

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2050
ANSWERED ON 12/12/2024

SUPPORT TO UNIVERSITIES IN FOSTERING RESEARCH CULTURE

2050 Shri Mukul Balkrishna Wasnik:

Will the Minister of Science and Technology be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that most of the publicly funded research in the country is carried out by specialised research institutes, leaving universities primarily as teaching centres with minimal involvement in research activities;
- (b) whether Government recognise that universities can play an important role in developing skilled researchers and in producing high-quality research papers;
- (c) if so, whether Government has any plan to support universities and centrally funded institutions of higher education in fostering a research culture and to elevate the quality of research in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) No. Universities are also involved in research through their doctoral and post doctoral programs.

(b) to (d): Yes, Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing a dedicated programme exclusively for strengthening the research ecosystem in universities called Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence (PURSE). So far under PURSE, DST has supported eighty-two (82) universities with a total investment of ₹1227 crores. Additionally, nine more universities have been selected and recommended for support under the PURSE 2024 call.

Furthermore, under the “Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure in Universities and Higher Educational Institutions” (DST-FIST), departments of various universities receive support for scientific infrastructure building. DST support is extended to Sophisticated Analytical Instrument Facilities (SAIF) Centers for acquiring research facilities; many of these centers are located at universities. The Consolidation of University Research for Innovation and Excellence (CURIE) program empowers exclusive women's universities by supporting research facilities in basic and applied sciences.

State University Research Excellence (SURE) scheme of erstwhile Science and Engineering Research Board (now Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)), aims to boost research capabilities in state and private universities. Under SURE Scheme, 425 projects have been supported with an investment of ₹117.8 crores to strengthen university research.

Recently, ANRF has launched the Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research (PAIR) program to boost university research. This program pairs top-tier institutions (hubs) with emerging ones (spokes) to foster research collaboration, knowledge sharing, and

capacity building. This initiative is designed to cultivate research excellence across Indian universities, by collaborations with top-tier institutions.

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) also contributes to infrastructure development in research institutions through programs like DBT- Boost to University Interdisciplinary Life Science Departments for Education and Research Programme (DBT-BUILDER) and Scientific Infrastructure Access for Harnessing Academia University Research Joint Collaboration (DBT-SAHAJ). These programs aim to enhance research capabilities and foster innovation in the field of biotechnology.

DST, DBT, CSIR, MoES and ANRF have been instrumental in advancing university scientific and technological landscape by supporting research grants, fellowships, and infrastructure development initiatives. Substantial support by these organizations have significantly strengthened the nation's university research ecosystem.
