

crore students and the vast gap in the literacy rate of Bihar compared with Kerala and Tamil Nadu — demonstrates the need for localized policymaking.

Centrally-driven education policies overlook regional nuances, leading to inefficiencies. For instance, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, meant for tribal students, face challenges stemming from centralized hiring. Teachers recruited centrally struggle with regional languages, creating a disconnect that hampers learning. Tamil Nadu has consistently opposed NEET, since it restricts students from rural areas and those educated in the State Board syllabus.

States are better equipped to design policies tailored to their specific socio-cultural landscapes. Decentralization allows States to innovate, ensuring systems are responsive to local needs. Returning 'Education' to the State List would restore States' autonomy, enhance accountability, and enable localized strategies crucial for improving educational outcomes in a diverse country like India. Sir, I urge the Government to look into it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. SASMIT PATRA): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member, Shri Tiruchi Siva: Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu (Tamil Nadu) and Shri N.R. Elango (Tamil Nadu).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. SASMIT PATRA): Now, Dr. John Brittas.

### **Demand for Viability Gap Funding (VGF) by way of non-repayable grant for Vizhinjam International Seaport Thiruvananthapuram**

DR. JOHN BRITTAS (Kerala): Sir, Vizhinjam Seaport exemplifies Kerala's success in infrastructure development. As India's deepest port capable of accommodating mother ships, its strategic location along major international shipping routes positions it to compete with global maritime hubs like Colombo, Singapore and Dubai.

This project holds the distinction of being the first port initiative to secure approval for VGF for Rs. 817.80 crores. However, while approving VGF grant in 2015, Centre made a stipulation requiring Kerala to repay the VGF grant later in NPV terms through revenue sharing.

Kerala is investing resources worth Rs. 5595 crores out of the total project outlay of Rs. 8,867 crores. Additional repayment burden of Rs. 817.80 crores in NPV

terms would inflate Kerala's liability by around Rs. 12,000 crores in actual terms, straining its limited fiscal resources.

I urge Government to release Vizhinjam's full VGF amount without repayment conditions and ensure parity in infrastructure project treatment across States for equitable development. \*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. SASMIT PATRA): It doesn't go on record. I am sorry; it doesn't go on record. Whatever is not in the text will go on record. The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member, Dr. John Brittas: Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu) and Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu (Tamil Nadu).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. SASMIT PATRA): The House stands adjourned to meet at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

*The House then adjourned at fifty-eight minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Wednesday, the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024.*

---

\* Not Recorded