

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, like in Jamshedpur, TISCO has upgraded their own airport for civilian use, let the Rourkela Steel Plant or SAIL upgrade that airport for civilian use. You can ask the commercial companies to operate them.

DR. CHANDAN MITRA: It is for you to ask them.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There is no issue. It is a private airport belonging to SAIL. Let the SAIL operate it and I am sure that the commercial operation will start. (Ends)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Listed companies for expansion in higher education sector

*441. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the need to make higher education in the country independent of Ministry's interference and to ensure quality by allowing the listed companies to expand higher education programmes;

(b) whether Government is in favour of increasing the enrolment rate in higher education to over 20 per cent from present 12 per cent; and

(c) if so, what is Government's view to regulate higher education through an independent regulator, who may remove entry barrier to allow more players as well as give students more choice to choose from?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) The Government is committed to the autonomy of universities and other institutions of higher learning. The National Policy on Education as well as judicial pronouncements, are against the commercialization of higher education. While any company can assist in providing for improving research and quality of institutions of higher education, there is no proposal at present to allow listed companies to directly establish institutions in higher education. Creation of an overarching regulatory body in higher and technical education, working at arm's length from Government, is one of the priorities of the Government. One of the objectives of Eleventh Five Year Plan, is to strengthen the quality of higher education, for which several academic reforms, have been initiated.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan as approved by the National Development Council (NDC), has a target to increase Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 5% by the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan period (2007-12) and increasing it to 21% by the end of the Twelfth Five Year Plan period.

Revision of wages for Bank employees

*445. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the revision of wages of the officers and staff of Public Sector Banks is due since November, 2007;

- (b) if so, the reasons for delay in settling the issue; and
- (c) by when a decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table on the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The wage settlement of officers and employees is negotiated by the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) representing the managements of such banks, which have mandated it to negotiate on their behalf, with the Unions/Associations representing the employees and officers. The wage revision exercise includes revision of pay and allowances, basic service conditions, perquisites and benefits and retriial benefits etc. The Unions/Associations present their Charter of Demands to IBA and thereafter several rounds of negotiations are held by IBA with the Unions/Association to arrive at a settlement. Resolving the issues involved is a time consuming process. Efforts are being made to arrive at a settlement.

Discussion with States regarding Yashpal Committee's report

*449. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee appointed during the year 2008, with Prof. Yashpal as the Chairman, to advise renovation and rejuvenation of higher education in India has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this report has been accepted by the competent authority;

(d) if so, the details of decision taken, if any, to implement the report;

(e) whether the report has been made available to the competent authority of States and the general public for discussion;

(f) if so, whether the views of the various State Governments will be considered before implementing the report; and

(g) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): Yes, Sir. The Committee to advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education constituted by the Government under the chairmanship of Prof. Yash Pal has submitted its Report on 24th June, 2009.

(b) Recommendations of the Committee *inter-alia* are:

- (i) Creation of an all-encompassing National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), a Constitutional body to replace the existing regulatory bodies including the University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical