

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1249
ANSWERED ON 27.07.2023

Padho Pardesh Scheme

1249. SHRIMATI SARMISTHA SETHI:
SHRI SYED IMTIAZ JALEEL:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has discontinued the scheme of interest subsidy on education loans for overseas studies for students belonging to minority communities under Padho Pardesh Scheme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has assessed the impact of this decision on students from minority communities who aspire to pursue higher education abroad and if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of beneficiaries who have availed this scheme since inception;

(e) whether the Government has any alternative scheme or plan to provide interest subsidy on education loans for overseas studies to minority students and if so, the details thereof; and

(f) whether the Government reconsiders its decision in light of the scheme's significant contribution to the welfare of minority communities and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (f): 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 specifically implemented various schemes, including Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means Scholarship schemes, across the country for socio-economic and educational empowerment of the six notified minority communities.

The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC), a PSU under Ministry of Minority Affairs, provides educational loan for education abroad, at low rate of interest, exclusively to students belonging to minority communities. It has also been observed that benefits of interest subsidy that got accrued to the beneficiaries under the Padho Pardesh scheme were limited and also that there is an overlap with other similar schemes being implemented by other Ministries viz. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, which are applicable to eligible minority community students as well. In view of the aforesaid overlap, limited benefits and ease of availing education loans on low rate of interest, it has been decided to discontinue Padho Pardesh Scheme from 2022-23 onward. The Scheme benefitted 20,365 beneficiaries since inception. As of now, there is no proposal to reconsider the continuation of the Padho Pardesh Scheme.
