

'We want higher education to focus on innovation'

Four ministries in three years is a task for anyone. However, **Prakash Javadekar**, currently Union Minister for Human Resource Development, has handled all of them with aplomb. In fact, his latest assignment was seen as a sign of the Prime Minister's growing confidence in his abilities after he had successfully taken on challenges in Information and Broadcasting, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Parliamentary Affairs. In an interview to Shailendra Paranjpe, he talks about his achievements in all these ministries during his tenures there.

■ *What are your achievements?*

The biggest challenge was assessing the deteriorating quality of government schools, but we zeroed in on the challenge. We focused on learning outcomes and competence of students by deciding minimum competence level. Now, there will not be a case where a Class 8 student can't handle Class 3 mathematics.

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR

Union Minister for Human Resource



■ *But wasn't it there previously?*

It was mentioned in the Right To Education 2006 Act but it was not notified. Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated this approach of outcome orientation, and the learning outcome initiative was also because of his insistence on outcome orientation. We made a

training module for teachers mandatory. We are trying to bring accountability at all levels in schools.

■ *How do you ensure quality in school education?*

We have brought back the Class 10 board examination in CBSE. We are in the process of making a law so that states will be allowed to decide whether a student can be held back between Class 5 and Class 8. This detention policy will provide autonomy to states.

■ *What about higher education?*

We want higher education to be focus on research and innovation. Through a higher education finance agency, we are putting in Rs 20,000 crore in higher education through debt instruments.

Full interview on www.dnaindia.com