

group. The number of children belonging to Scheduled Caste and poor families attending pre-school at Anganwadi Centres is not separately maintained by Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for free and compulsory education to every child of the age group of 6 to 14 years in a neighbourhood school till completion of the elementary education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is the designated Centrally Sponsored Scheme to meet the objective of the RTE Act, 2009, provides assistance to State Governments and UTs to ensure quality and inclusive elementary education for all children. Universal enrolment is the first goal of SSA, and hence continuous steps/measures have been taken to bring all children in schools. SSA has sanctioned 2.04 lakh primary and 1.59 lakh upper primary schools to States and UTs for ensuring universal provisioning of schooling facilities. Preference for opening of school is given to tribal areas, and areas with high concentration of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minority population. 3609 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, which are residential schools for girls at upper primary level, have also been sanctioned to the States for improving access to marginalised girls particularly out of school, either drop out or never enrolled. The number of children enrolled at elementary level has increased to 19.8 crore in 2014-15 from 15.1 crore in 1998-99.

Additionally, other strategies adopted under SSA such as improving pupil-teacher ratios, providing incentives like free textbooks, uniforms for eligible category of children and mid-day meal in schools have proved to be useful in increasing the enrolment of children in elementary schools.

#### **Funds for Tribal Sub Plan of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme**

1235. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the fund earmarked under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme for Odisha for the financial years 2013, 2014 and 2015;

(b) whether the fund has been fully utilized for the purpose it was allocated; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) The funds earmarked under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme for Odisha for the financial years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 are as under:

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Years	Allocation of Central Funds under TSP
1.	2013-14	18176.61
2.	2014-15	14798.15
3.	2015-16	11863.94

(b) and (c) State Government of Odisha has informed that the earmarked funds have been fully utilized during the last three years. The State Government has further informed that the total expenditure including TSP allocation has been ₹ 76917.92 lakh, ₹ 69363.58 lakh and ₹ 70557.45 lakh for the year 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively.

#### **Collaboration with foreign educational institutions**

1236. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether UGC has decided to allow our educational institutions to tie up with foreign ones, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the tie up would be at university level or at college level also;

(c) who will give final degree in this arrangement; and

(d) what would be its impact on cost of education?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016, Indian Universities and Colleges having the highest grade of accreditation/threshold accreditation, and conforming to other eligibility conditions as laid down in the regulations, can apply online to the UGC for starting twinning arrangement with quality Foreign Educational Institutions (FEI) having the prescribed quality. The regulations are available at <http://www.egazette.nic.in/WriteReadData/2016/170684.pdf>. The regulations are in supersession of UGC (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulation, 2012.

As per the regulations, the degree will be awarded by the Indian Educational Institutions (IEIs) alone; joint degrees are not permitted. However the name of the collaborating Foreign Educational Institution (FEI) can be indicated on the degree,