

7th January, 2013 has decided to revise the fee for Under Graduate (UG) students of IITs to Rs. 90,000 per annum from Rs.50,000 per annum. The revised rates would be applicable for the new entrants for UG programmes from the academic year 2013. The fee structure would be reviewed every year.

(c) and (d) Decision to raise the fee for under graduate students of IITs do not have any link with the decrease of budget for higher education at Revised Estimate (RE) stage of the current financial year. As per the analysis made by the report of Dr. Kakodkar Committee on "Taking IITs to Excellence and Greater Relevance", the fee covered only 7.5% of the revenue expenditure during the year 2010.

#### **Miserable condition of farmers in Assam**

\*18. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the condition of farmers in Assam is very miserable;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken by Government for improvement of their financial condition;

(c) whether heavy floods are a major factor for poor financial condition of farmers in Assam;

(d) if so, whether Government has any plan for tackling such natural calamities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Disproportionate pressure of population on agriculture resulting *inter-alia* in low per capita income in farm sector, disparity between per capita income in farm sector and non-farm sector and other constraints such as preponderance of small and marginal holdings, imperfect market conditions and lack of backward and forward linkages adversely affect income levels of farmers, including farmers in Assam.

In addition to various developmental interventions such as National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Technology Mission on Horticulture for North Eastern States, Bringing Green

Revolution in Eastern India, etc., Government has taken several steps for improving financial condition of farmers including enhancement in Minimum Support Prices of agricultural commodities, interest rate subvention for timely repayment of crop loans, debt waiver/debt relief, increase in credit flow to agriculture sector etc.

(c) to (e) Assam is periodically affected by floods which cause crop losses. Government is, therefore, promoting cultivation of rice in the boro season which affords assured and higher returns to the farmers. Government is also promoting submergence tolerant varieties of rice like Swarna sub 1 to prevent crop losses due to flash floods. Government is also extending assistance to the State for implementation of flood and erosion control measures like construction of embankments, plugging of breaches, prevention of erosion etc.

#### **ASER study on schooling outcomes**

\*19. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an independent annual study by the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Centre into schooling outcomes in rural India which has found steady decline in students' performance in key areas such as reading, comprehension and arithmetic although enrolment rates remain high;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures being taken to ensure that the norms laid down under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act are implemented?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) is brought out annually by PRATHAM, a non-governmental organization. The ASER Rural-2012 (Provisional) presents certain positive findings, including that more than 96% children in the 6-14 years age groups are enrolled in schools in rural areas, while the percentage of out-of-school children in the 6-14 years age group has dropped from 4% in 2009 to 3.5% in 2012. The report expresses concern regarding learning levels of children in schools in rural areas.

(c) The norms of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for universalizing elementary education, have been revised to conform to the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009. Since the commencement of the RTE Act in April, 2010 sanctions under