

Free and compulsory education

619. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to provide free and compulsory education;

(b) if so, up to which level;

(c) whether proposal is upto +2 level; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in that direction ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) KUMARI SELJA) : (a) to (d) In accordance with the constitutional directive, all State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have abolished tuition fee in Government schools upto upper primary level. Education in schools run by local bodies and private aided institutions is mostly free in the States/UTs. However, private un-aided schools which constitute 3.7% of the total elementary education schools in the country, do charge fee. Beyond elementary stage, the position differs from state to state.

14 States and 4 Union Territories have passed Acts making primary education compulsory. While these States have enacted legislation to make education compulsory, they have desisted from prescribing the rules and regulations whereby those provisions can be enforced on account of various socio-economic compulsions that keep children away from schools. To attract children and retain them in school system, Government have initiated schemes such as Operation Blackboard, Establishment of District Institutes of Education & Training, Strengthening of non-formal centres etc. together with adoption of child centred and activity based process of learning at primary stage to make school environment better.

Central assistance to M.P. Text Book Corporation

620. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Madhya Pradesh Text Book Corporation was formed in 1968 with the Central Assistance to sell the school books, stationery etc. at the cheaper rates on a 'no profit no loss basis';

(b) if so, whether this scheme continued upto March, 1990 and Central Government stopped assistance from that date onwards to this institution;

(c) whether this scheme of setting up of Text Book Corporation had greatly helped the weaker and downtrodden people and had helped in making the education less costly;

(d) if so, whether after the Central assistance was stopped, the Corporation could not function and Selling of books etc. at cheaper rates was stopped;

(e) if so, what were the main reasons for stopping the central assistance and whether Government are considering to continue the central assistance from now onwards as demanded by the State Government; and

(f) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) KUMARI SELJA) : (a) to (f) The Textbook Corporations are under the purview of the State Government/Union Territories concerned. However, from 1974 to March, 1990, there was a scheme for supply of White Printing Paper (WPP) at concessional prices.