

and voluntary efforts in education, while preventing establishment of institutions which intend to commercialize education.

Students not availing mid-day-meals due to caste factor

2718. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether instances of students not availing the mid-day-meals at some places due to caste factor have come to the notice of Government;
- (b) if so, the facts and the details thereof; and
- (c) the corrective measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Six complaints (two each from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and one each from Andhra Pradesh and Orissa) have been received by this Department since 01.01.2010. They were referred to the concerned States for enquiring into the matter and taking necessary action. The States of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have informed that no discrimination due to caste factor was found. In Orissa, however, it was found that the guardians of the school students had stopped their children from taking mid-day-meal prepared by a Cook belonging to the scheduled caste. After an enquiry, the State Government booked a case against one of the guardians, who was arrested and produced before the Court. The Mid-Day-Meal programme in that school has been going on smoothly thereafter.

(c) Many studies have shown mid day meal fosters social equality, spreads egalitarian values, and breaks barriers of caste and class in school. Similarly, appointment of cooks from SC/ST communities teaches children to overcome caste prejudices. In addition, many States/UTs have formed School Management Committees/Samities under RTE Act, 2009 with members from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes to monitor the implementation of mid-day-meal in schools.

In order to ensure effective implementation of the scheme, there is an extensive monitoring mechanism at the school, block, district, State and the National levels. The scheme is constantly reviewed through Quarterly Progress Reports; in the National level steering cum Monitoring Committee meetings and during Programme Approval Board meetings as well as through the Central Review Missions. In addition 40 independent monitoring institutes evaluate the Scheme at regular intervals with defined Terms of Reference.

Women Study Centres

2719. DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: