which is the main vehicle for implementation of the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009, provides for free and compulsory elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years, including the children of tribal areas. Under SSA Programme, 109 tribal concentrated districts have been identified to focus programmatic interventions. 12% of the total outlay for SSA is targeted to these 109 tribal concentrated districts in 2014-15. To improve the infrastructural facilities of tribal areas, SSA provides for opening of new schools, construction of school buildings, construction of additional classrooms, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) and residential schools/hostels.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is re-engineering some of the existing schemes under the Umbrella Scheme of Education for ST Children. The Ministry, with its mandate of critical gap filling, is re-engineering the education schemes, wherein the existing schemes are merged and subsumed under an Umbrella Scheme. The merger and reorganization of the existing schemes is expected to expand the scope and flexibility of interventions that are presently available under the individual stand-alone schemes. It would provide a cafeteria mode of options for States and Union Territories to draw upon, according to their specific needs and priorities in a bottom up approach. The objective of re-engineering is to provide adequate educational infrastructure for STs and incentive for education for ST children through scholarships. This is to be achieved through convergence of schemes of line Ministries along with simplification of process for availing scholarships and also through technological aids in improving learning activities. The Umbrella Scheme subsumes following existing schemes of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

(i) Establishment and strengthening of Ashram Schools.

(ii) Establishment and strengthening of Hostels.

(iii) Vocational Training in Tribal areas.

(iv) Pre Matric Scholarships.

(v) Post Matric Scholarships and Upgradation of Merit.

Funds for minor forest produce in Maharashtra

†3184. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government has received any proposal for sanction of funds for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) from Government of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof, as on date and the current status of this proposal, and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the time-frame fixed for finalising this proposal along with the reasons for the delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA): (a) No, Sir. The Government has not received proposal from Government of Maharashtra this year.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

ST status to fishermen of Andhra Pradesh

3185. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been demands from various States to grant ST status to identified communities, if so, the details of such demands, State-wise;

(b) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has been requesting to grant fishermen ST status, if so, what action has been taken on the same; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government has decided to grant ST status to six Assam communities now, if so, the details of the same and what decision has been taken on the similar demands from other States, particularly Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA): (a) A Statement indicating the State/UT-wise number of proposals for granting ST status is given in Statement (*See* below).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Government of India on 15-6-1999 (further amended on 25-6-2002), has laid down the modalities for determining the claims for inclusion in, exclusion from and other modifications in the Orders specifying lists for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. According to these modalities, only those proposals which have been recommended and justified by the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration and concurred with by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) are to be considered for amendment of legislation.

The proposals for inclusion of communities in list of STs of Assam State *(i.e* Koch Rajbongshi, Tai-Ahom, Moran, Matak, Chutia, and Tea and Ex-Tea Garden) as well as proposals of the States/UTs for inclusion of communities in list of STs have been processed as per the modalities.