

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1243
ANSWERED ON 05/12/2024

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS

1243. Shri G. C. Chandrashekhar:

Will the Minister of Science and Technology be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has launched several schemes/initiatives/fellowships to increase participation of women in research and development sectors;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of funds allocated for the above schemes during the last five years;
- (d) whether these schemes have drawn interest of women towards science and technology;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefore?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (b): Yes Sir, the Government has launched several schemes/initiatives to increase the participation of women in research and development sectors. The Department of Science and Technology is implementing a holistic scheme 'Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)' to encourage and promote women in the Research & Development (R&D) in Science & Technology (S&T) domain. In 2023, DST launched new programmes under WISE-KIRAN Scheme namely, WISE Fellowship for Ph.D. (WISE-PhD) and WISE-Post Doctoral Fellowship (WISE-PDF), which support women to pursue Doctoral and Post-Doctoral research, respectively, in Basic and Applied Sciences; WISE-SCOPE programme encourages women scientists to carry out research to address societal challenges. DST has also launched the 'WIDUSHI' programme in 2023, which enables unemployed senior women scientists and retired women scientists to continue their scientific careers. Another programme 'WISE Internship in IPR (WISE-IPR)' was also launched in 2023 to provide one-year on-the-job training in the field of Intellectual Property Rights to enhance job opportunities.

During 2022, the Department also extended support to Women Post-Graduate Colleges under 'Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence (CURIE)' Programme to develop research infrastructure and facilities for enhancing women's participation in research and development. In addition to this, Vigyan Jyoti is another unique initiative of DST that encourages meritorious girls of Class IX-XII to pursue higher education and careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), especially in the areas where participation of women is low. Moreover, DST is also implementing 'Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)' programme that aims to transform institutions for a more gender-sensitive approach and inclusiveness with the ultimate goal to improve gender equality in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine).

(c) The budget allocation for the WISE-KIRAN Scheme during the last five years is Rs.95 Crore in FY 2020-21, Rs. 100 Crore in FY 2021-22, Rs.125 Crore in FY 2022-23, Rs.131.20 Crore in FY 2023-24 and 135.50 Crore in FY 2024-25.

(d) to (e): Yes, these programmes have drawn the interest of women towards science and technology. Since the year 2023, more than 7400 proposals/applications have been received under different fellowship programmes viz. WISE-PhD, WISE-PDF, WISE-SCOPE and WIDUSHI. On the other hand, around 220 Women PG Colleges have shown their interest in CURIE programme since the year 2022. Further, the Vigyan Jyoti programme is also covering 300 Districts of the country.

(f) Not applicable.
