

Aligarh Complex may come up in State soon, says Ahamed

To contribute to educational and social uplift of Muslims

Special Correspondent

KOZHIKODE: A proposal to establish an Aligarh Complex modelled on Muslim Aligarh University that symbolises the educational aspirations of the Muslim community is under the consideration of the Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry.

The proposal was made as one of the measures that could give a fillip to the development of the community along the lines recommended by the Sachar Committee, Union Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed said at a national seminar on the Sachar Committee report here on Saturday. Mr. Ahamed said the Ministry had before it a proposal to set up five 'Aligarh complexes' in five States, including one in Kerala.

Since he thought these would contribute in a big way to the educational and social development of the community, he had met HRD Minister Arjun Singh to seek his approval for the projects. Mr. Singh had promised to consider the request.

Mr. Ahamed said the best thing about the Sachar Committee report was that it opened the eyes of many lead-



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ers to the pathetic condition of Muslims. Even West Bengal Chief Minister had promised action to improve the lot of Muslims in response to the findings of the committee.

While emphasising that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had shown great concern for the welfare of the minorities, Mr. Ahamed was also highly critical of LDF government for filing an affidavit in the Kerala High Court which, he said, blatantly undermined the rights of minority communities to run educational institutions. The affidavit, he said, was filed during the government's legal battles with self-financing professional colleges.

MES hails measures

Fazal Gafoor, president of the Muslim Educational Society (MES), hailed the measures taken by the Manmohan Singh government for the welfare of the

minorities. He said it would not be realistic to expect the Centre to give total satisfaction to the minorities as such moves might be exploited by the BJP to achieve its political ends.

Granting of university affiliation to minority institutions in North India and provision of scholarships for children of minority communities were major achievements of the Manmohan Singh government, Dr. Gafoor said.

He was also quick to add that political empowerment would be the panacea to cure the backwardness of the Muslim community in North India. The confidence found in Muslims in Kerala arose from their political empowerment that had been achieved largely through the efforts of the Indian Union Muslim League. Dr. Gafoor underlined the need for governments coming to power in the State in the coming years to

implement the recommendations of the Sachar Committee in right earnest.

Paloli panel suggestions

The recommendations made by the Paloli Mohammed Kutty committee, which had prepared a report based on the views it collected from all concerned at sittings held in different places in the State, also had to be followed up. But the battle for welfare of the Muslim community in Kerala would have to be continued. A joint struggle by all concerned was needed since a section of the bureaucracy was engaged in torpedoing benefits of reservation and scholarships provided to minorities, he said.

The former Education Minister E.T. Mohammed Basheer was of the view that a clear-cut objective had to be laid down for organisations that had launched educational institutions invoking minority rights. Some of these institutions were inaccessible to members of the community for which they were meant, he said.

Kamal Mitra Chenoy of Jawaharlal Nehru University, social activist from Gujarat Zakia Johan and educationist M. Gangadharan also spoke.