

Rare Step by Government to Ensure Disbursal of Scholarships of 2015-16 to the Minority Students

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INVC NEWS New Delhi, The Government of India has taken a rare step for the first time to allow the Ministry of Minority Affairs to use the scholarship funds earmarked for 2015-16 in the next financial year through an alternative mechanism. This step has been taken by the Government to ensure the disbursal of scholarships due in 2015-16 to Minority students all over the country acknowledging the technical difficulties faced by the Minority students on the new National Scholarship Portal. Efforts were on to address the challenges being faced to shift payment of scholarships to DBT mode. Regular meetings at the highest levels in the Government of India and with the State Governments helped to overcome most of the challenges. From February onwards the scholarship disbursement picked up speed and till now about 39 lakh minority students have already received scholarships in their bank accounts under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode. It may be mentioned here that the Ministry of Minority Affairs distributes scholarship to over 80 lakh students every year. The Ministry of Minority Affairs has earlier taken a landmark decision that all the scholarships should be transferred directly to the students' bank account through the National Scholarship Portal. This is to address the problems faced by the students in receiving the full scholarship timely due to the involvement of many channels in the process of disbursement. It will also remove the leakages and malpractices by which some students received scholarship from multiple sources while others were denied the benefit. This being the first attempt for such a massive online verification and transfer of funds directly to the bank accounts of the students, some technical and administrative challenges were faced by the Government which included incomplete information in the forms, anomalies in the information provided in the application forms and a few software glitches. Further, the Ministry has also released an additional fund of Rs. 5.75 crore to the University Grant Commission for the Maulana Azad National Fellowship to meet the requirement of pending fellowships of Minority students during 2015-16. Altogether the Ministry has released Rs.55.43 Crore for the Fellowship Scheme during 2015-16.

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