

admitting Institutes and complete admission formalities. The admission process is still in progress. The reason for non-acceptance of the seat is that candidates do not get the branch of their choice in any of the IITs and hence they prefer to go to other institutions in India and abroad to pursue the branch of their choice.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The steady increase in the number of registrations in the JEE(Main) and the JEE(Advanced) indicates that the IITs are the most preferred institutions in the field of Engineering and Technology.

Ranking of Indian Universities in Asia

2040. SHRI GULAM RASOOL BALYAWI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that no Indian University figures in top 10 universities of Asia;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps taken and being taken to improve the standard of education and research in the country;
- (d) whether any target has been fixed for achieving excellence in education at global level; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per the Times Higher Education Asia Rankings of 2014 and the Quacquarelli Symonds University Rankings: Asia 2014, no Indian University figures in the top 10 universities of Asia. There are several international ranking systems, which use different values, indices and parameters to rank higher educational institutions. None of these systems are universally accepted and are always open to criticism. While figuring in the top universities in Asia or the world may be a desirable objective, Government policy focuses not just on the qualitative aspects of higher education but access, equity and inclusion as well.

(c) The Government has taken various measures for improving the standards of research in the country. These include the continuous increase in successive plan allocations for scientific departments, the setting up of new institutions for science education and research, the creation of centres of excellence and facilities in emerging and frontline areas in academic and national institutes, the establishment of new and attractive fellowships, strengthening of the infrastructure of Research & Development

(R&D) in universities, encouraging public-private R&D partnerships, the recognition of R&D units and national awards for outstanding R&D for industries etc.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) implements various schemes aimed at improving the quality of higher education, such as Universities with Potential for Excellence (UPE), Colleges with Potential for Excellence (CPE), Special Assistance Programme (SAP), Assistance for Strengthening of Infrastructure for Science and Technology (ASIST), “Assistance for Strengthening of Infrastructure for Humanities and Social Sciences” (ASIHSS), Basic Scientific Research (BSR) etc. Other measures taken by the UGC include the introduction of a semester system, the regular updating of curricula and Choice Based Credit Systems (CBCS), etc. The UGC has also issued Regulations on “Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education, 2010” for improving the standard of teaching in Indian Universities. The UGC has also issued the Mandatory Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions, Regulations, 2012 whereby all eligible higher Educational institutions are required to get themselves accredited.

The Department of Science and Technology, through its programme “Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence” (PURSE), Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE), Fund for the Improvement of S&T Infrastructure in Higher Educational Institutions (FIST) etc. provides support to the universities essentially for research, staffing costs, augmentation of equipment and computational facilities, research consumables and maintenance of the facilities etc.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is also funding research in the Social Sciences and Humanities through its various research councils, viz., the Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS), the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and the National Council of Rural Institutes (NCRI).

For enhancing the standards of teaching, learning and research in state universities and colleges, the Central Government has launched the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) which aims to improve overall quality of existing state higher educational institutions by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards and adoption of accreditation as a mandatory quality assurance framework.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. The augmentation of research and development for achieving excellence in education at global level in education is an ongoing endeavour. Rapid Changes in scientific and technical fields pose challenges that require continuous upgradation of our existing research and development facilities.