

Ministries/Departments of the Government of India including Ministries of Minority Affairs, Social Justice and Empowerment and Tribal Affairs and other regulators and autonomous bodies. The Task Force will periodically monitor the progress of the consultation process and submit the report through Secretary (School Education and Literacy) and Secretary (Higher Education) to the Minister for Human Resource Development.

Out of the 33 identified themes, some of the themes both in School and Higher Education i.e. 'Enabling Inclusive Education—education of Girls, SCs, STs, Minorities and children with special needs' and 'Bridging gender and social gaps'; on which suggestions have been invited and thematic discussions are being held has focus also on minorities. The main objective of this consultation process is to ensure that an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach is undertaken, which takes into consideration expert opinions, field experiences, empirical research, stakeholder feedback, as well as lessons learned from best practices. A year-long consultation with bottom up citizen-centric participatory approach has been put in place for formulation of the New Education Policy.

Graft and poor quality in MDMS

2264. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports that graft and poor quality are plaguing the Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS);
- (b) the present status of the scheme in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana;
- (c) whether it is a fact that several tests of food samples carried out have failed to meet the standards; and
- (d) the details of steps taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) A total of 233 complaints were received during last three years and current year, out of which 97 pertained to poor quality and 55 to irregularities.

(b) The Mid Day Meal Scheme is being implemented in both the States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and 3124672 children in Andhra Pradesh and 2014395 children in Telangana availed the benefit of Scheme in the year 2014.

(c) and (d) The Government of NCT Delhi has reported that between 2010 to 2014, 89% of the food samples did not meet the nutritional and calorific values. The

Government of Delhi has taken action in the form of proportionate deduction from the payment due to service providers towards cooking costs, where samples did not meet the norms. The Government of NCT Delhi has also terminated contracts in case of four service providers on account of failing on microbiological parameters on sample testing.

The Government of India has issued updated guidelines on quality, safety and hygiene in school level kitchens to all the States/UTs on 13th February, 2015. The Central Government has also taken following steps to ensure quality food under Mid Day Meal Scheme:

- (i) Training for cook-cum-helpers on safety, quality and hygiene aspects.
- (ii) Instruction to schools to procure Agmark quality and branded items for preparation of mid day meals.
- (iii) Tasting of meals by 2-3 adult members including at least one teacher before serving to children.
- (iv) System of testing of food samples by accredited laboratories.
- (v) Construction of kitchen-cum-stores for safe storage and preparation of meals in a hygienic environment.
- (vi) Engagement of cook-cum-helpers.
- (vii) Periodic upward revision of cooking cost.

Rise in fake educational certificates

2265. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the rise in cases of fake educational qualifications among people, especially teachers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) what are the steps taken by Government to address this particular issue; and
- (d) whether the existing law in place is sufficient to deter the practice of issuing and receiving fake degrees?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Since universities are autonomous entities, created by both Central and State Governments, such data is not centrally maintained. It is not possible therefore to state whether there has been any increase in such cases or not.