



“Improvement of quality at all levels is the theme of the whole education reforms” - Shri Prakash Javadekar. Union HRD Minister highlights ‘Education Initiatives’ in Budget 2017-2018

Posted On: 05 FEB 2017 3:11PM by PIB Delhi

Union Human Resource Development Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar while interacting with media at New Delhi emphasized that improvement of quality at all levels is the theme of the whole education reforms and that is the thrust of the government lead by The Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He further noted that, considering changes in funding pattern after devolution by Finance Commission, there has been 25% more allocation made for education and we are progressing towards the expenditure 6% of GDP. The Union HRD Minister highlighted five specific initiatives mentioned in the Union Budget 2017-18.

Learning Outcomes are assessment standards indicating the expected levels of learning that children should achieve for that class. These indicators can be used as check points to assess learning at different points of time and should be the point of reference for assessment of learning. The learning outcomes for students at elementary level have been finalized and they will be included in the Central Rules of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE), Act, 2009.

It is proposed to conduct an **Annual Survey of Learning Outcomes (ASLO)** through a third party. It will be conducted in all 36 States and UTs in sample Government and aided schools. This assessment will be benchmarked against the learning outcomes already finalized and will be a granular and diagnostic tool to identify students who need additional support to achieve the required learning levels and to assist teachers in identifying the gaps in the teaching-learning process. This will help the teacher to make necessary changes to his/her teaching practice as well as provide additional support to ensure that all children achieve the desired level of learning outcomes.

The MHRD is supporting all States and UTs through the SSA and its component Learning Enhancement Programmes to improve the Learning Outcomes of their students.

The Innovation Fund for Secondary Education would be provided from the budget of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) Scheme to encourage local innovation for ensuring universal access, gender parity and quality improvement, to be introduced in **3479 educationally backward blocks and Rs. 100 Crore** have been earmarked for this in the Budget 2017-18.

- (a) One time allocation would be made to the State/UT under the innovation Fund. The States/UTs would be required to submit a proposal in this regard. The proposals from States will need to include in their proposals innovation element, sustainability etc. The proposals may include projects like:-
- ICT enabled learning tablets/ smart classrooms/ virtual classrooms/ IT based teaching aids for CWSN.
 - Enrolment and retention drive for SC/ST/girls/minority students in EBBs.
 - Transport facilities for students in difficult areas in EBBs.
 - Portacabin residential schools in worst affected LWE districts.
 - Guidance and counseling for adolescent children.
 - Innovative science labs/ tinkering labs/ robotics labs.
 - Boys hostels in EBBs.
- (b) A national level committee would be constituted which would be headed by the Additional Secretary- Department of School Education & Literacy, MHRD which would consider and approve the proposals under the Innovation Fund.

Reforms in University Grants Commission, responding to a felt need to bring about great process efficiency and role clarity in the University Grants Commission, the Finance Minister's Budget Speech has referred to reforms to be undertaken for the UGC.

While the details and modalities of the reforms will be worked out over the next few months, the intended direction is to allow good quality institutions to be brought under a more **liberal regulatory measure**, initially with provisions for self regulations and peer review.

The UGC should focus more on improving quality and helping institutions which are presently of lesser quality to reach higher academic and educational standards. **Graded oversight** by the UGC depending on the nature of the institutions is one possibility with less oversight and regulation for good quality institutions and greater UGC guidance and handholding of lesser quality.

It is intended that a system be put in place for regular **curriculum reform** which would ensure that the intuitions upgrade their curriculum in consonance with the present day requirements to meet the challenges of the modern world.

A possible area of focus would be the **Credit Based Qualification Framework** to be framed with equivalence being determined on credit hours rather than calendar duration.

There is a need to focus on **teacher education**, including at the time of induction, and periodically, the latter in the form of refresher training.

National Testing Agency, the outlines of the structure and the tasks to be assigned have by and large been prepared and a proposal will shortly be prepared for processing.

CBSE is presently being overburdened with conducting multiple examinations for about an estimated 1.12 Crore number of students over the year.

In the first instance best entrance examinations for streams of higher education, including the IITs, NITs and even university system would be prepared.

It is hoped that later the Agency will move from being merely an examination body to one that is able to support education system. In other words, providing for including outcome learning and outcome assessments for students and in evolving good examination processes.

The SWAYAM platform is ready, content is currently under review with the objective of making it more attractive for students and easier for them to absorb and learn content. The objective is to have a system of **quality assurance for courses** offered.

At the same time, a system for encouraging and preparing **faculty** of educational institutions to work in conjunction with the **MOOCs** and to use them in classroom teaching and in smaller students groups.

The **credit framework** being developed for the MOOCs too.

An outreach and awareness programme for SWAYAM and the **DTH channels** will be prepared to make them more acceptable to stakeholders.

MOOCs will be blended with **Open and Distance Learning system**, for better communication and learning structure as a platform of the future.

GG/RT/RK/Education in Budget 2017-18

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