

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL MEETS DELEGATION OF COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL

New Delhi: January 6, 2010

Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development today met with 22 students of the Columbia University Business School. On being asked about his priorities for the education sector, he stated that the top priority is to get a critical mass of students to go into University, which means that the GER in 2020 will need to be raised to 30 percent from the current 12.4 per cent. This would enable the country to develop wealth in a manner we would want it, he added. The second priority is having quality faculty at all levels of institutions in the country. The third priority, he said, was to include the disadvantaged, such as STs/SCs and minorities within the education field.

Shri Kapil Sibal explained, in reference to other queries by the students, that public sector is the primary vehicle for school education in the country with 93 per cent of children in India attending government schools. He added the private sector would also have to be roped in to supplement government efforts, considering financial constraints of the government. The model of how the private sector can participate is being worked upon. As regards the higher education sector, the Minister said we will expand opportunity to have the private sector play a much bigger role in order to reduce the demand and supply gap. With regard to vocational training, while laying emphasis on alignment of process of education with industry demand, the private sector would have to play very big role, he added.

The Minister expressed confidence that India would in the next 30 years be the natural hub of education in the world.

MV/Hb