

that the scheme of teaching Yoga in Kendriya Vidyalayas was started in 1981-82 on an experimental basis and later it was decided for continuing the scheme on a regular basis.

The qualifications and pay scales of Yoga teachers (Rs. 1400-2300) were lower than those of Trained Graduate Teachers (Rs. 1400-2600) who have been granted the benefit of senior scale of pay.

The Board of Governors of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in 1995 decided to confirm those Yoga teachers who fulfilled the revised prescribed qualifications of graduation with three months training in Yoga. The question of giving higher scales of pay to the Yoga teachers who have been confirmed can be considered in the light of the recommendations of 5th Pay Commission as accepted by the Government.

Boarding and hostel facilities for girls

1167. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Central Scheme for strengthening of boarding and hostel facilities for girls students of secondary and higher secondary schools is under implementation in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the salient features of the scheme and hostels provided under the scheme in the state so far;

(c) whether the scheme has helped the State in increasing the ratio of retention of girl students; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHAMMAD SAIKIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under the Scheme, financial assistance is being given to eligible voluntary organisations to improve the enrolment of adolescent girls belonging to rural areas and weaker sections. Preference in providing assistance is given to hostels located in educationally backward districts, particularly those predominantly inhabited by SCs/STs and educationally

backward minorities in the secondary and higher secondary schools.

Assistance under the scheme is provided for purchase of furniture, utensils, recreational aids etc. and for food for students and salary of cook and warden etc.

So far five hostels have been sanctioned in State of Maharashtra.

(c) and (d) An evaluation of the whole scheme to find out the real impact of the scheme is due to be undertaken this year.

Navodaya Vidyalayas in Arunachal Pradesh

1168. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how many Navodaya Vidyalayas have been established in Arunachal Pradesh; whether all such Navodaya Vidyalayas have been provided with all the necessary infrastructure facilities;

(b) what are the norms laid down for admission in such schools; and

(c) whether the locals who voluntarily donate lands for opening such schools are given some preference in the matters of admissions; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHAMMAD SAIKIA): (a) Seven (7) Navodaya Vidyalayas have been sanctioned in Arunachal Pradesh. Construction of permanent Vidyalaya buildings has been taken up for all the Vidyalayas except in Lower Subansiri district where the land has not yet been transferred to the Samiti. There is shortage of accommodation in the temporary buildings where these schools are run, but all basic minimum facilities like electricity, water are provided to these Vidyalaya.

(b) Admission to Navodaya Vidyalaya is made only at Class VI on the basis of Test by N.C.E.R.T. A candidate appearing for the selection test must be studying in Class V in a recognised school in that District, where he/she is seeking admission and should be between 9-13 years of age as on 1st of May of the year of admission. The candidate must have also

studied and passed Class III, IV and V from recognised school/schools in the preceding three continuous academic sessions, spending one full academic session in each class through formal system of education without any repetition of class. No candidate is allowed to appear in the selection test for the second time. At least 75% of the seats in a district are filled by candidates from rural area. Reservation of seats in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is provided in proportion to their population in the concerned district, provided that in no District such reservation is less than the national average, efforts are made to ensure that atleast 1/3rd of the students selected are Girls.

(c) No, Sir.

National Open Schools in the Country

1169. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of National Open Schools at present in the country; and whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for opening more such schools;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government propose to bring change with a view to providing an alternative system of education to supplement the formal education system;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Working Group under his Ministry submitted its final report on Open learning system at school stage; and

(d) if so, what are the recommendations made by the Working Group?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) There is only one National open School in the country. However, it has its study centres spread throughout the country. At present, there are about 750 study centres.

National Open school was established in 1989 to provide education to school drop-outs and those who cannot attend

regular classes. It is a significant innovation for complementing formal education.

(c) and (d) A working Group on open Learning System at School Stage to suggest proposals for the IX Plan was set up under the Chairmanship of Prof. Uttam Bhoite. The Working Group has submitted its report. The major recommendations of the Working Group include establishment of State Open Schools in various States, establishment of a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to provide financial support to set up State Open Schools, review of reading materials, establishment of National Consortium of Open Schools, to develop vertical and horizontal linkages between open learning System and other sectors of education, establishment of more State Institutes Education Technology (SIETs) and strengthening of media support.

Progress of free compulsory primary education

1170. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of progress, if any, made by the Ministry in executing Government's resolution to provide free compulsory primary education to all as on date; and

(b) if no progress has been made so far, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) In pursuance of the resolve of the United Front Government to make the right to free and compulsory education a Fundamental Right, the Constitution (Eighty Third Amendment) Bill, 1997 has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 28th July, 1997.