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Minority Affairs Minister**

Ministry of Minority Affairs

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**Focus of the Ministry this year will be on better education and employment-oriented skill development of girls: Minority Affairs Minister**

**Record increase of Rs. 505 crore in the Budget of Ministry of Minority Affairs proves that inclusive growth is the priority of Government led by PM Shri Narendra Modi: Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi**

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The Union Minister for Minority Affairs, Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has said that education is the golden key to guarantee of constitutional and social security of girls; he said that we should take it as a mission to make education our first priority.

Addressing "Taleem-o-Tarbiyat" programme at Anjuman-a-Islam Girls High School at Bandra, Mumbai, Shri Naqvi said that education is a very strong tool for development and that the Government of India, led by PM Shri Narendra Modi, has been working towards educational empowerment of minorities, especially girls, on priority basis.

Shri Naqvi said that due to efforts of the Government of India, the school dropout rate among Muslim girls, which was earlier more than 70 per cent, has now been reduced to about 40 per cent. He said that the goal of the Government is to bring it down to zero per cent.

The Minister said that the focus of the Ministry of Minority Affairs this year will be on better education and employment-oriented skill development of girls. He said that the Central Government will provide financial assistance to those institutes being established and being run on Waqf properties and are engaged in educational activities, especially educational empowerment of girls. The Central Government will award those "Mutawallis" who perform well in management of Waqf properties to ensure utilization of these properties for betterment of the society, especially educational empowerment of girls.

Shri Naqvi said that the record increase of Rs. 505 crore in the Budget of Ministry of Minority Affairs for the year 2018-19 proves that inclusive growth is the priority of the Government led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Last year, the ministry's budget was Rs. 4,195 crore, which has now been increased to Rs 4,700 crore. The Minister said that this increase will be helpful in socio-economic-educational empowerment of minorities, especially in effective implementation of programmes aimed at educational development of girls.

Shri Naqvi said that during the last 3 years, about 2.42 crore students belonging to minority communities have been provided various scholarships. This year, more than 1.5 crore students have applied for pre-matric, post-matric, merit-cum-means and various other scholarships given by the Ministry of Minority Affairs. More than 3 lakh applications have been received for "Begum Hazrat Mahal Girls Scholarship". He said that in the last six months, thousands of educational institutions of all Minority communities including Madrasas have been included in the mainstream education system by connecting them with 3Ts - Teacher, Tiffin, and Toilet. Besides, girls are also getting benefits from job-oriented skill development schemes such as "Nai Roshni", "Seekho aur Kamao", "Nai Manzil" and "Garib Nawaz Kaushal Vikas Yojana".

Shri Naqvi said that "Hunar Haat", "Seekho aur Kamao", "Nai Manzil", "Gharib Nawaz Skill Development Scheme" and "Nai Roshni" have proved to be important steps towards skill development of minorities. The Minister said that in last 3-plus years, these schemes have succeeded in providing employment and employment opportunities to more than 8.5 lakh people belonging to minority communities.

Shri Naqvi also inaugurated drinking water and toilet facilities at Anjuman-a-Islam Girls High School on the occasion.

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