

'Central Sector Scheme of Free Coaching for SC and OBC Students'

1. Background

i) The empowerment of the weaker sections has been a priority area of concern for the Government since independence. A number of plans and programmes are being implemented for assisting them so as to enhance their skills and capabilities for ensuring rapid economic development and integration in the national mainstream.

ii) A scheme for providing free coaching to students belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs) was started during 6th Five Year Plan. Similar schemes were also being implemented to provide free coaching to students belonging to other backward classes (OBCs) and minorities. With a view to ensure effective implementation and monitoring and to assist the students in a better manner, the separate coaching schemes for SCs, OBCs and Minorities were amalgamated and a combined Scheme, namely, 'Coaching and Allied Assistance for Weaker Sections' including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities was introduced with effect from September, 2001.

iii) After creation of a separate Ministry to handle matters relating to the minorities viz. the Ministry of Minority Affairs, the Scheme underwent further revision in April 2007 for removing the minority component from the ambit of the scheme and to accommodate other changes deemed necessary at that point of time. The last revision of the Scheme came into effect from 01.08.2012.

2. Objective

The objective of the Scheme is to provide coaching of good quality for economically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations and succeed in obtaining an appropriate job in Public/Private Sector.

3. Courses for Coaching

The **courses** for which the Coaching will be imparted shall be as follows:

- i) Group A and B examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) and the various Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs);
- ii) Group A and B examinations conducted by the State Public Service Commissions;
- iii) Officers' Grade examinations conducted by Banks, Insurance Companies and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs);
- iv) Premier Entrance Examinations for admission in (a) Engineering (eg. IIT-JEE & AIEEE), (b) Medical (eg. AIPMT), (c) Professional courses like Management (eg. CAT) and Law (eg. CLAT), and (d) Any other such disciplines as Ministry may decide from time to time.
- v) Eligibility tests/examinations like SAT, GRE, GMAT and TOEFL.

4. Implementing Agencies

The Scheme will be implemented through the reputed coaching institutions/centres run by the:

- i) Central Government/State Governments/UT Administrations/PSUs/Autonomous Bodies under Central/State Governments;
- ii) Universities (both Central and State) including the Deemed Universities and Private Universities recognized by concerned authority; and
- iii) Registered private institutions/NGOs.

5. Eligibility criteria for applying for Empanelment of Coaching Institutions

- (i) The institute should be a registered body or run by any organization registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860/Companies Act, 2013 or any other relevant Act of the State/Union Territory.

- (ii) The institute should have been registered at least for a period of 3 years as on date of notification inviting applications from States/UTs/Coaching Institutions for empanelment by the Ministry.
- (iii) The institute should have been fully functional for a minimum period of 3 years at the time of applying under this Scheme and having a minimum enrolment of 100 students in the courses as indicated at Para-3 here-in-above each year for at least two years, immediately prior to the year in which selected for empanelment.
- (iv) The institute must have proper infrastructure to meet all requirements for providing coaching in the courses applied for.

6. Selection of Institutions

- i) The proposals for empanelment of coaching institutions will be considered by a **Selection Committee** and recommended for selection based on their past record of performance and other criteria to be determined by the Selection Committee. The institutions for providing coaching will finally be selected by the Ministry based on the recommendations of the Selection Committee. The Composition of Selection Committee will be as follows:

a.	Additional Secretary (SJE)	-	Chairperson
b.	Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, D/o SJE	-	Member
c.	Joint Secretary, SCD-B, D/o SJE	-	Member
d.	Joint Secretary, Deptt. of Higher Education	-	Member
e.	A representative of Niti Aayog	-	Member
f.	Two representatives from relevant background to be decided by the Minister(SJE)	-	Member
g.	Director/ DS, Scheduled Caste Division, D/o SJE	-	Convener

- (ii) The States/UTs will furnish a list of at least 5 and not more than 10 reputed coaching institutions with a proven track record of success in coaching in courses identified in Para-3 here-in-above.
- (iii) In addition to proposals received from States, the Selection Committee as indicated at Sub-para (ii) above may also propose empanelment of institutes which enjoy good reputation and record of performance in providing coaching.

- iv) On receipt of list of names of coaching institutions, the institutes will be addressed by M/o SJE to submit a detailed proposal in compliance with requirements of the Scheme along with their performance record in proforma as requested.
- v) Reputed institutions having branches in more than one district in a State will be given preference over stand alone institutions.
- vi) The concerned Programme Division will carry out a preliminary screening of the proposals received from State Governments / UTs and institutions recommended by the Selection Committee and shortlist those, which prima facie satisfy the eligibility criteria and have all prescribed supporting documents. Such shortlisted proposals shall be placed before the Selection Committee.
- vii) The institutions, once selected, will enter into an **Agreement** with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India with regard to the courses to be offered, terms and conditions of empanelment, fee structures, number of slots, duration of courses, furnishing of Utilization Certificates, etc.
- viii) Selected coaching institutions will be empanelled for a period of three years subject to their Agreements entered with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Note: With a view to give the Scheme wider publicity, the coaching institute will issue advertisement in the local newspapers and invite applications from the eligible SC and OBC candidates as per provisions of the Scheme.

7. Funding Pattern

- i) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India will fund the entire expenditure of coaching provided to selected SC/OBC candidates as per the terms and conditions of the Scheme and agreement entered into with the concerned coaching institute.
- ii) The grant-in-aid along with eligible amount of stipend for the students will be released directly to the coaching institutions/centres concerned.

- iii) Grant-in-aid will be released to the institutions concerned in two equal installments every year.
- iv) The first installment will be released to the institutes immediately after their empanelment. However, the second installment of grant-in-aid will be released (in shape of reimbursement) to the coaching institutes on production of Utilization Certificate, complete details of stipend paid to the students coached, details of expenditure made, audited accounts certified by a Chartered Accountant, details of courses conducted and number of students trained.
- v) After completion of first year, the performance of the institutions will be assessed before releasing the fund for the subsequent year. The release of fund after every year will depend on the satisfactory performance of the institution during the previous year.
- vi) The grant-in-aid for 2nd and 3rd year would be released to empanelled institutions only after receipt of due Utilization Certificate, list of students coached with the previous year's grant, details of stipend paid to the students, audited accounts in respect of previous year's funds and performance of students coached during previous year.

8. Quantum of Fee

The quantum of fees will be as agreed to in the agreement between the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and the coaching institution at the time of empanelment.

9. Ratio of Candidates

The ratio of SC and OBC students to be coached under the Scheme will be 70:30. In case of non-availability or inadequate availability of candidates in a particular category, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment can relax this ratio.

10. Eligibility criteria and selection of beneficiary students

- i) The students should be selected by the coaching institution based on academic criteria prescribed by the institution itself. However, the institution may relax these criteria for SC/OBC candidates as per terms to be laid down in the Agreement.
- ii) Only students belonging to SCs and OBCs having total family income from all sources of Rs.6.00 lakh or less per annum will be eligible for benefits under the Scheme.
- iii) Benefits under the Scheme can be availed by a particular student not more than twice, irrespective of the number of chances he/she may be entitled to take in a particular competitive examination. The coaching institution will also be required to take an affidavit from the students that they have not taken benefit more than twice under the Scheme.
- iv) Where examination is conducted in two stages viz. Preliminary and Main, the candidates will be entitled for free coaching for both the examinations. They will be entitled for free coaching upto two times each for Preliminary and Main examinations as per their convenience. However, there will be no restriction in number of chances for coaching for Interview, if the candidate is selected for interview.
- v) The selected students shall have to attend all classes. In the event of any student remaining absent for more than 15 days without any valid reason, benefits of free coaching to him/her shall be discontinued under intimation to this Ministry.

11. Stipend

Monthly stipend of Rs.2500/- per student will be paid for local students for attending the coaching class. Similarly, Rs.5000/- per student will be paid per month for outstation students. The institute would have to pay stipend to each student on monthly basis through ECS or cheque. No cash payment would be allowed.

12. Special Allowance

Students with disabilities would also be eligible for Special for Special Allowance of Rs. 2000/- per student per month towards reader allowance, escort allowance, helper allowance etc. having valid disability certificate (equal to or more than 40% disability).

13. General Provisions

- i) The institute shall maintain full progress record of the coaching and selection of the candidates.
- ii) Grant-in-aid released to the institutions shall be dealt with in a separate account by them.
- iii) The institutions shall utilize the grant-in-aid only for the purposes laid down in this Scheme. In the event of the grantee institution acting in contravention of this condition, the institution will be liable to refund the amount received with 18% penal interest and other action, as deemed necessary.

14. Review of performance and monitoring

- i) There will be a review of performance of the coaching institutions at the end of 3rd year of empanelment. The assessment will be based on the results of SC and OBC candidates provided coaching under the Scheme and the success rate enjoyed by coached students in clearing competitive examination for which he/she has received coaching.
- ii) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India reserves the right to conduct random inspection/check from time to time of any of the empanelled institutions.
- iii) The Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment reserves the right to discontinue funding under the Scheme at any point of time if the performance of the coaching institute is found to be unsatisfactory.

15. Revision of the Scheme

The Scheme will be reviewed every three years.
