

Bill Summary

The School of Planning and Architecture Bill, 2014

- The School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) Bill, 2014 was introduced by the Minister of Human Resource Development, Ms. Smriti Zubin Irani, in the Lok Sabha on December 2, 2014 and passed by the Lok Sabha on December 3, 2014. The Bill aims to declare three existing SPAs as institutes of national importance and to promote education and research in architectural studies.
- **Objectives:** According to its Statement of Objects and Reasons, the Bill seeks to provide three existing SPAs in New Delhi, Bhopal and Vijayawada the status of institutes of national importance. It enables them to grant degrees to their students. The SPA, New Delhi was established in 1959 and conferred with the status of a Deemed University (a high-performing institution declared so by the centre, under the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956) in 1979. SPAs in Bhopal and Vijayawada were established in 2008.
- **Functions of the SPAs:** The SPAs will aim to: (i) undertake research and innovations in architecture, planning, design and allied activities; (ii) supervise and control the residence and regulate the discipline of students; (iii) hold examinations and grant degrees, diplomas and other titles; (iv) notify and make appointments to various posts with prior approval of the centre; (v) establish and maintain such infrastructure as may be necessary; etc.
- **Board of Governors:** The Board shall be the principal executive body of each SPA. It will be headed by a Chairperson, and consist of representatives from the UGC, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Council of Architecture, experts from the field of architecture, etc. The Board will be responsible for the general superintendence, direction and control of the affairs of the SPAs. It shall have the power to review the acts of the Senate, take decisions on policies relating to administration and working of the SPA, make statutes, etc.
- **Senate:** The senate will be the principle academic body of each SPA. It will be chaired by the Director of the SPA and consist of educationists of repute, all heads of departments, a nominee of the Institute of Town Planners, etc. It shall have the power to specify the criteria and process for admission, recommend to the Board new programmes and courses of study, and to specify the broad academic content and academic calendar.
- **Council:** A Council shall be established to coordinate the activity of all the SPAs. It will consist of Ministers having administrative control over technical education, two Members of Parliament, Chairmen of Indian Institute of Architects, UGC, AICTE, Director of every SPA, two secretaries to the central government dealing with urban development, etc. Key functions include: (i) advising on matters related to the duration of the courses and degrees; (ii) recommend to the centre, proposals for establishment of new SPAs; (iii) examining the development plans and broadly indicating the financial implications of such plans, for each SPA; (iv) laying down policy regarding cadres, levying of fees; etc.
- **Financing of the SPAs:** The SPAs will continue to be centrally funded.
- **Transitional provisions:** The members of the Board of Governors, Academic Council and all other committees of every SPA shall continue to function in the same manner until a new Board, Council or committee is constituted. They will cease to hold office once the new body is constituted.

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