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Title : Need to amend the MCI regulation in order to lower the eligibility criteria for ST students for admission to medical courses in Kerala.

SHRI M.B. RAJESH (PALAKKAD): I would like to draw the attention of this august House to an important issue concerning the tribal students in Kerala. ST students in Kerala are being denied their constitutional quota of medical seats due to the eligibility criteria in the MCI Regulation. Medical Council of India's eligibility criteria stipulates 40% in the Combined Entrance Examination which is extremely difficult for the students from unprivileged sections like STs. Due to this, in the present academic year only five ST students could get admission even though there is quota of 24 seats. Also, no students from these communities got admission to BDS course. During 2007-2009 due to some special efforts like Special Entrance Examination taken by Government of Kerala, all seats reserved for STs were filled. However, this year Hon'ble High Court has stayed Special Entrance terming it as against MCI's Regulations. Hon'ble Supreme Court though ratified the earlier Special Entrance Examinations, has made it clear that this cannot be taken as a precedent. Hence, in these circumstances Government of India's effective intervention is inevitable to protect the interests of ST students either by legalizing the Special Entrance Examinations or by amending the regulations of MCI stipulating 40% minimum marks in Combined Entrance Examination for tribal students.