

**Office of the State Mission Director**  
**Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)**  
(Directorate of Secondary Education)  
Government of Tripura.

No. F.19(7)-SE/RMSA/2010 (L-II)

Dated, September 17, 2016

To  
The Joint Secretary (SE-I)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
Department of School Education & Literacy,  
New Delhi-110 115.

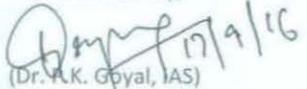
**Subject :- Action Taken Report in respect of the recommendations of the 7<sup>th</sup> Joint Review Mission for Tripura.**

Sir,

With reference to your D.O.No.1-27/2005-RMSA-1 dated 18.08.2016 I am furnishing herewith the action taken report as well as observation in respect of the concerns expressed by the 7<sup>th</sup> JRM for Tripura in the Annexure.

Enclo:- As stated.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Dr. A.K. Goyal, IAS)

State Mission Director, RMSA  
(Joint Secretary & Director)  
Secondary Education, Govt. of Tripura.

**ANNEXURE**

**ACTION TAKEN REPORT IN RESPECT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
THE 7<sup>TH</sup> JRM FOR TRIPURA**

	<b>CONCERNS ON KEY ISSUES</b>	<b>OBSERVATION OF THE STATE OF TRIPURA &amp; ACTION TAKEN</b>
1	Overall RMSA seems to be operating in a very supply driven manner – civil works spending dominates. Attention to common and often more pressing school requirements such as running water, electricity (which goes beyond supplying the head teacher and staffroom), maintenance, classroom furniture and learning support materials are neglected.	Most of the schools of Tripura are provided with the facilities of running water, electricity and furniture etc. In some schools the facilities like running water, electricity (which goes beyond supplying the head teacher and staffroom), classroom furniture facility is not sufficiently available. If the funding for these components can be considered under RMSA by the MHRD, it will be highly beneficial.
2.	The five km (4 km given the dispensation for North East states) norm appears to be driving expensive investments without any reference to broader issues associated with good education such as availability of teachers and teacher utilization rates. The mission visited one school where RMSA had built five classrooms however the building had been locked up and remained unused for the last two years and staff at the school were unclear as to why the classrooms had been built – given the status of the school there appeared no shortage of other priorities that this money could have been spent on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- In the hilly and forested areas where habitation are far away and number of families living in such habitation is small, High Schools are required to be set up for smaller number of students following the distance criteria otherwise the desired norms of enrolment will not be achieved. The GER at present is 97.65 and NER is 74.02. The total No. of unserved habitations is 351. Until relaxation in respect of enrolment criteria is allowed, the goal of universalisation of secondary education will be difficult to achieve.</li><li>- The building in question has already been put in use.</li></ul>

(Contd.....P/2)



3.	<p>The proliferation of small schools – in a state where already 2/3 of schools do not have qualified maths/ science teachers presents a massive quality and financial challenge. The schools proposed for upgrade in 2016/17 AWPB are of an average size of 22 students but , should state norms be followed will still require staffing with five teachers– maths, science, English, MIL and social studies teacher – i.e. 1 teacher for every 4 students. This is neither realistic nor affordable.</p>	<p>Out of 24 no. of schools proposed for up-gradation 18 schools have projected enrolment of more than 25 and only 6 no. of school have projected students less than 25. But the above mentioned 6 schools were proposed for the reasons stated below :-</p> <p>a) Considering the distance of above 5 kms.</p> <p>b) It is also seen that the parents prefer to put their wards even in lower classes of High &amp; Higher Secondary Schools. So when a school is up-graded there are chances that the enrolment in Class VIII will go up.</p> <p>Proposal for up-gradation of Taikumba S.B. School has been proposed in the AWP&amp;B for2016-17 where there are 22 students. The school has been proposed for up-gradation as there are no schools within the distance of 12 km.</p>
4.	<p>There was a very evident difference in resourcing, management and performance between rural and urban schools. Despite being double shift schools the large urban schools were much better resourced and delivered much higher test board exam success rates. In contrast small single shift rural schools were struggling – were ill equipped and did not have full complements of qualified staff. Given that the state board exam requires clearance in all subjects to pass it is perhaps not surprising some rural schools were reporting pass rates as low as 10%.</p>	<p>The state has already identified the low performing blocks and a Nodal Officer has already been appointed to take appropriate measures and monitor closely to improve the Board Exams results of the low performing blocks. Mention may be made that same practice was adopted in case of earlier identified 10 Blocks and outcome of the process was satisfactory. Adequate No. of teachers will be provided in all the schools of rural area once the new teachers are recruited, for which the process has already been initiated.</p>



5.	Despite extensive evidence collection- UDISE, NAS, GIS, school mapping etc there was limited evidence of that data was being used to inform state wide strategies to best deploy scarce resources. The inflexibility of RMSA norms appears to be impeding devising of locally appropriate solutions. This is particularly evident in school based planning -which appears to have turned into an obligatory but ultimately futile exercise as what is needed is not necessarily on the menu of what RMSA offers.	NAS data was not shared with RMSA till the date of JRM visit. Efforts will be made to use various data available for educational planning. Also the norms of RMSA scheme may be made flexible so that state specific requirements can be met efficiently from the resources provided under the scheme.
6.	The JRM team also noted a substantial variation in enrolment figures in rural schools between grades 9 and 10. In the four rural schools we visited this gap was more than 60%. On enquiry school management could not explain this discrepancy. However during the last wrap up meeting RMSA director clarified that it is because the high influx of class 8 students automatically. At the same time many grade nice repeaters are counted as new entrance instead of repeaters. The schools are doing these practice to control the grade 10 enrolment and to show high percentage of pass rate at state board examination.	Only those students who passed Class-IX are being promoted to Class-X, and those who do not qualify the exam of Class-IX are retained in Class IX. This results in large variation in the student enrolment figures of Class-IX & X. As such, there is nothing to control the enrolment at Class-X and no intention to exacerbate the Board result.
7.	A good example of this is the school development plan -SDP which could be the guiding document for identifying individual school needs. Overall the quality of SDPs was deemed low and this is perhaps not surprising as all involved know the SDPs are of little significance. No evidence was seen of their use and there appeared to be no 'guardian' of the SDP in the DEO office. Rather than responding to school needs as articulated in the SDPs financing appeared to be driven by the funding options as defined by RMSA funding pro-forma. For example while many schools needed support with ICT expenditure this was not an option under RMSA so bids were put in for excursions, book fares and science kits which RMSA did treat as eligible.	The AWP&B is prepared on the basis of the data available in UDISE and the UDISE data is being utilized by all concerned including preparation of SIP. The observation regarding modifying the RMSA guidelines to make these more flexible may be accepted for betterment of the scheme.

<p>There is a real opportunity for RMSA to incentivize and stimulate real needs based planning through reform of its financing norms and operational procedures.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION TAKEN</p>
<p>Better use of evidence to inform planning and financing strategies</p> <p>Enhance capacity of school, block, district and states official on education indicators, use of data and evidence on planning and monitoring exercise</p> <p>Deeper consideration of the affordability and performance implications of policies currently being pursued.</p> <p>In response to every State report Tripura devises a detailed remediation strategy to address key issues and learning deficits identified. The strategy includes impact evaluation to ascertain whether interventions are effective.</p>	<p>The AWP&amp;B is prepared on the basis of the data available in UDISE and the UDISE data is being utilized by all concerned including preparation of SIP. However, all concerned have been instructed to utilize the data and evidence more carefully in planning process giving due weightage to the state norms etc.</p> <p>The learning deficit blocks have already been identified. One Nodel Officer for each block has been entrusted for close monitoring of the academic affairs of the schools and to take necessary remedial measures. The effort has yielded positive result. Also in order to address deficits in attainment levels in Mathematics, Science and English, the teachers are being trained.</p>
<p>The State needs to urgently consider what to do with the stock of computer equipment lying unused in schools across the state. If these computers cannot be effectively used at the school it may be worth collecting and redistributing them to institutions where they would be useful e.g. to DIETs or district education offices where the equipment could be utilized</p> <p>State Govt. needs to budge for the recurrent cost of running ICT in schools, which includes replacement, maintenance, internet costs.</p> <p>A holistic staff development programme is needed to induct use of computers in schools. This needs to cover both pre-service and in-service training.</p>	<p>Most of the computers have become non-functional . The possibility of getting the computers repaired is being explored.</p> <p>Provision for Pre-service and in-service teachers training on computer will be proposed in next Annual Work Plan and Budget.</p>

<p>Tripura expand its successful model of consolidated secondary and higher secondary school and seek alternative approaches such as hostel accommodation or providing safe motorized transport for students to avoid small, costly, poorly staffed and poorly performing schools.</p> <p>Tripura urgently quantify both supply of and demand for subject specific teachers at secondary and put enact realistic plans to ensure optimum utilization of teachers in shortage subjects e.g. peripatetic teachers.</p> <p>Tripura further exploit its powerful GIS school mapping facility to look at expanded strategies to ensure all students are taught by subject specialist teachers e.g. school rationalization and sharing of specialist teachers via cluster arrangements</p> <p>Tripura pay particular attention to the State findings of the grade 10 NAS – particularly the areas where the state has been identified as significantly under-performing (Number systems, Algebra, coordinate geography, and history). The state commission the SCERT and other concerned bodies such as teacher training institutions develop a remediation plan for every NAS survey published addressing key findings on learning challenges e.g. through – enhanced pre-service and in-service training, textbook reform, additional education support materials research</p>	<p>Setting up of residential schools covering some areas of the sparsely populated areas may be proposed in the future Annual Work Plan &amp; Budget.</p> <p>The process of recruitment of teachers has already been started by the Govt. and it is expected that the teachers recruitment will be made very shortly.</p> <p>The Tripura Board of Secondary Education has introduced new syllabus at secondary level in the year 2016.</p>
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The state should carefully consider its civil works needs beyond applying a crude 5 km rule. The mission visited excellent schools in urban areas that were required to run double shifts because of over demand (thus warranted additional classrooms or even brand new schools). Conversely the mission was informed of a school upgrading for 7 students was being proposed. Given the chronic shortage of teachers, and the significant recurrent expenditure of teacher costs (typically 80% - 90% of education costs) a more holistic view – which connects – enrolment, teacher deployment and utilisation, and student performance (students cannot be expected to excel if they do not have access to a qualified subject teacher). Tripura should consider a radical plan of consolidation and rationalisation together with alternative approaches to give its students the very best chance of not only having school buildings but schools in which there are teachers and learning takes place.

The RMSA society needs to get a better understanding of civil works progress from PWD and RDD level. It should follow up as a matter of urgency on utilization certificates for previously released money is received before any further monies are released. It should also clarify how interest is being treated.

The RMSA may consider inserting penalty clauses for missing deliver deadlines, standards and delayed issuing of utilization certificates with implementing agencies.

Proposal for upgradation of schools are being made on the basis of distance and enrolment criteria. But 6 (six) schools were proposed only on the basis of distance criteria because it is seen that the parents prefer to put their wards even in lower classes of High & Higher Secondary Schools. So when a school is up-graded there are chances that the enrolment in Class VIII will go up.

Close monitoring and follow up with the RD Department have been taken up and as a result the work progress has reached to a better position. The emphasis was given for collection of utilization certificate and considerable improvement has been achieved in the meantime.

