

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2757
ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026

Limited Representation of Rural Institution in NIRF Rankings

2757. Smt. Sajda Ahmed:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the recent National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings show limited representation of rural institutions;
- (b) if so, the reasons for such under-representation;
- (c) whether any concerns have been raised on the rationality and due diligence of the NIRF process, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether it is a fact that private involvement in the process has affected its credibility, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to ensure transparency, fairness and inclusivity in the NIRF rankings, particularly for rural institutions?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): To promote healthy competition among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched in 2015 by the Government of India for the annual ranking (called India Rankings) of these HEIs. The methodology of India Rankings is based on five broad parameters, i.e. “Teaching, Learning and Resources,” “Research and Professional Practices,” “Graduation Outcomes,” “Outreach and Inclusivity,” and “Peer Perception”.

The list of Ranked & Rank-Band institutions is announced every year and published on the NIRF website, which is available to all stakeholders as well as to the general public. In India Rankings 2025, the NIRF has evaluated institutions across 17 categories/disciplines. Notably, approximately 35% of the top-ranked institutions, including all categories/disciplines, are located in rural areas, highlighting the growing prominence of such institutions in the national higher education landscape.

The data for ranking is sourced primarily through two channels; i.e. institutional submissions provided directly by participating institutions and verified third-party databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Derwent Innovation, and Journal Citation Reports.

As part of the process, participating institutions are required to upload their submitted data on their official websites. This practice enables transparency and allows stakeholders, including public, peer institutions, and other entities, to review and provide feedback on the accuracy of the submissions. The consolidated data of ranked institutions is made publicly available on the official NIRF website.
