

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2349**  
ANSWERED ON 16/12/2024

**DISCONTINUATION OF SUPPORT FACILITIES FOR MINORITY STUDENTS**

2349 DR. JOHN BRITTAS:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has discontinued the Maulana Azad National Fellowships and Padho Pardesh Programme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the number of beneficiaries per annum and the financial assistance provided under these schemes during the last five years prior to their discontinuation, if so, the details thereof, year-wise; and
- (d) the financial support provided by Government to Maulana Azad Education Foundation during the last five years, year-wise?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a) & (b): The Ministry of Minority Affairs has been implementing various schemes for socio-economic empowerment of the six (6) centrally notified minority communities viz. Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Muslim, Parsi and Sikh including various educational empowerment Schemes such as (i) Pre-Matric, (ii) Post-Matric (iii) Merit-cum-Means based scholarships. Besides, this Ministry also implemented Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) Scheme and Padho Pardesh- Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies till 2021-22.

It is stated that this Ministry has implemented the Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) Scheme on the lines of the JRF Scheme of UGC and CSIR. The UGC and CSIR Fellowship Schemes are open for candidates of all social categories and communities including minorities. Further, students from minority communities are also covered under National Fellowship Schemes for Scheduled Castes and OBCs implemented by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and National Fellowship Scheme for Scheduled Tribes implemented by Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In view of the overlap among the aforesaid Schemes, it has been decided to discontinue the MANF Scheme from 2022-23 onward. However, the existing MANF Fellows will continue to receive Fellowships till the end of their respective tenure, subject to compliance with the extant guidelines.

Further, the Government has eased the norms and made various educational loans available easily to all students through Public Sector Banks. In addition to this, the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC), a PSU under Ministry of Minority Affairs, also

provides educational loan for education abroad, at lower rate of interest, exclusively to students belonging to minority communities. It has also been observed that benefits of interest subsidy that get accrued to the beneficiaries under the Padho Pardesh scheme are limited and also that there is an apparent overlap with other similar schemes being implemented by other Ministries which are applicable to eligible minority community students as well. In view of the aforesaid overlap, limited benefits and ease of availing education loans on lower rate of interest, it has been decided to discontinue Padho Pardesh Scheme from 2022-23 onward. However, existing beneficiaries of the Scheme as on 31.03.2022 will continue to receive the interest subsidy during the moratorium period on their educational loan, subject to the compliance with the extant guidelines.

(c): The year-wise details of number of beneficiaries and amount sanctioned under MANF and Padho Pardesh Schemes during the last five years, prior to their discontinuation, are as under:

**Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme**

Financial year	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount sanctioned (in ₹ Crore)
2017-18	3,047	124.87
2018-19	2,517	97.85
2019-20	2,578	100.00
2020-21	2,342	73.50
2021-22	2,058	74.00

**Padho Pardesh Scheme**

Financial Year	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount sanctioned (in ₹ Crore)
2017-18	1711	17.00
2018-19	2495	45.00
2019-20	3238	14.43
2020-21	3656	20.19
2021-22	4622	22.15

(d): The year-wise details of financial grants sanctioned by the Government to the Maulana Azad Education Foundation during the last five years are as under:

Financial Year	Amount sanctioned (in ₹ Crore)
2019-20	37.50
2020-21	70.92
2021-22	76.00
2022-23	0
2023-24	0

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