

under which UGC has declared 10 Public and 10 Private institutions as IoEs. The objective of the scheme is to enable them to achieve rankings within top 500 in any of the world renowned ranking frameworks. Government Institutions will get financial assistance of 1000 crores over a period of five years in addition to the grant already being received. The institutions selected from the private sector will have autonomy to promote innovation and creativity. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has taken various quality initiatives such as examination reforms, mandatory internship, induction program for students, revision of model curriculum, internship, industry readiness accreditation, start-up and national initiative for Teachers' Training etc. to provide a thrust to improve quality of technical education in the country.

(b) Government has taken various initiatives to improve the global ranking of Indian education institutions and to increase quantity and quality of research in Universities / Institutions through various schemes, awards, fellowships, Chairs & Programmes with financial assistance across S&T disciplines such as, Basic Scientific Research (BSR), Universities and Colleges with Potential for Excellence (UPE/CPE), Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT), Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY) schemes, Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS), Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy (STRIDE), Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration, Minor and Major Research Projects (MRP), establishing Centres of Excellence, Research Parks and Technology Business Incubators (TBIs), Prime Minister's Research Fellows, Study in India, research workshops, seminars and conferences and Emeritus fellowship etc.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. AICTE provides financial assistance to teachers engaged in research under its themes namely Faculty Development Program (FDP), grant for organizing conferences and travel grant for attending international conferences/seminars.

Delay in examinations due to COVID-19 pandemic

535. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the University Grants Commission (UGC) has directed various universities to complete all the examinations that were delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic by September 30th, 2020;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether many State Governments are unable to conduct examinations due to growing rate of COVID-19 patients in various parts of the country and therefore have requested to grant further extension for conducting examinations; and

(d) if so, details thereof and Central Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'):

(a) and (b) The University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued revised guidelines dated 06.07.2020 on Examinations and Academic Calendar for the Universities in view of COVID-19 Pandemic. According to these guidelines, the Universities are required to complete the examinations by the end of September, 2020 in offline (pen & paper)/ online/ blended (online + offline) mode following the prescribed protocols/ guidelines related to COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines are available at https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/6100894_UGC-Revised-Guidelines-on-Examinations-and-Academic-Calendar-for-the-Universities-in-view-of-COVID-19-Pandemic_06_07_2020.pdf

(c) and (d) In its judgement dated 28.08.2020 for WP(C) No. 724/2020 and others, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has disposed of the batch of cases and ordered that if any State/Union Territory in exercise of its jurisdiction under Disaster Management Act, 2005 has taken a decision that it is not possible to conduct the final year/terminal semester examination by 30.09.2020, such State/Union Territory has the liberty to make an application to the UGC for extending deadline of 30.09.2020 for that State/Union Territory. The same shall be considered by UGC and rescheduled date communicated to such State/Union Territory, at the earliest.

The State Governments of West Bengal, Punjab, Odisha, Meghalaya and Maharashtra have approached the UGC in this regard.

Criteria for deletion of lessons/ topics from CBSE curriculum

536. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria on the basis of which Government chose the lessons/ topics for deletion as part of revision of CBSE Academic Curriculum for 2020-21;

(b) whether the Centre was consulted by CBSE before selecting topics/lessons for removal as part of the revision of curriculum; and

(c) if so, the process adopted for such revision of CBSE Academic Curriculum for 2020-21?