

(b) if so, whether Government would constitute a high level committee to inspect such universities; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) to (c) State Private Universities are established by the Act of respective State Legislature. They are regulated by their respective State Acts and the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003. Similarly, Private Deemed to be Universities are regulated by the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2016. These Regulations provide for periodic inspections of these Universities. Accordingly, UGC through its Expert Committee inspects these Institutions to ensure mandatory resources as per Acts and Regulations mentioned above. The deficiencies found, if any, are communicated to the Universities / Institutions for its rectification and submission of compliance report in a time bound manner. There, is no proposal under consideration of the Government to set up any other high level committee for the same purpose.

Drop out of students from higher education

847. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that in India only 11 per cent students register for higher education and the rest drop out after higher secondary level for one reason or the other;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the reasons for this sorry state of affairs; and

(c) what steps Government has planned to increase the percentage of students continuing higher studies in universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) and (b) Registration of students in higher education is measured in terms of total enrolment in higher education out of the eligible population in the age group of 18-23 years. Total enrolment in higher education as percentage of the population in the 18-23 years age group is defined as Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). As per the report of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), GER in Higher Education during 2015-16 is 24.5% as compared to 10.0% in

2004-05. The quantum jump in GER over the years indicates considerable improvement in registration of students in higher education.

(c) To increase the percentage of students to continue studies in institutions of higher education, the Government has taken several initiatives such as opening of new institutions, scholarship and interest subsidy on educational loans availed by the students. Extensive use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications is also being made in furtherance of higher education in the country. During the Twelfth Five Year Plan a new scheme called the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) has been launched with the aim to achieve equity, access and excellence in state higher education system. The scheme supports components such as upgrading autonomous colleges to universities, clustering colleges to establish a university, setting up of new professional colleges in un-served and underserved areas as well as providing infrastructure grants to universities and colleges to scale up capacity.

Literacy for poverty alleviation

†848. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the literacy is critical for any strategy of poverty alleviation as illiteracy is a hurdle in the road to empowerment of the poor;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the targets and objectives for literacy fixed for the coming decade; and

(d) whether Government is making constant efforts to take care of every illiterate person for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. One of the objectives of Saakshar Bharat is to impart functional literacy to non-literate adults. Functional Literacy in the context of Saakshar Bharat programme, implies achieving self reliance in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and becoming aware of the causes of one's deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition through organization and participation in the process of development; acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well being and creating an aware and responsible citizenry.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.