

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding request to continue the Maulana Azad Fellowship for minorities students.

DR. M. P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI (MALAPPURAM): Thank you, hon. Speaker Sir, for permitting me to raise a very important issue related to the educational upliftment of minorities and the backward classes.

Sir, I stand here to oppose the Government's decision to discontinue the Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme. It is highly deplorable and condemnable that the Government, under the pretext of one or the other reasons, is withdrawing the Constitutional Rights given to the minorities and the backward classes. It is very unfortunate.

I urge upon the Government to withdraw this decision of discontinuing the Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme and also the pre matric scholarship given to the students belonging to the minorities and the backward classes. ... (*Interruptions*) Sir, please give me one minute as it is a very important matter.

Sir, the justification given by the Government is that this Fellowship Scheme overlapped with the various other fellowship and research scholarship schemes. It is not correct. This scheme was established on the basis of a study conducted by the official agencies like the Sachar Committee.

It found that the students belonging to the minorities and the backward classes are underrepresented in various other fellowship schemes. If there is overlapping, the Government can correct it by other regulations. So, through you, I urge upon the Government to withdraw this decision so that the rights of the minorities and the other backward classes are re-established. Thank you.