

(d) The Government is taking various steps to build confidence between industry and the educational institutions to undertake research work. The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy 2013 has been formulated and its main features are, balancing between excellence and relevance, creating an enabling policy ambience for attracting larger investments of private sectors into Research and Development, promoting a science and developmental priorities of the country in agriculture, manufacturing, services and infrastructure sectors. Similarly a number of initiatives have been taken to fund schemes for research and development in universities and colleges.

Creation of cluster universities

382. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to create 35 cluster universities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that each cluster university would get Rs. 55 crore in the ongoing Twelfth Five Year Plan followed by Rs. 65 crore in the next Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the programmatic norms, universities would be created by conversion of colleges in a cluster by pooling the resources of three to five colleges, with one of the colleges being identified as the lead college. All colleges should have *inter-alia*, been in existence for at least 15 years with adequate academic, physical and technical infrastructural facilities and be located within a radius of 15-20 km. from the lead institution. Further details are available on the Ministry's website at http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/RUSAguidelines30102013.pdf.

(c) and (d) Each such cluster university would be entitled to a total amount of Rs. 55 crores, of which 65% or 90% (the latter for special category States) would be as central assistance under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

Grant of degrees by autonomous colleges

383. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to give autonomous colleges the power to grant degrees and if so, the details in this regard and the reasons for taking such a decision;