

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 335
ANSWERED ON 03.12.2025**

Government investment in higher education institutions

335 Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha:

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government investment in higher education institutions has declined in recent years;
- (b) if so, the impact of such a decline on research capacity, faculty recruitment and the expansion of public universities;
- (c) whether Government's focus on foreign and private universities under NEP, 2020 risks marginalising public higher education institutions; and
- (d) the steps being taken to establish new public universities, upgrade existing ones and ensure equitable access for students from rural and marginalised backgrounds?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)**

(a) to (d): Education is a subject of concurrent list. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central government and all State / UT Governments. Accordingly, both Centre and the States / UTs collaboratively work together to increase the public investment in Education sector.

As per the "Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education 2019-20 to 2021-22", Public Expenditure (Centre and States) on Education in India is 4.12% of GDP in 2021-22, which has grown from 3.84% in 2013-14.

Various schemes/projects/programmes run by the Ministry have been aligned with NEP 2020. As far as Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education is concerned, it has increased its Budget allocation (RE) to Rs. 36031.57 Cr. for the year 2021-22, to Rs. 40828.35 Cr. for the year 2022-23, to Rs. 44744.48 Cr. for the year 2023-24, to Rs. 46615.13 Cr. for the year 2024-25 and the Budget Estimate to Rs. 50077.95 Crore for the year 2025-26.

With regard to expansion of public universities, it is stated that the number of Universities/University level Institutions registered under AISHE have increased to 1213 in 2022-23 (Provisional) from 760 in 2014-15. Similarly, number of colleges registered under AISHE have increased to 46624 in 2022-23 (Provisional) from 38498 in 2014-15. Further, 42

New Higher Educational Institutions viz. Central Universities, IITs, IIMs, NITs, IIITs and IISERs have been set up. Setting up of higher education institutions is an ongoing process. Depending on the need, educational institutions are opened from time to time. As per AISHE 2022-23, number of faculty in higher education has increased to 16.64 lakh in 2022-23 from 14.73 lakh in 2014-15.

India has shown remarkable growth in the field of intellectual property, with 92,168 patent applications filed in 2023–24 from 42763 in 2014-15. A major driver of this growth has been the contribution of educational institutions. The patent filings by domestic educational institutes have more than tripled from 7405 in 2021-22 to 23,306 in 2023-24. Educational institutions are playing an important role in promoting innovation in India.

Focus of NEP on research and innovation has propelled India's ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII) from 81 in 2015 to 38 in 2025.

India ranks 3rd in terms of number of PhDs awarded in Science and Engineering (S&E) as per 'Research and Development Statistics at a glance 2022-23' of Deptt. Of Science and Technology. India also ranked 3rd in 2022 (from 7th in 2010) in terms of total number of Science and Engineering publications.

NEP 2020 envisages the promotion of quality research within the Higher Education system. Research and innovation are important aspects to enhance quality education by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In order to boost research and innovation, the Government has established the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), which seeks to harness the research potential of universities and colleges, support academic research, and facilitate translational research in emerging technologies and national priority areas. The ANRF aims to mobilize ₹50,000 crore during 2023–28, including ₹14,000 crore from the Central Government, with the remaining sourced from public sector enterprises, the private sector, philanthropies, and international bodies, through various funds such as the ANRF Fund, Innovation Fund, and Science and Engineering Research Fund.

The transformative reforms in higher education has resulted in more and more HEIs being ranked in international ranking. In QS 2026, 54 Indian HEIs/Universities are ranked as compared to 11 in QS 2015. In QS 2026, there are 10 Indian HEIs in top 500. In QS World University Rankings, Asia 2026 India has second most representation, with 294 universities, up from 163 in 2025. The QS Subject Rankings for 2025 included 79 Indian HEIs, an increase of 10 from the previous year's 69, reflecting a 14% growth.

NEP 2020 envisions that all HEIs (public and private) shall be treated on par within this regulatory regime. All education institutions shall be held to similar standards of audit and disclosure as a 'not for profit' entity. Surpluses, if any, will be reinvested in the educational sector. The regulatory regime shall encourage private philanthropic efforts in education. There will be common national guidelines for all legislative Acts that will form private HEIs. These common guidelines will cover Good Governance, Financial Stability & Security, Educational Outcomes, and Transparency of Disclosures.

Department of Higher Education is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). The scheme through various components viz., Multi-Disciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERU), Grants to Strengthen Universities (GSU), Grants to Strengthen Colleges (GSC), New Model Degree Colleges

(NMDC) and Gender Inclusion and Equity Initiatives (GIEI) provides fund to States/UTs institutions, with the vision to attain higher levels of access, equity, and excellence in the State higher education system. Under RUSA 1.0 (2013-17) and RUSA 2.0 (2017-20), total 1612 units and 990 units with amount of Rs. 7,887.33 crore (including a Central Share of Rs. 5,229.19 crore) and 5927.79 crore (including a Central Share of Rs. 3943.58 crore) respectively were approved.

In alignment with NEP 2020, the Government has launched the 3rd phase of the scheme in June 2023 in the form of Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USA) for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26, with an outlay of Rs. 12926.10 crore, including the committed liabilities of the earlier phases of RUSA to cater to the needs of educationally unserved/ underserved areas. Under the scheme, all the 613 units have been approved with a total amount of Rs.8168.51 crore under various components.
