



**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS**

PRESS RELEASE

Revised Scheme of National Overseas Scholarships (NOS) for ST candidates

Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recently approved the revised scheme of National Overseas Scholarships (NOS) for ST candidates by the Competent Authority. The scheme would be implemented during the 12th Five Year Plan period (2013-14 to 2016-17). The scheme is meant to provide financial assistance to students selected for pursuing higher studies abroad for Post-Graduation, Ph. D and Post-Doctoral research programmes. Ministry has revised some of its provisions to make it more beneficial for ST students in terms of increasing their employability and for their socio-economic development.

To expand the scope of field of study, the number of awards has been increased from existing 15 to 20. In order to make the scheme more inclusive, out of total 20 awards, 3 awards have been earmarked for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and 30% awards have been earmarked for girls candidates. Now with the inclusion of more subjects into the scheme and reorganising field of study by grouping the various subjects under a few broad-based fields more ST students would be benefitted as the number of subjects has increased from 35 to 52. Earlier the eligibility criteria was 60%, now it has been reduced to 55% and made equivalent to the norms followed in the case of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) Scheme so as to enable a larger number of ST students to becoming eligible to apply for the scholarships under NOS. The maximum income ceiling has now been increased to Rs 6 lakhs per annum from Rs3 lakh per annum earlier. However, all other parameters remaining the same, preference would be given to students with lower income. Similarly, financial assistance and equipment allowance and Incidental Journey expenses have been increased to 10% keeping in view the inflation rates.

Considering the fluctuating Air Fares, the ceiling cap for air travel has been relaxed and now ST student can travel on actual basis from India to the nearest place to the educational institution and back to India, by Economy Class and shortest route by National Carrier i.e. Air India. Henceforth, the earlier awardees already undergoing studies abroad will also be eligible to receive the revised rates of financial assistance etc. as approved in the scheme. Regarding duration of the course, it was found that in some countries masters' degree programmes vary from 1 to 3 years of programmes. Therefore, in the revised scheme duration of programme has been kept as upto 1.5 years for Post Doctoral; upto 4 years for Ph.d and between 1 and 3 years for Masters degree programme.

Last but not the least, to enhance the chances of students being selected in Foreign Universities, a provision for providing coaching for TOEFL/GRE/GMAT has put in place for selected candidates.



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**THE SCHEME OF NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR SCHEDULED TRIBE CANDIDATES FROM 2012-13 TO 2016-17**

I. OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEME

The scheme provides financial assistance to students selected for pursuing higher studies abroad in certain subjects at the Masters level, and for Ph. D and Post-Doctoral research programmes. Bachelor level courses in any discipline are not covered under the scheme. 20 awards per year would be sanctioned to ST students as under:

| Sl. No. | Category | No. of Award |
|---------|---|--------------|
| 1 | Scheduled Tribes | 17 |
| 2 | Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTG) | 03 |
| | Total | 20 |

(ii). If for any specific year, successful candidates are not available to the extent prescribed for either of the above listed categories, the awards for that year would be inter-changeable vice-versa between the above categories. Women candidates will be encouraged: other things being equal, preference in selection will be given to women candidates. Moreover, six awards (30%) are earmarked for girls. However, in case the earmarked slots remain un-filled, these slots may be transferred to boys.

(iii) The jurisdiction of the scheme extends only to providing prescribed financial support to the selected candidates for pursuing higher education in the specified subjects. The scheme does not cover any area related to employment opportunities of the awardee after his/her having availed of the award

II. SUBJECTS COVERS UNDER THE SCHEME

The subjects/disciplines in which courses may be undertaken for grant of award are listed below:-

| Field of study | Number of slots for the field of study |
|---------------------|--|
| 1.Engineering | 07 |
| 2. Management | |
| 3. Economic/Finance | |
| 3. Pure Science | 03 |
| 4. Applied Science | |
| 5. Agriculture | 05 |
| 6 .Medicine | |
| 7. Humanities | 05 |
| 8.Social Science | |

A list indicating the subjects under each field of study mentioned above which will qualify for consideration for award of scholarship is given at Annexure-I.

III. DURATION OF AWARD WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The prescribed financial assistance shall be provided till completion of the course/research or the following period, whichever is earlier:-

- (a) Post Doctoral Research - 1 & 1/2 years (One and a half year)
- (b) Ph. D. - 4 years (four years)
- (c) Master's Degree – 1/2/3 years (One/Two/Three years) depending upon the duration of the Course.

The extension of stay beyond prescribed period for levels of courses as mentioned above, may be considered without financial assistance of any kind except the air passage to return to India, if and only if recommendation of the competent concerned authority in the educational institution/ university as well as the Indian Mission abroad is received certifying that such an overstay for a specified period, is absolutely essential for facilitating the candidate to complete the course. The final decision in this regard will, however, rest with the Government of India alone.

IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

(i) Minimum Qualifications

- (a) **For Post Doctoral** : 55% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Master's Degree and Ph.D.

Experience: 5 years - Research/Teaching/ Professional in the concerned field is desirable. Candidates with experience would be given preference.

- (b) **For Ph.D.** : 55% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Master's Degree.

Experience: 2 years' - Teaching/ Research/ Professional / M. Phil Degree in the concerned field is desirable. Candidates with experience would be given preference.

- (c) **For Masters' Degree** : 55% marks or equivalent grade in relevant Bachelor's Degree.

Experience: 2 years' work experience in the concerned field is desirable. Candidates with experience would be given preference.

(ii) AGE

Below 35 years, as on first day of July of the relevant year of the award.

(iii) INCOME CEILING

Total income from all sources of the employed candidate or his/her parents/guardians should not exceed Rs. 6.00 lakh per annum (excluding such allowances as are not treated as part of total income for the purpose of income-tax) as

certified by the employer. A copy of latest tax-assessment, be also enclosed with application.

(iv) ONE CHILD IN A FAMILY AND ONE TIME AWARD

Not more than one child of the same parents/guardians will be eligible and to this effect a self-certification will be required from the candidate. An individual can be given the award only once and cannot be considered for the award for a second or subsequent time.

V. OTHER MANDATORY CONDITION

Other mandatory condition have been placed at Annexure-II to this document

VI. VALUE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

(i) Annual Maintenance Allowance

A annual maintenance allowance in US will be *US Dollars 15,400 (\$ Fifteen thousand four hundred only)* for all level of courses covered under the Scheme. The annual maintenance allowance for candidates in United Kingdom will be *Pound sterling 9,900 (£ Nine thousand nine hundred only)* for all levels of courses covered under the scheme.

(ii) Annual Contingency Allowance

A annual Contingency allowance for books/essential apparatus/study tour/typing and binding of thesis etc. will be *US Dollars 1512 (\$ One thousand five hundred twelve only)* for the candidates in US and for candidates in United Kingdom, it will be *Pounds sterling 1100 (£ One thousand one hundred only)*

(iii) Poll Tax

Actual shall be paid, wherever applicable.

(iv) Visa Fees

Actual visa fees in Indian Rupees will be paid.

(v) Equipment Allowance

Equipment Allowance will be allowed @ Rs.1320/- per annum

(vi) Incidental Journey Expenses

Incidental journey expenses up to US Dollars 18.70 or its equivalent in Indian Rupees are permissible.

(vii) Fees

Tuition fees as per actual will be admissible.

(viii) Medical Insurance Premium

Actual as charged will be admissible.

(ix) Cost of Air Passage

Air passage grant on actual basis from India to the nearest place to the educational institution and back to India, by economy class and shortest route in arrangements with the national carrier, shall be provided.

(x) Local Travel

Second or Coach class railway fare from the port of disembarkation to the place of study and back and in case of far flung places not connected by rail, bus fare(s) from the place of residence to the nearest railway station, actual charge of crossing by ferry, air fare to the nearest rail-cum-air Station and/or II class railway fare by the shortest route to the port of embarkation and back will be permissible.

(xi) All the awardees already undergoing studies abroad would also be eligible to receive the revised rates as approved in the scheme and its modified form with prospective effect.

The mode of disbursement of above listed financial assistance will be decided by Government of India and Indian Missions abroad.

VII. DOMESTIC TRAVEL FOR INTERVIEW.

For attending interviews by the candidates at the place decided by the Government of India, the second class fare/ordinary class bus fare from the city of their place of residence to the city in which the interviews for selection have been decided by the Government of India shall be permissible.

VIII. TRAINING FOR SELECTED CANDIDATES

The finally selected candidates will be supported for getting Coaching for TOEFL/GRE/GMAT.

IX. FURNISHING OF FALSE INFORMATION

If any candidate has furnished any false information/document and is established as false, he/she shall be debarred from the award and if he/she has availed of it or is availing, an action will be initiated for recovery of the amount spent with 15% compound interest thereon. Such candidate will also be black listed for future and the employed candidate will also have to face departmental action for such act, for which the Government of India will take up the matter with the respective employers. The respective employers are, therefore, also requested to carefully go through contents of application of their employees before forwarding the same to this Ministry. The employers are also free to insist on candidates employed by them to execute such bonds with them, as they deem fit and necessary and in accordance with their rules and regulations in such cases.

X. DEFAULT UNDER THE SCHEME

In case a candidate pursuing studies abroad violates any of the terms and conditions of the bonds executed by him/her and that the educational institution/university intimates the Indian Mission abroad about his/her adverse reports on studies and/or conduct and/or that the candidate leaves for any other country or absconds or joins any other university or course/programme or/and returns to India in case of emergency without intimating the Indian Mission abroad, he/she shall be declared a defaulter and shall be liable to refund the entire amount spent on him/her along with the interest @ 12% per annum or such rate as may be fixed from time to time by Government of India and in case an awardee fails to repay the amount within six months from the date on which a demand for such refund is made, penal interest at the rate which is 2.5% higher than the aforesaid rate of interest on the outstanding amount would be charged. If the awardee fails to repay such amount along with interest thereon in the manner decided by Government of India, his/her sureties who have executed bonds, shall be liable to pay the entire amount failing which the District Collector of the concerned district shall realize the amount as arrears of land revenue.

XI. STEPS TO BE TAKEN FOR SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

This will include activities relating to generation of awareness about the scheme, publicity through Newspapers/ Advertisement and Website, Screening and Selection of the candidates on the basis of the applications received, announcement of results etc as per the guidelines given in **Annexure-II** to this document.

XII. EARNINGS FROM RESEARCH/TEACHING ASSISTANCESHIP

The awardees are permitted to supplement their prescribed allowances by undertaking Research/Teaching Assistantship up to US Dollars 2400/- per annum and for awardees in United Kingdom, Pounds sterling 1560/- per annum. Where income earned is beyond these prescribed ceilings, the maintenance allowance under the scheme shall be correspondingly reduced by the Indian Missions abroad.

XIII. RELAXATION OF ANY CLAUSE OF THE SCHEME

There is no clause in this Scheme under which relaxation of any of norms for selection of the candidates can be considered and decided by any authority.

However, this Ministry, if necessary, in consultation with other Departments/ Agencies, shall take decisions on such issues concerning awardees as may arise from circumstances which are of unforeseeable nature and, thus, not covered under this written scheme and such decisions of the Ministry shall be final and binding on the awardees.

XIV. LITIGATION

Any litigation on matters arising out of this scheme in India will be subject to sole jurisdiction of the courts situated in Union Territory of Delhi. The litigations arising abroad will be attended to by the Indian Missions abroad.

XV. PASSAGE GRANTS FOR ST CANDIDATES OTHER THAN THE STUDENTS.

Applications on plain paper in the prescribed format shall also be invited for the award of four passage grants in a year to Scheduled Tribes, which are open throughout the year. Only those ST candidates who are in receipt of a merit scholarship for Post Graduate Studies, Research or Training abroad (excluding attending seminars, workshops, conferences), from a foreign government/ organization or under any other scheme, where the cost of passage is not provided, shall be eligible to apply.

The candidates should possess a Master's or an equivalent degree in Technical, Engineering and Science disciplines. The eligibility conditions otherwise will be same as contained in the scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for ST. The candidates, who have already reached abroad, will not be considered for passage grants. For selected candidates, air passage to the destination abroad and back to India, will be provided by economy class and shortest route through arrangement with the **national carrier**. The prospective candidates may contact this Ministry for obtaining the application form for applying for the passage grant.

List of identified subject/disciplines under the Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for ST students

| Sl. No. | Name of the field of study | Subjects included in the field of study |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Engineering and Medicine | 1.Bio-technology/Genetic Engineering 2. Industrial Environmental Engineering 3. Nano-Technology 4. Marine Engineering 5. Petro-Chemical Engineering 6. Plastic Technology 7. Cryogenic Engineering 8. Mechatronics 9. Automation Robotics in including Artificial Intelligence 10.Laser Technology 11.Radiology 12.Low Temperature Thermal Dynamics 13.Dock and Harbor Engineering 14.Imaging System Technology 15.Composite Materials Engineering including Decentralised Power Distribution(for Solar Heat) system, Energy Storage Engineering, Energy Conservation, Energy Efficient Habitat Engineering 16.Packaging Engineering./Technology 17.Nuclear Engineering 18. Information Technology including Computer Engineering, Software, Software Quality Assurance, Networking/Connectivity Engineering, Communication System under Hazardous or Post-disaster conditions, Multi-media Communication 20. Industrial Safety Engineering 21. Neurology 22. Pediatrics 23. Psychiatry 24. Reproductive health 25. Oncology 26. Nuclear Medicine |

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|----|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2. | Agriculture/Allied field | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.Agriculture and Agro Technology2.Agronomy3.Forestry4.Floriculture & Landscaping5.Food Sciences & Technology6.Forestry & Natural Resources7.Horticulture8.Plant Pathology9.Farm Power & Machinery11.Veterinary Sciences12.Soils & Water Management13.Plant Breeding & Genetics14.Small-scale Rural Technology |
| 3 | Humanities and Social Science | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Economics2. Anthropology3. Sociology4. Journalism & Mass Communication |
| 4. | Pure Science/Applied Science | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ocean and Atmospheric Science2. Mathematics3. Molecular Biology4. Physics5.Chemistry |
| 5. | Finance/ Management | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.Coporate Finance2. Development Finance3.Business management |

OTHER MANDATORY CONDITIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THE NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ST STUDENTS.

Candidates who are in employment must forward their applications through their employer, along with a NOC by the employer, to this Ministry so as to reach the Ministry on or before the last date of receipt of applications as specified in the advertisement of the scheme.

2. The finally selected candidates shall obtain admission and join an accredited university/ institution abroad **within three years** from the date of communication of selection. On expiry of this specified period of time, the award will automatically get cancelled and come to an end. No request for extension of time for availing the award is permissible under the scheme. The candidates are required to seek admission and join accredited Universities/ institutions only.

3. The selected candidate shall execute a bond on a non-judicial stamp paper before **a notary-public with two sureties** who will execute surety bonds separately for the actual amount to be spent by Government of India on the candidate or **Rs.50,000/- whichever is more**. Each of the surety bonds shall specify and cover for the estimated expenditure in Indian Rupees that would be incurred as travel expenses, tuition fees, maintenance and contingency allowances, stipends, scholarship and other miscellaneous expenses, on the awardee during the entire period of study abroad and shall become payable by the sureties jointly or/and severally in case the awardee is declared a defaulter by the Ministry under the provisions of the scheme. The language of the bond as decided by the Government of India shall be acceptable to the candidate.

4. The selected candidate shall also execute a bond with this Ministry and the Indian Mission abroad, as per prevailing laws of the foreign country, that the extension of stay abroad beyond completion of the course or duration of the scholarship under the scheme, whichever is earlier will not be permissible except as provided in para III of this scheme. The candidate/awardee shall not seek any extension of stay abroad beyond the duration for which the scholarship is awarded. The language of the bond as decided by Government of India will be acceptable to candidate.

5. The candidate shall not change the course of study or research for which scholarship has been sanctioned.

6. The candidate shall execute another bond with this Ministry and the Indian Mission abroad, that he/she will sign a Record Release Consent Form in the manner prescribed by Government of India and it shall be acceptable to the candidate.

7. The selected candidates may pursue their respective studies in an accredited university/ institution in a country of their choice with which India has diplomatic relations, but this will be subject to prior written approval of the Government of India, whose decision will be final and not challengeable. The candidates are required to make their own efforts in seeking admission in accredited Universities/ institutions in programmes/fields specified in the scheme.

8. Expenses and logistics covered by the award would be strictly limited to the candidate.

9. All administrative matters like study leave; salary etc. will be directly sorted out by the candidate with his/her employer and as per rules of the serving organization. This Ministry will not take any responsibility or render assistance in this regard.

10. In an emergency the awardee is permitted to return to India for a specific purpose in connection with the emergency, after having duly informed the Indian Mission as well as the awardee's institution of study. The awardee will, however, be required to bear to and for journey expenses for the visit and shall also not be entitled to receive maintenance allowance under the scheme, from the Indian Mission, for the period of being away from the place of his/her educational institution abroad and the maintenance allowance shall be resumed by the Indian Mission only from the date of his/her resuming same course at the same institution. The awardee shall return to the place of his/her educational institution, as early as possible; failing which, he/she shall be liable to be declared a defaulter and the recovery proceeding will be initiated against him/her.

11. All candidates after having availed of the award under the scheme shall return to India and under no circumstances they will be issued '**No Obligation to Return to India**' certificate by any authority in Government of India.

12. The awardee prior his/her departure would execute a bond incorporating a clause to the effect that they would remain in India for 5 years after their return and **shall remain in India for at least five years** and shall also serve the Government, if he/she continues to be in Government service after return to India, as he/she was before going abroad with award under the scheme. With a view to introducing a greater element of accountability in the scheme, and for a better evaluation of its impact, the Ministry would monitor what the candidates were doing for 3 years subsequent to their return after award of scholarship.

13. It will be for the candidate to obtain the appropriate visa for a country wherein he/she intends to study further under award from the scheme, and for the visa issuing authorities to issue only such visa as permits the candidate to pursue the specified course abroad and thereafter the candidate returns to India. Government of India will render no assistance to a candidate for obtaining visa.

14. Selected candidates shall furnish all such documents and enter into such agreements before their departure as shall be decided by the Government of India from time to time. In case the candidate is already residing abroad, he/she shall furnish all relevant documents and enter into such agreements prior to the release of the scholarship by the Indian Mission.

15. In case the awardee has received overpayment through Indian Mission abroad or any other Government agency, he/she shall refund the same to Government of India and his/her employer (if any) is authorized to recover the excess amount from his/her dues, on request from Government of India, and refund the same to Government of India.

16. The decisions of Government of India shall be final in all such issues, as may come up during course of time.

17. The Indian Mission abroad shall obtain six monthly progress reports from the university/ institution where the awardee is pursuing his/her studies for which the award was given under the scheme. The Mission shall inform this Ministry such serious adverse developments in case of the awardee which requires decision towards further continuation of the award or otherwise. The Mission shall, however, keep on advising such awardees to put serious efforts in improving their achievements, as are not seen to be up to the mark, as reflected in their said six monthly progress reports and they may also be reminded that financial assistance under the scheme is not extendable beyond the stipulated period under the scheme.

18. If an awardee pursuing Ph.D. or Post Doctoral research in a university/ institution where he/she is initially registered with, finds himself/herself in a serious situation where his/her guide has left and there are no immediate replacements thereof or that the university/institution has discontinued the research support facilities in the area where the awardee was pursuing Ph.D./Post Doctoral research; the Indian Mission abroad is authorized in such cases to allow the awardee to change the university/ institutions, after the Mission is satisfied about such a need, subject, however, to the condition that the credits earned by the awardee in the initial university/ institution are accepted for transfer by the second university/ institution and that the total period of award shall remain unchanged even on such a transfer/change, which may be permitted only once during the award.

19. The prospective awardee shall be selected by the Selection Committee constituted by this Ministry, for a particular subject from within the specified subjects for pursuing Masters' Programme, Ph.D. or Post Doctoral programme and candidate **shall be given three years' time** from the date of communication about his/her selection for the award to obtain admission in the specified programme. The candidate before leaving for overseas to pursue the course for which he/she was selected, shall give a declaration to this Ministry that he/she has not already acquired the qualification in the meanwhile or has not submitted the final thesis leading to active possibility of acquiring the qualification, from an Indian University. This Ministry on receiving such a declaration from the candidate will appropriately decide as to whether candidate can be awarded under the scheme or otherwise and the departure of the candidate will depend on the decision.

20. In case the awardee is unable to complete the course successfully and that if the guide/head of the department of the candidate certifies that the candidate **has not been found wanting** in his/her commitment/dedication/attention to studies then the Ministry shall have the right to exempt him/her from the penalty clause of "**Defaulter under the Scheme**". The Indian Missions in such cases shall provide the return air passage to India by shortest route and economy class.

21. In normal circumstances, immediately after successful completion of the course, the Indian Mission abroad shall book the return journey, for the awardee as provided in the scheme. If the awardee remains in the foreign country for more than one month after successful completion of the course and then return to India at his/her own cost, he/she shall not be entitled to refund of return passage.

DETAILS ABOUT THE STEPS TO BE TAKEN FOR SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

1. AWARENESS OF SCHEME

The Ministry will periodically write to all the identified Universities/IITs/ Medical Colleges etc. with a request to post the silent features of the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme.

2. ADVERTISEMENT FOR INVITING APPLICATIONS

The scheme will be advertised in the leading newspapers, Employment News and Web-site of the Ministry along with summarized information about it every year in the month of August. The candidates shall, after assessing their eligibility and suitability, as per conditions of the scheme, apply to this Ministry (employed candidates through proper channel), in the prescribed application form which will form a part of the advertisement. The last date of receiving applications will also be mentioned in the advertisement. **The candidate can also apply through online and submit hard copy of the application within a period of one month from the date of issue of the advertisements in leading newspapers and Web-site of the Ministry.**

3. SELECTION PROCEDURE

All applications received within the stipulated period, will be put before the Screening Committee for short-listing of the applications. The candidates short listed by the Screening Committee will be required to present themselves for personal interview before the Selection Committee. The merit list prepared, on the basis of assessment of individual candidates, by the Selection Committee, will finally and decisively complete the selection procedure to decide the merit. In case of tie-up of two or more candidates, the one who is eldest in age (as per date of birth) will be placed above the others, as per respective dates of birth as recorded in Secondary School Certificate. **Call letters to eligible candidates will be posted on the Ministry's website for interview.**

The constitution of Screening and Selection Committee will be decided by Government of India. The Chairperson and Members of these Committees will be entitled to be paid air fare and the rate of D.A. would be as admissible to the Secretary to the Government of India. If the Chairperson and Members of these Committees are from Delhi/New Delhi then a suitable compensation package inclusive of traveling allowance will be payable to them, for each day of their participation in proceedings of the meetings. There will be no departmental representative in the Selection Committee and the concerned Department will lend only administrative and logistic support to them including services like tea, coffee, cold drinks, lunch, snacks etc. **which may be arranged from anywhere.**
