

EDUCATIONAL UPLIFTMENT OF MINORITIES

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Education and related issues

The Government is implementing various schemes for the welfare and upliftment of every section of the society including minorities especially economically weaker & downtrodden sections all over the country. The Ministry of Minority Affairs implements various scholarship schemes for educational empowerment of six notified minority communities i.e. Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Muslims, Buddhists and Parsis under which approx 4.52 crore minority students belonging to economically weaker section from the six centrally notified minority communities have been benefitted. Besides, there is another Scheme namely Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK), which is implemented by the Ministry, in 1300 identified Minority Concentration Areas (MCAs) of the country with the objective to develop socio economic and educational infrastructure assets and basic amenities in these areas. For Larger coverage of the scheme, in the year 2018 the areas under PMJVK have been increased from 90 Districts originally to 308 Districts of the country, which include 870 Blocks, 321 Towns and 109 District Headquarters. The thrust of PMJVK is to allocate at least 80% of the resources to education, health and skill development sectors of which at least 33-40% are allocated for women centric projects. The type of education projects sanctioned under PMJVK includes new school buildings, student hostels, residential schools, smart classrooms, computer labs, Libraries, Degree colleges, ITIs, Polytechnics, Unani Medical College, Nursing College, etc. Under the PMJVK more than 43000 basic infrastructure projects have been created such as schools, colleges, hostels, community centres, common service centres, ITIs, Polytechnics, Girls Hostels, Sadbhavana Mandaps, Hunaar Hub, etc in backward Minority concentrated areas across the country. After 2018, the Ministry has sanctioned a total of 19817 educational projects which include 4571 Additional Class Rooms (ACRs), 333 ACR Blocks, 492 School Buildings, 106 Residential Schools, 260 Hostels, 24 Degree Colleges, 37 ITIs, 8 Polytechnics, 636 toilets in school and 13350 Smart Class Room.

The schemes for educational upliftment of the minorities are mentioned below:

(i) Scholarship Schemes: Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship and Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship.

(ii) In addition, the Maulana Azad Education Foundation implements Begum Hazrat Mahal National Scholarship for meritorious girl students, belonging to the minority communities and whose total annual family income is less than Rs.2 lakh, and who are studying in Classes IX to XII.

(iii) Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme provides financial assistance to students from notified minority communities, to pursue higher education such as M.Phil and Ph.D.

(iv) Padho Pardesh: A scheme for providing interest subsidy on educational loans for overseas studies to enable students from minority communities to pursue higher education abroad.

(v) Naya Savera: The Free Coaching and Allied Scheme aims to assist students and candidates from minority communities to qualify in examinations for admission in technical and professional courses as well as to succeed in competitive examinations for recruitment to Group 'A', 'B' and 'C' services and other equivalent posts under the Central & State Governments including PSUs etc. During last seven years about 69,500 candidates have benefitted from the coaching

scheme of this Ministry.

(vi) Educational Loan Scheme of National Minorities Development Finance Corporation (NMDFC): NMDFC a PSU under the Ministry implements Educational Loan Scheme with the objective to facilitate job oriented education for the eligible persons belonging to minorities. Loan is available for 'technical and professional courses' for which loan up to Rs. 20.00 lakh for domestic courses and upto Rs. 30.00 lakh for courses abroad is provided.

In addition, the Scheme for providing Education to Madrasas/Minorities (SPEMM), which comprises two previously existing schemes namely, Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM) and Infrastructural Development in Minority Institutions (IDMI) has been transferred from Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education to this Ministry with effect from 1st April, 2021. The Objectives of SPQEM is to encourage traditional institutions like Madrasas and Maktabas by giving financial assistance to engage teachers to teach Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Hindi and English in their curriculum so that academic proficiency for classes I-XII is attainable for children studying in these institutions. The process of modernization of traditional Madrasas and Maktabas is voluntary. The objectives of IDMI is to facilitate education of minorities by augmenting and strengthening school infrastructure in Minority Institutions (elementary/ secondary/ senior secondary schools) in order to expand facilities for formal education to children of minority communities.

Besides, the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education implements Samagra Shiksha scheme and one of the major objectives of the scheme is bridging of gender and social category gaps including minorities at all levels of school education. The Scheme reaches out to children including those belonging to SC, ST, minority communities and transgender. The scheme has also given attention to urban deprived children, children affected by periodic migration, and children living in remote and scattered habitations. The Integrated Scheme also focuses on the identified Special Focus Districts (SFDs) on the basis of adverse performance on various indicators of enrolment, retention, and gender parity, as well as concentration of SC, ST and minority communities.

This information was given by the Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

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