Pitiable State of Indian Universities

*345. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian universities are in pitiable state;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that they are unable to perform and compete with their research contribution coming down to an all-time low;

(d) the reasons for such under-performance and incompetence among the research contribution in our country;

(e) the steps Government have taken during the last two years to compete with international standards; and

(f) the steps Government would like to take to strengthen the whole university system in future within a specific time-frame?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (f) While it would not be correct to generalize that Indian Universities are in a pitiable state, insufficient funding of research activities, inadequate infrastructural facilities and insufficient scientific work force have been identified as factors that need to be overcome in order to improve scientific research in university system. The Central Government had, in March, 2005, constituted a Task Force for basic scientific research in universities. The Task Force recommended, *inter alia,* creation of positions of research scientists at various levels, promotion of formal collaborative research and networking between universities and national level institutions as well as with industries and user organizations, and upgrading infrastructural facilities for research. Recommendations of the Task Force have been accepted by the Government and the University Grants Commission has been directed to implement the same. The Task Force now functions as an Empowered Committee to monitor and render necessary guidance for implementation of the recommendations.

Central Government has made substantial increase during the last two years in the Plan allocation for University Grants Commission, for strengthening universities.