

Scholarship for college and university students

3514. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has approved changes in eligibility criteria for meritorious students from low income background, to let them avail of benefits of the scheme;

(b) if so, whether the Committee under the Prime Minister has approved changes in eligibility norms for Central Sector Scheme of scholarship for college and university students;

(c) if so, the details of changes made; and

(d) to what extent these changes will benefit students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The changes in the eligibility norms in the Central Sector Scheme of Scholarship for College and University Students have been approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.

(c) While there has been no change in the income criteria, the criteria of merit has been amended. Under the earlier norms, one of the criteria was that a student had to score 80% and above in the Class-XII or equivalent examination, to be eligible for applying for the scholarship. As per the revised norms, students who are above 80th percentile of successful candidates in the relevant stream for a particular Board of Examination, in Class XII of 10+2 pattern or equivalent, would be eligible for applying for scholarship under this scheme. The selection, however, would continue to be on merit from among all those applicants who meet the eligibility criteria.

(d) Under the revised norms, many more students are eligible to apply for this scholarship.

Role of NGOs under NP-NSPE

3515. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NPSE) (Mid-Day-Meal Scheme) is a fully Government run programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the role of NGOs in the scheme;

(d) whether Government is paying the same amount to the NGOs, as paid to the schools to run the scheme; and

(e) if so, the input by the NGOs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) is a centrally sponsored programme under which children at primary stage are entitled to get a nutritious hot cooked meal with an energy content of 450 calories and protein content of 12 grams and students at upper primary stage get an energy content of 700 calories and protein content of 20 grams in Government, Government aided, National Child Labour Project schools, Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education centres including Madarsas and Maqtabas supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

(c) Under the Guidelines of the MDMS, the States/UTs may assign the responsibility of cooking mid day meal, its distribution, training and capacity building, monitoring, evaluation and research to NGOs fulfilling the conditions laid down in the Guidelines.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Government releases funds to the State Government/UT Administration and no payment is made directly to the NGOs. Some of these NGOs run centralized kitchens for a cluster of schools in cities, where there is inadequate space for kitchens, to provide hot cooked mid day meal to children. They have mechanized kitchens to ensure quality and hygiene in preparation of meals. The cooked food is also transported through vehicles which ensure hot and fresh meals are served.

Violence and sexual abuse in schools

3516. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: