

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has mounted a special scholarship scheme titled "Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research" (INSPIRE) to attract talented youth to study and careers with science. The main features of the INSPIRE are: (a) Scheme for Early Attraction of Talents for Science (SEATS) providing Science innovation scholarship of Rs. 5000 for a total of one million young learners of the age group 10—15 years once in their school career during the next five years for experiencing the joy of innovations. This includes with a mentorship through global science leader including Nobel Prize winners and Indian leaders in science through a summer camp for the top 1% performers in the Class X examination every year for a period of five years; (b) Scholarships for Higher Education (SHE) for the age group of 17—22 years targets 10,000 fellowships per year @ Rs. 1.0 lakh per year for continuing science education at BSc and MSc levels and (c) Assured Opportunity for Research Careers (AORC) for the age group of 22—32 years for 5 years doctoral research backed by an assured research career opportunity scheme for a another period of five years after their PhD in sciences. About 1000 young people in each category would be considered under this program.

The allocation in 2007-08 for the above programmes is Rs. 110 crore including Rs. 100 crore allocation for SHE. The scheme envisages that the available number of scholarships would be distributed to students from various boards based on total number of students taking their examinations in the respective Boards.

Cases of ragging

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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of cases of ragging reported during the last three academic years, State-wise and year-wise;

(b) whether the Government plan to introduce better methods of introducing freshers to the old students; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) Information on cases pertaining to ragging in higher educational institutions is not being maintained centrally. A Monitoring Committee has been appointed by the Supreme Court of India *vide* interim orders dated the 16th May 2007 in SLP(C) No. 24296-24299 of 2004 to oversee the compliance with its directions. The Monitoring Committee has come across approximately 70 incidents of ragging in various parts of the country, as reported by the media, during the current academic session, 2007-08. In the said interim order, the Supreme Court has accepted several recommendations of the Committee for Prevention of Ragging, constituted earlier by this Ministry on the directions of the Apex Court, which include among other things, introduction of junior students to senior students only in the presence of faculty members, welcome parties to "freshers" by Heads of Institutions, orientation programmes, joint sensitization programmes and counseling of both "freshers" and seniors by a professional counselor, a calendar of cultural, sports and other activities to provide a common platform for "freshers" and seniors to interact with each other in the presence of faculty members. The Monitoring Committee has asked the University Grants Commission, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and other regulatory agencies responsible for maintenance of standards of education, to give feedback on the implementation of the Court's directives for the prevention of ragging.