

universities should be made responsible for academic content of all courses and programmes of study including professional courses. The need for an overarching independent body for overseeing the entire spectrum of higher education has been accepted by Government as one of its priorities.

Employment of expatriate teachers

1142. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has set norms to set up International Schools and a strict policy framework for their functioning in our country;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is growing demand for Indian Employment visas for teachers from western countries to be recruited by the so called International schools in India at expatriate salaries and perks for teaching routine subjects like maths, physics etc.; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to prevent foreigners to come to India and occupy such posts, which do not call for any special skills not obtainable in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Currently, there are no specific norms to set up international schools in the country. Such schools are generally affiliated to foreign boards and are set up with requisite approvals.

(b) and (c) Such statistics is not centrally maintained in this Ministry. At present, Indian Missions have been empowered to grant employment visas to foreigners, including foreign teachers coming to India for employment, in conformity with the provisions laid down in the visa manual, and in case of teachers, subject to ceiling prescribed for the relevant schools.

Misuse of SSA funds

†1143. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases have come to Government's notice of misuse and diversion of funds sanctioned to the States under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to retrieve the diverted or misused funds to be used for the purpose for which they have been sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The Performance Audit report on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for the period 2001-02 to 2004-05, submitted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in August 2006, indicates that an amount of Rs. 53 crores can be classified as

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.