

Achuthanandan promises Kerala Muslims a better deal

Kerala Chief Minister V.S. Achuthanandan Tuesday assured the Kerala Assembly that his government would do everything to see that the Muslims in the state get a better deal.

'In the light of the Justice Sachar Committee report, I assure the Muslims in Kerala that my government would do its best to raise their socio-economic status,' said Achuthanandan.

He was replying to a calling attention motion moved by former minister and senior opposition member Kutty Ahammed Kutty who pointed out that even though Muslims constitute 24 percent of the state's 32 million population, they remain the most backward.

'It has been found out that the total number of graduates in the Muslim community is a mere 5 percent, which is the same as the graduates in the ST/SC community. Likewise, there is a lack of educational institutions in Muslim-dominated areas and the representation of the Muslim community in government jobs is poor,' said Kutty.

Achuthanandan said, 'We will see to it that more educational institutions are opened in Muslim-dominated areas. And we will take appropriate action on what can be done for a special recruitment drive for bringing some sort of parity in government jobs for the Muslim community here.'

Towards the end of the Oommen Chandy government's term in 2006, the contentious issue of a special recruitment drive for Muslims was not taken up.

Currently the Muslim community has become the second largest community in Kerala, pushing Christians to the third spot.

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