

Education

HRD Ministry to celebrate International Women's Day in Schools

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Union Human Resource Development Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has said that to take forward the momentum of empowerment of girls and women through education, the Ministry of HRD will celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) in schools and colleges across the country. He further said that the Government has launched a special theme-based focused campaign from 1st-7th March in the run-up to International Women's Day on 8th March this year with Education being the theme on 1st March. Shri Pokhriyal further said that as a tribute to women, the celebration by HRD Ministry will continue throughout the year.

The HRD Minister has said that the Government has taken several game-changing initiatives since 2014 for the education of the girl child. This is one of the reasons for the success of the scheme of Beti Bachao Padhao whereby the Gross Enrolment Ratio of girls across all levels of education is now higher than boys. At the elementary level, GER is 94.32 % as against 89.28% for boys. At the secondary level, it is 81.32 % as compared to 78 %.

He has said that the HRD Ministry has decided to take further various activities to encourage female students to excel in their lives and establish that their gender is never a hindrance to excellence. UGC will conduct **round table discussions** and take up several other programmes on women empowerment on various themes in about 40 Central Universities around the country among several other activities to be taken up.

He exhorted the educational institutions to focus on women achievers during classroom instruction. Shri Nishank informed that to nurture the leadership qualities and confidence in girl students, the Ministry has decided to designate a girl student as class monitor “**Main Hoon Monitor**” for at least half of the academic school session of the year 2020-21 and beyond.

He further informed that a **Self-Defence Olympiad** will be organised for girls at school level on the lines of Yoga Olympiad. To ensure the safety and security of girls, Self defence training is imparted to girls of class VI to XII belonging to Government Schools.

The Culture and Theatre Clubs in Colleges and Universities will be encouraged to organise nukkad natak, mime shows etc shows on women’s issues. The Minister also emphasized that all Colleges and Universities will prominently display Women Helpline Numbers at different places on their respective campuses.

Shri Nishank said that to motivate girl students, **special morning assemblies** will be organised once a week in schools throughout the year. He added that in these assemblies, talks on women achievers in different fields, role play, thought of the day,

group songs on women empowerment, awards/recognition to the girl students who have performed well in different fields such as academics, sports, dance, music, arts, social service, and novel areas will be included.

The Minister informed that the schools are also being requested to **honor women faculty** members and staff for their distinguished service for the organization. Educational institutions will also organize essay writing contests on prominent/inspirational women of the district where they are located. He added that in higher educational institutions, the Gender Studies Cells in coordination with UGC will conduct seminars on gender bias and stereotyping, gender equality and women's right.

Ministry of HRD is continuously working to provide a secure and conducive environment for girls' education under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao movement of the Government of India. To encourage enrollment of girl students in the schools Ministry of HRD constructed gender-segregated toilets in elementary and secondary schools within one year from 15.08.2014 to 15.08.2015 under Swachh Vidyalaya initiative. Now all government schools have gender-segregated toilets for girls and boys.

Besides this Ministry of HRD has taken various steps to promote education among girls.

Under the newly launched Integrated Scheme of School Education-Samagra Shiksha, effective from the year 2018-19, provision has been made to upgrade the existing Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) from upper primary level up to senior secondary level in convergence with the erstwhile Girls Hostel Scheme. KGBVs are residential schools for girls belonging to disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, OBC, Minority and Below Poverty Line (BPL). As of December 2019, 4881 KGBV were operational as compared to 3593 on 30th September 2014. KGBVs currently have an enrolment of 6.18 lakh girls while enrolment stood at 3.52 lakh girls as on 30th September 2014.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) in association with WCD Ministry has decided to establish ten (10) Chairs in different universities in the name of Eminent Women personalities in various fields. Women Studies Centres with special focus on most marginalised and disadvantaged women in the society are being set up in Universities and Colleges.

For supporting a single girl child in higher education, Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Scholarship for Research in Social Science was started in 2014-15.

UGC has provided support for eight exclusive women universities.

The All India Council for Technical Education is implementing the PRAGATI scholarship scheme for the assistance of girls pursuing technical education.

The Government has decided to increase female enrolment in B. Tech. Programmes of IITs from the current 8% to 14% in 2018-19, 17% in 2019-20 and 20% in 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats.

The Government has also decided to increase female enrolment from existing 14% to 20% over a period of 2-4 years by creating supernumerary seats in undergraduate programmes of the National Institute of Technology and Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur.

Accordingly, 835 supernumerary seats were created in IITs in the year 2018-19 and 1122 seats in 2019-20. 673 supernumerary seats were created in NITs and IEST in the academic year 2018-2019.