

(c) whether some kind of incentive had been provided to certain Government agencies for controlling illiteracy among girls in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Census 2011 reported 32.23 per cent illiteracy rate, in 7 and above age group in rural areas of the country, compared to 41.26 per cent in 2001 thus showing a decrease in illiteracy rate by 9.03 percentage points. Likewise, as per Census reports, the number of non-literate girls in the age group of 7-14, in rural areas of the country, has decreased by 1.22 crore from 2.53 crore reported in 2001 to 1.31 crore in 2011.

(c) In order to improve the female literacy rate in the country, "Saakshar Bharat", a Centrally Sponsored Scheme is being implemented in rural areas of 410 districts in 26 States and one UT that had adult female literacy rate of 50 per cent and below as per Census 2001, including left wing extremism affected districts, irrespective of their literacy rates, with special focus on women and other disadvantaged groups.

In order to ensure greater participation of girls in elementary education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has targeted interventions for girls which include opening of schools in the neighborhood to make access easier for girls, appointment of additional teachers including women teachers, separate toilets for girls, teachers' sensitization programme to promote girls participation, gender sensitive teaching learning materials including textbooks. In addition, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyayas have been opened in Educationally Backward Blocks where the female rural literacy is below the national average to provide for residential upper primary schools for girls.

Under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) several provisions viz. construction of separate toilets for girls, construction of residential quarters for teachers, curriculum reforms, conducting self defence training for the girls, special programme for empowerment of girls, stipend for girls with disabilities, vocationalisation of secondary education, girls hostel, etc. have been made for improving girls education and effectively addressing female literacy rate.

Anytime anywhere Ph.D. for women

1324. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any progress is being made on devising the 'anytime anywhere Ph.D. for women', as mentioned by the Minister at a recent event in Pune, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the Ministry has studied this as a precedent elsewhere in this world?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The UGC has initiated several measures to facilitate continued enrolment of women students in Ph.D. courses and its feeder course *i.e.* M.Phil. The measures include amendments in the Ph.D./M.Phil. Regulations by relaxing the maximum duration for completion of Ph.D. or M.Phil. by women candidates for a further two years and one year, respectively; allowing transfer of research data in case of relocation of a Ph.D./M.Phil. woman scholar due to marriage or otherwise; and allowing women candidates maternity leave/child-care leave once in the entire duration of Ph.D./M.Phil. for up to 240 days. Further, the UGC is implementing Swami Vivekananda single girl child scholarship for research in social sciences and PG Indira Gandhi Scholarship for single girl child for postgraduate courses to promote the enrolment of women at doctoral and its feeder level.

Interactive voice response system for Mid Day Meal

†1325. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an interactive voice response system has been launched for implementation and monitoring of the quality of Mid Day Meal, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether an App named Shaala Siddhi has been launched with the aim to monitor the quality of schools, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) The Ministry of Human Resource Development had launched a web enabled Management Information System (MIS) in June, 2012 for online collection of data on the Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS). The States of U.P. and Bihar are operating Interactive Voice Response based system for real time monitoring of MDMS. The Mid Day Meal–Management Information System of the Ministry has scope to integrate with the Interactive Voice Response System as well as other digital systems of data collection for near real time monitoring of the Scheme. 35 States/UTs except West Bengal have signed Memorandum of Understanding with this Ministry to roll out an Automated System/Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) based monitoring system.

(b) “Shaala Siddhi” is a School Standards and Evaluation Framework developed by National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) and its web portal was launched on 7th November, 2015. It is a comprehensive instrument for school evaluation leading to school improvement. It aims to enable schools to

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.