

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2757
ANSWERED ON 12/08/2026

Higher education reforms in Andhra Pradesh

2757 Shri Bhashyam Rama Krishna:

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

- (a) the measures taken to strengthen Higher Education Institutions in Andhra Pradesh through accreditation support, research promotion, and the establishment of multidisciplinary Universities under NEP 2020;
- (b) the progress made in integrating skill development and vocational courses into the higher education curriculum in the State;
- (c) whether adequate career counselling and awareness mechanisms exist to help students, particularly first-generation and rural learners, meaningfully utilise flexible options such as multiple entry-exit and the Academic Bank of Credits; and
- (d) the initiatives being taken to improve the Gross Enrolment Ratio and equity of access for disadvantaged groups in Andhra Pradesh?

ANSWER

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

(a): The Government has undertaken several measures to strengthen Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in line with the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, with inter-alia emphasis on quality assurance, research and innovation, and multidisciplinary education.

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has facilitated Seminars/Conferences/Workshops in Andhra Pradesh for promoting quality assurance through accreditation.

To boost research and innovation, the Government has established the Anusandhan National Research Foundation, 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.

Other initiatives such as the Research Development and Innovation, Prime Minister's Research Fellowship, Prime Minister Research Chair Scheme, Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration, IMPRINT, and Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana continue to enhance research capacity, innovation and collaboration between academia, industry and international institutions.

Union Cabinet in its meeting held in May, 2025 has approved expansion of academic and infrastructure capacity including creation of Research Park of five new IITs including IIT

Tirupati with a total outlay of Rs. 11,828.79 crore, out of which ₹ 2313 crore has been allocated to IIT Tirupati for the period 2025–26 to 2028–29.

The UGC has also issued the Guidelines for Establishment of Research & Development Cell in Higher Education Institutions to strengthen the research and innovation ecosystem. As of July 2026, 1,722 HEIs across the country, including 38 HEIs in the State of Andhra Pradesh, have established Research & Development (R&D) Cells under these Guidelines.

In addition, UGC has formulated the Guidelines on Sustainable and Vibrant University-Industry Linkage System for Indian Universities to promote industry-academia collaboration in research, development, skill development and innovation. Further, in line with NEP 2020, the UGC has also issued the Guidelines for Transforming Higher Education Institutions into Multidisciplinary Institutions, enabling HEIs to offer a wider range of disciplines and providing students greater academic choice and flexibility.

For research promotion, interaction, skill development and multidisciplinary programmes, NIT Andhra Pradesh has taken several initiatives like establishing an Incubation and Start-Up Center (EISC) to support innovation and entrepreneurship, curricular flexibility supported by the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) and a clustering approach to transition standalone, single-stream institutions into broader multidisciplinary ecosystems and regional networks for sharing academic resources.

Under Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA), in the State of Andhra Pradesh, a total of 33 units have been approved for a total amount of Rs. 378.74 crore, including approval of Rs. 100 crore to Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visva Vidyalayam, Tirupathi under Multi-Disciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERU) component.

Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER) Tirupati has also been established by the Govt. of India under the Ministry of Education for imparting quality education in basic sciences and for setting up state-of-the-art research facilities for frontline and cutting-edge research in science. Several interdisciplinary courses along the lines of NEP 2020 guidelines have been floated in IISER and offered to students.

(b): UGC has facilitated skill-based education under the National Skills Qualifications Framework through Community Colleges, B.Voc. Degree Programmes and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centres. During 2020-21, 96 HEIs in Andhra Pradesh were approved to offer skill-based programmes under NSQF.

Further, UGC has issued the Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions to offer Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programme (AEDP), 2025, to integrate academic learning with industry-relevant skills and enhance employability. The NCrF, NHEQF and Curriculum and Credit Frameworks for UG and PG programmes provide flexibility for integration of academic, vocational, skill-based and experiential learning. UGC also organized the Fourth Zonal AEDP Conference at Sri Padmavathi Mahila Vishwavidyalayam, Tirupati, on 06.02.2026 to promote implementation of AEDP in Andhra Pradesh.

As of date 2 HEIs namely (i) Acharya Nagarjuna University, Namburu, Guntur District, and (ii) Indian Maritime University, Visakhapatnam Campus, Andhra Pradesh, have implemented AEDP courses as part of their three-year Undergraduate (UG) Programmes in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(c): Several measures have been undertaken to promote multidisciplinary and flexible higher education in line with the NEP, 2020. The UGC has notified the Guidelines for Multiple Entry and Exit in Academic Programmes offered in HEIs, facilitating flexible learning pathways and academic mobility through the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC). The Government is also implementing the Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education Scheme to strengthen research infrastructure and promote innovation and interdisciplinary research in Higher Educational Institutions.

UGC has been facilitating awareness and implementation of these provisions through its regulatory guidelines, advisories and sensitization of HEIs, with the HEIs being responsible for orienting and counselling students regarding available academic pathways, credit transfer, re-entry and programme options. This enables students, including those from rural and first-generation backgrounds, to make informed choices regarding continuation, mobility and completion of their programmes.

As on 31.07.2026, 298 HEIs in Andhra Pradesh under the purview of UGC were registered on the ABC Portal, comprising 3 Central Universities, 9 Deemed to be Universities, 12 Private Universities, 28 State Universities and 246 Autonomous Colleges.

The availability of digital academic records through ABC/APAAR, along with flexible learning opportunities through SWAYAM, ODL and Online Education, further facilitates student mobility and access to alternative learning pathways.

(d): To improve Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and equity of access, UGC has undertaken measures to expand the reach, flexibility and accessibility of higher education. The Guidelines for Transforming Higher Education Institutions into Multidisciplinary Institutions enable learners to pursue programmes of their choice and facilitate access to a wider range of disciplines closer to their place of residence.

Further, SWAYAM enables learners to access quality courses anytime and from anywhere, and UGC regulations permit HEIs to offer up to 40% of the courses in a programme in a semester through SWAYAM. UGC MOOCs and e-PG Pathshala provide additional access to quality academic content, including approximately 23,000+ PG e-content resources. To address last-mile accessibility and language barriers, UGC has integrated its e-content and SWAYAM courses through Common Service Centres (CSCs) in rural areas and made selected content available in eight regional languages, including Telugu.

SWAYAMPBHA DTH channels provide educational content free of cost through 24/7 channels, including lectures, tutorials and study material, thereby extending access to learners in remote and underserved areas and helping bridge the digital divide.

To promote equity and ensure greater access to quality higher education among tribal communities, the Government has established three Central Tribal Universities, including the Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh.

As per All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Gross Enrolment Ratio for the State of Andhra Pradesh has increased from 31.5 for the year 2014-15 to 35.5 for 2023-24.
