

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5210

ANSWERED ON:26.04.2013

RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP RGNF TO ST STUDENTS

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Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the objectives and salient features of the Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) implemented by the Government for Scheduled Tribes (STs) students along with the target fixed thereunder;
- (b) the funding pattern of the scheme indicating the allocation made thereunder during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the criteria adopted for selection of students under the scheme along with the number of students benefited thereunder indicating the number of applications received and accepted/ rejected during the said period, State/UT-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has reviewed the performance/implementation of the scheme;
- (e) if so, the details thereof indicating the shortcomings noticed therein; and
- (f) whether the Government proposes to revise the scheme and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SMT. RANEE NARAH)

- (a) The objective of the Scheme of 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for Scheduled Tribe' students is to provide fellowships to Scheduled Tribe students for pursuing higher studies such as M.Phil and Ph.D in the Universities/Institutions recognized by the UGC. The scheme is implemented through University Grant Commission (UGC). The amount of Scholarship covers fellowships, contingency expenses, expenses for departmental assistance; escorts/reader assistance for disabled candidates and HRA on UGC pattern and the average cost of fellowship is Rs. 2.16 lakh for Junior Research Fellow (JRF) and Rs. 2.40 lakh Senior Research Fellow (SRF). The total number of fresh fellowships to be awarded each year is fixed at 667.
- (b) Under the Scheme, there is no State/UT-wise budget allocation. However, the total year wise budget allocation during the last three years and current year is given at Annexure I.
- (c) To be eligible for this fellowship, a Scheduled Tribe candidate should have passed Post Graduation examination and the requirement of 50% marks at post graduation level will not be insisted by UGC. The student should get admission and registration for regular full time M.Phil /Ph.D degree courses in University/Academic Institutions as per the prescribed norms and advertisement of UGC. If the number of the ST students exceeds the number of available awards UGC selects the candidates based on percentage of marks in the Post Graduate examination. As regards the number of applications received and accepted/rejected, this information is not maintained centrally. The number of students benefited under the scheme during the last three years is given at Annexure II.
- (d)to (f) The review of the performance/implementation of the scheme during the 11th Plan period by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has brought out that the number of fellowships awarded each year should be increased, actual utilization of fellowships awarded to ST students also should be increased, and more awareness about the scheme should be created and the procedure of release of fellowship amount to the beneficiaries should be streamlined. These findings have been noted for revision of the scheme during 12th Plan.