

improve teaching standards, including regular in-service teacher training, a 30-days induction training for newly recruited teachers, the training of all untrained teachers to acquire professional qualifications, the recruitment of additional teachers for better pupil-teacher ratios, academic support for teachers through block, and cluster resource centres, a continuous and comprehensive evaluation system to equip the teacher to measure pupil performance and provide remedial action wherever required, and teacher and school grants for the development of appropriate teaching-learning materials, etc. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 specifies the statutory duties and responsibilities of teachers and lays down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in elementary schools, which have been notified by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in its Notification dated 23rd August, 2010. For secondary education, the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan programme similarly provides for in-service teacher training and academic support to schools for improving teacher performance.

#### **Setting up of open polytechnic institutes**

659. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to set up open polytechnic institutes all over the country through National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS);

(b) whether Government has also entered into agreement with New Zealand Government for their support in opening of Open Polytechnic Institutes in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof and how much is the budget for this project; and

(d) the details of such institutes to be established and where?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) No such proposal is under the consideration of the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

(b) The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Open Polytechnic New Zealand (OPNZ) to strengthen the distance education programmes run by it. The MoU aims to promote vocational and technical education as per the socio-economic needs of the workforce in the country.

- (c) No budget has been allocated.
- (d) Does not arise.

**Coverage of MDMS against enrolment**

660. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is not a fact that coverage under Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) against enrolment is just 70 per cent;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that, in some States, the coverage is just 45 per cent;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the details of coverage in Andhra Pradesh; and
- (e) what efforts the Ministry is making to increase the coverage to, at least, 90 per cent in the Twelfth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) The coverage against enrolment, under the MDMS, during the 4th quarter of 2012-13 was 75%; as against 72% during 2011-12 and 71% during 2010-11.

(b) and (c) The UT of Chandigarh has recorded the lowest coverage against enrolment of 43%. According to the local officials, children in Chandigarh do not prefer to take mid-day-meal in schools as they are from relatively well-off families.

(d) 81% of the enrolled children have been covered under Mid-Day-Meal Scheme in Andhra Pradesh during 2012-13.

(e) The coverage against enrolment, under the MDMS, is more than 90% in 13 States/UTs; between 80-90 % in 7 States/UTs and between 70-80% in another 7 States and UTs. The issue of coverage of enrolled children is discussed in the Programme Approval Board Meetings, in the review meetings with the State Education Secretaries, in the Regional Review Meetings. The information submitted through the Quarterly Progress Reports is also analyzed and feedback shared with the States/UTs for taking remedial measures for improving the coverage of children.