

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:215

ANSWERED ON:28.03.2012

CENTRES OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

Singh Smt. Meena

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether certain institutions in the country have been declared as centres of excellence in education and international understanding;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) the present status of the plan of action initiated to revive the ancient Nalanda University in Bihar, as a global centre of learning;
- (d) the number of meetings of the Nalanda Mentor Group held so far and the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the future plans of the Government to revive the reputation of the said university?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.215 REGARDING 'CENTRES OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING' FOR ANSWER ON 28.03.2012

(a) No, Madam. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has not declared any institution in the country as Centre of Educational Excellence and International Understanding.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) & (d) Under a Joint Press Statement issued at the Fourth East Asia Summit, held at Hua Hin, Thailand, on October 25, 2009, it was agreed to support the establishment of the Nalanda University as a non-state, non-profit, secular, and self-governing international institution with a continental focus that will bring together the brightest and the most dedicated students from all countries of Asia. Section 2 of the Nalanda University Act, 2010, declares Nalanda University an institution of national importance. The Nalanda Mentor Group and subsequently the Governing Board have provided directions under the Chairmanship of Professor Amartya Sen for the revival of the ancient Nalanda University. The University administration headed by the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Gopa Sabharwal, has been set up and has begun to function. The University's website and logo have been launched. The construction of the boundary wall has begun. The University's Statutes have been approved by the Visitor. The University has appointed a Steering Committee to oversee the Global Design Competition. The meeting of the Governing Board in Beijing in October, 2011, decided that the Schools of Historical Studies and Ecology and Environment will be the first two schools. India has made the major contribution to the University. Contributions have also been received from China and Thailand. Singapore, Australia and Laos have pledged contributions.

To give directions for the setting up of the new University and guidance to its support staff, the Nalanda Mentor Group held 6 meetings between July, 2007 and August, 2010. It discussed the University's objectives, academic structure and administrative setup.

(e) The future plan includes the establishment of the seven schools proposed in the Nalanda University Act, 2010, selection of faculty by a Search Committee to the schools of Historical Studies and Ecology and Environment, and institution of a Global Design Competition to plan for the new University and thereafter to build it.