

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3575
ANSWERED ON 11.08.2025

Multidisciplinary Education and Research University (MERU)

3575. Shri Shrirang Appa Chandu Barne:
Smt. Bharti Pardhi:
Shri Bhausahab Rajaram Wakchaure:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) the progress on the establishment of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) and the implementation of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) system in higher education institutions across the Country, particularly in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether the Government is facilitating international collaborations and the entry of top ranked global Universities as envisioned under National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, while ensuring equitable access to students from socio-economically marginalized segment of the country, particularly in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to enhance the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of students from marginalized segment in Higher Education across the country, particularly in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh?

ANSWER

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

(a): In alignment with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the government has launched the third phase of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in June 2023 in the form of Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) 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 Multi-Disciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERU) component of PM-USHA, 35 Universities (including 3 Universities in Madhya Pradesh and 4 Universities in Maharashtra) have been approved.

To further facilitate smooth student mobility and credit transfer, the Government has launched the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) initiative. ABC facilitates formalising credit recognition, accumulation and transfer. Under the ABC system, a 12-digit unique identifier, Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID has been created for seamless interaction amongst the stakeholders of the education ecosystem and to effectively map the lifelong journey of the learners.

(b): In line with the NEP 2020, the UGC has issued '*University Grants Commission (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023*' in November, 2023 to facilitate the establishment of campuses of the Foreign Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs) in India. These regulations are available at <https://fhei.ugc.ac.in/Downloads/Regulations.pdf>.

Under the Regulation 2023, UGC has issued Letter of Intent to 12 Foreign HEIs from Australia, Italy, United Kingdom, USA to open their campuses at various places in India including Gurugram (Haryana), Bengaluru (Karnataka), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and Noida/Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh). University of Southampton has already established its campus in Gurugram, Haryana.

Furthermore, world-class Foreign Universities and Institutions can set up their branch campuses in GIFT City as per the criteria and standards laid down in the *International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) (Setting up and Operation of International Branch Campuses and Offshore Education Centers) Regulations, 2022*, issued in October, 2022. These regulations are available at <https://ifsc.gov.in/Document/Legal/ifsc-ibc-and-oec-regulations-202213102022113639.pdf>.

Two Australian universities namely, Deakin University and University of Wollongong have established offshore branch campuses and are offering courses in GIFT City, Gujarat under the Regulations, 2022 mentioned above.

(c): As per the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2022-23 (provisional), the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Higher Education at the national level is 29.5. Furthermore, the Government has taken various measures to increase the GER in Higher Education sector across the country including in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, such as opening of more HEIs; implementing various Scholarship and Fellowship schemes for providing financial assistance to students including for SC/ST/OBC; providing flexible exit as well as re-entry options in Higher Education system; providing anytime, anywhere learning opportunities for all learners through Study Webs for Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) platform; and conducting JEE, NEET (UG) and Common University Entrance Test (CUET) Exams in 13 languages, to facilitate students, particularly from vernacular/rural background.
