

(e) the students benefited from the above scholarship programme in Telangana?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) to (e) A Scheme called "Prime Minister Research Fellows and Promotion of Research and Innovation" presently under consideration of the Ministry, seeks to encourage bright students completing B.Tech in IITs/NITs or graduation in IISc and IISERs to register for direct Ph.D. programmes in IITs and IISc. The modalities for implementation are not yet finalized.

#### **Democratic rights to university students**

2468. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an increasing tendency on the part of authorities to deny democratic rights to university students;

(b) whether denying them rights to hold an opinion and express it, is denial of constitutional rights to them since most of them are voters;

(c) if not, the manner in which Government justifies its stand; and

(d) the reasons for increasing trend of intolerance spreading in the university campuses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Some isolated unfortunate incidents in the Universities have been reported which might have been observed due to different ideological convictions of students resulting in sloganeering and protests in groups. The UGC has issued guidelines on students entitlement during their course of study in a university and is available on UGC website ([http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdf/news/4336926\\_StudentsEntitlementGuidelines.pdf](http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdf/news/4336926_StudentsEntitlementGuidelines.pdf)). Regarding student unions, following orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the recommendations of the Lyngdoh Committee are being followed by colleges/universities. It is pertinent to mention here that Central Universities are autonomous institutions established under the respective Acts of Parliament and are competent to take action in the academic and administrative matters of the institutions, including students' rights.

#### **Girl specific scheme under RUSA**

2469. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any girl specific special/exclusive component exists under the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) which was launched with the noble idea of achieving significant milestone in higher education;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would give importance to set up higher education institutions in rural areas to provide education in the close vicinity of rural areas where sending girls to schools and colleges are still considered as taboo; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no girl specific component under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). However, the component of Equity Initiatives under the Scheme is aimed at promoting equity and equal opportunity in higher education. Under this component, States can seek Central support for gender sensitisation programmes, equal opportunity cells, etc.

(c) and (d) Education being in the concurrent list, the creation of new institutions is the responsibility of both Central Government and the State Governments. However, the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) is being implemented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development with the aim of promoting access, equity and quality. The focus of the scheme is on serving the unserved and underserved areas. *Inter alia*, assistance is provided to States for creation of Model Degree Colleges (MDC) in Educationally Backward Districts and creation of New Colleges (Professional and Technical). The proposals for construction of new colleges have to be included in the State Higher Education Plans (SHEPs) which are prepared by the States after assessing the critical needs and gaps in the State's higher education system. State Governments can seek Central assistance under RUSA to set up new Colleges (Professional and Technical) and Model Degree Colleges and decide at their own level to dedicate these exclusively for girls. A total of 72 MDCs and 29 New Colleges (Professional and Technical) have been approved under RUSA till date.

#### **Challenges of State universities in fulfilling criteria of API system**

2470. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State universities are facing various challenges in maintaining quality and in fulfilling the criteria of Academic Performance Indicators (API) system; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken by the Ministry to resolve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY): (a) and (b) As a part of measures for the maintenance of standards in Higher Education, the University Grants