

(c) if not, the reasons therefor, in view of the fact that people are unable to afford public school education costs and number of people living below the poverty line is very high?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During the 3 years, *i.e.*, 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09, 7 Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) have been opened in the districts of Boudh, Gajapati, Malkangiri, Nabrangpur, Raigada, Kandhamal and Bhadrak in the State of Orissa.

Kendriya Vidyalayas are opened primarily to cater to the educational needs of children of Central Government employees including defence and para military forces.

#### **Setting up of NCHER**

\*130. SHRI JABIR HUSAIN :

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is keen to tie up with leading global universities;

(b) whether a task force has been set up by his Ministry for replacement of University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) by the proposed National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) and a national testing scheme on the lines of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) for university admission;

(c) whether he visited US for developing partnership with educational institutions of global repute;

(d) if so, the outcome to his visit; and

(e) to what extent setting up of the task force will improve higher education?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) In order to improve quality of education and research in Indian institutions of higher learning, the Government, in addition to other measures, is keen to promote collaborations with leading Universities of the world.

(b) and (e) The need to establish an overarching regulatory body in higher, technical and professional education based on the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission and the Committee to advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education under Prof. Yash Pal has been expressed by Government as one of its priorities for which a Task Force has been constituted by the Government. The Task Force would aid, advise and assist the Government in achieving its objectives of reform and restructuring of the Higher Education sector and has the following terms of reference:—

(i) To aid and advise the Central Government in the establishment of a Commission for Higher Education and Research.

(ii) To aid and advise the Central Government in the establishment of a National Testing system for admission to Universities and other institutions of higher learning.

- (iii) To aid and advise the Central Government in evolving new governance structures for Universities.
- (iv) To monitor the implementation of such recommendations of the Committee to advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education and the National Knowledge Commission as the Central Government may decide to implement.
- (v) To aid and advise the Central Government in the establishment of Innovation Universities aiming at world class standards.

(c) and (d) An official delegation headed by the Minister of Human Resource Development visited some Universities in the United States (US) namely Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, Yale University and Georgetown University between 25th to 31st October, 2009. The delegation also interacted with Presidents of several other Universities, prominent academics and officials in the Department of Education in the Federal Government of USA. The discussions focused on the establishment of Innovation Universities and other institutions of higher learning in India. The Indian academe in the US expressed their keenness to participate in India's reform process for higher education. Among the issues discussed were the scope for evolving various models of partnership in Higher Education including Public-Private Partnership, encouraging twinning arrangement between universities in the two countries, joint assignments in Indian universities to Indo-American academe, invitations to academics from top US Universities in specialized fields of knowledge to Indian institutions to strengthen such fields in Indian Universities and encouragement to post-doctoral and graduate students from India to work with top academics and researchers in specialized areas of knowledge.

#### **Effect of recession on SMEs**

\*131. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:  
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's initiatives for mitigating the hardships of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have not really percolated down to the ground level;
- (b) if so, the facts and details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has taken any fresh steps to protect the small and medium enterprises which are hard hit by the current economic slowdown; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Keeping in view the impact of global economic slowdown on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the Government, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Public Sector Banks have taken several measures for