

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter addressed by **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Dr. Manmohan Singh**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 7.9.2012 is reproduced below:

"It has been brought to my notice that the Dental Council of India has issued a Gazette notification regarding the introduction of a National Eligibility Entrance Test for both BDS and MDS courses. In this context, I would like to record my strong objection to the introduction of these tests for the same reasons for which I had already objected to the introduction of a National Eligibility Test for entrance to undergraduate and postgraduate medical courses in my earlier letter to you dated 30.7.2012.

As already stated, the Government of Tamil Nadu has taken steps since 2005 and finally abolished the Entrance Examination for professional courses from the year 2007-2008. This was done after detailed examination by an Expert Committee that found that such Common Entrance Examinations put rural students and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds at a disadvantage due to lack of geographical and financial access to requisite training institutions and materials.

I had also pointed out that such entrance examinations result in the growth of expensive coaching centres which charge high fees which the poorer students cannot afford. The need for such coaching classes will be specifically felt in the case of a national level examination as the students who pass the 12th standard based on our State syllabi will not face a level playing field as the topics covered for the entrance exam are likely to be based on the NCERT/CBSE curriculum and syllabi.

As part of its policy of upholding social justice, Tamil Nadu has been following 69% reservation for Backward and Most Backward Communities and Scheduled Castes and Tribes in professional courses. The introduction of a National Eligibility Entrance Test would create confusion and litigation in the smooth implementation of this reservation policy both in undergraduate and postgraduate admissions.

The Government of Tamil Nadu therefore strongly protests the move to conduct an All India Common Entrance Test for admission to Under Graduate/Post Graduate Courses in Dental Colleges as proposed by the DCI. I request that Tamil Nadu may be exempted from the test and allowed to continue with its existing system for admission to undergraduate and postgraduate dental seats."

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