

**Availability of funds for schools under MDMS**

2244. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in majority of the schools under the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme funds do not reach on time and procuring food and fuel has become a challenge in Assam's schools;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of measures taken for improving the functioning of the said scheme in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) The Government of Assam has informed that on account of procedural formalities, there is a delay of 2 to 3 months in delivering the funds to the schools. In order to cut delay, the State Government is in the process of allocating funds directly from State Headquarters to the School Management Committees through electronic bank transfer. To improve the functioning of the scheme, the State Government has decided to engage retired teachers with good reputation to supervise and monitor the scheme. Besides, food grains are also allocated regularly to the schools.

**Status of universities in the country**

2245. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of universities as on 31 March, 2012 alongwith the details thereof, category-wise;

(b) the reasons for allowing foreign universities to function in the country; and

(c) the reasons for not improving the standard of our own university education?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The number of Universities as on 31.03.2012 was 568. Out of these, 42 are Central Universities, 286 are State Universities, 111 are Private Universities and 129 are Deemed to be Universities.

(b) Neither Central Government, nor the University Grants Commission (UGC) has given any permission to establish any foreign university in the country. However All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has issued Regulations for collaboration of technical/professional institutions of India and foreign universities. So far AICTE has permitted only seven such collaborations. UGC has also approved Regulations for academic collaborations between Indian and foreign universities.