GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2747
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Dropout Rate of School Children
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps to reduce the dropout rate of students at primary level;
(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, category-wise and gender-wise;
(c) the funds allocated/released/spent during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
(d) whether the Government has proposed or proposes to conduct any study/assessment in regard to the increasing rate of dropouts in the rural and urban areas of the country and if so, the details thereof; and
(e) the action plan prepared in this regard to achieve this task within a timeframe period?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) & (e): A number steps have been taken to reduce the annual average dropout rate of students at primary level. Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), incentives are given to encourage enrolment & retention and to reduce dropout of children in schools. These include enhancing access to primary & upper primary schools, free textbooks and two sets of uniform, transportation/escort facilities, strengthening school infrastructure like school building, additional classrooms, toilets, drinking water facilities etc., improving the teachers pupil ratio as well as strategies for gender positive textbooks, gender sensitization of teachers and educational administrators. In addition, 3602 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) or residential schools for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities at upper primary level in educationally backward blocks of the country have been set up. The mid-day meal programme is also implemented in elementary schools, to help retain children in schools.

To ensure quality outcomes in government schools, the Central Government through SSA has supported State / UTs on (i) early grade reading, writing & comprehension and early mathematics programmes through a sub-programme namely "Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat" (ii) sharing an exemplar on continuous comprehensive evaluation in elementary education developed by the NCERT; (iii) notifying learning outcomes by class and stage of education brought out by the NCERT; (iv) conducting the 3rd round of National Achievement Surveys for Class III, V and VIII to track student learning outcomes; (v) provide funds and technical guidance to states for annual refresher training of teachers and (vi) provide academic support to teachers and schools through Block and Cluster Resource Centres.

The identification of Special Focus Districts (SFDs) is an important step in the direction of providing universal and quality education to SCs & STs student at elementary level. These districts are identified based on indicators like concentration of out of school children, high gender gap, low retention rate and infrastructure gap as well as concentration of SC/ST/Minority population. During 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16, 48%, 48%, 42.8% & 49% respectively of the funds under SSA were targeted to SFDs.

As a result, the annual average dropout rate of boys has reduced from 5.89% in 2012-13 to 4.68% in 2013-14 and of girls from 5.34% to 4.66% during the same period. The State-wise details on funds released by the Central Government under SSA programme and the expenditure during 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 and the current year are at Annexure.

A survey was commissioned by the Ministry and was conducted by Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) on "National Survey of Estimation of out-of-school children in age 6-13 in India" and completed in 2014. It was pointed out in the study report that children within the rural areas drop out of school earlier than those in the urban areas. Most of the drop-outs in the said age group from the rural areas have completed education up to Class-II, while those from the urban areas have completed class V.
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