

as per the specifications. There is no provision in the Concession Agreement for putting a net to protect the stone pitching as it is not technically required.

Filling up of vacancies of VCs in Central Universities

*67. PROF. MRINAL MIRI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2644 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 4th August, 2014 and state:

(a) whether the position of Vice Chancellors (VCs) in 16 Central Universities, which were vacant as on 4th August, 2014, have already been filled up, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if not, the reasons for not filling these vacancies, as yet?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Out of 16 positions of Vice Chancellors in Central Universities which were vacant on 4th August, 2014, four vacancies of Vice Chancellors at Central University of Gujarat, Central University of Kerala, Central University of Punjab and Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, Uttarakhand, have been filled up.

The Search Committees have given the recommendations/panels for appointment of Vice Chancellors for 3 Central Universities namely Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya (Madhya Pradesh), Central University of Karnataka and Central University of Himachal Pradesh.

Applications have been received and Search Committees have been constituted for the posts of Vice Chancellors for Central University of Haryana and Central University of Bihar.

Applications for the posts of Vice Chancellor of Central University of Kashmir and Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Chhattisgarh, have been received.

5 Central Universities *i.e.* Central University of Jharkhand, Central University of Odisha, Central University of Rajasthan, Central University of Tamil Nadu and North-Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya, have been directed to issue advertisement immediately.

The Search Committees for selection of Vice Chancellors of 8 Central Universities namely Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya (Madhya Pradesh), Central University of Bihar, Central University of Kashmir, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Chhattisgarh, Central University of Jharkhand, Central University of Odisha, Central University of

Tamil Nadu and North-Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya, were scrapped earlier and process was re-started.

Budget cut for education sector

*68. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been huge cuts in the budget for the education sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) In the year 2014-15, the budget estimates for the Ministry of HRD was ₹82771.10 crore. The proposed budget 2015-16 has indicated ₹69074.76 crore for the Ministry of HRD. The budget estimates for this Ministry for 2015-16 have been drawn up in the context of the 14th Finance Commission wherein a higher tax devolution to the States has been recommended.

World Bank report on primary education

†*69. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether several negative remarks have recently been made regarding the quality of primary education in the country in a report of the World Bank, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether there is a need to bring about a change in the education policy in order to improve the quality of primary education in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) World Bank Report on 'Student Learning in South Asia – Challenges, Opportunities and Policy Priorities' in 2014, highlights that South Asia has made considerable progress in improving access to education but faces a major quality challenge in primary and secondary education. The Report emphasises on investing in education quality and that policies to improve student learning outcomes should be embedded within a larger agenda of inclusive growth and governance reform.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi