

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2041  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.03.2020**

**RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP SCHEME**

**2041. SHRI ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY:**

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

- (a) whether the Government has recently made qualifying NET as basic eligibility for Scheduled Caste students for availing fellowship under Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has received any representation regarding removal of NET as basic eligibility criteria for the National Fellowship for SC students;
- (d) if so, whether the Government plans to take back its decision in this regard; and
- (e) whether there is any plan to increase the number of fellowships and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER STATE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT  
(SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA)**

(a): Yes, Sir. NET qualification criteria has been incorporated in the Scheme guidelines for the 'National Fellowship for SCs (NFSC)'.

As per the revised guidelines, the SC candidates who have qualified in the following tests are eligible to apply for fellowship under the scheme:

- i) National Eligibility Test- Junior Research Fellowship (NET- JRF) of UGC (for Humanities/ Social Sciences); or
- ii) UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF Joint Test (for Science stream including Engineering & Technology).

(b): As per the extant Government's guidelines, all the ongoing schemes of the Department are required to be reviewed/ appraised at the end of each Plan period/ Finance Cycle for continuation in the next Plan period. Accordingly, the scheme of National Fellowship for SCs was evaluated and reviewed by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in 2017-18 and a third party evaluation of the scheme was carried out by an independent agency. One of the suggestions given by the organization in its report for better implementation of the scheme was making the selection process of students more transparent and exhaustive. Accordingly,

to make the selection process more transparent and implementation of the scheme more effective, after due consultations with the University Grants Commission (UGC), the scheme guidelines of National Fellowship for SCs have been revised w.e.f. 01.04.2018 in line with the guidelines of the UGC, which also prescribe NET qualification as one of the eligibility criteria for grant of fellowship.

(c): Yes, Sir. Representations for removal of NET as basic eligibility criteria for the National Fellowship for SC students have been received in this Ministry.

(d) & (e): No such proposal is under consideration in this Ministry.

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