

# MORE TEACHERS IN CLASS, free laptops for college kids

Team TOI

Waking up to reality, the government has finally tried to address the dismal public school system. The CM hiked the allocation for primary education to Rs 18,266 crore and hailed the role of non-profit organizations such as Akshara Foundation, Sikshana and Azim Premji Foundation, among others in improving quality of education in government schools. However, the Right to Education Act found no mention in the speech.

The upcoming academic year will include techniques to impart effective learning of English language from Class 1. Additionally, 10,000 trained graduate teachers will be recruited for government primary schools across the state, and 1,626 for high schools; 176 consolidated schools up to Class 12 will come up at gram panchayats, the CM said. The government has decided to begin training 50,000 teachers and lecturers across the state.

Free spectacles following eye tests, distribution of shoes and socks, milk for five days a week from July, uniforms and



Photo for representation

**SET FOR CLASS:** Nearly 10,000 trained graduate teachers will be recruited for government primary schools

chudidhars for students and extension of fortified rice for four lakh students across four districts through midday meal scheme – the CM's budget announced goodies galore for primary school children. Turning to technology to en-

sure quality education, the CM said the existing Shikshana Kirana scheme will introduce biometric attendance for school teachers. While allocation for higher education has dipped to Rs 4,401 crore, the

government announced free laptops for 1.5 lakh students in medical, engineering, polytechnic and first-grade colleges. In 2014, the government had proposed to distribute free laptops to 10.5 lakh students of I and II PUC but edu-

cation minister Kimmane Ratnaakar had said it had been dropped as it would cost the exchequer Rs 300 crore.

Raichur University will become a reality soon. All colleges in Raichur and Yadgir districts will be brought under this university. Despite the lower allocation, the higher education department is setting up 23 girls' hostels in polytechnic colleges at a cost of Rs 2 crore each.

The CM has also announced 25 new polytechnic colleges, and 10 model SC/ST residential first-grade colleges. The state has given Rs 25 crore to the University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering.

Karnataka will have 900 more MBBS seats to offer. The budget has proposed the opening of six new medical colleges in Chitradurga, Bagalkot, Haveri, Yadgir, Chikkaballapura and Chikkamagaluru districts. To address the issue of deficiency of specialized doctors, the budget has proposed 150 more DNB seats from next year. Compared to last year, allocation for medical education has gone up by Rs 390 crore to Rs 2,004 crore.