

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1335
ANSWERED ON 09.02.2023

DISCONTINUATION OF FELLOWSHIPS FOR MINORITIES

1335. SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is overlooking the backward and minority groups in the country by cutting pre-matric and post-matric scholarships and discontinuing fellowships for minority researchers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the aforesaid instance is Government's new policy for the rejection of reservations to minorities and if so, the details thereof;

(d) the alternative measures supposed to be taken by the Government to support minorities on all the said issues; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor along with the reaction of the Government thereto?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (e): 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 also implemented various welfare schemes, including various Scholarship schemes, across the country for socio-economic and educational empowerment of the notified minority communities.

The coverage under the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme has been revised from 2022-23 and made applicable for classes IX and X only, since the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for free and compulsory elementary education (classes I to VIII) to each and every child, irrespective of his religion, caste or sex. This has also been done to harmonize the scheme with identical Scholarship schemes implemented by other Central Government Ministries.

The Post Matric Scholarship Scheme shall continue to be implemented during 2022-23.

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.
