

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3, the Schedule, Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I beg to move :

“That the Bill be passed

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That the Bill be passed.”

Shri Ranga.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Tenali) : I have a word to say. This is only to remind the hon. Minister about the urgent national need to develop the railway connections in the North-Eastern region. We have nine States, and only three of them are connected by rail and some of their State headquarters are tens of miles away from the nearest possible railway station anywhere and it is high time that the Government not only in the Railways, but also in the Finance and any in every other side of the Government should pay special attention to the development of the railways in that region and ensure that all those States and their headquarters somehow or other come to be connected with rail.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

“That the Bill be passed.”

The motion was adopted.

15.29 hrs.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

[English]

As passed by Rajya Sabha

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We now take up Item No. 16 of the Agenda, University Grants Commission (Amendment) Bill,

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI) : I beg to move :

“That the Bill further to amend the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

Before the House takes up a general discussion on the Bill I would like to share with the Hon. Members the reasons for bringing forward this amendment. According to Section 6 of the University Grants Commission Act, a person appointed as Chairman, unless he becomes disqualified for continuing as Chairman under the Rules shall hold office for a term of five years, and a person appointed as Vice-Chairman or other member, shall hold office for a term of three years. This Section further provides that the office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be whole-time and salaried, and that the terms and conditions of their services shall be prescribed by the Rules. Rules have been notified under these provisions specifying the disqualifications and also the terms and conditions of service. As part of the terms and conditions of service of the Chairman, the Rules provide that unless there is a contract to the contrary, the Chairman shall retire on attaining the age of 65 years. However, in the case of Vice-Chairman, there is no provision in the Rules which prescribes an age of retirement.

Doubts have been expressed that the provision in the Rules relating to the age of retirement goes beyond the scope of the provision in the Act. Since the Act mentions a five-year tenure for the Chairman, a view has been expressed that this tenure cannot be curtailed by the Rules framed under the Act.

In order that the matter is placed beyond all doubts, we propose to make a provision in the Act itself that the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the UGC shall hold their respective offices for the prescribed terms or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. The Bill before the House seeks to incorporate this provision in the UGC Act,