

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 961
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24TH JULY, 2026**

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH RESEARCH

†961. SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the fact that public expenditure on health research in the country as a proportion of GDP is relatively lower than that of many developed and emerging economies and if so, the reasons therefor along with the Government's reaction thereto;
- (b) the details of budget allocation, actual expenditure and the number of sanctioned and pending research projects for the Indian Council of Medical Research and other national health research institutes during the last three years, along with the number of projects pending due to lack of funds or other reasons, year-wise;
- (c) whether research work is being affected due to the shortage of state- of-the-art research equipments, the need for modernisation of laboratories and vacant posts of scientists and technical personnel; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, institute-wise and the steps taken by the Government to address these shortcomings?

ANSWER

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

(a): The allocation of Department of Health Research (DHR) is 0.012% of GDP. However, in recent years Government has increased the budget in health research along with new programmes/initiatives to make research grants more competitive and accessible. The budgetary allocation for DHR has increased over 5 times - from ₹ 932.00 crores in 2014-15 (RE) to ₹ 4,821.21 in 2026-27 (BE). There has been rise of approximately 24 per cent in Budgetary allocation in 2026-27 over the Revised Estimates for 2025-26 (₹3,900.69 crore) indicating strong commitment of Union Government towards strengthening health research in the country.

(b) Government has undertaken measures to broaden and strengthen the health-research funding ecosystem. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has rationalised and expanded its intramural and extramural grant architecture so that funding support is calibrated to the scale,

maturity, risk and translational stage of a research proposal. ICMR has initiated new follow up grants to utilize the leads from the initial research grants. Details are regularly published at ICMR ePMS portal.

The current structure includes Small or ANVESHAN Grants of up to ₹2 crore, Intermediate or NISCHAYAK ANVESHAN Grants ranging from ₹2 crore to ₹8 crore, the First-in-the-World Challenge with stage-linked support of up to ₹8 crore, and Centres for Advanced Research with support of up to ₹15 crore. These instruments support investigator-initiated research, proof-of-concept studies, validation of interventions, high-risk and high-reward innovation, multidisciplinary research and advanced research programmes.

Budget allocation, expenditure and number of sanctioned projects at ICMR in last three years- are detailed below-

Year	Budget allocation of ICMR (RE)	Actual expenditure of ICMR (AE)	Number of sanctioned projects
2023-24	₹2295.12 Cr	₹2343.18 Cr	989
2024-25	₹2869.99 Cr	₹2869.57 Cr	759
2025-26	₹3150.00 Cr	₹3149.79 Cr	795

ICMR has further informed that none of the projects are pending as the number of projects sanctioned are within the funding available itself. However, if more funding is allocated to ICMR, it can sanction more number of projects.

(c) and (d): ICMR has informed that it continuously upgrades its infrastructure including laboratories and equipments so that research work is not affected due to the shortage of state-of-the-art research equipment, the need for modernization of laboratories. ICMR has also undertaken phased capital upgrades including modernization of labs and animal house facilities, centralized/pool procurement for key equipment, and grant level capital support for networked labs, ICMR I-RISE platform is available for lab equipment sharing with organizations outside ICMR Network. There is a dedicated Central Procurement Cell at ICMR headquarters to streamline the procurement for the Research needs. As on date ICMR has total sanctioned strength of 923 scientists out of which 778 scientists are already in position. Further, 2137 personnel are in position in Technical cadre. ICMR has also accelerated recruitment drives for regular and contractual staff and has also collaborated with Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research (AcSIR) to train young researchers through ICMR Faculty of Medical Research.
