

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 397
ANSWERED ON 06.12.2023

SCHOLARSHIPS TO MINORITY STUDENTS

397. SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:
SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH:
SMT. RANJEET RANJAN:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any specific schemes to provide scholarships to the students of the Minority communities to study abroad, if so, the details thereon;
- (b) whether Government has any specific schemes to support the students of the minority communities to pursue higher education and study abroad, if so, the details thereof, if not, reasons therefor;
- (c) the reasons for discontinuation of the Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF);
- (d) the number of students applied for scholarship in the last five years and the number of students provided the scholarship, State-wise; and
- (e) the quantum of funds allocated by Government to Minority Board across the country, State-wise?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) and (b): The Government has implemented various schemes for the welfare and upliftment of every strata, including minorities, especially the economically weaker and lesser privileged sections of the society, through various schemes of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Rural Development.

Ministry of Minority Affairs has specifically implemented various welfare schemes, including various Scholarship schemes, across the country for socio-economic and educational empowerment of the notified minority communities.

The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC), a PSU under Ministry of Minority Affairs, provides educational loan for education abroad, at low rate of interest, exclusively to students belonging to minority communities. It has also been observed that benefits of interest subsidy that got accrued to the beneficiaries under the Padho Pardesh scheme were limited and also that there is an overlap with other similar schemes being implemented by other Ministries viz. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, which are applicable to eligible minority community students as well. In view of the aforesaid overlap, limited benefits and ease of availing education loans on low rate of interest, it has been decided to discontinue Padho Pardesh Scheme from 2022-23 onward.

(c): It has been observed that Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) Scheme of UGC and CSIR is open for students of all social categories and communities including minorities. Further, students from minority communities are also covered under National Fellowship Schemes for Scheduled Castes and OBCs implemented by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and National Fellowship Scheme for Scheduled Tribes implemented by Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In view of the overlap among the aforesaid Schemes and possibilities of misuse and duplication, it has been decided to discontinue the MANF Scheme from 2022-23 onwards. The existing MANF Fellows will continue to receive Fellowships till the end of their respective tenure, subject to compliance with the extant guidelines.

(d): Details of the number of students applied for scholarship in the last five years and the number of students provided the scholarship, State-wise are available in the website of the Ministry i.e. <https://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/>.

(e): Under the Scholarship Schemes of this Ministry, funds are not allocated to the Minority Boards and entities in the States/UTs.
