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Title: Regarding issuance of NCC 'C' Certificates to Sainik School Cadets.

SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL (ALAPPUZHA): Thank you, Sir. A National Cadet Corps decision to discontinue issuing NCC 'C' certificates to Sainik School cadets is drawing flak from the parents' associations and school officials across the country. The NCC decision had come into effect during the last academic year. The NCC 'C' Certificate is one of the motivations for youngsters to join the Sainik School. It enables them to sit for the Service Selection Board interviews and for selection as armed force officers without appearing for the UPSC exam. Even if they did not join the forces, it stood them in good stead in the competitive exams for professional courses. Youngsters in the Sainik Schools are not students but cadets. They undergo vigorous training for seven years with the ultimate aim of entering the forces. That was the intention when the then Defence Minister Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon took the initiative to establish these schools. The existing practice – until the decision to discontinue issuing 'C' Certificate – was that a cadet would sit for the NCC 'A' Certificate exam in Class X, the 'B' Certificate exam in Class XI and 'C' Certificate in Class XII.

The new decision requires Class XII cadets to sit for 'B' and obtain the 'C' certificate at the University level. The latest worry of the parents is that the 'B' certificate examination is to be held in February, and unless the Government acts promptly the cadets who are in Class XI will lose out one chance to sit for the 'C' certificate examination next year. I would request the Government to take necessary steps for addressing the grievances.

DR. K. GOPAL (NAGAPATTINAM): Sir, Tamil Nadu is the second largest salt producing State next only to Gujarat, and Vedaranyam is the second largest salt producing city in Tamil Nadu. About 2,426 acres of Sri Vedaranyeswarar Swamy Temple's Swamp land was forcibly taken on lease by the mighty East India Company for annual rent of 1,200 pagodas in the 18th Century.

After Independence, the Government of India's Salt Department continues to be in possession of the above land by paying a mere amount of Rs.4,200 to the temple. Whereas by sub-leasing this land, the Salt Department collects Rs.5.5 lakh from the sub-leases.

Now, the Salt Department contemplates to collect 10 times more from the sub-leases by way of proposed enhanced ground rent and assignment fee with retrospective effect. This is unethical and unjust.

If the said land is returned back to the temple *suo motu*, it will help not only the temple fiscally but it will have a big effect on the culture and heritage of this region and also save the traditional salt producers who do not know any other job. This will undo the historic wrongs committed by the exploitive East India Company on this soil.

I would request that my appeal may be considered favourably.