Ministry of Textiles has signed Memorandums of Understanding with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to secure educational facilities for the weavers and their families. NIOS offers Secondary and Senior Secondary level education with specialized subjects on design, marketing, business development, etc., through distance learning mode for handloom weavers, whereas IGNOU offers continuing education programs through accessible and flexible learning opportunities relevant to the aspirations of handloom weavers and their children for career progression. Ministry of Textiles is providing reimbursement of 75% of the fee towards admission to NIOS/IGNOU courses in case of SC, ST, BPL, and women learners belonging to handloom weavers' families.

**Implementation of Forest Rights Act**

625. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States that are yet to implement the Forest Rights Act, 2006 in its entirety;

(b) the reasons for the delay in the implementation of the Act by the States; and

(c) the manner in which the Ministry believes that the Forest Rights Act would best protect the rights of the tribals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RENUKA SINGH SARUTA): (a) and (b) As per Forest Rights Act, 2006 and the rules made thereunder, implementation of the Act is the responsibility of the State
Governments. The implementation of the Act is, however, an ongoing process and State Governments have been carrying out this process. Some of the North-Eastern States have indicated non-applicability of the Act in their territory and have also reported to have not received any claim under the Act. In Punjab and Haryana, it is reported to have no Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers.

(c) Forest Rights Act, 2006 is an act to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded, to provide for a framework for recording the forest rights so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land. Proactive action towards effective implementation of the Act by State Governments would best protect the rights of the tribals. This Ministry has been writing to the State Governments from time to time in this regard.

**Van Dhan Yojana for tribal entrepreneurs**

†626. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the branding, packaging and marketing activity of tribal products, under the Van Dhan Yojana started by the Government, is playing a vital role in producing the tribal entrepreneurs in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the main objective of the said scheme is to increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education sector and to improve the quality of higher education institutes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RENUKA SINGH SARUTA): (a) and (b) Van Dhan Yojana is primarily the training and development of value chain/component under the scheme titled "Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value chain for MFP" and is an initiative targeting livelihood generation for tribal population by harnessing the wealth of forest i.e. Van Dhan and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.