

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which the Government propose to deal with the situation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) Under the 'Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools' (CLASS) Central assistance is provided to States and Union Territories for purchase of Computer hardware and for implementing the Computer Literacy Project in Government and Government aided Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools. Grants are not separately earmarked for rural areas. The funds released under this Project are at various stages of utilisation. The State Government/Union Territories have been seeking necessary carry forward permission.

Continuous efforts are being made to impress upon the State Governments/Union Territories for early utilisation of unspent balances to facilitate release of fresh grants under the said Schemes.

[Translation]

Commercialisation of Education

63. DR. SUSHIL INDORA :
DR. CHINA MOHAN :

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

(a) whether the proposed participation of private sector in the development and spread of education will lead to its commercialisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the strategy proposed to be chalked out to ensure that the privatisation of education does not result into its grass commercialisation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) In the spread of higher education, the Government are not in favour of any commercialisation.

[English]

Working Plan for Companies to Buy-Back Shares

64. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated

detailed working plan for the companies to buy-back their shares/stocks either from the Indian shareholders or from foreign shareholders; and

(b) if so, the details thereof with the criteria fixed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) The salient features relating to buy-back of shares by companies have been outlined in the Companies (Amendment) Ordinance, 1998 promulgated on 31.10.98. Further, SEBI Board has approved on 10th Nov. 1998, SEBI (Buy back of Securities) Regulations 1998 which will be applicable to listed securities of companies.

(b) The salient features of Buy-back Regulations made by SEBI are as under :

- (i) The scope of the Regulations covers listed securities of the company only. In other words the unlisted securities issued through private placement or otherwise is not covered by the Regulations.
- (ii) The buy back has been permitted through the tender offer made for buy back from the existing shareholders on proportionate basis and from odd lot holders. Similarly, the book building mode which is a modified version of the internationally practised Dutch Auction and purchases through stock exchanges has been permitted for open market transaction.
- (iii) In the purchases made through the stock exchange, the details of purchases made in the buy back scheme of the company shall be made available to the stock exchange on daily basis which in turn shall make this information available to public regularly.
- (iv) The regulations have an accent on disclosures; they provide for extensive disclosures in the Explanatory Statement to be annexed for the notice for the general meeting and the Letter of Offer.
- (v) Adequate care has also been taken to disclose the pre and post buy back holdings of the promoters.
- (vi) Promoters are not permitted to participate in the buy back through the stock exchange mode.
- (vii) Buy back through negotiated deals, spot transactions or private arrangements is not permitted.