

Need to increase the family income ceiling to Rs. 8 lakh for Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships of SC, ST and OBC students ? Laid

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI (THOOTHUKKUDI): I would like to bring to the bring attention of the Government the urgent need to address the disparity in educational opportunities for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC) students. Currently, the annual family income ceiling for post-matric and pre-matric scholarships for these students is ₹2.5 lakh. In comparison, the income ceiling for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and schemes such as the National Overseas Scholarship and Top-Class Education Scheme has been revised to ₹8 lakh. According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-21, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for SC students stands at 23.1%, and for ST students at 18.9%, significantly below the national average of 27.3%. This disparity highlights the need for interventions to ensure equitable access to higher education for disadvantaged communities. The Government of Tamil Nadu has written to the Prime Minister in December 2024 urging the Union Government to raise the income ceiling for SC, ST, and OBC students? Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarships to ₹8 lakh, similar to that of the EWS students and facilitate greater educational inclusion for marginalized communities. I request the Government to act promptly on this proposal.