

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 7.10.2015 addressed by **Selvi J Jayalalithaa**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is reproduced below:

"You may recall that the State of Tamil Nadu has consistently opposed the introduction of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to the Under Graduate and Post Graduate Medical and Dental courses. I had also written to the then Prime Minister on 30.7.2011, 7.9.2012 and 30.9.2012 conveying the opposition of Tamil Nadu to the proposed introduction of NEET. We had also taken up this issue in the Supreme Court.

In a landmark judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 18th July, 2013, the Notification by the Medical Council of India and the Dental Council of India introducing a National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for the Under Graduate and Post Graduate Medical and Dental courses was found ultra vires of the Constitution and quashed. This finally brought to an end a long pending and vexatious issue relating to a policy by which students aspiring for Medical and Dental seats at the Under Graduate and Post Graduate level had to go through the agony of an uncertain selection process which militated against their interest and the interests of the State of Tamil Nadu. The majority judgement has rightly upheld all the valid objections raised by Tamil Nadu. This judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court was also widely welcomed.

However, instead of abiding by the judgement of the Apex Court, the Government of India went ahead with the Review Petition of the judgement in the Supreme Court. I had written to the then Prime Minister on 28.7.2013, asking the Government of India to withdraw the Review Petition and abide by the Supreme Court Judgement.

You may recall that I had urged you to review the stand taken by the UPA Government and withdraw the Review Petition and abide by the decision of the Supreme Court in the Memorandum submitted by me on 3.6.2014.

To my surprise, reports have recently started appearing in the media that the Medical Council of India has given a recommendation to the Government of India, seeking introduction of a Common Entrance Test and that the Government of India is actively considering it.

This has again created confusion and frustration in the minds of thousands of students of Tamil Nadu, who have already been covered by a fair and transparent admission policy laid down by the Government of Tamil Nadu, which has been working well.

In my earlier letters, I had already pointed out that, the Government of Tamil Nadu had taken a number of steps starting from 2005, and only after careful consideration later abolished the Entrance Examination for professional Under Graduate courses. My Government has

taken the consistent stand that rural students and students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds were unable to compete with urban elite students in such Common Entrance Examinations, which are designed to favour the urban elite. The rural students would have been put to a disadvantage because they lack the resources to enroll in training institutions and access materials available to urban students. Consequently, a large number of socially and economically backward meritorious rural students have benefited by the decision to abolish the Common Entrance Test.

For the Post Graduate courses, the Government of Tamil Nadu gives preference to those who have served in rural areas, giving special weightage to those working in hilly and tribal areas. The State Government has also successfully obtained and enforced bonds from those completing Post Graduate education in Government Medical Colleges to serve the State Government for a minimum period, which has helped us to meet the need for specialist medical manpower in Government Hospitals. The introduction of NEET would nullify the implementation of these policy initiatives and socio-economic objectives of the State, since we would have to fall in line with the regulations of the National Test, which did not have such enabling provisions. The National Test would be out of tune with the prevailing socio-economic milieu and administrative requirements of Tamil Nadu.

Despite our strong and sustained objections, when NEET was attempted to be introduced, the State Government had taken all legal steps and after considering the strong plea of the Tamil Nadu Government, the Apex Court had vindicated the just stand of Tamil Nadu and upheld the rights of the State Government. The Tamil Nadu Government has also filed a Petition opposing the Review Petition filed by the Government of India. The State has been pressing the Government of India to abide by the decision of the Supreme Court in toto and withdraw its Review Petition.

Tamil Nadu strongly objects to any such purported fresh attempts by the Government of India to review the judgement of the Supreme Court seeking re-introduction of NEET or by introducing it in any other name or manner, as it infringes upon the State's rights and admission policies to medical institutions in Tamil Nadu."

Issued by: Director of Information and Public Relations, Chennai – 9

Dated : 8.10.2015