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Title: Regarding withholding of fee sanctioned for 5000 students of Jammu and Kashmir studying in various colleges in India under Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme.

SHRI TARIQ HAMEED KARRA (SRINAGAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, taking advantage of the 'Zero Hour', I would like to highlight a very grave situation perpetrated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India on thousands of poor students hailing from the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The unilateral and arbitrary order passed by the Ministry to withhold the fee amount sanctioned for around 5000 such poor students studying in various colleges in the country under the Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme has jeopardized their career.

Sir, you would be remembering that the year 2010 witnessed the worst kind of unrest amongst the youth of the Valley when the State Government in the Chair did not hesitate in brutally gunning down 126 unarmed young boys. And in order to evaluate and ascertain the causes and reasons thereof, an Expert Committee was constituted by the then Prime Minister on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, which recommended opening of new educational vistas within the country by providing the poor students admission in professional and technical courses in different colleges of the country. The Ministry of Human Resource Development was made the nodal Ministry.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the objective of this Scheme was to provide tuition fees, hostel fees, cost of books and other incidental charges to students belonging to poor families in the trouble-torn areas of Kashmir who, after passing Class-XII or equivalent examination, secure admission in Government colleges and institutions and other select institutions outside the State.

The Scheme was launched with much fanfare in 2011. In the first year, only 38 students availed of the benefits. But in 2012-13, the optimum limit went to 5000. This unilateral withholding of fee amount has caused returning home by quite a number of students. In other cases, parents in an effort to save the career of their children are applying for loans on higher interest rates. Quite a few of them have even sold their ancestral properties.

As such, it is demanded that the Ministry of Human Resource Development may take the call and release the withheld fees for such students as per the stated policy so as to save the career of thousands of poor students.