

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3122
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2009
ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey regarding enrolment of children at the elementary level after the introduction of mid-day meals scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the extent to which mid-day meals scheme has helped to improve the quality of education and the health of students; and
- (d) the percentage of dropout rate come down after the implementation of said scheme?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Human Resource Development has elaborate arrangements to collect data on educational parameters including enrolment and dropout rate through District Information System for Education (DISE) under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Under DISE system of SSA, data collected from school level is thoroughly verified at Cluster level. Further random verification is carried out at the Block levels as well as District levels on a sample basis. After the State/UT is satisfied with the quality and reporting of the data, the same is submitted for dissemination and analysis at national level. The DISE software also checks for internal inconsistency in the data and generates reports for verification by the District Project Office. The Statistical Division of this Ministry also releases annual publication by the name of Selected Educational Statistics (SES) containing statistical data on important educational indicators including the enrolment of children and dropout rate.

(c): Enrolment, retention etc. of students in schools depend on several interventions of the Government in the field of education, health, nutrition, economic development, demographic changes, expansion of private sector in Elementary Education etc. including the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Therefore, any increase in enrolment or decrease in dropout rate cannot be attributed solely to Mid-Day Meal Scheme. However, various evaluation studies conducted by independent agencies including studies conducted by Prof. Amartya Sen's Pratichi Trust and University of Rajasthan & UNICEF suggest that the Mid-Day Meal Scheme has played a major role in universalization of primary education by

(i) increasing enrolment, attendance

(ii) reducing dropout rate and

(iii) averting classroom hunger, under-nourishment especially of those belonging to under-privileged sections of the society. Besides this, MDM Scheme also addresses the micronutrients needs of the children under the School Health Programme in convergence with National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Twenty-seven States/UTs have approved School Health Programme under the NRHM.

(d): The dropout rate at the primary level has shown a consistent decline since the launch of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in 1995-96. As per the SES, the dropout rate in primary schools (I- V) at national level was 42.07 percent in 1995-96, which has come down to 25.43 percent in 2006-07. Thus, there has been a decline of 16.64 percent in dropout rate from 1995-96 to 2006-07.