

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

TWO HUNDRED SIXTH REPORT

ON

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS 2008-2009 (DEMAND NO. 57) OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
(MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT)**

(PRESENTED TO THE RAJYA SABHA ON 17TH APRIL, 2008)
(LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA ON 17TH APRIL, 2008)

**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
APRIL, 2008/CHAITRA, 1930 (SAKA)**

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON HRD
(2008-09)**

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|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi | ¾ | <i>Chairman</i> |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|

**RAJYA SABHA
MEMBERS**

2. *Shri Dwijendra Nath Sharmah

3. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
4. Shri Vijay Kumar Rupani
5. Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
6. Smt. Brinda Karat
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9. Smt. Supriya Sule
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LOK SABHA

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25. Shri K. Virupakshappa
26. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
27. Shri Francis K. George
28. Shri Anantkumar Hegde
29. Shri Rahul Gandhi
30. Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh
31. Shri Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury

*Ceased to be a Member of the Committee consequent upon retirement from the Rajya Sabha with effect from 9th April, 2008

SECRETARIAT

Shri N.C. Joshi, Secretary
Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri N.K. Singh, Director
Shri J.Sundriyal, Joint Director
Shri Sanjay Singh, Committee Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Two Hundred Sixth Report of the Committee on the Demands for Grants (Demand No.57) of the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development for the year 2008-2009.

2. The Committee considered the various documents and relevant papers received from the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development and also heard the Secretary and other Officials of that Department on the said Demands for Grants in its meeting held on 27th March, 2008.

3. The Committee considered the Draft Report and adopted the same in its meeting held on 15th April, 2008.

NEW DELHI;
April 15, 2008
Chaitra 26, 1930 (Saka)

JANARDAN DWIVEDI
Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on
Human Resource Development

REPORT

I. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

1.1 The Department projected a requirement of Rs.40762 crores for the various schemes concerning School Education and Literacy. Against this projection, a plan allocation of Rs. 26,800 crores has been provided in BE 2008-09. The Committee was informed that this year's allocation is Rs.4,609 crores (20.77%) more than the RE allocation of Rs.22,191 crores in 2007-08.

1.2 The Secretary presented before the Committee a comparative analysis of allocations made in 2007-08 and 2008-09 as follows:-

Scheme	(Rs. in crores)		
	2007-08 RE	2008-09 BE	Increase/Decrease
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	13,171.00	13,100.00	(-) 71.00
Mid-Day Meal Scheme(MDM)	6678.00	8,000.00	(+)1322.00
Secondary Education	1635.30	4,554.00	(+) 2918.70
Teacher Education	312.00	500.00	(+) 188.00
Adult Education	251.00	451.00	(+)200.00

1.3 The Committee observes that while there is a marginal decrease in the allocation for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2008-09 as compared to 2007-08 allocations, all the other sectors/schemes show an upward trend with the major share of it going to the Secondary Education followed by Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Adult Education and Secondary education. **The Committee would, however, like to point out that out of Rs. 13,100 crore allocated for SSA in 2008-09, Rs. 7690.00 crores is proposed to be met from the amount generated as Education Cess under the Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh against the contribution of Rs. 6993.00 crore as Education Cess in 2007-08. Similarly, under MDM Scheme, out of Rs. 8000.00 crore allocated for 2008-09, Rs. 5127.00 crore is envisaged from the Education Cess, as compared to contribution of Rs. 3400.00 crore from Education Cess in 2007-08. Thus, it is evident that direct funding by the Central Government to its two flagship Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and MDM was, in fact, declining as there was simultaneous increase in the amount accruing from Educational Cess that goes to Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh.**

1.4 The Committee was informed that the enhancement in the allocation for the Mid-Day meal Scheme was on account of its extension to the Upper Primary level all over the country. Under Secondary education, raise in allocation was mainly for the proposed two new schemes *viz.*, 'New Model Schools' and 'Upgradation of 2000 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (Residential schools, Hostels/Girls Hostels)'. Under the Adult Education, one new programme named 'Literacy Programme for 35+ age group' was proposed to be introduced in the current fiscal. **The Committee welcomes the extension of MDM to upper primary level and launching of new schemes for girls' and also for 35+ persons.**

Under-utilization of Funds

1.5 The Committee notes that during the previous fiscal, under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, till mid-February 2008, only Rs.10,689.98 crore was spent out of the Rs.13,171 crores. Similarly, for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, reported expenditure during this period was Rs.5670.71 crores against the allocation of Rs.6678 crores as in March, 2008. In the Adult Education sector also, expenditure was to the tune of Rs.212.33 crores against an allocation of Rs.251 crores as on 29th February, 2008. **Such under-utilization in the case of SSA & MDM during 2007-08 notwithstanding, the Committee notes improvement in the rate of increase in the utilization of allocations as compared to the previous years. The Committee recommends that every possible effort should be made for narrowing this gap in the utilisation of allocated funds to the maximum possible extent.**

Pending Utilisation Certificates (UCs)

1.6 Problem of large number of pending Utilisation Certificates is another issue engaging Committee's attention. The Committee also notes the problem of unspent balances available with the implementing agencies. As on 31st December, 2007, a total of 1265 Utilisation Certificates amounting to Rs. 995.40 crores were not received in respect of Grants/loan released upto the 31st March, 2006. Further, total unspent balances with implementing agencies under different schemes as on the 1st April, 2007 was Rs. 3637.71 crores, which increased to the tune of Rs. 5465.58 crores in the next six months *i.e.*, on the 30th September, 2007. The Committee notes that Unspent Balances were available with implementing

agencies (other than State Government/UTs) mainly in the Voluntary Sector. The Committee was informed that efforts were being made to get the UCs expedited and some progress had been made and a large number of NGOs had been blacklisted. **The Committee feels concerned about a large amount of funds being cornered by these bodies and no efforts being made to get the money back from them. The only action taken against the erring NGOs is to blacklist them. The Committee recommends that every effort be made to bring them to book and such NGOs be proceeded against under the Indian Penal Code.**

II. SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

2.1 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the national flagship programme launched in 2001-02 for achieving the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time bound approach in partnership with States and Local Bodies. It is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving capabilities of all the children in the age group of 6-14 years through provision of community-based quality education in a mission mode. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan today covers all States and Union territories, reaching out to 19.4 crore children in 12.3 lakh habitations.

Achievements under SSA

2.2 The achievements of SSA have been stated to be as follows :-

Activity	Achievement
Access	98% of the rural population has a primary school and 86% of it has Upper Primary School as per the SSA norms.
Gross Enrolment Ratio	GER rises in the 6-14 age group to 110.86 at the primary level and to 64.72 at the upper primary level during 2006-07
Gender Parity Index	Improves to 0.93 at primary level and 0.87 at upper primary level in 2006-07
Dropout Rate at primary level	Reduced by 10.54% to 28.49% in 2004-05 from 39.03% (2001-02). Dropout rate for girls declines by 15.08% points
Pupil-Teacher Ratio	PTR stands at 36:1 for primary and 32:1 for upper primary level in 2006-07
Enrolment of Children with Special needs	26.21 lakh children identified and 21.58 children enrolled in school by 2007-08

2.3 **The Committee is fully aware of the various limitations in the gigantic task of universalisation of elementary education (UEE) in a vast country like ours particularly, through the schemes like SSA and MDM. It appreciates the efforts made in trying to achieve various goals**

set in this regard and the Committee takes note of some improvements in respect of various dimensions/indicators towards reaching the goal of UEE. It, however, feels its duty to point out the areas of concern with a view to making mid way corrections and making assiduous efforts for achieving our goal in time.

Goals of SSA

2.4 The Committee would like to draw attention towards the main targets of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which are as follow:-

- All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'Back-to-School' camp by **2005**
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by **2007** and at upper primary level by **2010**
- Universal retention by **2010**
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis an education for life.

2.5 The Committee notes that the first goal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to bring all children to schools, Education Guarantee Centres, Alternate Schools, 'Back-to-School' camps by 2005 has been long overdue. As per District Information System for Education (DISE) 2006-07 figures, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at the primary level and the Upper Primary level stands at 92.75 and 48.45 respectively. Further, as per the Department's estimate, around 75.97 lakh children in the age group of 6-14 do not attend any form of schooling. Maximum concentration of such children is reported to be in Bihar (28%) followed by West Bengal (18%) and Uttar Pradesh (10%). Even after three years since 2005, the goal of achieving universal enrolment remains yet to be achieved.

2.6 As regards bridging gender and social gaps at primary level by 2007 and upper primary level by 2010, the situation is no better. As per the target, we should have by now been able to bridge the gender and social gaps at primary level. However, DISE 2006-07 statistics puts the Gender Parity Index in enrolment at 0.93 for the primary level. On the social front, percentage of enrolment at elementary level is 19.87 for SCs and 10.69 for STs. For OBCs, it is 42.18 % at the primary level and 41.23 % at the upper primary level. Going at this pace, it is highly unlikely that the goal of bridging gender and social gaps in elementary education can be achieved by the year 2010.

2.7 The goal of Universal Retention by 2010 also, it appears, would remain unfulfilled. The drop-outs rate of primary level in the Class I-V group has, no doubt, decreased from 39% in 2001 to 29% in 2004-05; it still might be about 20%. State-wise figures, however, indicate extreme disparities in this respect. There are ten States having a dropout rate exceeding 40%. In contrast Delhi, Puducherry and Kerala show 0% dropout rate, followed by six States having less than 5% dropout rate. This rate was more than 60% at upper primary and secondary levels in 2004-05. Going at this rate, the target of universal retention by 2010 appears difficult to reach.

2.8 For girls, the dropout rate has remained around 25.4% in 2005. Similarly, SC and ST student dropout rates have been 34.2% and 42.3% respectively. And if drop-out rate is taken as total for class I to VIII, it was around 50% in the year 2004-05. Comparative analysis of State-

wise achievement level points out to another disturbing trend. In respect of quite a few States, dropout rate shows an upward trend during the period 2002-05. Not only this, in respect of some States, whereas enrolment ratio continues to be much below the national ratio, drop-out rate is considerably higher than the average rate. Thus, the Committee feels that the target of the Universal Retention by the year 2010 also would be difficult to reach.

2.9 The following figures were made available to the Committee in respect of the SSA:

Construction of School Buildings		Additional Classrooms		Drinking Water Facilities		Toilets	
Cumulative targets upto 2007-08	Completed	Cumulative targets upto 2007-08	Completed	Cumulative targets upto 2007-08	Completed	Cumulative targets upto 2007-08	Completed
2,05,924	1,41,738	8,15,517	5,57,927	1,88,832	1,54,121	2,44,297	1,97,633

2.10 The Committee notes that under all these components, some of the works are under construction also. Even then, considerable gap is there between the targets set and achievements made, with disparities being noticed in State-wise figures. Besides this, the Committee is surprised to note that exact details and status of all the targets are not there. In majority of the cases, construction works completed and in progress do not match with the cumulative targets. **The Committee would appreciate if exact status note is made available to it.**

2.11 Likewise, there is a big gap between teachers to be recruited and trained. Against overall target of 11,34,068, teachers recruited upto 31.12.2007 were 8,62,399, with maximum shortfall noticed in respect of Bihar, Chattishgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

2.12 The Committee is of the view that the slow pace of progress in providing basic infrastructure in the schools is a major problem area. The main goals of SSA can only be achievable if basic components like school building, additional classrooms, drinking water, toilet facilities, recruitment and training of teachers were in place as scheduled. These gaps under different components of SSA were being persistently pointed out by the Committee. With the availability of funds and effective monitoring mechanism reported to be in place, position should have improved by now. The Committee would again emphasize that the basic infrastructure as well as dedicated teachers are the deciding factors through which SSA goals and targets can be accomplished in time.

Quality in SSA

2.13 Last but not the least, the quality of elementary education being provided in the government and government-aided schools, let alone EGS/AIE centres, leaves much to be desired. In the absence of clearly identified verifiable indicators of quality, the quality of education could be judged mainly on the basis of the students learning achievement levels. As per the findings of the 2003-04 National Sample Survey by NCERT for class III which was carried out in 29 States, students in as many as 17 States scored below the mean achievement level in Mathematics and 13

States were lagging being in achievement in Language. For Class V covering 30 States/UTs, students of 17 and 15 States/UTs scored below the mean achievement levels in mathematics and languages respectively. Class VIII students of as many as 10 States (in mathematics), 11 States (in languages) and 10 States (in Science) scored below the mean achievement levels in a survey conducted across 17 States. Further, as per DISE 2006-07 figures, only 44.96% boys and 45.12 % girls could pass the class IV/V examinations with 60% and above marks. The figures for classes VII/VIII are 38.83% for boys and 40.06% for girls. Clearly, the achievement levels of students are far from being satisfactory.

2.14 The Committee is of the view that one of the reasons for the lack of quality education in the elementary schools is the teachers themselves not possessing the required academic qualifications. Committee's apprehensions are borne out by the DISE data of 2006-07, which showed that only 44.01% regular elementary school teachers possess qualification upto Higher Secondary level with some of the States having teachers with still lower qualifications. The Committee can only imagine about the status of teachers in EGS/AIE Centres.

2.15 The Committee expresses its grave concern on the aforesaid findings. At the current pace of progress being made towards the goal of universalisation of elementary education, the Committee has serious doubts about achieving the goals by the year 2010. The Committee, therefore, recommends to the Department to make a realistic assessment of the progress made *vis-a-vis* the targets on priority basis. Based on the findings of the assessment, the Department could consider redefining the goals/targets of the scheme in a realistic manner.

Funding Pattern

2.16 Sharing of funds under the programme of SSA was on an 85:15 basis during the Ninth Plan and 75:25 during the Tenth Plan between the Centre and the States. The envisaged 50:50 sharing arrangement after the Tenth Plan is proposed to be achieved in a phased manner during the Eleventh Plan. The Department proposes to bring down the Central share in phases, to 65:35 during the first two years (i.e, 2007-08 and 2008-09); 60:40 in the third year (i.e, 2009-10) ; 55:45 in the fourth year (i.e, 2010-11); and 50:50 thereafter i.e, from 2011-12 onwards.

2.17 The Committee was informed that the Working Group (XIth Plan) had confirmed that the States had demanded to continue the 75:25 sharing ratio. The Working Group also had recommended for acceptance of the demand of the States/UTs to continue the 75:25 sharing pattern in the XIth Plan also. Moreover, with the allocations of SSA increasing significantly every year and projected to increase further in coming years, it may be difficult for the States and UTs to spare 50% of the total SSA allocations. The Committee has been informed that all the States and UTs were now contributing their share regularly. It indicates their increasing commitment to SSA and its goals. **The Committee is happy to note this. On a note of caution, it however, would like to emphasize that inability of any State/UT to contribute the required share might hamper the achievements made under SSA. The Committee, therefore, feels that the sharing pattern suggested by the Working Group is worth considering.**

2.18 Impact assessment and evaluation of performance of schemes like SSA and MDM is mainly

dependent upon the quality of data collected from the field about their various dimensions. There have been different, if not contradictory, figures about various indicators collected by different sources. While data emanating from government sources present a better picture, those given by non-government sources reflect a different picture. Methodology, technique, etc. adopted by the agencies also make significant variations. Then, there is a problem of updation of data; we get data that are 3-4 years old. Mid corrections and future planning based on the old figures certainly would not be effective. The Committee found that the Selected Education Statistics which was released in 2007 contained data collected from the States/UTs during 2004-05.

2.19 To a query as to why these data were not updated, the Committee was informed that the collection of data being a huge administrative exercise, could be carried out once in every 2-3 years. The Department accepted the fact that there were differences in the statistics generated from different sources due to different methodologies followed by the surveying agencies in collection of data at the ground level. While the administrative mechanism collected data through the Village Level functionaries who would furnish information regarding the government/aided schools only, household surveys projected a different picture as they would involve all children, irrespective of the fact whether they were attending a government/aided school or a private school. The Department also accepted the fact that there was no mechanism to cross-check the information being furnished by the States in this regard.

2.20 The Committee finds that the achievements could be misleading as the data on which these calculations were based may not be the actual figures. The Committee is given to understand that the enrolment figures represent only the number of children whose names were entered in the school rolls. The number of students who are actually attending is lower. There is a trend in some States to cover almost all students through enrolment drives and indicate a very low figure of Out of School Children (OoSC). Further, both the District Information System of Education (DISE) and NCERT's All India Educational Survey (AIES) restrict themselves to collecting information about recognised schools, which means that data about a large number of private unrecognized schools is omitted.

2.21 The Committee expresses its concern about this aspect despite being aware of the dimension of this exercise and the practical problems/constraints faced in collection and updation of data from the States/UTs. The Committee is of the opinion that in view of the greater importance of readily available authentic and latest data, the data collection exercise needs to be made more scientific, objective and quick. In the age of ICT, it is possible to do that.

2.22 Committee's attention has been drawn by one of the recommendations made by the Joint Review Mission on the SSA (16-26 July, 2007) wherein it was suggested that steps be taken to reduce unnecessary data collection and burdensome form-filling by determining what was the minimum amount of data required from schools and with what frequency. The Committee hopes that necessary actions must have been taken in the matter.

Educational Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) under SSA

2.23 Under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), educational facilities are set up in habitations that do not have a primary school within a distance of one km. Any habitation having 25 out of school

children in the 6-14 age group (15 in the case of hilly and desert areas and tribal hamlets) is eligible to have an EGS centre. The EGS is a transitory facility till a primary school replaces it in two years. Formal curriculum is taught in EGS centres and all enrolled children are provided free textbooks and mid day meal. The EGS is managed by the local community bodies *viz.* Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Village Education Committee (VEC) or the Gram Panchayats. A local teacher is engaged by the community for teaching in such centres.

2.24 Under the AIE component, flexible strategies are being implemented for education of children who cannot be directly enrolled in a school/EGS centre. The strategies include residential and non-residential bridge courses, back to school camps, seasonal hostels, drop-in centres and other alternative schools. AIE has been more effective in providing education to the older age group (11-14 years) never enrolled or dropout children, children who migrate seasonally with their families, street and other deprived urban children, working children and other vulnerable children in difficult circumstances.

2.25 Till December 2007, 95493 EGS centres had been upgraded to primary schools. In 2007-08, 7.1 lakh children were enrolled in 18268 EGS centres till December, 2007. Another 29.26 lakh children had been enrolled in 58392 AIE centres till December, 2007. 3497 residential bridge course centres and 7367 centres for urban deprived children and for children belonging to migrating families had been provided upto December, 2007. **The Committee, however, notes that targets set for AIE coverage for 2006-07 remained unfulfilled. Against targetted 59,19,685 children to be covered under AIE Centres, only 30,32,943 children could be covered. Position remained unchanged during 2007-08 also. Against the target of 47,44,701 children to be brought under AIE centres, after first three quarters, achievement was only 29,26,619 children. The Committee understands that these children are from the 'very hard to reach' category. But the fact remains that in many States, there are large number of such children deprived of any education so far. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that the Department should make every endeavour to actively involve the concerned State Government to bridge such glaring gaps.**

2.26 **The Committee is aware of the need of EGS and AIE in our context and appreciates the upgradation of these to Primary Schools. Around 24 lakh children are still in this system. Our effort must be to phase out these centres at the earliest because after all these are not full-fledged schools. While EGS/AIE may be helpful in achieving universal access, their quality of education would not be at par with the formal schools.**

Girl's Education under SSA

2.27 SSA promotes girls education to equalise educational opportunities and eliminate gender disparities. SSA has made efforts to mainstream gender concerns in all the activities under the programme. A two pronged strategy adopted for the promotion of girls education is to make the education system responsive to the needs of girls on the one hand and to generate a community demand for girls education, on the other. A focused strategy has now been made in education planning to target low female literacy pockets and reduce gender disparity. Special effort is being made to bring the out-of-school girls, especially from the disadvantaged sections to the schools. Girls education is targetted through National Programme for Girls Education at Elementary Level and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV).

2.28 The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) was launched in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC's and Minorities in difficult areas in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where the female literacy is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is more than the national average. This scheme was merged with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2007.

2.29 As per information provided to the Committee, out of the 2180 KGBVs sanctioned in the country, only 1819 are functional upto March, 2008. About this big gap between KGBVs sanctioned and those functioning in States like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, delay in identification of agencies to run the schools and unavailability of land were cited as the main reasons. However, more worrisome fact as accepted by the Department is that some schools could not be made functional due to delay in identifying girl students. The Committee fails to understand our inability to identify girls for the schools - the very purpose for which these special schools are being set up.

2.30 The Committee is happy to note that the Department proposes to open 410 new KGBVs during 2008-09 in the areas where the female literacy rate is less than 30% in the rural blocks and 53.67% in the urban blocks. The Committee, therefore, recommends that all-out efforts be made not only for starting all the schools sanctioned at the earliest but also sanction more schools. There is a mismatch between the target and funds made available for this purpose. The Committee, therefore, recommends that allocation for this purpose would certainly be inadequate which must be enhanced suitably.

2.31 The Committee observes that the Scheme for Strengthening of Boarding and Hostel Facilities for Girl Students of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools was under implementation during the Tenth Plan period. Due to some inherent problems, the scheme could not be effectively implemented. The Scheme was got evaluated by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and a revamped Scheme is proposed to be launched during 2008-09. The Committee notes that out of Rs. 10.00 crores allocated for the Scheme for 2007-08, an expenditure of only Rs. 35.00 lakhs has been reported. Reason being the same as for the Tenth Plan that the Scheme was under revision. The Committee has been informed that around 250 girls hostels are targetted to be sanctioned with a proposed allocation of Rs.80.00 crore for 2008-09. In addition, around 150 Girls Hostels run by reputed NGOs are also proposed to be assisted. The Committee while appreciating this initiative is constrained to point out that the Scheme is yet to be approved by the competent authority. Department's clarification that the projected outcomes are highly tentative and its achievement will depend on the form in which the scheme is approved and the time the scheme is actually launched, confirms Committee's apprehension about the fate of this revised scheme. The Committee strongly feels that the scheme is already over delayed. Any further delay would defeat the very purpose of providing a much-needed facility to girl students. It is also convinced that allocation for this purpose would have to be enhanced.

2.32 The Committee does not find any gender segregated data particularly under the SSA, emphasis on girl education apart. If we exclude the girl-specific schemes like NPEGEL, KGBV schemes, it is not clear as to what percentage of expenditure is on the girls. Even in girl-specific

initiatives neither allocations are adequate nor are the expenditure upto the mark. The Committee, therefore, recommends that a status report showing, among other things, outlays and outcomes as also the percentage of expenditure on girls education from the total allocation to the Department and that of SSA expenditure be provided to the Committee.

Teachers Recruitment and Training

2.33 The cumulative target for recruitment of teachers under SSA (upto 2007-08) was 11,34,068 against which 8,62,399 teachers have been recruited till December, 2007. While the national average of teachers recruited so far works out to be more than 70%, the State-wise figures are not necessarily encouraging. The Committee is surprised to note that 6 States/UTs, Delhi, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Nagaland and Puducherry have been shown to have nil recruitments against the sanctioned posts.

2.34 The performance of the other States/Uts viz., Chandigarh (240 out of 785), Haryana (6074 out of 8090), Jammu & Kashmir (15660 out of 27559), Jharkhand (74054 out of 88157), Karnataka (15873 out of 22404), Madhya Pradesh (80316 out of 92715), Meghalaya (2500 out of 7077), Orissa (49875 out of 68724), Punjab (1868 out of 3091), Rajasthan (53459 out of 111132), Tamil Nadu (15985 out of 20542) and West Bengal (53962 out of 92681) also does not present a very encouraging picture.

2.35 The Committee is further informed that out of the total teachers in all government schools, 13% are Para teachers. The State-wise figures are, however, quite alarming. The percentage of Para teachers in Jammu & Kashmir (33.86), Jharkhand (41.27) and Uttar Pradesh (35.08) are, in fact, baffling. Irregularities being committed in certain States in engaging the para-teachers were brought to the notice of the Committee by some members. **The quality of education under SSA has been defined to be a thrust area for the XIth Plan. No matter what special interventions are devised to achieve this target, the absence of regular teachers is bound to hinder the implementation of the SSA. The Committee is of the view that to achieve this target, the Department should ensure that all existing vacancies of regular teachers are filled up at the earliest and the percentage of Para teachers be brought down to the minimum.**

2.36 Training of Teachers is another very crucial component of SSA. Overall targets and achievements for Teacher training for 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 are as follows:-

2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
1,64,490	47,976	4,07,381	2,63,942	2,32,886	1,52,642

2.37 The Committee is surprised to see that in respect of States/UTs like Chandigarh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttrakhand, no target for Teacher training was fixed during this period. What is more disturbing is the overall status of Teachers trained under SSA. Out of 35,39,559 Teachers targeted to be trained as on 2007-08, achievement upto 31st December, 2007 is reported to be only 19,14,575, i.e. 54.09 percent of the cumulative target. The Committee takes a serious

view of such a state of affairs. The Committee would only emphasize that there is an urgent need for providing the required training to maximum number of teachers. A fully trained teacher undeniably is the most crucial component for achieving the goal of providing quality education under SSA.

III. NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF MID-DAY MEAL IN SCHOOLS

3.1 The Mid Day Meal Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme which provided for hot cooked mid day meal with 450 calories and 12 grams of protein to all children studying in classes I-V in Government and aided schools and EGS/AIE Centres. From October, 2007, the scheme was extended to children in upper primary (classes VI-VIII) in 3479 Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs). It has now been extended to all the upper primary schools across the country from 2008-09. The calorific value of a mid-day meal at upper primary stage has been fixed at a minimum of 700 calories and 20 grams of protein by providing 150 grams of food grams (rice/wheat) per child/school day.

3.2 The salient features of the revised scheme, in addition to extension of the Scheme to upper primary stage, are:-

- (i) Including Inflation Adjusted Index (consumer Price Index) while assessing annual financial requirements towards Central Assistance for cooking costs every two years, beginning 2008-09 for mid day meal both for primary and upper primary stages.
- (ii) Modifying the existing system of payment of transportation subsidy to States/UTs from reimbursement to Grant-in-aid as in the case of other components of Central assistance under the Scheme.
- (iii) Incorporating Information, education and Communication (IEC) activities as a component of Management, Monitoring and Evaluation costs.

3.3 The Committee is happy to note that the Department has factored in inflation while assessing the central assistance towards cooking costs. The Committee also welcomes the initiative of the Department to henceforth provide Grant-in-aid for transportation expenses.

3.4 The Committee takes note of the fact that the Mid Day Meal Scheme has been extended to all the Upper Primary Schools across the country from 2008-09. The Committee would, however, like to point out that there may be areas, particularly tribal and remote areas, where only private schools are running. With only Government and Government-aided schools being covered under the Mid Day Meal Scheme, children residing in such areas and going to small private schools are being deprived for no fault of theirs. The Committee feels that this is an area of serious concern and needs to be taken care of. The Committee would like a viable proposal to be worked out for this purpose.

Provision of Kitchen-cum-Stores

3.5 Under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, central assistance to construct Kitchen-cum-Store in a phased

manner upto Rs. 60,000 per unit is admissible to the States. Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that out of 2,21,039 Kitchen-cum-Stores sanctioned upto 31st December 2007, only 25745 (12%) had been completed so far. In States like Bihar, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Punjab, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, construction of not even one Kitchen-cum-Store has been completed so far, inspite of Central funds being duly sanctioned and utilization position being more or less satisfactory. In other States like Chattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand, funds remained sanctioned on paper only as work had simply not started. The Committee, during its recent visit to various States/UTs found that in most of the schools, mid-day meal was being cooked either within the classroom or in temporary shelters in the open.

3.6 The Committee expresses its serious concern over these findings. The Committee recommends that every possible effort be made to encourage States/UTs to get and utilize funds for Kitchen-cum-Store in the shortest possible time.

3.7 The Committee's attention has also been drawn to the State-wise details of expenditure incurred on Transport subsidy under the Scheme. The details reveal that States/UTs like Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haweli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry failed to avail of this facility during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. In the absence of any further details in the matter, the Committee is unable to comprehend the reasons for non-utilisation of the subsidy. **The Committee would like the Department to give reasons State-wise, for the same.**

Lifting of foodgrains

3.8 Allocation and lifting of foodgrains by the States/UTs leaves significant gaps. Against a total allocation of 23.23 lakh MTs in 2007-08, foodgrains lifted upto 29th February, 2008 is 16.76 lakh MTs (72%). Except for Andhra Pradesh (104.16%) Nagaland (107.48) and Chandigarh (97.13%), all the other States/UTs are far behind their targets especially Bihar (45.29%), Haryana (55.70%) Dadra & Nagar Haweli (5.13%), Daman & Diu (17.88%) & Arunachal Pradesh (48.42%). **The Committee believes that there must be practical reasons behind States/UTs not lifting their share of foodgrains provided free of cost under the scheme. Quality of foodgrains being sub-standard, problem in transporting foodgrains from FCI outlets to the schools, pilferage and delay in release/receipt of central assistance have been reported to be some reasons behind this. The Committee recommends that Department must take up this issue with the concerned States/UTs and see to it the foodgrains were lifted regularly by them.**

3.9 The Committee during its visit to Lakshadweep was informed that there was no FCI godown in this UT; they have to lift grains from Mangalore. Cost norms for transportation cost does hardly cover the actual cost. As a result, UT is not lifting foodgrains. They had taken up this issue with the Government of India but to no avail. The Committee is quite convinced of their limitations in this regard and urges upon the Department to take up this issue with the concerned Ministry for providing FCI outlet in the UT at the earliest. The Committee would like to know the development in this regard in the Action-Taken Note.

Monitoring of MDM

3.10 The Committee is informed that the Department has prescribed a comprehensive and elaborate mechanism for monitoring and supervision of the Scheme. As per the Department, at the local level, monitoring is to be done by the representatives of Gram Panchayats/Gram Sabha, members of VECs, PTAs, as well as Mother's Committees. There is also a provision for quarterly inspection at the State level. The State Government is also required to submit periodic returns to the Department regarding carriage and progress in utilization of central assistance. Other than these, 41 Institutions of Social Science Research are also entrusted the task of monitoring the scheme.

3.11 Data collection, evaluation and monitoring are exercises that are inter-related yet different. The Committee has expressed its concern/opinion about the problem/issues involved in such activities in respect of SSA in paragraph 2.18 in this report. It applies *ipso facto* to MDM also.

3.12 The Committee would like to point out about the monitoring of the MDM particularly at school level. The scheme itself provides for a community monitoring by the Panchayats VECs, PTAs, Mothers' Groups, etc. The Committee has found during its visits to several States/UTs, and also the Members individually as peoples representatives from different parts, that the community participation/involvement in monitoring the MDM schemes remains a far cry. The kind of role visualized for them in the scheme does not exist in most of the States/UTs except few. So much so, even MPs & MLAs were also not being involved formally at least in the monitoring aspect. In one of the UTs visited by the Committee, the only local Lok Sabha Member complained that he was not at all consulted or involved in these exercises.

3.13 The Committee is of the considered opinion that MDM could be made more attractive and effective simply by activating the local community for this purpose; it would not only ensure hygiene and quality of food but also in reducing teacher absenteeism, improving quality of teaching-learning, pupil evaluation, etc. Some States/regions have adopted good practices in these respects which need to be propagated to all the States/UTs for adoption with suitable modifications wherever required.

3.14 The Department had informed the Committee in 2007-08 about a study being conducted by the Planning Commission with regard to monitoring of the scheme as well as identifying and rectifying the possible areas that hinder the implementation of the scheme at the ground level. The Committee is, however, disappointed to note that the study has still not been completed. **The Committee recommends that the study may be expedited so as to enable the Centre and the States/UTs to take remedial steps to plug the loopholes in the existing monitoring mechanism.**

3.15 The Committee has been informed that two per cent of the cost of foodgrains, transportation of food grains and cooking cost is made available for Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME). Out of this amount, 1.8% is released as MME component to the States/UTs, and 0.2% is used by the Central Government towards MME. States/UTs are required to utilize MME Funds towards School level expenses, including forms and stationery, weighing machines, Height Recorders and replacement/management, supervision, training and internal/external evaluation. The Committee notes that Rs. 40.31 crores, Rs. 39.12 crores and Rs. 69.80 crores have been released for MME purposes in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 respectively, with Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan,

Karnataka, Assam and West Bengal being the major beneficiaries. The Committee finds that Central assistance is also being given for procurement of Kitchen devices. Out of Rs. 254.65 crores released upto 31.08.2007, 45% expenditure has been reported. **The Committee fails to understand the basis for inclusion of component of replacement of cooking devices, utensils under MME with separate funds earmarked for their procurement and being duly released. The Committee would also like to have an idea about component-wise utilisation status of MME funds by the States/UTs.**

IV. RESTRUCTURING & REORGANIZATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION

4.1 As envisaged in the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and its Programme of Action (PAO), the Centrally-sponsored Scheme of Restructuring & Reorganization of Teacher Education was launched in the year 1987 with an aim to create a sound institutional infrastructure of pre-service and in-service training of elementary and secondary school teachers and for provision of academic resource support to elementary and secondary schools.

4.2 Under this scheme, Central assistance is provided to the States for:-

- (i) Setting up District Institutes of Education & Training (DIETs) for elementary teachers;
- (ii) Strengthening of Secondary Teachers Education Institutions into Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs); and
- (iii) Strengthening of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs).

In addition to the above, central assistance is also extended to the States/UTs for civil works, purchase of computers, pay & allowances, training and research programmes, etc.

4.3 The Committee notes that an allocation of Rs. 450 crores made for the scheme at the BE stage in 2007-08 was subsequently reduced to Rs. 266.65 crores at the RE stage. The scheme has again been granted a BE allocation of Rs. 450 crores in 2008-09. **The Committee hopes that the entire allocation will be utilised for the scheme during this fiscal.**

4.4 The Committee has pointed out in the past also about the problems of delays in civil construction, transfer of land and shortage of teaching/non-teaching staff under these schemes in the institutions at different levels.

4.5 The Department clarified that under this scheme, it provides *inter alia* financial assistance to the States/UTs for the DIETs, CTEs, IASEs which are sanctioned by the Central Government. For starting new institutions, the States/UTs are required to submit a detailed proposal to the Ministry, containing the cost estimates, etc. These are then considered for appropriate sanctions which are subsequently released to the respective States/UTs. It was also submitted that Department was aware of the fact that delays have taken place in operationalization of these institutions and have constantly taken up the matter with the respective States to expedite the work process. Apart from delays involved in acquisition of land for these institutions, an important factor has been the non-release of funds by the State Governments to the PWD authorities, etc.

4.6 The Committee emphasizes the need to sensitize the State Governments to ensure that budgetary provision of the central assistance was made in the State's budget; and that urgent steps were taken to expedite availability of land for these institutions. As regards the large number of vacancies, particularly of academic staff in the DIETs, the Department must periodically review the vacancy position and ask the respective States/UTs to fill up the vacancies at the earliest. Further, while granting central assistance to these DIETs, the level of filled up posts may be linked with the amount of release.

4.7 The Committee has been informed that a Sub-Group on Teacher Education for the XIth Plan had submitted its Report in December, 2006. A number of far-reaching recommendations were made by the Sub-Group, based on which a Memorandum for Reorganization and Restructuring of the Teacher Education Scheme for the Eleventh Plan was prepared by the Department. However, the EFC while considering the Memorandum, recommended comprehensive evaluation of the scheme within a period of one year. Till such evaluation, the existing scheme was to continue. The Committee notes that the Department has initiated the exercise of comprehensive evaluation of the scheme. The Committee fails to understand the basis for going for another review in spite of comprehensive evaluation undertaken by a Sub-Group of Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Director, NCERT. One of the many recommendations of the Sub-Group was to strengthen the existing structure such as the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), SCERTs, IASEs, CTEs, DIETs etc., and wherever considered necessary, be expanded. The Committee has however also been informed that a Review Committee of the Department has recommended the repeal of the National Council for Teacher Education ACT, 1993 and to vest all regulatory functions relating to Teacher Education and Teacher Education Institutions for all stages of teacher education in the University System.

4.8 The Committee is not aware about the position taken by the Department on the contradictory recommendations made by the two different Committees about the future of NCTE. The Committee would like to know the clear position taken by the Department in this regard. The Committee would also like to emphasize that Teacher Education needs to be given proper focus and timely action. Nobody can deny the fact that teacher training in the right perspective is one of the most crucial component for providing quality education to our children. Further delay due to reviews, counter-reviews will prove to have a negative impact only.

4.9 Due to shortage of trained teachers, particularly in case of B.Ed. and M.Ed., instances of one teacher being showed on the rolls by different institutions of Teacher Education with a view to fulfill requirement laid down by NCTE, lest they should lose their recognition, have come to the notice of the Committee. This practice is reported to have become rampant particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. The idea of allotting an identification number to every education degree holder and by putting those numbers on the website of NCTE so that anybody was able to cross check this kind of duplication can perhaps tackle this problem area. The Committee would like the Department to consider this idea and present its views for the perusal of the Committee.

4.10 Besides, there has been a long standing demand for making 'Education' as a subject in the competitive exams, held in the country. The Committee would like the Department to take up with the concerned quarters and furnish its considered opinion on this aspect to the Committee.

V. KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN

5.1 Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was set up in 1965, as a registered body, wholly financed by the Government to establish, control and manage Kendriya Vidyalayas. The main objective of the KVs is to meet the educational needs of the children of transferable Central Government employees.

5.2 There are presently 979 Kendriya Vidyalayas including three abroad (Kathmandu, Moscow & Tehran). Out of these 979 KVs, 351 are in the Defence Sector, 500 in Civil, 18 in Institutions of Higher learning and 110 in Project sector.

5.3 During the year 2008-09, a total allocation of Rs. 1049 crores (including Rs. 30 crores for the NER) has been provided to the Sangathan. This includes a plan allocation of Rs. 300 crores (Rs. 30 crore for the NER) and non-plan allocation of Rs.749 crores.

5.4 The Committee's attention has been drawn to the fact that a total number of 4850 posts (4094 teaching + 756 non-teaching) in the Kendriya Vidyalayas are lying vacant as on 01.02.2008 due to recruitment, resignation, death, termination of service, non-joining on promotion/direct recruitment, voluntary retirement and new sanction of posts. On enquiry, the Committee was informed that advertisements for the posts have been made and DPC meetings were also being conducted to fill these posts.

5.5 The Committee does not accept the reply of the Sangathan. It is of the opinion that except for the vacancies arising out of death, resignation and termination of services, all other vacancies could be anticipated well in advance and hence there is no reason as to why the Sangathan cannot initiate the process of recruitment for all other posts well in advance. The very fact that such large number of vacancies exist is a pointer to the Sangathan not being able to take action in time. The Committee, therefore, recommends the Sangathan to streamline its recruitment procedures at the earliest and complete the recruitment of posts at the earliest. Efforts should be to ensure that vacancies, as and when they arise, are filled up within the shortest possible time.

5.6 The Committee has been informed that a large number of ad-hoc/part-time teachers were being engaged at the school level to make up for the shortages of teaching staff. Every possible attempt should be made to fill up the vacancies by regular teachers and the role of ad-hoc/part-time teachers should be temporary only as a stop-gap arrangement.

5.7 It was brought to the notice of the Committee that the Action Taken Note on audit para 8.4 of Report No. 3 of 2006 regarding idling of investment due to deviation from MOU was being prepared in consultation with KVS. On enquiring, the Committee was informed the ATN on Audit para 8.4 had thrice been sent to the DGACR but it was returned back every time with some objections. The Department is now again revising the ATN as per the DGACR comments. **The Committee is surprised as to why the Department was not able to come up with the required ATN in one go.**

5.8 As regards the issue of Special Dispensation coupons for admission in KVs for the Members of Lok Sabha who do not have a KV in their constituency, the Department could not give a convincing

reply. **The Committee feels that this issue should be resolved without further delay and the Committee be informed accordingly.**

5.9 The Committee had also been informed of difficulties being faced by the teachers/Staff in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Goa on account of exorbitant charges for electricity & water by the Defence authorities. The Committee had directed the Department to look into the matter and report back to the Committee. However, even after a lapse of 9 months, the Committee is yet to receive the report from the Department. On enquiring, the Committee has learnt that the Department had taken up the matter with the Defence Ministry. The report from the Defence Ministry is however still awaited.

5.10 The Committee expresses its displeasure at the callous attitude with which this case has been taken. Even after taking up this issue persistently for nine months, the Committee is yet to receive a response. The Department appears to be helpless because Ministry of Defence, which has to take a decision in the matter, is not responding to its repeated requests. The Committee directs the Department to take up the issue with the Ministry of Defence again and if no response is received in a reasonable time, the Committee would decide about taking appropriate steps that may be available to it.

VI. NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA SAMITI

6.1 In pursuance of NPE-1986 (as modified in 1992) on setting up of pace setting residential schools where good quality education could be imparted to the talented children in rural areas, a Central Scheme was launched by the Government of India in 1986 to set up Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) in each district of the country. These JNVs are run by an autonomous organization, the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) established in 1986 under Registration of Societies Act, 1860.

6.2 In keeping with the objectives of providing a forward looking school system in rural areas, reservation of 75 per cent seats are made to students belonging to rural areas. Similarly, the scheme also provides a proportionate representation of SC/ST population subject to minimum national average. In addition to this, 33 percent of the seats are reserved for girl students. In total 1,96388 students were on the rolls of Navodaya Vidyalayas as on 30th September, 2007.

6.3 The percentage of students belonging to SC/ST categories, girls and rural areas in the Navodaya Vidyalaya has been found to be above national norms (15 per cent SC and 7.5 per cent ST) (as on 30.9.2007) as given below:

	GIRLS	RURAL	SC	ST
NUMBER	69695	151776	54992	29291
AGE%	35.49	77.28	28.00	14.91

6.4 During the year 2008-09, a total allocation of Rs. 904.25 crores (including NER) has been provided to the Samiti. The plan allocation is Rs. 700 crores (includes Rs. 70 crores for NER) and non-plan allocation is Rs. 204.25 crores.

6.5 The Committee was informed that 574 JNVs have so far been sanctioned and 554 of them are

functional. Further, out of these 554 JNVs, construction activities under Phase-A have been sanctioned in respect of 551 schools, out of which construction of Phase-A have been completed in respect of 419 JNVs and work is in progress in 132 JNVs. Thus, out of a total of 574 JNVs, construction activities of 23 JNVs have not been sanctioned due to non-availability of land from the State Government/District Administration. **The Committee has time and again been urging the Department to sort out the problem of acquisition of land in operationalisation of JNVs. It however feels that not much headway appears to have been made in this regard. As per the latest information made available to the Committee, there are 75 JNVs where land has not yet been formally transferred by the State Government in the name of the Samiti. The Committee finds that 41 Vidyalayas are functional from temporary site, quite a few for considerable period. Residential schools functioning from temporary sites for years cannot be considered an ideal position. The Committee reiterates its recommendations and urges upon the Department to find a way out of this problem. It must take up this issue with State Governments and ensure that the 23 non-functional JNVs are operationalised at the earliest.**

6.6 The Committee has been informed that the establishment of Special Navodaya Vidyalayas for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes it being dealt with by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Committee notes that the Department of School Education and Literacy is in favour of an inclusive strategy rather than having separate Vidyalayas for SC/ST students. At present, SC and ST representation in all JNVs in the country is to the extent of 24.64% and 15.74% respectively. Therefore, a better option would be to consider opening more JNVs in districts having SC/ST concentration with reservation for SC/ST to the extent of their proportion of the populations in the district. In the interest of better co-ordination and management, the Committee is inclined to agree with the contention of the Department.

6.7 Another issue of concern for the Committee is the shortage of teaching and non-teaching staff in the JNVs. As per information provided by the Department, the position as on 31.12.2007 is as under:-

	Sanctioned	In Position	Vacant
(A) Teaching			
i) PGTs	3476	2943	533
ii) TGTs	4740	4045	695
iii) Misc.	2562	2473	89
Teachers			
Total	10778	9461	1317
(B) Non-Teaching	8574	6993	1581

6.8 The Committee fails to find convincing reason for having such a large number of vacancies in JNVs. It believes that these vacancies must have accumulated over a period of time. Reason why these vacancies have accumulated is a matter that needs to be examined. The Committee is of the opinion that in case of most of the vacancies, except for a few which may have arisen on account of death, resignation, termination of services etc, recruitment processes could have initiated well in advance. Large number of vacancies in teaching posts that too for a long time directly tells upon the academic performance of the students. The Committee does not know how the teaching is being

managed by the schools in which there are vacancies. The Committee recommends that recruitment processes be structured in such a manner that vacancies do not get accumulated and are filled up as and when they arise in the shortest possible time.

6.9 Apart from gap in operationalisation and existence of large number of vacancies, other cause for concern is reported shortfall in the enrollment of new students as well as seats remaining vacant in higher classes. The Committee views it seriously and would like to know the reasons for this and corrective measures taken to see that seats do not go vacant in these schools for which lot of money is being spent. Plan allocation for JNVs is more than double of the plan allocation for KVs, particularly when number of KVs is almost double of the number of JNVs. Of Rs. 860 crores given at RE in 2007-08 to JNVs, only Rs. 532.50 crores could be utilized upto December, 2007. The Committee in its report on the working of JNVs has given a number of suggestions for improving the situation. It only hopes that these were being implemented.

VII. INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOL

7.1 The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Information and Communication Technology in Schools was introduced in 2005-06 by merging the existing schemes of Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools (CLASS) and Educational Technology (ET) with a view to promote computerisation in the Government and Government aided Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools with particular emphasis on rural sector to bridge the digital divide between the rural and urban areas.

7.2 Under the Scheme, Union Government provides 75% financial assistance to States/UTs and the balance 25% is contributed by the respective States/UTs. The Scheme also has a provision for contribution of 25% of funds from the MPLAD Scheme in addition or as an alternative to State Government contribution. Assistance to the Special Category States is, however, in the ratio of 90:10.

7.3 The Committee notes that in the year 2007-08, 22833 schools were covered under the scheme. On perusal of the State-wise details, it was, however, found that the spread of the Scheme in different States was quite uneven. Further, while the total amount of assistance approved (both Centre and State share) was Rs. 53792.40 lakhs, less than 50% of the funds were released upto February, 2008. The Committee found that in as many as 10 States/UTs, no funds had been released during 2007-08 due to the pendency of UC of the previous project. This is a worrying trend. The Committee is aware of the fact that the Scheme is being reviewed for better implementation in the XIth Plan. The Committee hopes that the Department will factor - in these problems, especially regarding pendency of UCs, while finalizing and approving the news scheme.

7.4 The Committee finds that out of 1,07,112 Secondary Schools targetted to be covered under the ICT Scheme, only 1967 and 719 Schools could be covered during 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively. Status of 22,633 Schools Sanctioned during 2007-08 is not known. The Committee understands that States have been advised to implement the scheme in at least 2 schools in each Educationally Backward Block in each State. Availability of electricity is one of the major problems identified in the successful implementation of the Scheme. The Committee would like to emphasize that every effort should be made for availability of electricity during school hours where computer labs have already been set up/likely to be set up in the near future. The

Committee would appreciate if monitoring of this aspect is regularly carried otherwise the very purpose of this scheme would be defeated.

7.5 The Committee was also informed that the revised scheme if implemented in the current fiscal would require an allocation of around Rs.1600 crores. It was further informed that to even implement the programme in its present form, the Department would need at least Rs. 800 crores during 2008-09.

7.6 The Committee is of the view that a forward-looking scheme like ICT @ school should not face constraint of funds. Any compromise in this regard, the Committee believes, will impact adversely the consolidation of the edge that India enjoys in the field of IT in the global scenario. The Committee recommends that more funds be provided to the scheme during 2008-09.

VIII. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT +2 LEVEL

8.1 As envisaged in the NEP, 1986, vocationalisation of secondary education provides for diversification of educational opportunities so as to enhance individual employability, reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled manpower and to provide an alternative for those pursuing higher education. Under the scheme, job oriented courses at +2 level are being provided in the areas of Agriculture, Business & Commerce, Engineering and technology, Home Science, Health and Paramedical, Social Sciences, Humanities etc.

8.2 The Committee was informed that a sum of Rs. 764.90 crores has been spent so far on the scheme since its inception in 1987-88. Till date, around 6000 institutions at plus two stage of education have introduced the programme. Around 150 vocational courses are offered in these schools with an intake capacity of around 10 lakh student per year.

8.3 The Committee notes that plan allocation (BE) of Rs. 18 crores in 2007-08 was drastically reduced to Rs. 1 crore at the RE Stage. On enquiring about the reason, the Committee was informed that the scheme was being revised and hence no allocation could be utilized during 2007-08. The Scheme is still under revision but an allocation of Rs. 33 crores has been provided in the BE for the year 2008-09 in anticipation that revised scheme would be launched.

8.4 On enquiring about the need for the revision, the Committee was informed that the big gap existing between supply and demand due to the changing nature of the Indian economy and skill requirement has primarily necessitated the revision. Besides, several Reports and Evaluation studies over the years had identified several shortcomings in the existing scheme which needed to be redressed.

8.5 The Committee is also aware of the fact that the Task Force on Skill Development has since submitted its Report. The Task Force in its Report has also accepted the fact that there has to be a paradigm shift in the national policy on skill development. The Task Force has laid emphasis on a shift from a supply to a demand driven policy.

8.6 About the need to promote vocationalisation of education, this Committee has also made number of observations expressing its concern about the manner in which it was being

implemented. Vocational streams in schools/colleges did not attract students and there were no adequate infrastructure available including the trained teachers. A more focussed approach was suggested by the Committee, particularly in engaging local entrepreneurs in developing an interface with them so that they could get trained manpower that they need and students their employment. The Committee is happy to know that the scheme for skill development is being revamped. It only hopes that revised scheme would take care of all the problems that plagued the earlier schemes. The Committee emphasizes the need for finalizing the revised scheme this year only.

IX. NEW INITIATIVES UNDER THE SECONDARY EDUCATION

9.1 Secondary education has been given added importance during the 11th Five Year Plan and a number of new schemes as well as the revamping of existing schemes are under way. Allocation for secondary education in 2008-09 is Rs. 2918.70 crores more than the allocation for the year 2007-2008. The general objective is to universalize the secondary education by 2015 by providing a secondary school within five to seven kilometers of every habitation. It has been proposed to increase the GER at secondary level to 75% by 2012 and 100% by the end of 2015. For achieving these goals, a new scheme named SUCCESS is being proposed to be launched during 2008-09 that will be basically on the lines of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. It is also being proposed to open 6000 model schools in educationally backward blocks to set standards of excellence for others. This scheme is also proposed to be launched during 2008-09 with the help of KVS, NVS, State Governments and under PPP. Besides, the existing schemes of IEDC for differently abled children and ICT in schools are also being revamped. A new scheme, for providing girls hostel at secondary level is also being launched.

9.2 The Committee is happy to note that the secondary education has begun to receive focused attention that was long overdue, because only 10% of our secondary passouts were going for the higher education so far. The interventions proposed in the SUCCESS scheme are more or less on the lines of those of the SSA and are proposed to be implemented with the help of the State Governments and Union Territories. The Committee advises the Department that while finalizing/implementing the scheme, the problems and shortcomings noticed in the implementation of SSA, such as delay in timely receipt of complete and viable proposals from State Governments, non-availability of land, financial constraints in the States, delay in recruitment and training of teachers, lack of adequate and effective monitoring, etc., should be kept in mind. The Committee would like to point out that Rs. 1305.00 crores allocated in 2007-08 primarily meant for preparatory activities by the State Governments remained unutilized for want of approval of the Scheme from the Competent Authority. The Committee recommends that the duly approved Scheme be launched in 2008-09 as pressure on secondary education is bound to increase due to emphasis on elementary education.

9.3 As regards the existing schemes like the Scheme for Integrated Education for the Disabled Children that is under revision, the Committee has expressed its concern in its previous reports about its slow implementation as well as lack of visible impact. The Committee notes that the process of revision of this scheme is still continuing in spite of the announcement of a National Action Plan for the Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities in March, 2005. The Committee observes that the revised Scheme replacing the existing IEDC Scheme was to be

launched during 2007-08. However, the revised scheme is yet to get the approval of the Planning Commission before being sent to the Cabinet. The Committee can only hope that all these formalities will be completed at the earliest and the revised scheme is launched in 2008-09 itself.

9.4 Provision of Rs. 650.00 crore has been made for 2008-09 for setting up of 6000 Model Schools at the rate of one school in each Block throughout the country to set standards of excellence for others in the area. Out of 6000 model schools, 3500 will be in Government Sector-500KVs, 500 NVs and 2500 KV- template Schools in Educationally Backward Blocks to be run by State Governments. The remaining 2500 model schools are proposed to be set up in public-private partnership mode. The Committee notes that the draft EFC memo has been circulated and subject to requisite approval, the scheme is to be made operational in 2008-09 itself, with 500 such schools to be sanctioned in the first year. The Committee observes that the 2500 schools under PPP mode will be set up in Hqrs. of Blocks other than Educationally Backward Blocks. The private partners will have to bear the entire Capital Cost initially, with percentage of cost of construction to be borne by the Centre/State Governments afterwards. Only some percentage of seats will be reserved for sponsorship by State Governments and the remaining will be management quota.

9.5 The Committee does not agree with the proposals outlined to set up the model schools particularly through the public-private partnership mode. The Committee is in favour of setting up these schools under government support and control.

X. BAL KENDRA STAFF

10.1 It was brought to the notice of the Committee that a large number of instructors are working in the Bal Bhawan on part-time basis since 1980 and they are being paid a paltry sum that was decided initially. The amount being paid to them has not been revised thereafter. Their demand in this regard, the Committee has learnt, has not been considered/acceded to by the Ministry. **The Committee is surprised to see that the part-time instructors working in the Bal Bhawan are being paid the same salaries that was fixed twenty seven years ago, whereas in the meantime, salaries ,etc. have been increased in the case of other Central employees at least twice. The Committee feels that there is a strong case for revising the amount being paid to them suitably on the basis of existing rate of inflation.**

XI. ADULT EDUCATION

11.1 **Adult education schemes are meant for imparting functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years, for which a National Literacy Mission was launched in 1988. Over the years, the Committee notes, the literacy rate has shown substantial improvement. Nearly 124 million persons have been made literate under various schemes. Today, we have literacy rate at 65% (male literacy 75.26% and female literacy 53.67%), gender gap 21.59%, SC literacy 54.69% and ST literacy 47.10%. Although the Committee appreciates the significant improvements reported on all these counts, it however, feels that the gaps in all these respects are still on the higher side. For example, we have still 304 million non-literates in the country, around 47% female are still illiterate and around 50% of SC and ST population in the reference age group remain illiterate. It is thus clear that our efforts and resources in the adult education sector have**

not had the desired results. Not only in respect of functional literacy, our achievements in respect of vocational education particularly, among the rural youth, has also not been properly focused and emphasized. We have been able to set up the Jan Shikshan Sansathans to conduct vocational training for the neo literates only in 221 districts, out of more than 600 districts in the country. Similarly, large number of districts are yet to have Districts Resource Centres/Zila Saksharata Samitis – important bodies for implementing adult education programmes. State Liaison calls are also not in place in every State. The Committee is happy to note that there is a visible shift in this respect as the Government has decided to revamp the existing scheme laying special emphasis on the skill development and has also increased the allocations by Rs. 200 crores in the 2008-09 as compared to the year 2007-08.

11.2 The Committee is also happy to note that an additional intervention from the year 2008-09 has been started for the persons in the 35+ age group who were hitherto left out. Rs. 15 crores has been earmarked for this purpose. The Committee feels that this allocation would be sufficient to take care of only small section of this age group that constitutes 160 million persons in the country as per the Census 2001. This number might have, in fact, gone further up by now.

XII. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 A number of schemes are being administered by the Department having far-reaching impact in the Education Sector. The Committee notes that general awareness about these schemes, eligibility norms, their implementing agencies, etc., is not there. **The Committee is of the view that such information should be available on the website of the Department. The Committee would also appreciate if a pamphlet in English and Hindi and also Regional languages giving details of these Schemes in a simple form is got published by the Department. Such a move would prove useful for all concerned, both beneficiaries and implementing agencies.**

RECOMMENDATION/OBSERVATION AT A GLANCE

I. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

1.3 The Committee would, however, like to point out that out of Rs. 13,100 crore allocated for SSA in 2008-09, Rs. 7690.00 crores is proposed to be met from the amount generated as Education Cess under the Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh against the contribution of Rs. 6993.00 crore as Education Cess in 2007-08. Similarly, under MDM Scheme, out of Rs. 8000.00 crore allocated for 2008-09, Rs. 5127.00 crore is envisaged from the Education Cess, as compared to contribution of Rs. 3400.00 crore from Education Cess in 2007-08. Thus, it is evident that direct funding by the Central Government to its two flagship Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and MDM was, in fact, declining as there was simultaneous increase in the amount accruing from Educational Cess that goes to Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh.

1.4 The Committee welcomes the extension of MDM to upper primary level and launching of new schemes for girls' and also for 35+ persons.

Under-utilization of Funds

1.5 Such under-utilization in the case of SSA & MDM during 2007-08 notwithstanding, the Committee notes improvement in the rate of increase in the utilization of allocations as compared to the previous years. The Committee recommends that every possible effort should be made for narrowing this gap in the utilisation of allocated funds to the maximum possible extent.

Pending Utilisation Certificates (UCs)

1.6 The Committee feels concerned about a large amount of funds being cornered by these bodies and no efforts being made to get the money back from them. The only action taken against the erring NGOs is to blacklist them. The Committee recommends that every effort be made to bring them to book and such NGOs be proceeded against under the Indian Penal Code.

II. SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Achievements under SSA

2.3 The Committee is fully aware of the various limitations in the gigantic task of universalisation of elementary education (UEE) in a vast country like ours particularly, through the schemes like SSA and MDM. It appreciates the efforts made in trying to achieve various goals set in this regard and the Committee takes note of some improvements in respect of various dimensions/indicators towards reaching the goal of UEE. It, however, feels its duty to point out the areas of concern with a view to making mid way corrections and making assiduous efforts for achieving our goal in time.

Goals of SSA

2.5 The Committee notes that the first goal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to bring all children to schools, Education Guarantee Centres, Alternate Schools, 'Back-to-School' camps by 2005 has been long overdue. As per District Information System for Education (DISE) 2006-07 figures, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at the primary level and the Upper Primary level stands at 92.75 and 48.45 respectively. Further, as per the Department's estimate, around 75.97 lakh children in the age group of 6-14 do not attend any form of schooling. Maximum concentration of such children is reported to be in Bihar (28%) followed by West Bengal (18%) and Uttar Pradesh (10%). Even after three years since 2005, the goal of achieving universal enrolment remains yet to be achieved.

2.6 As regards bridging gender and social gaps at primary level by 2007 and upper primary level by 2010, the situation is no better. As per the target, we should have by now been able to bridge the gender and social gaps at primary level. However, DISE 2006-07 statistics puts the Gender Parity Index in enrolment at 0.93 for the primary level. On the social front, percentage of enrolment at elementary level is 19.87 for SCs and 10.69 for STs. For OBCs, it is 42.18 % at the primary level and 41.23 % at the upper primary level. Going at this pace, it is highly unlikely that the goal of bridging gender and social gaps in elementary education can be achieved by the year 2010.

2.7 The goal of Universal Retention by 2010 also, it appears, would remain unfulfilled. The

drop-outs rate of primary level in the Class I-V group has, no doubt, decreased from 39% in 2001 to 29% in 2004-05; it still might be about 20%. State-wise figures, however, indicate extreme disparities in this respect. There are ten States having a dropout rate exceeding 40%. In contrast Delhi, Puducherry and Kerala show 0% dropout rate, followed by six States having less than 5% dropout rate. This rate was more than 60% at upper primary and secondary levels in 2004-05. Going at this rate, the target of universal retention by 2010 appears difficult to reach.

2.8 For girls, the dropout rate has remained around 25.4% in 2005. Similarly, SC and ST student dropout rates have been 34.2% and 42.3% respectively. And if drop-out rate is taken as total for class I to VIII, it was around 50% in the year 2004-05. Comparative analysis of State-wise achievement level points out to another disturbing trend. In respect of quite a few States, dropout rate shows an upward trend during the period 2002-05. Not only this, in respect of some States, whereas enrolment ratio continues to be much below the national ratio, drop-out rate is considerably higher than the average rate. Thus, the Committee feels that the target of the Universal Retention by the year 2010 also would be difficult to reach.

2.10 The Committee would appreciate if exact status note is made available to it.

2.12 The Committee is of the view that the slow pace of progress in providing basic infrastructure in the schools is a major problem area. The main goals of SSA can only be achievable if basic components like school building, additional classrooms, drinking water, toilet facilities, recruitment and training of teachers were in place as scheduled. These gaps under different components of SSA were being persistently pointed out by the Committee. With the availability of funds and effective monitoring mechanism reported to be in place, position should have improved by now. The Committee would again emphasize that the basic infrastructure as well as dedicated teachers are the deciding factors through which SSA goals and targets can be accomplished in time.

Quality in SSA

2.13 Last but not the least, the quality of elementary education being provided in the government and government-aided schools, let alone EGS/AIE centres, leaves much to be desired. In the absence of clearly identified verifiable indicators of quality, the quality of education could be judged mainly on the basis of the students learning achievement levels. As per the findings of the 2003-04 National Sample Survey by NCERT for class III which was carried out in 29 States, students in as many as 17 States scored below the mean achievement level in Mathematics and 13 States were lagging being in achievement in Language. For Class V covering 30 States/UTs, students of 17 and 15 States/UTs scored below the mean achievement levels in mathematics and languages respectively. Class VIII students of as many as 10 States (in mathematics), 11 States (in languages) and 10 States (in Science) scored below the mean achievement levels in a survey conducted across 17 States. Further, as per DISE 2006-07 figures, only 44.96% boys and 45.12 % girls could pass the class IV/V examinations with 60% and above marks. The figures for classes VII/VIII are 38.83% for boys and 40.06% for girls. Clearly, the achievement levels of students are far from being satisfactory.

2.14 The Committee is of the view that one of the reasons for the lack of quality education in the elementary schools is the teachers themselves not possessing the required academic qualifications. Committee's apprehensions are borne out by the DISE data of 2006-07, which showed that only 44.01% regular elementary school teachers possess qualification upto Higher Secondary level with some of the States having teachers with still lower qualifications. The Committee can only imagine about the status of teachers in EGS/AIE Centres.

2.15 The Committee expresses its grave concern on the aforesaid findings. At the current pace of progress being made towards the goal of universalisation of elementary education, the Committee has serious doubts about achieving the goals by the year 2010. The Committee, therefore, recommends to the Department to make a realistic assessment of the progress made *vis-a-vis* the targets on priority basis. Based on the findings of the assessment, the Department could consider redefining the goals/targets of the scheme in a realistic manner.

Funding Pattern

2.17 The Committee was informed that the Working Group (XIth Plan) had confirmed that the States had demanded to continue the 75:25 sharing ratio. The Working Group also had recommended for acceptance of the demand of the States/UTs to continue the 75:25 sharing pattern in the XIth Plan also. Moreover, with the allocations of SSA increasing significantly every year and projected to increase further in coming years, it may be difficult for the States and UTs to spare 50% of the total SSA allocations. The Committee has been informed that all the States and UTs were now contributing their share regularly. It indicates their increasing commitment to SSA and its goals. **The Committee is happy to note this. On a note of caution, it however, would like to emphasize that inability of any State/UT to contribute the required share might hamper the achievements made under SSA. The Committee, therefore, feels that the sharing pattern suggested by the Working Group is worth considering.**

2.18 Impact assessment and evaluation of performance of schemes like SSA and MDM is mainly dependent upon the quality of data collected from the field about their various dimensions. There have been different, if not contradictory, figures about various indicators collected by different sources. While data emanating from government sources present a better picture, those given by non-government sources reflect a different picture. Methodology, technique, etc. adopted by the agencies also make significant variations. Then, there is a problem of updation of data; we get data that are 3-4 years old. Mid corrections and future planning based on the old figures certainly would not be effective. The Committee found that the Selected Education Statistics which was released in 2007 contained data collected from the States/UTs during 2004-05.

2.20 The Committee finds that the achievements could be misleading as the data on which these calculations were based may not be the actual figures. The Committee is given to understand that the enrolment figures represent only the number of children whose names were entered in the school rolls. The number of students who are actually attending is lower. There is a trend in some States to cover almost all students through enrolment drives and indicate a very low figure of Out of School Children (OoSC). Further, both the District Information System of Education (DISE) and NCERT's All India Educational Survey (AIES) restrict themselves to collecting information

about recognised schools, which means that data about a large number of private unrecognized schools is omitted.

2.21 The Committee expresses its concern about this aspect despite being aware of the dimension of this exercise and the practical problems/constraints faced in collection and updation of data from the States/UTs. The Committee is of the opinion that in view of the greater importance of readily available authentic and latest data, the data collection exercise needs to be made more scientific, objective and quick. In the age of ICT, it is possible to do that.

2.22 Committee's attention has been drawn by one of the recommendations made by the Joint Review Mission on the SSA (16-26 July, 2007) wherein it was suggested that steps be taken to reduce unnecessary data collection and burdensome form-filling by determining what was the minimum amount of data required from schools and with what frequency. The Committee hopes that necessary actions must have been taken in the matter.

Educational Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) under SSA

2.25 The Committee, however, notes that targets set for AIE coverage for 2006-07 remained unfulfilled. Against targetted 59,19,685 children to be covered under AIE Centres, only 30,32,943 children could be covered. Position remained unchanged during 2007-08 also. Against the target of 47,44,701 children to be brought under AIE centres, after first three quarters, achievement was only 29,26,619 children. The Committee understands that these children are from the 'very hard to reach' category. But the fact remains that in many States, there are large number of such children deprived of any education so far. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that the Department should make every endeavour to actively involve the concerned State Government to bridge such glaring gaps.

2.26 The Committee is aware of the need of EGS and AIE in our context and appreciates the upgradation of these to Primary Schools. Around 24 lakh children are still in this system. Our effort must be to phase out these centres at the earliest because after all these are not full-fledged schools. While EGS/AIE may be helpful in achieving universal access, their quality of education would not be at par with the formal schools.

Girl's Education under SSA

2.29 As per information provided to the Committee, out of the 2180 KGBVs sanctioned in the country, only 1819 are functional upto March, 2008. About this big gap between KGBVs sanctioned and those functioning in States like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, delay in identification of agencies to run the schools and unavailability of land were cited as the main reasons. However, more worrisome fact as accepted by the Department is that some schools could not be made functional due to delay in identifying girl students. The Committee fails to understand our inability to identify girls for the schools - the very purpose for which these special schools are being set up.

2.30 The Committee is happy to note that the Department proposes to open 410 new KGBVs

during 2008-09 in the areas where the female literacy rate is less than 30% in the rural blocks and 53.67% in the urban blocks. The Committee, therefore, recommends that all-out efforts be made not only for starting all the schools sanctioned at the earliest but also sanction more schools. There is a mismatch between the target and funds made available for this purpose. The Committee, therefore, recommends that allocation for this purpose would certainly be inadequate which must be enhanced suitably.

2.31 The Committee observes that the Scheme for Strengthening of Boarding and Hostel Facilities for Girl Students of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools was under implementation during the Tenth Plan period. Due to some inherent problems, the scheme could not be effectively implemented. The Scheme was got evaluated by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and a revamped Scheme is proposed to be launched during 2008-09. The Committee notes that out of Rs. 10.00 crores allocated for the Scheme for 2007-08, an expenditure of only Rs. 35.00 lakhs has been reported. Reason being the same as for the Tenth Plan that the Scheme was under revision. The Committee has been informed that around 250 girls hostels are targetted to be sanctioned with a proposed allocation of Rs.80.00 crore for 2008-09. In addition, around 150 Girls Hostels run by reputed NGOs are also proposed to be assisted. The Committee while appreciating this initiative is constrained to point out that the Scheme is yet to be approved by the competent authority. Department's clarification that the projected outcomes are highly tentative and its achievement will depend on the form in which the scheme is approved and the time the scheme is actually launched, confirms Committee's apprehension about the fate of this revised scheme. The Committee strongly feels that the scheme is already over delayed. Any further delay would defeat the very purpose of providing a much-needed facility to girl students. It is also convinced that allocation for this purpose would have to be enhanced.

2.32 The Committee does not find any gender segregated data particularly under the SSA, emphasis on girl education apart. If we exclude the girl-specific schemes like NPEGEL, KGBV schemes, it is not clear as to what percentage of expenditure is on the girls. Even in girl-specific initiatives neither allocations are adequate nor are the expenditure upto the mark. The Committee, therefore, recommends that a status report showing, among other things, outlays and outcomes as also the percentage of expenditure on girls education from the total allocation to the Department and that of SSA expenditure be provided to the Committee.

Teachers Recruitment and Training

2.35 The quality of education under SSA has been defined to be a thrust area for the XIth Plan. No matter what special interventions are devised to achieve this target, the absence of regular teachers is bound to hinder the implementation of the SSA. The Committee is of the view that to achieve this target, the Department should ensure that all existing vacancies of regular teachers are filled up at the earliest and the percentage of Para teachers be brought down to the minimum.

2.37 The Committee is surprised to see that in respect of States/UTs like Chandigarh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttrakhand, no target for Teacher training was fixed during this period.

What is more disturbing is the overall status of Teachers trained under SSA. Out of 35,39,559 Teachers targeted to be trained as on 31st December, 2007 is reported to be only 19,14,575, i.e. 54.09 percent of the cumulative target. The Committee takes a serious view of such a state of affairs. The Committee would only emphasize that there is an urgent need for providing the required training to maximum number of teachers. A fully trained teacher undeniably is the most crucial component for achieving the goal of providing quality education under SSA.

III. NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF MID-DAY MEAL IN SCHOOLS

3.3 The Committee is happy to note that the Department has factored in inflation while assessing the central assistance towards cooking costs. The Committee also welcomes the initiative of the Department to henceforth provide Grant-in-aid for transportation expenses.

3.4 The Committee takes note of the fact that the Mid Day Meal Scheme has been extended to all the Upper Primary Schools across the country from 2008-09. The Committee would, however, like to point out that there may be areas, particularly tribal and remote areas, where only private schools are running. With only Government and Government-aided schools being covered under the Mid Day Meal Scheme, children residing in such areas and going to small private schools are being deprived for no fault of theirs. The Committee feels that this is an area of serious concern and needs to be taken care of. The Committee would like a viable proposal to be worked out for this purpose.

Provision of Kitchen-cum-Stores

3.6 The Committee expresses its serious concern over these findings. The Committee recommends that every possible effort be made to encourage States/UTs to get and utilize funds for Kitchen-cum-Store in the shortest possible time.

3.7 The Committee's attention has also been drawn to the State-wise details of expenditure incurred on Transport subsidy under the Scheme. The details reveal that States/UTs like Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haweli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry failed to avail of this facility during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. In the absence of any further details in the matter, the Committee is unable to comprehend the reasons for non-utilisation of the subsidy. The Committee would like the Department to give reasons State-wise, for the same.

Lifting of foodgrains

3.8 The Committee believes that there must be practical reasons behind States/UTs not lifting their share of foodgrains provided free of cost under the scheme. Quality of foodgrains being sub-standard, problem in transporting foodgrains from FCI outlets to the schools, pilferage and delay in release/receipt of central assistance have been reported to be some reasons behind this. The Committee recommends that Department must take up this issue with the concerned States/UTs and see to it the foodgrains were lifted regularly by them.

3.9 The Committee during its visit to Lakshadweep was informed that there was no FCI godown in this UT; they have to lift grains from Mangalore. Cost norms for transportation cost does hardly cover the actual cost. As a result, UT is not lifting foodgrains. They had taken up this issue with the Government of India but to no avail. The Committee is quite convinced of their limitations in this regard and urges upon the Department to take up this issue with the concerned Ministry for providing FCI outlet in the UT at the earliest. The Committee would like to know the development in this regard in the Action-Taken Note.

- Monitoring of MDM

3.11 Data collection, evaluation and monitoring are exercises that are inter-related yet different. The Committee has expressed its concern/opinion about the problem/issues involved in such activities in respect of SSA in paragraph 2.18 in this report. It applies *ipso facto* to MDM also.

3.12 The Committee would like to point out about the monitoring of the MDM particularly at school level. The scheme itself provides for a community monitoring by the Panchayats VECs, PTAs, Mothers' Groups, etc. The Committee has found during its visits to several States/UTs, and also the Members individually as peoples representatives from different parts, that the community participation/involvement in monitoring the MDM schemes remains a far cry. The kind of role visualized for them in the scheme does not exist in most of the States/UTs except few. So much so, even MPs & MLAs were also not being involved formally at least in the monitoring aspect. In one of the UTs visited by the Committee, the only local Lok Sabha Member complained that he was not at all consulted or involved in these exercises.

3.13 The Committee is of the considered opinion that MDM could be made more attractive and effective simply by activating the local community for this purpose; it would not only ensure hygiene and quality of food but also in reducing teacher absenteeism, improving quality of teaching-learning, pupil evaluation, etc. Some States/regions have adopted good practices in these respects which need to be propagated to all the States/UTs for adoption with suitable modifications wherever required.

3.14 The Committee recommends that the study may be expedited so as to enable the Centre and the States/UTs to take remedial steps to plug the loopholes in the existing monitoring mechanism.

3.15 The Committee fails to understand the basis for inclusion of component of replacement of cooking devices, utensils under MME with separate funds earmarked for their procurement and being duly released. The Committee would also like to have an idea about component-wise utilisation status of MME funds by the States/UTs.

IV. RESTRUCTURING & REORGANIZATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION

4.3 The Committee notes that an allocation of Rs. 450 crores made for the scheme at the BE stage in 2007-08 was subsequently reduced to Rs. 266.65 crores at the RE stage. The scheme has again been granted a BE allocation of Rs. 450 crores in 2008-09. **The Committee hopes that the entire allocation**

will be utilised for the scheme during this fiscal.

4.4 The Committee has pointed out in the past also about the problems of delays in civil construction, transfer of land and shortage of teaching/non-teaching staff under these schemes in the institutions at different levels.

4.6 The Committee emphasizes the need to sensitize the State Governments to ensure that budgetary provision of the central assistance was made in the State's budget; and that urgent steps were taken to expedite availability of land for these institutions. As regards the large number of vacancies, particularly of academic staff in the DIETs, the Department must periodically review the vacancy position and ask the respective States/UTs to fill up the vacancies at the earliest. Further, while granting central assistance to these DIETs, the level of filled up posts may be linked with the amount of release.

4.7 The Committee notes that the Department has initiated the exercise of comprehensive evaluation of the scheme. The Committee fails to understand the basis for going for another review in spite of comprehensive evaluation undertaken by a Sub-Group of Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Director, NCERT.

4.8 The Committee is not aware about the position taken by the Department on the contradictory recommendations made by the two different Committees about the future of NCTE. The Committee would like to know the clear position taken by the Department in this regard. The Committee would also like to emphasize that Teacher Education needs to be given proper focus and timely action. Nobody can deny the fact that teacher training in the right perspective is one of the most crucial component for providing quality education to our children. Further delay due to reviews, counter-reviews will prove to have a negative impact only.

4.9 Due to shortage of trained teachers, particularly in case of B.Ed. and M.Ed., instances of one teacher being showed on the rolls by different institutions of Teacher Education with a view to fulfill requirement laid down by NCTE, lest they should lose their recognition, have come to the notice of the Committee. This practice is reported to have become rampant particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. The idea of allotting an identification number to every education degree holder and by putting those numbers on the website of NCTE so that anybody was able to cross check this kind of duplication can perhaps tackle this problem area. **The Committee would like the Department to consider this idea and present its views for the perusal of the Committee.**

4.10 Besides, there has been a long standing demand for making 'Education' as a subject in the competitive exams, held in the country. The Committee would like the Department to take up with the concerned quarters and furnish its considered opinion on this aspect to the Committee.

V. KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN

5.5 The Committee does not accept the reply of the Sangathan. It is of the opinion that except for the vacancies arising out of death, resignation and termination of services, all other vacancies could be anticipated well in advance and hence there is no reason as to why the Sangathan cannot

initiate the process of recruitment for all other posts well in advance. The very fact that such large number of vacancies exist is a pointer to the Sangathan not being able to take action in time. The Committee, therefore, recommends the Sangathan to streamline its recruitment procedures at the earliest and complete the recruitment of posts at the earliest. Efforts should be to ensure that vacancies, as and when they arise, are filled up within the shortest possible time.

5.7 The Committee is surprised as to why the Department was not able to come up with the required ATN in one go.

5.8 The Committee feels that this issue should be resolved without further delay and the Committee be informed accordingly.

5.10 The Committee expresses its displeasure at the callous attitude with which this case has been taken. Even after taking up this issue persistently for nine months, the Committee is yet to receive a response. The Department appears to be helpless because Ministry of Defence, which has to take a decision in the matter, is not responding to its repeated requests. The Committee directs the Department to take up the issue with the Ministry of Defence again and if no response is received in a reasonable time, the Committee would decide about taking appropriate steps that may be available to it.

VI. NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA SAMITI

6.5 The Committee has time and again been urging the Department to sort out the problem of acquisition of land in operationalisation of JNVs. It however feels that not much headway appears to have been made in this regard. As per the latest information made available to the Committee, there are 75 JNVs where land has not yet been formally transferred by the State Government in the name of the Samiti. The Committee finds that 41 Vidyalayas are functional from temporary site, quite a few for considerable period. Residential schools functioning from temporary sites for years cannot be considered an ideal position. The Committee reiterates its recommendations and urges upon the Department to find a way out of this problem. It must take up this issue with State Governments and ensure that the 23 non-functional JNVs are operationalised at the earliest.

6.6 The Committee has been informed that the establishment of Special Navodaya Vidyalayas for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes it being dealt with by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Committee notes that the Department of School Education and Literacy is in favour of an inclusive strategy rather than having separate Vidyalayas for SC/ST students. At present, SC and ST representation in all JNVs in the country is to the extent of 24.64% and 15.74% respectively. Therefore, a better option would be to consider opening more JNVs in districts having SC/ST concentration with reservation for SC/ST to the extent of their proportion of the populations in the district. In the interest of better co-ordination and management, the Committee is inclined to agree with the contention of the Department.

6.8 The Committee is of the opinion that in case of most of the vacancies, except for a few which may have arisen on account of death, resignation, termination of services etc, recruitment processes could have initiated well in advance. Large number of vacancies in teaching posts that

too for a long time directly tells upon the academic performance of the students. The Committee does not know how the teaching is being managed by the schools in which there are vacancies. The Committee recommends that recruitment processes be structured in such a manner that vacancies do not get accumulated and are filled up as and when they arise in the shortest possible time.

6.9 Apart from gap in operationalisation and existence of large number of vacancies, other cause for concern is reported shortfall in the enrollment of new students as well as seats remaining vacant in higher classes. The Committee views it seriously and would like to know the reasons for this and corrective measures taken to see that seats do not go vacant in these schools for which lot of money is being spent. Plan allocation for JNVs is more than double of the plan allocation for KVs, particularly when number of KVs is almost double of the number of JNVs. Of Rs. 860 crores given at RE in 2007-08 to JNVs, only Rs. 532.50 crores could be utilized upto December, 2007. The Committee in its report on the working of JNVs has given a number of suggestions for improving the situation. It only hopes that these were being implemented.

VII. INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOL

7.3 The Committee notes that in the year 2007-08, 22833 schools were covered under the scheme. On perusal of the State-wise details, it was, however, found that the spread of the Scheme in different States was quite uneven. Further, while the total amount of assistance approved (both Centre and State share) was Rs. 53792.40 lakhs, less than 50% of the funds were released upto February, 2008. The Committee found that in as many as 10 States/UTs, no funds had been released during 2007-08 due to the pendency of UC of the previous project. This is a worrying trend. The Committee is aware of the fact that the Scheme is being reviewed for better implementation in the XIth Plan. The Committee hopes that the Department will factor - in these problems, especially regarding pendency of UCs, while finalizing and approving the news scheme.

7.4 The Committee finds that out of 1,07,112 Secondary Schools targetted to be covered under the ICT Scheme, only 1967 and 719 Schools could be covered during 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively. Status of 22,633 Schools Sanctioned during 2007-08 is not known. The Committee understands that States have been advised to implement the scheme in at least 2 schools in each Educationally Backward Block in each State. Availability of electricity is one of the major problems identified in the successful implementation of the Scheme. The Committee would like to emphasize that every effort should be made for availability of electricity during school hours where computer labs have already been set up/likely to be set up in the near future. The Committee would appreciate if monitoring of this aspect is regularly carried otherwise the very purpose of this scheme would be defeated.

7.5 The Committee was also informed that the revised scheme if implemented in the current fiscal would require an allocation of around Rs.1600 crores. It was further informed that to even implement the programme in its present form, the Department would need at least Rs. 800 crores during 2008-09.

7.6 The Committee is of the view that a forward-looking scheme like ICT @ school should not face constraint of funds. Any compromise in this regard, the Committee believes, will impact

adversely the consolidation of the edge that India enjoys in the field of IT in the global scenario. The Committee recommends that more funds be provided to the scheme during 2008-09.

VIII. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT +2 LEVEL

8.6 About the need to promote vocationalisation of education, this Committee has also made number of observations expressing its concern about the manner in which it was being implemented. Vocational streams in schools/colleges did not attract students and there were no adequate infrastructure available including the trained teachers. A more focussed approach was suggested by the Committee, particularly in engaging local entrepreneurs in developing an interface with them so that they could get trained manpower that they need and students their employment. The Committee is happy to know that the scheme for skill development is being revamped. It only hopes that revised scheme would take care of all the problems that plagued the earlier schemes. The Committee emphasizes the need for finalizing the revised scheme this year only.

IX. NEW INITIATIVES UNDER THE SECONDARY EDUCATION

9.2 The Committee is happy to note that the secondary education has begun to receive focused attention that was long overdue, because only 10% of our secondary passouts were going for the higher education so far. The interventions proposed in the SUCCESS scheme are more or less on the lines of those of the SSA and are proposed to be implemented with the help of the State Governments and Union Territories. The Committee advises the Department that while finalizing/implementing the scheme, the problems and shortcomings noticed in the implementation of SSA, such as delay in timely receipt of complete and viable proposals from State Governments, non-availability of land, financial constraints in the States, delay in recruitment and training of teachers, lack of adequate and effective monitoring, etc., should be kept in mind. The Committee would like to point out that Rs. 1305.00 crores allocated in 2007-08 primarily meant for preparatory activities by the State Governments remained unutilized for want of approval of the Scheme from the Competent Authority. The Committee recommends that the duly approved Scheme be launched in 2008-09 as pressure on secondary education is bound to increase due to emphasis on elementary education.

9.3 As regards the existing schemes like the Scheme for Integrated Education for the Disabled Children that is under revision, the Committee has expressed its concern in its previous reports about its slow implementation as well as lack of visible impact. The Committee notes that the process of revision of this scheme is still continuing in spite of the announcement of a National Action Plan for the Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities in March, 2005. The Committee observes that the revised Scheme replacing the existing IEDC Scheme was to be launched during 2007-08. However, the revised scheme is yet to get the approval of the Planning Commission before being sent to the Cabinet. The Committee can only hope that all these formalities will be completed at the earliest and the revised scheme is launched in 2008-09 itself.

9.5 The Committee does not agree with the proposals outlined to set up the model schools particularly through the public-private partnership mode. The Committee is in favour of setting

up these schools under government support and control.

X. BAL KENDRA STAFF

10.1 The Committee is surprised to see that the part-time instructors working in the Bal Bhawan are being paid the same salaries that was fixed twenty seven years ago, whereas in the meantime, salaries ,etc. have been increased in the case of other Central employees at least twice. The Committee feels that there is a strong case for revising the amount being paid to them suitably on the basis of existing rate of inflation.

XI. ADULT EDUCATION

11.1 Adult education schemes are meant for imparting functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years, for which a National Literacy Mission was launched in 1988. Over the years, the Committee notes, the literacy rate has shown substantial improvement. Nearly 124 million persons have been made literate under various schemes. Today, we have literacy rate at 65% (male literacy 75.26% and female literacy 53.67%), gender gap 21.59%, SC literacy 54.69% and ST literacy 47.10%. Although the Committee appreciates the significant improvements reported on all these counts, it however, feels that the gaps in all these respects are still on the higher side. For example, we have still 304 million non-literates in the country, around 47% female are still illiterate and around 50% of SC and ST population in the reference age group remain illiterate. It is thus clear that our efforts and resources in the adult education sector have not had the desired results. Not only in respect of functional literacy, our achievements in respect of vocational education particularly, among the rural youth, has also not been properly focused and emphasized. We have been able to set up the Jan Shikshan Sansathans to conduct vocational training for the neo literates only in 221 districts, out of more than 600 districts in the country. Similarly, large number of districts are yet to have Districts Resource Centres/Zila Saksharata Samitis – important bodies for implementing adult education programmes. State Liaison cells are also not in place in every State. The Committee is happy to note that there is a visible shift in this respect as the Government has decided to revamp the existing scheme laying special emphasis on the skill development and has also increased the allocations by Rs. 200 crores in the 2008-09 as compared to the year 2007-08.

11.2 The Committee is also happy to note that an additional intervention from the year 2008-09 has been started for the persons in the 35+ age group who were hitherto left out. Rs. 15 crores has been earmarked for this purpose. The Committee feels that this allocation would be sufficient to take care of only small section of this age group that constitutes 160 million persons in the country as per the Census 2001. This number might have, in fact, gone further up by now.

XII. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 A number of schemes are being administered by the Department having far-reaching impact in the Education Sector. The Committee notes that general awareness about these schemes, eligibility norms, their implementing agencies, etc., is not there. **The Committee is of the view that such information should be available on the website of the Department. The Committee would also appreciate if a**

pamphlet in English and Hindi and also Regional languages giving details of these Schemes in a simple form is got published by the Department. Such a move would prove useful for all concerned, both beneficiaries and implementing agencies.

**MINUTES
VI
SIXTH MEETING**

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The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday, the 27th March, 2008 in Committee Room No. 'A', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi ¾ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Dwijendra Nath Sharmah
3. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
4. Shri Vijay Kumar Rupani
5. Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
6. Smt. Brinda Karat
7. Prof. Ram Deo Bhandary

LOK SABHA

8. Shri Basudeb Barman
9. Shri Harisinh Chavda
10. Shri G.V. Harsha Kumar
11. Smt. Archana Nayak
12. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
13. Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh
14. Dr. Thokchom Meinya
15. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
16. Shri Francis K. George

SECRETARIAT

Smt Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri N.K. Singh, Director
Shri J. Sundriyal, Joint Director
Shri Sanjay Singh, Committee Officer

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LIST OF WITNESSES

Department of School Education & Literacy

- 1. Shri A.K. Rath, Secretary (SE&L)

2. Ms. Vrinda Sarup, JE (EE.II)
3. Ms. Anita Kaul, JS (EE.I)
4. Shri S.C. Khuntia, JS (SE)
5. Shri. Anant Kumar Singh, JS (AE)
6. Shri S.K. Ray, JS&FA
7. Shri Y.P. Mittal, EA (SE&L)
8. Shri S. Mohan, Deputy Secretary
9. Ms. Neelam S. Rao, Director
10. Ms. Anuradha Mall, Director
11. Ms. Alka Bhargava, Director
12. Shri I.P.S. Bakshi, Deputy Secretary
13. Shri S.N. Gupta, Deputy Secretary
14. Shri Vikram Sahay, Director
15. Shri P. Sukumar, Director
16. Shri K.R. Meena, Director
17. Shri Arvind Suri, Director
18. Ms. Richa Sharma, Deputy Secretary
19. Shri K. Ravi Ramachandran, Deputy Secretary
20. Ms. Simmi Chaudhary, Deputy Secretary
21. Shri D.K. Gautam, Deputy Secretary
22. Shri K. Satish Nambudiripad, Director
23. Shri Ishwar Singh, Deputy Secretary
24. Dr. G.L. Jambhulkar, Deputy Educational Adviser
25. Shri Vijay Bharat, Director
26. Shri V. Jayachandran, Director
27. Ms. L. Indumathy, Director
28. Shri P.K. Mohanty, Deputy Educational Director
29. Ms. Amita Shaw, Acting Director, NBB
30. Prof. Krishan Kumar, Director, NCERT
31. Shri O.N. Singh, Commissioner, NVS
32. Shri Rangalal Jamuda, Commissioner, KVS
33. Shri Ashok Ganguly, Chairman, CBSE
34. Shri M.C. Pant, Chairman, NIOS
35. Shri Vineet Joshi, Director, CTSA

2. The Committee heard the Secretary of the Department of School Education & Literacy on Demands-for-Grants (2008-09) of the Department. The Secretary made a presentation on the activities and achievements of the Department and briefly explained the budgetary allocation under different heads as also the functioning of the Department. The Members, then, sought clarifications to which the Secretary and the officials of the Department replied. The Committee, thereafter, adjourned at 1.00 p.m. to meet at 2.30 p.m.

3. ***

4. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

4. The Committee then adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

***Relates to other matter.