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From Financial Hardship to Academic Excellence NFSC Fellowship Empowers a Research Scholar



CHENNAI – 14 Nov, 2026 The journey of Arjun Naik (name changed) from Narasinghpur, Cuttack district, Odisha reflects the role of targeted financial assistance through the NFSC in helping scholars overcome economic and social barriers to higher education.

Through the NFSC, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment continues to support educational advancement and create opportunities for Scheduled Caste students to pursue their academic aspirations.

Access to quality higher education and research opportunities can open pathways to academic achievement, professional growth and social contribution. The National Fellowship for Scheduled Caste Students (NFSC), provides financial support to eligible scholars pursuing advanced studies and research.

Despite financial hardship and social challenges, he aspired to pursue higher education, build a career in research and teaching, and contribute to society through Anthropology.

Limited economic resources, lack of academic exposure and social marginalisation had created barriers to accessing quality higher education and research opportunities. These challenges also made it difficult to meet academic expenses and sustain research activities.

In 2017, Arjun began receiving assistance under the National Fellowship (SC). The support included a fellowship of ₹16,000 per month, along with House Rent Allowance (HRA) and contingency assistance. It helped meet his academic expenses, fieldwork requirements and research-related costs, reducing financial stress and enabling him to focus on his higher studies.

The fellowship addressed key barriers relating to financial resources, access to educational facilities, research expenses and academic continuity. It also enabled greater participation in academic activities and supported his research and professional development.

With the support of the fellowship and his continued efforts, Arjun successfully completed his Ph.D. in Anthropology. He is currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, where he is engaged in teaching, research and mentoring students.

His academic progress has translated into professional advancement and improved economic circumstances for his family. The fellowship also strengthened his confidence and enabled him to contribute to academic and social development through his work at the university.