

Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education and Literacy

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STATE EDUCATION
SECRETARIES HELD ON 28TH JANUARY – 30TH JANUARY, 2010
AT VIGYAN BHAWAN, NEW DELHI**

A. INAUGURAL SESSION:

1. A 3-day Conference of State Education Secretaries and State Project Directors (SPD) of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was held from 28th -30th January 2010. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Kapil Sibal, Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development in the presence of Smt. D. Purandeshwari, Hon'ble MOS (HRD), Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary School Education and Literacy.

2. Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary (SE&L) extended a warm welcome to the Minister for Human Resource Development, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, as also all the participants to the Conference. She gave an overview of the activities of the Department of School Education & Literacy. She stated that pursuant to the enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE), a Committee had been constituted, which has had interactions with State Secretaries of Education, representatives of teachers' unions, voluntary agencies and civil society organisations to review the SSA strategies and with the provisions of the RTE Act. Some of these norms were considered and approved by the Executive Committee of the National Mission of SSA in its meeting held on 22.1.2010. She stated that wherever change of norm involved significant financial implications, necessary approval of EFC/Cabinet will also be obtained. She highlighted the other developments that have taken place in the Department, including inter alia (i) rationalization of cooking costs and other norms under the MDM scheme in November, 2009, (ii) introduction of a new grading and comprehensive evaluation system by the CBSE, (iii) launching of the Saakshar Bharat Mission to promote adult literacy for women with immediate focus on 167 districts in 19 States covering over 81000 Gram Panchayats, (iv) progress under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) after its launch in March, 2009, (v) sanction of 167 Model Schools in 6 States and

269 Girls Hostel in 9 states. She also stated that the National Council of Teachers Education (NCTE) is moving towards greater transparency through registration of applications for teacher education institutions through its web-portal.

3. With this she invited Smt D. Purandeshwari, MoS (HRD) to unveil the new logo for Saakshar Bharat and Shri Kapil Sibal, HRM to launch the NCTE web-portal.
4. Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Human Resource Development stated in his inaugural address the country is at the threshold of a new kind of learning process that will take shape in the years to come; this will empower our children to meet the challenges of the 21st century. He stated that any nation seeking its place in the sun, must ride on the tide of education, empower our future generations through processes of learning to enable them to compete with the best in the 21st century. This task can not be performed by a Minister or a Ministry, or for that matter, through one programme or the other. This is a national effort, a national commitment, which will allow our country to be part of the developed world and be at the centre of the creation of knowledge. He stated: We must ask ourselves the question – what have we done right and what have we done wrong? We must also ask ourselves a further question – have we done enough; if more needs to be done, what more needs to be done, and how should it be done? And if we are able to find answers to these questions, perhaps we can launch ourselves forward on that trajectory which meets the goals. But if we get mired in procedural issues without keeping in sight the goals that we have, then we will be tinkering not with the substance, but with procedures. It is time for this nation to realize that if we want double digit growth in this country, it cannot happen without the enrolment ratio reaching 30 per cent by 2020. It means that, we need a critical mass of people who will move from class 12 to higher education, who when being challenged in a high quality university system, will be creators of knowledge and consequentially, creators of wealth. It is that knowledge, which is at the heart of the university system that takes any country forward; knowledge cannot be measured by virtue of investments and return of investments because the concept of knowledge creation cannot be measured by virtue of returns. The time has come, when quality should be at the forefront of our education system. What we mean by quality is not exclusivity. What we mean by quality is not elitism. What we mean by quality is that access to education must be available to all, and all must be imparted quality education. A nation can not survive on the quality of an elite class of people. We must spread equality; we must allow access of quality to the large masses of people who are under-privileged – the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the minority communities, the disadvantaged groups, the differently abled groups – all those must be part of our national commitment for

imparting quality education. Quality is brought about ultimately by he or she who teaches. So, at the heart of the system, has to be that leader in the school system – whether at the level of elementary education or secondary education; we need to build those leaders within the education system.

5. He further said that, at the end of the three day deliberations, we must have in place a system that allows the State Governments to take ownership of our national commitment to education, and build the leaders of tomorrow who will educate our children. In any organization, whether government, private or NGO, the leader at the top has to set the example. Therefore, we need the Principals of our schools throughout this country to be the leaders, who will inspire our children. What we need is a leadership programme.

6. The second great challenge before us, he stated, is the quality of teachers. How do we train our teachers? Under the Right to Education Act teachers who do not have the requisite qualifications must attain those within a maximum period of five years. But, that is not enough. It is the quality of the teaching that matters, and there is sometimes a huge gap between the qualification of the teacher and the quality of his or her teaching. He asked is there a way of attaining quality teachers as well as quality teaching? How can the Central and State Governments partner to ensure that quality teaching is provided in the country? Quality teaching involves a whole set of issues which need to be addressed: what is the expectation of a student, of a parent and of a nation, of its young ones? What do we expect our children to be as they grow up? What kind of learning should they embrace? Should learning continue to be a one way process, where the teachers provide the answers, and the children merely absorb the answers; or, should the process of learning be more interactive, participatory and experiential? Is it not time for us to think about the quality of learning that lays the foundation for minds that are free of prejudice. We need to lay the foundations of children's minds that like to fly, to dream, mind of a genius that needs to flower. Are we allowing our school education system to move in that direction, where the minds of our young ones are free to question, free to take a flight, free to seek answers and perhaps to provide them? And if our education structure in sync with those goals, we need to ask ourselves whether the examination system that is prevalent today, which is text book based, the best way of testing the learning of a child? Is the ability of the child to memorize and regurgitate what he or she has memorized, the best way of testing the breadth of knowledge of that child? How do we work together as State Governments and the National Government, to put these visions in place?

7. The fundamental responsibility for education lies with the State Governments, especially for elementary and secondary education. The States need to introspect on the adequacy of investments and expenditures on education that is needed to take our vision forward. Have we built the education capital that is the foundation of our modern education system and meets the challenges of tomorrow? What more needs to be done? He said that solutions to many of these questions are contextual. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions because every State has different challenges, and may be met contextually in a different manner. He asked whether the States have contemplated a State specific contextual plan to meet the challenges. Should we not have a platform by which each State must set-up that plan and share it with the Central Government, so that we can be partners in this national effort and the Centre and States can help each other?
8. He added that he is aware that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has succeeded to a large extent. That we have opened 2.88 lakh schools and that 98 per cent of our habitations have primary schools within a distance of one kilometer. But, what happens as the children move up? What about the drop-out rates? Why the drop-outs? Is it enough to have primary schools in our 98 per cent habitations? Is that our goal, or, is education much more than that?
9. He drew attention to the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) approved by CIBE in 2005. The curricular principles in the Right to Education Act are drawn from the NCF-2005. We have to ensure inclusive education; ensure that the differently-abled children are integrated into the school system; ensure that the girl child has equal access to education as boys. We must make sure that at the level of the nation, there is a core curricula, that needs to move forward – in Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry; ensure that the quality of the State Boards improves and matches the quality of Central Boards; ensure that in the time to come, even in the respect of humanity, there is a core curricula; that whenever there is teaching in humanities, whether at the State level School Boards, it should be core plus, to take care of that diversity.
10. He said that there are so many people who have not had access to education. We have launched the *Sakshar Bharat* – 70 million people to be educated, of which 60 million would be women. How do we ensure that we work together in those

programmes, to ensure that those who are left out are brought into the system? How do we move forward and have the same national commitment in the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, as we did in the SSA. These are some very vital issues, the fruition of which will determine the future of India. The road-map that is delineated and embark upon will determine where India will stand in the Comity of Nations in the 21st century.

B. TECHNICAL SESSIONS:

I. HARMONIZATION OF SSA VIS-À-VIS RTE

11. Smt Anshu Vaish, Secretary (SE&L) invited Smt Anita Kaul, Joint Secretary to make a presentation on SSA in the context of the RTE Act. Smt Anita Kaul stated that a committee had been constituted under the chairpersonship of Shri Anil Bordia, former Education Secretary, Government of India, to consider the issue of harmonizing the SSA vision, strategies and norms with the RTE mandate. Six meetings of the committee have been held so far for interaction with State Education Secretaries, SPDs of SSA, Educationists, and representatives of Teachers' Unions, Civil Society and Non Government Organisations.
12. She stated that the draft Report is now available, and shared the important recommendations in the report, with a view to eliciting responses from the participants before giving final shape to the Report.
 - 12.1 School Access: States need to formulate explicit policy on opening schools, incorporating appropriate distance norms to ensure that all children have access to a neighbourhood school in accordance with the RTE Act. There would be need to undertake physical and social mapping of all habitations; link habitations to specific schools, as also address social, cultural and physical barriers to enrolment and participation. Further, EGS centres would need to be upgraded to regular primary schools within a maximum period of three years. AIE centers would need to be reconceptualized to function as facilities for 'special training' for mainstreaming out-of-school children into age appropriate classes in regular elementary schools. Further, integration of class V and VIII with primary and upper primary stage respectively in nine States which follow a seven-year elementary education cycle will also need to be taken up on priority.
 - 12.2 Age appropriate admission: The RTE Act provides for age appropriate admission of all out-of-school children. Identification of all out-of-school

children through social mapping will therefore be a priority. The Committee has recommended that age appropriate admission would include formal enrolment of children as also special training of flexible duration ranging from three months to two years to enable them to cope with the age appropriate class. The curriculum and material prepared for age appropriate class should focus not merely on the 3Rs, but also on life skills, which would need to be prepared by a specially constituted group. On completion of special training, children would be inducted into the formal school and continued to be provided support to enable them to integrate academically and emotionally into the school system. Mahila Shikshan Vihars under the Mahila Samakhya programme have demonstrated ability to run bridge courses and to develop necessary curricula and teaching-learning arrangements. They could make an important contribution in conducting programmes for children who get admitted to age appropriate classes but require preparatory courses to keep pace with other students.

- 12.3 Gender: Gender has come to be accepted as an important category in policy and programme formulation, but is understood in limited ways. Girls from disadvantaged communities form the bulk of out-of-school children. The focus in current programmes is to achieve quantitative targets to enable girls to ‘catch up’ with boys. There is need to reconceptualise schematic provisions for gender to ensure that they are cohesive, rather than piecemeal, encompassing all aspects of curriculum, teacher training, peer behaviour as also classroom arrangement. The SSA focus on recruitment of 50% female teachers has increased the presence of women in the education system; but women teachers need to be provided support for security concerns and dealing with other forms of male bias and harassment in the system. The issue of ‘hidden curriculum’ in schools will need to be addressed with respect to equity dimensions. Training and academic support will be needed for classroom processes that are gender sensitive, non-discriminatory, free of corporal punishment and mental harassment. In addition there will be a need to make appropriate changes to KGBV and NPEGEL.
- 12.4 Admission of 25% children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections: The RTE Act provides for admission of 25% children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections in Class I each year with a view to moving towards a more democratic and heterogeneous class. Disclosure of lists of children admitted would ensure transparency as also diversity of backgrounds from among the disadvantaged groups and weaker sections.
- 12.5 Inclusive education for children with special needs should ensure barrier-free environments with not only accessible classrooms, but also toilets, playgrounds and laboratories for children with disabilities. Professional teacher education courses should include credit courses for all teachers to

become ‘special teachers’; similarly, there should be a system of credit courses for all ‘special teachers’ to equip them to work in mainstream schools. NCPDR/SCPCRs should include a disability expert and BRC/CRC to have trained Resource Teachers.

12.6 Curriculum and Evaluation: The curriculum and evaluation systems would need to adopt a holistic approach so that curriculum, syllabus, textbooks and supplementary teaching learning material, assessment systems and teacher training mutually reinforce each other for learning and evaluation systems that are age appropriate.

12.7 Teachers and Teacher Education:

- (i) In respect of teachers and teacher education, the Committee has noted that there are an estimated 57 lakh teacher posts at primary and upper primary levels, of which 5.23 lakh posts are vacant in the State sector. There is also imbalance in teacher deployment as there are as many as 5.29 lakh (53.20%) schools with a PTR exceeding 30:1. In addition, as per estimation prepared by NUEPA there is a requirement of approximately 5.10 lakh additional teachers to meet the PTRs prescribed under RTE. States would need to ensure that systems are put in place to ensure that these posts are filled up expeditiously.
- (ii) There is also need to design and undertake training for 5.48 lakh ‘untrained’ teachers at primary; 2.25 lakh at upper primary. This would need to be undertaken within the time frames stipulated in the RTE Act.
- (iii) Many RTE provisions have been welcomed by teachers; these include provisions for reasonable school infrastructure, acceptable PTR, a well-framed curriculum and teaching learning material. In addition, RTE Act provides that teachers will not be burdened by non-academic duties. There are however, also high expectations of teachers under RTE. These include their full involvement with the functioning of SMCs, accountability towards the “local authority” regarding rights of children, ensuring that there is no corporal punishment, harassment, and no-detention. This entails significant change in classroom transaction; and further invokes a moral response from the teaching profession.
- (iv) For better teacher motivation and conduct, the problem of arbitrary postings and transfers would need to be addressed; a system of rational and transparent postings and transfers would need to be put in place. Special circumstances of women teachers will need to be kept in mind. Appropriate career advancement opportunities and scope for enhancement of academic and professional qualifications should be available to teachers.

- 12.8 Civil society organizations will play an important role in translating RTE into a vibrant movement. The engagement of civil society needs to be done in a systemic, and not a project driven manner. SSA should sustain partnerships which have hitherto worked well; SSA should also explore new areas of partnerships in mobilization and awareness building, training of SMCs, PRIs, ensuring equity, quality and non-discrimination, development of curriculum, pedagogy exemplar material, specialized support – CWSNs, infrastructure design, publications, gender and equity training, area based responsibility, monitoring and watchdog role.
- 12.9 Infrastructure: Bringing school infrastructure at par with RTE requirements would require construction of ‘composite’ school buildings. Technical capacity for large scale school infrastructure development should be created. Incorporating child friendly elements and ensuring barrier free access to schools must be taken up on priority. Old, weak and structurally unsafe school buildings should be appropriately repaired/ reconstructed. Structural safety features should be built into new school building design, retrofitting of existing buildings located in high risk seismic zones. Drinking water and sanitation facilities in schools would need to be ensured.
- 12.10 Governance: RTE would require the entire education department to function in a unified manner. The existing two-dimensional system to be reviewed and integrated. A unified academic support system through SCERTs, DIETs, BRCs, CRCs, would need to be conceptualised. The Committee has recommended that SSA and RTE management and monitoring structures can co-exist; however efforts should be made to dispense with the multiplicity of departments and lack of unified administrative and academic leadership. The Committee has however, endorsed that SSA’s fund transfer mechanism should be retained even in new scheme.
- 12.11 Financial Requirements: The financial requirements estimated by NUEPA are of the order of Rs 1.71 lakh crores over five year period. The Committee has also recommended review of the fund sharing pattern between Centre and States. There will be need to factor in RTE requirements more holistically in the SSA AWP&B process.
13. Secretary (SE&L) stated that Education Departments in the States would need to work towards developing consensus within the State on the financial mechanism. The Finance and Planning Departments of the state should speak in one voice, and ensure that funds from Central and State sources flow in a time bound manner to the State SSA societies.
14. In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- (i) Shri R.P Gupta, Secretary, Gujarat sought clarification regarding provision of funds for the regulatory mechanism under RTE. It was clarified the RTE Act mandates protection of the rights of the child through the NCPCR/SCPCR. In States where SCPCR has not been constituted, the Education Department should ensure that a Right to Education Protection Authority (REPA) is expeditiously set up. It was further clarified that SSA norms have been modified to that intervention of Research, Evaluation, Monitoring and Supervision under SSA has been modified to incorporate financial support for NCPCR/SCPCR from the REMS budget @ Rs 50 per school.
- (ii) Shri Krishan Kumar, SPD, Punjab sought clarification as to whether the exemptions to non-academic work provided under the RTE Act included preparatory election work, such as revision of electoral rolls. It was clarified that the spirit of these provisions in the RTE Act is to ensure that teachers are facilitated to devote time to fulfilling their academic responsibilities towards children, and States should take appropriate action keeping the overall interests of children in mind.
- (iii) Ms. Radhika Jha, SPD Uttarakhand stated that in Uttarakhand there are some very small hamlets with very few children. It was suggested that Uttarakhand should take a look at the small school policies of the States of Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh etc which could be adopted/adapted to their context.
- (iv) SPD, Chandigarh stated that Chandigarh is a planned city, and the project costs of schools are estimated at Rs 2-3 crores. Infrastructure funding is limited under SSA; school building construction takes long to complete, because government funding takes time to come. It was suggested to the State that they could develop the whole design for a school and undertake construction in phased manner.
- (v) Ms. Banuo Jamir, Additional Chief Secretary, Nagaland sought clarification about the provision of age appropriate admissions. It was clarified that irrespective of the age of the child, he/she will be admitted to the appropriate class. The RTE Act also provides that children who join school late are entitled to free and compulsory education till they *complete* elementary education - even beyond age 14. Also, there is provision for Special Training of flexible duration of three months to two years to ensure that these children are enabled to cope with the requirements of age appropriate class.
- (vi) Shri. Rajesh Bhushan, SPD Bihar sought clarification on incorporating physical and financial requirements based on RTE norms in the SSA AWPB for 2010-11. He expressed concern as to whether the AWPB 2010-11 could accommodate the RTE requirements, given the possibility that notification for the date of enforcement of the Act would issue only after the PAB meetings for AWP&B 2010-11 are completed. It was clarified that the Planning Tables provided to the States for the AWP&B 2010-11 have been designed such that they will contain the information required from the perspective of the RTE norms and standards. However, till such

time as the SSA norms are modified, to conform to the RTE norms and standards, sanctions would be issued as per the current SSA norms. When the SSA norms are revised the State requirements for RTE, as projected in the Planning Tables included in the AWP&B, 2010-11 would be taken into consideration.

- (vii) Ms. Mridula Sinha, Secretary Jharkhand asked how dichotomy of VEC and SMC will be addressed as the latter would have a more central role in the context of RTE. It was clarified that the RTE Act lays down the composition of the SMC to include 75% members from among parents of children in the school, 50% representation of women, proportionate representation of representatives of SC, ST categories, as also representatives of teachers and panchayat members. SMCs would need to be constituted as per the composition laid down in the Act. Members of existing VECs who have been actively involved in the functioning of schools, could be involved in the SMCs if they fulfill the above criteria on SMC composition.

II. MODEL RULES UNDER RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT, 2009

15. Smt Anshu Vaish, Secretary, SE&L stated that the Ministry had also constituted a Committee under the chairpersonship of Prof. AK Sharma to prepare the 'Draft' Model Rules under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. After being examined in the Ministry, the Model Rules have been finalised and circulated to the State Governments for adoption/adaption while framing the State Rules under the RTE Act. Ms Anita Kaul, Joint Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy emphasised that the States have to take this task on a priority since the Rules have to be notified by the State Governments on the same date on which the RTE Act comes into force. A presentation of the Model Rules was made by Shri Vikram Sahay, Director, Department of School Education and Literacy, after which discussions were held on various aspects of the Model Rules.
16. Education Secretaries of West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh sought clarification on the role of the Village Education Committees vis-a-vis that of the proposed School Management Committees (SMC) u/s 21 and 22 of the RTE Act. It was clarified that there was no apparent conflict between the two Committees as the SMC had to be constituted for every school (other than an unaided school)

while the VEC was in respect of all schools within a village. Further, the composition of the SMC was distinct and different from that of the VEC.

17. State Education Secretary, Government of U.P. sought clarification on whether the aided and unaided schools can be considered as neighbourhood schools within the meaning of the Act. Attention in this regard was brought to the provisions of the section 3(1) of the Act read with sections 6 and 12(1) (a) of the Act, and it was clarified that the right of the child to receive free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education was in a neighbourhood school established by the appropriate Government and the local authority, i.e. schools under sub-clause (i) of clause (n) of section 2 of the Act. The role of aided and unaided schools for providing free and compulsory education was only in pursuance of the provisions of clauses (b) and (c) of section 12(1).
18. Principal Secretary (Education), Government of Madhya Pradesh raised the issue regarding applicability of section 23(3) to teachers of unaided school and sought clarification on whether, while finalising the Rules under the Act, the State Governments should prescribe the salary and other allowances and service conditions of teachers of the unaided schools. It was clarified that even though section 23(3) does not make any distinction amongst teachers with respect of the type of schools in which they are employed, each State Government will need to take a view on the matter (while prescribing the Rules) after considering the extant State Regulations/laws on the subject and after holding consultations with the various stakeholders, particularly, the managements of the unaided schools.
19. A related issue was raised by the participants from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal regarding salary of 'para-teachers'. It was clarified that the Act empowers the appropriate Government to prescribe the salary and other service conditions of all teachers under section 23(3) and does not draw any distinction between 'para-teachers' and regular teachers. However, in the Model Rules, it has been provided that State Governments should endeavour to treat teachers with similar qualification, experience and responsibilities at par in terms of pay and other conditions. It was, however, upto the respective State Governments to frame the Rules in this regard.

20. Principal Secretary (Education), Government of Orissa and Principal Secretary (Education) Government of Madhya Pradesh, along with other participants, raised to issue of teaching in mother tongue to children migrating from other States. It was clarified that while section 29(2) provides that the curriculum and evaluation procedure should take into account that medium of instruction should be, as far as practicable, in child's mother tongue, each State Government would need to address this issue separately, having regard to the ground realities.
21. Ms Anshu Vaish, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy stated that State Governments would need to hold extensive consultations with other stakeholders within the State for addressing the various issues involved in formulating the Rules under the Act.

III. FINANCIAL ESTIMATION FOR RTE

22. A presentation on financial implications under RTE was made by Ms. Neelam Shami Rao, Director, MHRD on 29th January 2010. Introducing the agenda she said that this presentation is based on the macro-estimation of RTE requirements on certain key items. She added that States will need to make estimates based on school development plans and other field requirements. She suggested that while undertaking the State estimates the principles followed at the national level by NUEPA could be followed.
23. She highlighted following points in the course of the presentation. The financial implications for RTE can be captured largely under the following items:
 - (i) Child entitlements in the form of books and uniforms for free and compulsory education
 - (ii) Provision for access through neighborhood schools
 - (iii) Schools to adhere to standards and norms, particularly infrastructure & teachers as per schedule under section 19 of the RTE Act
 - (iv) Training of untrained teachers within 5 years, annual in-service as well as induction training

- (v) Strengthening of SMC through capacity building and providing platform for convergent action with PRIs
 - (vi) Provisions for context specific interventions for out-of-school children, and children with special needs
 - (vii) Innovations, research, technical support and capacity building
 - (viii) Development of curriculum and evaluation systems in conformity to NCF-2005.
 - (ix) Monitoring, implementation and management of various aspects of RTE.
24. She said that the overall estimation at the national level of Rs 1,82,828 crore is summation of the State-wise requirement. For this purpose teacher requirement are staggered in 3 year time. It is evident that teachers' salary and civil works will have maximum financial requirement of 28% and 24% respectively, followed by child entitlements at 17%, special training for out of school children at 9%; school facilities will require 8%, inclusive education 6% and teacher development will need 5% of the entire projection.
25. The entitlements to the children are costed for text books at current SSA norms, and uniforms @ Rs 400 per child per annum. Considering that many States are already providing uniforms from their own State budgets, the additionality will be only for the remaining children. The component of uniforms is currently not covered under SSA. In addition, the costing for children with special needs is made at Rs.3000/- per child for inclusive education, and Rs.10, 000/- for home based education for severely disabled children. SSA norms have already been amended to accommodate their requirement and, therefore would be covered under existing SSA scheme. For admission of out of school children in age appropriate class, the current unit costs of SSA have been used.
26. Teacher salary has three sub – components (a) salary of additional 5.1 lakh teachers; (b) making terms & conditions of the services of all teachers equitable; and (c) provision of part-time instructors in 1.5 lakh upper schools. Towards this, the salaries of teachers under SSA are contingent on State specific norms; States can tap resources under SSA. The additional 5.1 lakh teachers and part time instructors will have to be recruited within a period of three years. The current teacher norms under SSA would need to be modified, and this is under consideration of the D/SEL. Further, flagging the requirement of additional

teachers Ms. Neelam Rao stated that 5.1 lakh teachers will be recruited to meet the PTR provided under RTE. Additionally, there are 5.3 lakh vacancies under State budgets, which States will need to fill expeditiously. Thirdly, under teacher posts already sanctioned under SSA, there is a balance of 2.25 lakh teachers to be recruited; the recruitment of these teachers would also need to be expedited. The following States will require a relatively large number of teachers.

Teachers	States
> 1.5 Lakh	UP
0.5 – 1 Lakh	Gujarat, Bihar,
0.2 – 0.5 Lakh	Haryana, Punjab, Karnataka,
0.1 – 0.2 Lakh	Assam, Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Goa
< 0.1 Lakh	Other States

27. Another key area of intervention would be the professional training of untrained teachers within a maximum time period of 5 years. It is estimated that there are 7.6 lakh untrained teachers in the country. The highest percentage of untrained teachers are in Arunachal Pradesh (75%), Assam (61%), Manipur (50%), Meghalaya (70%), Nagaland (71%), Sikkim (55%), Tripura (57%), Bihar (51), Jammu & Kashmir(45), Jharkhand (45). These States need to look at their pre-service teacher training capacities as well.
28. The States will have to undertake induction training for almost 13.3 lakh new teachers in the next three years for which preparedness is required. The highest number of teachers to be inducted are in Uttar Pradesh (3.9 lakh), Bihar (2.2 lakh), West Bengal (1.0 lakh), Gujarat & Rajasthan (0.6 lakh), and Orissa (0.5 lakh).
29. The requirement for Civil Works is estimated to be almost 25% of the overall estimate. Except for changing the SSA norms to provide for one classroom per teacher, the current SSA norms are sufficiently enabling for providing school facilities stipulated under SSA.

30. About 7.8 lakh additional classrooms will be required; the majority of these will be in Uttar Pradesh (2.5 lakh), Bihar (2.5 lakh), West Bengal (1.3 lakh), and Assam (30,000), Rajasthan (23,000), Punjab (20,000), Jharkhand (20,000), Gujarat (8,600), Andhra Pradesh (8,000), Orissa (6,400), Haryana (5,400).

30.1 Almost 9.43 lakh rooms for Head Teacher-cum-office-cum-storeroom in all schools will be required as follows:

Range	States
> 50,000	Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar (5)
40,000-50,000	Karnataka, West Bengal, Gujarat (3)
20,000-40,000	Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand (3)
< 20,000	Other States (24)

30.2 There are as many as 33405 pucca schools; 27000 kuchcha schools these will need to be upgraded. The status of semi pucca & kuchcha schools is as follows:

Range	States (No.)
> 5,000	Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra,
5,000-2,000	West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar
< 2,000	Other States
> 4,000	Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan
4,000-1,000	Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat,

	Maharashtra
< 1,000	Other States

30.3 Almost 7 lakh toilets for girls will be required as follows:

Range	States
> 50,000	Bihar (90k), Madhya Pradesh (63k), Orissa (54k),
35,000–50,000	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka
5,000-35,000	Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh

30.4 3.4 lakh schools will require drinking water facility as follows:

Physical	States
> 10,000	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Assam, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh (10)
1,000-10,000	Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh (9)
< 1,000	Other states (16)

31. Considering this the overall financial implications of the States will range from 7 crores to 38,000 crores amongst the States. The Statewise financial estimates are in Annexure – I.
32. After the presentation, Secretary flagged the issue of capacities of the State to absorb huge funds. Towards this she also asked, what the preparedness among the States is and how they will undertake implementation. The following points were made:
- (i) Shri R.G. Nadadur, Principal Secretary, Karnataka said that there is no clarity at the State level pertaining to the modality of funding under the RTE Act. There are two different voices being heard - the State Finance Department is of the view that funds will flow from the treasury, whereas Education Department wants the fund to flow through State Society Mode.
 - (ii) Shri Manoj Jhalani, SPD, Madhya Pradesh raised the issue of fee reimbursement of children from weaker section to unaided schools. It was clarified that the overall fund has taken into account child-wise requirement for universal education. Since the costing made by NUEPA covers all children in the 6-14 age group (as per child population projections of the Registrar General, Census of India), all children have been accounted for in the base estimation, and there is no need to factor fee reimbursement separately.
 - (iii) Sri James Varghese, Secretary (Education), Kerala stated that State budgetary allocations are in the process of being finalized and that this is the time for States to ensure adequate budgetary provisions. It was clarified to the States that the agenda note on finances circulated indicates the range for State share requirement, and States would be well advised to make budgetary provisions on the basis of the financial requirements shown, so that release of the first installment in 2010-11 under SSA is not delayed. The States were also informed that funding pattern for RTE additionality is under consideration.
 - (iv) Sri Ashok Ganguly, Additional SPD, UP said they will be adopting multi-ranged strategy, particularly with regard to recruitment of teachers which will be decentralized through block level selection. Since teachers will need to be provided on priority, there will be need to relax the qualification norms in the first instance, and ensure that teachers acquire the stipulated qualifications within the time specified in the Act. For training of

untrained teachers, the system of distance training through IGNOU/State Open Universities will need to be strengthened. He stated that the State has already initiated a dialogue on this issue. He requested Government of India and NCTE to facilitate the recognition of these courses in the distance training mode. As far as Civil Works are concerned, he stated that UP has sufficient capacity; its VECs can build the requisite numbers without any constraints. He added that with such substantial amounts of funds devolving at sub-district level, there is a need for strengthening the system of financial decentralization and monitoring at the block level, especially through capacity building of Block Education Offices for financial management and RTE implementation.

- (v) Shri Rajesh Bhushan, SPD, Bihar endorsed the view of Additional SPD, UP pertaining to training of untrained teachers. He said that issues of recognition of courses can only be taken up by MHRD. NCTE needs to recognize the DEP programme particularly with reference to the on-going programme where investments in terms of time and money has already been done, and delay at this juncture would lead to wastage of all efforts.
- (vi) Sri R. Prasad Gupta Secretary Education, Gujarat said that there is a need to enhance the norms of teacher training, RBC as well as civil works. In addition, the ceiling of 33% to build infrastructure within the strict time frame will need relaxation in some districts. Sri Singh, SPD Chandigarh also requested for the relaxation of civil works norms from the current 33% ceiling. Ms Anita Kaul JS (EE-II) clarified that wherever there are infrastructure gaps, those districts can always be declared as special focus districts. These districts can utilize upto 50% of outlays for civil works in a given year, provided this does not exceed the ceiling of 33% in entire project period.
- (vii) Ms. Radhika Jha, SPD Uttarakhand asked that their present SSA budgets are at Rs.358 crores, where as RTE estimates peg them at less than this. It was clarified to the state that the financial amounts do not include existing teacher's salary budget under SSA.
- (viii) Ms Vijayasheela Sardesai from Maharastra raised the issue of including class 8th in the elementary cycle. She said that in the existing structure, the students of class 8 have an advantage of having teachers from Senior Secondary. Ms Anita Kaul, JS(EE-II) said that there are seven states that have the same problem. All benefits of free and compulsory education as also MDM are being denied by these States to children who are currently not part of the elementary school cycle. She emphasized that it is important to understand that class 8 students are not senior secondary

students. From a pedagogic point of view, there is a need to look at composite elementary education cycle, where students are not burdened by the nature of secondary schooling which is significantly different in nature from elementary education.

IV. SSA: ACCESS AND EQUITY

33. Shri Pramod Tiwari, Director, D/SE&L made a comprehensive presentation on issues relating to access and equity. He highlighted the following points:

- (i) There has been significant progress under SSA in achieving the access goals. However, there is need for sharper focus on children in small and sparsely populated habitations; a multi-pronged strategy to address their age appropriate needs to be evolved, encompassing relaxation of State norms for opening schools, wherever possible, and arrangements for transportation or opening of residential schools. In this context he also drew attention to eight States, namely, Assam, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Kerala, Manipur and West Bengal, which do not have an explicitly articulated policy on opening new schools; lack of such policy has adversely affected attainment of the goal of universal of access to elementary education.
- (ii) Comprehensive school and social mapping undertaken with community involvement would enable states identify children in need of schooling in such habitations, and design special interventions for them. Dialogue with the village community and peer group sensitization should be initiated to address the social, economic and cultural barriers that children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections face within the school or outside school to eliminate discriminatory practices in the schools and ensure that the school becomes a more equitable place for all children.
- (iii) 313 districts have been categorized as Special Focus Districts on account of high population of disadvantaged groups. These include 61 districts with SC population, 109 with ST population and 88 with a high percentage of Muslim population. States have not yet instituted mechanisms for monitoring progress in respect of access and equity in these districts
- (iv) The quality of access has become a cause of concern, and requires urgent attention. States should undertake access audit to ascertain that school infrastructure provided under SSA and other state programmes meet the

desired standards. Particular attention should be given to making school buildings CWSN-friendly.

- (v) On the progress of opening new schools, Shri Pramod Tiwari flagged the slow progress in several states. Of 9,404 new primary schools sanctioned in 2009-10, only 2,677 were reported to have been opened. Of the total of 1,70,426 primary schools sanctioned up to 2009-10, as many as 19,257 are yet to be opened. Large backlogs persist in the States of Assam, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, J&K, Orissa and West Bengal.
- (vi) As regards new upper primary schools, only 3,709 out of 12,015 sanctioned in 2009-10 have been opened. Against the cumulative target of 1,61,907 up to 2009-10, as many as 25,042 upper primary schools have not yet been opened. There are large backlogs in the states of Bihar, J&K, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- (vii) In the context of primary and upper primary schools remaining unopened, Shri Pramod Tiwari emphasized the need for ensuring access in villages with 40% or more SC, ST and Muslim minority population, especially in districts which fall in the category of Special Focus Districts (SFD) 'D'.

34. Further, he pointed out that nine states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Goa, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Orissa, which follow a seven year elementary education cycle of 4+3 years, need to take immediate corrective measures to follow a eight year elementary education cycle of 5+3 years, especially keeping in view of the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009.

35. In the discussion that followed the following points were made:

- (i) Shri Rajesh, SPD, Himachal Pradesh responded that many habitations in Himachal Pradesh are uninhabited and agreed that a school mapping exercise was necessary in order to ascertain the exact position.
- (ii) SPD, Assam stated that new primary schools had not been opened on account of the delay in Government decision for upgrading EGS centres. She stated that the State Government has now notified the upgradation of 1521 EGS centres, and the process of opening of all the sanctioned schools would be initiated.
- (iii) SPD, Bihar stated that non-availability of land is the main reason for delay in opening new schools. He also stated that the State Government is making budget provisions for purchase of land, and expected that the remaining new schools would be opened without further delay.

- (iv) SPD, West Bengal stated that the State Government has initiated the process of notifying the upgradation of the existing SSKs and MSKs, and once this is complete, the new schools would be opened.
- (v) SPD, Rajasthan stated that there were Assembly and Panchayat elections during the year, and therefore it had not been possible to open the new schools. She stated that now that these elections are over, the State would take expeditious steps to ensure that the new schools are operationalised.
- (vi) SPD, Uttar Pradesh stated that all remaining upper primary schools would be opened during this year itself.

V. OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN

- 36. On issues concerning out-of-school children Shri Pramod Tiwari stated that slow progress and delay in operationalizing AIE centres was a matter of concern. By the end of the 2nd quarter of 2009-10, only 36.18% RBCs and 34.03% NRBCs were reportedly opened; the utilization of funds was only 17.24%. The slowest progress was in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Orissa and West Bengal.
- 37. He highlighted the significance of the RTE provisions relating to age appropriate admission of out-of-school children. The implications of this provision is that States would need to (i) institute a system of comprehensive identification of out-of-school children, (ii) ensure their admission to age appropriate class, (iii) set up mechanisms for special training of these children depending on previous levels of learning, their age and the class to which they are admitted, and (iv) ensure that on completion of special training they are integrated in the regular class and provided ongoing academic and emotional support in school. States would need to reconceptualise the functioning of AIE centres as Special Training Centres under the RTE Act, 2009.
- 38. Further, Shri Tiwari flagged issues of conducting and updating survey records of migrant and urban deprived children, especially in the four metros and 35 million plus cities, context-specific special training strategies for SC, ST & Muslim children, development of appropriate teaching-learning materials in line with the State's renewed curriculum and effective and adequate training for teachers engaged in special training. States were requested to develop an online record of

children and a web-enabled mechanism for intra-state and inter-state sharing of information on migrant children.

39. Shri Tiwari noted with concern the slow implementation of activities for SC / ST and Minority under the Innovation (16.52% and 12.02% for SC and ST respectively up to the 2nd quarter). States like Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, D&D, Delhi, Haryana J&K, Manipur, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh had reported Nil utilization of funds for ST, ST under the Innovation Fund up to the 2nd quarter. Similarly, the states of A.P., Bihar, Delhi, J&K, Orissa and U.P. had reported nil utilization for Minority under the Innovation fund.
40. States were apprised of the observations of the 11th JRM that there was very little innovation in the designing of activities under these heads. Shri Tiwari stated that activities under the Innovation Fund should be based on detailed social mapping exercises, and an holistic assessment of the diverse challenges faced by the children of these social groups in getting quality education. He elaborated that the identification of Special Focus Clusters and blocks, and formation of block and cluster level consultative groups could help in planning better interventions. Given the importance of addressing equity concerns in all the access and quality interventions, he suggested that states should have Equity Coordinators both at the SPO and DPO levels and in the small states/UTs the Gender Coordinator, could be assigned responsibility of monitoring equity issues.
41. In the discussion that followed the following points/clarifications were made:
 - (i) SPD, Rajasthan stated that RBCs in Rajasthan could not be started owing to the complaints of malpractices. Shri Tiwari pointed out that Rajasthan was one of the States with the largest difference in the figures of out-of-school children as estimated by the State and projected by the IMRB sample survey.
 - (ii) Several States pointed out that delay in operationalizing AIE centres arose on account of the time taken in inviting proposals from NGOs, processing those proposals and holding GIAC meetings. Shri Tiwari suggested that that states could streamline this process through empanelment of reputed NGOs at the start of the year, rather than adopting a piecemeal and fragmented approach.

- (iii) Secretary, Education, Chhattisgarh stated the state had developed a web portal for keeping online record of the children and had also revised its approach to the survey of out of school children by incorporating dropout children in this category.
- (iv) SPD, Gujarat raised the issue of coordination between States to ensure coverage of migrant children. She stated that she had written letters to the SPDs of neighbouring states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- (v) SPD, Tamil Nadu informed that the state had taken steps for intra-state sharing of information on migrant children and was in communication with other states to set up inter-state coordination body for effective coverage of migrant children.

VI. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- 42. On Inclusive Education for Children With Special Needs, Shri Tiwari flagged the need to provide greater momentum to the identification process of the CWSN, particularly in 10 states, namely, Haryana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu and Delhi, where the identification was extremely low at less than 1% of the child population.
- 43. States also need to pay greater attention to the enrollment of the CWSN as nearly 17% of the identified CWSN were reported to be out of school. He stated that the IMRB survey pegs the figure of out-of-school CWSN at 34%.
- 44. Effective academic support to CWSN was impeded by the absence of technically qualified Resource Teachers. States were urged, therefore, to engage the requisite number of Resource Teachers, and also to provide 90-day Foundation Course Training to a larger number of regular teachers
- 45. Shri Tiwari informed participants that the SSA norm for CWSN have been increased from Rs. 1200/- to Rs. 3000/- per CWSN. It should therefore be possible for States to provide 10-15 days multi-category training to Resource Teachers, strengthen Resource Rooms, institutionalize a robust monitoring mechanism, and ensure disaggregated data on enrollment, attendance, retention and completion for CWSN.

46. Finally, he stated that CWSN-appropriate elements should be incorporated in the curriculum, text books and evaluation process, so that they could complete their education without facing any stress and anxiety.
47. Smt Anshu Vaish, Secretary SE&L stated that under SSA considerable progress has been made to achieve the access goal, especially at the primary stage of education. It is crucial for us to ensure that we reach out to the hardest to reach and most deprived children, and provide education of equitable quality. She reiterated the following points for states to take immediate action:
 48. Eight states which do not have an explicit policy on opening schools should take immediate steps to do so. Further, all other states should review their existing policy in the light of the RTE Act to ensure that no child is left out of the elementary schooling system.
 49. In school and social mapping exercises, it is not enough to merely prepare spatial maps and distance matrices for school location. School and social mapping must be undertaken with community involvement to ensure that children who cannot access school to social, economic and cultural reasons are enabled to do so.
 50. RTE Act mandates free and compulsory education for all children in the 6-14 age group. Therefore, nine states which follow a seven year elementary education cycle should ensure that appropriate changes are put in place for an eight year elementary education cycle.
 51. States should put in place mechanisms for regular monitoring of activities in the SFD districts for SC, ST and Muslim minorities, as also for the LWE affected districts.
 52. The process of reconceptualising AIE to function as Centres for Special Training under the RTE Act must commence. This would entail review and reform of the curriculum, teaching learning material, teacher training to ensure that children participating in Special Training are provided learning opportunities appropriate to their age and the class to which they will be enrolled.

VII. GENDER AND GIRLS' EDUCATION

53. Initiating the discussions Dr. Suparna S. Pachouri, Deputy Secretary, MHRD gave a brief presentation on Girls' Education indicating focus areas for AWP&B 2010-11, major concerns relating to KGBV, NPEGEL, as also on the Mahila Samakhya programme and its contribution to girls' education.
54. Dr. Pachouri reviewed the existing data on outreach and coverage across the States through the KGBV and NPEGEL programmes, highlighting three specific areas of concern:
- (i) Need for fair and rationale criteria, and transparent process of selection of girls,
 - (ii) Low enrolment of girls from minority communities, even in EBBs of minority in particular, and
 - (iii) Existing KGBVs are not fully functional as schools at present.
55. Some responses from the larger group were as follows:
- (i) SPD, SSA Uttar Pradesh stated that there is need in KGBVs to appoint Headmistresses, in addition to wardens and teachers. He stated that wardens are overburdened by housekeeping duties, overall care of holistic development of the girl students, and also the administrative and managerial responsibilities of a large residential school. To take this burden off and allow efficiency in each aspect of running the KGBV, a seperate Headmistress needs to be appointed.
 - (ii) Secondly, a point was raised that the existing salary for KGBV teachers is relatively low, and results in a high turnover of teachers. A suggestion was made to enhance salaries iof KGBV teachers.
 - (iii) SPD, SSA , Jharkhand stated that to look deeper into why fewer Muslim girls are enrolled in KGBVs, the State Government conducted a survey in blocks with concentration of Muslim population and noticed that there are many Madrasas which are doing excellent work in Muslim girls' education. Therefore, the State Education department is trying to support this ongoing work as well.
56. Dr. Pachouri highlighted issues in the implementation of NPEGEL and KGBV by Mahila Samakhya in seven States and provided the corresponding data to the larger group. MS programme's own coverage across 10 States was also shared. Mentioning the existing conflicts between MS programme and State Education departments in a few States faced this year, Dr. Pachouri made a brief statement on the essence of the MS programme:

- (i) MS is not a service-delivery programme.
 - (ii) MS learnings from two decades' of grassroots work with rural women and girls should be integrated into SSA's planning.
 - (iii) MS should be recognised at State & National levels as the primary technical resource on gender in education.
 - (iv) Keeping in mind these non-negotiables of the MS programme, Dr. Pachouri emphasised the critical need for State Education departments and SSA programmes to evolve mechanisms like a code of conduct to negotiate and maintain a collaborative, mutually respectful and supportive relationship between the former and MS State programmes.
 - (v) She then also shared that fostering such a supportive relationship is the objective of including MS in deliberations of the State Education Secretaries' conference for the first time and hence, the PAB of MS and SSA are being held concurrently at the MHRD level this year, as well.
57. Smt Anshu Vaish, Secretary (SE&L) observed that Mahila Samakhya programme was not generally covered in previous Conferences of State Education Secretaries/SPDs, but to ensure convergence of MS with SSA and to ensure better coordination, the GoI has laid stress on the issue of mutual respect between the two programmes. MS is a quality programme rather than the quantity programme. Through various evaluations, it has been proved a successful programme in empowering women. However, the pressures upon functioning of MS in a few States is causing concern. Procedures for appointment and selection of SPDs are not being followed. As the nature of MS programme is completely different from that of SSA, there should be an appreciation of differences between the two programme functionaries. Accordingly, there is a need for State Education Secretaries to extend support to State Programme Directors, MS in their respective States. Treating MS as a service delivery mechanism should be avoided.
58. JS(EE.II) stated that Mahila Samakhya is a powerful grass-root programme in which Sangha women have resisted gender discrimination of any kind to bring about change in the Society's outlook towards women. It is the oldest programme of the MHRD and perhaps its uniqueness is what has supported its survival over two decades. Hence this uniqueness should be preserved and not pressured to change into service-delivery. MS State programmes, sanghas & federations are empowered and have undertaken programme delivery as per their priorities and capacity. This should be respected by State Education Secretaries where MS is functioning.
59. JS (EE.II) also referred to the need in KGBV for selection of girls from disadvantaged families and to ensure the enrolment of muslim girls. The main issue of concern is that some of the States are conducting entrance test of girls seeking admission into KGBVs. It was felt that there should be no screening

procedure. If there were more applications than the number of seats then admission can be done with lottery system or on need based assessment.

60. JS (EE.II) also mentioned that this year onwards, the appraisals of MS would be conducted and thereafter the Annual Plan of MS would be discussed alongwith the SSA PAB meeting of the relevant State. This procedure has been adopted to ensure timelines of completion of procedures.
61. On the issue relating to launching of MS programme in Madhya Pradesh, Secretary(SE&L) stated that the Government of Madhya Pradesh is not responding to various communications sent by GoI in this regard. She requested that the State Education department should communciate within reasonable time to the MHRD its plans to start the programme, pending which any other state viz. Rajasthan may be requested to take action for starting MS programme in that State.

VIII. REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON QUALITY INTERVENTIONS UNDER SSA

62. A presentation on review of progress on quality interventions under SSA was made by Ms. Neelam Rao, Director, MHRD on 30th January, 2010 during the Education Secretaries Conference. She highlighted following points:

62.1 Key outcome indicators for assessing progress:

- (i) Retention rates at elementary level, which remain low
- (ii) Student Attendance as also teacher availability rates is also a cause for concern. Students attendance as per QMT reports are as low as 65 in Assam, 77 in Madhya Pradesh, 83 in Punjab and Tripura.
- (iii) Learning levels indicate modest improvement between the 1st and 2nd rounds of NCERT achievement testing, but nonetheless still continue to be low

62.2 Large teacher vacancies:

- (i) High vacancies under SSA persist in Bihar (91657), Madhya Pradesh (15898), West Bengal (46797), Rajasthan (28499), Uttar Pradesh (27580).

- (ii) In addition, there are high vacancies under State budget in Uttar Pradesh (1.7 lakh), West Bengal (53,000), Bihar (51,000), Chhattisgarh (37,000), Orissa (37,000), Rajasthan. (30,000).
- (iii) The situation is exacerbated by adverse PTR at the school level. There are a large number of such schools in Bihar (74%), Uttar Pradesh (55%), Jharkhand (51%), West Bengal (44%), owing to overall inadequate teachers, as also in Madhya Pradesh (38%), Chhattisgarh, Punjab (20%), Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat. (18%), Uttarakhand (16%), Karnataka (14%) owing to uneven deployment.

62.3 Harmonising the core components of curriculum - syllabus, textbook, teacher training and assessment systems

- (i) Several States have reportedly initiated curriculum reform in accordance with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005. The process of curriculum framework formulation needs to be concretized through further work in syllabus revision and consequential redesigning of textbooks, supplementary material and assessment systems.
- (ii) The core elements of curriculum, including syllabus formulation, textbook development, supplementary teaching learning material, learner assessment systems and teacher training are developed by different agencies of the education department, with little or no effort at ensuring that the core elements are in sync with each other. This disharmony between the core elements leads to development of material which is not age appropriate and increases the teaching learning burden on teachers and children.

62.4 Annual in-service teacher training:

- (i) The current training approach is fragmented, often leading to a situation that teachers repeatedly attend the same training programme year after year. Consequently, training often does not lead to capacity enhancement or content enrichment, or result in enhancing motivation levels of teachers to bring about changes in classroom practices.

- (ii) The practice of developing an overall Training Plan, which delineates details of different training modules does not exist, and needs to be introduced.
- (iii) More focus needs to be given to introduce and sustain interactive, participatory and democratic training methods/ processes.

62.5 Training of untrained teachers

- (i) The professional training of untrained teachers needs to be taken up on priority, considering that there are 9.62 lakh untrained teachers in Government and aided schools. The highest percentage of untrained teachers is in Arunachal Pradesh (75%), Assam (61%), Manipur (50%), Meghalaya (70%), Nagaland (71%), Sikkim (55%), Tripura (57%) Bihar (51%), J&K (45%), Jharkhand (45%)

62.6 Timely delivery and effective utilization of textbooks

- (i) The overall distribution of free textbooks is 97%; however, textbooks are yet to be distributed in A&N, D&NH, Mizoram, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Gujarat.

62.7 Teacher and School Grants

- (i) Teacher grants have been distributed to 85% teachers, but the process has not yet been initiated in Manipur and Mizoram and progress is slow in Andhra Pradesh (50%), Bihar (70%), Uttar Pradesh (72%), Rajasthan (76%), Assam (78%), Delhi, Haryana (85%)
- (ii) School Grants have been distributed to 91% schools (12.5 lakh), but not initiated in Manipur and Mizoram, progress is slow in Andhra Pradesh (65%), Bihar (61%), Haryana, Jharkhand (88%) and Rajasthan (89%)

- (iii) There is little evident of effective utilisation of teacher and school grants; there is need for capacity building of teachers, head teachers and educational administrators to ensure that these grants are being utilised in a meaningful manner in the interest of children and schools.

62.8 Academic support by BRC and CRC

- (i) Although most BRCs and CRCs are operational, their effectiveness is an area of concern. The quality of school visits undertaken by CRC and BRC faculty, and the training programmes conducted by them need considerable improvement.
- (ii) There is need for instituting a system whereby experienced and competent regular staff are posted to BRCs/CRCs.
- (iii) States need to focus on the academic role of BRC/CRCs – giving priority to school visits and academic support. 29% of the schools were not even visited even once during the year by the CRCs, whereas CRC is required to visit all schools once in a month.
- (iv) Implement performance indicators for tracking and enhancing performance of teachers, trainers, and support institutions (especially in Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland and Punjab)
- (v) Monitoring formats should be rationalized to reduce their number and repetitive nature.
- (vi) Need for capacity-building through exposure to innovative practices/ resources.

63. In the discussion that ensued the following points were made with reference to teacher recruitment and re-deployment:

- (i) Shri Rajesh Bhushan, SPD, Bihar stated that there are two issues, one relating to absolute vacancies and the other relating to rationalisation of vacancies. Out of available vacancies of 2,20,000 in Bihar, about 76,000 vacancies will be filled up before 31st March, 2010 on fixed pay basis.

Another 35,000 vacancies of regular teachers will be filled up before new academic session. In the districts and sub districts having PTR > 40:1, the rationalisation will be done before April- May, 2010.

- (ii) Smt Veenu SPD, Rajasthan stated that a proposal for filling up 17,000 posts has been sent to Rajasthan Public Service Commission, which was pending due to some dispute in State reservation policy. She stated that a decision had been recently taken to fill up the posts on the basis of the existing reservation policy, and that these posts are likely to be filled up within the next 6- 8 months. To the query raised by Ms. Rao regarding 60,000 teachers' vacancies in the State sector in Rajasthan, SPD replied that another proposal is being sent RPSC for filling up the remaining vacancies. She also stated that redeployment of teachers will be completed before the next academic session.
- (iii) Shri Manoj SPD, West Bengal stated that teacher vacancies could not be filled up due to litigation. Now, 58,000 regular teachers have been recruited and 60,000 more vacancies will be filled up before the start of new academic session.
- (iv) Shri Ashok Ganguly, Additional SPD, Uttar Pradesh stated that 96% redeployment of teachers has already been completed in U.P. He further informed that around 37,000 vacancies of teachers are expected to be filled up by April, 2010.
- (v) Shri Pattnaik SPD, Orissa stated that PTR in Orissa has already improved and they have recruited 45,000 teachers during the current year. The redeployment process is in progress to improve PTR at school level in view of the provisions of RTE, Act, 2009.

64. To the issue of uneven deployment of teachers, Shri Krishan Kumar, SPD Punjab intimated that the rationalisation was done in October- November, 2009 and the process will be completed by March end 2010.

- (i) Shri Nand Kumar, Education Secretary, Chhattisgarh stated that 13,000 vacancies out of a total of 37,000 vacancies will be filled up before 30th April 2010 in Chhattisgarh.
- (ii) Smt. Aarti Kanwar, SPD, Gujarat stated that the redeployment policy has been reviewed and redeployment will be take place to improve, the PTR.

- (iii) Shri Venkatesh, SPD Tamil Nadu stated that there are no teacher vacancies at primary level; 6,000 vacancies at Upper Primary level will be filled up in next two months.
 - (iv) Shri Manoj Jhalani SPD, Madhya Pradesh stated that there are 5,000 vacancies of teachers in Madhya Pradesh, and rationalisation of teacher redeployment will be undertaken before the next academic session.
 - (v) Shri R. Nadadur, Principal Secretary Education, Karnataka pointed out difficulties in posting teachers to remote, inaccessible parts of the State. Nonetheless, existing teacher vacancies are likely to be filled up by March, 2010. Ms. Neelam Rao, Director MHRD stated that the 11th JRM has observed that the special allowances for teachers posted to difficult areas may be considered by the State Government.
65. Flagging the issue of 7.5 lakh teacher vacancies in different States in the country, Smt. Anshu Vaish Secretary (SE&L) urged the States to expedite recruitment and redeployment. She also advised the States to adopt a transparent system of teacher deployment and drew attention to the provisions of RTE for this purpose.
66. Smt Anita Kaul, JS (EE-II) raised the issue of follow up on the Regional Workshops on Education of Equitable Quality held in June-August 2009. The following points were made in this regard:
- (i) Shri Reshi SPD, J&K stated that the process of curriculum renewal has been initiated in consultation with J&K School Board of Education and it is expected that the textbook will be revised in the next 3-4 months.
 - (ii) Smt Vijayasheel Sardesai from Maharashtra stated that the State Government has held two meetings for revising SCF, and a third meeting is likely to be held shortly. The SCERT, SSA and Board of Education have initiated the process of revision of textbooks.
 - (iii) Shri Mohammad Rafath, SPD, Andhra Pradesh stated that they have already revised SCF up to class V on the basis of NCF, 2005 and the process is underway for class VI to VIII. Textbooks for classes I-V have also been revised on the basis of revised SCF. On a query from JS (EE-II) about the approach to textbook revision, Shri Rafath stated that text books, which were previously teacher centred, are now being made child centred.

- (iv) Shri Rajesh Bhushan SPD, Bihar informed that in Bihar a BCF has been formulated on the basis of NCF, 2005. They have revised the syllabus & textbooks for classes I, III & VI. The textbooks for other classes will be revised by December, 2010. The new books are different from the previous ones and are of better quality in terms of paper, layout and design; in addition they contain local specific reference to Bihar's places, rivers and personalities etc.
 - (v) Shri Ashok Ganguly, SPD, U.P. stated that they have revisited the syllabi/books for classes I to VIII, included English as subject. The teachers' manual is in place. They have also adopted the continuous and comprehensive evaluation/ assessment system.
 - (vi) Ms Vandana Jena, Principal Secretary, Orissa stated that the SCF had been formulated, and syllabus/ textbooks have been revised for classes I and II. The new books are in multi-colour. Revision of textbooks for classes III to VIII is under process. She enquired whether the books of Maths & Science developed by NCERT can be used by the State. JS (EE- II) clarified that NCERT gives copyright permission for using their books; this is generally not a problem, and prior permission may be obtained from the NCERT.
67. On the issue of Teacher Training, Smt Anshu Vaish Secretary (SE&L) reiterated the importance of training processes and methodology. She urged States to develop comprehensive Training Plans, so that teachers perceive them as relevant. Smt. Anita Kaul, JS (EE.II) emphasised the need of residential training and participatory method. She stated that the idea of experiential and activity based learning processes has been theoretically accepted by States, but training methodology continues to be lecture dominated. Unless training processes are changed to become more experiential and activity based, it would be futile to expect teachers to changes classroom practices. The States must revisit their classroom processes, and review the training content and methodology. Following points were made by the States:
- (i) SPD, Manipur and SPD, Sikkim stated that progress in teacher training was slow, but is now picking up in their respective States.
 - (ii) Education Secretary, Jharkhand stated that the State will make an effort to ensure that teacher training is conducted during the vacation period, so that teachers are not disturbed in the middle of the academic session.

- (iii) Addl. SPD, UP intimated that 75% of the number of teachers expected to be trained is expected to be achieved by 15th Feb., 2010
 - (iv) SPD, Rajasthan raised the issue of inadequacy of norms (Rs.100 per person per day) for residential training, and suggested that the financial norms be revised.
68. With respect to slow progress in distribution of TLM grant and school grant, SPD Manipur and SPD Mizoram stated that they have already released the grant, and SPD Assam stated that grants are likely to be released before the 15th February, 2010.
69. With respect to BRC and CRC following points were made:
- (i) SPD, Rajasthan informed that there are no BRCs/CRCs in 19 erstwhile DPEP districts in the State. The State Govt. has declined to support the BRCs/CRCs in these districts. In these districts, BEO and HM of school have been assigned additional responsibility of BRCs/CRCs. This makes their workload heavy and difficult to discharge.
 - (ii) Education Secretary, Chhattisgarh stated that CRC were promoted and now the post of CAC (Cluster Academic Co-ordinator) has been sanctioned for working as CRC.
70. Director, MHRD requested the States to furnish details of research studies, if undertaken by States at the earliest.
71. Shri Subir Shukla, Chief Adviser (Quality) emphasised the need for a long-term quality plan which should be based on an introspection of what is '*right*' (*right* meaning age appropriate, relevant, based on their experience)
- (i) Schools should teach the children the *right* things and should not work as tuition centres or coaching centres.
 - (ii) Teachers should teach in the *right* way

- (iii) Children should be taught *right* quantum of learning.
- (iv) There should be diversity in classroom processes.

72. Shri Subir Shukla expressed confidence that if the above is implemented sincerely, then quality in education will definitely improve. He suggested the development of a three years quality plan, which should include:

- (i) Holistic quality improvement plan
- (ii) Development of curriculum, syllabus and text book, etc.,
- (iii) Capacity development of master trainers i.e. resource persons.

IX. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

73. Ms. Richa Sharma, Director (EE) made a comprehensive presentation on Financial Management and Procurement, highlighting the following points:

- (i) The overall level of expenditure upto 30th September 2009 is low. In certain intervention no expenditure whatsoever has been incurred. The state-wise expenditure performance is tabulated below:

>40%	4 States Karnataka, Tripura, Rajasthan and Mizoram
30% and 40%	13 States M.P, Goa, Kerala, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh, West Bengal, H.P, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh
20% and 30%	8 States Puducherry, Maharashtra, Assam, Orissa, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Nagaland

< 20%	<p>10 States A&N Island, Bihar, Delhi, Lakshadweep Daman & Diu, Haryana, J&K, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, A.P and Manipur</p>
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- (ii) The Manual on Financial Management and Procurement has been revised. The revisions will take effect from 1st April, 2010. The changes were shared with the States and they were advised to immediately translate the manual in the vernacular, and disseminate it to all SSA personnel in the States. The States were also advised that the VEC/SMC Manual should be appropriately revised, highlighting the importance of opening of bank accounts, simplified accounting and procurement procedure, maintenance of essential books of accounts, need for display board in schools etc.
- (iii) Financial Monitoring needs to be strengthened by providing optimal staff, improving internal audits and strengthening statutory audit.
- (iv) Eight States, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Manipur and Sikkim have not yet submitted the statutory audit report for 2008-09, even though it was due on 31st December 2009.
- (v) The quality of audit reports is poor and needs improvement. Timely appointment of auditor by the close of the financial year was also emphasized. All States should ensure audit coverage of VECs receiving more than Rs. 1 lakh per year in a cycle of three years.
- (vi) Compliance reports are awaited from:

2005-06 - 11 States of Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, HP, Jharkhand, J&K, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland.

2006-07 - 19 States of Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, J&K, Karnataka, Kerala, MP, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu & Tripura.

2007-08 - 25 States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, J&K, Jharkhand, HP, Haryana,

Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, MP, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand

2008-09 - Deficiencies/discrepancies and certain audit observations taken up with the States, who have submitted the audit reports.

- (vii) The date of submission of audit is advanced to 30th November, therefore statutory auditors should be appointed as soon as possible.
- (viii) The position of outstanding advances is alarming and the States should take immediate action to adjust all outstanding advances.
- (ix) Although internal audits have started they are still weak in 31 states. These have not been carried out in Tamil Nadu since 2006-07, and not started at all in Chhattisgarh, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep and Nagaland. The States must set up a functional and efficient internal audit system. The States are expected to ensure optimal and concurrent coverage and review reports as a feedback on existing internal control systems and for effective financial management.
- (x) Follow up action on the IPAI review reports is pending in many States and these States should take immediate action in this regard.
- (xi) Diversion of funds and other financial irregularities are a matter of serious concern and State should avoid the same in future. The State should also take immediate action to recoup the same to SSA accounts.
- (xii) Refund of the unspent balances of DPEP and SSA pre-project funds by the following States:
 - a. **Pre-project activities of SSA:** Refunds are due from Assam, Bihar, J&K, Manipur, Meghalaya and West Bengal.
 - b. **DPEP:** Refunds are due from Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Kerala, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

- (xiii) Vacant posts of finance and accounts staff are a major problem in many States, which was also commented upon by the 11th JRM. States should take immediate action to fill all the vacant positions.
- (xiv) Vacant posts at SPO in 26 States: Arunachal Pradesh (1), Assam (3), Bihar (3), Chhattisgarh (2), Dadra & Nagar (1), Daman & Diu (1), Delhi (1), Goa (1), Gujarat (1), Haryana (12), HP (2), J&K (2), Jharkhand (5), Karnataka (1), Kerala (1), Lakshadweep (1), Maharashtra (1), Mizoram (1), Nagaland (1), Puducherry (1), Punjab (2), Rajasthan (5), Tripura (5), UP (8), Uttarakhand (2) and WB (3).
- (xv) Vacant posts at DPOs in 26 States: Assam (13), Bihar (34), Chhattisgarh (6), Daman & Diu (2), Delhi (36), Goa (1), Gujarat (12), Haryana (14), HP (8), J&K (22), Jharkhand (11), Karnataka (5), MP (17+82 Block level), Maharashtra (33+130 Block level), Manipur (9), Meghalaya (1), Nagaland (3), Orissa (13), Punjab (2), Rajasthan (21+121 Block level), Sikkim (2), Tamil Nadu (4), Tripura (19), Uttar Pradesh (75), Uttarakhand (13) and WB (22)
- (xvi) Capacity building of Finance and Accounts staff is not taking place in many States and several States are lagging behind in the annual five days mandatory training. The States should accelerate the pace of capacity building. All States/UTs must provide training to Accounts staff on a regular basis, especially covering areas where amendments have been made in the FMP manual.
- (xvii) The State should ensure e-transfer of funds upto sub-district level wherever banking facilities exist.
- (xviii) More attention should be paid to web based monitoring. The States, which have not yet introduced web based monitoring, should introduce the same urgently.
- (xix) The procurement procedure prescribed in the Manual on Financial Management and Procurement should be strictly followed. Documentation of procurement is very important and the same should be retained for audit/review purpose.
- (xx) The maintenance of stock register and asset register and its annual physical verification should be ensured at all levels.

74. In the discussion that followed the presentation following points were made:

- 74.1 SPD, Bihar stated that the expenditure figures presented were as on September, 2009, and the position as on December, 2009 has improved considerably with reference to outlay and funds available. He sought more funds from Government of India during the current financial year.
- 74.2 SPD, Orissa stated that as on December, 2009, expenditure is around 50% of the outlay and 67% of the funds available.
- 74.3 J&K stated that the backlog of State share amounting to Rs. 132 crore was brought to the notice of the State Government, and a request has been made to release the State share.
- 74.5 SPD, Andhra Pradesh stated that Rs. 192 crore is only the backlog of State share.
- 74.6 SPD, West Bengal stated that the backlog of the State share was already released and sought more release from Government of India.
- 74.7 SPD, Mizoram has also sought release of more funds from the Government of India.
75. Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary (SE&L) emphasized the need for accelerating the expenditure. The refund of the unspent balances of DPEP and SSA pre-project funds should be made immediately, to ensure that further release of funds under SSA is not adversely affected. She also made it clear that without the availability of State share it will not be possible to release further GOI funds, which will affect the implementation of the programme.
76. JS (EE-II) stated that funds are available with GOI and the States, which have fulfilled the conditions should send the request for additional funds.

X. PRIORITY AREAS UNDER SSA AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN & BUDGET 2010-11

77. Ms Neelam Shami Rao, Director also made a presentation on the priority areas under SSA and the Annual Work Plan & Budget 2010-11 for SSA. The main highlights of the presentation are as follows:

77.1 **Universal Access & Enrolment:** Although there is an increase in GER and NER level both at primary and upper primary level, challenges at upper primary level are high; 8% habitations do not have upper primary school within 3 km. The challenges in terms of enrolment are high particularly at the elementary level in Bihar (GER 48), Uttar Pradesh (GER 55), Jharkhand (GER 66) & Gujarat (GER 58). She also flagged need for reducing inter-State and inter-District disparity by careful location of the schools. Some States like Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Kerala, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland continue to follow 7 years elementary education cycle, and this has adversely affected enrolment and retention in the elementary cycle.

77.2 Trends informing reduction in the number of out of school children indicate that the percentage of out of school children has reduced from 10% to 4.2% of 6-14 years. As per independent survey conducted by SRI-IMRB in 2009, girls constitute 4.6%, SC 5.9%, ST 5.2% of the total out-of-school children. The SRI-IMRB study also reveals that the largest number of out of school children in the 6-14 age group are among Muslims 7.7%. Ms Neelam Rao flagged the differences in the data emanating from the household survey conducted by States/UTs and the SRI-IMRB survey. She stated that the difference in the percentage of out of school children in household survey conducted by States and the SRI-IMRB survey is particularly high in Uttar Pradesh (34%), Bihar (17%), Rajasthan (12%), West Bengal (9%) and Orissa (5%) and Madhya Pradesh (4%); these States have 81% of the total out of school children in the country.

- 77.3 She further informed States that the 8th All India School Education Survey (AISES) is being undertaken by NCERT in 2010; it is expected that AISES will help validating DISE data. Since the last AISES in 2002 1,70,426 primary schools have been sanctioned, of which 89% operational. West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Jammu & Kashmir need to operationalise 4386, 1835, 1700 and 1707 primary schools respectively. At the upper primary level 1,61,907 upper primary schools have been sanctioned, of which 85% have been made operational. There are a large number of unopened upper primary schools in Bihar (6117), West Bengal (6298), Rajasthan (2864) and Orissa (2272). She stated that opening the new upper primary school sanctioned should be taken up on priority in order to address the problem of the high PS:UPS ratio. This is most acute in West Bengal (5.48:1), Arunachal Pradesh (4.16:1) and Bihar (3.35:1).
- 77.4 To ensure universal access and enrollment some of the norms of SSA have been revised. To enhance access (ref para 1.9.10 of Chapter 1, Intervention 2 of the Framework of Implementation) the norms for school have been modified to enable opening of schools within the neighbourhood as prescribed by the State. Further, no new EGS will be opened and existing EGS will have to be upgraded or phased out within two years of their functioning. Similarly, to ensure admission of out of school children in age appropriate class in the school, the norms (re: Intervention 19 of the Framework of Implementation) for out of school children have been modified to convert alternative schooling facilities under AIE to Special Training facilities as per the mandate of section 4 of RTE Act. She explained that Special Training will be based on especially designed, learning material and its duration may vary from 3 months to 2 years as per the context. The Special Training will be conducted in the school premises as far as possible. The current unit cost of the SSA will remain unchanged.
- 77.5 The thrust areas for AWP & B 2010-11 to achieve universal access are (a) School and social mapping with community involvement with focus on out of school children to ensure social access. (b) Reviewing State norms for opening new schools at primary level, (c) Making provision for class V/ VIII in existing primary/upper primary schools, where the elementary education cycle ends at class IV/VII. (d) Saturating upper primary access with priority to districts with PS and UPS ratio > 3:1 and villages with

40% SC, ST or minority populations. (e) Special training for out of school children for age appropriate admissions.

78. **Universal Retention:** Retention at primary level is 74.9%, for elementary level in States with Class I-VII it is 72%, and for States with Class I-VIII it is 44%. But there are as many as 154 districts in the country with retention rate lower than 65%; these districts are primarily in Bihar (27), Rajasthan (20), Uttar Pradesh (16), West Bengal & Madhya Pradesh (12), Karnataka (6), Punjab (4) and Sikkim (3). She further stated that there are 114 low retention districts which have been notified as special focus districts in 2010-11. Transition rate from primary to upper primary is 82.68%; however, there are 251 district in the country which have low transition rates. Districts with transition rates >75 are in Uttar Pradesh (56), Bihar (24), West Bengal (18), Jharkhand (13), Madhya Pradesh (10), Rajasthan (8), Orissa (5), Gujarat & Arunachal Pradesh (2). The lowest transition rates are in Uttar Pradesh (64), West Bengal (70), Bihar (71), Jharkhand (72), Manipur (79) and Madhya Pradesh (80). It was shared that regular students' attendance goes a long way in improving retention and quality of education. Towards this, States need to institutionalize tracking and analyzing students' attendance for improved retention.

78.1 In order to achieve universal retention the AWP&B 2010-11 will need to pay attention to (a) improving teacher availability in each school at 40:1 PTR by redeployment as well as recruitment. (b) improving student attendance, (c) improving transition of children from primary to upper primary level, (d) focus on 114 districts with low retention as well as focus on SC and ST children, (e) identification of specified pockets of low retention/ high drop out, low transition and low attendance for special monitoring.

79. **Bridging Gender and Social Category Gaps:** On the gender parity index, the overall trends are positive. However, there are challenges are in representation for girls at upper primary level, and bringing 4.6% of out of school girls into schools. High gender gap of 10% point at primary level and 15% point at upper primary level persists in 29 districts; these are in Rajasthan (9), Punjab (5), Jammu & Kashmir (4), Bihar, Haryana and Gujarat 2 each and Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Daman and Diu and Chandigarh 1 each. The inter-State status of gender gaps and social category gaps was also shared with the States. Among SCs there

is a high percentage of out of school in Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Similarly, out of school ST children are high in Orissa, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, and out of school Muslim children are high in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Haryana. Children with special needs constitute 2.1% of the children in the 6-14 age group according to Census 2001, but, only 1.4% of these children have been identified. The Statewise numbers as per Census 2001 were shared with the States. Further the issue of low identification and coverage, especially in the States of J & K, Jharkhand, West Bengal was flagged.

- 79.1 To bridge social and gender gaps some of the norms of SSA have been revised. These include: (a) enhancement in maintenance grant of girl child in KGBV to Rs 900 per month; of this Rs 1200 annually is meant for clothing of girl child. In addition there will be a provision for replacement of bedding once in three years (b) relaxing sub-component wise ceiling under NPEGEL and restoring funds for community mobilization within 6% management costs with a condition that there will be no duplication of activities under SSA. (c) enhancement of unit cost per CWSN upto Rs 3000 provided that at least Rs 1000 will be for resource teacher.
- 79.2 Towards bridging gender and social category gaps the thrust areas for AWP & B 2010-11 are as follows:
- 79.3 Girls Education: There will be a cohesive and comprehensive approach for bridging gaps with focus on community mobilization, support to disadvantaged girls, particularly out-of-school older girls. Steps will be taken for optimum utilization of KGBV capacity
- 79.4 Children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections: focus will be on eliminating discriminatory practices in schools and classrooms.
- 79.5 Urban Deprived Children: There will be separate plan for the 35 cities with million plus population and more intensive focus on four metros. Towards this, there will be emphasis on identification of urban deprived children of various categories such as street children, rag pickers children

without adult protection, etc and ensuring special strategies for their admission in age appropriate classes.

79.6 Inclusive Education: The focus will be on strengthening the identification system and ensuring full coverage of children with special needs, strengthening the resource support team for regular and effective academic support and ensuring barrier free access, particularly the availability of ramps and barrier free toilets.

80. **Enhancing Learning Achievement:** As a measure of quality the learning assessment system needs to be aligned to continuous and comprehensive evaluation. The results of national learning achievement survey were shared with the participants. Participants were also informed that there are 9.62 lakh untrained teachers in government and government aided schools across the country. These include of 16% regular teachers and 69% para teachers. The highest percentage of untrained teachers is in Arunachal Pradesh (75), Assam (61), Manipur (50), Meghalaya (70), Nagaland (71), Sikkim (55), Tripura (57), Bihar (51), J&K (45), and Jharkhand (45).

80.1 To improve quality some of the norms of SSA have been revised. These include (a) Setting up of School Library: SSA will provide a one time grant for school library @ Rs 3000 for PS and Rs 10000 for UPS within the 33% ceiling on Civil Works (b) Teacher Training: Provision for training of RPs, Master trainers, BRC and CRC Coordinators for 10 days each year @ Rs.100 per person per day. The average training batch will not exceed 30 teachers (c) Strengthening BRC/CRC: Contingency grants have been enhanced to Rs 50,000 per BRC and Rs 10,000 per CRC; the costs for Meetings, Travel allowance have been enhanced to Rs. 2500/- per month per BRC, Rs. 1000/- per month per CRC. TLM Grant is enhanced to Rs.10,000/- per year per BRC and @ Rs.3000/- per year per CRC (d) Community Training: training of VEC/ SMC as a cohesive group in batches upto 30 persons with the involvement of civil society as far as possible. All members to be trained within 2 years. The unit cost for training have been enhanced from Rs 30 to Rs 100 per day for residential training and Rs 50 per day for non residential training. The State will prepare exemplar material, which will be contextualized at district / block level. The State will also undertake periodical independent

evaluation. (e) Community Mobilisation: Upto 0.5% of outlay will be available for Community Mobilization under the Management head. The advocacy will be on issues of social access, regular attendance of children, completion of elementary education and right of children to free and compulsory education.

81. **For comprehensive quality interventions** the thrust areas for AWP & B 2010-11 will be as follows: (a) Bringing curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, teaching learning material, teacher training and assessment systems in harmony with each other and in consonance with NCF 2005. (b) Integrating LEP with normal classroom processes during school hours. (c) Providing greater attention to teacher training and development and addressing the challenges of training ‘untrained’ teachers with equivalent professional qualifications, making in-service training participatory and inclusive and further strengthening BRC/CRCs, and developing effective linkage with DIETs and SCERTs. (d) training of Education Administrators.
82. There is general improvement in the status of basic facilities. However, the student classroom ratio continues to be high in Bihar and Jharkhand; drinking water facility is low in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh; facilities for girls toilets low in Meghalaya and Assam.
- 82.1 SSA civil works norms have been revised to provide for (a) office – cum – headmaster – cum – teachers room at primary level (b) relaxing norms for major repairs by removing ceiling of 5% schools within district (c) clarifying norms under School Grants to include play and sports equipment
- 82.2 The thrust areas for civil works in the AWP & B 2010-11 are as follows: (a) Child friendly elements in the building designs and in the design of indoor and outdoor spaces of the school (b) new PS and UPS to be composite buildings with all facilities (c) priority on completion of primary schools and provision of additional classrooms to schools with the worst student-classroom ratio. (d) convergence with the drinking water mission and total sanitation campaign.

83. The details of special focus districts were also shared with the States (a) SFD- A (138 districts) – districts with PS:UPS ratio > 3:1. (b) SFD- B (38 districts) – districts with a gap in ACR > 3000. (c) SFD- C – districts with more than 20,000 OoSC (24), districts with retention less than 60% (114) and districts with gender gap >10% at primary and >20% at upper primary level (29). (d) SFD- D – districts with a concentration of ST population (109), SC population (61), Minority population (141), Left Wing Extremist (34) and Border Area districts (96).
84. Ms Neelam Rao stated that the AWP & B 2010-11 should be seen as a tool for initiating changes arising out of RTE. The attention of the States was drawn to (a) aspects that prevent girls, children from weaker sections & disadvantaged groups from completing elementary education (b) fore-fronting provisions relating to prohibition of corporal punishment, detention and expulsion (c) developing a system that provides a warm, welcoming and encouraging approach for children to learn (d) ensuring that teaching learning process are made free from stress and anxiety as per provisions of section 29 of RTE Act, (e) ensuring curricular reform and reviewing testing and grading systems in consonance with NCF- 2005 and section 29 of RTE Act, (f) developing teacher accountability systems towards RTE (g) maintaining PTR in each school, and instituting reforming teacher recruitment, transfer and deployment systems (h) training/ re-orienting educational administrators to understand the spirit of RTE Act (i) establishing School Management Committees (SMC) and their interface with gram panchayats under the existing State legislations for Panchayat Raj.
85. The States were also asked to (a) track the Results Framework corresponding to the four SSA goals to be appended with each district plan and a consolidated one for the State.
86. Further, States were informed that PAB will also be seeking commitments on (a) objective & transparent systems for rational teacher deployment (b) clearing the backlog of untrained teachers (c) improving teacher accountability by bringing in systems for tracking teachers' attendance; performance indicators for teachers (e.g. ADEPTs); VEC / SDM supervision by devolving specific powers (d) synchronize elementary cycle as per NPE (1992), 5 years of primary and 3 years of upper primary (e) unified or single system of educational statistics at the elementary level i.e., for DISE & SES and submission of DISE by 15th of

January 2011 after independent check for data validation (f) ending parallel post of District Coordinator for SSA implementation at district level and (g) conducting regular meetings of District Level Monitoring Committee.

87. After the presentation the representative of Maharashtra sought clarification regarding remedial teaching, especially in the context of no detention policy under RTE. Ms Anita Kaul, JS (EE-II) clarified that remedial teaching brands children as backward, slow learners which goes against the basic principles that each child should be enabled to learn at her/his own pace, and brings in negative discourse. Under RTE, children who are not enrolled or dropout will have a special training depending on their needs for a duration ranging from 3 months to 2 years. When they are re-inducted into the school special handholding support will need to be given. She further stated that eventually, we need to move towards a system of which enables each child to learn at her own pace.

88. With this the sessions on RTE and SSA were concluded.

SESSION ON MID DAY MEAL SCHEME

Review of implementation of MDM scheme was taken up on 30th January, 2010. Shri Anant Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy made a presentation on critical issues under the MDM programme. The gist of the discussions is as follows:

1. Status of 1st and 2nd Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) of 2009-10

Shri Anant Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary (EEI) mentioned that QPRs of 1st quarter are due in July and 2nd Quarter in the month of October. Although the first QPR of the year 2009-10 has been received now from all the States/UTs, yet only the States of Uttar Pradesh and Manipur had submitted it within the prescribed time i.e. within the month of July.

Second QPR has been received from 24 States/UTs. Only Manipur, Mizoram, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, and Lakshadweep submitted the QPRs within the prescribed time. 2nd QPR of the FY 2009-10 has not been received from the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tamilnadu.

J&K, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu furnished the QPR for the second quarter during the meeting. Other States assured that they would furnish the QPR by 2.2.2010. JS(EE.I) emphasized the need to send QPRs in time as it facilitates the process of release of funds except the first ad-hoc release (25% of the allocation) which is made without asking for any information from the States/UTs.

2. Pending Release of 2nd Instalment of Recurring cost

JS(EE-I) stated that Second instalment of recurring cost could not be released to Six States, namely Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Tripura and Delhi because these States had more than 15% of allocation as unspent balance and have not provided information on utilization of recurring cost already available with them inspite of repeated reminders. He

requested the States to provide this information immediately, otherwise it will not be possible to release the balance amount of 2nd instalment for 2009-10.

The representative from **Assam** informed that they will submit the information by **9th February, 2010**. The representative from **Bihar** informed that they have sufficient fund available with the State, so they do not need further recurring Central assistance. However, they will submit the information by **6th February, 2010**. **Delhi** informed that they have already sent the information on **13th January, 2010**. **Manipur** informed that they will send the information by **2nd February, 2010**. About Tripura the Joint Secretary(EE.I) mentioned that the proposal for release of Central assistance has already been forwarded to Finance Division.

The representative of Jammu & Kashmir informed that the State has spent about 19.70 crore at the end of the third quarter. JS(EE-I) inquired why the State could spend only about 19.70 crore till the end of third quarter when the annual allocation is about 48 crores. However, no satisfactory explanation was forthcoming. Secretary(SE&L) advised the State Government representative to co-ordinate between the two regions or Kashmir & Jammu properly and send the consolidated expenditure statement at the earliest.

3. Request for Validation / Additional Allocation of Foodgrains

JS(EE-I) informed that only Tripura had requested for additional allocation, which has been released. Assam, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Lakshadweep and Orissa have requested for revalidation of allocation of foodgrains which lapsed due to various reasons. Out of these, the revalidation for Orissa and Assam have been issued with the concurrence of Department of Food & Public Distribution. The proposals of Maharashtra and Jharkhand have been sent to D/o F&PD for their concurrence. Proposal received from Lakshadweep is incomplete. The UT has been requested to furnish complete information.

No such pendency was reported by any other State / UT.

4. Additional Requirement of Cooking Cost

JS(EE-I) informed that only 16 States/UTs have submitted Proposals for additional requirement of cooking cost. The proposals of 11 States / UTs (Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Daman & Diu)

are in order and are being processed Proposals from 5 States / UTs (Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Delhi) are incomplete.

The representatives from Chandigarh and Karnataka informed that they will be sending the proposal incorporating the required information soon. The representative from West Bengal mentioned that they will send the proposal by 2nd February, 2010. The representative from Maharashtra mentioned that their proposal is pending with their Finance Department. Representatives from Delhi Govt. promised to rectify the deficiency in the following week.

No proposal has been received from the remaining 19 States / UTs i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, A&N Islands, D&N Haveli, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry.

The States/UTs were requested to provide information on date of implementation, additional requirement of funds, budget provision, commitment to bear the State share, revised cooking cost (Central as well as State share) and publicity of the revision.

The representative from Jharkhand informed that they have prepared the proposal and will submit it immediately.

Secretary(SE&L) advised the 19 States/UTs to submit their proposals for requirement of additional cooking cost quickly.

5. Honorarium to Cook-cum-helper

JS(EE-I) informed that based on the number of Cook-cum-Helper as shown in AWP&B 2009-10, Central Assistance has been released to 28 States. The Central Assistance could not be released to 7 States/UTs (Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Maharashtra, Sikkim, A&N Islands, Chandigarh & Delhi) for want of information about the number of cooks engaged in these States/UTs.

Proposals received from 6 States / UTs (Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram and Punjab) are in order and under process.

Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have not indicated the date of engagement of new cooks-cum-helpers as per the revised norm. The representative from West Bengal informed that they

have already engaged the cook-cum-helper, and orders in this regard have been issued in the last week of November, 2009. He assured that the requisite information will be provided by 2nd February, 2010.

The Representative from Delhi informed that in Delhi, mid day meal is being cooked in centralized kitchens but they want to engage a person at school level to serve the food to children as the centralized kitchen is not doing this job inspite of it being provided in the MOU.

The representative from Bihar also pointed out that previously the labour component was included in the cooking cost and the NGO operating the centralized kitchen used the grant accordingly. But with the revision of norms labour cost has been excluded from the cooking cost, so the supplier NGO is asking for honorarium component also for cooking the meal.

JS(EE-I) clarified that the cook-cum-helper is expected to perform all activities relating to cooking, serving and washing the utensils. Whosoever does these jobs is entitled for the honorarium. In case of centralized kitchens also, if all activities like cooking, serving etc. are undertaken by them, they are entitled to honorarium as well as the cooking cost. But if the centralized kitchen is not arranging to get the meal served in the school, then the honorarium can be apportioned between the centralized kitchen and the agency/individual serving the meal. The principle and procedure for apportionment of honorarium between various partners providing the services can be laid down by the State / UT Govt. as appropriate.

The representative from Meghalaya inquired about the possibility of entrusting the responsibility of cooking of mid day meal to private contractors. Secretary(SE&L) clarified that the State has to adhere to the MDM guidelines.

JS(EE-I) advised the remaining 26 States/UTs to send their funding proposals urgently.

6. Fund Requirement for Construction of Kitchen-cum-Store

JS(EE-I) informed that Proposals received from 9 States / UTs (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and A&N Islands) are in order and under process.

Proposals from Rajasthan, Karnataka, Chattisgarh and Gujarat are incomplete. Rajasthan has not provided the information on plinth area norm. Karnataka has not submitted the utilization

of old grant given to them. Chattisgarh has not given the budget provision and utilization. Gujarat has not given the budget provision, commitment to contribute State share, and also the physical and financial progress of already sanctioned kitchen sheds.

Proposals from remaining 22 States / UTs (Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, D&N Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi Lakshadweep and Puducherry) have not been received.

The representative of Chhattisgarh mentioned that they undertake the construction of kitchen cum store through the panchayats and fund has been transferred to them. Fund released to one VEC cannot be withdrawn and given to another VEC for use. Therefore, GOI should not insist on utilization of earlier grant for release of new grant. New grant is meant for new schools and kitchen shed is required in all schools. Karnataka, West Bengal and several other States supported this contention. JS(EE-I) assured that this ground reality will be given due consideration while releasing the Central assistance this year.

The representative of Punjab requested for additional amount, as per the revised norm, for the kitchen sheds that were sanctioned during the year 2008-09, as it is not possible for them to construct the kitchen shed within the previous ceiling of Rs. 60,000. Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal raised the similar issue. JS(EE-I) clarified that the revised norm is applicable from 1.12.2009, so additional grant for kitchen shed-cum-store sanctioned during 2008-09 or before will not be possible. However, if the States / UTs give the factual details and requirement of additional fund along with commitment to contribute the State Share, the matter will be put up before the competent authority for appropriate decision.

7. Pendency of confirmation of food grain lifting:

JS(EE-I) reminded the States/UTs that they are expected to send confirmation of lifting of food grains every month to facilitate/validate payment to FCI. In spite of monthly reminder, confirmation is awaited from several States/UTs in respect for several months. States/UTs were requested to send quickly the confirmation of foodgrains lifted by them.

Bills of FY 2009-10, still pending confirmation, pertain to Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (13 bills each), Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Jharkhand (12 bills), Jammu &

Kashmir, and Mizoram (10 bills), Mahdy Pradesh and Haryana (8 bills each), Puducherry (6 bills), Kerala, Punjab and Chandigarh (5 bills each), Orissa, Rajsthan, and Meghalaya (4 bills each), West Bengal, Tripura, Bihar, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and A&N Islands (2 bills each), Himachal Pradesh and Daman & Diu (1 bills each).

The representative of Punjab and Mizoram informed that they have already sent the confirmation for all the bills. The representatives from Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh informed that they will send the confirmation of lifting of food grains by 2nd February, 2010

Bills of FY 2008-09, still pending confirmation, pertain to Kerala (18 bills), Punjab (14 bills), Arunachal Pradesh (13 bills), J&K (11 bills), Nagaland (10), Chattisgarh (9 bills), Assam (7 bills), Andhra pradesh and Manipur (5 bills each), Meghalaya, Daman & Diu, and Sikkim (2 bills each), Uttarakhand and Uttar pradesh (1 bill each).

There are bills of FY 2007-08, which have not been confirmed by Jammu & Kashmir (12 bills), Nagaland (8 bills), Meghalaya (4 bills), Assam, Mizoram and Manipur (3 bills), Tripura, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand (2 bills each), and Arunachal Pradesh (1 bill)

Secretary(SE&L) expressed her deep concern over the issue of non confirmation of lifting of foodgrains by States, particularly Jammu and Kashmir. She reminded the State's representative that this matter was also discussed in the meeting taken by the Cabinet Secretary at Srinagar in October, 2009, and is yet to be resolved. She requested all the States/UTs to send information on lifting of foodgrains at the earliest to facilitate timely payment to FCI.

8. Pending ATN on Audit Para of C &AG 2000:

JS(EI-I) emphasized the urgent need to settle the pending audit paras in respect of C& AG Audit of 2000. So far, in spite of repeated reminders, the requisite information has not been received on the queries raised by the C & AG Audit of 2000 from 6 States, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, and Sikkim. He informed that since the matter has been delayed considerably, this Department will have to send the ATN quickly. He requested all the above states to send the information otherwise, this Department will be compelled to stop the grant to these States.

The representative of Assam informed that in the year 2000 the programme was implemented by the Panchayat Dept. in the State and because of this they are not able to reply to the queries raised by the C & AG Audit of 2000. JS(EE-I) advised the State representative to coordinate the matter at the Chief Secretary level and provide the information urgently. He also informed that the matter was raised by the representative of the Govt. of India in the last SSMC meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary. The Secretary(SE&L) Govt. of India has also written, to the Chief Secretary of Assam in this regard.

The representative of Orissa informed that the information is ready and it will be sent to Govt. of India within 2-3 days. The representative of Sikkim informed that they have already sent the information. The representatives of Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh informed that they will send the information very soon.

9. Pending ATN on Audit Para of C&AG 2007:

ATN on Audit Para of C&AG 2007 is pending from 14 States/UTs namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Tripura, and West Bengal. JS(EE-I) requested these States/UTs to provide the required information within three weeks.

10. Reply to points arising out of oral evidence before PAC on C&AG Report No.PA 13 of 2007:

Reply to points arising out of oral evidence before PAC on C&AG Report No.PA 13 of 2007 are pending from 22 States/ UTs namely Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, and Daman & Diu. In the absence of response from States, an interim reply has been sent but final reply has to be sent soon. JS(EE-I) requested these States/UTs to provide the required information within three weeks.

11. Payment of Cost of Foodgrains at District Level

JS(EE-I) invited the views of the State representatives on the draft guidelines laying down procedure circulated with the agenda note for the decentralized payment of cost of

foodgrains to the FCI in the respective districts. Representatives from Himachal Pradesh stated that the present system of centralized payment by Govt. of India is working well and the Central Government may rethink the issue. In Himachal Pradesh, there are fewer godowns than the number of districts. State level agency lifts the foodgrains and delivers it to districts. Therefore, payment at the District level will lead to difficulties. The representative of Uttar Pradesh opined that whether the payment of cost of food grains is to be done at the District level or the State level may be left to the States. He also suggested that if penal interest is to be paid by the States, then the freedom to recover it from the staff or not should be given to the States. It need not be prescribed in the guideline of the Govt. of India. Mizoram informed that FCI godowns are not available in every district, so it will not be possible to make payment at district level. Representatives of Jharkhand and Punjab also felt that continuance of the existing system will be better.

It was clarified by JS(EE-I) that the decision to decentralize the payment was taken after discussing this matter with the States in the Regional and National Review meetings because the existing system is prone to risk and delay in payment. The proposed system will not change the existing system of management and monitoring of the foodgrains in any manner. The States will have to continue with the existing system of lifting, transportation, storage, delivery etc. Payment from district level will ensure better co-ordination amongst various departments/organization rendering services for MDM.

Secretary(SE&L) advised to form a small group to fine tune and finalize the procedure for the decentralization of payment of cost of food grains to districts early, so that the States/UTs have enough time to prepare for implementing the same.

12. Plan for Media Campaign

JS(EE-I) explained that awareness amongst common public about their entitlement is important for the successful implementation of mid day meal scheme. He emphasized that entitlement of children under MDM in respect of quantity & quality of food should be widely publicized. He advised States/UTs to undertake this exercise in local vernacular for dissemination of information through audio-video, print, electronic media. Govt. of India will also launch such a campaign at the National level.

13. Grievance Redressal Mechanism

JS(EE-I) stressed the need to have a responsive Grievance Redressal Mechanism at different levels for effective implementation, monitoring, transparency and supervision of the Scheme and invited the views of the State representatives on this issue. The representative from Uttarakhand informed that in Uttarakhand they have a toll free number to register complaints and attend them within 24 hours. She said that the cost of this toll free number is Rs. 19,000 only for a year. She also added that the State is planning to publicize the Mid-day-Meal programme through advertisement on AIR FM Rainbow channel. The representative from Jharkhand also informed that they have almost 80 percent schools with telephonic facility and they have formed a cell at State level for monitoring the daily progress in randomly selected schools. The same phone can be used for lodging complaints and redressing the grievances.

JS(EE-I) stated that the Govt. of India is going to launch a media campaign to educate the masses about their entitlement under the MDM in all languages. Therefore, it is all the more important that all States have an effective Grievance Redressal Mechanism and GOI will organize a separate meeting of the States/UTs on this issue soon.

14. Community Participation

JS(EE-I) stressed on the issue of active involvement of local bodies i.e. GP / VEC / SMC / PTA / MTA / SHG / Mahila Mandals / Mahila Sanghs in the Mid Day Meal scheme. He emphasized that the VEC and community members should be encouraged to visit and supervise the implementation of mid-day-meal scheme regularly on rotation basis. He requested States / UTs to think of ways of mobilizing the community to add value to the programme.

Secretary(SE&L) suggested that training of VEC / SMC / PTA / MTA are being organized under SSA and a module on the MDM Scheme could be included in this training.

15. Review Mission for MDM Scheme

JS(EE-I) informed that the Department of SE&L has decided on a Review Mission for Mid Day Meal Scheme on the pattern of SSA. The Mission will comprise representatives from GOI, States, UNICEF and NGOs. In the first phase, 4 such teams will visit Assam, Bihar, Uttar

Pradesh and another State yet to be finalised. The Review Mission will take place during the 1st fortnight of February, 2010. This team will visit about ten schools in two districts from each State. States are requested to participate in this actively. Govt. Of India will bear the cost of this Mission.

16. MME Plan of the States / UTs

JS(EE-I) explained that during the PAB-MDM meetings, State Education Secretaries Meetings and other review meetings, it has been emphasized that every State/UT should prepare a workable management and monitoring plan for itself and if it requires additional funds for this purpose, then a comprehensive proposal with full justification should be sent to GOI for appropriate decision by the competent authority. So far, only four States viz. A&N Islands, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh have sent the required proposal. He requested the remaining 31 States/UTs to send the MME plan on urgent basis.

The representative from Uttar Pradesh requested the Govt. of India to remove the internal ceilings of 50%, 35% and 15% within the MME grant. He explained that Uttar Pradesh has about Rs. 2 crore for external monitoring and evaluation head under MME grant which is huge amount to spent for external monitoring and evaluation. For School level expenses, they have about Rs. 6.65 crore, out of which they have already spent about 90 percent.

Secretary(SE&L) agreed that flexibility at the State level in this regards seems reasonable and a clarification will be issued soon.

17. Residual Issues

The representative from Rajasthan mentioned their problem of imposition of service tax on central kitchens. Chandigarh also raised a similar point. JS(EE-I) informed that the matter had already been taken up by this Department with the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance but they have not agreed to our request. It will be further pursued for an early decision.

In conclusion, Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary(SE&L) thanked all the participants for their participation and valuable comments. She said that education is a national effort in which active and constructive partnership of the Centre and States/UTs is a must. She expressed appreciation for the active role of the State/UT Governments in implementing the schemes of the Department

of School Education and Literacy, Government of India. She requested the States/UTs to send their funding proposals at the earliest. She also urged them to suggest policy / systemic changes which they rethink will facilitate smooth implementation of the scheme and better delivery of services to the children.

SESSION ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Secretary (SE&L) apprised the participants that the Teacher Education Scheme is being revised, and in this context evaluation of the Scheme has been completed by NCERT. Also, evaluation report has been shared with stakeholders including States/UTs. She assured them that their concerns would be addressed to the extent possible. Thereafter, she requested Shri Vikram Sahay, Director (EE) to give a brief presentation on the Scheme.

2. Director (EE) presented a broad picture of implementation of Teacher Education Scheme in various States. He requested those States which did not furnish latest expenditure position to send the details for releasing Central assistance. Director (EE) further requested States to submit their proposals including detailed action plan on in-service training programmes, arising out of the decisions taken by TEAB while considering the annual plans for the year 2009-10. It was also noted that the States of Maharashtra and West Bengal have not submitted their proposals on CTEs/IASEs so far.

3. Director (EE) mentioned that there are five non functional DIETs in Assam, which should be operationalised and in the case of Sikkim, the State is yet to seek recognition of DIET, West from NCTE. The representative of Assam replied that the State is in the process of operationalizing the five DIETs. It was noted that most of the States have not created separate cadre for teacher educators. Further, Director (EE) stated that funds released for academic programmes remain largely unutilized. He also stated that the proposals in terms of revised pay scales of the 6th Central Pay Commission are yet to be received from most of the States. Secretary (SE&L) intervened to say that those States which have not submitted their claims on revised pay scales in terms of 6th Central Pay Commission, should urgently furnish the details.

4. JS (EE.I) stated that approximately ten lakh teachers (including existing vacancies) would need to be recruited in the context of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. Therefore, teacher education institutions are to shoulder additional responsibilities to produce trained teachers. He also stated that the time has come when the States should come forward to show more commitment towards the Teacher Education Scheme, which would strengthen the education system of the State in the long term.

5. The representative of Himachal Pradesh stated that the teachers of senior level should not be posted in DIETs, as their knowledge of pedagogy and transaction of processes at elementary level have not been found to be satisfactory.

6. Principal Secretary (School Education), Madhya Pradesh requested Chairperson, NCTE to involve States in a more meaningful manner when it comes to granting recognition to private teacher education institutions (TEIs) and also in monitoring these institutions. She stated that the TEIs have been granted recognition by NCTE even when the State did not recommend the case. She expressed the view that the NCTE should act in a manner that does not create difficulties for the States.

7. Additional SPD, SSA, UP stated that the infrastructural facilities including buildings of DIETs/CTEs are in bad shape. This requires strengthening of infrastructure on an urgent basis. Considering the work load of faculty of DIETs, it is necessary to increase the strength of faculty. He further stated that the training capacity of the existing teacher education institutions is limited, particularly in the context of RTE Act in which the demand for recruitment of Teachers would be substantial. Therefore, additional facilities for imparting training to teachers need to be urgently created. In this context, he suggested training through distance education mode. He also pointed out that only three CTEs are at present functioning in the State. Considering the requirement of teachers at secondary level, more CTEs need to be set up preferably at 18 divisional headquarters.

8. Principal Secretary (HRD), Bihar said that during the last three years, more than two lakh teachers were recruited in Bihar. These teachers as well as other untrained teachers need to be

provided training. Since the existing training capacity is limited, the State has taken the help of IGNOU in providing training through distance mode. However, it has been found that the quality of programmes are not up to the mark. If the current situation is allowed to continue, it would be impossible to meet the mandate of RTE. Secretary (SE&L) suggested that one way of tackling the problem could be utilizing the surplus capacity of trained teachers of neighbouring States. Chairperson, NCTE stated that the High Powered Committee had looked into various aspects pertaining to Bihar and further action will be taken in the light of the recommendations of the Committee.

9. Principal Secretary (School Education), Gujarat suggested that academic qualification should be the criteria for posting of teachers in SCERT & DIETs for providing quality education. Chairperson, NCTE informed that the State of Gujarat has provided details of 129 Teacher Education Institutions which have not been found upto the mark. Accordingly, NCTE has taken appropriate actions against 80 institutions. Principal Secretary (SE), Gujarat raised the issue of increasing the number of teaching days. Chairperson, NCTE was of the view that the affiliating body should ensure minimum 180 days of teaching by students-teachers.

10. Principal Secretary (School Education), Karnataka felt that substandard teacher education institutions should be weeded out. He expressed the view that in-service training is an important component and should be accorded due priority. In this context, he suggested formulation of a good training policy. He also stated that considering the present status of teachers, it is important to restore their dignity and prestige in the society.

11. The representative of Rajasthan suggested that capacity building programmes for Teachers and Principals of DIETs should be organized on a regular basis which would give them exposure to innovative ideas and latest trends in teacher education. He also suggested appropriate incentives for DIET teachers.

12. Director, SCERT, Delhi stated that the 6th Central Pay Commission pay scales have been implemented in DIETs. However, implementation of part B of the recommendations of the Pay Commission pertaining to allowances has been taken up with the Government of NCT of Delhi.

The response of the State Government is awaited. Secretary (SE&L) stated that, it has been observed, the State of NCT of Delhi is not owning the Teacher Education Programme. In fact, for the last three financial years, the Annual Plan of the NCT of Delhi was not forwarded by the State Government. SCERT, Delhi had sent the Annual Plan directly to the Ministry. This gives the impression that the State Government is not keen on the Teacher Education Programme. They have to own up the Teacher Education Programme. Also, the Annual Plan for the financial year 2010-11 will not be considered if it is not received from the State Government. Secretary (SE&L) requested Director, SCERT, Delhi to convey the matter to the State Government.

13. Joint Secretary (EE-I) stated that since the Scheme is under revision, it has been thought appropriate to fix the meetings of the Teacher Education Approval Board (TEAB) to consider proposals under the revised Scheme. However, in order to avoid any disruption in the implementation of the Scheme, States/UTs should forward their Annual Plan in terms of the existing Teacher Education Scheme. The proposals would be appraised in the Ministry, if needed, in consultation with States/UTs, and appropriate releases would be made. When the Scheme is revised, States/UTs would be requested to submit their proposals under the revised Scheme for consideration of TEAB.

14. Chairperson, NCTE outlined the measures taken by NCTE to bring about transparency in the system particularly in regard to recognition of teacher education institutions. As per streamlined procedure, the application will now be received online only and the relevant details can be accessed on its website. He further stated that the consultation mechanism with States has been strengthened. For instance, in case No Objection Certificate (NOC) is not received from the State within 45 days, the concerned State would be requested again to furnish the NOC within another 30 days. Further, on an application, if the State Government furnished negative recommendation along with the reasons, NCTE will not grant recognition. NCTE is also in the final stage of completion of the study of demand and supply of teachers, which would help NCTE in arriving at a suitable decision with regard to recognition of teacher education institutions in the States. Chairperson, NCTE observed that NCTE is conscious of the fact that some sub standard and undeserving private TEIs had been granted recognition, and in this context requested States to extend their cooperation in identification of sub standard teacher

education institutions so that necessary action could be taken to derecognize them. Also, the Teacher Education Curriculum Framework, being prepared by NCTE, would address relevant concerns relating to quality, duration of the programme etc. Chairperson, NCTE further observed that even in those States where NCTE has imposed temporary ban on recognition of TEIs, the proposals on Innovative Courses are welcome. The Secretaries of States appreciated the measures taken by NCTE and assured cooperation in this regard. Principal Secretary, Education, M.P. suggested that necessary amendments should be made in the NCTE Act to provide for a clearly specified role for States in respect of all such issues on which States' co-operation is envisaged by the NCTE.

SESSION ON SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Session on Secondary Education was the first in the series of interactive sessions in the 3-day Conference. **Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy** chaired the session.

Initiating the discussion, Secretary (SE&L) highlighted the importance accorded to Secondary Education in the 11th Five Year Plan, briefly mentioning about the various initiatives and new schemes that are being undertaken in the sector during the current Plan. She then invited **Shri K. Satish Nambudiripad, Director (SE)** to make a presentation on various Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the Secondary Education.

Director (SE) made a presentation on the schemes. He dwelt at length on RMSA – the largest and the most important scheme of the Sector. In the presentation, the following issues were flagged:-

1. Overall goal and general strategies of the schemes
2. Planning process and preparatory activities
3. Financial parameter of the schemes

4. Implementation issues
5. Issues requiring the attention of the State Governments

The following issues were raised and discussed in the meeting:-

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

Bihar

Principal Secretary (Education), Government of Bihar suggested taking a liberal approach in appraisal of State Plans under RMSA, keeping in view the fact that 2009-10 was the first year of implementation of the scheme.

Secretary (SE&L) clarified that a liberal approach had indeed been taken keeping in view the constraints of the State Governments in the first year of its implementation.

Chhattisgarh

Secretary (Education), Chhattisgarh stated that while 1001 upper primary schools were identified for upgradation under annual plan 2009-10, only 218 schools were approved by PAB. He stated that the schools were proposed based on GIS mapping exercise and it would be of great help to the State government in planning if all these schools could be approved “in principle”. Besides, the State government plans to start these schools from the next academic year.

Secretary (SE&L) stated that the project of the State government had already been appraised. Considering that very little time is left in the current financial year, it would be advisable for the State government to get next year’s annual plan appraised by PAB at the earliest so that the schools would start only after approval by the PAB.

Orissa

Principal Secretary (Education) stated that a perusal of the agenda note indicated that 300 new schools were approved by the PAB for Orissa under the current year's Annual Plan. However, as indicated in the Annual Plan proposal, the State Government would need 1087 new schools based on GIS mapping. A line to the effect that these schools were approved, "in principle", would help the State Government in planning for the future.

Director (SE) clarified that even the details required in respect of 300 schools approved by the PAB were still awaited from the State Government. It would not be possible to release funds even for 300 schools unless the details were furnished. Secretary (SE&L) stated that as a general principle there was no objection in conveying "in principle" approval in respect of a larger number of schools if that would help the State Government in planning for the long run. However, a larger number of new schools can be approved only after comprehensive GIS based school mapping exercise has been completed. In case of Orissa, the proposal was to have one new school per village Panchayat and this was not based on school mapping exercise.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

The representative of the UT Administration stated that in the 2nd PAB meeting State/UT Governments were advised to submit school-wise details for major repair. However, such requirements were not been captured in Data Capture format for SEMIS.

It was clarified that SEMIS was meant to capture the data on the availability of current infrastructure and resources. The shortfall from the norms in existing schools can be found out for comprehensive planning. However, SEMIS is not the only source of information and State Governments should be able to assess requirement for major repair through their normal channels including Directorate of School Education. Further, it is not essential to submit proposal of major repair for all schools in a single year and therefore, State Government can cover the schools in a phased manner and take up a limited number of schools, depending on their capacity, for assessing requirement for major repair in a particular year.

West Bengal

Secretary, School Education pointed out that very few secondary schools in the State were directly under the ownership of State Government. Almost 90% schools are either

government aided or unaided private schools. He, therefore, wanted to know whether it would be in order to cover the aided private schools while carrying out the perspective planning exercises. Secretary, **Uttar Pradesh** and Principal Secretary, **Gujarat** also expressed similar concerns.

Secretary (SE&L) stated that for perspective planning, all schools – both Government and private - need to be taken into account. However, the scheme at present can cover improvement to only Government school system. The Central Government was aware of the difficulties of these States and a way out would be found in due course. However, for the present, the State Governments would have to carry out their planning exercise within the parameters of the scheme.

Gujarat

Principal Secretary, Gujarat stated that the State Government had proposed upgradation of 170 schools, but none of the schools was approved.

It was clarified that the upgradation was proposed from class VII to class VIII, which was not part of the secondary stage, and hence this was not permissible under RMSA. The State Government had been advised in the PAB meeting to come back with a fresh proposal next year when class IX would be due in these schools. This will be reflected in the minutes.

Principal Secretary, Gujarat expressed his regret for his inability to attend the meeting of the PAB and assured that in future the State Government will be represented at appropriate level.

Jharkhand

Secretary (Education), Jharkhand stated that State Government had decided to upgrade Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) to secondary level and wanted to know whether such schools can be included in the Annual Plan proposal for RMSA.

Secretary (SE&L) clarified that KGBVs being elementary schools, could be considered for upgradation to secondary level under RMSA, depending on viability. However, if the State Government has already upgraded such schools to secondary level, they would be treated as existing secondary schools and would be eligible for school annual grant and strengthening of infrastructure as per RMSA norms.

Rajasthan

SPD, RMSA, Rajasthan requested for early communication on the quantum of amount sanctioned by the Central Government so that, the State Education Department can convince the State Finance Department to make necessary provision for the State share.

Secretary (SE&L) stated that provision in State budget could be made, either at the time of initial budget preparation or later through supplementaries. Therefore, the State Governments need to make a lump sum provision at the initial stage for all Centrally Sponsored schemes otherwise they would have to wait for supplementaries which happens generally towards the end of the financial year.

Model Schools

Bihar

Principal Secretary (Education), Bihar wanted to know as to why land details such as plot/survey No. etc. were being insisted on for the Model School proposal. He wondered whether insistence on such details would serve any useful purpose.

Secretary(SE&L) clarified that the purpose of asking these details was to ensure that the State Government had actually identified the required land for construction of schools. Otherwise Central Government would release Central share even for schools which were in no position to start the construction work. The result could be parking of money with State Government, which would deprive other States which have done better preparatory work.

Haryana

Secretary (Education), Haryana enquired about the status of the proposal submitted by the State Government.

It was informed that the State Government had proposed to set up all the schools through conversion of existing schools. Since these schools would have to be set up in KV template, it was advisable for the State Government to re-formulate these proposals to take full benefit of the scheme. It was also pointed out that strengthening of existing schools could be done even under RMSA programme.

Assam

Secretary Education, Assam wanted to know the rationale of prescribing English as medium for schools with classes VI to XII and Regional medium in schools with classes IX to XII.

Secretary (SE&L) stated that the Model Schools being secondary schools, they should ideally have classes from IX to XII. However, it would be difficult for a student having studied in regional medium upto the VIII standard to switch over to English medium at class IX. Therefore, schools with English as medium of instruction have been permitted to start from class VI.

Girls' Hostels

Madhya Pradesh

Principal Secretary Education, Madhya Pradesh stated that the cost norms for Girls' Hostels were based on KGBV norms, which were inadequate for girls of older age group

studying in secondary & higher secondary schools. The cost norms needed revision for proper implementation of the scheme. ‘

Secretary (SE&L) stated that MHRD was aware of the problem. She agreed that these norms needed revision. There is a proposal to move towards a State Schedule of Rates based approach under KGBV scheme, and once the proposal goes through it would perhaps be possible to revise the norms for Girls’ Hostels also as these are essentially based on KGBV norms.

Maharashtra

Secretary (Education), Maharashtra wanted to know whether the Girls’ Hostels could be run by the NGOs.

Secretary (SE&L) clarified that Girls’ Hostel were to be owned and managed by the State Governments and there was no scope of involving NGOs under the present scheme.

Assam

Secretary (Education), Assam wanted to know whether it would be in order to implement Model School and Girls’ Hostel schemes through the same Society.

Secretary (SE&L) clarified that if number of EBBs was not very large, both the schemes could be run by the same Society. However, the accounting and fund flow will have to be kept separate. If the number of EBBs is very large, it would be advisable to have separate societies.

Orissa

The representative of the State Government wanted to know whether there was specific norm regarding the space to be allotted per boarder.

It was clarified that the scheme norm was to provide a minimum living space of 40 Sq. ft. per boarder after excluding common facilities such as kitchen, toilet etc. however, this is a very conservative norm and it is advisable that State governments provide more space to every boarder.

Information and Communication Technology in School

Nagaland

Nagaland sought clarification on the number of dedicated teachers that can be appointed per school. It was clarified that under the revised scheme, guidelines for which will be issued shortly, one dedicated teacher per school can be appointed.

Kerala

Kerala sought funds for development of e content. Secretary (SE&L) clarified that SIET Kerala has not raised this issue so far. In fact SIET Kerala was released funds for development of Learning Objects. It was further clarified that under the revised scheme, funds for upgrading of SIETs are also being provided. A sum of Rs 100 crore for development of e content under the nodal agency of CIET has also been earmarked under the new scheme..

Secy (SE&L) also requested the State Govts. to identify schools to be made Smart Schools (1 in each district) so that these schools can act as pace setters. Funds amounting to Rs 25 lakhs per Smart School, would be made available. State Govts should make plans accordingly.

National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship

Madhya Pradesh

The representative of the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, requested for clarification on whether students can open their accounts in public sector banks other than S.B.I., for receiving Scholarship amount under “National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme”, It was clarified that there was no objection to the students opening their accounts in other public sector banks provided the Bank has Electronic Clearing system (ECS) facility. This is already mentioned in guidelines of the Scheme.

With this, the session of Secondary Education concluded.

SESSION ON ADULT EDUCATION

Secretary, (SE & L) in her opening remarks stated that SAAKSHAR BHARAT, which was launched in September, 2009, has been rolled out in 19 States covering 167 districts and administrative as well as financial sanctions accorded for proposals received from the States for the year 2009-10. She called upon the Secretaries to take pro-active steps to accelerate the implementation of the programme in their respective States in a time bound manner. Thereafter, she invited Shri J. S. Raju, Joint Secretary (AE) & DG (NLMA) to make a presentation on various aspects of the programme including important milestones to be accomplished during January-September, 2010.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) made an elaborate presentation on the goal and road map for the first phase of the programme ending September, 2010. He listed out the following goals to be attained by September, 2010 :

- To impart literacy to 10 million non-literate adults in 167 identified districts;
- Assessment of the learners on 1st September, 2010;
- State-wise results by 3rd September, 2010;
- Declaration of nationwide outcome on 8th September, 2010;

To accomplish these goals, JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) enumerated major input activities, more importantly those related to funding, organisational network, capacity building, environment building, teaching learning process, assessment and certification and monitoring. It was pointed out that to facilitate release of funds from NLMA to SLMA and from SLMA to sub-State implementing agencies, there were several steps involved including receipt of bond and account from SLMAs, opening of subsidiary accounts in the name of individual implementing agency at State and sub-State levels, besides signing of tripartite agreement between NLMA, SLMA and the designated bank. However, only seven States namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, U.P. and West Bengal have signed the tripartite agreement. But, no subsidiary account has been opened by SLMA in their respective State. Therefore, all the States were requested to arrange to send bonds without further delay, open subsidiary accounts of sub-State implementing Agencies at all levels, issue authorisation in centralised or decentralised mode, train implementing agencies in issuing of authorisations to all sub-district

implementing agencies. It was also informed that a software has been developed to facilitate issue of authorisations.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) stated that each SLMA is expected to prepare a State plan, state delivery framework and sub-State plans for implementation of SAAKSHAR BHARAT in their respective States and districts and Gram Panchayats covered under the programme. Since Zila Saksharta Samitis would no longer be the implementing agencies and SLMAs also require some alteration in their constitution, urgent steps may be taken to reconstitute SLMAs as per the revised advisory and also designate and notify the implementing agencies at the district, block and Gram Panchayat level. Therefore, there was an urgency to set up adult education centres and engage Preraks besides engaging coordinators at the block and district level as per the approved norms. He pointed out that only two States namely Chhatisgarh and Uttar Pradesh have reconstituted their SLMAs and constituted committees at the district and block level. He requested that State action plans be formulated and shared with NLMA, the committees at all the three tiers under district constituted and notified as only after this step has been taken, bank accounts could be opened and cheque books issued to these implementing bodies.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) brought to the notice of all the Secretaries that SAAKSHAR BHARAT being a new programme, all the implementing agencies will have to be oriented on its salient features and new facets besides the literacy managers will also have to be trained in various aspects of management and administration of the programme. However, the biggest challenge was in training the voluntary teachers as their number was extremely large. He informed that Ministry of Panchayati Raj has agreed that functionaries of Panchayati Raj institutions could be trained and oriented in using the funds available under BRGF for BRGF districts and SGSY for non-BRGF districts. It was also informed that NIRD has already prepared a curriculum and programme for the training of all the PRI functionaries through respective SIRDs. The State Education Secretaries were requested to contact their counterparts in the Department of Panchayati Raj to carry forward the training of the PRI functionaries. Regarding training of voluntary teachers, they were requested to identify the Key Resource Persons and Master Trainers and commence their training through State Resource Centres.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) emphasised that environment building and mobilisation was an integral part of the mass campaign mode. He called upon the Secretaries to formally launch

SAAKSHAR BHARAT in their respective States and respective districts and that should mark the beginning of the large scale community mobilisation and environment building with Gram Panchayat as the nerve centre. It was suggested that NGOs with experience and expertise may be associated in the process of environment building and mobilisation and all tools and mediums be used as listed in the Blue Print for Environment Building and Mobilisation already circulated to SLMAs. For this activity, funds have already been provided to each Gram Panchayat for mass mobilisation and environment building at the grass root level. State, district and block level environment building and mobilisation could be done from management cost and through convergence with other government programmes and participation of private sector.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) emphasised that survey will be a very important aspect of not only environment building and mobilisation but of the entire programme. He explained that templates of schedules of survey have already been communicated to SLMAs duly incorporating suggestions received from SLMAs during the National Workshop held at Chennai on 8th January, 2010. After the household survey has been completed and information validated, the entire information related to prospective learners as well as the voluntary teachers will have to be digitized and uploaded on the NLMA portal. It was requested that this activity must be completed by 31st March, 2010.

It was informed that all the States except Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh have not yet got their basic primers technically approved by the DAE. It was requested that States which have already got their primers approved may now undertake the production and distribution of the primers while those who have yet to get their primers approved should expedite it on priority. It was stressed that the classes must commence latest by 1st week of April so that the first assessment could take place in the last week of August, 2010. It was informed that dates of assessment are non-negotiable as the outcome of the programme must be announced on 8th September, 2010. It was clarified that while there was no target set for the number of learners who undergo assessment or must be made literate by the State, it was very important for assessment to be conducted.

JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) concluded his presentation by presenting the following target dates for the delivery framework :

- Release of actual funds to SLMAs – bonds and accounts details must reach before 3.3.2010 from all the remaining States;
- Dates for orientation of SLMAs of remaining 12 States to be finalised;
- Dates to be finalised for launching of first phase of SAAKSHAR BHARAT in respective States/Districts;
- Opening of subsidiary accounts for SLMA/ZP/BP and GP to enable fund flow to the ground level implementing agencies by authorisation;
- Constitution of management committees at ZP, BP and GP levels by all the remaining 17 States;
- Identification and selection of Preraks and Coordinators by all the 19 States;
- Identification of RPs, MTs and VTs and strategy for orientation and training should be finalised by all the States;
- Finalisation of proto-type primers and approval of the primers by technical committee of DAE;
- Completion of survey;
- Compilation of data of non-literates/ VTs/ Preraks/ Coordinators/ Management Committees at different level and Gram Panchayat profile;
- Digitalisation of the data on the web portal;
- Printing and distribution of primers and other teaching learning material to GPs/AECs/Learners;
- Commencement of Teaching-learning activities in those states which have completed all preparatory activities.

After the presentation by JS (AE) & DG (NLMA), brief presentations were made on fund release mechanism and survey/monitoring. Thereafter, Secretary (SE & L) invited questions from the participants. Principal Secretary (Education), Government of Andhra Pradesh raised

the issue whether the Preraks could be assigned the task of imparting basic literacy and whether voluntary instructors could also be paid honorarium? JS (AE) & DG (NLMA) responded that the guidelines of SAAKSHAR BHARAT do not prohibit Preraks to be used as volunteer teachers for basic literacy programme. Further, he added that the proposal for payment of funds to the volunteer instructors is not permitted under the spirit of volunteerism approved for SAAKSHAR BHARAT. However, the State Government may arrange such payment from their own resources, if they so desire.

Shri R. P. Gupta, Secretary (Education), Government of Gujarat expressed concern on convergence with Panchayati Raj department. A similar view was also expressed by couple of other States. Secretary (SE & L) observed that the Executive Committee of the SLMA is headed by Chief Secretary and Secretary, Panchayati Raj is a member of this committee. It is therefore, expected that Chief Secretary of the State will bring about the desired convergence between the participating departments.

Besides, NLMA may also organise meetings with the States having particular problems of coordination and senior representatives of Ministry of Panchayati Raj should be invited to participate.

In her concluding remarks, Secretary (SE & L) urged the State Governments to play a pro-active role as SAAKSHAR BHARAT is a flagship programme of the Government of India. She requested the State Education Secretaries to ensure adherence to the road map and timelines suggested for the programme.
