GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

RAJYA SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. 150

ANSWERED ON 12.02.2026

MIGRATION OF SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS

*150 SMT. RAJANI ASHOKRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has reviewed the issue of scientists and highly skilled researchers migrating abroad from the country;

(b) if so, the number of scientists and researchers leaving India annually, discipline-wise and country-wise;

(c) the reasons for such migration, including career opportunities, research funding, infrastructure and working conditions;

(d) the incentives, schemes or support measures provided by Government to retain talent and encourage the return of Indian scientists working abroad; and

(e) the reasons why domestic research ecosystems continue to remain less attractive for top talent and the steps proposed to strengthen infrastructure, funding and career prospects in India?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR THE

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & EARTH SCIENCES

(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT AS REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 150 FOR 12.02.2026 REGARDING "MIGRATION OF SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS"

(a) to (e): No significant migration of scientists and highly skilled researchers abroad from the country which requires a review has been observed by the Government in recent years.

The number and place of migration of scientists and researchers are dynamic and hence their number cannot be conclusively established. Absence of adequate research ecosystem in the country in the past had led to some level of migration of scientists and researchers. Factor such as advanced training and exposure to diverse research ecosystems which provides a larger pool of avenues for addressing global challenges in a shared environment also caused mobility of researchers.

The Ministry of Science and Technology has formulated several schemes to retain talent and encourage the return of Indian scientists working abroad. The extramural funding schemes of Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Fellowship schemes of DST, DBT, Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) have been designed to encourage scientists to do quality research in the country. Several schemes / programmes for building research infrastructure for enhancing research capabilities and several high stake technology missions have been instituted. Special attention has been given to young scientists for making them independent and motivate them to continue their research in the country. The Government has consistently increased the budget allocation for science and research. In last 5 years there has been a significant increase in the funding for the Ministry of Science and Technology from ₹14,794.03 crore (2021-22) to ₹38,613.32 crore (2025-26) that has bolstered R&D, and improved India's position in the Global Innovation Index. Significant opportunities have been created by recent launching of the ₹1.0 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund as well as expansion of S&T led start-ups. The number of DPIIT registered startups has grown to 2,13,621 which positioned India at number 3. DST through the Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) Faculty Scheme and DBT through Ramalingaswami re-entry Fellowship provide attractive avenues and opportunities to Indian researchers of high calibre, who are residing in

foreign, to work in Indian Institutes/Universities of their respective interest and domain. DST also implements a VAIBHAV (Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik) Fellowship Programme exclusively for Indian Diaspora [Non-Resident Indian (NRI)/ Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)] to undertake collaborative research in Indian Institutions. Ramanujan Fellowship of ANRF is another scheme for brilliant Indian scientists and engineers aiming to return to India from abroad for undertaking competitive R&D. Further, the Flexible Complementing Scheme/ Merit based promotion scheme positioned in scientific departments and introduction of Performance Related Incentive Scheme (PRIS) in strategic Departments have also been instrumental in recruiting and retaining the scientists. All these measures taken by the Government are aimed at retaining talented researchers as well as encouraging the return of Indian scientists working abroad.

Several measures have been implemented to facilitate access to grants, cutting-edge labs, and advanced equipment thereby enhancing the quality and capability of domestic research ecosystems. Strengthening the research infrastructure in the institutions across the country through programs like Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructures in universities and higher educational institutions (FIST), Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence (PURSE), Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI) etc. have enabled access to high-end research infrastructure to our researchers. Ministry of Science and Technology is actively partnering with 40 countries across the globe along with regional and multilateral entities, UN and other International S&T Organizations. The main aim of these collaborations is to connect Indian research with global efforts by providing support for Joint R&D projects, project-based mobility exchanges, training and advanced workshops in different thematic areas of mutual interest, seminars, fellowships, advanced schools, exchange and exposure visits, access to advanced facilities etc. particularly in the frontier areas of S&T. All these initiatives are being implemented to encourage scientists to do quality research in the country and thereby preventing migration as well as attract Indian-origin overseas scientists to re-establish their careers in India, thereby promoting a self-reliant and innovation-driven research landscape.

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