

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 308
ANSWERED ON 02/02/2026

Difficulties Faced by Economically Weaker Sections in Processing Scholarships

†308. Shri Lalji Verma:
Shri Neeraj Maurya:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the students of economically weaker sections belonging to minority groups have been unable to submit fresh applications and renewal applications on the National Scholarship Portal for the Central Government scholarships during the last two years, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that due to non-receipt of scholarship amounts, a large number of economically weaker minority community students have been compelled to discontinue their studies midway owing to their inability to pay fees;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government proposes to provide any alternative financial assistance to students who have not received scholarships during the last three years, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (c): The Department of Higher Education (DHE) is implementing the Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsahan (PM-USP) Yojana, comprising of two scholarship schemes namely, Central Sector Scheme of Scholarship for College and University Students (CSSS) and Special Scholarship scheme for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, wherein means-cum-merit scholarships are provided to students pursuing higher education subject to extant scheme guidelines. These schemes are onboarded on the National Scholarship Portal (NSP).

In last two years, the scholarships under the PM-USP CSSS and PM-USP SSS for JKL, has been provided to about 3.8 lakh students, belonging to all communities.

(d): The Pradhan Mantri Vidyalaxmi (PM Vidyalaxmi), a new central sector scheme has been launched on 6th November 2024. The main objective of the scheme is to ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to pursue higher education due to financial constraints. Under the scheme, collateral-free and guarantor-free education loan is provided to all the students, including students from minority communities who get merit-based admission in top Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs) and who desire to avail the education loan and there is no upper limit for this. Further, for students with annual family income up to ₹ 8 lakh, the scheme provides 3% interest subvention on education loans up to ₹ 10 lakhs. Up to one lakh fresh students not getting any other scholarship or interest subvention on education loan will get this interest subvention. A dedicated online platform, the PM Vidyalaxmi portal <https://pmvidyalaxmi.co.in> has been developed on which students can apply for the education loan as well as interest subvention, through a simplified application process to be used by all banks.

Further, the Department of Higher Education is implementing the PM-USP Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme. Under the PM USP-CSIS Scheme, full interest subvention is provided to all students who are pursuing technical/professional courses from approved NAAC accredited HEIs/NBA accredited courses and whose annual family income is up to ₹ 4.5 lakhs for loans up to ₹ 10 lakhs, during the moratorium period. There is no upper limit on number of student beneficiaries for this Scheme.

Moreover, under the Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsahan Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Education Loans (PM-USP CGFSEL) of the Central Government, credit guarantee is provided for education loans sanctioned up to ₹ 7.5 lakhs. The guarantee cover is up to 75% of outstanding default. Further, under the model education loan scheme of the Indian Banks' Association, the repayment period for education loan is up to 15 years after moratorium period (course year plus one year).

Thus, PM Vidyalaxmi, PM-USP CSIS and PM USP CGFSEL schemes, along with the various scholarships together provide holistic support to all deserving students to pursue higher education in quality HEIs and technical/professional education in approved HEIs.

As a result of all the above initiatives, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of students in Higher Education has increased from 27.3 in 2020-21 to 29.5 in 2022-23 (provisional).
