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**SIXTH REPORT**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN  
(2005-2006)**

**(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

**NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR SCHEDULED CASTE  
STUDENTS FOR HIGHER STUDIES ABROAD**

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT**

**SIXTH REPORT**

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

**22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2006/ 1<sup>st</sup> Jyaistha, 1928 (Saka)**

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT**

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 22.5.2006*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 22.5.2006*

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NEW DELHI**

\_\_\_\_\_2004/\_\_\_\_\_1926 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN  
(2005-2006)**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Chairperson Smt. Krishna Tirath**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Joachim Baxla
3. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
4. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
5. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
6. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
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- 22\* Ms. Pramila Bohidar
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24. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
25. Smt. N.P. Durga
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27. Smt. S.G. Indira
- 28.# Smt. Brinda Karat
29. Smt. Maya Singh
30. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

**SECRETARIAT**

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Shri S.K. Sharma  | Additional Secretary |
| 2. Shri R.C. Ahuja   | Joint Secretary      |
| 3. Smt. Veena Sharma | Deputy Secretary     |
| 4. Shri V.P. Goel    | Assistant Director   |

# Nominated *vice* Smt. Chandra Kala Pandey, MP, w.ef. 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2005.

\* Nominated as Members of the Committee w.e.f 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 *vice* Smt. Kum Kum Rai, MP on her retirement and Smt. Jaya Bachhan on her disqualification from the membership of Rajya Sabha.

**INTRODUCTION**

I, the Chairperson of Committee on Empowerment of Women present the Sixth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee, on the subject 'National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste Students for Higher Studies Abroad'.

2. The Report is based on the material received from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

3. The Committee on Empowerment of Women took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2005, in connection with examination of the subject.

4. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006) at their sitting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2006. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officials of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and furnishing desired information in connection with the examination of the subject.

6. For facility of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

**NEW DELHI;  
17<sup>th</sup> May, 2006  
27<sup>th</sup> Vaisakha, 1928 (Saka)**

**(KRISHNA TIRATH)  
CHAIRPERSON  
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

## **National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste Students for Higher Studies Abroad**

### **Introductory**

Development and empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs) in order to bring them at par with the rest of the Society is a commitment enshrined in the Constitution. As per Article 46 of the Constitution, the State shall 'promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation'. This needs to be done by adopting the approach of 'Social Justice' to ensure equal rights, access to benefits and resources and 'empowerment' to enable them to develop their potential and capacities through the process of planned development.

2. There is no denying the fact that Education is the first and the foremost requirement for social empowerment. This includes education not only at the elementary and post-matric level but also higher studies. Better opportunities for higher studies will enhance the potential of SC students for senior placements and profile jobs in view of changing economic and labour market scenario demanding higher qualifications.

3. The Government of India had started the 'National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC etc. students for Higher Studies Abroad' in 1954-55, which is being implemented by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.



**Salient Features of the Scheme**

4. The National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes etc. students for pursuing higher studies abroad was introduced to provide financial assistance to students selected on the basis of merit for pursuing higher studies abroad in specified fields of Master level courses, Ph. D and Post Doctoral research programs in Engineering, Science and Technology. The Scheme is categorised under the Non-Plan Expenditure Head. Twenty awards per year are available under the Scheme with following distribution:-

- i) Scheduled Castes (17),
- ii) Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (2)
- iii) Landless Agricultural Labourers and traditional Artisans (1)

If for any specific year, successful candidates are not available to the extent prescribed for each of the aforementioned categories, the awards for that year is open for candidates belonging to other categories mentioned above as per merit grades attained by such candidates.

5. As informed by the Ministry, the purpose of the scheme is to make opportunities available to Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and Landless Agricultural Labourers and traditional Artisans candidates to study abroad in subjects for which facilities are not available in India. Since studies abroad are expensive and beyond the reach of these candidates, the scheme provides them monetary assistance for the same. Moreover, a good number of scholarships are offered by different countries, bilateral agencies and multinational agencies for studies abroad but the

candidates belonging to these categories are not able to avail this benefit due to their general educational backgrounds.

6. This scheme was initiated in 1954-55. It had in total 30 slots: 17 for SCs, 9 for STs, 1 for Denotified Nomadic Tribes and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, 2 for SC converts to other religion and 1 for landless agricultural labourers and traditional artisan at the time of bifurcation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the formation of Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999, the scheme is now being implemented for 20 slots as per the distribution mentioned in paragraph 4 above, by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

7. Under the existing scheme, the under mentioned courses have been approved for undertaking studies. However, the award may also be given for a specialty or super specialty under the broad disciplines mentioned below and in such cases the Ministry reserves the right to decide the programme of studies that could be considered for award of scholarship:-

- i) Bio-technology/Genetic Engineering
- ii) Industrial Environmental Engineering.
- iii) Nano-Technology
- iv) Marine Engineering.
- v) Petro-Chemical Engineering.
- vi) Plastic Technology.
- vii) Cryogenic Engineering.
- viii) Mechatronics.
- ix) Automation Robotics including Artificial Intelligence.

- x) Laser Technology.
- xi) Low Temperature Thermal Dynamics
- xii) Optometry.
- xiii) Art Restoration Technology.
- xiv) Dock and Harbour Engineering.
- xv) Imaging System Technology.
- xvi) Composite Materials Engineering including Decentralised Power Distribution(for solar heat) system, Energy Storage Engineering, Energy Conservation, Energy Efficient Habitat Engineering
- xvii) Packaging Engineering./Technology.
- xviii) Nuclear Engineering.
- xix) Information Technology including Computer Engineering, Software, Software Quality Assurance, Networking/Connectivity Engineering, Communication System under Hazardous or Post-disaster conditions, Multi-media Communication.
- xx) Industrial Safety Engineering.

8. The Committee have been informed that awards under the Scheme, however, are not available in disciplines of Agriculture, Medical Sciences and subjects relating to Indian Studies.

9. The Committee desired to know the criteria for inclusion of the above listed courses under this Scheme and whether there was any proposal to include more disciplines under the Scheme such as Agriculture, Electrical Engineering, Aviation, Medicine and Social Science subjects etc. Responding to the query, the Ministry informed that subjects, where adequate facilities are

available in India, are not included in the list of subjects for the overseas scholarship. Those subjects where adequate facilities are not available in the country are included in the Scheme. The Ministry further stated that there is no proposal to expand the list of courses under this Scheme as it has been recently revised on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2004.

### **Eligibility Conditions**

10. The Ministry in a note furnished to the Committee have informed that following are the eligibility conditions for the scheme:-

(i) Minimum qualifications required for the Post Doctoral, Ph.D and Masters Degree courses under the scheme are:

- (a) For Post Doctoral :- 1<sup>st</sup> class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Masters Degree . Ph .D and 5 years' Research/Teaching/ Professional experience in the concerned field.
- (b) For Ph.D. :- 1<sup>st</sup> class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Masters' degree and 2 years' Teaching/Research/Professional experience/M. Phil degree in the concerned field.
- (c) For Masters' degree: - 1st Class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Bachelors' degree and 2 years work experience in the concerned field.

(ii) The candidates desirous of availing scholarship should be below 35 years, as on first day of the month of the Advertisement of the Scheme.

(iii) The total income from all sources of the employed candidate or his/her parents/guardians should not exceed Rs.18,000/- per month, (excluding such allowances as are not treated as part of total income for the purpose of income-tax ) as certified by the employer.

(iv) Not more than one child of the same parents/guardians is eligible for scholarship under this scheme and to this effect a self-certification is to be furnished by the candidate. Also the awardee cannot be considered for the award for second or subsequent times as the individual can be awarded for once.

A copy of the Regulations governing the Scheme with effect from 2001-2002 to 2006-2007 giving detailed account of other mandatory conditions under the scheme is given at **Annexure I**.

11. The Committee desired to know whether the Government is satisfied with the existing age limit or there is any proposal to increase the age limit. The Ministry in reply have stated that the present age of 35 years for availing the scholarship seems to be satisfactory. During 2004-05, around 82 applicants were found eligible for 20 slots, which indicates that enough number of eligible candidates are available. The Committee pointed out that with condition of work experience of 2 to 5 years required for availing the

benefits of the scheme, whether it was not desirable to relax the age limit to 40 years. In response, the Secretary during oral evidence stated as under:-

“From 22 to 35 years, he has 13 years wherein he can obtain three years work experience. Perhaps, aged people do not generally go. We would like to encourage younger people to go. If we have a choice between 40 and 30, we will prefer persons of 30 years to go.”

12. On being asked whether the Government was contemplating to increase the income ceiling of Rs. 18,000 per month, the Ministry have stated that income ceiling had been revised on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2004 from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 18,000. Replying to a query as to whether the Government had any discretion to relax the income ceiling for the deserving candidates, the Ministry have stated that no discretion is available under the Scheme.

13. In reply to a query whether it was not desirable to relax the prescribed criteria of work experience keeping in view the fact that some foreign Universities were not insisting for the work experience, the Ministry have submitted that sufficient number of candidates are available with experience prescribed in the Scheme. So, there is no strong ground for relaxation. Moreover, for various courses, particularly at the Ph.D level, the foreign universities themselves either prescribe or give preference to 'work experience' for admission. As such, reducing the work experience may make it difficult for the students to seek admission in foreign universities.

**Selection Procedure**

14. Regarding the procedure adopted for selection of candidates, the Ministry have informed that applications are invited from eligible candidates through an all India advertisement published in the Employment News and National/Regional daily newspapers. The applications are scrutinized and brief summary of each candidate is prepared and placed before the Screening Committee which consists of an academician in the field of Science and Technology, Deputy Secretary/Director of the Programme Division and Deputy Secretary/Director (Finance). The Chairman of the Screening Committee is nominated by the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Screening Committee scrutinizes the applications thoroughly and establishes the eligibility of each candidate as per prescribed norms. The role of Screening Committee is restricted to recommending eligible candidates to the Selection Committee.

15. The Ministry have further stated that the short listed candidates are called for personal interview before the Selection Committee, which comprises of only subject experts drawn from various universities/institutions. The Chairman and members of the Selection Committee are nominated by the Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment. The Selection Committee interviews the candidates and assess their suitability for the courses applied. Based on this assessment, the Selection Committee recommends a list of candidates based on merit. The

proposal is thereafter submitted to the Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment for final approval.

16. On a query regarding the steps taken by the Ministry to ensure that the selection process is fair and impartial and not subjected to any external influence, the Ministry replied that the Screening Committee shortlists candidates for appearing before the Selection Committee for personal interview strictly on the basis of the eligibility criteria, as specified in the scheme.

17. In this connection, the Ministry in their post evidence information have further stated that the most important feature of this Scheme that ensures free and fair selection of candidates is that the Chairman of Screening Committee who is nominated by the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has always been a renowned scientist/academician in his field. Secondly the Selection Committee that conducts personal interviews of the screened candidates is purely an academic body, with experts drawn from various Universities/Institutions. No official of the Ministry is member of the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee recommends the award of scholarship to the candidates in order of their merit, which is approved by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment.

18. The selected candidates are allowed to pursue their respective studies in an accredited University/ Institution in a country of their choice with which India has diplomatic relations, but this is subjected to prior written approval of the Government of India, whose decision is regarded final and not



challengeable. The candidates are further required to make their own efforts in seeking admission in accredited Universities/ Institutions in programmes/fields specified in the Scheme.

19. The Committee pointed out that total time taken to complete the selection procedure for awarding scholarship under the scheme often exceeds one year and desired to know the steps the Ministry had taken or intend to take to reduce the time taken for awarding scholarship. In response, the Secretary of the Ministry during evidence stated :-

“Madam you have rightly pointed out the issue. Keeping this in mind, this year the Selection procedure has been completed in four months less time as was in the last year. Accordingly we have set a time frame and instructed the Ministry that after the Scheme is advertised in the newspaper, the procedure should be completed within four to four-and-a-half months.”

The witness further stated that :-

“This time in the advertisement, we had put the format of the application also. Earlier, the candidates had to collect the application form from the Ministry and that used to take lot of time. This has saved a lot of time.”

20. Elaborating further, the Ministry in their post evidence reply have stated that the Ministry is contemplating to complete the process of selection in a six months period by simultaneously carrying out overlapping activities. While the tabulation of the applications is going on, the process of appointment of Chairman of the Screening Committee has begun, so that the total scrutiny of the applications is quickly finalised by the Screening Committee. The meeting of the Selection Committee is proposed to be held

within three weeks of the meeting of the Screening Committee, and interview shall be held soon thereafter. This will facilitate early selection.

### **Number of Scholarships Awarded**

21. The Committee have been informed that as per 2001 census, the SC population in the Country is 16.6 crores. The State wise figures of the SC population is given at **Annexure-II**. Considering the substantial number of the Scheduled Caste population throughout the country, the Committee wanted to know whether 20 scholarships per year as specified under this Scheme by the Ministry is sufficient. In reply, the Ministry in a written note have stated that the progress of selection of candidates in earlier years revealed that adequate number of candidates were not found suitable by the Selection Committee, as compared to available number of scholarships. As such 20 scholarships per year was considered as sufficient. However, since the last selection in 2004, a good number of applicants are available for selection and the Selection Committee found adequate number of suitable candidates. In case this trend continues, Ministry will consider further increase in the number of scholarships under the scheme. In this context the Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment while deposing before the Committee during oral evidence stated:-

'We will be very happy to increase the number of scholarships at the time when we ask for the revision of the Scheme'.

22. When asked to state the number of applications received from candidates, the number of candidates who had been awarded the scholarship year-wise and gender-wise during the last 10 years and the reasons for rejection of applications, the Ministry furnished the following details to the Committee indicating the figures and reasons for rejection of applications since 1995 to 2004:-

Year	No. of applications	No. of scholarships	No. of candidates who availed the scholarship	Girl candidates	Reasons for rejection
1995-96 to 1997-98	No selection was made during these years.				
1998-99 & 1999-00	128	26 (19 SC & 7 ST)	14 (SC)	2	51 candidates found eligible by the Screening Committee were called for interview, 40 were presented for interview out of them 26 recommended by the Selection Committee. The case of 7 ST candidates were transferred to M/Tribal Affairs. Out of 19 SC candidates, 4 candidates were subsequently rejected for want of non-completion of requisite formalities.
2001 to 2004	No selection was made during these years.				

23. The above information furnished by the Ministry clearly states that during the years 1995-96 to 1997-1998 and 2001 to 2004 no selections were

made. During the year 1998-99 and 1999 –2000 as many as 128 applications were received out of which, 26 candidates (19 SC and 7 ST) were recommended by the selection Committee for being awarded scholarships. But out of the 19 SC candidates, only 14 could avail the benefit, of which only 2 were women candidates.

24. When the Committee desired to know the reasons for not awarding scholarships in the aforementioned years, the Ministry in a written note have stated that the scheme was continued upto 1995-96 by the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE) in its meeting held on 31.3.1992. Process for further continuation of the scheme upto 2000-01 with modification was started in July, 1995. The CNE meeting was held on 20.03.1997 to consider the proposal to continue the scheme upto 2000-01. The Committee did not agree to continue the scheme with proposed modifications and suggested certain alternatives to continue the scheme. Policy decision to incorporate the changes suggested by the CNE took considerable time. Finally the CNE in its meeting on 15.6.1998 approved the continuation of the scheme. After completion of all required formalities, the scheme was advertised in May 1999 for a combined selection of candidates for the selection year 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

25. The Process for further continuation of the scheme from 2001-02 to 2005-06 was started in March 2001, when CNE Memo was circulated. The Department of Expenditure considered the Memo and made back references

in August 2001, March 2002 and April 2002. Reconciliation of the proposal with Ministry of Tribal Affairs took considerable time and a joint meeting of the two Ministries was held in May 2002. Comments on the observations of Department of Expenditure were finally sent to that Ministry in June 2003. Repeated requests were made to Department of Expenditure for meeting of CNE.

26. In the same context, the Ministry have further stated that in September 2003, the Department of Expenditure amended the Delegation of Financial Power Rules, enhancing the powers of the Ministries to consider projects/proposals under Non-Plan Budget. Ministry, therefore, considered and approved the proposal at the level of the Standing Finance Committee of the Ministry and obtained the approval of the Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment for continuation of the scheme from 2001-02 to 2006-07. Specific orders for continuation of the scheme were issued in July 2004. Thereafter, process for selection of candidates for 2004-05 was initiated and advertisement issued in August 2004.

### **Women Beneficiaries**

27. On scrutiny of the information furnished by the Ministry, it is seen that during the period 1995-96 to 1999-2000, only 2 women candidates have been selected out of total 128 applications received. The Committee desired to know the reasons for such a less representation of women candidates. In this regard, the Secretary of the Ministry during oral evidence stated that: -

“In 2004-2005 a total of 82 applications were received out of which 14 were women candidates. The Selection Committee conducted interviews on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2004 and recommended 24 candidates for the available 20 slots out of which four were women. .... It may be seen that the performance of women candidates has been quite satisfactory as four woman candidates out of five eligible women candidates were recommended by the Selection Committee. Actually it has been very good because out of the five women who were eligible four were allotted; offers were issued to three women candidates in the order of merit; and one is in the panel. Even earlier when combined selections were made for 1998-99 and a total of 128 applications were received, 13 of them were women. That keeps it in range of 10 per cent. The Screening Committee short-listed 51 candidates out of which five were women. Finally, 19 candidates were selected out of which two were woman candidates”.

The Secretary further added:-

“Although the Scheme is not women-oriented, representation of woman candidates has been made. If we compare the last two selections, the women are coming on their own merit. It is not as if within the SCs they require reservation because 10 per cent have come in on their own merit. I hope this representation will increase further as wider publicity will be given to the Scheme”.

28. When asked to state whether there is any scheme specifically for the SC Girl Students for higher studies, the Ministry have replied that there is no scholarship scheme in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment exclusively for Scheduled Caste girl students or Scheduled Caste boy students. The focus is on the welfare of Scheduled Castes. The Post-Matric Scholarship scheme includes both girls and boys.

29. On being asked to state whether the Ministry had any proposal to reserve some seats out of the existing 20 for girl candidates, the Ministry have stated that there is at present no proposal to reserve some scholarships out of existing 20 scholarships for women candidates. However, at the time

of the continuation of the scheme in 2006-07, the Ministry will propose reservation of 30% of the seats (i.e. 6 out of 20), for women candidates. However, if eligible women candidates are not available, the seats will be utilized for male candidates.

### **Role of Ministry of External Affairs**

30. Responding to a query raised by the Committee as to the role played by the Ministry of External Affairs in the implementation of this Scheme, the Ministry in a written note have stated that Indian Missions abroad confirms the admission of the awardee and the status of accreditation of university/institute, where the awardee secures admission to pursue the course. After getting confirmation from the Indian Mission and verification of the antecedents of the candidates and execution of legal bond, final award letters are issued under intimation to the concerned Indian Mission abroad. On arrival of the candidate, the concerned Indian Mission pays advances towards maintenance allowance facilitating transportation to the place of his studies. The expenditure abroad on the awardee are incurred by the Indian Mission which is later claimed from Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment through the Ministry of External Affairs. The Indian Missions/Embassies also monitor the progress of the study of the awardees by obtaining Half Yearly Progress Reports from the concerned university/Institution. The grievances of the awardees, if any, are either

solved by them or routed through them to the Ministry of External Affairs for a decision. The Mission acts as a local guardian of the awardees.

### **Budget Provision**

31. The Committee, desired to know the details of the funds allocated for implementation of the Scheme and utilized during each year since inception of the Scheme. In response, the following information has been furnished by the Ministry: -

<b>Year</b>	<b>Funds Allocated (Rs. In Lakhs)</b>	<b>Funds Utilised (Rs. In lakhs)</b>
1986-87	45.94	34.52
1987-88	44.20	50.24
1988-89	45.50	53.00
1989-90	53.00	57.91
1990-91	57.00	57.91
1991-92	59.00	59.00
1992-93	69.00	69.00
1993-94	76.00	260.00
1994-95	148.00	562.00
1995-96	254.00	390.81
1996-97	490.00	180.00
1997-98	475.00	226.00
1998-99	375.00	125.83
1999-2000	172.00	99.73
2000-2001	113.00	65.08
2001-2002	113.00	47.00
2002-2003	113.00	50.00
2003-2004	100.00	70.00
2004-2005	100.00	90.00
2005-2006	100.00	160.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3002.64</b>	<b>2708.66</b>

32. The Ministry in a subsequent note have further informed that the budget provision under the scheme for the year 2006-2007 is Rs. 140.00 lakhs.



33. On scrutiny of data regarding Budget allocated and utilized under this Scheme it is seen that there is wide gap between the Budget allocated and utilized. While for some years, i.e. during 1993-94, 1994-95 there had been over utilisation of allocated funds, for the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99, there was under-utilization of funds allocated. When asked to state the reasons for the disparity between funds allocated and utilized under the Scheme, the Ministry have stated that the disparity between funds allocated and funds utilized is due to the fact that expenditure under this Scheme is initially incurred by the Ministry of External Affairs. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment reimburses the expenditure incurred on the candidates on receipt of the bills from Ministry of External Affairs. The expenditure is, therefore, dependent on the receipt of Bills from Ministry of External Affairs.

34. The Committee pointed out that though the Scheme was not functional during 2001-02 to 2004 for want of approval of Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure for its continuation and no selection was made during that period, how the funds to the tune of Rs. 47.00 lakhs, 50 lakhs and 70 lakhs were utilized for the years 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 respectively. In response, the Ministry have stated that even when no selections were made during the period from 2001-02 to 2003-04, candidates already selected and who were in the midst of their course continued their studies abroad. Expenditure on these candidates continued to be incurred during this period. Candidates are given 3-years time, after selection, to get admission in a foreign university and thereafter they join courses of various durations. As

such, candidates selected during 2000-01 were studying abroad during this period.

35. According to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment the Scheme has been functioning under the Non-Plan-Expenditure head since its inception. The Committee desired to know whether the Ministry had any proposal to shift the scheme from Non-Plan to Plan head expenditure. Responding to the query, the Secretary of the Ministry while deposing before the Committee stated as under: -

“I also thought that it might be better if we could shift it to the Plan side. In that case, the money also will get shifted and the Budget Estimates will be added on to the Plan side. In case we need to further increase the allocation, then we will have to go through the same kind of the procedure. We will take up this matter with our Finance”.

The Secretary further added:-

“Supposing, the Budget is increased in the Non-Plan or supposing, the Budget is increased in the plan, once the money is made available, then it makes no difference where it is. But yes, it is easier to increase the Plan Budget than it is to increase the Non-Plan Budget”.

36. Replying to a query whether it would be feasible to shift this scheme from Non Plan to Plan Expenditure, the Ministry in their post evidence reply have stated that Plan Schemes are designed to be implemented for a certain period. It has to be continued beyond the approved period with the approval of the competent authority. Under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme candidates are given three years time after selection to join courses of various durations in the Universities abroad. As such the committed liability for the awardees selected during a particular year can remain upto seven years,

which is beyond a Plan period. If a Scheme is not approved for continuation, care will have to be taken to provide for a budget for the committed liabilities beyond the approved period. The advantage of having a Scheme in the Plan is that it is easier to increase the funding. The Ministry will take further action as per the recommendation of the Committee.

37. In a subsequent note, the Ministry in this regard have further stated that in the review meeting to consider continuation of the Non-Plan Scheme in, the Ministry have recommended to shift the scheme from Non-Plan side to Plan side from Eleventh Plan.

### **Awareness**

38. The Committee desired to know the steps taken by the Ministry to disseminate the information relating to the Scheme widely in different parts of the country. In this regard, Secretary of the Ministry during oral evidence informed the Committee that they had advertised the Scheme in 34 Newspapers across the Country. In response to a query whether electronic media like Doordarshan was being used for publicity, the Ministry have stated that the advertisement for the scholarship is given wide publicity on all India basis through national/regional Newspapers and through Ministry's Website on the Internet. In addition to the detailed advertisement, a short advertisement is also given subsequently, in all leading national and regional newspapers inviting attention to the main advertisement.

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**39. Education is the first and foremost pre-requisite for social and economic development of any strata of society. It is all the more important for the upliftment of the underprivileged sections of Indian society. Hence, conscious efforts are essential to bring these sections at par with the rest of the society. They need to be given opportunities to develop, enhance and sustain their capabilities and capacities. The commitment to uplift and empower the Scheduled Caste population is enshrined in Article 46 of the Constitution of India, which stipulates that 'the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation'.**

**40. The 'National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes etc. Students for Higher Studies Abroad' was introduced by the Government of India in 1954-55. The Scheme is designed to facilitate Scheduled Caste students for pursuing higher studies abroad in specified fields of engineering, science and technology. Under this Scheme scholarship is awarded to selected candidates in specified fields for Masters, Ph.D and Post Doctoral research programmes. This Scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and it is categorized under the Non-Plan Expenditure head.**

Prior to bifurcation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Scheme had in total 30 slots, 17 for SCs, 9 for STs, 1 for Denotified Nomadic Tribes and Semi Nomadic Tribes, 2 for SC converts to other religions, and 1 for landless agricultural labourers and traditional artisan. Since the formation of a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999, the Scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for 20 slots only: 17 for Scheduled Castes, 2 for De-Notified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and 1 for landless agricultural labourers and traditional artisans. The Scheme is implemented in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs as all payments are routed through Indian Embassies and High Commissions abroad and they provide necessary assistance to the Indian students who go abroad for pursuing higher studies.

41. The selection of candidates under this Scheme is done on an All India basis and applications are invited through an open advertisement in major daily newspapers and Employment News. Under the Scheme, financial assistance is provided to selected students on the basis of merit. The assistance includes payment of full fees charged by the institutions, annual maintenance allowance, contingency allowance, air passage, visa fees, medical insurance premium etc.

42. A critical analysis of the working of the Scheme indicates that there are various shortcomings in its implementation. The Scheme, which was launched with a specific and laudable objective, has not been implemented in its right perspective. The following factors are responsible for the ineffective

**implementation of the Scheme. The Committee will discuss these issues at length in the succeeding paragraphs of the Report.**

- (i) The Scheme was not implemented continuously. It was discontinued for some years for want of approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE).**
- (ii) Considering the large number of Scheduled Caste persons in the country, the stipulated number of scholarships under this Scheme, i.e 20 is insufficient.**
- (iii) The representation of women among the selected candidates is negligible.**
- (iv) There is no reservation of seats for women under the Scheme.**
- (v) The entire selection process often exceeds the one-year cycle, thus putting at stake one full academic year of the applicants.**
- (vi) There is a wide disparity in the Budgetary allocations made and the amounts utilized.**
- (vii) There is an income ceiling of Rs 18,000/- prescribed under the Scheme, which debarbs many bright women candidates.**
- (viii) The criteria of work experience for availing benefit under this scheme also disqualifies many potential women candidates.**
- (ix) The disciplines of study included under this Scheme are not diverse enough. There is scope to include more disciplines, such as Medicine, which are popular among women candidates.**
- (x) The scheme has not been widely publicized among women especially in the remote areas of the country, which is reflected in poor representation of women in the scheme.**

43. The Committee, therefore, desire that prompt remedial measures should be taken on these aspects urgently so as to eliminate these shortcomings with a view to achieving the avowed objectives of the Scheme.

44. The Committee are shocked to note that out of the total 101 candidates selected under this scheme from 1993-94 to 2004-05, only five were women. Of the five women, two were selected during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 (combined) and three during 2004-05. Such a dismal representation of women in the Scheme is a major cause of concern to the Committee. The Committee feel that women, in general, are a deprived and neglected lot of our society and it becomes all the more important to make consistent efforts to improve their participation in the field of education when they belong to the underprivileged section of our country. Education is an instrument to bring about change in the status of women and ensure their empowerment. It is a critical pre-condition for their participation in the development process. The Committee are of the opinion that the need for superior academic achievements is greater for girls as compared to boys because of the prevailing socio-economic conditions. The future of the girl rests squarely on her educational achievements and economic independence.

45. It is a matter of great concern to the Committee that there have been no efforts on the part of the Government to provide Scheduled Caste women better opportunities for pursuing higher studies abroad by way of reservation of seats exclusively for women. The Committee feel that there is an urgent need to reserve some seats exclusively for women under the Scheme as it would

encourage more women candidates to come forward to avail the benefits of this Scheme. The Committee are given to understand that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment are now contemplating to propose reservation of some seats for women at the time of continuation of the scheme in 2006-07. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should look into the possibility of allocating at least 30 per cent of the seats to women under the Scheme.

**46. As per the information made available by the Ministry, the Scheme was not implemented during some of the years and no selections were made. For instance, during the years 1995-96, 1997-98 and from 2001 to 2004, no candidates were selected. The reason furnished by the Ministry in this regard that the Scheme was not functional during these years for want of approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure is not convincing. The Committee have not been apprised as to why the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure did not accord approval to the Scheme during these years. It has also not been indicated by the Ministry as to what efforts they had made at their level to get the requisite approval from the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure. The Committee feel that timely action and follow up in this regard could have avoided such a situation. The Committee are of the view that non continuance of the scheme for years deprives the candidates of weaker sections of the requisite benefits, defeating in the process the very objective of the Scheme. The Committee, therefore, desire**



**that to avoid such gaps in the selection of candidates under the Scheme, the Ministry should devise, in coordination with the other concerned Ministries, a foolproof mechanism to ensure that the Scheme continues uninterrupted and such instances do not recur in future.**

47. The Committee regret to note that there has been no increase in the number of scholarships under the Scheme which was started way back in 1954-55, even though the Scheduled Caste population in the country has increased to 16.5 crores as per Census 2001. On the contrary, when the Scheme was initiated, there were 30 slots for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates whereas at present these are for 20 slots only, out of which 17 are for Scheduled Castes. The Committee are constrained to point out that the Ministry have not

taken this aspect into consideration while revising the scheme in 2001. The apathy of the Ministry towards this vital issue is nothing but regrettable. Considering the present population of Scheduled Castes in the country, the Committee feel that 20 scholarships per year (out of which 17 are for Scheduled Castes) are grossly insufficient. They, therefore, desire that the number of scholarships to be awarded per year under the Scheme should be realistically increased keeping in view the increase in the population of Scheduled Castes in the country. The Committee further desire that all the eligible candidate's applications should be considered for scholarship under the scheme irrespective of their number. The Ministry may approach the Ministry

of Finance and the Planning Commission to provide adequate funds, if so required.

**48. One of the reasons for poor performance of the Scheme is that the existing selection process for awarding scholarships to the candidates, from inviting applications to awarding scholarships, is quite long, and often it exceeds the one-year cycle. The Committee feel that such delays defeat the purpose of the Scheme itself, as, it might cause loss of one full academic year to eligible candidates, which could be detrimental to the candidate's career. The Ministry in this regard have spelt out some measures contemplated by them to expedite and complete the selection process in a six months period by simultaneously carrying out overlapping activities viz. initiating the process of appointment of Chairman of the Screening Committee while tabulation of application forms is going on, holding the Selection Committee meeting within three weeks of the meeting of the Screening Committee and interviews to follow soon after. This, according to the Ministry would facilitate early selection. The Committee hope that necessary measures will be introduced at the earliest and followed in letter and spirit.**

**The Committee also wish to emphasize the need of devising such a mechanism whereby the funds are released to the candidates within a month after their selection in foreign Universities, so that they are not denied admission for non-payment of fees etc. in time.**

**49. The Committee regret to note that funds allocated for the implementation of the Scheme were not properly utilized during most of the years. While for some years i.e. during 1993-94 and 1994-95, there had been over utilization of funds, there was under-utilization of allocated funds for the years 1996-97, 1997-**

98 and 1998-99. In the years 1993-94 and 1994-95, Rs. 260 lakh and Rs. 562 lakh were utilized as against Rs. 76 lakh and Rs. 148 lakh allocated for the respective years. Whereas during the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 against the allocation of Rs. 490 lakh, 475 lakh and Rs. 375 lakh respectively, only Rs. 180 lakh, Rs. 226 lakh and Rs. 125.83 lakh were utilized. The Ministry, in this regard have stated that this disparity is caused due to the fact that expenditure under this Scheme is initially incurred by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment reimburse the expenditure incurred on the candidates on receipt of bills from the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee do not find the reasons furnished by the Ministry as convincing. The Committee feel that had timely and proper measures been taken by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in co-ordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, such incongruity between the funds allocated and the utilized could have been avoided. The Committee are inclined to conclude that the under utilization of funds has deprived many aspiring candidates, belonging to the underprivileged section of society, of the benefits of the scheme. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take necessary steps to ensure that such situations do not arise in future and maximum number of candidates are given the benefit of the scheme every year.

50. The Committee note that the Scheme is being implemented under the Non-Plan Expenditure Head since its inception. The Committee understand that Plan Schemes are designed to be implemented for a certain period. But in case the Scheme is not approved for continuation, care needs to be taken to provide for a Budget for the committed liabilities beyond the approved period. At the same time the advantage of having a Scheme under Plan head is that it

is easier to increase the funding. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take up the matter with the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance to explore the feasibility of shifting the Scheme to the Plan Expenditure Head, if it will help the Ministry to get the Budget allocations enhanced as per their future requirements.

51. The Committee have been told that there are certain eligibility criteria and standards, such as minimum qualification, age limit, income ceiling, etc. which the applicants should fulfill while applying for the scholarship under this Scheme. The Committee desire that the Screening Committee while scrutinizing the applications should be more considerate especially towards women candidates, since the purpose of the Scheme is to effect welfare to a particular section of the society, and should not reject applications on technical grounds only at the screening level. The Committee also feel that maximum number of candidates should be given a chance to appear before the Selection Committee to face the interview. The Committee also find that sometimes after the selection of the candidates in the foreign University they are not able to seek admission and deposit fee etc. within the limited prescribed time as the meeting of the Screening Committee has not been held during that period to recommend their cases. The Committee, therefore, desire that in such cases the Ministry should themselves recommend their cases to the Selection Committee so that the candidates are not denied admission due to non-clearance of their application by the Screening Committee. Therefore the Ministry should themselves approve such cases so that all those candidates may get there scholarship in time.

52. The Committee also note that as per the eligibility criteria listed under this Scheme, 'work experience of two to five years' is required to apply for the three courses offered i.e. Masters Degree, Ph.D and Post Doctorate. The Committee feel that due to this requirement many deserving women candidates are not able to apply for scholarship under this scheme. The Committee are of the view that a woman should not be deprived of the opportunity to apply for the scholarship just because she does not have the required work experience in the desired field. Therefore, the Committee desire that 'work experience' should not be

mandatory, rather it should be treated as a desirable requirement and the rules may be amended accordingly.

The Committee also feel that the age limit of 35 years prescribed under this Scheme for the applicants may also be increased so that more women may be able to take benefit of the Scheme.

53. The Committee have been informed that for grant of scholarship under the Scheme the income from all sources of the employed candidate or his/her parents/guardians should not exceed Rs. 18000/- per month. The ceiling was revised from Rs. 12000/- per month in July, 2004. The Committee desire that under the Scheme, income of the employed candidate from all sources should only be taken into consideration if the candidate - male or female - is totally self-dependent and the income of his/her parents/guardians should not be considered for the income ceiling. The Committee, keeping in view the present status of the market, which is characterized by inflation, feel that the present income ceiling is still low. The Committee suggest that a clause should be added to the Rules governing this Scheme whereby every year the income ceiling be increased by 5 to 10 per cent, so that the impact of inflation and resultant increase in salary or income may not affect adversely the candidates who were in the eligibility zone in the previous years.

54. The Committee are concerned to note that there are only twenty subjects under this Scheme for which scholarships are awarded. These twenty subjects do not include disciplines such as aviation, medicines and other highly specialized disciplines for which sufficient facilities do not exist in India. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the disciplines under this Scheme need to be

diversified further by including some of the subjects popular among the women candidates such as medicine, as this in itself will popularize the Scheme further.

55. As far as publicity and awareness about the Scheme is concerned, the Committee are given to understand that the Scheme is advertised on all India basis through National/Regional Newspapers and the Ministry's website on the Internet. In this connection, the Committee desire that the advertisement regarding the Scheme should be prominently printed in leading National and Regional Newspapers.

The Committee also desire that copies of the press-clippings of such advertisements given in the various newspapers may be furnished to them. The Committee also feel that reliance on only print media and internet are not sufficient to popularize the Scheme and reach out to the beneficiaries. The Committee wish to emphasise that to ensure greater representation of women under the Scheme, due importance needs to be given to its publicity so that it reaches out to the maximum number of people for whom it has been formulated. The Committee, therefore, suggest that there should be effective involvement of electronic media as well, especially TV and Radio, so that the Scheme is made popular among the women living in difficult and remote parts of the country. The Committee also desire that some amount should be specifically allocated in the Budget Provision for this purpose.

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**NEW DELHI;  
17<sup>th</sup> MAY, 2006**

27 Vaisakha, 1928 (Saka)

**KRISHNA TIRATH,  
CHAIRPERSON**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SCHEME OF  
NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP  
FOR SC ETC CANDIDATES WITH EFFECT FROM  
2001-2002 TO 2006-2007**

**THE SCHEME**

The scheme provides financial assistance to finally selected students for pursuing higher studies abroad in specified fields of Master level courses, Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral research programmes in the field of Engineering, Technology and Science. The awards under the Scheme, however, are not available in disciplines of Agriculture, Medical Sciences and subjects relating to Indian Studies. Twenty awards per year are available under the Scheme with following distribution:

(i)	Scheduled Castes	-	17
(ii)	Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes	-	2
(iii)	Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans		1
	Total		20

If for any specific year, successful candidates are not available to the extent prescribed for each of the above listed categories, the awards for that year will become open for candidates belonging to other categories mentioned above as per merit grades attained by such candidates. Bachelor Level Courses in any discipline are not covered under the Scheme. The under mentioned courses have been approved for undertaking studies under the Scheme ( The award may also be given for a specialty or super specialty under the broad disciplines mentioned below and in such cases the Ministry reserves the right to decide the programme of studies that could be considered for award of scholarship).

1. Bio-technology/Genetic Engineering
2. Industrial Environmental Engineering.
3. Nano-Technology
4. Marine Engineering.
5. Petro-Chemical Engineering.

6. Plastic Technology.
7. Cryogenic Engineering.
8. Mechatronics.
9. Automation Robotics in including Artificial Intelligence.
10. Laser Technology.
11. Low Temperature Thermal Dynamics.
12. Optometry.
13. Art Restoration Technology.
14. Dock and Harbour Engineering.
15. Imaging System Technology.
16. Composite Materials Engineering including Decentralised Power Distribution(for solar heat) system, Energy Storage Engineering, Energy Conservation, Energy Efficient Habitat Engineering
17. Packaging Engineering./Technology.
18. Nuclear Engineering.
19. Information Technology including Computer Engineering, Software, Software Quality Assurance, Networking/Connectivity Engineering, Communication System under Hazardous or Post-disaster conditions, Multi-media Communication.
20. Industrial Safety Engineering.

#### **I. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- (a) For Post Doctoral :- 1<sup>st</sup> class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Masters Degree . Ph .D and 5 years' Research/Teaching/ Professional experience in the concerned field.
- (b) For Ph.D. :- 1<sup>st</sup> class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Masters' degree and 2 years' Teaching/Research/Professional experience/M. Phil degree in the concerned field.
- (c) For Masters' degree :- 1<sup>st</sup> Class or 60% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Bachelors' degree and 2 years work experience in the concerned field



**II. AGE**

Below 35 years, as on First day of the month of the Advertisement of the Scheme.

**III. INCOME CEILING**

Total income from all sources of the employed candidate or his/her parents/guardians should not exceed Rs.18,000/- per month, (excluding such allowances as are not treated as part of total income for the purpose of income-tax ) as certified by the employer. A copy of latest tax-assessment, be also enclosed with application.

**IV. ONE CHILD IN A FAMILY AND ONE TIME AWARD**

Not more than one child of the same parents/guardians will be eligible and to this effect a self-certification will be required from the candidate. The awardee can not be considered for the award for second or subsequent times as the individual can be awarded for once.

**OTHER MANDATORY CONDITIONS**

I. Candidates who are in employment must forward their applications through their employer alongwith a NOC by the employer to this Ministry so as to reach the Ministry on or before the last date of receipt of applications as specified in the advertisement of the Scheme.

II. The finally selected candidates are required to obtain admission and join an accredited university/ institution abroad within three years from the date of communication of selection. On expiry of this specified period of time, the award will automatically get cancelled and come to an end. No request for extension of time for availing the award is permissible under the Scheme. The candidates are required to seek admission and join accredited Universities/ institutions only.

III. The selected candidate is required to execute a bond on a non-judicial stamp paper before a notary-public with two sureties who will execute surety bonds separately for the actual amount to be spent by Government of India on the candidate or Rs.50,000/- whichever is more. Each of the surety bonds shall specify and cover for the estimated expenditure in Indian Rupees that would be incurred as travel expenses, tuition fees, maintenance and contingency allowances, stipends, scholarship and other miscellaneous expenses, on the awardee during the entire period of study abroad and shall become payable by the sureties jointly or/and severally in case the awardee is declared a defaulter by the Ministry under the provisions of the Scheme. The language of the bond as decided by the Government of India will be acceptable to the candidate.

IV. The selected candidate will also be required to execute a bond with this Ministry and the Indian Mission abroad, as per prevailing laws of the foreign country, that the extension of stay abroad beyond completion of the course or duration of the scholarship under the Scheme, whichever is earlier will not be permissible. The candidate/awardee shall not seek any extension of stay abroad beyond the duration for which the scholarship is awarded. The language of the bond as decided by Government of India will be acceptable to candidate.

V. The candidate shall not change the course of study or research for which scholarship has been sanctioned.

VI. The candidate will have to execute another bond with this Ministry and the Indian Mission abroad, that he/she will sign a Record Release Consent Form in the manner prescribed by Government of India and it will be acceptable to the candidate.

VII. The selected candidates can though pursue their respective studies in an accredited university/ institution in a country of their choice with which India has diplomatic relations, but this will be subject to prior written approval of the Government of India, whose decision will be final and not challengeable. The candidates are required to make their own efforts in seeking admission in accredited Universities/ institutions in programmes/fields specified in the Scheme.

VIII. Married candidates in principle, are not allowed to take their spouse and children with them or join them subsequently during the period of study. Nevertheless, under emergency conditions like serious health grounds of the awardee, the condition may be relaxed by this Ministry for which specific and preferably prior permission of the Ministry is required.

IX. All administrative matters like study leave, salary etc. will be directly sorted out by the candidate with his/her employer and as per rules of the serving organization. This Ministry will not take any responsibility or render assistance in this regard.

X. In case of emergencies at home where the awardee is forced to return to India for sometime to attend to the adverse situation; the awardee is permitted to return to India for the specific purpose, after having informed the Indian Missions and the educational institution where one is pursuing studies about it. The awardee will, however, be required to bear to and fro journey expenses for the visit and shall also not be entitled to receive maintenance allowance under the scheme, from the Indian Mission, for the period of being away from the place of his/her educational institution abroad and the maintenance allowance shall be resumed by the Indian Mission only from the date of his/her resuming same course at the same institution. The awardee after having dealt with the emergencies at home, is required to return to the place of his/her educational institution, as early as possible; failing which, he/she shall be liable to be declared a defaulter and the recovery proceeding will be initiated against him/her.

XI. All candidates after having availed of the award under the Scheme are required to return to India and under no circumstances they will be issued 'No Obligation to Return to India' Certificate by any concerned authority in Government of India.

XII. The awardee on return to India has to remain in India for at least five years and is also required to serve the Government, if he/she continues to be in Government service after return to India, as one was before going abroad with award under the Scheme.

XIII. It will be for the candidate to obtain the appropriate visa for a country wherein one intends to study further under award from the Scheme and the Visa issuing authorities may kindly see that only such type of visa be issued which only permits the candidate to pursue specified course abroad and thereafter the candidate returns to India. Government of India will render no assistance to a candidate for obtaining Visa .

XIV. Selected candidates are required to furnish all such documents and enter into such agreements before their departure as shall be decided by the Government of India from time to time.

XV. In case the awardee has received overpayment through Indian Mission abroad or any other Government agency, he/she is liable to refund the same to Government of India and his/her employer (if any) is authorized to recover the excess amount from his/her dues, on request from Government of India, and refund the same to Government of India.

XVI. The decisions of Government of India will be final in all such issues, as may come up during course of time.

XVII. The Indian Missions abroad will obtain six monthly progress reports from the university/ institution where the awardee is pursuing his/her studies for which the award was given under the Scheme. The Missions will inform to this Ministry such serious adverse developments in case of the awardee which requires decision towards further continuation of the award or otherwise. The Missions will, however, keep on advising such awardees to put serious efforts in improving their achievements who are not seen to be upto the mark as reflected in their said six monthly progress reports and they may also be reminded that financial assistance under the Scheme is not extendable beyond the stipulated period under the Scheme.

XVIII. There may arise situations when an awardee pursuing Ph.D. or Post Doctoral research in a university/ institution where one is initially registered with, find a serious situation where his/her guide has left and there are no immediate replacements thereof or the university/ institutions has discontinued the research support facilities in the area where the awardee was pursuing Ph.D./Post Doctoral research; the Indian Missions abroad in such cases are authorized to allow the awardee to change the university/ institutions, after the Missions are satisfied about such a need subject, however, to the condition that the credits earned by the awardee in the initial university/ institution are accepted for transfer by the second university/ institutions and that the total period of award will

remain unchanged even on such a transfer/change, which will be permitted only once during the award.

XIX. The prospective awardee is selected by the Selection Committee constituted by this Ministry, for a particular subject from within the specified subjects for pursuing Masters' Programme, Ph.D. or Post Doctoral and candidate is given three years time from the date of communication about his/her selection for the award. The candidate before leaving for abroad to pursue the course for which one was selected under the Scheme, is required to give a declaration to this Ministry that he/she has not already acquired the qualification in the meanwhile or has not submitted the final thesis leading to active possibility of acquiring the qualification, from the Indian university. This Ministry on receiving such a declaration from the candidate will appropriately decide as to whether candidate can be awarded under the Scheme or otherwise and departure of the candidate for abroad will depend on the decision.

XX. In case the awardee is unable to complete the course successfully and that if the guide/head of the department of the candidate certifies that the candidate has not been found wanting in his/her commitment/dedication/attention to studies then the Ministry shall have the right to exempt him/her from the penalty clause of "Defaulter under the Scheme". The Indian Missions in such cases will provide the return air passage to India by shortest route and economy class.

XXI. When the awardee overstays abroad for more than one month after successful completion of the course and then of his/her own returns to India at own cost, he/she will not be entitled to refund of return passage booked by him/her. In normal circumstances, immediately after successful completion of the course, the Indian Missions abroad books the return journey, for the awardee as provided in the Scheme, and thus, the overstaying awardee without any specific purpose for more than a month after the course is over, will forfeit his/her claims of return passage at Government expense through Indian Missions abroad.

XXII. This Ministry, if necessary, in consultation with other Departments/ Agencies, will take decision on such issues concerning awardees arising out of such situations and circumstances which are of unforeseeable nature and, thus, not covered under this written scheme and the decisions of the Ministry will be final and binding on the awardees.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### **I. VALUE OF MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE**

The annual maintenance allowance of US Dollars 8,200/- has been prescribed for all levels of courses covered under the Scheme. The annual maintenance allowance for candidates in United Kingdom will be Pound Sterling 5,200/- for all levels of courses covered under the Scheme.

## II. EARNINGS FROM RESEARCH/TEACHING ASSISTANCESHIP

The awardees are permitted to supplement their prescribed allowances by undertaking Research/Teaching Assistantship upto US Dollars 2400/- per annum and for awardees in United Kingdom, Pound Sterling 1560/- per annum and beyond these prescribed ceilings, their maintenance allowance under the scheme will be correspondingly reduced by the Indian Missions abroad.

## III. CONTINGENCY ALLOWANCE

Contingency allowance for books/essential apparatus/study tour/typing and binding of thesis etc. will be US Dollars 550/- per annum and for candidates in United Kingdom, it will be Pound Sterling 400/- per annum.

## IV. POLL TAX

Actual will be paid, wherever applicable.

## V. VISA FEES

Actual visa fees in Indian Rupees will be paid.

## VI. EQUIPMENT ALLOWANCE AND INCIDENTAL JOURNEY EXPENSES

Equipment Allowance of Rs.1,100/- and incidental journey expenses upto US Dollars 15/- or its equivalent in Indian Rupees are permissible.

## VII. FEES AND MEDICAL INSURANCE PREMIUM

Actual as charged

## VIII. AIR PASSAGE

Air passage from India to the nearest place to the educational institution and back to India, by economy class and shortest route in arrangements with the national carrier, will be provided.

## IX. LOCAL TRAVEL

Second or Coach class railway fare from the port of disembarkation to the place of study and back In case of far flung places not connected by rail, bus fare(s) from the place of residence to the nearest railway station, actual charge of crossing by ferry, air fare to the nearest rail-cum-air Station and/or II class railway fare by the shortest route to the port of embarkation and back will be permissible.

X. For attending interviews by the candidates at the place decided by the Government of India, the second class fare/ordinary class bus fare from the city of their place of residence to the city in which the interviews for selection have been decided by the Government of India will be permissible.

The mode of disbursement of above listed financial assistance will be decided by Government of India and Indian Missions abroad.

#### **DURATION OF AWARD WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The prescribed financial assistance is provided upto completion of the course/ research or the following period, whichever is earlier :-

- (a) For Post Doctoral Research - 1 & 1/2 years (One and a half year)
- (b) Ph.D. - 3 years (three years)
- (c) Master Degree –3 years ( three years)

The extension of stay beyond prescribed period for levels of courses as mentioned above, may be considered without financial assistance of any kind except the air passage to return to India, if and only if recommendation of the competent concerned authority in the educational institution/ university as well as the Indian Mission abroad is received certifying that such an overstay for a specified period, is absolutely essential for facilitating the candidate to complete the course. The final decision in this regard will, however, rest with the Government of India alone.

#### **JURISDICTION OF THE SCHEME**

The jurisdiction of the Scheme is upto providing prescribed financial support to the selected candidates for pursuing higher education in the specified subjects. The Scheme does not cover employment aspects of the awardee and also does not provide for any kind of assistance to the awardee in seeking employment anywhere, after his/her having availed of the award.

#### **DEFAULT UNDER THE SCHEME**

In case a candidate pursuing studies abroad violates any of the terms and conditions of the bonds executed by him/her and that the educational institution/ university intimates the Indian Mission abroad about his/her adverse reports on studies and/or conduct and/or that the candidate leaves for any other country or absconds or joins any other university or course/programme or/and returns to India in case of emergency without intimating the Indian Mission abroad, he/she will be declared defaulter and will become liable for refund of entire amount spent on him/her alongwith the interest which will be 12% per annum and in case an awardee fails to repay the amount within six months from the date on which a demand for such refund is made, penal interest at the rate which is 2.5% higher than the above normal rate of interest on the outstanding amount would be charged. If the awardee fails to repay such amount alongwith interest thereon in

the manner decided by Government of India, his/her sureties who have executed bonds, will be liable to pay the entire amount failing which the District Collector of the concerned district will realize the amount as arrears of land revenue.

## **SELECTION PROCEDURE**

The scheme will be advertised in the newspapers giving summarized information about the Scheme. The candidates shall after assessing their eligibility and suitability, as per conditions of the Scheme, apply to this Ministry (employed candidates through proper channel), in the prescribed application form which will form a part of the advertisement. The last date of receiving applications will also be mentioned in the advertisement. Thereafter, all applications received up to the last date of receiving applications, as notified in advertisement, will be put before the Screening Committee. The candidates short listed by the Screening Committee will be required to present themselves for personal interview before the Selection Committee. The merit list prepared, on the basis of assessment of individual candidates, by the Selection Committee will finally and decisively complete the selection procedure to decide the merit. In case of tie-up of two or more candidates, the one who is eldest in age (as per date of birth) will be placed above the others, as per respective dates of birth as recorded in Secondary School Certificate.

The constitution of Screening and Selection Committee will be decided by Government of India. The Chairperson and Members of these Committees will be entitled to be paid air fare and the rate of D.A. would be as admissible to the Secretary to the Government of India. If the Chairperson and Members of these Committees are from Delhi/New Delhi then a suitable compensation package inclusive of traveling allowance will be payable to them, for each day of their participation in proceedings of the meetings. There will be no departmental representative in the Selection Committee and the concerned Department will lend only administrative and logistic support to them including services like tea, coffee, cold drinks, lunch, snacks etc. which may be arranged from anywhere.

## **FURNISHING OF FALSE INFORMATION**

If any candidate has furnished any false information/document and is established as false, he/she will be debarred from the award and if he/she has availed of it or is availing, an action will be initiated for recovery of the amount spent with 15% compound interest thereon. Such candidate will also be black listed for future and the employed candidate will also have to face departmental action for such act, for which the Government of India will take up the matter with the respective employers. The respective employers are, therefore, also requested to carefully go through contents of application of their employees before forwarding the same to this Ministry. The employers are also free to insist on candidates employed by them to execute such bonds with them, as they deem fit and necessary and in accordance with their rules and regulations in such cases.

## **LITIGATIONS**

Any litigation on matters arising out of this Scheme in India will be subject to sole jurisdiction of the courts situated in Union Territory of Delhi. The litigations arising abroad will be attended to by the Indian Missions abroad.

## **RELAXATION TO ANY CLAUSE OF THE SCHEME**

The continuation of the Scheme from 2001-2002 to 2006-2007 has the approval of then Union Minister of Social Justice Empowerment on the recommendation the Standing Finance Committee (SFC), headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. There is no clause in this Scheme as approved by the said Committee, under which relaxation of any of norms of the Scheme can be considered and decided by any authority.

## **PASSAGE GRANTS (2001-2002 TO 2006-2007)**

Applications on plain paper in the prescribed format are also invited for the award of five passage grants in a year to Scheduled Castes (4 grants), and Denotified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes (One grant), which are open throughout the year. Only those candidates who are in receipt of a merit scholarship for Post Graduate Studies, Research or Training abroad (excluding attending seminars, workshops, conferences), from a foreign government/ organization or under any other Scheme, where the cost of passage is not provided, will be eligible to apply.

The candidates should possess a Master's or an equivalent degree in Technical, Engineering and Science disciplines. The eligibility conditions otherwise will be same as contained in the Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for SC etc. The candidates who have already reached abroad, will not be considered for passage grants. For selected candidates, air passage to the destination abroad and back to India, will be provided by economy class and shortest route through arrangement with the national carrier. The prospective candidates can contact this Ministry for obtaining application form for applying for the passage grant.



## APPENDIX II

### STATEWISE SC POPULATION ACCORDING TO 2001 CENSUS

Sl No.	India/State or Union Territory	SC Population
<b>States</b>		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	12339496
2.	Arunanchal Pradesh	6188
3.	Assam	1825949
4.	Bihar	13048608
5.	Chattisgardh	2418722
6.	Goa	23791
7.	Gujarat	3592715
8.	Haryana	4091110
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1,502,170
10.	Jharkhand	3189,320
11.	J&K	770.155
12.	Karnataka	8,563,930
13.	Kerala	3123,941
14.	Madhya Pradesh	9,155,177
15.	Maharashtra	9881656
16.	Manipur	60037
17.	Meghalaya	11,139
18.	Mizoram	272
19.	Nagaland	0.00
20.	Orissa	6,282,063
21.	Punjab	7,028,723
22.	Rajasthan	9,694,462
23.	Sikkam	27165
24.	Tamil Nadu	11,857,504
25.	Tripura	555,724
26.	Uttar Pradesh	35,148,377
27.	Uttaranchal	1,517,186
28.	West Bengal	18,452,555
<b><u>Union Territories</u></b>		
1.	Andhaman & Nicobar Islands	0.00
2.	Chandigarh	157597
3.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	4104
4.	Daman & Diu	4838
5.	Delhi	2,343,255
6.	Lakshadweep	0.00
7.	Pondicherry	157771
	<b>India</b>	<b>166575663</b>

**STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Para No.</b>	<b>Ministry/Department</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations</b>
1.	39.	<b>Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</b>	Education is the first and foremost pre-requisite for social and economic development of any strata of society. It is all the more important for the upliftment of the underprivileged sections of Indian society. Hence, conscious efforts are essential to bring these sections at par with the rest of the society. They need to be given opportunities to develop, enhance and sustain their capabilities and capacities. The commitment to uplift and empower the Scheduled Caste population is enshrined in Article 46 of the Constitution of India, which stipulates that ‘the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation’.
2.	40.	<b>Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</b>	The ‘National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes etc. Students for Higher Studies Abroad’ was introduced by the Government of India in 1954-55. The Scheme is designed to facilitate Scheduled Caste students for pursuing higher studies abroad in specified fields of engineering, science and technology. Under this Scheme scholarship is awarded to selected candidates in specified fields for Masters, Ph.D and Post Doctoral research programmes. This Scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and it is categorized under the Non-Plan Expenditure head. Prior to bifurcation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Scheme had in total 30 slots, 17 for SCs, 9 for STs, 1 for Denotified Nomadic Tribes and Semi Nomadic Tribes, 2 for SC converts to other religions, and 1 for landless agricultural labourers and traditional artisan. Since the formation of a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999, the Scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for 20 slots only: 17 for Scheduled Castes, 2 for De-Notified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and 1 for landless agricultural

labourers and traditional artisans. The Scheme is implemented in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs as all payments are routed through Indian Embassies and High Commissions abroad and they provide necessary assistance to the Indian students who go abroad for pursuing higher studies.

3. 41. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The selection of candidates under this Scheme is done on an All India basis and applications are invited through an open advertisement in major daily newspapers and Employment News. Under the Scheme, financial assistance is provided to selected students on the basis of merit. The assistance includes payment of full fees charged by the institutions, annual maintenance allowance, contingency allowance, air passage, visa fees, medical insurance premium etc.

4. 42. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

A critical analysis of the working of the Scheme indicates that there are various shortcomings in its implementation. The Scheme, which was launched with a specific and laudable objective, has not been implemented in its right perspective. The following factors are responsible for the ineffective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee will discuss these issues at length in the succeeding paragraphs of the Report.

(i) The Scheme was not implemented continuously. It was discontinued for some years for want of approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE).

(ii) Considering the large number of Scheduled Caste persons in the country, the stipulated number of scholarships under this Scheme, i.e 20 is insufficient.

(iii) The representation of women among the selected candidates is negligible.

(iv) There is no reservation of seats for women under the Scheme.

(v) The entire selection process often exceeds the one-year cycle, thus putting at stake one full academic year of the applicants.

(vi) There is a wide disparity in the Budgetary allocations made and the amounts utilized.

(vii) There is an income ceiling of Rs 18,000/- prescribed under the Scheme, which debars many bright women candidates.

(viii) The criteria of work experience for availing benefit under this scheme also disqualifies many potential women candidates.

(ix) The disciplines of study included under this Scheme are not diverse enough. There is scope to include more disciplines, such as Medicine, which are popular among women candidates.

(x) The scheme has not been widely publicized among women especially in the remote areas of the country, which is reflected in poor representation of women in the scheme.

5. 43. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Committee, therefore, desire that prompt remedial measures should be taken on these aspects urgently so as to eliminate these shortcomings with a view to achieving the avowed objectives of the Scheme.

6. 44. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Committee are shocked to note that out of the total 101 candidates selected under this scheme from 1993-94 to 2004-05, only five were women. Of the five women, two were selected during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 (combined) and three during 2004-05. Such a dismal representation of women in the Scheme is a major cause of concern to the Committee. The Committee feel that women, in general, are a deprived and neglected lot of our society and it becomes all the more important to make consistent efforts to improve their participation in the field of education when they belong to the underprivileged section of our country. Education is an instrument to bring about change in the status of women and ensure their empowerment. It is a critical pre-condition for their participation in the development process. The Committee are of the opinion that the need for superior academic achievements is greater for girls as compared to boys because of the prevailing socio-economic conditions. The future of the girl rests squarely on her educational achievements and economic independence.

7. 45. **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**
- It is a matter of great concern to the Committee that there have been no efforts on the part of the Government to provide Scheduled Caste women better opportunities for pursuing higher studies abroad by way of reservation of seats exclusively for women. The Committee feel that there is an urgent need to reserve some seats exclusively for women under the Scheme as it would encourage more women candidates to come forward to avail the benefits of this Scheme. The Committee are given to understand that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment are now contemplating to propose reservation of some seats for women at the time of continuation of the scheme in 2006-07. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should look into the possibility of allocating at least 30 per cent of the seats to women under the Scheme.
8. 46. **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**
- As per the information made available by the Ministry, the Scheme was not implemented during some of the years and no selections were made. For instance, during the years 1995-96, 1997-98 and from 2001 to 2004, no candidates were selected. The reason furnished by the Ministry in this regard that the Scheme was not functional during these years for want of approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure is not convincing. The Committee have not been apprised as to why the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure did not accord approval to the Scheme during these years. It has also not been indicated by the Ministry as to what efforts they had made at their level to get the requisite approval from the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure. The Committee feel that timely action and follow up in this regard could have avoided such a situation. The Committee are of the view that non continuance of the scheme for years deprives the candidates of weaker sections of the requisite benefits, defeating in the process the very objective of the Scheme. The Committee, therefore, desire that to avoid such gaps in the selection of candidates under the Scheme, the Ministry should devise, in coordination with the other concerned Ministries, a foolproof mechanism to ensure that the Scheme continues uninterrupted and such instances do not recur in future.

9. 47. **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**
- The Committee regret to note that there has been no increase in the number of scholarships under the Scheme which was started way back in 1954-55, even though the Scheduled Caste population in the country has increased to 16.5 crores as per Census 2001. On the contrary, when the Scheme was initiated, there were 30 slots for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates whereas at present these are for 20 slots only, out of which 17 are for Scheduled Castes. The Committee are constrained to point out that the Ministry have not taken this aspect into consideration while revising the scheme in 2001. The apathy of the Ministry towards this vital issue is nothing but regrettable. Considering the present population of Scheduled Castes in the country, the Committee feel that 20 scholarships per year (out of which 17 are for Scheduled Castes) are grossly insufficient. They, therefore, desire that the number of scholarships to be awarded per year under the Scheme should be realistically increased keeping in view the increase in the population of Scheduled Castes in the country. The Committee further desire that all the eligible candidate's applications should be considered for scholarship under the scheme irrespective of their number. The Ministry may approach the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission to provide adequate funds, if so required.
10. 48. **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**
- One of the reasons for poor performance of the Scheme is that the existing selection process for awarding scholarships to the candidates, from inviting applications to awarding scholarships, is quite long, and often it exceeds the one-year cycle. The Committee feel that such delays defeat the purpose of the Scheme itself, as, it might cause loss of one full academic year to eligible candidates, which could be detrimental to the candidate's career. The Ministry in this regard have spelt out some measures contemplated by them to expedite and complete the selection process in a six months period by simultaneously carrying out overlapping activities viz. initiating the process of appointment of Chairman of the Screening Committee while tabulation of application forms is going on, holding the Selection Committee meeting within three weeks of the meeting of the Screening Committee and interviews to follow soon after. This, according to the Ministry would facilitate

early selection. The Committee hope that necessary measures will be introduced at the earliest and followed in letter and spirit.

The Committee also wish to emphasize the need of devising such a mechanism whereby the funds are released to the candidates within a month after their selection in foreign Universities, so that they are not denied admission for non-payment of fees etc. in time.

11. 49. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Committee regret to note that funds allocated for the implementation of the Scheme were not properly utilized during most of the years. While for some years i.e. during 1993-94 and 1994-95, there had been over utilization of funds, there was under-utilization of allocated funds for the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99. In the years 1993-94 and 1994-95, Rs. 260 lakh and Rs. 562 lakh were utilized as against Rs. 76 lakh and Rs. 148 lakh allocated for the respective years. Whereas during the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 against the allocation of Rs. 490 lakh, 475 lakh and Rs. 375 lakh respectively, only Rs. 180 lakh, Rs. 226 lakh and Rs. 125.83 lakh were utilized. The Ministry, in this regard have stated that this disparity is caused due to the fact that expenditure under this Scheme is initially incurred by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment reimburse the expenditure incurred on the candidates on receipt of bills from the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee do not find the reasons furnished by the Ministry as convincing. The Committee feel that had timely and proper measures been taken by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in co-ordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, such incongruity between the funds allocated and the utilized could have been avoided. The Committee are inclined to conclude that the under utilization of funds has deprived many aspiring candidates, belonging to the underprivileged section of society, of the benefits of the scheme. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take necessary steps to ensure that such situations do not arise in future and maximum number of candidates are given the benefit of the scheme every year.

12. 50. Ministry of Social Justice and

The Committee note that the Scheme is being implemented under the Non-Plan Expenditure

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|-----|---|---|
|     | <b>Empowerment</b>                                    | Head since its inception. The Committee understand that Plan Schemes are designed to be implemented for a certain period. But in case the Scheme is not approved for continuation, care needs to be taken to provide for a Budget for the committed liabilities beyond the approved period. At the same time the advantage of having a Scheme under Plan head is that it is easier to increase the funding. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take up the matter with the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance to explore the feasibility of shifting the Scheme to the Plan Expenditure Head, if it will help the Ministry to get the Budget allocations enhanced as per their future requirements.   |
| 13. | 51. <b>Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</b> | The Committee have been told that there are certain eligibility criteria and standards, such as minimum qualification, age limit, income ceiling, etc. which the applicants should fulfill while applying for the scholarship under this Scheme. The Committee desire that the Screening Committee while scrutinizing the applications should be more considerate especially towards women candidates, since the purpose of the Scheme is to effect welfare to a particular section of the society, and should not reject applications on technical grounds only at the screening level. The Committee also feel that maximum number of candidates should be given a chance to appear before the Selection Committee to face the interview. The Committee also find that sometimes after the selection of the candidates in the foreign University they are not able to seek admission and deposit fee etc. within the limited prescribed time as the meeting of the Screening Committee has not been held during that period to recommend their cases. The Committee, therefore, desire that in such cases the Ministry should themselves recommend their cases to the Selection Committee so that the candidates are not denied admission due to non-clearance of their application by the Screening Committee. Therefore the Ministry should themselves approve such cases so that all those candidates may get there scholarship in time. |
| 14. | 52. <b>Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</b> | The Committee also note that as per the eligibility criteria listed under this Scheme, 'work experience of two to five years' is required to apply for the three courses offered i.e. Masters   |



Degree, Ph.D and Post Doctorate. The Committee feel that due to this requirement many deserving women candidates are not able to apply for scholarship under this scheme. The Committee are of the view that a woman should not be deprived of the opportunity to apply for the scholarship just because she does not have the required work experience in the desired field. Therefore, the Committee desire that 'work experience' should not be mandatory, rather it should be treated as a desirable requirement and the rules may be amended accordingly.

The Committee also feel that the age limit of 35 years prescribed under this Scheme for the applicants may also be increased so that more women may be able to take benefit of the Scheme.

15. 53. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Committee have been informed that for grant of scholarship under the Scheme the income from all sources of the employed candidate or his/her parents/guardians should not exceed Rs. 18000/- per month. The ceiling was revised from Rs. 12000/- per month in July, 2004. The Committee desire that under the Scheme, income of the employed candidate from all sources should only be taken into consideration if the candidate - male or female - is totally self-dependent and the income of his/her parents/guardians should not be considered for the income ceiling. The Committee, keeping in view the present status of the market, which is characterized by inflation, feel that the present income ceiling is still low. The Committee suggest that a clause should be added to the Rules governing this Scheme whereby every year the income ceiling be increased by 5 to 10 per cent, so that the impact of inflation and resultant increase in salary or income may not affect adversely the candidates who were in the eligibility zone in the previous years.

16. 54. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Committee are concerned to note that there are only twenty subjects under this Scheme for which scholarships are awarded. These twenty subjects do not include disciplines such as aviation, medicines and other highly specialized disciplines for which sufficient facilities do not exist in India. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the disciplines under this Scheme need to be diversified further by including

some of the subjects popular among the women candidates such as medicine, as this in itself will popularize the Scheme further.

17. 55. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

As far as publicity and awareness about the Scheme is concerned, the Committee are given to understand that the Scheme is advertised on all India basis through National/Regional Newspapers and the Ministry's website on the Internet. In this connection, the Committee desire that the advertisement regarding the Scheme should be prominently printed in leading National and Regional Newspapers.

The Committee also desire that copies of the press-clippings of such advertisements given in the various newspapers may be furnished to them. The Committee also feel that reliance on only print media and internet are not sufficient to popularize the Scheme and reach out to the beneficiaries. The Committee wish to emphasise that to ensure greater representation of women under the Scheme, due importance needs to be given to its publicity so that it reaches out to the maximum number of people for whom it has been formulated. The Committee, therefore, suggest that there should be effective involvement of electronic media as well, especially TV and Radio, so that the Scheme is made popular among the women living in difficult and remote parts of the country. The Committee also desire that some amount should be specifically allocated in the Budget Provision for this purpose.

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## **PART – II**

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## **MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2005-06)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 from 1530 hours to 1630 hours in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

### **PRESENT**

### **IN CHAIR**

Smt. Krishna Tirath - **Chairperson**

### **MEMBERS**

#### **LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Joachim Baxla
3. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
4. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
5. Dr. P. P. Koya
6. Smt. Minati Sen
7. Smt. C.S. Sujatha
8. Shri Mohd. Tahir Khan
9. Smt. Tejashwini See Ramesh

#### **RAJYA SABHA**

10. Smt. Prema Cariappa
11. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
12. Smt. N.P. Durga
13. Smt. Kum Kum Rai
14. Smt. Maya Singh

### **SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri S.K. Sharma - Additional Secretary
2. Shri R.C. Ahuja - Joint Secretary
3. Shri R.C. Kakkar - Deputy Secretary
4. Smt. Veena Sharma - Under Secretary

### **WITNESSES**

#### **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**

1. Smt. Sarita Prasad - Secretary
2. Dr. Sandeep Khanna - Additional Secretary
3. Shri Hasib Ahmad - Director

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment to the sitting of the Committee and invited their attention to the provisions contained in Direction 55 of the Directions by the Speaker.
  
3. The Committee then took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry on the subject "**National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste Girl Students for Higher Studies Abroad**".
  
4. Thereafter, the Chairperson requested the representatives of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to furnish notes on the points raised by the Members to which replies were not readily available with them during the discussion.
  
5. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

**The Committee then adjourned.**

## **MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2005-2006)**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2006 from 1530 hours to 1630 hours in Committee Room 'B', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

### **PRESENT**

**Smt. Krishna Tirath** - **Chairperson**

### **MEMBERS**

#### **LOK SABHA**

2. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
3. Dr. P.P. Koya
4. Smt. Preneet Kaur
5. Smt. K. Rani
6. Smt. Minati Sen
7. Smt. Tejaswini See Ramesh
8. Smt. Jayaben Thakkar

#### **RAJYA SABHA**

9. Ms. Pramila Bohidar
10. Smt. Prema Cariappa
11. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
12. Smt. N.P. Durga
13. Smt. Brinda Karat
14. Smt. Maya Singh
15. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

### **WITNESSES**

#### **National Commission for Women**

1. Dr. Girija Vyas - Chairperson
2. Ms. Yasmeen Abrar - Member
3. Ms. Nirmala Venkatesh - Member
4. Shri N.P. Gupta - Member Secretary

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**SECRETARIAT**

1. Smt. Veena Sharma - Deputy Secretary
2. Shri V.P. Goel - Assistant Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting. The Committee then took up for consideration the Draft Report on the subject **'National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste Students for Higher Studies Abroad'**. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the Draft Report.

3. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalise the Report and present the same to both Houses of Parliament during the current Session.

4. Thereafter, the representatives of the National Commission for Women were invited to the sitting. The Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the National Commission for Women and requested them to brief the Committee about the social and economic conditions of tribal women, the problems being faced by them and various other aspects relating to the subject 'Social and Economic Upliftment of Tribal Women'. The Chairperson, National Commission for Women briefed the Committee about the social and economic conditions of Tribal Women. She also shared her views on the adequacy of Schemes being implemented by the Government for the social and economic upliftment of tribal women and gave an insight about certain other aspects of the subject.

5. The Members of the Committee then raised certain queries which were replied to by the representatives of the National Commission for Women.

6. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

**The Committee then adjourned.**

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