

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) At present, there is no proposal to set up a Rural University in the country by the University Grants Commission (UGC) or Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). However, MHRD is funding the Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University), which engages in promoting an integrated and sustainable rural development based on the Gandhian philosophy.

(b) The UGC has started a scheme of “Epoch Making Social Thinkers of India” in various universities/colleges to introduce various courses on great thinkers and social leaders, their thoughts and philosophies including Gandhian studies. As reported by the UGC, under this scheme 85 Gandhian Studies Centres have been approved by the UGC for continuation in the XII Plan and 55 Centres have been approved for establishment during XII Plan *w.e.f* 2013-14. Details of the scheme are available at http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/0594822_Guideline-EPOCH-XII-Plan.pdf

Discontinuation of Non-Net Fellowship

565. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR:

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL:

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.:

SHRI S. THANGAVELU:

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

(a) whether Government has discontinued the Non-NET Fellowship to M.Phil and Ph.D students at Central Universities, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the reasons and rationale for the same;

(c) whether students have protested against the decision of Government in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) No, Sir. The Central Government has directed the University Grants Commission (UGC) not to discontinue the Non-National Eligibility Test (NET) Fellowship.

(b) In view of above does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Government has taken note of the protests against the decision of the UGC discontinuing the Non-NET Fellowship. The Central Government has issued an Order under Section 20(1) of the UGC Act, 1956 directing the UGC not to implement the Commission's decision against agenda item No. 4.01 in its 510th meeting discontinuing the Non-NET Fellowships and to continue all existing and continuing fellowships, NET as well as Non-NET and there be no change retrospectively in the fellowships.

The Government has appointed a Committee on 28th October, 2015, under the Chairpersonship of Prof. Gautam Barua, former Director, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati to go into the issues related to the research fellowships provided by the UGC, covering both NET Fellowships and Non-NET Fellowships. The details of the committee are available at http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/ReviewUGCFellowships.pdf.

This Committee has been constituted to bring the benefits and opportunities of the Non-NET Fellowship scheme to a larger number of Universities, including State Universities. It has also been decided that the existing awards under Non-NET Fellowships will not be reduced but expanded instead and that guidelines for selection, coverage, award and administration of Non-NET Fellowships will be developed.

National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship

566. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated to the National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship for the year 2015-16;

(b) the number of beneficiaries under this scholarship; and

(c) whether Government has disbursed all scholarship, if not, details and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) An amount of ₹ 70.00 crore has been allocated in BE 2015-16 for National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship scheme.

(b) The estimated number of beneficiaries under this scheme during 2015-16 is 205000.