

benefits under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972. The Apex Court has, however, observed:

"Our conclusion should not be misunderstood that teachers although engaged in very noble profession of educating our young generation should not be given any gratuity benefit. There are already in several States separate statutes, rules and regulations granting gratuity benefits to teachers in educational institutions which are more or less beneficial than the gratuity benefits provided under the Act. It is for the Legislature to take cognizance of situation of such teachers in various establishments where gratuity benefits are not available and think of a separate legislation for them in this regard. That is the subject matter solely of the Legislature to consider and decide."

Necessary steps for consultations with the States have been initiated.

Distortion of facts in NCERT books

*12. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was criticism of distortion of facts in the Social Studies and History curriculum-2000 prepared by NCERT for school students;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering review of the NCERT syllabus 2000;

(c) whether Government are considering withdrawal of such books from the school curriculum;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE), is due for review.

(c) to (e) Reports of communalization and inadequacies of history textbooks of the NCERT have engaged public and academic attention for some time. Therefore, it has been considered necessary to have a quick review of the history textbooks and history portion of the social science

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textbooks in lower classes done by a panel of eminent historians of impeccable credentials who would suggest what needs to be done in the shortterm,. Accordingly, a panel consisting of Prof. S. Settar, Prof. J. S. Grewal and Prof. Barun De has been constituted. Government will take appropriate decisions based on the report of the panel. As far as the subjects in social studies other than history are concerned, the forthcoming review of NCFSE will address these issues.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme

*13. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether one of the oldest programmes meant for the children below age of six, adolescent girls and pregnant women have not been implemented properly for the last 30 years;

(b) if so, whether the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme has been able to cater to only sixteen per cent of the undernourished children;

(c) if so, whether the Supreme Court as per its order dated November 28, 2003 has asked the Central and State Governments as to why this Scheme has not been implemented; and

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme launched in 1975-76 is a nation-wide Early Childhood Care Programme which aims at holistic development of children (0-6 years) and pregnant and lactating mothers from disadvantaged sections by providing a package of services comprising supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, pre-school non-formal education and nutrition and health education. The number of operational ICDS projects has increased from 3946 at the end of Eighth Plan (1996-97) to 5267 as on 31.3.2004. Similarly, the number of the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) have increased from 3.47 lakh centres at the end of Eighth Plan (1996-97) to 6.49 lakh centres as on 31.3.2004. During this