

(e) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) and (b) The Thirteenth Finance Commission (FC-XIII) had recommended, *inter-alia* a grant for elementary education to all States, which aggregate to ₹ 24,068 crore for its award period, 2010-2015. The objective of the elementary education grant was to provide financial assistance to States to cover the difference between the targeted State share of 50% by the terminal year of the Eleventh Plan under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and the contribution required to be made by each State in 2008-09, *i.e.* 35%. Thus, FC-XIII had recommended a grant of 15% of the estimated SSA expenditure of each State other than North-Eastern States. In respect of North-Eastern States, the Commission had recommended the difference between the average amount contributed by each State in the year 2007-08 and 2008-09 and the amount they needed to contribute on the basis of a 10% share, subject to a minimum of ₹ 5 crore per year. In recommending the grant for all States, the Commission had focused on recurrent items of expenditure, and excluded the requirements of civil works. This grant was an additionality to the current expenditure of the States for elementary education as per the conditionalities laid down in the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance in August, 2010.

(c) Details in this regard are being collected.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The period of implementation of recommendations of the FC-XIII was over on 31st March, 2015 and therefore, Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure which released the grants to States as per the recommendation of FC-XIII, has informed that no balance grant is payable to States including Tamil Nadu.

Standard of education in Universities/Colleges

1256. SHRI SHADI LAL BATRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any assessment of the quality and standard of education and teaching in the Universities/ Colleges;

(b) if so, the details and reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government is implementing any programme for improving the standard of education and teaching in the Universities/Colleges in the country, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by Government in improving the education system in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) and (b) The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), an Inter University Centre of the University Grants Commission (UGC) undertakes accreditation of Universities and Colleges on seven criteria, which includes the criterion of teaching-learning and evaluation. Further, under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), Educational Institutions are ranked by an independent ranking Agency on the basis of objective criteria.

(c) and (d) The Central Government and the University Grants Commission (UGC) are constantly endeavouring to improve quality of higher education in the country. The Central Government has launched several initiatives viz. Impacting Research, Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT), Uchchatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY), Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) etc. in the field of education for the qualitative development of education in the country. Under the IMPRINT initiative, the Government has taken the initiative to address major engineering challenges through the collaborative efforts of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc). The objectives of UAY scheme are to promote innovation in IITs addressing issues of manufacturing industries; to spur innovative mindset; to co-ordinate action between academia and industry and to strengthen labs and research facilities. GIAN Scheme is for facilitating partnership between Higher Educational Institutions of the country and other countries. The scheme is aimed at tapping international talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs.

The UGC undertakes maintenance of standards in teaching and research and quality assurance in Universities, Deemed to be Universities and Colleges through the following mechanisms, namely: framing regulations and schemes and; disbursing grants to the eligible institutions. The UGC has notified several regulations with the objective of sustenance and improvement in the quality of higher education and for undertaking academic reforms. The regulations are available at <http://www.ugc.ac.in/page/UGC-Regulations.aspx>. In order to encourage research and development in the country, UGC has laid out schemes, awards, fellowships, chairs and programmes under which financial assistance is provided to institutions of higher education as well as faculty members working therein to undertake quality research covering areas of knowledge across disciplines including revival and promotion of indigenous languages. These schemes are at <http://www.ugc.ac.in/page/XII-Plan-Guidelines.aspx>.