

teachers as prescribed by the National Council for Teacher Education. Recruitment of the teaching staff is done in a centralized manner to ensure greater degree of objectivity, transparency and uniformity in standards. For seeking appointment in the KVs as Trained Graduate Teachers and Primary Teachers, only those candidates who have qualified the Central Teacher Eligibility Test are eligible. The selected teachers are posted to the KVs located all over the country including Tamil Nadu.

(c) The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in partnership with State Governments for universalizing elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning levels of children. The Central Government through SSA, supports States/UTs on early grade reading, writing and comprehension, and early Mathematics programmes through a sub-programme namely 'Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat' (PBBB) in classes I and II. Further, the Government has launched Rashtriya Aavishkar Abhiyan (RAA) Programme on 09.07.2015, *inter-alia*, as a sub-component of SSA and RMSA, to motivate and engage children of the age group from 6-18 years in the Science, Mathematics and Technology through observation, experimentation, inference drawing, model building, etc. both through inside and outside classroom activities. Additionally, under SSA, the State Governments and UT Administrations are supported on several interventions to improve teaching standards, including regular in-service teachers' training etc. Since inception of the Scheme of SSA in 2001, 7392 schools have been opened and 34908 teachers recruited under the Scheme in the State of Tamil Nadu.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) envisages enhancing the quality of education by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of every habitation, improving quality of education imparted at secondary level, removal of gender, socio-economic and disability barriers. Since inception of the Scheme, 1096 new schools and 13320 teachers have been approved for the State of Tamil Nadu.

The Central Government has launched the 'Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching' in December, 2014 to comprehensively address all issues related to teachers, teaching, teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum design, research in pedagogy and developing effective pedagogy.

Online classroom lectures by universities

1493. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) or any other university considering

to conduct online classroom lectures to expand its reach of the students across the country in the near future;

(b) if so, the details of such concept and Government's response thereto;

(c) whether Government is promoting such idea to conduct online classroom lectures for the benefit of more students in the country; and

(d) if so, details of support and co-operation will be made to the universities for the technology based learning in the country, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Yes Sir. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has invited proposals from Universities including Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) for contributing to the conduct of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to expand the reach of education to students across the country, in the near future.

(b) The MHRD is in the process of preparing, under the project 'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM), a software platform for launch of MOOCs and MHRD has assigned the work to 'National Coordinators' for preparation of Online Course material from School class 9 to Post Graduation levels, in all disciplines.

(c) Yes Sir. The Ministry is promoting the idea to conduct online classroom lectures for the benefit of more students in the country.

(d) The Government is fully committed to support the Indian MOOCs in the country, in terms of preparing SWAYAM Platform; commissioning the preparation of Online Courses; providing financial support on preparation and launch of MOOCs; providing the Data Centers, suitable Cloud Network, Content Delivery Network; issuing MOOCs Guidelines; involving Regulators in formulating the Credit Framework for seamless integration of conventional education with MOOCs etc.

Validity status of foreign degrees

1494. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to bring comprehensive list of foreign degrees and its validity status for the benefit of students; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when it will be brought in public domain?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Association of Indian Universities