

Improvement in quality of school teachers

1319. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any plan to improve the quality of school teachers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by Government for early implementation of recommendations of Justice Verma Commission on teachers education; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to have a fairly rigorous system of admission to teacher education courses, in order to bring improvement in quality of school teachers especially in Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. To improve the quality of school teachers, the Government has adopted a three-pronged strategy, which includes (i) The strengthening of Teacher Education Institutions, (ii) the revision of curriculum for teacher education in accordance with the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009 and (iii) the laying down of minimum qualifications for Teacher Educators and their continuous professional development.

The Government has approved a Rs. 6308 crore Project for the Strengthening of Teacher Education during the 12th Plan. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has been revamped with the appointment of the foremost Teacher Education experts in the country as members. It has been declared as the Academic Authority under section 23(1) of the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. The NCTE has accordingly laid down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in classes I to VIII in a school. In addition, all aspiring teachers have to qualify the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) to be eligible for appointment as teachers. The RTE Act also provides that persons who do not possess the prescribed qualifications would be required to acquire the same within a period of 5 years. The State Governments have accordingly taken up the training of 6.6 lakh untrained in-service teachers through the distance mode.

The Central Government has constituted Joint Review Missions (JRM)s, consisting of more than 50 top experts in the field of education/teacher education, to visit the States and guide them in strengthening Teacher Education. The Joint Review Missions have been undertaken for 14 States so far.

(c) and (d) The Justice Verma Committee (JVC) had made 30 recommendations in its report submitted to Hon'ble Supreme Court. The NCTE has set up a number of sub-committees to work out the modalities for the implementation of the JVC recommendations including exploration of the possibility of instituting a rigorous and transparent procedure of pre-entry testing of candidates for teacher education courses in order to bring about improvement in the quality of school teachers in the entire country. This work is being reviewed by a sub-committee of the former members of JVC set up by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Punjabi language in DU

1320. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, under the four-year graduate policy, the teaching of Punjabi language has been abolished while the B.A. and B.Com programmes in which Punjabi was being taught as a subject have also been abolished by Delhi University (DU);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has received representation from various Sikh organizations against the decision of Delhi University; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) and (b) No Sir. According to the information furnished by Delhi University (DU) to the Ministry, under the Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP), Punjabi is available as an option under the Foundation Courses and the Applied Language Courses in the first year as a compulsory subject. It is also available as Discipline Course-I and Discipline Course-II.