

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1024
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.12.2022**

IMPLEMENTATION OF NOS SCHEME

1024. DR. SANJEEV KUMAR SINGARI:

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

- (a) the salient features of the National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) Scheme;
- (b) the number of students who were awarded the scholarship in 2021-22;
- (c) whether only about 50-70 students have been awarded these scholarships during the past six years and if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the remedial measures taken to ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the scheme?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI A. NARAYANASWAMY)**

(a): The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment implements two National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) schemes. One is implemented by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment for students from Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans. The other is implemented by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DoEPwD) for students with disabilities. Similarly, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is also implementing a NOS Scheme for students belonging to the Scheduled Tribe communities. The salient features of these schemes are attached at **Annexure-I**.

(b): The number of students who were awarded the scholarship in 2021-22 is as tabulated below:

Name of the Ministry/Department	DoSJE	DoEPwD	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
No. of Scholarships Awarded	125	11	20

(c): The number of students selected under the National Overseas Scholarship annually for the past six years is as under:-

Details of candidates selected under NOS Scheme from 2016-17 to 2021-22						
Min/Dept	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment	108*	183*	100	100	100	125
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DoEPwD)	14	7	5	5	6	11
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	16	20	20	20	20	20

* vacant slots of previous years were carried over.

** Only 48 students were awarded NOS by DoEPwD during the last six years due to receipt of less number of applications.

***MoTA selects 20 students every year and a time period of two years is given to join the University/Institute abroad and therefore a few students selected in last two years may join the University/Institute at later stage.

(d) The remedial measures taken to ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the scheme by the three Departments are attached at **Annexure-II**.

Annexure referred in reply to part (a) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1024 for answer on 13/12/2022 regarding Implementation of NOS.

(i) Salient features of the NOS scheme being implemented by DoSJE are as under:-

a. The Scheme provides financial assistance to the selected candidates for pursuing Masters level courses and Ph.D. courses abroad in Institutions/Universities accredited by the Government/authorized body of that country in any field of study.

b. From the year 2021-22 onwards, the slots awarded each year under the scheme have been increased to 125.

c. The following is the category-wise distribution of slots for various groups eligible for scholarships under the scheme:

S. No.	Category	Numbers
a)	Scheduled Castes	115
b)	Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes	06
c)	Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans	04
	Total slots	125

d. 30% of the awards for each year are earmarked for women candidates. However, in case, adequate female candidates are not available, the unutilized slots will become open for eligible male candidates.

e. Candidates already staying or studying or having completed studies abroad by utilizing any other scholarship from State Government, other agency, or through own funds are not eligible to apply under NOS.

f. Candidates having unconditional offer of admission from top 500 ranked foreign Institutes/Universities as per the latest available QS rankings only are selected for grant of scholarship.

g. In order to be eligible for scholarship, at least 60% marks or equivalent grade in the qualifying examination would be required.

h. The candidate should not be more than 35 (Thirty Five) years of age, as on first day of April for selection year.

i. Total family income from all sources shall not exceed Rs. 8.00 lakh per annum in the preceding financial year as detailed in the guidelines.

(ii) Salient features of the NOS scheme being implemented by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DoEPwD) are as under:-

(a) Slots: There are 20 slots available per year under NOS scheme.

(b) Minimum Qualification:

For Ph.D. - Fifty five per cent (55%) marks or equivalent grade in relevant Master's Degree.

For Masters' Degree: - Fifty five per cent (55%) marks or equivalent grade in relevant Bachelor's Degree.

(c) Age: Below 35 (Thirty -Five) years as on 1st January of the year of application.

(d) One Time Award: Individual can be awarded National Overseas Scholarship only once in a lifetime.

(e) Role of MEA: With effect from 01.04.2022, disbursement of scholarship under NOS scheme is being done by Ministry of External Affairs through Indian Missions abroad.

(iii) Salient features of the NOS scheme being implemented by Ministry of Tribal Affairs are as under:-

- a. Financial assistance is provided for pursuing post graduate courses (Masters, Ph. D and Post-Doctoral Research) in reputed universities across the world.
- b. 20 awards are given every year to ST students as under:

Sl. No.	Category	No.of awards
1	ST candidates	17
2	Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)	03
	Total	20

c. If for any specific year, successful candidates are not available to the extent prescribed for one of the above listed categories, the awards for that year would become open for the other category.

d. 30% of the scholarship awards are earmarked for female candidates. However, in case, adequate female candidates are not available, the unutilized slots will become open for eligible male candidates.

Annexure referred in reply to part (d) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1024 for answer on 13/12/2022 regarding Implementation of NOS.

(a) The remedial measures taken to ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the scheme by DoSJE are as under:-

- i. The income ceiling has been increased from Rs.6 lakh/annum to Rs. 8 lakh per annum w.e.f 2020-21 so that more number of students can avail benefit under NOS Scheme.
- ii. The documents required under NOS have been kept to a minimum so as to ensure that awardees do not have to face administrative bottlenecks and delay at State Government level. In order to further simplify the procedure, many documents have been replaced with a Self undertaking from students. The process of application has been made simpler by making it online w.e.f 2019-20 and doing away with police verification. Police verification would take a lot of time - approx 1 year - and thus this step was removed and instead self-declaration was adopted.
- iii. Field wise distribution of seats has been done away with from 2020-21.
- iv. Before 2020-21, students were given assurance of scholarship even without a formal offer letter from the University. This would also waste a lot of time. Now only students having unconditional offer of admission are eligible to apply. Thus, blocking of slots by those students who do not have confirmed admission is avoided.
- v. From the year 2020-21, selection of candidates on the basis of QS ranking was introduced so as to maintain the quality of education imparted to the Indian students by Universities /Institutes situated abroad.
- vi. Payment of maintenance amount has been linked to the academic progress of the students.
- vii. The number of slots under NOS has been increased from 100 to 125 w.e.f 2021-22.
- viii. Topics concerning Indian Culture/heritage/History/ Social studies on India based subjects are not covered under NOS from the Selection Year 2022-23 onwards.
- ix. The scheme is advertised in the newspapers/other media and Department's website for wide dissemination and awareness .

(b) The remedial measures taken to ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the scheme by DoEPwD are as under:-

- (i) Income ceiling has been increased from Rs. 6 lakh to 8 lakh;
- (ii) The condition of furnishing solvency certificate for the actual amount of scholarship was reduced to Rs. 50,000/-;
- (iii) Candidate is now eligible for scholarship under NOS scheme to pursue the same level course (Masters/Ph.D.) but in a different stream from the one in which he/she already acquired the qualification.
- (iv) Advertisements are published time to time in national and regional newspapers and Department's website for wide dissemination and awareness about the NOS scheme.

(c) The remedial measures taken to ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the scheme by Ministry of Tribal Affairs are as under:-

The guidelines have been revised with effect from 01.04.2021. In the earlier guidelines candidates were selected on the basis of personal interview and given the time period of 2 years to join the University/Institute of the course of their choice.

As per the revised guidelines, in order to ensure that all the selected candidates join the course of study in foreign University abroad, preference is given to those who have already got admission in the top 1000 QS world ranking University/Institute abroad. The next preference is given to those who have got offer of admission from the top 1000 QS world ranking institute. This will ensure better coverage of beneficiaries under the Scheme.

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