

India & others versus Dr. Narayan Rao Battu & another, Hon'ble High Court of Delhi observed that since the new pension scheme was in effect and a policy decision had already been taken to make the said scheme applicable to all incumbents joining government service on or after 01.01.2004, the Respondent, who was appointed on 25.02.2005, cannot claim the right to be covered by the old pension scheme, merely because the vacancy against which he was appointed was initially advertised at a time when the old pension scheme was in force. Hon'ble Court also observed that once the new pension scheme unambiguously and specifically provided that since all incoming office bearers, whose date of appointment is on or after 01.01.2004, would be governed by the new pension scheme, no reference can be made to either the date of vacancy, or the date of advertisement.

In view of the specific provisions of the Notification dated 22.12.2003, the date of advertisement for the vacancies or the date of examination for selection against those vacancies is not considered relevant for determining the eligibility for coverage under the Old Pension Scheme or the National Pension System. There is no proposal to revise the orders issued *vide* aforesaid Office Memorandum dated 17.02.2020.

National strategy on artificial intelligence

599. SHRI M.V. SHREYAMS KUMAR: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of implementation of National Strategy on Artificial Intelligence by NITI Aayog;
- (b) the status of Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence; and
- (c) the number of countries with which NITI Aayog has partnered for knowledge sharing of Artificial Intelligence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) NITI Aayog, after extensive consultation with various ministries and leading academicians, institutions, practitioners and industry players, had released India's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (NSAI) for the country in June 2018. The Strategy outlined proposed efforts in research, development, adoption and skilling in AI. The major recommendations of the Strategy include, *inter alia*, setting up Centres of Research Excellence (CORE)-focused on fundamental research; and

International Centres on Transformational AI (ICTAI)- focused on applied research. The AI vertical of the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) programme of DST will be implemented as per the recommendations of the NSAI. The Draft Cabinet Note (DCN) on implementation of National Strategy on AI is being steered by MeitY and the same is under examination.

(c) NITI Aayog has collaborated with several countries and entities for knowledge sharing in AI viz. Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS, Government of UK), Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI, Japan), Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) and Treasury, Government of Australia.

Funds for space exploration programmes

600. DR. SASMIT PATRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) total funds sanctioned for the space exploration programmes by the country over the past three years; and

(b) total funds expected to be sanctioned for the space exploration programmes in the next one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDERA SINGH): (a) Total funds sanctioned for space exploration programmes during the past three years i.e. 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 are given below:—

Financial Year	Allocation in BE (₹ in crore)
2017-18	188.12
2018-19	230.10
2019-20	285.80

Space exploration has been given special priority in the last six years by the Government. This has resulted in the success of Mars Orbiter Mission, Astrosat and Chandrayaan-2 missions. Vital qualifications tests related to Gaganyaan mission have also been carried out during this period.

(b) An amount of ₹265 crore has been sanctioned in BE 2020-21.