

Mass Education Extension & Library Services



Mass Education Extension and Library Services Department looks after the education aspects of children with special needs, destitute children, young women in distress, develops schools and social welfare homes with proper infrastructure for them, and expands the library system in the state to make it function both as a storehouse of knowledge as well as a repository of information regarding life and livelihood of the people.

Major initiatives and achievements of the Department during last one year are:

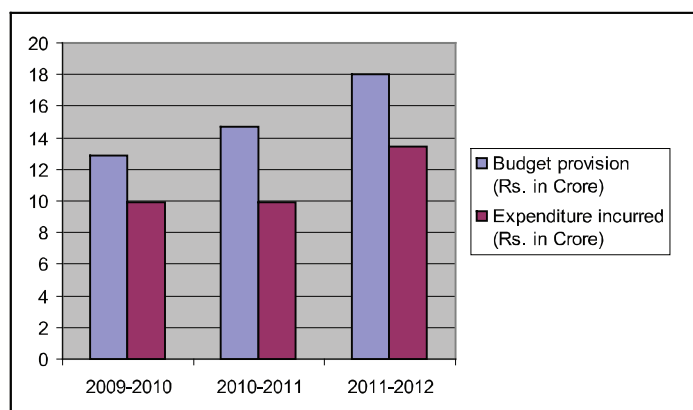
1. Infrastructure Development of Government and Government sponsored Public Libraries

Infrastructural development by way of grants for construction, repair, renovation of Government and Government Sponsored Public Libraries as well as for purchase of books, furniture, organization of book fairs in districts and computerization of libraries, is a major thrust activity of the Department.

- The budget provision for infrastructural development grant to Govt. and Government Sponsored Public Libraries in 2009-10 was Rs.12.84 crore. Out of this budget provision Rs. 9.92 crore was spent.
- In 2010-11 the budget provision for this purpose was Rs. 14.67 crore. The expenditure was Rs. 9.87 crore.
- In 2011-12 the budget provision for this purpose was Rs. 18.02 crore. The expenditure was Rs. 13.42 crore.

Chart : 1 - Graphical presentation of Budget provision vis-a-vis Expenditure incurred for the purpose of

infrastructural development of Govt. & Govt. Sponsored Public Libraries.



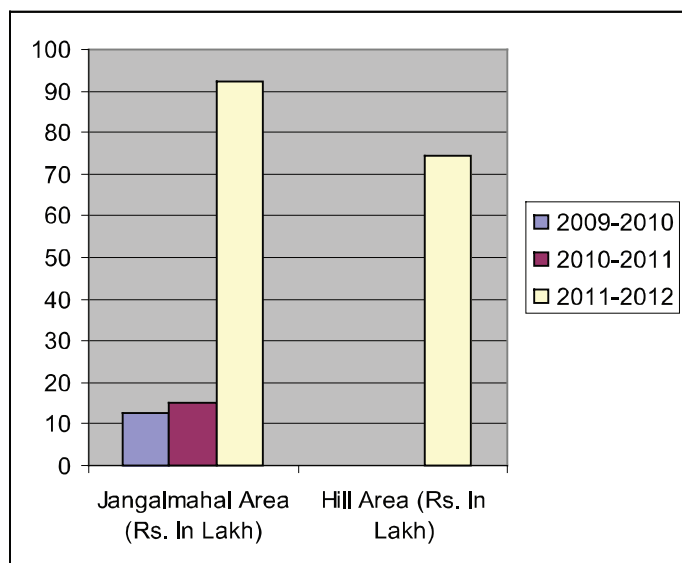
2. Jangal Mahal Areas :

In 2009-10, financial assistance to the public libraries in Jangal Mahal was to the tune of Rs. 12.8 lakh and in 2010-11, the level was Rs. 14.86 lakhs. In 2011-12, there was a quantum jump in fund release amounting to Rs. 92.46 lakhs to the public libraries in Jangal Mahal Areas.

3. Hill Areas :

Library got grants after 2 years. In 2009-10 and 2010-11 no amount was spent for the infrastructural development of public libraries in hill areas. In 2011-12, libraries situated in Hill Areas of Darjeeling have received grant for building construction amounting to Rs. 74.54 lakh.

Chart : II - Graphical presentation of amount of Grant received by libraries of Jangal Mahal Areas and Hill Areas in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 for the purpose of infrastructural development.



4. Education, Training & Maintenance of Sponsored Institutions for student with special needs.

This fund is devoted for infrastructural development of sponsored as well as aided schools meant for students with special needs. It includes construction, repairs of such schools as well as for procurement of furniture, other equipment etc. In the year 2009-10, against a budget provision of Rs. 942 lakhs, expenditure incurred was to the tune of Rs. 313 lakhs, in 2010-11 against the budget estimate of Rs. 842 lakhs, utilization was Rs. 247 lakhs whereas in 2011-12, expenditure of Rs. 387 lakhs was made against a budgetary provision of Rs. 800 lakhs signifying a jump of almost 57 % against the previous fiscal

5. Social Welfare Homes : More funds for destitute children and young women in districts

There are 49 State Welfare / Aided Homes for destitute children upto 18 years and another 5 aided Homes for young women in distress. State Government supports these Welfare Homes by way of infrastructure development as well as maintenance of needy inmates. In the year 2009-10, against a budgetary provision of Rs. 481 lakhs for this purpose, funds of around Rs. 472 lakhs were spent and in 2010-11, against the budget availability of Rs. 254 lakhs, an amount of Rs. 347 lakhs was spent for the purpose. In the year 2011-12, realizing the demand, a bigger provision of Rs. 650 lakhs was kept and against this, Rs. 427 lakhs were utilized, signifying an increase in expenditure of 27 % over 2010-11.

Major Policy Decisions / Reforms made by the State Government since June 2011

The following important policy decisions/reforms were made by the Government in the Department of Mass Education Extension & Library Services since June 2011:

- Disbursement of salaries of the employees of Government Sponsored Public Libraries to be available on the first day of every month. This is in place now.
- Introduction of exclusive all women's libraries on a pilot basis, from the year 2012-13, in order to increase access to women readers including neo literates especially in the areas inhabited predominantly by minorities and other disadvantaged segments.
- Scope of modernization of public libraries has been widened by covering public libraries even at grass roots level. Accordingly, 200 rural libraries are being covered under the computerization initiative. The process for purchase of hardware and accessories regarding computerization programme has been started along with a comprehensive training programme of library personnel in phases. It has been further decided that to improve e-governance, internet connectivity will be given to 170 Town Libraries and 200 Rural Libraries.
- The vision is that the State Central Library, District Libraries and 370 Town and Rural libraries to begin with, will provide information relating to life and livelihood of people through Community Information Services with the help of Computerization Programme.
- Revamping the management structure of the Special Schools sponsored by the Government of West Bengal under the administrative control of this Department with a view to cleansing the academic environment and bringing about qualitative change, de-politicisation and transparency.
- Publication of a structured syllabus for the pre-primary students of all categories of disabilities, including MR, reading in the Special Schools sponsored and recognized by the Government in the MEE & LS Department.
- Constitution of a Committee to review the existing Scholarship Scheme administered by this Department for students with disabilities studying above Class VIII.
- Targeted intervention for providing relief to the less privileged and socially and economically marginalized sections of the people across the State, and towards this end, decision to set up 10 Model State Welfare Homes in the State including in North Bengal and Jangalmahal areas and one in Rajarhat.
- Decision to upgrade at least one Special School into Model Special School in each district of the State.
- Introduction of specific changes in the format of special schools for ensuring wider coverage of students with special needs, with focus on PPP mode through enlisting participation of the corporate sector as a part of their CSR.