

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3063
ANSWERED ON –20/08/2025

Reintroduction of NTSE

3063 Smt. Rajani Ashokrao Patil:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to State:

- (a) whether Government is considering reintroducing the National Talent Search Examination (NTSE), which was discontinued after 2021;
- (b) if so, the timeline proposed for its reimplementaion and whether any change in format or eligibility criteria are being considered;
- (c) whether the decision to discontinue the NTSE had an adverse impact on identification and support of academically gifted students, particularly from rural and underprivileged backgrounds;
- (d) whether any feedback was received from State Governments, educationists or student bodies regarding its discontinuation; and
- (e) what alternative talent identification or scholarship mechanisms have been introduced in place of NTSE, if any?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (d): The National Talent Search Examination (NTSE) is conducted by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) under the National Talent Search Scheme (NTSS) which has been in operation since 1963 to identify and reward students with exceptional ability and aptitude. A third-party evaluation report on NTSS, prepared based on consultation with Parents, Teachers, Schools, NTSE awardees and other stakeholders, was submitted by the NCERT to this Department in February, 2021. The evaluation report and ensuing examination revealed several limitations in the Scheme design and its implementation such as persistent under-representation of rural areas, girls and certain States among scholarship awardees, lack of access to examination centres due to long travel distance, insufficiency of financial assistance, ineffective nurturance and inadequate dissemination of

the Scheme. Consequently, the Scheme and its major components are undergoing comprehensive review in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and to address key limitations constraining its effectiveness, impact and reach.

The details of the number of scholarships awarded and funds utilised during the last four years by the NCERT are given as follows:

Financial Year	No. of Scholarships Awarded	Funds Utilised (Rs. in Crore)
2021-22	6734	13.31
2022-23	7239	13.47
2023-24	4491	9.78
2024-25	4735	11.03
Total	23,199	47.59

Further, in FY 2025-26, Rs. 15 crore has been allocated by the NCERT towards NTSS.

NEP 2020 underlines that there are innate talents in every student, which must be discovered, nurtured, fostered and developed. It also advocates for creating a supportive and inclusive environment where such students receive mentorship, specialized programs and opportunities for deeper exploration in their areas of interest. The policy also stresses the importance of collaboration with experts and institutions to ensure that gifted students are given the necessary resources and guidance to reach their full potential and excel alongside their peers. The Government of India is committed towards providing support to talented students and gifted students.

(e): The Government of India implements the Central Sector Scheme ‘National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme’, with the objective to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage. One lakh fresh scholarships are awarded to selected students of class IX every year and their continuation/renewal in classes X to XII for study in State Government, Government-aided and Local body schools under the Scheme. The amount of scholarship is Rs. 12,000/- per annum.
