

was recipient of Nation's highest award 'Bharat Ratna' in 2001 and was the third classical musician to receive this award belonging to the world of music after M.S. Subbulakshmi and Pandit Ravi Shankar.

In the passing away of Ustad Bismillah Khan, the country and the music world has lost one of the towering personalities in the realm of Indian music. His death is an irreparable loss to the world of Indian classical instrumental music.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Ustad Bismillah Khan.

I request Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved family our deep sense of sorrow and sympathy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Shortage of universities in the country

*341. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether universities are less in number in our country as compared to China, where there are 900 universities and Japan where there are 4000 universities;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to increase the number of universities in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) Authentic information in regard to the number of Universities in other countries is not available. In India, however, according to the University Grants Commission, there are at present, 357 Universities and equivalent institutions. A University can be established by either an Act of Parliament or a State Legislature. An institution for higher education, other than University, may also be declared as a "deemed to be University" under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. There is no numerical restriction either on declaration of institutions as Deemed Universities or on establishment of Universities by the Legislature.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, my first supplementary is this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is a proposal to set up a Central University with a branch in every State for each specialised subject, like computer science, information technology, medicines, engineering etc. if so, the details thereof?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, much as it would be desirable to do that, I do not think it is practical to set up a Central University in each and every State.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, my second supplementary is, how many deemed universities are there in the country? Is it proposed to declare some more institutes as deemed universities? If so, the details thereof. Is there any proposal to give additional funds to the Salem Periyar University in Tamil Nadu to take-up research work in various fields? If so, the details.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir deemed Universities are declared on the recommendation of the UGC after a certain process. Anybody can apply and the UGC makes its recommendations. Regarding this particular university at the place, which the hon. Member has mentioned, if I am given a notice, I shall look into it.

श्री स्वप्नारायण पाणि: जन्यकद सभापति महोदय, दुर्भाग्य से दुनिया के दूसरे देशों में जनसंख्या वृद्धि की तुलना में हमारे देश में जनसंख्या की वृद्धि दर बहुत अधिक है, जो कि हमारी प्रगति की बाधक होती है। जनसंख्या वृद्धि दर हमारे देश में जितनी है ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: आप सीधे क्वेश्चन करिए।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: महोदय मैं आता हूँ।

श्री सभापति: आओ या चाहे जाओ, क्वेश्चन करिए।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: शिक्षादान की वृद्धि की दर ज्यादा से ज्यादा भारत में होनी चाहिए। हमारे देश के ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: आप क्वेश्चन करिए। मैं अलाऊ नहीं करूंगा। सीधा क्वेश्चन कर लीजिए।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: महोदय, मेरा आपके माध्यम से यह प्रश्न है कि उड़ीसा प्रदेश में नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस, एनआईएस होने का था। बाद में इस सरकार ने इसको आईआईएससीआर, भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान केन्द्र करके कहा। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर नाम में परिवर्तन करते हैं, तब भी पिछले पांच-छः साल से यह जो पेंडिंग है, उस संबंध में नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस भुवनेश्वर में खोलने के संबंध में क्या स्थिति है? अभी तक क्यों इसे खोला नहीं जा रहा है हमारे प्रदेश के साथ भेदभाव क्यों किया जाता है?

श्री सभापति: आप बैठ जाइए। मंत्री जी, वहां की क्या स्थिति है, वह आप बता दीजिए।

श्री अर्जुन सिंह: सर, इंस्टीट्यूट खोलने की पृष्ठभूमि में बहुत सी चीजें रहती हैं। उड़ीसा के संबंध में ऐसी घोषणा हो गयी थी। ऐसे इंस्टीट्यूट्स को कायम करने के बारे में बाद में निर्णय लिया गया है और इसमें तीन जगहें अभी निश्चित हुई हैं, कोलकाता, पुणे और पंजाब। उड़ीसा का नाम भी उसमें शामिल है। उस संबंध में आगे जब फैसला होगा तब उसके संबंध में भी विचार किया जाएगा।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: सर, इसमें फ्लिम्ब किया जाता है। हमारे साथ भेदभाव किया जा रहा है।

श्री सभापति: हो गया, हो गया। आप उड़ीसा का क्या बनाया केस बिगाड़ रहे हो। अब बैठ जाओ। जो कुछ कहा है ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: सर, जो गरीब हैं, उनके साथ क्या अन्याय होता रहेगा?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Hon. Chairman, Sir, it is not the number of universities in the country that matters. It is the quality of education of higher learning as also the research work, which is very important for India.

Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that the University Grants Commission has declared deemed universities under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. The so-called deemed universities

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RAJYA SABHA

universities have been declared so by the University Grants Commission ever; when they lack sufficient infrastructure. That is the first point.

Secondly, according to Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, colleges that are within the campus, within the area, are to be considered as deemed universities. But, in some States, even colleges situated outside the State have been affiliated and considered as deemed universities. Therefore, I would like to seek clarification from the hon. Minister.

MR CHAIRMAN: Please, take your seat. The question is very clear. Let him reply.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Yes, Sir, I leave it to you for decision.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: That is the best thing to do. Sir, to leave everything to you!

Sir, the hon. Member wanted to know how deemed-to-be universities are constituted. As I said, this is an action, which is taken by the UGC. Under Section 3, if there is any complaint of misapplication of this facility, we can certainly look into it. But, on a generalised scale, I cannot say that all the universities that have been declared as deemed-to-be universities suffer from any infirmities. It is also true that some universities which are 'deemed-to-be universities', have the right of off-campus centres and it has taken place. But, there again, I think if there is any specific complaint about any action, if it is more specific, it will be better to reply to it.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: More specifically, Sir, I referred to the universities outside the State. That is the specific part that I would like to know.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: It may be outside the State.

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the foreign universities, in collaboration with some private universities, have started functioning in some parts of our country. Are there rules framed by the Government for permitting the foreign universities to start their activities, either in collaboration or independently, in India?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, as of today, any university in India can enter into any agreement with any other university for research collaboration. But, for starting a new university in the country, we have not given any university that kind of permission. Actually, the foreign universities regulatory provision is under consideration and we will bring it before the Parliament as soon as it is finalised.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. The hon. Minister has said, in his reply, that there are 357 universities and equivalent institutions in the country. Out of these universities, in some of them, the quality and standard of education is very low. Academic excellence and academic standard is much less in some of the institutions. At the same time, in some of these universities and institutions, academic standards are very good. When students get degree from some universities, one wonders whether the student who has passed out from that university is a graduate at all. He cannot even speak; he cannot even understand. Is there any mechanism by which the Government regulates and monitors the academic standards of various universities? If so, what is that mechanism?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, the regulatory mechanism rests with the UGC and it is the duty of the UGC to regulate what is happening in which university, what is the standard, to what extent standard is maintained or compromised. If the hon. Member has any specific name in his mind, I will be grateful if he can let me know. We will certainly try to find out. But, one thing I must say that apart from the qualification that I have given, one of the major issues, which has to be kept in mind, is the access to higher education and that also is a part of the anxiety which you must share and try to find a way out.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: सभापति जी, नारायणसम्प्री जी ने बिल्कुल सही कहा था कि विश्वविद्यालयों की संख्या से ज्यादा उनकी गुणवत्ता महत्वपूर्ण होती है। महोदय, यहाँ पिछले कुछ वर्षों में यूनिवर्सिटीज की mushroom growth हुई है। तीन वर्ष पहले छत्तीसगढ़ में हर हफ्ते एक यूनिवर्सिटी स्वीकृत की जाती थी। अभी मेरठ में जो चौधरी चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय का मामला हमारे सामने आया, वह हम सबको शर्मसार करने वाला है। इसलिए मैं मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगी कि दूसरे देशों में यूनिवर्सिटीज का ग्रेडेशन कराया जाता है और उस ग्रेडेशन को प्रकाशित किया जाता है, ताकि विश्वविद्यालय में दाखिला लेने से पहले बच्चे को यह पता हो कि मैं जिस यूनिवर्सिटी में जा रहा हूँ, वह कहां स्टैंड करती है, उसका कितना

नंबर है? क्या इसी तरह से ये जो 357 विश्वविद्यालय हमारे यहां हैं, आप उनका कोई ग्रेडेशन कराएंगे?

श्री अर्जुन सिंह: सभापति महोदय, यह प्रश्न निश्चित रूप से महत्वपूर्ण है और यह अच्छा होगा कि यह ग्रेडेशन प्रमाणित तौर से किया जाए, ताकि फिर किसी को संदेह न रहे कि अमुक युनिवर्सिटी की क्या स्थिति है? ऐसा नहीं है कि ग्रेडेशन नहीं होता, अभी भी ग्रेडेशन होता है, लेकिन इसको और पारदर्शी बनाने के लिए यदि कोई तरीका है, तो उसका इस्तेमाल करना चाहिए और इस विषय में, मैं माननीय सदस्यों से सुझाव भी चाहूंगा।

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: सर, सरकार इंडिपेंडेंट एजेंसीज ले लेती है और उन इंडिपेंडेंट एजेंसीज से ग्रेडेशन कराती है, तो तरीके तो हैं, जैसे बाहर वाले करते हैं। आप किसी भी इंडिपेंडेंट एजेंसी को दे दीजिए, आप IIM को दे दीजिए, IIM कोलकाता को दे दीजिए, IIM अहमदाबाद को दे दीजिए। ये इंस्टिट्यूशन्स बहुत prestigious इंस्टिट्यूशन्स हैं, जो आपको ग्रेडेशन करके देंगे।

DR. P.C. ALEXANDER: Sir, the number of universities, as Mr. Narayanasamy said, is not a criterion for comparison with other countries about the progress of higher education. It is not even the quality of the universities. I would say that the real criterion would be the quality of the institutions like colleges affiliated to the universities. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he would take up a policy of encouraging greater number of autonomous colleges in the country rather than creating more universities to control the colleges?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, there is a concept for making autonomous colleges, and, I think, it is a very solid and valid concept. Many colleges have acquired that status and there has to be a limit to it. But we can certainly try to encourage autonomous colleges, which are qualified, which have the required faculty, to become role models.

SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Right to Education is the fundamental right of a citizen. We have seen here that there is so much of demand but the supply is limited. Sir, the cut-off marks for admission is 94 per cent, 92 per cent. Are we not creating a class discrepancy? Even bright students, if they get below 94 per cent, they don't get admission. It has become a nightmare not only for the children but also for their parents and the society at large. Is the hon. Minister addressing this particular question, which is a great problem for the society as a whole?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, I understand the anxiety of the hon. Member and the parents also have great concerns on this account. But with regard to the qualifying marks that are given, I would say that it is not something in which I can interfere, or, should interfere. It is purely a subject for the academic world. As I said, we can certainly think of ways how to go about it. But, straightway, I cannot tell you what I am going to do or can do tomorrow.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what changes have been made in the criteria for declaring a university as a deemed university. It took the IITs about two decades before they could be called deemed university.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: IITs? It is not deemed university. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: They are not yet! (*Interruptions*) I want to know what is the criterion for that? Sir, the reason why I am asking is that in the private sector, you have now a sort of commodification of education which is taking place, and, which we have discussed in this House a number of times. Not merely the gradation, what is the criterion on the basis of which UGC will declare that it is a deemed university, and, on what basis it will be done.

Secondly, Sir, if you permit me, I would like to say that you rightly said that it is not only the question of number of universities but also the question of access to higher education. Now, we have repeatedly discussed this issue as to how to create a balance between the quantity, quality and equity in the Indian education system. And, in higher education, how are we going to achieve this balance. I would be grateful to the hon. Minister if he could let the House know about it.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Member for having put the entire issue in perspective. Exactly, the matter that faces us in this 'balance', which he has just said. Now, Section 3 of the UGC Act entitles the UGC to recommend grant of deemed university status. I can lay on the Table of the House the detailed reasons why it is given, for the information of the House. And, as the hon. Members has said, it is now up to Parliament to try to create that balance. And, that balance will ultimately serve the purpose of the entire country, not a section or an area

or anything like that, and that balance will have to be done by this Parliament.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: That is why we are requesting you to cooperate ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: You are asking me to cooperate!

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: I mean the Government, not you.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Well, I think, we leave that matter out, Sir. In whatever way it is achieved, let us all collectively do it.

Tribals residing in forest lands

*342. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Tribal families residing in the forest lands in different States, for which they have not been given the order of settlement;

(b) whether these families are allowed to use the non-timber forest produces for their livelihood;

(c) whether Government propose to give these families the right to the forest in consideration of their age-old adaptation to the forest-life; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Demographic details in respect of people residing on forest land are maintained by the respective State/Union Territory Governments.

(b) The Indian Forest Act, 1927 provides for determination of traditional rights of forest dwellers over forest land and to exclude such areas from the area to be notified as Reserved Forest (RF). It also provides for determination and grant of traditional rights over use of forest produce in lands declared as RF. In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has requested the State/Union Territory Governments to assign ownership