

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No-187
ANSWERED ON- 24/07/2024

NON-JRF PHD Stipends

187 Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi:

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Ministry in the last five years to support sustainable social sciences research in the country;
- (b) whether Government is aware of the significant stipend disparity between non-Junior Research Fellowships (non-JRFs) and Junior Research Fellowships (JRFs);
- (c) whether Government is aware that non-JRF PhD scholars in Central Universities receive stipends far below the minimum wage prescribed for semi-skilled and skilled workers in Delhi; and
- (d) the reasons for not revising non-JRF stipends in the last five years, despite a 20 per cent increase in JRF stipends in 2023?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a): The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) has been established by the Government of India to promote research in social sciences in the country. For promoting evidence-based high impact research in the field of social and human sciences, the ICSSR has been proactively awarding fellowships, research projects, seminar/conference grants, publication grants and capacity-building programmes. From 2019-20 to 2023-24, ICSSR has awarded 1988 Doctoral Fellowships, 969 Post-Doctoral Fellowships, 138 Senior Fellowships, 764 Major Research Projects, 727 Minor Research Projects and 129 Research Programmes.

(b) to (d): The University Grants Commission (UGC) provides the Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) based on the National Eligibility Test (NET). Six percent of the candidates who appear in the NET are qualified for Assistant Professor and out of these qualified candidates, UGC awards JRF for 11,750 slots per year. In addition, fellowships are also offered by different Ministries and Organizations to support the scholars pursuing PhD. Special fellowships are provided for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities and Single Girl Child. The Ph.D. scholars are eligible to join research projects sanctioned by various funding agencies to the Universities and to avail of funding to support their research, leading to the award of a Ph.D.

Further, some students are admitted to Ph.D. courses by the Universities without financial support from any source. To enlarge the scope, UGC decided to partially support such students by providing a stipend in the form of non-NET Fellowships. These Non-NET Fellowships have been benefitting M.Phil./Ph.D. students enrolled in various Central Universities across the country, especially the students of Universities located in the remote areas and North-Eastern regions of the country.