

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO -1578**  
ANSWERED ON - 12/03/2025

**RATIONALE FOR CUT IN BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR SCs AND OBCs**

1578. SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:-

- (a) the rationale behind critical schemes such as the Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs having faced a drastic cut from ₹ 30 crore to ₹ 0.02 crore, if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) whether Government acknowledges that research fellows from OBC communities have not received their scholarship payments under the National Fellowship for OBCs scheme since June 2024, if so, the reasons for delay despite the scheme's increased allocation of 245 per cent in the 2025-26 Budget?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR)

- (a) The Budget allocation for the Venture Capital Fund Scheme for SCs and OBCs during 2024-25 and 2025-26 is as below:

	2024-25		2025-26
	BE	RE	BE
VCF-SC (Rs Cr)	10	0.01	0.01
VCF-BC (Rs Cr)	40	30	0.01

Both funds have reached their target corpus of ₹750 crore for the Venture Capital Fund Scheme for SCs and ₹200 crore for the Venture Capital Fund Scheme for OBCs, leaving no further scope for the release of the Government of India's contribution to the corpus. Further, it is mentioned that the duration of both these funds is up to March 31, 2025. A token provision has been made for 2025-26 to keep the budget head operational.

(b) In October 2023, the University Grants Commission (UGC) increased the monthly fellowships for Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) scholars from Rs. 31,000 to Rs. 37,000 and for Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) scholars from Rs. 35,000 to Rs. 42,000, effective from January 1, 2023. The number of OBC Research Scholars under the National Fellowship for OBCs (NF-OBC) Scheme grew from 1,338 to 2,271. As a result, Rs. 54.50 crore has been distributed to scholars in the financial year 2024-25, out of the allocated Rs. 55 crore, covering payments until June 2024. To support this increased expenditure, the Department has requested additional funding from the Department of Expenditure.

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