

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 07.03.2011
ANSWERED ON
SETTING UP OF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE .

1226

Smt. Gundu Sudharani

Will the Minister of COALSCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry proposes to establish 50 Centres of Excellence in the country in the coming six years;
- (b) if so, the details of the centres proposed to be set up, with a particular reference to Andhra Pradesh;
- (c) the details of areas in which the proposed centres are going to work;
- (d) the budget that has been made available for setting up those centres;
- (e) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering to enhance the spending on R&D; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES

(ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is implementing a programme to augment and strengthen institutional research capacity for promotion of excellence in interdisciplinary science and innovation in specific areas of biotechnology through support for establishment of Centre of Excellence (CoE) in biotechnology. The programme provides flexible long-term support for highly innovative research, both basic and translational in nature, in biotechnology. The DBT has planned to establish 50 such CoE in biotechnology in the country. So far, 14 Centres have been supported, covering healthcare, agriculture, bioinformatics and basic research in biotechnology. These Centres have been established in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Four CoE have been supported in the state of Andhra Pradesh, namely, `Centre of Excellence for Microbial Biology` jointly at Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD), Hyderabad and Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad; `Centre of Excellence for genetics and genomics of silkmooths` at CDFD, Hyderabad; `Centre of Excellence for high-throughput allele determination for molecular breeding` at International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT), Patancheru; and `Virtual Centre of Excellence on multidisciplinary approaches aimed at interventions against Mycobacterium tuberculosis` jointly at University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Institute of Life Sciences, Hyderabad, CDFD, Hyderabad and National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad.

(d) A total budget provision of Rs. 114.50 crores has been made available for these 14 Centres.

(e) & (f): Government have taken several measures to enhance the investment on Research & Development to 2% of GDP by the end of 12th Five Year Plan from the current level of less than 1% by aggressively promoting private sector investment. Some of the measures to encourage investment in R&D include higher allocation to scientific research, setting up of new institutions for science education and research, creation of centres of excellence and facilities in emerging and frontline areas in academic and national institutes, strengthening infrastructure for R&D in universities, encouraging public-private R&D partnerships, grants for industrial R&D projects, income tax and custom duty exemption on goods imported for use in Government funded R&D projects, national awards for outstanding R&D. The recent enhancement of research fellowships and launching of new initiatives like Innovation for Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE), Nano Mission, Mega Facilities, Open Source Drug Discovery, Network Projects, National Biotechnology Development Strategy etc. in the XI Plan period demonstrate the commitment of the Government to encourage investment in the S&T sector.