

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (d) There is no State-based R&D Funding Scheme in the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

The Ministry has supported R&D at various academic and R&D institutions directly without the involvement of the State Governments in the areas of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology.

The Working Groups (set up by the Ministry, consisting of experts) in various relevant domains review the respective project proposals. Based on the recommendations of the Working Groups, projects are initiated. The projects initiated are reviewed and monitored at regular intervals by Project Review and Steering Groups set up for this purpose. Based on review, the next installment of the R&D grant is released. Any unspent balance is deducted from the next installment of the grant due.

Contents in NCERT textbooks

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

(a) whether Government has recently decided to set up an institutional mechanism along the lines of the Academic Councils established in Universities, that will have the final word on contents in NCERT textbooks;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments which are trying to remove parts from the NCERT textbooks would also be checked;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent the mechanism adopted by Government on the vetting of NCERT textbooks would be honoured by the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The mechanism for approval of content in school textbooks is different from the mechanism established in Universities. As regards National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks, Government of India has constituted a National Monitoring Committee (NMC) in 2005 to oversee the process of syllabus formation and textbooks writing, publication and distribution. Terms of reference of the Committee are:

(i) To ensure that syllabi and textbooks finalized by the NCERT reflect the values enshrined in the Constitution in the organization of knowledge in all subjects;

(ii) To ensure that the main thrust of the NCF 2005, *i.e.* to reduce curricular burden is fully reflected and carried out in the syllabi and textbooks;

- (iii) To ensure that textbooks encourage classroom pedagogy which enables both teachers and children to explore and use other resources of learning;
- (iv) To ensure that all textbooks reflect sensitivity to gender, caste and class parity and the needs in all subjects of children with disability;
- (v) To ensure that environmental education, peace, health issues and work related attitudes and values are infused in all subjects;
- (vi) To ensure that textbooks are free of errors and distortions; and
- (vii) To review the schedule of textbook publication.

The NMC is still continuing and performing the role assigned to it.

(b) to (d) Education is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution of India. It is for the States' School Education Boards to finalise their own Curricula and Syllabi. However, some of the School Education Boards have adopted the NCERT text books.

Passenger train from Gujarat to Shirdi

*296. SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) by when Railways are going to start passenger train from Gujarat to Shirdi, as there is a sharp rise in pilgrim tourist traffic to Shirdi from Gujarat;
- (b) whether Railways have conducted or are going to conduct any survey in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the specific details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MUKUL ROY): (a) Trains are not introduced State-wise, but on pattern of traffic demand, operational feasibility and availability of resources. However, introduction of trains from stations like Gandhidham/Okha/Dwarka/Rajkot/Bhavnagar/Ahmedabad/Vadodara/Surat etc. to Sainagar Shirdi station is not feasible at present due to operational and resource constraints including non-availability of maintenance facilities at Sainagar Shirdi for primary maintenance of the train and line capacity constraints on Ahmedabad-Vadodara-Surat-Jalgaon-Nandgaon-Manmad sections.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) Does not arise.

Sale of sub-standard Urea

*297. SHRI RANBIR SINGH PARJAPATI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state: