

usually upwards of INR 10,000 per exam. This also indicates that an hefty annual revenue of several billion dollars is being generated for foreign entities conducting these exams. This cost is exacerbated by additional expenses, such as coaching fees, study materials, repeated attempts, and lack of adequate exam centres entailing to high travel costs as well.

Considering the said facts, it would only be appropriate that India comes up with an indigenous English proficiency test, catering to the needs and aspirations of Indians. I request Ministry of Education to take initiative of formulating a world-class test based on internationally-accepted standards and make joint efforts with the Ministry of External Affairs to create its acceptance throughout the countries with global education hubs. This shall not only afford ease of access for an economically challenged aspirant but also democratize the mechanism of learning English as a means of gaining higher education from foreign lands.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by hon. Member, Shri Kartikeya Sharma: Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala) and Dr. John Brittas (Kerala).

Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla, not present; Shri Sant Balbir Singh, not present; Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham, not present; Dr. John Brittas. Demand for setting up All-India Institute of Medical Sciences in Kozhikode District of Kerala.

#### **Demand for setting up AIIMS in Kozhikode, Kerala**

DR. JOHN BRITTAS (Kerala): Sir, in an effort to address regional disparities in the accessibility and affordability of advanced tertiary healthcare services across the nation, the Government has been establishing new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in various States under the *Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana* (PMSSY) initiative. A total of 22 AIIMS have been announced so far under this scheme in various States, except Kerala. Kerala is perhaps the only major State in the country that does not have an AIIMS. The demand to set up an AIIMS in Kerala dates back over a decade. Though the State of Kerala has remarkable feats in the healthcare sector, the absence of a Union Government-funded Institution of National Importance for tertiary healthcare and research remains a significant gap. Recognizing this, Government of Kerala has already identified and proposed Kinalur in Kozhikode District as a suitable location, equipped with all necessary facilities to cater to the requirements for the establishment of AIIMS. However, despite repeated

appeals from the State, a definitive decision from the Union Government is still awaited. In an answer to a written question raised by me in Rajya Sabha on July 25, 2023, Government revealed that the proposal for AIIMS in Kerala has not been approved in the current phase of PMSSY.

Therefore, I earnestly and fervently urge upon the Government to review its stance and expeditiously grant approval for the establishment of AIIMS at Kinalur in Kozhikode district in Kerala.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by hon. Member, Dr. John Brittas: Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu (Tamil Nadu), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu) and Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala).

Shri K.R.N. Rajeshkumar, not present. Shri Haris Beeran. Concern over Exponential Increase in Airfares being charged by the Airline Companies.

**Concern over exponential increase in air fares being charged by the airline companies**

SHRI HARIS BEERAN (Kerala): Sir, I am raising the matter regarding the exponential increase in airfares being charged by the airline companies with particular reference to the Gulf region. Rule 134 of the Aircraft Rules states that there cannot be any monopoly or cartelization with regard to the airfares. The DGCA is the appropriate authority in this regard. The majority of expats in the Gulf area are engaged in blue-collar jobs. They face excessive airfares, particularly on Air India Express. It is also pertinent to note that there are numerous complaints against Air India Express regarding irregular price hikes, inconsistent flight schedules and abrupt cancellations. On 9th May, 2024, 85 Air India Express flights (out of 380) were cancelled across the country, and, on 12th May, 52 flights were cancelled. More than 400 flights were cancelled and re-scheduled within two weeks in May alone. Further, the user fee at Thiruvananthapuram Airport has been hiked by 50 per cent by the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority, which significantly impacts air travel and tourism sector in Kerala. In this background, I request the hon. Minister for the Civil Aviation to direct the DGCA to perform its statutory duties, cap the airfares and penalize those airline companies which are in breach of the Aircraft Rules.