

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 07.03.2011
ANSWERED ON
UNDER UTILIZATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER INSPIRE .

1227

Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that 85 per cent of scholarships, under the Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE), instituted to encourage top students in the country to take up science at the undergraduate level have been unutilized;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government proposes to alter its eligibility criteria to enable more students to avail of the scholarships or take other steps to ensure utilization of the scholarships; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES

(ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) & (b): No Sir, The Scheme is in the early stages of development. The Department had originally planned to institute only 2500 scholarships per year after taking into account the limited career opportunity in the public funded resource systems in the country. However, conscious decisions were taken to provide for 10000 scholarships per year in anticipation of the expanding base of the research and development (R&D) with establishment of new institutions new opportunities are being opened up in research career. The scheme is designed to attract the students to a career in research. The sizing of the scope was made with a long term horizon in the planning stage. Although, there are two streams viz, one based on Board examinations and other competitive examinations. These should be considered as one and the same. Currently 4500 students are pursuing science education. The current annual enrollment is 1900-2000 between the two streams.

(c) & (d): The Department is hopeful of increasing the enrollment by improving the outreach and developing new partnerships on the one hand and providing an Assured Opportunity for Careers with research on the other hand. A total of 18 Lakh posters have been sent this year to cover all schools to make students aware about the available scholarship options for pursuing career in science. Further, the eligibility parameters have been revised in light of the decision of Government of India to abolish the Class X Board examination. Partnership with various school Boards and institutions are being developed to increase the outreach. These measures are expected to enhance the enrollment of the students in this scheme. However, the department has developed plans to utilize the full span of 10000 scholarships in a phased manner over a period of three years. Phased expansion of scholarship should be in the tune with the expansion of absorption capacity of the R & D system in India.