

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 30.5.2018 of Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, New Delhi.

I would like to draw your kind attention to the recent revision of guidelines for the Post Matric Scholarship scheme, wherein it has been stated that the fees claimed against the Management quota/Spot admission seat in any institutions / Universities will not be reimbursed with effect from April, 2018. I wish to state that in Tamil Nadu, large number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribe students belonging to poor economic background who are not able to get admission under the Government quota on merit, have been availing the benefit under the Post Matric Scholarship scheme under management quota seats in self financing colleges. These students who have so far, benefited by the Post Matric scholarship scheme had led to a large number of these students joining the Higher and Technical education institutions in the State. In fact, this scheme has largely benefitted the State to achieve higher Gross Enrollment Ratio of more than 45%. Non-reimbursement of fees for management quota seats under the new guidelines, will create a huge set back in achieving the goal of social equity and social justice, as it will deny opportunities to the poor SC/ST students in the fields of higher and technical education. This may cause serious resentment and unrest among the SC/ST community.

Further, instead of strengthening this scheme in the interest of achieving social justice and promoting the welfare of SC/ST, the revised guidelines will only dilute the State's efforts in this regard. It is relevant to point out that even though increased awareness resulted in increased admission of SC/ST students to higher education, the allocation in the central budget remained stagnant for the past many years. This resulted in accumulation of a huge amount of pending reimbursement to the State by Government of India, which affected the scheme's implementation at the field level. For instance, Rs.1803.50 crore has accumulated as arrears pending reimbursement to the State of Tamil Nadu, upto March, 2018. Apparently, the above move seems to curtail

expenditure within the budget sanction, instead of extending the benefit to all eligible students. Under the circumstances, the right course of action should be to step up the allocation substantially rather than making modifications in the guidelines to curtail the existing benefit.

As per the existing scheme guidelines, the total expenditure under the scheme at the end of a plan period, will be considered as the committed liability of the State for the next plan period and Central Assistance would be provided for the expenditure over and above this committed liability. In view of the fact that the Five Year Plans, no longer exist, I request that the scheme may be funded with a sharing pattern of 60:40 between the Centre and State respectively, as in the case of other Central Schemes. This will bring more clarity in the scheme funding.

I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to kindly intervene and allow reimbursement of fees against management quota seats also, without any change and release the pending central assistance to the States early. Since the admission process for Higher and Technical Education courses in the State is about to begin, Hon'ble Prime Minister may kindly consider my request on priority and accordingly direct the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

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