

(b) if so, contributions to the Kosh made till October, 2016;

(c) whether Government is considering to put CSR money in Swachh Bharat projects; and

(d) if so, the response of the corporate sector towards the mission and steps being taken to achieve the objective of the mission?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Till date, Swachh Bharat Kosh has received ₹ 458.79 crores (including interest) as contributions from Organizations as well as Individuals.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Companies can declare their contributions to Swachh Bharat Kosh (SBK) as their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions under the Companies Act, 2013. Apart from this, all donations towards “Swachh Bharat Kosh” are eligible for deduction of 100% from the total Income Tax under Section 80G, other than the sum spent on Corporate Social Responsibility under Sub-Section (5) of Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. In addition, the corporate sector is directly supporting the cities for solid waste management and for construction of toilets for making cities open defecation free.

Social security agreements with BRICS nations

*95. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to ink pacts on social security programmes with BRICS nations with a view to ensure more benefits to Indians in BRICS nations, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the number of agreements entered into so far and the number of agreements implemented as on date?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The idea to ink pacts on social security programmes with BRICS nations was discussed at the meetings of the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers held on 9 June, 2016 in Geneva and on 27-28 September, 2016 in New Delhi respectively. The possibility of concluding social security agreements between BRICS countries also finds mention in the Goa Declaration of the 8th BRICS Leaders' Summit. As a follow up to the Goa Declaration, the Ministry of External Affairs has sent communications to the relevant authorities in all BRICS nations for commencing negotiations on the social security agreements. Brazil has responded favourably and the first round of negotiations will be held in Brasilia on 13-17 March, 2017.

(b) India has to date signed and operationalized comprehensive Social Security Agreements or Totalization Agreements with 16 countries. They include Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, South Korea, Austria, and Australia. We have also signed comprehensive Social Security Agreements with Portugal and the Quebec Province of Canada, both of which are in the process of getting operationalized. A partial/limited Social Security Agreement is in place with Germany.

UGC funds for Punjab

*96. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Punjab has approached the Central Government seeking release of funds from the University Grants Commission (UGC) to tide over the financial crisis; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Ministry of Human Resource Development has not received any proposal from Government of Punjab seeking release of funds from University Grants Commission (UGC) to tide over financial crisis.

However, a request was received from the Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University seeking release of maintenance deficit grants from the UGC. The UGC constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Sanjay Govind Dhande, Member, UGC to examine the request. As per the recommendation made by the Committee, the UGC has allocated ₹ 176 crores during 2016-17 towards maintenance deficit grants to the University. Out of the total allocation, ₹ 132 crores has been released till date.

Scrapping of English as a mandatory language

*97. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to scrap English as a mandatory language in schools; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The Government has adopted the Three Language Formula, as recommended in the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, in the area of school education. English is one of the many languages offered to students under the Three Language Formula. There is no proposal to modify the Three Language Formula at present.