b): In order to focus attention in universities located in backward/rural/remote/border areas, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has been implementing a scheme, namely, "Special Development Grant for Universities in Backward Areas" to strengthen their available infrastructure and to create additional basic infrastructure. The UGC has also been implementing a scheme to provide assistance to eligible colleges located in rural/remote/border/hilly/tribal areas for providing accommodation for teachers and students on rental basis, development of location specific curricula, and for providing conveyance allowance to eligible poor students.

Indira Gandhi National Tribal Open University, with its headquarters at Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh, has been established as a teaching and affiliating university to promote an avenue of higher education and research for the tribal population in the country. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is responsible for enhancing education through distance mode, and promoting, coordinating and determining standards in open learning and distance education systems. The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been envisaged as a Centrally sponsored scheme to leverage the potential of ICT in teaching and learning process for the benefit of all learners in Higher Education Institutions in any time and any where mode. A new scheme has been envisaged in the XI Plan to provide financial assistance to State Governments to set up a model degree college in each of the 374 educationally backward districts identified by UGC in the country, where the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is less than the national GER.