

private telecom operators to provide phone connections in rural areas. If so, what are the details?

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, the hon Member wanted to know whether any funds are being created for telecom infrastructure for rural areas. I have mentioned it very clearly that there is a proposal in the DoT to use the USO fund so as to support the passive infrastructure to enable mobile connection in the rural areas. Already, under the USO fund, basic services are being provided in those villages, which are not profitable

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, I would like to know whether BSNL has achieved the target for providing telephones in rural areas and if not, then what are the reasons? I have one more doubt. I would like to know whether Government is aware that the service is very poor in BSNL and MTNL mobile phones, considering that the person has to try many times before getting connections from one phone to another phone. If so, what action has been taken upon it?

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, I have already answered the first part.

*314. [The questioner (Shri Rajkumar Dhoot) was absent. For answer *vide* page 47]

Autonomous Colleges

*315. PROF. P.J. KURIAN Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give permission for more autonomous colleges;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of such autonomous colleges in the State of Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD.ALI ASH RAF FATMI): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) and (b) The status of autonomous colleges is granted by the affiliating

university with the approval of the appropriate government on the recommendation of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The Commission recommends grant of autonomous status to colleges which satisfy the criteria laid down under its guidelines. Therefore, grant of autonomous status to more colleges would depend on receipt of proposals in UGC from colleges satisfying the prescribed criteria.

(c) Presently, there is no autonomous college in the State of Kerala.

PROF. P. J. KURIAN: Thank you, Sir. The ballot is rarely in my favour but due to the absentee Members I am getting this question. Thank you very much Sir. Sir, I would like to know what is the policy of the Government with regard to autonomous colleges and whether the Government is doing something about it. But, Sir, the answer is disappointing. The answer says that the UGC receives applications and they decide on the autonomous colleges. Sir, all education experts agree that more autonomous colleges will help in the improving education, and, yet, the answer says as if the Government has no responsibility over this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Government has a policy on this? Is the policy in favour of increasing the number of autonomous colleges? What steps the Government is taking to increase the number of autonomous colleges?

श्री मोहम्मद अली अशरफ फातमी : सर, माननीय सदस्य ने किसी कॉलेज के ऑटोनोमस होने की प्रक्रिया संबंधी जो जानकारी चाही है, उसके बारे में मैं उन्हें बताना चाहता हूँ कि इसके लिए रूल्स-रेगुलेशंस बिल्कुल स्पष्ट हैं कि कोई भी कॉलेज यदि ऑटोनोमस होना चाहता है तो या तो वह युनिवर्सिटी में ऐप्लाइ कर सकता है या फिर वह यू.जी.सी. डायरेक्ट ऐप्लाइ भी कर सकता है, लेकिन उसके लिए जब तक युनिवर्सिटी और स्टेट गवर्नमेंट की रजामंदी न हो और वह कॉलेज इस लायक न हो कि उसे ऑटोनोमस माना जाए, तब तक यह मुमकिन नहीं है। जब कोई कॉलेज ऐप्लाइ करता है, तो उसके लिए एक एक्सपर्ट कमिटी बनती है जो सारी बातों को देखती है – कॉलेज का स्टैंडर्ड किस तरह का है, उसके बिल्डिंग्स कितनी हैं, उसकी लेब कैसी है, उसकी लाइब्रेरी कैसी है, आदि, आदि। एक्सपर्ट कमिटी इन सारी चीजों को देखकर, उस कॉलेज के बारे में सारी जानकारी लेकर अपनी रिपोर्ट तैयार करती है, अगर वह रिपोर्ट दुरुस्त है और उसके लिए युनिवर्सिटी और स्टेट गवर्नमेंट एग्री हैं, तो उसे ऑटोनोमस माना जा सकता है। रिपोर्ट दुरुस्त होने के साथ-साथ युनिवर्सिटी और स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का भी एग्री होना बहुत जरूरी है।

PROF. P.J. KURIAN: What hon. Minister replied is about the procedure to set up a college or an autonomous college. My question is: What is the policy of the Government with regard to autonomous colleges, whether to increase the autonomous colleges or not. That is my question. He has not replied to that. He should reply to this question first.

My second supplementary is this. Second part of the reply says, 'Presently there is no autonomous college in the State of Kerala'. I would also like to know why is there no autonomous college in Kerala? Is it the fault of the Government of Kerala or the Universities or is it that the Central Government is not taking any initiative in this? What initiative the Central Government will take to ensure that there would be more autonomous colleges in Kerala? The hon. Minister may reply to my first supplementary and this supplementary.

श्री मोहम्मद अली अशरफ फातमी : सर, इसमें हमें कोई भी इनीशिएटिव लेने की जरूरत नहीं है...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : यह आपके पहले क्वेश्चन का जवाब है।

श्री मोहम्मद अली अशरफ फातमी : जी सर । जहां तक केरल का सवाल है , वहां के सात कॉलेजों ने एप्लाइ किया है । यह प्रोपोजल हमारे पास है और 31.03.2006 को इस पर आगे की कार्यवाही होगी । हम लोग स्टेट के खिलाफ नहीं है, यदि केरल चाहे तो अपना प्रोपोजल भेज सकता है, यूजीसी उस पर स्वयं ध्यान देगी ।

*316. [The questioner (Shri Vasant Chavan) was absent. For answer *vide* page 48]

Scholarship to engineering students

*317. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether schemes are under implementation by Government to provide merit scholarship to engineering students;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of students being given scholarship, State-wise, and the eligibility criteria laid down therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the number of scholarships being given is far less considering the size of the country; and