

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) Levying of capitation fee is against the national policy as well as rulings of the Apex Court. There is no information which could conclude that there is any increasing trend over the years towards charging of huge capitation fee or misleading of students in the higher educational institutions.

A legislative proposal namely 'The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010' has been circulated in Parliament. This is with a view to address the problem of unfair practices in technical educational institutions, medical educational institutions and Universities and to protect interests of students admitted or seeking admission therein.

Semester system in higher education

3424. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the semester system of examinations is a big educational reform in itself; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to adopt and implement it in institutions of higher education?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Universities have autonomy in academic matters including the introduction of the Semester System. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has written to Vice Chancellors of all Universities and institutions deemed to be universities to implement a slew of academic reforms in higher education including the introduction of semester system. Section 6(2) of the Central Universities Act, 2009, makes it obligatory on the new Central Universities to implement certain academic reform measures including the Semester System. The introduction of the semester system in conjunction with other reform resources would ensure greater choice in learning besides enabling student mobility across institutions.

Private engineering colleges

3425. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that private engineering colleges in the country are not properly controlled and regulated by the concerned universities to which they are affiliated and the AICTE with the result that they have created chaotic conditions;

(b) if so, what mechanism and measures are envisaged to regulate them;

(c) whether Government is aware of the fact that they don't have adequate qualified faculty and infrastructure facilities; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to appoint qualified staff and provide infrastructural facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) All technical institutions including private engineering colleges are required to adhere to the norms and standards prescribed by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to maintain the standards of technical education. In cases of the proposals for establishment of new technical institutions, AICTE examines the proposal from the sponsoring trust, gets those claims verified *viz-a-viz* norms and standards prescribed by it through the Expert Visiting Team. On the basis of the report of the visiting team, AICTE grants approval for establishment of new technical institutions. As regards the existing technical institutions and engineering colleges, such institutions are required to furnish the information in the form of Compliance Report to AICTE. On the basis of the said Compliance Report, AICTE accords the permission for extension of approval etc. In case AICTE receives any complaint against any engineering college with *prima facie* evidence, the same is got inquired and appropriate action is taken in accordance with the provision under AICTE Approval Process Handbook framed under the concerned Regulations.

(c) and (d) Certain section of the private engineering colleges had raised the issue of shortage/non-availability of qualified faculty, in terms of “All India Council for Technical Education (pay scale, service condition and qualification for teacher and other academic staff in technical institutions (Diploma/Degree) Regulation, 2010” of AICTE). Considering the concern of the engineering colleges, AICTE has allowed the recruitment of teachers with B.Tech qualification as Pro-term Lecturers for a limited period of 3 years. The said Pro-term Lecturer is supposed to obtain its masters qualifications within the period of 3 years. In order to address the issue of shortage of qualified faculties also to facilitate the students to pursue their higher study leading to award of M.Tech degree. The AICTE has granted permission to start second shift in the existing institutions.

Adult female literacy rate

3426. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to enhance the adult female literacy rate, Government has launched the new variant of National Literacy Mission and has fixed the target of reducing the gender gap in literacy to 10 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action plan prepared to achieve the goal; and

(d) the achievement made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Saakshar Bharat, the new variant of National Literacy Mission has been launched with prime focus on adult female literacy. It aims to provide opportunities to acquire basic literacy, skill development, continuing education and equivalency to formal school education.