

shall have the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary education. The Central Government and the State Government have the joint responsibility for achieving the universal elementary education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the main vehicle for implementation of the Act under which funds are provided to the State Governments in accordance with the extant SSA norms. Grants are, however, released to the State Governments/institutions keeping in view the proposals received, availability of resources and progress of utilization of funds earlier released under each scheme.

Committee to examine extension of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme

3176. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has constituted a national level committee to examine extension of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme to cover students studying in privately managed unaided schools in tribal areas including unaided minority institutions in the country;
- (b) if so, the terms of reference of the said committee;
- (c) whether the said committee has completed study and submitted its report; and
- (d) if so, the details of recommendations made therein and the action so far taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The Government has constituted a national level committee with the following terms of reference:—

- (i) to examine the suggestions with regard to coverage of students studying in privately managed unaided schools with focus on Tribal areas and minorities;
 - (ii) to estimate financial and other implications of such coverage/extension; and
 - (iii) to ascertain whether State Governments/UT Administrations are agreeable to the extension of MDM Scheme to privately managed unaided recognized schools and share the cost.
- (c) and (d) No, Sir.

Future of students studying in deemed universities

†3177. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards his statement in which he has said that all the deemed universities would be dissolved and the future of the students studying in these universities would not be affected;
- (b) if so, the time when this policy decision was taken and under which circumstances;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the total number of deemed universities and the students studying in them; and

(d) whether Government would ensure that such students will have the permission to go back to the colleges recognised by parent universities so that their future does not get affected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) At present, there is no policy decision on closure or dissolution of all the existing 'Deemed to be Universities' in the country. However, pursuant to the general perception about dilution of academic standards in certain institutions 'deemed to be universities', Government constituted a Committee of eminent academic experts to review the functioning of institutions deemed to be universities and the desirability of their continuance as such. The Review Committee, on the basis of their evaluation and assessment, reported that while some institutions deemed to be universities met the required benchmarks, some others would need some time to do so and yet, some others, numbering 44 such institutions, did not deserve to continue as institutions deemed to be universities, and the Government has, in principle, accepted the report of the Review Committee.

(c) As on date, one hundred and thirty institutions have been declared by the Central Government, on the advice of the University Grants Commission (UGC), as institutions deemed to be universities, under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956. As per the data provided by 126 out of the 130 institutions deemed to be universities during their Review in September, 2009, there are around 4,58,000 students studying in these institutions.

(d) Subsequent to the review of institutions deemed to be universities, a Task Force was also constituted by the Ministry to prepare a roadmap for implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Review Committee on deemed to be universities. In their report submitted to the Central Government, which has also been accepted, in principle, by the Government, the Task Force has *inter alia* recommended that all the pre-existing colleges, not found suitable for the status of deemed university should revert to status quo ante *i.e.* the status of an affiliated college of a State University so that the students would be able to complete their on-going courses and obtain the degree from the affiliating university. Further, if an institution is not able to obtain affiliation, every effort should be made to facilitate migration/reenrollment in equivalent or similar courses in other institutions.

The issue relating to implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of both the Review Committee and the Task Force is, currently sub *judice* in the Supreme Court of India in the matter of Viplov Sharma Vs Union of India and Others [WP(Q 142 of 2006)].