

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1189
ANSWERED ON 13.12.2023

Reduction in budget for Minority Students

1189 Shri Aneel Prasad Hegde:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- a. whether it is true that budget for schemes of Ministry of Minority affairs was reduced from ₹5020.50 crore in FY 2022-23 to ₹3097.60 crore in FY 2023-24, if so, reasons therefor;
- b. whether it is true that budget allocation of ₹2428 crore for 2022-23 for Pre-Metric, Post-Metric, Metric-cum-Means based scholarship scheme, Maulana Azad National Fellowship and Padho Pardesh Scheme was reduced to ₹1542.00 crore under scholarship schemes during FY 2023-24, if so, reasons therefor; and
- c. the quantum of funds spent on Pre-matric scholarship, Post-matric, Maulana Azad Fellowship Schemes(MANF), research schemes and scheme for minority students during last five years?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) & (b): The Government implements various schemes for the welfare and upliftment of every strata, including minorities, specially the economically weaker and lesser privileged sections of the society, through various schemes of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Ministry of Jal Shakti etc.

2. Ministry of Minority Affairs specifically implements various schemes across the country for socio- economic and educational empowerment of the six (6) centrally notified minority communities. These schemes give representation to all weaker segments of society including minorities. The Schemes/

programmes implemented by the Ministry during the last five years are as under:

A. Educational Empowerment schemes

- (1) Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme
- (2) Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme
- (3) Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship Scheme

B. Employment and Economic Empowerment Schemes

- (4) Pradhan Mantri Virasat ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS)
- (5) Equity to National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) for providing concessional loans to Minorities

C. Special Schemes

- (6) Jiyo Parsi: A Scheme for reversing the population decline of Parsis in India
- (7) Quami Waqf Board Taraqqiati Scheme (QWBTS) and Shahari Waqf Sampatti Vikas Yojana (SWSVY)
- (8) Research/Studies, Dissemination, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Schemes including Publicity

D. Infrastructure Development Schemes

- (9) Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)

3. The budget of the schemes of the Ministry of Minority Affairs was reduced from ₹ 5020.50 crore for the FY 2022-23 to ₹3097.60 crore for the FY 2023-24 due to the following reasons:

(i) Adoption of new mechanism for release of Central share of funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes, for which State Nodal Agencies (SNA) and Central Nodal Agencies (CNA) were required to be appointed. As per the revised procedure of Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, release of funds under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) are not tied to the individual projects and the amount available in the account of State Nodal Agency (SNA) forms a common pool. As on 1.12.2023, the unspent amount with the States is ₹ 1515.91 crore, and the States are required to first incur expenditure from the SNA account, to complete the ongoing projects.

(ii) Scholarship schemes of the Ministry were to be aligned with the pattern followed by the Education Ministry and other ministries such as Tribal Affairs and Social Justice. Central Government had taken the decision to limit the coverage under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Minorities to only Classes IX and X based on very strong rationale. Firstly, it was observed that the participation of students from Minority communities is at par with the national average at primary and elementary level. Also, the students at these levels are already covered under Right to Education (RTE) Act. Further, there was a felt need to harmonize the coverage under Pre-Matric Scheme for minorities with similar schemes implemented for other target groups like Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and the OBCs.

(iii) The two flagship schemes of the Ministry –Scholarship Scheme and PMJVK Scheme together account for nearly 80% of the Ministry's budget.

(iv) The Government has taken a decision to discontinue the following schemes from the Financial Year 2022-23:

- a. Maulana Azad National Fellowship for Minority students
- b. Padho Pardesh
- c. Free Coaching and Allied Schemes (Naya Savera)
- d. Nai Udaan Scheme - Support for Minority Students clearing Prelims conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Staff Selection Commission (SSC), State Public Service Commissions (SPSCs)

(v) Skilling schemes (Skill Development Initiative, USTTAD, NAI Manzil, Hamari Dharohar and Scheme for Leadership Development of Minority women) under Ministry of Minority Affairs have been amalgamated under the PM Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS).

4. Based on the study report and physical verification conducted through a third-party agency, it has been found that gross irregularities with instances where benefit of Scholarship Schemes is not reaching to the targeted beneficiaries. Accordingly, Ministry took the following steps to ensure that such cases should not be repeated and systemic changes and due diligence can be brought about for streamlining the scheme:

- Ministry referred the matter to CBI for thorough investigation and FIR has been registered by CBI on 28.08.2023.
- Subsequently, Ministry also conducted a drive for Aadhaar based bio authentication of all verifying officers and verified applicants during the period 01.08.2023 to 22.09.2023, by engaging CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd

through a dedicated utility based on the data on National Scholarship portal (NSP) and Aadhaar.

As a result, a total number of 5,74,694 applicants could not turn up for their bio-authentication and have been weeded out. Hence, the output of budget will vary.

5. The budget allocation of ₹2,428 Crore was allocated for 2022-23 for Pre-Matric, Post Matric, Merit cum Means Based Scholarship Scheme, Maulana Azad National Fellowship and Padho Pardesh Scheme, as the Schemes were proposed for revision during 2022-23. As Maulana Azad National Fellowship for Minority students and Padho Pardesh schemes has been discontinued in FY 2022-23, the allocation under the above schemes is ₹ 1659.00 Crore has been made in FY 2023-24.

(c): The details of the quantum of funds spent on schemes implemented by the Ministry during the last five years are available on the website of the Ministry i.e. <https://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/>.
