

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding scholarships for the minority students of classes 1- 8

SHRI VIJAYKUMAR ALIAS VIJAY VASANTH (KANYAKUMARI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I urge upon the Government not to scrap the scholarship for minority students of class 1-8 (Pre-matric). It is the duty of our Government to provide free education to all children, and also to encourage students to come to school. The UPA Government under Dr. Manmohan Singh had initiated the welfare scheme of providing education with scholarship for economically weaker students of minority communities.

I would like to bring to the notice of this august House that 24 per cent of boys and 15 per cent girls drop out of classes 1 to 8 due to financial constraints. The Standing Committee on Education and the NEP strongly recommend that scholarships are a must to tackle the problem of dropouts. To attract students to schools and to avoid their dropping out of classes, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Hon. K. Kamaraj started the mid-day meal scheme. The current Chief Minister hon. Stalin is providing breakfast also with the mid-day meal. The scholarship is provided as a means of encouragement to the families to send their wards to school without any burden. The justification given by the Union Government that the students are being provided free education under RTE is very fragile.

The Government should take all initiatives so as to attract students from all sections of the society to school. Continuation of scholarship for minority students is a big step for India to become a nation of scholars. India can become a superpower only if we have 100 per cent education. Thank you.