

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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**INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION TO ALL**New Delhi, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

The Government is committed to increasing access to quality education to all sections of the society and provide adequate funds to realize these goals. The 42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976 brought about a fundamental change by transferring education from the State List to the Concurrent List recognizing the federal structure of our country and giving equal responsibility to both the Central and State Governments to promote education.

Several schemes are being implemented by the Ministry so as to enhance access to public funded education across all levels ranging from elementary, secondary, higher and technical education. These include implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) which makes it incumbent on Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children of 6-14 years of age and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for universalizing elementary education. The Mid Day Meal Scheme is also being implemented in order to enhance enrolment and attendance to children studying in elementary classes which supplements the efforts of SSA. The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) scheme aims at making good quality education available, accessible and affordable to all young persons in the age group of 14 to 18 years. In higher Education, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), state higher educational institutions are being strengthened.

The Government has been establishing schools, such as Kendriya Vidyalayas ( KVs) and Navodaya Vidyalayas(NVs) in un-served and under-served areas so as ensure that the socially and economically disadvantaged sections have access to education. Similarly in higher education, IITs, IIMs, NITs, IIITs, IISERs, Central Universities are being established so that every aspiring learner has access to affordable education. In addition to the efforts of the Ministry, the State Governments also undertake several steps to provide equitable access to education across all levels of education. To ensure that all sections have access to education several student financing schemes, such as scholarships and education loans are being

implemented. The UGC regulations on deemed universities stipulate preventing commercialization and ensuring that the interests of the socially and economically weaker students have been protected adequately.

The extant National Policy on Education (NPE) provides for a National System of Education which implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. Also, the stated policy of the Government is that education is a 'not-for-profit' activity. The Government has also initiated the consultation process of formulating a New Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge.

This information was given by the Minister of State (HRD), Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey today in a written reply to a Rajya Sabha question.

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**GG/RK/ QUALITY EDUCATION TO ALL**