

DR. SANTANU SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI SULATA DEO (Odisha): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Need to restore the pre-matric scholarship for students of class 1 to 8 belonging to SC, ST, OBC and minority communities

SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY (TELANGANA): Sir, this is an important issue -- I would like to bring it to the notice of the Government through you -- regarding the Pre-Matric scholarships which have been discontinued for the minority and OBC students. Education, as we know, is the best leveler in the society. The Delhi Declaration was way back. Primary and elementary education is the best investment India can make. As a step in that direction, for the last many decades, various steps have been taken to ensure that the weakest of the weak in the society and those children come and get educated. As a part of that issue, various measures have been taken over a period of time. With a heavy heart, I have to inform that in the midst of this academic year of 2022-23, last month, the Government issued a notice stating that the Pre-Matric scholarships for the OBCs and minorities would be discontinued. Now, we are all aware that the minorities and the OBCs are economically very weak. They need all types of support including the financial support which has been continuing. Giving them Rs.1,000 to Rs.5,000 per student under various categories per year is not really a big burden for the Government but it is a big relief for the students coming from these poor sections. It is an incentive for them to join school. It is an incentive to the families to send their children to the school and it is also an incentive to the private schools to run the schools in one of the remotest areas where Government is unable to reach. In a situation like this, without any consultation, the Government comes out and says: "The Pre-Matric scholarship will be discontinued." This has left millions and millions of students affected by this. The Government talks about "*Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas*" but *sabke sath*, when these particular sections are eliminated from the scholarship, you would not be leaving a very good platform in the society for these people. So, I urge upon the Government to kindly reconsider it. Minorities are also a part of our society. The OBCs are also a part of our society and they are the weakest of the weak. So, it is the bounden duty of the Government. ...*(Time-Bell rings.)*... I have some more time as 24 seconds are left. May I continue, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY: Sir, in this issue, I request the Government to kindly consider this. They say that they have come out with other schemes like Mid Day Meal scheme and other things and that is the reason they are cutting down this money. But kindly bear in mind that this amount goes a long way in strengthening the educational system and, most importantly, bringing these minority and OBC students into the schools. If they are not in the schools, it would create a social imbalance. ...*(Time-Bell rings.)*... Therefore, I request the Government to kindly consider this.

SHRI ABIR RANJAN BISWAS (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK (Odisha): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SASMIT PATRA (Odisha): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SANTANU SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI SULATA DEO (Odisha): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI SUJEET KUMAR (Odisha): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

**Need to pay homage to Sahibzadas on their martyrdom anniversary, on the 26th
December, 2022**

श्री विक्रमजीत सिंह साहनी (पंजाब) : ऑनरेबल चेयरमैन सर, मैं पहले देश के प्रधान मंत्री जी का धन्यवाद करना चाहता हूँ कि उन्होंने 26 दिसंबर को जो श्री गुरु गोबिन्द सिंह जी के छोटे