

First career portal for students launched in Rajasthan

Will address the needs of students for information on scholarships and career choices



Rajasthan Minister of State for Education Govind Dotasra and UNICEF Rajasthan chief Isabelle Bardem inaugurating the career portal in Jaipur on Wednesday.

India's first "career portal", addressing the needs of secondary and higher secondary students for information on scholarships and career choices, was launched with the support of United Nations Children's Fund here on Wednesday. The portal is expected to help the students take "informed decisions" about their academic and professional pursuits.

To benefit lakhs

Minister of State for Education Govind Singh Dotasra and UNICEF-**Rajasthan** chief Isabelle Bardem inaugurated the portal, set to benefit about 23 lakh students, at Dr. Radhakrishnan Shiksha Sankul here in the presence of school principals, teachers and senior officials.

Mr. Dotasra said the portal would promote employment-oriented education in the State and provide information on 200 vocational and 237 professional careers, 455 employment avenues, 960 scholarships, 955 competitive examinations and 10,000 institutions of higher education to the students from Classes IX to XII.

Experts in UNICEF have developed the portal after an assessment of needs, awareness and perspective of students, teachers and system functionaries. Dr. Bardem said the assessment had indicated that most of the boys and girls in the State were keen to join the workforce as soon as they finished Class X or XII. Besides, the assessment revealed a substantial progress in terms of gender equality among the students.

"The career portal will serve the needs in the educational stream, enabling the students to choose their career path matching with their aspirations, interest, inclination and aptitude," Dr. Bardem said, adding that this would reduce dropouts at various stages in schools and improve retention in jobs. UNICEF had selected Rajasthan for launching the portal because of its track record in employment-oriented education, she said.

Mr. Dotasra also announced setting up of the Rajiv Gandhi Career Counselling Cell for adolescents and youths on the occasion. The cell will link school and college students with skill development programmes and internship opportunities in the pursuit of their career choices.

Career information

UNICEF's studies in Rajasthan have highlighted that two largest sources of career information for students are teachers and family members. About 69% of students

mentioned that they were using Internet for their career-related queries, which indicates that the adolescents will quickly learn to use the career portal.