



UP Increases Maintenance Allowance for Students

Why in News?

Under the **Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme**, the Uttar Pradesh (UP) Government has **doubled the maintenance allowance for disabled students**, increasing it from **₹2,000 to ₹4,000 per month**.

- An increase in the maintenance allowance will **benefit 2,650 disabled students enrolled in 28 residential schools** across the state.
- According to the data of the UP government, over **50 lakh students benefit from the state's scholarship and fee reimbursement programs every year**, including around 14-15 lakh from the Scheduled Castes.

Key Points

- **Excluding Criteria:** The government has made **students above 40 years of age ineligible for scholarships**, whereas previously, there was no maximum age limit for applicants.
 - **Students passing their high school exams from state boards outside UP will no longer be eligible for scholarships**, but those from central boards like CBSE and ICSE will still receive them.
 - The amended scheme will also **exclude students of UP campuses run by universities domiciled outside the state** from receiving scholarships.
- **Mandatory:** **DigiLocker** registration will now be **mandatory for scholarship applicants**, enabling automatic **Aadhaar-based data verification** and helping prevent fraud.
- **Increased Amount for SC Students:** For **Scheduled Caste (SC)** students, the yearly scholarship amount will be increased **by Rs 500, taking the total to Rs 3,500 per annum**.
 - Under the **Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme**, the **income limit restriction has been removed for children of families engaged in unhygienic professions** such as manual scavenging and working with raw leather, allowing them to avail the benefits of the scholarship scheme.

Note: As per the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016**, there are **21 recognized types of disabilities**: Blindness, Low-vision, **Leprosy Cured Persons**, Hearing Impairment (deaf and hard of hearing), Locomotor Disability, Dwarfism, Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness, Autism Spectrum Disorder, **Cerebral Palsy**, Muscular Dystrophy, Chronic Neurological Conditions, Specific Learning Disabilities (Dyslexia), Multiple Sclerosis, Speech and Language Disability, Thalassemia, Hemophilia, **Sickle Cell Disease**, Multiple Disabilities including deaf-blindness, **Acid Attack victim**, and **Parkinson's disease**.