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Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme

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Why in News

A recent investigation has found that the money meant for poor students under the **Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme** in Jharkhand has been siphoned off and is not reaching the students.

Key Points

- **About the Scheme:**
 - It is a **centrally funded scholarship scheme** for students in all states, which **opens every year** and has to be applied between August and November.
 - **Aim:** To help students of **minority communities** viz. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains and Buddhists from families with **annual income below Rs. 1 lakh**.
 - **Eligibility:** Students need to score **at least 50% in their class exams**.
 - **Structure of the Scholarship:** It is given in two tiers every year to:
 - Students in **class 1 to 5**: Rs. 1,000 per year.
 - Students of **class 6 to 10**: Rs. 10,700 if a hosteller or Rs 5,700 if a day scholar.
- **Application Process:**
 - Eligible students need to register at the **National Scholarship Portal** (NSP) and **submit educational documents**, bank account details and **Aadhaar numbers** among other documents.
 - The scheme is **online** and one can apply for a **fresh or renewal scholarship on the NSP or through a mobile application** of NSP.

- **Suggestions for Improvement:**

The government is planning to bring a **single national scholarship scheme** by merging all the current scholarship schemes.

The move came after a multi-crore scam was reported in the **post-matric scholarship scheme for Scheduled Castes** (SC) in Punjab in August 2020.

National Scholarship Portal

- It is a “**one-stop**” **solution** through which various services, starting from student application, application receipt, verification, processing, and disbursal of various scholarships to students are facilitated.
- It is taken as **Mission Mode Project** (MMP) under **Digital India** and aims at providing a **simplified, accountable, responsive and transparent system** for faster and effective disbursal of scholarship to eligible applicants directly into their account through **Direct Benefit Transfer** (DBT) without any leakages.

Source: IE