

Low utilisation of funds

1859. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has spent less than 30 per cent of the funds allocated to it in 2015-16;

(b) the percentage of allocated funds in 2014-15 and 2015-16 that is currently unused; and

(c) the reasons for low utilisation of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In 2014-15, 97.7% of budget earmarked at Revised Estimate (RE) stage was utilized by the Ministry and remaining was unused. In 2015-16 *i.e.* the current financial year, 70.16% of the Budget Estimates (BE) is unutilized as on date.

(c) The Ministry has earmarked budget of ₹ 3712.78 crore at BE stage under Plan for the year 2015-16. Out of this, ₹ 1955.20 crore (52.66% of the BE) are earmarked for Scholarship Schemes and ₹ 1757.58 crore (47.34% of the BE) are for other welfare and development schemes for minorities. The expenditure under the scholarship budget is low *i.e.* ₹ 37.08 crore only as on date because National Scholarship Portal (NSP) was launched during this year in July, 2015 and the last date for submission of application by the minority students was 31.10.2015. As per work flow on NSP, the applications are thereafter scrutinized online by the respective institutions followed by the State Governments/UT Administrations and submitted to the Ministry. The duly scrutinized applications for scholarships have not been received. Ministry of Finance has exempted Scholarship Schemes of the Ministry from expenditure limit in the last quarter of the financial year.

Ban on human embryo import

1860. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has banned import of human embryo, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether this will put an end to surrogacy tourism; and

(c) by when this ban will come into effect?