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Title: Regarding release of pending funds to Tamil Nadu relating to education sector.

SHRI C. GOPALAKRISHNAN (NILGIRIS): I would like to urge upon the Government to release pending funds of centrally aided schemes due to Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu Education Department has not received Rs 4,474 crore from the Centre under various schemes for the last few years. Many education schemes, including post-matric scholarship for SC/ST students suffered as the State was denied central funds on the ground of exhausting the budgetary allocations. A sum of Rs 1,547 crore has been pending towards the postmatric scholarship scheme for Scheduled Castes and Rs 27 crore for Scheduled Tribes for over a year. The annual allocation is grossly inadequate. I request that this amount may at least be doubled this year.

The Union Government has to pay arrears of Rs 1,312 crore for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the 'education for all' scheme to Tamil Nadu. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan aims at providing basic, education to children up to the age of 14 and any delay in the release of funds will hit basic education in spite of Tamil Nadu Government's best efforts. Under the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) scheme, which is being implemented to provide secondary grade education, an amount of Rs 1,588-crore is due to the State. Funds under the SSA and RMSA schemes have not been allotted to the State though these projects have been approved by the Project Approval Board. As education is pivotal to the task of nation building, I appeal to the Government to release all the funds due to Tamil Nadu without any further delay.