

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3045
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13TH DECEMBER, 2024**

ADVANCED DIAGNOSTIC AND RESEARCH CENTRES

3045. SHRI DHARAMBIR SINGH:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a comprehensive list of funding opportunities available for researchers, faculty members and medical colleges seeking to establish advanced diagnostic and research laboratories including grants, Government programmes or public-private partnerships in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has outlined a specific procedure for researchers or medical colleges to apply for and secure this funding, detailing eligibility criteria, application processes, necessary documentation and expected timelines for approval and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any particular agencies or departments have been designated to oversee and facilitate this funding and if so, the details of support or guidance offered to institutions aiming to advance their research and diagnostic capabilities;
- (d) whether a mechanism exists to prioritize funding for medical colleges with limited infrastructure, ensuring equitable access to resources for establishing such labs in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (e): i) The Department of Health Research (DHR) has implemented a Central Sector Scheme to establish a robust network of laboratories for managing epidemics and national calamities to strengthen India's preparedness and response to epidemics and natural disasters by establishing advanced Viral Research & Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) for Rs. 324 Crore for the period from FY 2021-22 to 2025-26. A total of 163 Viral research & Diagnostic Laboratories, have already been sanctioned in various medical colleges and research institutions. 11 of 163 VRDLs have a regional status and are equipped with the state of art Biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) facilities to detect high risk infectious pathogens of public health significance.

All Central Government Medical/Research Institutes of repute, including the Armed Forces Medical College, Army Medical Hospitals, and other health bodies providing medical and health services, such as Railway hospitals and AYUSH hospitals, are eligible to apply for the establishment of VRDLs. Institutions must meet the parameters outlined in the Scheme Guidelines available at

<https://dhr.gov.in/schemes/establishment-network-laboratories-managing-epidemics-and-natural-calamities>.

The applications are processed for funding as per the procedure laid out in the Guidelines.

ii) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that it provides financial assistance to different researchers and scientists working in ICMR institutes through its intramural grants programme and those outside ICMR institutes through extramural grants programme to conduct research in the fields of medicine, public health, and allied disciplines.

The three types of Extramural Research Grants include Small Grant, Intermediate Grant and Centre for Advanced Research.

Apart from these, ICMR has undertaken multi-centric projects across different parts of the country in identified priority areas through its National Health Research Priority Programme.

The applications are invited from researchers, faculty members and medical colleges, and projects are selected and funded as per the respective procedure laid out in Programme Guidelines that are accessible on ICMR website.

iii) The Department of Biotechnology has informed that it supports R&D infrastructure through the Research Resource Service Facility and Platform (RRSFP), which operates through 2 major arms:

- Boost to University Interdisciplinary Life Science Departments for Education and Research Programme (DBT-BUILDER) –focusing on upgradation of the post-graduate teaching and training laboratories by enabling advanced interdisciplinary research and teaching.
- Scientific Infrastructure Access for Harnessing Academia University Research Joint Collaboration (DBT-SAHAJ) –The SAHAJ portal on the DBT website consolidates the information of all facilities supported and established by the DBT under a single window, enabling potential users/individuals access to these facilities.

(iv) The Department of Science and Technology has informed that its Biomedical Device and Technology Development (BDTD) Program addresses R&D needs of the medical device industry to develop innovative products as per global standards. The program focuses on screening, diagnostic, surgical, and life-support equipment for healthcare applications and invites proposals from scientists/engineers/technologists working in academic institutions/R&D institutions/laboratories having adequate infrastructure/ facilities. Under BDTD, biomedical hubs provide facilities for prototype development, technology up-scaling, and market validation, promoting R&D and enabling technology transfer for commercialization.
