

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1723

ANSWERED ON 03.08.2023

PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN STEM

1723. SHRI B. PARTHASARADHI REDDY:

Will the Minister of Science and Technology be pleased to state

- (a) whether currently there are any policies to promote and encourage participation of women in STEM;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government is providing any scholarships and fellowships for women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM);
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether Government has any special policies to promote the participation of women and girls living in rural areas in STEM; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
FOR THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir. The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy, 2013, promotes and encourages participation of women in STEM. STI Policy mentions about gender parity and importance of women participation in STI activities. It also states to start new and flexible schemes to facilitate women in STEM career path. In this line, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has started different programmes under a holistic scheme 'Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)' to increase participation of women in STEM.

(c) & (d) Yes, the Government is providing a number of scholarships and fellowships for women in STEM under the umbrella scheme ‘Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)’ of DST. WISE-KIRAN Scheme is primarily aimed for improving gender parity in Science & Technology sector by inducting more women talent in the research & development domain through various programs, namely, Women Scientist Scheme for women scientists having break in career, ‘Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities (CURIE)’ programme for development of infrastructure and research facilities, ‘Indo-US Fellowship for Women in STEMM (WISTEMM)’ to provide international exposure to women scientists. Further, Vigyan Jyoti Programmes encourages young girls to pursue career in STEM. Another programme, Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) programme aims to transform institutions for more gender sensitive approach and inclusiveness with ultimate goal of improving women participation in S&T. Recently, DST has started new programmes namely, WISE Post-Doctoral Fellowship (WISE-PDF), WISE Fellowship for Ph.D. (WISE-PhD) and WIDUSHI Fellowship for senior women scientists.

In addition to above mentioned programmes, Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is implementing “SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)” to address lower participation of women scientists in research activities. Further, ‘Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation Programme (BioCARE)’ of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is also aiming to enhance the participation of Women Scientists in Biotechnology research.

(e) & (f) Yes, the DST is implementing ‘Science and Technology for Women (STW)’, programme with aim to promote gender equality and empower women at grassroots level with inputs of Science and Technology. The programme is empowering women especially in rural areas in livelihood generation through suitable technologies and available natural resources in their native areas, which has led to income generation. The programme supports projects related to R&D on adaptation, transfer and demonstration of appropriate technologies for women and establishment of Women Technology Parks on the identified thrust areas for health, nutrition, sanitation & hygiene; women safety and social security; agriculture- non-farm & farm; artisans & textile and improving livelihood status of women as prime/target beneficiaries. There are more than 50,000 women across the country who benefitted through this programme. In addition to this, Vigyan Jyoti programme of DST also cover large number of girls living in rural areas to pursue higher education and career in STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) especially in the areas where women are underrepresented.
