

New Thrust Area for 2008- NCMP commitment to ‘Universalise access to quality basic education’

Text of the para

“S-10- The UPA government pledges to raise public spending to at least 6% of GDP with at least half of this amount being spent on primary and secondary sectors. The UPA Government will introduce a cess on all central taxes to finance the commitment to universalise access to quality basic education....

[including (a) revamping of higher education system for meeting the needs of coming decades, (b) creating an enabling framework, including a legal framework, for large scale public and private investment in higher education and for rapid expansion of higher education facilities, **(c) expanding the secondary education system through credible mechanisms at central and state levels to meet the needs of an expanding student body**, (d) reforms and expansion of higher education, (e) 30 new central universities, 8 new IITs, 7 new IIMs, 5 new IISER and new IITs (f) 370 new colleges, **(g) universalisation of secondary education, (h) 6,000 new block-level schools**, (i) right to education bill]

Status

(c) Expanding the secondary education system through credible mechanisms at central and state levels to meet the needs of an expanding student body

(g) Universalisation of secondary education

1. Central Government has decided to implement a centrally sponsored scheme for universalisation of access to and improvement of quality of education at secondary stage during the 11th Five Year Plan. The objective of the scheme is to make secondary education of good quality available, accessible and affordable to all young persons by providing one secondary school within 5 kilometer of every habitation. The proposed scheme envisages: (i) provision of necessary infrastructure and resources in the secondary education sector to create higher capacity in secondary schools in the country, and for improvement in quality of learning in the schools; (ii) provision for filling the missing gaps in the existing secondary schools system: (iii) provision of extra support for education of girls, rural children and students belonging to SC/ST, minority and other weaker sections of the society; and (iv) a holistic convergent framework for implementation of various schemes in secondary education. Some of the major components of the proposed scheme are, (i) new schools buildings, (ii) additional rooms including classrooms, laboratories, computer room, library room, toilet etc., (iii) teaching –learning aids, (iv) School grant (v) teachers’ in service training (vi) additional teachers, (vii) research and innovation, (viii) curricular reforms and (ix) Examinations reforms etc.

2. EFC in its meeting held on 30.6.2008 has recommended the scheme. The draft note for Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has been circulated to Planning Commission and appraising Ministries on 11.9.2008. The proposal will be shortly brought before CCEA.

3. A budget provision of Rs. 2185 crore has been made for the scheme in the current year 2008-09.

(h) 6,000 new block-level schools

1. The Prime Minister in his Independence Day Speech on 15.8.2007 announced the decision of the Government to support 6,000 high quality model schools throughout the country, at the rate of one in every block, to set standards of excellence for other schools in the area.

2. The proposal to set up 2500 model schools through the State Governments in educationally backward blocks has been approved by the CCEA on 5.11.2008 and the scheme will be implemented from the current year itself. A draft EFC memo on setting up the remaining 3,500 schools has already been circulated.