

Government of Pakistan
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division
Press Release

PM announces 200,000 need based undergraduate scholarships under Ehsaas to uplift the unprivileged



November 4, 2019 – Islamabad: Prime Minister Imran Khan today launched an Ehsaas Scholarships Programme at the Prime Minister’s House for undergraduate students from low income backgrounds. Ehsaas has 134 policies, programmes and initiatives and this scheme which is primarily aimed to enhance access to higher education is one of them. This Rs.20 billion need based scheme coming from the federal government is a key initiative of BISP and Higher Education Commission (HEC) under which 50,000 scholarships per year will be awarded to undergraduate students (50% girls) from the underprivileged families and areas over the period of next four years.

Unlike past scholarship schemes which focused at MS or Ph.D degree programmes, the Ehsaas has fetched a major policy change in educational canvas of Pakistan by emphasizing on the most critical segment, 4-5 year undergraduate programme, which contributes the most to furthering income generation potential. In the last 14 years, HEC has awarded a total of 30,000 undergraduate scholarships, while this scheme alone will provide 50,000 scholarships every year. This shows the focused and passionate commitment of the government towards education.

Speaking at the event, the Prime Minister said, “People have no idea what a big change this programme will bring in the society. He said under the initiative, a total of 200,000 scholarships (50,000 per year) will be awarded to the needy and talented students during the next four years. He said due to unemployment, the talented and intelligent youth of the country was developing intolerance and tendency toward negative practices. However, this scholarship programme will help the deserving students to divert their energies toward positive sides”

Dr. Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation and Chairperson BISP also spoke at the event. “Undergraduate Scholarships Programme is one of the best opportunities for students who cannot bear their academic expenses. It is an important element of the Ehsaas framework that aims to foster human capital development and shared prosperity through investing in education of the most deserving and needy particularly girls”, she reiterated.

At the event, Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, said, “Pakistan has no shortage of talented youth, but in several instances, limited resources prevent them from realizing their potentials. The government is committed to ensure that no student is deprived of higher education because of financial constraints. Holistically, this academic scheme welcomes girls and students with special needs as well as those from remote and disadvantaged areas to apply for scholarship aid.”

Chairman HEC, Dr. Tariq Banuri explained the operational modalities of the scheme, “Through this programme, students qualifying for the scheme will have access to undergraduate education in all public sector universities of Pakistan recognized by HEC. The Ehsaas scholarship will cover tuition fees plus living stipend as a part of this need based programme”, he said.

All students in Pakistan who are admitted in 4-5 year degree programme with family income below a certain poverty threshold of PKR 45,000 will be eligible to receive the scholarship. The scholarships will be awarded to the eligible students on need-cum-merit basis. However, the continuation of scholarship in following years will depend upon the maintenance of academic performance. The programme is open to students in all major fields of education including agriculture, arts and humanities, business education, engineering, medical, physical sciences, and social sciences. An Ehsaas Scholarships Portal (<http://ehsaas.hec.gov.pk>) has been established to receive applications from registered undergraduate students at all public sector universities.

The programme will be overseen by the Ehsaas Scholarships Steering Committee, co-chaired by Chairman HEC and Chairperson BISP. HEC and BISP have set up a joint monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that the scheme is running in a transparent, equitable, and accountable manner. The monitoring and evaluation system will report directly to the Ehsaas Scholarship Steering Committee.