

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.959**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2025

RATIONALE FOR BRINGING NEW ISI BILL, 2025

959. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA:

Will the Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation be pleased to state:

- (a) the rationale for bringing in a new ISI Bill 2025, instead of amending the previous ISI Act 1959; and
- (b) the rationale for replacing an elected council within the institute with a nominated Board of Governance in the new Bill?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE [RAO INDERJIT SINGH]

- (a) The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) was declared an Institution of National Importance through the ISI Act, 1959, yet uniquely among over 160 Institution of National Importance (INIs), continues to function as a registered society.

Four Review Committees, including the 2021 Mashelkar Committee, have documented structural deficiencies in ISI's governance model. Unlike peer institutions such as Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), ISI operates under a society-based structure where a General Body of over 1,000 members, exercises control. Amendments require three-fourths General Body approval, rendering substantive reform procedurally untenable.

This dual framework has precluded institutional reform and has created governance constraints that cannot be resolved through statutory amendments. Comprehensive new legislation is therefore essential to restructure ISI as a body corporate with statutory authorities and clear accountability mechanisms, aligning it with peer institutions rather than modifying the existing society model.

- (b) The current large size 33-member elected Council is structurally dysfunctional with 17 internal representatives and internal interests dominate decision-making. The Council's size, composition, and election-based selection create gridlock, enabling minority groups to block decisions, hampering institutional responsiveness.

The proposed 11-member Board of Governors with balanced internal and external representation addresses these deficiencies. This leaner structure line up with comparable INIs, enhances decision-making efficiency, and maintains institutional voice without sacrificing governance effectiveness.

The Bill establishes statutory authorities—the Visitor, Board of Governors, Academic Council, Director, and Registrar—with clearly defined roles. The Board of Governors in the draft Bill, comprising 11 members with balanced internal and external representation, provides a lean and empowered body suited for effective governance, focused deliberation, strategic decision-making and timely institutional action.

Accountability is strengthened through Visitor review, Board oversight of planning, and mandatory annual performance and financial reporting by the Director. These mechanisms address governance gaps identified by successive Review Committees.

Additionally, autonomy of the Centre is enhanced through formal recognition and delegation of administrative, financial, and academic authority to respective Management Councils, enabling independent functioning while maintaining central accountability.

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