

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 356**  
ANSWERED ON 23/07/2025

**Expansion of Higher Education Access**

356 Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of new Central Universities, IITs, and research institutes that have been approved in the last two years;
- (b) specific measures planned to improve the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, particularly in underserved States; and
- (c) ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing research and innovation capacity in public universities and colleges?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(Dr. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a): 42 new Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) viz. Central Universities, IITs, IIMs, NITs, IIITs and IISERs have been set up in the country after 2014. Sammakka Sarakka Tribal University, Telangana, a Central University has been established in the State of Telangana in December 2023 at a cost of Rs. 889.07 crore and has already started functioning from the academic year 2024-25 from its transit campus. The Government in May, 2025 has also approved expansion of academic and infrastructure capacity (Phase- 'B' construction) of five IITs which had been established in the States/UT of Andhra Pradesh (IIT Tirupati), Kerala (IIT Palakkad), Chhattisgarh (IIT Bhilai), Jammu & Kashmir (IIT Jammu) and Karnataka (IIT Dharwad).

(b): Education is in Concurrent List of the Constitution and majority of the Higher Education Institutions are in the domain of the respective States. The Centre and States endeavour to uplift the educational status of the students of the country, especially the disadvantaged communities. Government has taken various steps to enhance the GER in Higher Education like opening of more HEIs; multiple entry and multiple exit in Academic Programme offered by Higher Education Institutions; schemes to provide financial support, like PM-Vidyalaxmi, to meritorious students inter-alia enabling collateral free, guarantor free loan through a simple, transparent, student-friendly and entirely digital application process; revised regulation of ODL / Online Education; permitting up to 40% credits in regular courses using SWAYAM platform; launch of new SWAYAM Plus portal with aim to enhance skill and upskilling and reskilling of existing manpower employed in different sectors; improving quality of HEIs in underserved regions by way of funding; teaching-learning and examinations including entrance exams in Indian languages etc.

(c): The Government is driving multidisciplinary research and innovation through initiatives like the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), PM Research Fellowships (PMRF), and Translational Research Zones (TRZs) to bridge academia and industry. Over 6,000 HEIs have R&D cells, while 10,000+ Atal Tinkering Labs and 15,000+ Innovation Councils (IICs) foster school and university-level entrepreneurship. Research & Innovation Parks at premier institutions support startups and UGC/AICTE reforms strengthen industry ties via internships and apprenticeship-linked degrees.

The Government has established three Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence, focusing on healthcare, agriculture, and sustainable cities. These CoEs are led by premier institutions: IIT Kanpur, which leads sustainable cities, IISc Bangalore, which leads healthcare and IIT Ropar, which leads the agriculture sector. The budget outlay for these three CoEs is Rs. 990 crores. The Government has also announced a Centre of Excellence in AI for Education with a financial outlay of Rs. 500 crores.

Premier institutions are also setting up AI Skill Centres focused on frontier technologies such as AI, machine learning, data science, and quantum computing. Faculty development programs, upgraded digital infrastructure, and platforms like SWAYAM and ONOS further support AI-based education and access to global research.

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