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Ministry of Human Resource Development

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The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides a justifiable legal framework that entitles all children between the ages of 6-14 years free and compulsory elementary education which also includes children with disabilities as per Section 3 of the RTE Act, 2009. The erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) at elementary level and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) at secondary level had implemented the Inclusive Education (IE) programmes for children with special needs (CwSN). Presently, the Central Government has launched **Samagra Shiksha** - an Integrated Scheme for School Education, from 2018-19, which addresses the educational needs of CwSN covering classes I to XII and aims to provide inclusive education and barrier free access in schools. Under the Samagra Shiksha, allocation for children with special needs has been increased from Rs. 3000 to Rs.3500 per child per annum including a stipend of Rs. 200 per month for CwSN girls in Classes I to XII-earlier it was only for classes IX to XII. Also, provision has been kept for appointment of special educators at Block/Cluster/School level as per requirement.

The National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) has developed exemplar material on curricular adaptations, inclusive teaching and how to adopt flexibility in evaluation for children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), has an inclusion policy for students with disabilities which inter-alia includes permitting the use of computer in writing the examination as per the actual need and skills of the students with disabilities, provision of Reader in case student with disability does not want the facility of scribe and need a person to read the question paper and relaxation in mandatory attendance if any student with disability could not attend the school for prescribed days.

The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan(KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti(NVS) also provide a barrier free environment in their school campuses which includes ramps and separate toilets for CwSN.

As per Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) survey, 2014, there were 6,00,630 children with special needs who are out of school within the age group of 6-13 years.

Mapping of children with special needs (CwSN) is an integral part of the planning and surveys carried out by the States and UTs. A concerted drive to identify CwSN is undertaken through convergence with multiple stakeholders. The identified children are further assessed through assessment camps that are held in convergence with the line Departments along with other

resource persons in the State/UT.

Various steps are being taken to bring children with special needs (CwSN) to schools such as the National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) has developed exemplar material for providing low cost quality home education to students with severe disabilities through e-learning. NCERT text books have been converted into digital books which can be downloaded free by any one, any time. Most of the books are in UNICODE which a child with special needs can read using a Text-to-Speech (TTS)/Software/mobile app though e-Pathshaala mobile app. For visually challenged learners e-book in DAISY format and tactile maps have been developed.

This information was given by the Minister of State (HRD), Shri Upendra Kushwaha today in a written reply to a Rajya Sabha question.

NB/AK

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