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Research scholars to strike over poor stipend

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Research scholars from higher education institutions across the country have threatened a nationwide protest on December 20 if their demand for a hike in fellowships awarded by the central government is not met.

The research scholars of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and other technical institutions want the government to almost double their fellowship/stipend amounts, while the central and state university students are pressing for a hike in non-NET fellowships.

Students currently get Rs 25,000 per month under the junior research fellowship

(JRF) scheme, while it is Rs 28,000 for senior research fellowship (SRF).

Under UGC's non-NET fellowship scheme, MPhil students get just Rs 5,000 a month with a contingency of Rs 10,000 per year in the science stream.

The stipend for humanities and social science students is Rs 8,000 per year.

The fellowship amount under non-NET scheme is same for PhD students.

The students are demanding doubling of JRF and SRF amounts and a provision for annual revision. They also want the non-NET fellowships to be on a par with other research fellowships "with immediate and retrospective effect from 2014".

The research fellowship was last revised by the government in 2014.