

Proposal to create a National Text Book Council

2741. SHRI RANJITSINH VIJAYSINH MOHITE-PATIL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal of Government to create a National Text book Council that will monitor the content of school textbooks, including those taught at schools run by religious organizations has not found support amongst the State Governments;

(b) the number of States from which opinion has been received, so far;

(c) whether several States have opposed this proposal giving the feeling that it encroaches upon their jurisdiction; and

(d) if so, whether Government is going to remove this perception from their minds and suggest them to put forward their opinion in favour of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) A Committee of Central Advisory Board of Education on "Regulatory Mechanism for Textbooks and Parallel Textbooks taught in schools outside Government system" has recommended establishment of "National Textbook Council" to monitor textbooks used in schools in the country so that standard of education could be maintained and the student community is not exposed to inferior quality of textbooks or undesirable content. A proposal has been circulated among the State Governments seeking their opinion. Replies have been received from the 22 States and Union Territories out of which only three States have reservations about the proposal. The matter is under consideration at present.

Mid-Day-Meal Scheme

2742. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the corporates/multinational companies which run the Mid-Day-Meal Schemes;

(b) whether Government is paying the same amount to the corporates as paid to the schools to run the scheme; and

(c) if so, the input by the corporates/ multinational companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The responsibility to provide nutritious hot cooked meal to children under the Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) lies with the State Governments/UT Administrations. Under the Guidelines of the MDMS, the State/UT may assign the responsibility of cooking mid day meal, its distribution, capacity building, monitoring, evaluation and research to NGOs fulfilling the conditions laid down in the Guidelines.

The State Governments/UT Administrations assign the work to cook-cum-helpers, self help groups, Gram Panchayats, voluntary organisations, NGOs and in some cases to Registered Trusts.

The financial norms for providing assistance to schools and NGOs/Trusts are the same.

Right to Education (Amendment) Bill

2743. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Right to Education (Amendment) Bill is devoid of any suggestions on learning outcomes;

(b) whether Government has not included the concept of 'Minimum Learning Levels' from the National Policy on Education into the Right to Education framework and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to ensure that the children are guaranteed 'quality education' in schools across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2010 introduced in the Parliament provides for certain issues relating to children with disabilities and school management committees of Minority Institutions.

Section 29 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) of the child's understanding of knowledge and his/her ability to apply the same. Section 24 also specifies the duties and responsibilities of teachers to assess the learning ability of each child and supplement additional instruction, if required.

With a view to ensuring that quality education is provided the RTE Act lays down the norms and standards relating *inter alia* to Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school working days, teacher working hours. It provides for rational deployment of teachers by ensuring that the specified pupil teacher ratio is maintained for each school, rather than just as an average for the State or District or Block. It also provides for prohibition of deployment of teachers for non-educational work, other than decennial population census, elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament, and disaster relief. It provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, *i.e.* teachers with the requisite entry and academic qualifications. It also prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment, capitation fees, private tuition by teachers.

The Government is also implementing the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Programme for universalisation of elementary education. The norms under SSA have been modified to align them with the provisions of the RTE Act. The SSA goals include universal access