

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3377
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2021

FRAUD IN SCHOLARSHIP FOR SC STUDENTS

3377. SHRIMATI HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL:

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

(a) whether the Government's attention is drawn to the reports of alleged fraud published in the media regarding alleged bungling of crores of rupees and diversion of Rs. 2400 crores earmarked for Scheduled Caste (SC) scholarship to poor students belonging to SC categories in Punjab;

(b) if so, whether the Government has taken cognizance of the scam and initiated any action so that funds earmarked to help students belonging to SC communities are not siphoned off by the State Government of Punjab officials; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): No Sir, no such information specifically regarding alleged bungling and diversion of Rs. 2400 crore earmarked for Scheduled Caste (SC) scholarship to poor students belonging to SC categories in Punjab has been reported to the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

However in August, 2020, the Department has received a complaint regarding alleged misappropriation of funds under the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC students in the State of Punjab for the disbursals made for the period upto 2016-17.

Considering the seriousness of the complaints, the Department constituted a three member Committee to examine the various allegations of wrongful payments made to private institutions & other misappropriations and to recommend a further course of action in the matter.

With the aim of, inter-alia, ensuring timely delivery, comprehensive accountability, continuous monitoring and total transparency, the scheme has been revised recently. Some of the features include:

- Starting from 2021-22, the Central share in the scheme would be released on DBT mode directly into the bank accounts of the students.
- The scheme shall be run on an online platform with robust cyber security measures eliminating any chance of misuse of the scholarship.
- Further, awareness drives shall be undertaken by the State Governments/UTs about the scheme through the Gram Panchayats Notice Boards, school committees, and discussions in the parent-teacher association meetings and other public awareness measures in order to minimize any misuse.
