

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): I will take half an hour and let them get 15 minutes from my time.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA: If you extend this by one hour, the other business can be taken up.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, we may go upto 5.30 P.M.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the House that the debate on UGC report may continue upto 5.30 P.M.?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, it is agreed that the debate on UGC report will continue upto 5.30 P.M. The Minister will reply to the debate at 4.45 PM.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN (Cannanore): Sir, the discussion on the UGC report given an opportunity to this House to discuss the problems of higher education. Within the limited time at my disposal, I would like to bring some of the important problems, which I think the higher education in our country is facing today. If you talk in absolute terms, namely, in terms of admission of students in the universities and the great number of universities and colleges, I must say, the performance was good.

One of the very important problem to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister is that we have a lopsided approach in deciding the priorities in our education. It is not only in the matter of higher education but, I think, the Minister will also agree that after Independence the country failed to provide any opportunity of education to large sections of people who are still illiterate.

Then there is the problem of drop-outs. When you come from the Higher Secondary stage to University Stage, you find that a very few fortunate elites in the society get an opportunity to have university education. This is the reality in our

country today. I know that some have-nots get a chance for school education but if you take the figure of such students in the university their number is very very low. It is in this background that I want to say that the Central universities are squandering public money.

Since there is lack of time I am not going into the details. I find that on a student of the Jawahar Lal Nehru university, the country spends nearly Rs. 10,000 per student, whereas a student in Ranchi University in Bihar gets Rs. 145 only. I do not think this is a very good distribution of public money for education and the Minister might explain it like this that for the Central University, the whole expenditure will have to be borne by the Union Government. That is an argument he may put forward. But my point is not against the Central University. These Central Universities if they become seats of learning, centres of academic excellence, then there is a point in spending money. But I think, as it is today, the Central Universities cannot claim that credit. So, I think a second look is necessary in regard to the functioning of the Central Universities. I do not say: scrap them altogether. But make them centres of academic excellence by improving their standards, etc.

Now one thing which is worrying me and I am sure the country also, is the commercialisation in the field of education. I find certain values get distorted. For example, a student who wants to get an admission in the Engineering College or in the Medical College learns first to give bribe to the management and you cannot expect him to be gentleman after coming out with a Degree Certificate. He will try to earn that money—as capitation fee—by any means. I am not suggesting any drastic step that you should immediately nationalise all these institutions. But this commercialisation business in the educational field should be stopped. Then the role of the private management should be gone into in all the seriousness it deserves.

[Shri C. K. Chandrapan]

Another problem is that a wide gap is developing between the education in the rural areas and in the urban sector. Perhaps, the example which I have cited—the expenditure of a student in JNU and that of a student in the North Bihar University—indicates that this gap should be bridged. There is another very important question, that is, educated unemployed. It shows the purposelessness in the attitude of the students which may result in frustration and ultimately it may lead to a lot of problems in the country. Then, there is no use of accusing that the students are indisciplined and they are irresponsible to the country. So, for the

problem of educated unemployed, a solution should be found and the priority in the Government's plan should be given to this and the Ministry should come forward so that there should be proper manpower planning and that manpower planning in relation to the overall planning in the country.

The other problem is about the language—the medium of instruction. It is unfortunate even today in the higher seats of learning, our mother-tongue is not getting its proper place. I am not a fanatic to say that students should learn only in their mother-tongue and no other foreign language or the national language should be learnt. That is not my point. My point is that if you want to impart knowledge to a student, then the best way would be to impart him that knowledge through his own language, the language which has the smell of the earth, where he has been born—will make him understand the subject that he wants to learn. But at the same time we must give proper place to a foreign language as a library language and then the national language, surely Hindi, will have its own place. But the three-language formula should be implemented with all earnestness so that not only it will improve the quality of education but it will contribute to the strengthening of national integration.

I think university education can play an important role in this. Another thing I should like to say is about students and their democratic rights. After the Janata government came to power and after the emergency had been withdrawn, there was a fair chance that the students should be given full democratic rights in the educational institutions. I am sorry that it is not yet being done. So, the students' union should be allowed to function properly. India is one of the countries in the world having no national union of students. In almost all the countries there is a sort of a national union at students. It is not a union sponsored by any political party; unions come together and form a federation of unions which will represent the whole student community and their interests. I think the government will take some steps in that direction and set up a national union of students, in our country.

Coming to the last point, I know there is dearth of lands, I need not go into figures. What was allotted by the Planning Commission was much less than what was needed to meet the requirements of education. There should be more funds. There is no use asking me: where is the fund? It is the responsibility of the government to find funds and we in Parliament will extend you full support in your fight for more funds for education. You should also take into consideration the problems in a place like Delhi. In the capital itself students who get themselves promoted from the secondary a schools find nowhere to go. There is no place. This perhaps shows the inadequacy of the funds for providing more colleges for the students and so this matter should receive the hon. Minister's attention.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY
(Bombay North-East): The country and the university campuses are in somewhat greater peace, now that we have a distinguished and able Education minister. I am not one of