

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.268
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2025**

WELFARE OF SCs

268. SHRI GURMEET SINGH MEET HAYER:

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

- (a) the details of special schemes of the Government for welfare of SCs in districts and States with a high concentration of Scheduled Caste (SC) populations, aimed at promoting their economic prosperity;
- (b) whether Punjab is amongst the States with highest SC population in the country, with districts like Sangrur and Barnala having a significant concentration of SC population, if so, the steps taken by the Government to introduce special economic packages or projects tailored to the unique needs of these areas to ensure adequate job opportunities and economic prosperity of the area; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to address the education gaps in such regions, and specifically, is there a plan to establish a Central University in Sangrur to support the educational upliftment of the SC population in these areas?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)**

(a) to (c) The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE) is implementing various schemes for the Social, Educational and Economic empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs) across the country. The details are at Annexure.

As per 2011 census, Punjab has the highest percentage of Scheduled Caste (SC) population in the country, with around 32% of its total population belonging to the SC category. As per the information provided by the Department of Higher Education, at present, there is no plan to establish a Central University in Sangrur.

Annexure referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 268 for Answer on 04.02.2025, raised by Shri Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer.

The details of schemes being implemented by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE) for the Social, Educational and Economic empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs) across the country.

i) **Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students & Others:** It aims to support, through financial assistance, parents of children belonging to Scheduled Caste and other disadvantaged categories for education of their wards studying at the pre-matric stage.

ii) **Post-Matric Scholarships for SCs:** It aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio of SC students in higher education, with a focus on those from the poorest households. Under this scheme scholarships are provided to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes for studies in India at post-matriculation or post – secondary stage to enable them to complete their education.

iii) **Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS):** It is an umbrella scheme to ensure convergence of resources across the four smaller Central Sector Schemes of the Department catering to SC/OBC students desirous of pursuing higher education (in India and abroad) and/or obtaining employment in Group A/Group B services of centre or State Governments. The four smaller Central Sector Schemes of the Department are -

- a. Free Coaching for SC & OBC students (FCS)
- b. Top Class Scholarship for SCs (TCS)
- c. National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC students (NOS)
- d. National Fellowship for SC students (NFSC)

iv) **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY):** The scheme has three components: Adarsh Gram Component, Grants-in-aid Component, and Hostel Component. PM-AJAY is being implemented since 2021-22 with an aim to reduce poverty of the SC communities by generation of additional employment opportunities through Skill development, income generating schemes and other initiatives and to improve socio-economic developmental indicators by ensuring adequate infrastructure and requisite services in the SC dominated villages.

v) **Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA):-** DOSJE has been implementing this scheme to enhance the reach of development Intervention of the Government and to fill the gap in service deficient SCs dominant areas, in the sector of education through the efforts of grant-in-aid institutions (run by NGOs) and residential high schools offering high quality education and to provide environment for socio economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Castes (SCs).

vi) **Venture Capital Funds for SCs (VCF-SC):-** The VCF-SC has been established to promote entrepreneurship among Scheduled Castes and provide concessional financing to their entrepreneurs. In 2020, the Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM) was introduced under VCF-SC to support Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs focused on innovation and emerging technologies.

vii) **Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi Yojana:-** The scheme was launched to provide high quality skills through good quality institutions so that the training can result in finding jobs or self-employment ventures for the target group.

viii) **National Scheduled Caste Finance Development Corporation (NSFDC):** NSFDC under the aegis of DoSJE provides financial assistance in the form of loan, at concessional rate of interest to persons belonging to Scheduled Castes, having annual family income up to Rs.3.00 lakhs, for income generating activities, to promote self-employment opportunities.
