

MECON**(C) Details in respect of the hospital run by the MECON:**

The hospital has 12 Doctors, 18 Nurses and 47 supporting staff. The average number of beneficiaries is around 11,000. The year-wise expenditure on Ispat Hospital is as follows:—

Rs. in lakhs	
Year	Amount
2002-03	329.37
2003-04	410.85*
2004-05	323.31

*Includes expenditure on VRS & Gratuity to separated employees.

(D) MECON has not provided any financial assistance to the school since 2001.**Compulsory education for children**

†*370. DR. FAGUNI RAM: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is mandatory to provide compulsory education to the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years; and

(b) the provisions made by Government to provide compulsory education to the children who are staying away from their parents/guardians alongwith the number of such children in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Provision of Free and Compulsory Education to children of 6—14 years is a Constitutional mandate. Under the Centrally sponsored scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Central Government gives assistance to States, *inter alia*, for provision of free textbooks to all girls and SC/ST boys. Under this scheme, Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education Centres are also run for children in remote areas and those who cannot attend

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

regular schools, and certain other incentives like free uniform to girls can also be provided in educationally backward blocks. In addition, Central Assistance is also being given for provision of cooked Mid-day-Meals to children at the Primary stage, and for running residential schools for girls from weaker sections in selected educationally backward blocks. Taken together, these measures substantially address the problem of participation of all children in elementary education including those who may be staying away from their parents/guardians. Data is collected on out-of-school children but "Children staying away from their parents/guardians" is not a recognized category for which data is collected.

Gandhism In Elementary Education

***371. SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN:** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce syllabus with text books on Gandhism relating to Gram Swaraj as well as the history of National freedom from elementary level of education; and

(b) whether Government would also like to introduce from elementary education level, the text books based on the rights and duties of citizens and secularism provided in the Indian Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Elements mentioned in the question are already included in the curriculum/syllabus and textbooks of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

Vacant Posts of Teachers In Punjab

***372. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA:** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that thousands of posts of teachers, particularly in primary schools in Punjab, are lying vacant since long resulting in a set back to student education;

(b) if so, whether Government have asked for any report from the Government of Punjab; and