Regarding scrapping of NEET and give State Government the authority to develop an admission process based on Higher Secondary scores

 SUSHRI S. JOTHIMANI (KARUR): Thank you, hon. Chairperson, Madam. We, the people of Tamil Nadu, strongly oppose NEET. There are other States including the States run by the BJP alliance which join the fight against NEET.

 It is strongly believed that NEET is a test of the means of capability of social and financial capital where the most privileged ones who can afford to spend exorbitant amounts on coaching institutes take the cake. Today, it has also become the means of buying question papers for just Rs.25 lakh.

 I want to remind the House of a bright young girl, Ms. S. Anitha from Tamil Nadu who died in 2017. Ms. Anita hailed from a small remote village. She was a very brilliant student. She came from a Dalit community and had secured 1,176 marks out of 1,200 in her Board examination. But she did not have the money to go to a premier coaching institute. As a result, she could not get the cut-off mark for NEET. Eventually, she committed suicide. But I refuse to call it a suicide. What has happened to her is an institutional murder. It is the result of a broken system that is designed to push the already marginalised sections further towards the margins.

 But she is not the only one. At least, 18 students have committed suicide due to NEET in my State. The last one, unfortunately, was Ms. Vathana Priya from Pugaipatti of my constituency. Still, I remember that frightful night. I lost my words when their parents were crying out their hearts.

 Tamil Nadu has historically stood against the concept of entrance examinations. Such examinations contravene the principle of social justice, as substantiated by the A.K. Rajan Committee Report which found that after NEET was introduced, fewer students from rural areas and those studying in Tamil medium schools were able to secure admission to medical colleges in the State.

 Based on that Report, the State Legislative Assembly passed the Tamil Nadu Admission to Undergraduate Medical Courses Act, 2021. This Act would have empowered the State to allow for admission of students into medical colleges on the basis of their Board examination scores.

In this light, I urge upon the Union Government to scrap NEET altogether and allow the State Governments to develop an admission process based on the higher secondary scores and also exempt the States from NEET on their requests. It is high time we removed this rot from our education system. Thank you.