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| 35. | West Bengal University of Technology, Salt Lake, Kolkata (West Bengal) | Environment Technology and Management: Water Treatment for Clean and Green Environment   | West Bengal    |
| 36. | Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhopal             | Centre for Research on Environment and Sustainable Technologies (CREST): Clean Environment (Air, Water, Soil) and Sustainable Technologies | Madhya Pradesh |

#### **Complaints of discrimination with research scholars**

1360. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that research scholars of various Central Universities have rushed their complaints to the Ministry regarding discrimination being meted out to them in the universities by respective HoDs and inaction of the universities to take action against the HoDs, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is also a fact that they are seeking Ministry's permission to resort to self immolation, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to alleviate the problems of research scholars in the Central Universities?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) to (c) Central Universities are autonomous institutions which are governed by their own Acts and Statutes and are competent to deal with such complaints as well as to take all administrative decisions including steps to prevent discrimination against students. Accordingly, complaints received in this Ministry are forwarded to concerned Central Universities for appropriate action.

In order to check discrimination and harassment of any sections of students and to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanism, the UGC has formulated UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2012 and UGC (Grievance Redressal) Regulations, 2012. These Regulations intend to give effect in

letter and spirit to the statutory provisions and policies for prevention of discrimination against students.

A Conference of Vice-Chancellors of Central Universities was held on February 18, 2016 whereby all the Vice-Chancellors have been asked to be more vigilant and put a proper system in place to ensure that the students are not put to any disadvantage/hardship. The Vice-Chancellors have *inter-alia* agreed to appoint Anti-Discrimination officer as provided in UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2012.

**Assessment of students on international standards**

1361. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to undertake any programme for the assessment of students on international standards;
- (b) if so, the methodology adopted/likely to be adopted in this regard;
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to improve the standards of students at the school leaving stage; and
- (d) the extent of success achieved in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducts National Achievement Survey (NAS) across the country on the latest international Item Response Theory (IRT) methodology. The NAS is conducted for classes III, V, VIII and X *i.e.*, the critical stages of education, early primary, end of primary, upper primary and secondary levels. The NAS provides detailed information on learning outcomes which is useful for teacher training, curriculum development and for improving quality of education. International best practices are used in test development and the analysis of the data collected.

(c) Education, being a subject in the Concurrent List of the Constitution, and the majority of schools being under the jurisdiction of the State Governments, it is for the respective State/Union Territory Governments to take appropriate steps to improve the standard of students of their schools. The Central Government supports the State Governments and UT Administrations on several interventions to improve teaching standards, including regular in-service teachers' training, induction training for newly recruited teachers, recruitment of additional teachers for improving pupil-teacher ratios, Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) System, etc., to equip the teachers