

Punjab Smart Connect Scheme

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The Punjab Government took a digital leap with the statewide launch of its Rs 92 crore Punjab Smart Connect Scheme. Free smartphones to students was a key pre-poll promise of the party, which the Chief Minister finally started fulfilling.

Smart Connect Scheme

Among the students who received phones were those whose parents or families had no smartphones or those had been sharing it with their siblings, or those whose parents could not afford to buy them the device. Across Punjab, **the scheme is expected to benefit a total of 1,74,015 Class XII students of government schools in the first phase, to be completed by November 2020. Of these, 87,395 are boys and 86,620 girls, with the majority in the OBC and SC/ST categories .**

While 36,555 beneficiaries are OBC students, 94,832 are SC and 13 ST students. **The bulk of the students – 1,11,857, are from rural areas**, and the remaining in urban government schools. These phones come **pre-loaded with government applications like e-Sewa app with e-content related to Class 11 and Class 12 as approved by the Department of School Education.**