

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3264
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2022

SCHOLARSHIP IN SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY

3264. SHRI SYED NASIR HUSSAIN:

Will the Minister of **External Affairs** be pleased to state :

- (a) whether there is an ongoing protest at South Asian University (SAU) by students due to arbitrary new policy regarding the scholarship, freeships, and other issues;
- (b) the reason for making scholarships non-transferable when previously everyone used to get scholarships and freeships;
- (c) whether SAU is not receiving funding, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Government understands that by not giving freeships and scholarships the future of students has been jeopardized; and
- (e) the steps taken by Government to ensure that no one at SAU drops out due to financial barriers?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[DR. RAJKUMAR RANJAN SINGH]

(a) to (e) South Asian University is an international university established by eight Member States of SAARC. The University reports to the Governing Board which is represented by all the Member States. As a member state, Government of India is one of the parties to the collective decisions of the Governing Board.

The scholarships awarded to students are administered by the University itself as per its policies approved by the Governing Board. Scholarships granted by the University are “President’s Scholarship”, “Merit Scholarship” and “Freeship” scholarship. Separately, Government of India has been providing every year (since 2011), 100 scholarships to students from 5 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in SAARC (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Afghanistan) under the “SAARC Silver Jubilee Scholarship scheme”, which is administered by the University on behalf of India. There has been no change in the policy for SAARC Silver Jubilee Scholarship scheme.

India is committed to bearing 100% of the capital cost towards the University’s permanent campus development project including the cost of land for construction. Government is also bearing the rent for the temporary premises of the University at Akbar Bhawan, New Delhi. The total payment made towards capital expenditure of the project till date is Rs. 972.67 crores. The amount paid on account of rent for Akbar Bhawan till date is Rs. 308.12 crores.

Operational expenses of the University, which is an international body, are met through assessed contribution of SAARC Member States. Government of India’s share is 57.49% which has been paid in full till date.
