



Over 1.44 crore Scheduled Caste students supported with scholarships amounting to Rs 12,773 crore

Key reforms introduced under SHRESHTA, National Overseas Scholarship and National Fellowship Schemes to ensure timely admissions, transparency and accountability

More than 1.01 Crore OBC and EBC students receive scholarship assistance of Rs 2,445.05 Crore

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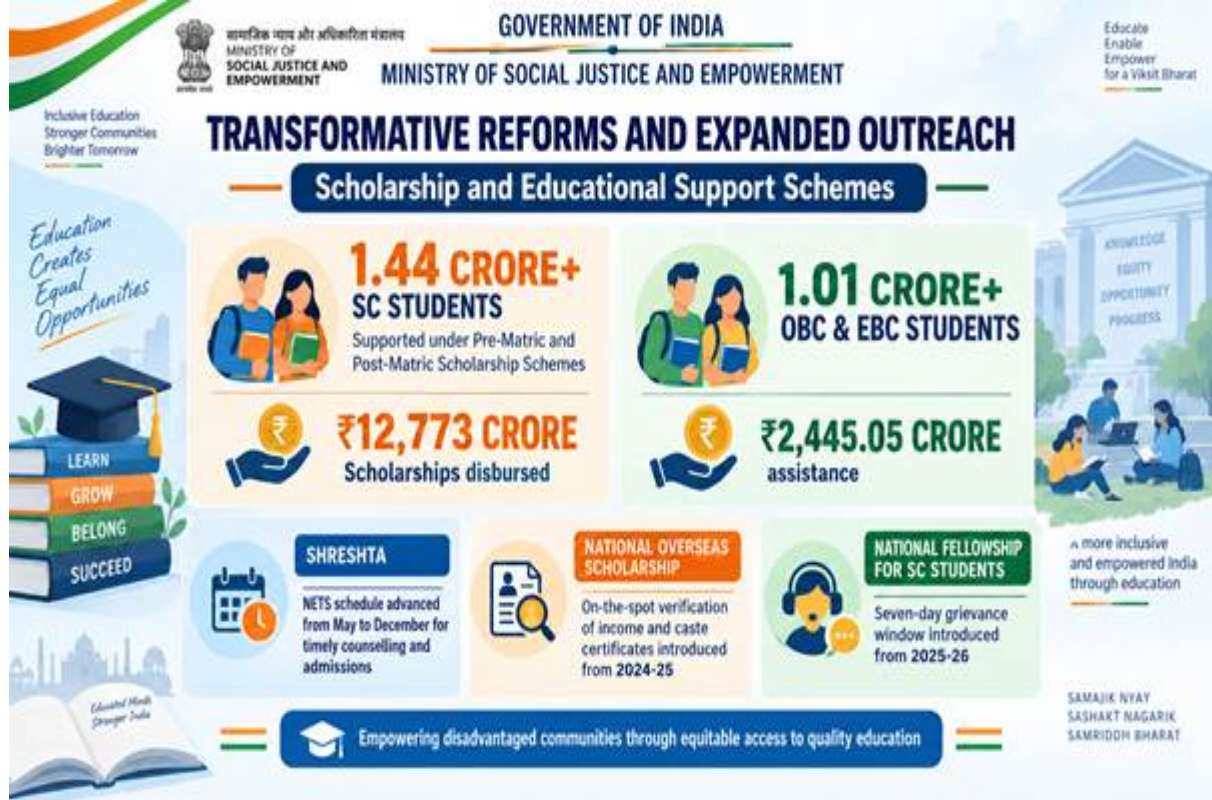
The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, has undertaken transformative reforms and significantly expanded the reach of its scholarship and educational support schemes. These initiatives are aimed at strengthening access to education for students from Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs), while making programme implementation more timely, transparent and accountable.

More than 1.44 crore SC students have benefited under the Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes. The Scholarships amounting to **Rs 12,773 crore** have been disbursed to support their educational advancement and help them pursue learning opportunities without financial barriers.

Similarly, more than **1.01 crore students** belonging to **OBC and EBC communities** have received support under the Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes, with assistance amounting to **Rs 2,445.05 crore**. This extensive outreach reflects the Government's commitment to promoting inclusive education and equal opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Under the **Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA)**, the annual National Entrance Test for SHRESHTA (NETS) examination schedule has been advanced from May to December. The reform is aimed at facilitating timely counselling and admissions, ensuring alignment with the academic calendar, and minimising delays and student drop-outs.

The revised schedule will enable eligible students to complete the admission process within the prescribed academic cycle and begin their studies without avoidable disruption.



To strengthen the authenticity of documents and prevent fraudulent claims, a system for **on-the-spot verification of income and caste certificates** directly from the issuing authorities was introduced under the **National Overseas Scholarship Scheme** from the academic year **2024–25**.

The measure reinforces the integrity of the selection process and helps ensure that scholarship benefits reach genuine and eligible candidates aspiring to pursue higher education abroad.

Under the **National Fellowship for SC Students Scheme**, a mandatory seven-day grievance-submission window was introduced from the academic year **2025–26** following the declaration of the UGC-NET and Joint CSIR-UGC NET results.

The stipulated window enables students to report discrepancies within a defined timeframe. It also promotes timely resolution of grievances, strengthens accountability and enhances transparency and trust in the fellowship-selection process.

Through expanded financial assistance and process-driven reforms, the Ministry continues to build a more inclusive, efficient and student-centric educational support ecosystem. These measures reaffirm the Government's commitment to empowering disadvantaged communities through equitable access to quality education and opportunities for academic advancement.

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