

Financial assistance to indigent authors and artists

1154. SHRI AVINASH PANDE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated and/or is implementing any scheme for the provision of financial assistance to indigent authors and artists to encourage literacy and artistic pursuits as full time careers; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme along with the year when it was first implemented, the total number of beneficiaries covered by the scheme and the total amount of money disbursed to the beneficiaries each year since its formulation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Culture is implementing "Artistes Pension Scheme and Welfare Fund" since 1961 to give pension to Persons Distinguished in Letters, Arts and such other walks of Life who may be in indigent Circumstances and their Dependents. Under the Scheme, artists whose personal income (including income of the spouse) does not exceed ₹ 4,000/- per month and who are not less than 60 (modified from 58 years with effect from 20.10.2015) years of age are considered for financial assistance of ₹ 4,000/- p.m. under Central Quota and with maximum of ₹ 3,500/- p.m. under Central - State Quota, the remaining balance of ₹ 4000/- being given by the State Government The eligible artists should have made significant contribution in the field of arts, letters, etc. for being considered for financial assistance under this Scheme. The total number of beneficiaries covered under the scheme is 3882 at present. The total amount of funds disbursed in the last 5 years are as under:-

(₹ in crore)

Year	Financial assistance granted
2010-11	12.92
2011-12	11.94
2012-13	15.22
2013-14	15.31
2014-15	17.64
2015-16	13.19

(up to December 2015)