

# More science scholarships for students okayed

## UGC will offer 600 fellowships every year

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** The Centre on Thursday has approved doubling the number of CSIR-UGC national eligibility test (NET) fellowships in the remaining plan period so that the benefits can be extended to 12,000 students pursuing their career in science.

The total cost of providing fellowships for 12,000 students in the 11th Plan period – up from 6,000 fellowships offered in the 10th Plan period – has been estimated at Rs 444.34 crore.

The additional fellowships are required because the number of students opting for a career in science is on an upward trend since the last two years.

“In December, 2009 almost 1.12 lakh students appeared in the NET as compared to 87,000 students who sat for the examinations in June 2009 and December, 2008.” Samir K



**Number of students opting for science is on the rise.**

**Brahmachari, director general of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) told Deccan Herald.**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) too has enhanced the number of fellowships. The UGC will now offer 600 fellowships every year compared to 300 it used to give out in the past, he said.

Combining with CSIR's planned increase in the num-

ber of Junior Research Fellow (JRF) to 2,400 every year, the new cabinet decision will ensure that every year 3,000 students can carry out their doctoral research.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh hinted at the enhancement in the fellowship amount both for the JRF and senior research fellow level.

Currently, a CSIR-UGC junior research fellow receives Rs 12,000 per month whereas a senior research fellow gets Rs 14,000. Both receive an annual contingency of Rs 20,000.

This is set to change as the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has initiated a fresh proposal recommending Rs 17,500 as the JRF amount and SRFs expecting to receive more than Rs 20,000 per month. The amount of contingency will be enhanced.

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