

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 6005
ANSWERED ON 01/04/2026**

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN STEM FIELDS

†6005. SMT. SANJNA JATAV:

SHRI P P CHAUDHARY:

SHRI P C MOHAN:

SHRI YOGENDER CHANDOLIA:

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB:

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY:

DR. K SUDHAKAR:

SHRI BIBHU PRASAD TARAI:

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

- (a) the number of women beneficiaries supported under various programmes of the Government aimed at promoting participation of women in STEM fields as of February 2026 including those from Karnataka and particularly Pali and Bharatpur Lok Sabha Constituency in Rajasthan;**
- (b) whether the Government has implemented special initiatives to encourage girls and women to pursue education and research careers in STEM disciplines and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether universities, research institutions and scientific organisations in Karnataka, particularly in Bengaluru, are collaborating with the Ministry for mentoring, training or fellowship programmes for women researchers in STEM fields and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to bridge the gap between women's enrolment in STEM education and their participation in research and development activities; and**
- (e) whether any targeted programmes or support mechanisms have been introduced in leading research hubs such as Bengaluru to increase women's participation in scientific research and innovation?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)**

- (a) The Government is implementing various programmes across multiple ministries and departments to promote the participation of women in higher education and in Science, Technology, Engineering,**

and Mathematics (STEM). The Department of Science and Technology (DST), through initiatives such as the Women in Science and Engineering–KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN) programme, has supported approximately 1,000 women scientists over the last three years, as well as around 82,813 girl students across the country (up to February 2026). During this period, 73 women beneficiaries in Karnataka and 24 in Rajasthan including one in the Bharatpur constituency have been supported under WISE-KIRAN. Additionally, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), through the Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation (BioCARE) scheme, has supported 49 women beneficiaries in Karnataka and 3 in Rajasthan. Furthermore, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has supported 21,654 women beneficiaries under the NET Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) and 858 beneficiaries under the Savitribai Jyotirao Phule Single Girl Child Fellowship (SJSGC). The UGC also promotes qualitative improvements in higher education for all categories, including women, through initiatives such as the scheme on the “Development of Women’s Studies in Indian Universities and Colleges.” Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided for establishing Women’s Studies Centres (WSCs) in universities and colleges, focusing on teaching, research, curriculum development, training, and outreach activities.

(b) The Ministry is implementing special initiatives to encourage girls and women to pursue education and research careers in STEM disciplines. These initiatives span the entire academic and professional pipeline from school education to post-doctoral research and include the provision of scholarships, fellowships, mentorships and internships under programmes such as Vigyan Jyoti; WISE-Doctoral of Philosophy (PhD); WISE-Post Doctoral Fellowship (PDF); WISE-Intellectual Property Rights (IPR); Women’s Instinct for Developing and Ushering in Scientific Heights & Innovation (WIDUSHI); CURIE (Consolidation of University Research for Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities), which strengthens Research and Development (R&D) infrastructure in women institutions. In addition, the DBT supports women’s career progression through the BioCARE Fellowship, which facilitates re-entry and sustained participation of women in the biotechnology sector.

(c) Universities, research institutions, and scientific organisations in Karnataka, including those in Bengaluru, are collaborating as host institutions and knowledge partners under various schemes of the Ministry of Science and Technology. These include premier institutions such as the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, the Indian Institute of Science, the Raman Research Institute, the CSIR–Fourth Paradigm Institute, the National Institute of Technology Surathkal, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), JSS Science and Technology University,

Nitte University Centre for Science Education and Research (NUCSER), Yenepoya (Deemed to be University), Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine, Manipal Institute of Regenerative Medicine (MIRM), Tumkur University, National Aerospace Laboratories, Mangalore University, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), Jyoti Nivas College, Centre for Nanoscience and Engineering, CSIR–National Aerospace Laboratories, GSSS Institute of Engineering and Technology, and Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women’s University, Vijayapur. These institutions facilitate mentoring, training, fellowships, research projects, and capacity-building programmes for women researchers in STEM fields.

(d) The Government has undertaken several targeted measures to bridge the gap between women’s enrolment in STEM education and their participation in research and development activities. A dedicated programme, namely the WISE-KIRAN aims to reduce financial barriers and encourage continued participation and career progression of women in STEM disciplines. The programme specifically addresses the transition from education to research by providing structured support mechanisms and opportunities. In addition, enabling provisions such as career counselling, maternity benefits, structured mentoring, exposure visits, and interactions with role models have been incorporated to facilitate continuity in women’s education and research. These measures help minimize attrition and promote sustained engagement of women in STEM careers. Complementing these efforts, the DBT supports women’s career progression through the BioCARE Fellowship, which facilitates re-entry and sustained participation of women in the biotechnology sector.

(e) Dedicated programmes and support mechanisms have been introduced in leading research hubs such as Bengaluru to enhance women’s participation in scientific research and innovation. National level initiatives, such as the Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN) programme of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), serve as flagship interventions for promoting women in science. Under this programme, 38 women scientists have been supported in Bengaluru over the last three years. In addition, DST has established 11 incubation centres in Bengaluru to provide comprehensive support to startups, helping them progress from ideation to commercialisation. Under the National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI)- Promoting and Accelerating Young and Aspiring Innovators and Startups (PRAYAS) programme, 63 women innovators and startups in Bengaluru have been supported. Further, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), through its Biotechnology Career Advancement

and Re-orientation (BioCARE) initiative, has supported 13 women in Bengaluru. These women-centric programmes are implemented through premier academic and research institutions, offering fellowships, mentoring, capacity building, infrastructure support, and career advancement opportunities. Collectively, they play a crucial role in strengthening the participation and leadership of women in scientific research and innovation.
