

No plans to replace UGC, AICTE with single regulator, says Govt

New Delhi: The government is not considering any merger of the UGC and the AICTE into a single higher education regulator at present, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Thursday.

"No such proposal is under consideration at present, to merge the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) into a single higher education regulator," Minister of State for HRD Mahendra Nath Pandey said in a written response in the Rajya Sabha. However, HRD Ministry officials had earlier claimed that the government was mulling introducing Higher Education Empowerment Regulation Agency (HEERA) to replace the UGC and the AICTE with an aim of eliminating overlaps in jurisdiction and remove irrelevant regulatory provisions.

The HRD Minister said in the response that the idea of establishing a single regulator for higher education is not new and various committees on higher education have earlier recommended a single body.

"While the National Knowledge Commission (2006) recommended an independent regulatory authority for higher education, the Committee on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education (2009) advocated an apex regulatory body by converging multiple regulatory agencies in the field of higher education.

"The UGC Review Committee in 2014 had also recommended that the commission should be replaced by an apex institution titled National Higher Education Authority," Pandey said. —PTI



Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy speaks in the Rajya Sabha

2 years on, states yet to respond on skills varsities

New Delhi: More than two years have gone by since a working group submitted its report and a draft Bill on setting up Skills Universities across the country, but states are still to come up with comments, the government informed Parliament on Thursday.

The working group was constituted on March 31, 2015, to lay down the roadmap, which submitted its report on April 22, 2015, along with a draft Bill for establishment of National Skills Universities. "The draft Bill was circulated to the central ministries or the departments concerned and state governments for seeking their comments. So far, no comments have been received from the states," Union Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha. To another



Legal notices and action have been initiated against defaulting partners

Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Union Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister

er query, the minister said a few loan accounts that have shown signs of stress have been classified as non-performing assets in the books of the National Skill Development Corporation.

"As of March 31, 2017, 19 loan accounts are classified as NPA with a total overdue amount of Rs 129.15 crore. As per the terms of the agreement, notice for default has been sent and legal notices and action have also been initiated against defaulting partners," Rudy said in the Rajya Sabha. —PTI