

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Common entrance test for engineering students

1253. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that AICTE has received representations against a common entrance test for students of engineering;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is a fact that a large number of engineering colleges are operating only upto 25 per cent of their capacity;

(d) if so, what steps AICTE is taking to assist such engineering colleges in finding students and also arranging financial assistance for such students; and

(e) the details of the steps proposed by AICTE to assist new engineering colleges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) The AICTE has received representations against a common entrance test for engineering students. However, the State Ministers of Higher and Technical Education, in the conference held at Bangalore on January 10-11, 2005, arrived at a broad consensus on the need for a Central Legislation to regulate admissions and the fee structure in private self-financing professional educational institutions. Accordingly, a Draft Bill has been prepared for vetting by the concerned Departments and subsequent circulation among stakeholders including the State Governments to elicit their views for eliminating arbitrariness and malpractices in professional educational institutions.

(c) The admission position varies from college to college depending upon the quality of education delivered, location, etc. Many colleges still receive applications for admission much more than the approved intake.

(d) and (e) To reduce the financial burden on new institutes, the AICTE has brought down the amount of Joint FDR from Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 35 lakhs. The interest accrued on the FDR is to be used for scholarship/fee concession to needy students which would encourage more students to

join the engineering colleges. To help improve the quality of faculty and to enhance infrastructural facilities, the AICTE grants financial assistance to the institutions under their various schemes.

Book on Vedic Civilization

1254. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a book of 'Vedic Civilization' has been released by the ICHR; and

(b) if so, what are the contents of the book and the name of the Committee members, constituted for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. ICHR has informed that no book entitled 'Vedic Civilization' has been released by the ICHR. The Council has released a book entitled "A Discourse on Indo European Languages and Culture" which contains contributions on Indus civilization, Rigveda and the Harappan civilization and Vedic Language among others.

Bill for Women Empowerment

†1255. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether economic empowerment is the better way to free women from exploitation;

(b) whether crores of women are not earning their livelihood through jobs or business;

(c) whether all such married women known as better-half should have the right of 50 per cent legal share in the movable and immovable property and income of their husband; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to introduce any Bill for women empowerment and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.