

16.00 hrs.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
(AMENDMENT) BILL

As passed by Rajya Sabha

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we resume further discussion on the motion for consideration of the University Grants Commission (Amendment) Bill moved on 13th December, 1985.

Shri M. Subba Reddy.

[Translation]

*SHRI M. SUBBA REDDY (Nandyal) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the present UGC Act has been in force for the past 30 years and there is hardly any improvement in the conditions. Now this Bill seeks to extend and regulate the tenure of the office of Chairman and Vice-Chairman. But I do not think that there will be any improvement by extending the tenure of the office of these officials. The prevailing conditions in our campuses are not going to improve by this step. On the other hand we should concentrate on how best we can contribute to make our educational institutions work on better lines. The present UGC Act had been in operation for the past 30 years. But it has failed to be effective. For the effective functioning of the UGC, it should be divided into 4 branches and located in the South, North, East and Western regions. Now, it is functioning from only one place. Much of the amount is being wasted on administration. One or two persons sitting at one place cannot decide the future of many educational institutions in the country. So it is better to divide this Commission into four parts and locate them in the four regions of the country. Another point that I want to stress is that the UGC should expand its scope. Instead of confining itself only to the University and college education, it should spread its wings and include secondary education also into its fold.

Sir, students should devote at least 40 hours a week if the education is to be really meaningful. Steps have to be taken to make the students study at least 40 hours per week.

Sir, at present there is no uniform syllabi or curricula so much so that a student who studies in one institution does not get admission in another institution just because the syllabus sought in that institution is different. It is most unfortunate that even after 40 years of independence we could not evolve a uniform curricula or syllabi for the entire country. We should think seriously about this matter and try to evolve a common curricula as early as possible. The pattern of education throughout the country should be one and the same.

Sir, it is better to have a two-language formula instead of 3-language formula. The 3-language formula has proved to be burden some to the students. The students should be made to learn their mother tongue and English. That is sufficient. At present the Government is spending a huge amount for translation from English to Hindi. I ask whether it is not necessary to encourage regional languages. The Govt. should ponder over it seriously. The speeches made in regional languages in this House are not immediately translated and sent to press just for the reason that there is no adequate arrangements made for this. I feel that the moment the interpreter translates our speeches, the arrangement should be such that it should be taken down by the Reporters. By doing so, the burden on the shoulders of the regional interpreters can be reduced considerably. It is not proper to leave the entire burden on the shoulder of only one person. This results in the delay of translation and it can not be covered by press. So the Members who speak in regional languages must have as many facilities as are available to other. There is every necessity to encourage regional languages. A separate arrangement should be made for translating from regional languages as is being done in the case of Hindi translation.

Sir, along with the increase in population the number of school and college going students is also increasing. Though the number of students attending our educational institutions has gone up, the standard of education has not gone up and infact it has declined. The standard of our education has gone down touching the bottom in the

*The speech was originally delivered in Telugu.

[Shri M. Subba Reddy]

recent years. A matriculate of yesteryears has much more knowledge and fluency than the modern graduate. The aim of British rulers was to make us serve them as white collar workers. Though we are independent day we are pursuing the same policy. Not much has been done to reorient our education system to meet the challenges of the day.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Total one hour only was allotted for the Bill. So please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI M. SUBBA REDDY : Sir, give me five more minutes. Our colleges in fact are manufacturing graduates. There is no standard. Nor there is any employment available for them when they come out of colleges. The colleges are concerned only upto the extent that the students get their B. A. or B. Com. degrees. Our education should not be like that. These colleges which impart education to our students must be in a position to take them stand on their own legs. They should not be thrown out on the streets in search of employment. It is a pity that even after 40 years of independence we could not reorient our education system so as to make it more meaningful and vocation oriented. Now the time has come to make soul searching and to try to find the defects in our education system. Thrust must on the technical education. It should be given pride of place in our education system. There is no use spending huge amounts on education without really deriving any benefit out of it. If the same amount is expended on projects, we can construct many projects and provide employment to millions of people. So what I say is that we must see whether the amount which is being spent on education is being utilised properly or not. Sir, the entire education system must undergo a rapid change. The University Grants Commission must be divided and located in North, South, East and Western regions so that it can serve the purpose effectively. I want to make a suggestion and request the hon. Minister to consider it. At

present all the members of the Commission are officials. It is being run by bureaucrats. I suggest that at least 50% of the members should be non-officials. During the days of the British, it was the officials who ruled the country. Now we are an independent nation. People's representatives should replace the officials. Since the people's representatives come from rural areas, they know the things better than the bureaucrats. So there should be less reliance on bureaucrats and hence I request that in the UGC at least 50% of the members should be non-officials. I hope the hon. Minister will consider this suggestion.

Sir, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak and I conclude my speech.

[English]

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR (Hamirpur) : Sir, the purpose of the Bill is very limited and I support the Bill. It seeks to regulate the retirement of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman at the age of 65 years. This is a welcome step because in almost all the universities of the country, the retirement age for the Vice-Chairman is 65 years and, therefore, it is in the fitness of things. The second thing is that for more than two terms, this age will not apply to members representing Central Government. This is also in the fitness of things because if a members nominated from the Central Government continues to be in office, and since this is an ex-officio appointment, he has to continue in the UGC also as a member in the ex-officio capacity. Therefore, it is only a regulatory Bill.

The U.G.C. Act was passed in 1956 and in these nearly 30 years, it has been amended a number of times. In 1984 also it was amended giving wide powers to the UGC for imposing a fee structure on the country and also for derecognising certain universities or colleges and also for creating certain institutions for coordination and for various other types of common facilities, programmes and other activities. What I want to impress upon the Minister is that there is need to have a comprehensive review of the UGC Act. Unless it is reviewed, after this

passage of three decades, it is not going to do justice because the Parliament does not get time to discuss the UGC Reports. I would request the hon. Minister to find out as to when was it discussed last. The UGC Report was discussed a long time back. So, the Parliament should find time to have some discussion on the Annual Reports which are submitted to this House. They are meant to be discussed otherwise there is a need for their submission to this House.

In one of its Reports, relating to 1982-83, it was reported that out of 120 universities of this country, as many as fourteen are unfit for getting financial assistance from UGC. This means about ten per cent or even more than ten per cent of the universities were unfit for this assistance. I do not know what happened later on but this speaks for the various things in the UGC and the way the UGC is functioning. Secondly, the UGC Committee for reviewing the functions of the Central universities gave a report which was rejected by all academics from all angles, and even by various other people. Shri Hidayatullah, one of our former Chief Justice, also came heavily upon this and said that there was no uniform imposition on the country. In this connection, I would say that UGC should have a living and organic link with the teachers' associations or organisation and look into their day-to-day demands. At present, when we are discussing this amendment, the Delhi University teachers are on strike. Their demands are genuine and the Government should intervene effectively so that the teachers do not go any further with this strike. Some effective steps should be taken to restore the academic functioning of the university so that the teachers stay to the classrooms. Some of these demands have been pending with the UGC. There was an agreement during the strike which was ended because the Delhi High Court also gave certain judgements. This was in 1983 when the 109 days old strike was called off. Those demands may be looked into and taken into consideration sympathetically and effective steps should be taken immediately, because the teachers everywhere in the country are in a moment of unrest. The Campus is not quiet. It is distressing to note, when a new Education Policy is

being evolved, the teachers are giving a call in Haryana and other parts of the country for strike. They should be taken into confidence and should be partners in the process of the evolution of the new Education Policy. The UGC is the primary wing of the academic society and is also a link between the academic community and the Government. It should step in and not live in an ivory tower thinking in terms of powers and regulations and not in terms of solution of the problems.

The new Minister has a very sympathetic approach towards the educational community. I know that. But at the same time it is also essential that the UGC—which comprises of one Chairman, one Vice-Chairman and ten Members—also acts as a living link with the teachers. They should not act in isolation on the basis of the regulations passed by them or on the basis of the legislations passed by this House years ago. They should bring in novelty and vigour in the education system. For successful implementation of the new education policy, the UGC should act as a living link and become a good institution for the future of the country.

I would support the various points of view with regard to the teachers' participation in the governance of the universities. The Charter of the California University, for example, says: 'for the professional responsibility of the teachers, it is necessary that they participate in the governance of the universities.' So, let the students, teachers and Karamcharies have a genuine voice in the universities. Then you will find that campuses become a useful arena or sphere for the promotion of the academic activities of this country.

The present Bill with its limited purpose can go a long way, but I repeat my demand that there should be a comprehensive review of the entire UGC Act, which is three decades old, so that all the lacunae and ills are removed.

With these words I request the Hon. Minister to look into the demands of the Delhi University Teachers.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska) : Sir, I support the Bill. The University Grants

[Shri Somnath Rath s]

Commission should come in a very big way and give assistance to different universities to promote art culture, history and learning in different fields in the universities. In this connections I would suggest, since Kavi Samrat Upendera Bhanja is very well known throughout Orissa and it has been suggested that a Chair in the Barhampur University should be established to translate the works of Kavi Samrat Upendera Bhanja in different languages and take up research on his works and this should be done immediately. His works that have been written and unpublished books should also be published in different languages. If that is done he will also come to be very much appreciated as a poet of nature as we do with regard to the works of Wordsworth.

I also propose that the Centre for Women's Studies should be encouraged to carry on the research studies on the development of women. I learn that Berhampur University of Orissa has submitted a proposal for establishing a Centre for Women's studies there. This should also be expedited by the UGC.

The Centre on Integration named after Smt. Indira Gandai proposed to be set up in Vishwabharati is a welcome step. I would suggest similar centres of integration should be set up in all States and should be attached to the specified universities. The UGC should come forward to encourage these study centres.

The new education policy proposed to be introduced should reflect the mechanism of sproading environmental awareness. Our esteemed Prime Minister has appropriately emphasised upon the importance of environment. Therefore, the study of the environment should be introduced in different universities and the UGC should come forward to see that these studies are conducted in all the universities. The New Educational Policy is a welcome step as it has located the weakness of the existing system and formulated a built-in strategy. It is rightly said that the policy would make education an effective tool for taking the country into the 21st century.

In this connection I wish to say that the University Grants Commission should examine the matter thoroughly and should

discuss it with the Vice Chancellors of different universities and take suitable steps to implement the same. I would submit that the Open university has to be opened in all the States of the country to make the Open University System more broad-based and more effective.

With these words I support the Bill.

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMA-CHANDRAN (Cannanore): Sir, while rising to support the amendments to the University Grants Commission Bill, I cannot but go into the object of the Act of 1956. As is well known, it was the outcome of the recommendations made by the Radhakrishnan Commission of 1948-49. The Commission had envisaged an autonomous Central body to deal with the affairs of the university especially as regards disbursal of Central Grants. The main objectives of the University Grants Commission are the promotion and coordination of University Education and maintenance of standards of teaching, examinations and research in Universities.

16 13 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH RATH *in the Chair*]

The responsibility of fulfilling the objectives have been vested in the Commission headed by the Chairman. The present Amendment deals only with the extension of tenure of service of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman.

In this connection I would suggest that what is necessary is not the extension of the tenure of service of the Chairman as well as the Vice Chairman. But there should be a thorough change in the structure of University Grants Commission.

Now, going back into the past functioning of the UGC one can say that we can not be proud of their achievement. So, a peripheral change in the UGC will not serve the purpose. What we require is a thorough change in the structural as well as functional activities of the University Grants Commission.

In this connection I have to make a suggestion with regard to the appointment of

Chairman as well as Vice Chairman. I humbly suggest that erudite scholars who are noted for their unbiassed attitude as well as progressive views may be appointed on the Commission. Moreover the Chairman, as well as the Vice Chairman and the Members of the Commission must conform to the needs and aspirations of the new century into which our country is marching ahead.

There is lot of complaint about the functioning of the Commission. People from the South as also from the East and also from the West have some feeling—there is some misunderstanding in their minds—that the UGC cannot cater to the needs and demands of the people of these areas. So I humbly suggest that there should be decentralisation of the functioning of the UGC by setting up the Regional Centres of the UGC in the South, East and the West. Of course, I really admire and also appreciate the great services rendered by the University Grants Commission in the past. In the Sixth Five Year Plan the UGC disbursed financial assistance to about 97 universities and 3524 colleges. The amount disbursed was intended to strengthen the infrastructure of the colleges, so also for the implementation of several programmes for the betterment of education. It also aimed at the enhancement of the quality as well as the teaching standard and examination and research activities.

Delving deeper into the subject, it leaves that much to be desired by the University Grants Commission. As its very name indicates, the function of the University Grants Commission has been reduced to daling out of the grants to the different universities. It should act as a pivotal point to develop educational advancement in this country. So, I feel that education is the strongest weapon to bring about social changes in our country. So any change that is brought about in the field of education will have a far-reaching repercussion on the society. So, it is my request that the hon. Minister must come forward with a new legislation to revamp the University Grants Commission which has lost its image.

Before I conclude, once again I request that some immediate steps must be taken to refurbish the lost image of the University Grants Commission.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is not much to say about the provisions of the Bill. All that I want to say about the Bill is regarding the extension of the term of the Chairman. The term of the Chairman is extended for two times. I have strong objection to this. There is no need for the term of the Chairman to be extended by another term. Just like the UPSC Chairman is appointed only for one term, the UGC Chairman also should be appointed for one term. That is my opinion.

Anyhow, this Bill provides an opportunity for the House to discuss the functioning of the UGC. I have a few words to say about it. The main function of the UGC as its name itself indicates is to provide funds for the universities in our country. Sir, with the funds under its disposal, what the University Grants Commission is doing now is, it is trying to control the universities in different States. It is putting forward a condition saying, 'Look here, if you want our funds, you should have to comply with our conditions'. There is a newly formed University in Kerala known as Gandhiji University. More than 100 colleges are affiliated to that University and the UGC's main condition is that if any University in this country wants the funds under its disposal, they should have to follow their stipulation. The Gandhiji University Act was passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly and the UGC is saying that certain provisions of the Act are not at all acceptable to them. So, they have not recognised the University till now. They are saying that there should not be any elected body. They say, if there is an elected Senate, if there is an elected Syndicate, Okay, you do it; we are not going to recognise, we are not going to provide funds. I do not know why they are saying like that, the Education Minister should explain who gave such powers to the UGC. Can the UGC dictate terms to a State Legislature? Are they expected to do that? The authorities of the UGC have suddenly found that, all the ills in our campuses, all the ills in our universities are due to the democratically elected bodies functioning there and so, they have to be dispensed with. So, my request to the Education Minister, through you, is this attitude of the UGC should be changed and Gandhiji University should be given recognition by the UGC forthwith. (*Interruptions*)

[Shri Suresh Kurup]

We are for democratically elected bodies in the universities.

Second thing I want to say is about the UGC attitude towards the democratic teachers' movement and students' movements. The authorities of the UGC are totally against these movements. You know, the Central Universities Review Committee report exclusively deals with students and teachers movements in the campuses. Do you know what they have recommended? If a teacher wants to write in a journal, he must seek the permission of the Head of Department or the concerned authorities. Otherwise, that teacher should not be permitted to write in journals. That is how the apex body of our universities is catering to the needs of the academic world by implementing such provisions. The UGC was very keen in discussing in the reports of the Police Commission. Of all things, the UGC was keen in discussing that part of the Police Commission Report which deals with police and students. The Vice-Chancellors of the 7 Central Universities sat together in 1983 and discussed about it. They appointed a 3-member subcommittee also to go into detail. The UGC has made known its views publicly. They are saying that there should be a university protection force, just like the Industrial Security Force. I do not know whether the Delhi University authorities are following the recommendations of the UGC by making a police state just inside the campus. What is this force? It is just to deal with the democratic students' movements.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Idukki) : It is to deal with rowdy students.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : I will take only two or three minutes. The recent strike of the Delhi University teachers is the example of the high handed attitude of the UGC. This agreement was reached in 1983, after a long drawn struggle for 109 days by the Delhi University students regarding their promotion scheme. The UGC interpreted that that agreement was only for the Sixth Plan period. When the next plan period would start, that promotion scheme would not be implemented. That is why, the strike is going on. They are not doing

anything. I want to know whether the Education Minister is going to interfere in these affairs. The colleges in the Delhi University are closed for the last one and a half weeks. It is because, of the attitude of the UGC, this strike has occurred.

I fully agree with my colleague, Mullappally Ramachandran. He demanded that regional centres of the UGC should be started. It should be started in Southern part, Eastern part and Western parts of India. This has been a long standing demand. The regional centres of the UGC should be provided with sufficient funds.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : Sir, I support this Bill. I would like to ask my hon. friend Mr. Suresh Kurup what should the Government and University authorities do when students are coming for writing examinations with daggers and the like?

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Am I responsible for this?

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : Yes. You are partly responsible for the chaos in the campus. Don't spread chaos in the campus. You are a student leader.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Are we to advocate police action?

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : No. I am not advocating for police action. But what I am saying is that, you being a student leader, you should definitely.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please address the Chair.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : I welcome the Bill but I thought that the Minister would now come forward with a comprehensive Bill because since the inception of the University Grants Commission, much change has taken place. The number of universities and colleges has increased and the problems have diversified. Therefore, it is high time to have a fresh look into the entire problem. Actually, the University Grants Commission is not having any control over universities or colleges. Mr. Suresh Kurup was saying that the UGC is trying to exercise control. But what is the fact? There is no control. UGC has no

control over academic matters. It has no control over admissions. It has no control.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Is UGC to have control ?

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : No, no. I am only saying that UGC should have control. On administrative matters or even on academic matters, the UGC has little control. Even in setting up of a new university by a State Government, UGC has no say. After setting up a university, it is the UGC which has to release the grants. But the State Government can set up a university without the concurrence of the UGC. That is the present position. I would only suggest that the entire thing should be re-examined in the light of the new problems that have cropped up.

Regarding the present working of the U.G.C. there is complaint that inordinate delay in sanctioning the grants to the colleges and universities is taking place. May be due to lack of staff or may be due to other problems, may be that the colleges are not complying in time with the formalities, whatever, it may be, even today, a number of colleges are to get the assistance of the Sixth Plan period.

From an answer given in the Rajya Sabha, a couple of days back, out of 5,246 colleges in the country, only 3,524 have got Sixth Plan assistance and these colleges also have not got the full assistance. They got assistance only in part. What about the remaining colleges and the remaining grants ? It means that the working of the UGC should be examined and something should be done for speedy disbursement of the grants and assistance. I suggest that staff structure should be changed. Modern management techniques should be used. There should not be large pendency of applications.

Another important thing is that there are nine universities in this country which UGC has not recognised or is not giving any assistance. You may recognise or not. Why assistance is not given to these universities ? My hon. friend Shri Suresh Kurup mentioned about Gandhiji University set up in Kerala after an enactment from the Kerala Assembly. The only university in the name of Gandhiji is not being recognised and given assistance.

Is it not a paradox ? (*Interruptions*) If the universities are not to be recognised, the UGC should see that such universities do not come up. But after University has come into existence, if you do not assist, you are punishing the students. UGC is disbursing the grants. Is there any mechanism for monitoring or supervision ? Have you any method of finding out whether the grants released are being utilised for the same purpose ? I understand there is no mechanism or machinery. This is not good. The UGC should have a monitoring machinery. Sir, in this connection I would also like to point out that the UGC is centralised in Delhi. The representatives of the Colleges in the south and other places, those Principals and teachers, will have to travel all the way to Delhi spending a lot of money in order to get the grants for their Colleges released. Therefore, I agree with the demand—and I also request—that regional centres of the UGC be set up, one in the south, one in the east and one in the west. These regional centres should release the grants and they should also monitor implementation of the projects submitted by the Colleges.

One more point. I suggest that the UGC should conduct a survey of the Colleges which are not having minimum facilities. The Colleges which are not having the minimum facilities should be given special assistance. Also there are a number of Colleges in the rural areas. These Colleges in the rural areas are not able to provide the matching grant and, therefore, they are not able to avail themselves of the assistance that the UGC is giving. So, for the Colleges in the rural areas, for the Colleges where the minorities are more and for the Colleges where Harijans are studying you should give special assistance and you should not insist on their providing the matching grant. Otherwise, you cannot extend the benefit of higher education to the rural areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : One more minute, Sir. I have many other points, but I cannot cover all of them for want of time. But I would like to mention about over-politicalisation in the Campus because Shri Suresh Kurup has raised it. We should do something in this regard. In Universities there are general elections ? Why can't we think of

[Prof. P. J. Kurien]

having an indirect election? The UGC should look into this and see what can be done to control over-politicalisation in the Campus. Something has to be done. I am not saying that the democratic right should be curtailed. There are different ways of looking at it. You can have an indirect election; or, have a discussion. On behalf of the future generation only I am making this request.

Over-politicalisation in the Campus is very much detrimental to the future of this country. Therefore, the UGC and the hon. Minister should seriously think about it and do something; they should come forward with a comprehensive legislation by which the entire problem can be tackled.

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far as the provisions of this Bill are concerned, I have no objection, but I take this opportunity to make a few suggestions.

The UGC as it is constituted today is not serving the purpose for which it has been constituted. In a democracy, in an autonomous body, there should be at least an element of democratic character. I find from the list of members that, apart from the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, ten members are nominated by the Government, including, I am told, four teachers. But those teachers do not represent the democratic teachers movement in the country. It is the teachers who should have a great say in the matter of Universities, it is the teachers who constitute the bulk of the Universities. So, I insist that the democratic teachers' movement should find a place. I do not say that all the members should be elected, but they should have a representation on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : I also support the demand made by many hon. Members, particularly from the south, that the UGC should have regional offices. Sitting in the air-conditioned building in Delhi, the UGC cannot supervise the functioning of 150 Universities and 5,000 Colleges. The other day, hon. Minister Shri Narasimha Rao said that the south

was getting more grants. Getting grants is not very important. What is more important is, the UGC should provide inspiration to the Universities, should provide leadership to the Universities; they should see that the Universities are well developed and the standards of education improve, that the students particularly are motivated. We are speaking of student unrest in the country. Why this unrest? Because the present education system is purposeless. That is why there has been unrest everywhere. The police is not the answer for that. Of course, that is a different issue, I am not going to say about that.

About the functions of the UGC, it should give encouragement for research and bring out more and more publication.

Lastly Sir, so far as Karnataka is concerned—I have made this point on the other day also—the style of functioning of the UGC must change. Two universities in Gulbarga and Mangalore were started five years back. Since five years the Karnataka Government has been appealing to the UGC. Ministers have personally come and they are requesting the UGC Chairman. The UGC Chairman did not even have the courtesy to keep up the appointment previously fixed. She cancelled the appointment to one of our Education Ministers also.

On these Universities, the Karnataka Government has spent Rs. 16 crores so far. But no grant is released till today. Prof. Kurien is speaking about Gandhiji University. In Karnataka even five years back two universities have complied with all the conditions laid down by the UGC. They asked the Government to bring out amendments once and that was complied with. They asked again. They have been asking them to bring more and more amendments. This is not the way.

DR. V. VENKATESH (Kolar) : Why all these disparities Sir?

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : I insist that the Hon. Minister should bring about a comprehensive bill keeping in view the suggestions made by the Hon. Members during the discussion on the education policy and also on the Central Review Committee. Thank you Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER : What about the capitation fee in Karnataka ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : No discussion please. I have already called the next member.

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY (Hoshiarpur) : Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister for having put in this spade work. Today is my first day of participation in the House. It has been after a lot of pressure that has been put by my friends, elders and well wishers, though I would have taken another two months to settle down like handling a new aircraft that I would have done in the Indian Air Force.

However, I chose this topic since today I am the President of the DAV college managing committee, Hoshiarpur. I am heading about thirteen institutions. There are about ten thousand students, teachers, and non-teaching staff who come under me which by itself is a mini university.

I have just come from Hoshiarpur. Last to last week we held the Punjab University Youth Festival. I would request the Hon. Members, Prof. Kurien, Prof. Parashar the Hon. Minister or any other member to come and have a look at that institution. We have never had a strike for the last more than 20 years. There is a military discipline in that institute. My father was heading that institution ever since 1962.

I had prepared a speech for ten minutes. Unfortunately after hearing the ringing of the bell, I have decided to speak on my own.

(Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER : This is his maiden speech; we should not disturb him.

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY : These strikes and all that we have been talking about mainly are encouraged because we want these students to become a part of the politics. We want to utilise them. Though my father had been in politics for the last fifty years, he never utilised these students for uplifting or creating an image for himself. I assure you that—Prof. Kurien and Prof. Parashar had been talking about

the strikes—all these strikes will never take place unless we encourage these students.

I only have one more point to make. The statistics say that 95% of the population is within one kilometer of a primary school and 80% is within three kilometres of a middle school. In that case, it is a very sore point that we have shamelessly high percentage of illiteracy. We cannot assure the world of equal opportunity being provided to all, unless we marshal out the entire community to the primary and middle school level. To that end, I suggest that more important to the UGC is the establishment of Primary/Secondary teaching Grants Commission and bringing primary and secondary education within the purview of the UGC. Catch them young and we will have a fine nation. Thank you Sir.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : If our young and attractive Education Minister prefers relatively younger people to man the UGC I have no objection. Naturally I will support her. But in this connection I will quickly raise two points about this UGC functioning. I do not want to go into the functioning of the UGC at the moment but I want to mention about the Government's attitude. In this Challenge of Education on page 60 a direction has been given to say as if the failures and the deficiencies of the Central Planning bodies have been—I quote their words—'mainly because the real initiative for planning is entirely in the hands of the State Governments.' This seems to be at the root of all the trouble—in the opinion of this Book and, I believe, in the opinion of the Government. Here, I have my quarrel because I do not think that that is the situation. Moreover, the Sarkaria Commission is going on for a democratic restructuring of the State-Centre relations. Education also appears in that and in that situation, the other day the Minister in her reply in the Rajya Sabha said something about some plan of centralisation of these Universities and naturally, UGC could be used through this, it seems. I request the Minister not to rush in for anything which will encroach upon the rights of the State legislatures at the moment. Though the question of core syllabus, etc. can be surely talked about but not an overall superbody imposed on the State legislatures.

[Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee]

Another point is the question of representation of teachers. I fully support our friend, Prof. Parashar here. I would like to suggest that the only organisation of the teachers at the moment is the All India University and College Teachers Organisation. That being the only organisation where all political parties are working, I strongly request the Minister for their representation in the UGC being considered.

Lastly, the settlement of the Delhi University teachers' strike. I request the Minister to intervene effectively because that was really a question of honouring and upholding the word given by the UGC.

[Translation]

PROF. NIRMALA KUMARI SHAKTAWAT (Chittorgarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the University Grants Commission (Amendment) Bill, 1985. I shall confine myself to a few points concerning the amendments sought to be effected through this Bill, as the time allowed by you is very limited. When the University Grants Commission was constituted in 1956, the only objective behind it was expansion of University education. Quantitywise, there has been progress in the field of education; today, there are 140 Universities and 5,000 colleges in the country, but in spite of all this, the U. G. C. has merely become an organisation for sanctioning grants. Therefore, I want to submit to you that an appropriate Bill should be brought forward for this purpose in the coming days with a view to reviewing the working of the U. G. C. and improving its functioning. What is needed today is that keeping in view the expansion of education, the U. G. C. should be strengthened. It holds only one meeting in a month and all its Member other than its Chairman and Vice-Chairman hold a sort of honorary position and the agenda of these meetings happens to be so extensive that the main points are left undiscussed. Therefore, my submission is that there is need to set up special types of cells. These cells should study and examine as to what should be our pattern of education, how we can bring about improvement in our

education and what are the requirements of the teachers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my another suggestion is that the representatives of the teachers' organisations should be nominated on the U. G. C. in the same way as you nominate educationists so that they could safeguard their interests.

Sir, our objective today is to have national integration, but our U.G.C. has not been able to fulfil the objective of universal education. Therefore, my suggestion is that a cell should be set up which should undertake research and survey work and see what type of students are needed for different professions. Educational planning should be based on the requirements of students for a particular discipline, such as, medical and engineering which are needed most today.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have just started and I shall conclude after giving a few suggestions.

Sir, today we see that there is widespread unrest in the Universities in our country. The only reason for this is the uncertainty among the students about their future. They have apprehensions as to what they would do after their studies. Therefore, I am of the view that if the proposed cell starts functioning, we shall be able to end this situation of uncertainty among the students and as such there is need to make special efforts to check tendency of aimlessness that is growing among the students.

Sir, I have yet another suggestion to make. At many places, our Universities have today become hotbed of politics and many of them have become teaching shops. They charge capitation fee there. This situation should be ended forthwith. I welcome the Indira Gandhi open University Bill brought forward by you with a view to extending education to the people in remote villages. At the same time, I would also that if you really want to educate the people in far-flung villages, you will have to develop a strong tele-communication network. The people in remote villages can be benefited only if you do that and not otherwise.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI) : Mr. Chairman, at the very outset I would like to thank all the hon. Members of this august House who have participated in this very innocent Bill and have made very good suggestions. There is not enough time to go into many of the points made by them and, I think, most of them were taken up on the day 'Challenge of Education' come up for discussion in the House.

I do realise that there are many questions and I can assure the hon. Members that all these will be taken into consideration at the time when the education policy which is under review and maybe the very functioning of the UGC may be necessary to be reviewed. Even the Act itself may be reviewed. But I cannot make any commitment on that. All the strong feelings and emotions expressed by the hon. Members will be taken into consideration at the time of concretising the education policy.

I would like to touch upon three basic points. First, what are the major functions of the UGC under this Act? I think every hon. Member knows and I do not have to go into them. They are coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in the universities. The hon. Members may feel that University standards have fallen. By and large people feel standards have fallen. It is precisely for that reason that all these things are under discussion. I think we will benefit from all the suggestions that have come up.

While fulfilling its responsibilities, it is the duty of the UGC to give grants. It is not dishing out money. It is not the charity that it is giving. It is carrying out its duty through giving grants and giving grants only to those institutions which have been found fit to receive the grants and it is very very necessary that they have to fulfil certain regulations and stipulations before they become entitled to receive these grants. There may be stipulations that they should have the forum like the one suggested in the Gajendragadkar Commission's recommendations or may be that they should

have Rs. two crores worth of facilities whether it is staff or buildings or something like that. So, we find that 40 of these universities have been established since 1972 and 14 out of them have not yet been declared to be fit to receive assistance. But that does not mean that they are not recognised. The fact is that they have not come up to certain standards. After fulfilling this criterion, they should be entitled to receive the assistance. I would only request the hon. Members from various parties to take up this matter with the respective State Governments and see that the fulfilment of these conditions is expedited and the UGC is satisfied and then only the financial assistance that they expect can be given to them.

DR. V. VENKATESH : What have you done for Karnataka?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : Have a little patience. I will come to that. Secondly, Sir, some hon. Members have mentioned about the democratic character. I think they have a point. But as it stands today, the existing UGC Act provides not less than 4 members to be chosen from persons who are teachers of the universities at any given time. Therefore, there would be at least 4 serving teachers in the UGC. Now, if we are to have elections. The hon. Member feels that a particular union should be represented, may be others may feel that another union should be represented. But that would lead to a little controversy. I do not think that it would be necessary to go into the controversy go far as the teaching community is concerned, they are always there and teacher is an instrument, is the vehicle through whom we have to bring forward new educational policy, not only for now but for the period of 21st century. About DUTA I will come later on.

Some hon. Members mentioned about the capitation fee. I think our views and the Government's views about the capitation fee is very very clear. They said all that has to be said. But the UGC is finalising the regulations for the capitation fee. It is just for the information of the Members. The Member has mentioned about the Ganbhi University in Kerala along with the Gulbarga and Mangalore

[Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi]

Universities in Karnataka. Now, these are among the 14 universities which are still to be declared fit to receive assistance from the UGC and I have said earlier that they have not yet come up to fulfil the stipulations. They have to fulfil those stipulations and if the UGC finds that they have fulfilled the obligations which are necessary, then they will be qualified for the assistance. (Interruptions). Apart from that, I also find that the UGC provides basic assistance for books, equipment and faculty improvement to all colleges which have an enrolment of 150 students or more in degree courses. Development grants are provided to colleges which have an enrolment of 400 or more students. This requirement is relaxed to 300 in the case of colleges in the rural areas and women's colleges. There are many colleges which do not fulfil the criterion specially enrolment and such non-viable colleges are not by and large getting any assistance from the UGC. But I think what the hon. Member has said should also be taken into account in this regard.

One point was made very clearly that the Central Government proposes to take over the control of the University. That is not the idea. There is no proposal for taking over the control of any university. I think all these things have been considered at various levels here, there and everywhere. But there is no proposal before the Government for taking over the control of the Universities.

Now, I come to the functioning of the universities.

In regard to the functioning of the universities, action is being taken in regard to the research work and quality improvement work. I do agree with them that the work should be better and there is scope for improvement. For instance, we can say that there are some areas where the UGC can play a more positive role in regard to the effective planning, monitoring and the evaluation of development of universities and their performance, development of machineries for curriculum, research and development, training of teachers and educational testing, etc. All this can be taken up and I think, any hon. Member

would appreciate that the manner in which the challenge of education has been brought forward and discussed in this House, only the very dedicated and sincere Government could have taken up and put all the bare facts in a most candid and sincere manner. That itself speaks in volumes that we do intend to improve things and UGC itself is proposing to create conditions where the functioning of the universities can be by and large improved. Some of these measures are contemplated in the Seventh Plan. Some steps are already being taken and in a number of colleges, many of these new schemes have also come into existence. I have the figures here with me. You can see that in the Sixth Plan, the outlay was only Rs. 280 crores. But seeing the important role that the UGC could and should play, we have set an allocation of Rs. 370 crores in the Seventh Plan. Whether it is sufficient or not, that is something else to decide. But it shows the importance that we attach to the UGC, the important role it has to play in maintaining standards and delivering standards to the people.

Now there are two points which I would like to mention. One was about the regional discrimination or about the need for setting up separate centres in various parts of the country dividing the UGC into four Divisions and all that. For this, I have some facts and figures before me but I do not understand why this issue has come before the members and why they are so disturbed about it. I think an hon. member mentioned the same particular point during the earlier discussion on education also. But I would like to reiterate that sometime back in a meeting, the Education Ministers of the Southern Region had suggested that regional offices of the UGC should be established to expedite the release of grants to the universities and colleges in the States. If it is only a question of expending the release of grants, it can always be accepted. So far as the discrimination in allocation and all those charges, I would like to quote some figures. The position as it transpires today is like this. In the Southern Region, for 21 universities, grants paid are Rs. 3574.55 lakhs and for 827 colleges, grants paid are Rs. 1572.56 lakhs; in the Northern Region, for 28 universities Rs. 3448.91 lakhs, for 877 colleges

Rs. 1641.79 lakhs; for the Eastern Region, for 22 universities Rs. 2434.96 lakhs, for 821 colleges, Rs. 963.22 lakhs, and for the Western Region for 26 universities, Rs. 3074.73 lakhs and for 999 colleges Rs. 1369.67 lakhs. Therefore, for giving out the money and for expediting this process, I think the UGC should look into this and it will look into the things that have been mentioned by the hon. members.

Now I am coming to the question of the DUTA strike. I do not think I would go into the details of the DUTA strike but since many of the members have referred to it, I can only assure them that last week, the Ministry, the UGC and me personally have met them for a couple of hours and I can say that we have all our sympathies with the teacher community. I have myself been a teacher and even if I had not been, otherwise also, I say that it is their community which can train and which can steer the country to the march that we are looking forward. But regarding the demands, I think it would be better if the hon. members ask the people who have met us as to what they had discussed, what they had not discussed and with what feeling they had gone back. I can only reiterate on this that any assurance which has been made by the Government will be honoured and we stand committed to it. More than that, I am not prepared to say anything. I still have great hopes and the way they went back and the way we had carried out our discussions, all this has been done in a very optimistic manner. With these words, I would like to thank the hon. members for supporting our amendments and I have nothing more to add.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Regarding the Gandhiji University, I mentioned that the UGC was insisting that there should not be elected... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not repeat. She has already replied to it.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : She did not reply to that. I want to ask whether the UGC has got any authority.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please sit down.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : But the Minister never replied to it. That was my question.

PROF P. J. KURIEN : It is not our case that the colleges in the east, south or west are not getting enough grants; our case is that in order to get these grants, colleges in these areas have to spend a lot of time and money. So, what is your answer to our suggestion that regional centres should be set up ?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : There is no question of setting up regional centres; but if they have grievances about delays in giving grants, they can always be looked into. There is no need for setting up regional centres.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

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

The Motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill. Now Clause 2. Mr. Mool Chand Daga is not here.

The question is :

“That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

17.00 hrs.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That Clause 1, Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 1, Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the Minister.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : I beg to move ;

“That the Bill be passed.”

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That the Bill be passed.”

The Motion was adopted.