

education, skill development and continuing education. The focus of the Mission is on excluded and disadvantaged groups, including the SCs.

**Caste and gender based discrimination under MDMS**

2429. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether certain cases of bias and discrimination have come to light in different regions under Mid-Day-Meal Scheme (MDMS);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a gender and caste bias has been noticed during the serving of meals in certain States;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the existing system of monitoring of this project in different regions in the country to control such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (d) Independent Monitoring Institutes have been engaged to monitor the Mid Day Meal Scheme and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as per the defined Terms of Reference. The Monitoring Institutions have reported about caste discrimination in some districts in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Gujarat and Karnataka Central teams were deputed in the 2nd week of the August, 2012 to these States to investigate into the matter. The teams did not come across any discrimination except in one school in district Boudh in Odisha. The matter was taken up by this Ministry with the Government of Odisha for taking immediate remedial action. The State Government have placed the Headmaster of the school under suspension and initiated disciplinary action against the Sub-Inspector of Schools. The District Administration has been instructed by the State Government to ensure social equity in all the schools.

- (e) The Government has made it clear that discrimination in the MDMS is unacceptable and has issued guidelines to the States to take preventive and corrective measures to ensure that discrimination does not occur, and is firmly dealt with if it does. The States/UTs have formed Committees/Samities with members from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to inspect preparation and distribution of

food. Similarly, priority is given to these communities in the recruitment of cook-cum-helpers. About 45% of the engaged cook-cum-helpers are from SC and ST communities.

The MDM guidelines lay down that on an average 25% of schools should be inspected every quarter by the State Government officers belonging to different departments at the District, Sub-Division, Tehsil/Taluka, block and other suitable levels. In addition, the Review Missions consisting of representatives of the Central Government, the respective State Government, the UNICEF and the Office of Supreme Court Commissioner are also monitoring the Scheme. Similarly, 41 independent Monitoring Institutions such as the Dr. PM Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Odisha, the NKC Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, the IIT Chennai and the Visva-Bharati University etc. also monitor this aspect.

#### **Drop-out rates**

2430. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the latest status of buildings in Government and local bodies schools;
- (b) the latest drop-out rates in schools in Classes I-V, I-VIII, I-X, Boys/Girls, SCs/STs; and
- (c) whether over the years, drop-out rate has come down?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) The status of school buildings under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is given in Statement-I (*See* below). With regard to the schools under the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), during the Eleventh Five Year Plan, 9636 new schools were sanctioned, out of which 8099 schools have become functional. The construction of buildings of 304 new schools has been completed and the construction work in respect of 2508 new schools is in progress.

(b) and (c) While the over-all drop-out rates (all categories) in the classes I-X have shown a declining trend during the years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11, the drop-out rates in the classes I-V and I-VIII during the same period have more or less remained static. The details of the drop-out rates are given in Statement-II and Annexure. [*See* Appendix 227 Annexure No. 32]