

12 Dec 2022

AIFRTE Circular

Call to protest against closure of pre-matric scholarships and Maulana Azad National Fellowship by union government

After the decision to stop pre-metric scholarships meant for SC/ST/OBC and minority students, the union government has now announced closure of the Maulana Azad National Fellowships (MANF) meant to promote participation of minority students in higher education.

MANF was initiated by the UPA government in 2009 on the basis of Sachar Committee recommendations because it felt that these students were amongst the most backward in terms of financial condition and they remained outside the purview of other scholarships. The Committee acknowledged the lowest proportion of minority community in higher education and recommended financial incentive to encourage their participation in higher education.

These moves by the union government are direct assault on the educational rights of the most oppressed and marginalised sections of the country. As we have already noted in our circular earlier, this action is yet another evidence of the Manuwadi anti-Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi-Minority agenda of the present regime at the centre.

While we had appealed our member- and fraternal-organisations and campaign associates to start campaigns against closure of pre-metric scholarships on 10th of December, we appeal again to take up struggle against this latest assault as part of this campaign. We also appeal that **widespread protests on these issues maybe organised on any date between 25th Dec 2022 (Manusmriti Dahan Diwas) and 3rd Jan 2023 (birthday of Savitribai Phule).**

Organisations may opt for diverse modes to protest — dharnas, jathas, demonstrations, hunger strikes, signature campaigns, etc. Literature to expose the union government's anti-people agenda may be developed in different creative forms. Social media may be used to amplify the campaign. Special focus shall be on forming alliances with the struggling organisations of the oppressed people.

Please share reports of the actions taken by you in the form of brief texts, photographs and short videos etc. These will be shared on AIFRTE social media pages, website and in our newsletters.

Jagmohan Singh, Chairperson, AIFRTE

Prasad V, Organising Secretary, AIFRTE

