

Teaching of NCERT books

†1754. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased, to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in pursuance of the National Curriculum Framework, the Central Board of Secondary Education had issued directions to all the schools in 2007 to teach the books of NCERT, as per the curriculum prescribed by the Board;

(b) whether Government is aware of the fact that some school managers and private publishers are flouting these directions by printing the books on NCERT pattern and selling them to the students at very high rates; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) *vide* circular no. 38/07 dated 02.08.2007 has given direction to schools that the practice of recommending the books of private publishers in different subjects at senior secondary level from the academic year 2005-06 has been stopped. The CBSE now prescribes only National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) published books for classes IX to XII.

(b) and (c) As per available information, the Government is not aware of any such practice.

Normalisation formula for entrance to IITs

1755. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the normalization formula for school boards governing entrance to IITs through the Joint Entrance Examination is mired in confusion;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether the Ministry has consulted the Australian Council for Educational Research in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of their advice and if their advice is negative, why the Ministry went ahead with the normalization formula;

(d) whether bungled education policies not only create confusion and invite litigation but also have far reaching implications for students and eventually institutions; and

(e) if so, what steps the Ministry is taking to undo the damage caused to students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) No, Sir. The normalisation formula for School Boards is not applicable for entrance to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) through the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE). However there has been some confusion about IIT admissions this year.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) was one of the agencies consulted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for combining the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) scores and the Board Assessment for Tertiary Selection Purposes in India.

(c) The advice of ACER was not negative. It was, *inter-alia*, to apply a transformation to the AIEEE total score of a candidate, adjust the mean and standard deviation of this normalized distribution, apply a transformation to each set of Board score, adjust the mean and standard deviation of this normalized distribution, and form a composite score.

(d) No, Sir. The policy to include the marks of Board examinations for normalising on a percentile basis was taken by the Government primarily based on the reports of the Acharya Committee and Ramasami Committee. The issues raised in these reports were also discussed and consulted extensively with the experts, the IIT Council, the NIT Council, the State Boards and the Central Advisory Board on

Education (CABE). As per the aforementioned reports the rationale for including the Board marks for entry into Professional Colleges was to reduce the impact of private coaching on selection by giving weightage to school performance and to promote more inclusion.

(e) In view of above, this question does not arise.

Systemic failure of Mid Day Meal Scheme

1756. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bihar Mid Day Meal tragedy is just one of several systemic failures that have come to light;

(b) whether reports of contaminated Mid Day Meals and drinking water are pouring in from all over the country; and

(c) if so, what steps Government is taking to appoint a new committee to look into these egregious failures and put the systems in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) The Bihar Mid Day Meal tragedy is a case of gross negligence by the head teacher in allowing the use of organophosphate-contaminated oil for cooking and not tasting the meal before serving it to the children. She is also charged with gross negligence in fleeing from the school after the incident and not ensuring the timely provision of medical facilities to the affected children.

(b) In the last one year 12 complaints of contaminated Mid-Day Meals have been received. However, no case of contamination of drinking water has come to the notice of the MHRD.

(c) The Ministry of Human Resource Development has decided to set up Empowered Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Human Resource Development Minister with eminent experts from various disciplines with following Terms of Reference:-